

#BE THE WAVE

EXPLAINER

#BeTheWave against climate change

Climate change is a global challenge. After all, the future of our planet is at stake. But, for many people, the challenge is so big that it can quickly become overwhelming.

The good news is that even the smallest action can make a big difference. In fact, every single person can do a lot to help stop climate change – and the #BeTheWave campaign sets the stage for doing so.

From a ripple to a wave

#BeTheWave is a new social media initiative that asks young people around the world to think global and act local. The campaign challenges users to make small, climate-friendly changes in their daily lives, share their achievements on Instagram, and inspire their friends and followers to do the same.

In doing so, #BeTheWave will show how even the simplest action can grow from a ripple into a wave of global change.

➤ Try the filter, take the challenge

➤ Starting 21 September 2020

➤ Find us on Instagram

➤ @eudiplomacy

Here's how it works

Supported by the European External Action Service (EEAS), #BeTheWave is driven by young activists and seeded by influencers. Although these activists post from different corners of the globe, they all share the same commitment to fighting climate change.

#BeTheWave gives each of these influencers a climate challenge via an Instagram filter. These challenges are meant to be simple and fun changes that anyone can make in their everyday lives. For example, one might be challenged to unplug unused chargers, not eat meat for one day, or switch off the car engine when parked. Others might find themselves working to turn leftovers into a new meal, upcycling last season's clothes, planting flowers to help bees, or saying no to plastic straws – to name but a few examples.



The influencers document themselves completing a climate challenge using a filter specially designed for the #BeTheWave initiative. They then share their photos and videos with their Instagram followers, either on their feed or in their stories.

By sharing their climate challenge, these influencers toss a stone into the water that starts to make ripples. They then call on their followers to take up the #BeTheWave challenge. With some influencers having thousands or even tens of thousands of followers, the ripples soon become waves.

Inspired to act, other users will document themselves completing a climate challenge, share via Instagram, and challenge their own friends and followers to #BeTheWave. With each new story, the ripples continue to grow – spreading their influence and ultimately resulting in real change.

Why Instagram?

It seems everybody is “doin’ it for the ‘gram” these days – and for good reason:

- Instagram is a very popular social media platform
- It's growing – and growing fast (up 4.5% in the first quarter of 2020)
- Users come from around the world
- Many young people see it as a source of information and as a place for political activism

Small steps towards big goals

#BeTheWave is a simple, interactive, and socially driven way to show how small actions can lead to big changes. By empowering already engaged and socially active Millennials and Gen Zers to take concrete actions at the local level, the European Union further contributes to the implementation of climate-related Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, this all happens during a very special year: the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.

The EU has a strong record when it comes to protecting the planet. As a leader in mitigating climate change, it has adopted a Green Deal that aims to see the continent go climate neutral by 2050. Likewise, one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals is to keep global temperature rise this century below 2 degrees Celsius and, if possible, below the 1.5 degrees outlined in the Paris Agreement.

The EU – leading the fight against climate change

The EU is leading the charge against climate change – both at home and through close cooperation with international partners.

On the home front, the EU has adopted several important policies and funding schemes. For example, its emissions trading system (EU ETS) aims to reduce the carbon footprint of such high-emitting industries as energy and aviation. The EU has also implemented policies that set new emission standards for vehicles, boost the use of renewable energy, and promote the development of low-carbon technologies.

At the heart of this work is the European Green Deal, an ambitious package of measures that range from cutting greenhouse gas emissions to investing in cutting-edge research and innovation and preserving Europe's natural environment. By engaging citizens and all parts of society, the Green Deal aims to make Europe the world's first climate-neutral continent by 2050.

The EU is also a leading player on the international stage, working with other countries to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, promoting bilateral cooperation, and financing developing countries' work to tackle climate change.

The #BeTheWave campaign unites these two international bodies and global citizens behind common objectives.

Learn More

- [#BeTheWave Campaign](#)
- [European Green Deal and EU climate action](#)
- [Tips for everyday climate action](#)
- [Our planet, our future – online magazine for young people](#)
- [European Climate Pact](#)

Contacts

- [European External Action Service](#)
relations@be-the-wave.eu