Youth at COP30: How EYEN Supports the Global Energy Transition

By *Leonardo Cangelmi & Halina Jagielska*

From November 10 to 22, EYEN proudly represented youth energy perspectives at COP30. With tackling global energy challenges and shaping the future of climate action as our ambitions. Three motivated volunteers took on the task during the world's most important negotiations on climate change. How? By participating in negotiations and roundtable discussions, organising side events and much more. This led to the exchange of ideas with global youth and energy stakeholders, laying the groundwork for future collaborations.

Halina Jagielska, Head of the Young Energy Consumers (YEC) Task Force, shares her insights: “Attending COP30 in Belém was an experience unlike any previous COP. From the moment I arrived, it was clear that youth presence here had a new weight. Our voices, perspectives, and energy were truly shaping the discussions. Experiencing the negotiations in person, particularly in a city directly affected by climate change, brought a new sense of urgency and reality to the talks.”

For EYEN, our presence was made possible by a dedicated team of three volunteers rotating throughout the conference. **Leonardo Cangelmi** explains: “Despite logistical challenges, including flooding and a fire at the venue, EYEN maintained a constant presence. Our small team ensured we were actively participating in negotiations, attending panels, organizing side events, and connecting with youth and stakeholders from around the world.”

Even with a small delegation, EYEN managed to organize four side events in collaboration with international partners, covering topics from energy poverty to youth-led innovation and cross-continental energy cooperation. Halina adds: “During the roundtable in the Mediterranean Pavilion, we highlighted the voices of young people from different regions and discussed meaningful ways for youth to participate in decision-making. At the ‘Youth Voices on Energy Poverty’ panel, we shared initial findings from the Young Energy Consumers Task Force survey, sparking conversations on energy accessibility and the global impact of energy poverty.”

Some of the most impactful moments, however, happened outside formal panels. Leonardo notes: “Our bilateral meetings with EU Parliamentarians and other youth organizations were crucial for presenting European youth perspectives and pushing for greater youth inclusion in climate policy.” The conversations over coffee, the spontaneous exchanges with delegates from Germany, Italy, Poland and beyond, and the networking with youth from all over the world were as meaningful as any formal event. They reminded that youth-driven climate action has real power and potential.

COP30 in Belém also offered a unique perspective on global energy challenges. The city itself, deeply affected by climate change, brought the realities of vulnerable communities directly into the conference. Halina concludes: “COP30 left me inspired and more committed than ever. Youth engagement is no longer optional; it is central to creating a sustainable energy future that is inclusive, fair, and just.”

In the end, COP30 was more than a conference. It was a reminder of the urgency, creativity, and determination that young people bring to the global energy transition. For EYEN, it was a chance to not only share our insights but to build lasting connections, exchange ideas with peers and policymakers, and contribute meaningfully to shaping a just and inclusive energy future.

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