

## **THE FIRST EUROPEAN RURAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT**

**11.8.2017, LIGATNE, LATVIA**

**The aim** of the event was to gather young people from Europe rural areas and discuss the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century rural youth in an interactive way. The focus of ERYP was on both young people who are currently living in the rural area and those who have left rural areas for various reasons.

How to create conditions that would allow young people to successfully develop business ideas, to ensure their personal fulfillment by still living in rural areas?

<https://create.piktochart.com/output/14217914-eryp>

### **Participation**

**The event involved 88 participants:**

10 participants from Latvia,  
2 participants from Estonia,  
2 participants from Armenia,  
1 participant from Moldova,  
6 participants from England,  
4 participants from Wales  
5 participants from Scotland  
6 participants from Northern Ireland  
11 participants from Germany  
2 participants from Italy  
7 participants from Finland  
5 participants from Austria  
5 participants from Switzerland  
4 participants from Denmark  
1 participants from Albania  
5 participants from Ireland  
5 participants from Slovenia  
1 participants from Ukraine  
4 participants from Norway

## Main Results – to be used in the manifesto and Declaration youth sections

**Entrepreneurship** was identified as the most important topic for the particular audience. The business was a common feature of the chosen case studies as challenges to solve. For young people it is important to work in a modern business environment.

Young people are optimistic and did not see obstacles in fulfilling the dreams of the described challenges, but reacted to the factors which were limiting implementation of the dreams. It is important to pay attention to the fact that it is not necessary to create optimism and confidence in young people abilities in order to fulfill their dreams because they are quite optimistic right now, but to focus on helping **eliminate obstacles** that hinder the fulfillment of dreams. Helping act need to be visible, so that young people could feel the support from society regardless of where they have decided to implement their dreams.

Living in an age of opportunities within the EU, **young people lack knowledge of legal and mental constraints** in various sectors.

Rural youth pay particular attention to the **problem of isolation**, giving examples of situations where rural people are isolated from society.

Participants showed how important business environment are to them, but solutions they offered had mostly social meaning.

The issue of **gender equality is not a problem** for young rural people, since they, chosen the persons with dreams about business, despite the "atypical" distribution of dreams (women - business, men - culture and entertainment).

Young people are **demanding for new solutions for rural employment** which could be modern and appropriate to the possibilities of the present. They want to be able to receive **services** in rural areas in the same quality as in centers in order to establish their own business and life quality.

The main conclusion is there is no doubt about how important is the involvement of the process of European Rural Parliament, but **youth need to be included in it as one of the partners not as separate ERYP event**, because they have opinion, knowledge and skills on different themes the same as other generations, possibly with much more modern point of view which could supplement ERP manifesto.

## WORKSHOP REPORTING FORM VENHORST– 20.10.2017

<b>Workshop Name</b>
Provision for youth in rural areas, and the future of the European Rural Youth Parliament
<b>Name of Facilitator</b>
Kim Smedslund/ Anita Selicka
<b>Name of Rapporteur</b>

Irene Marcic
<p><b>Vision of the theme</b></p> <p>Towards sustainable youth education and employment in rural areas Giving a voice for rural youth in Europe – the European Rural Youth Parliament</p>
<p><b>Main issues</b></p> <p>What youth want: Sustainable and competitive jobs, education and access to affordable housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Less opportunities for youth in rural areas in terms of jobs, education, housing,</li> <li>☐ Youth don't always want to stay in rural areas. They move to the capital or abroad for more opportunities. How to get them back?</li> <li>☐ Different issues in different rural areas – different tools?</li> <li>☐ Young said we don't always want to accept opportunities offered by others</li> <li>☐ Less after school activities for children</li> <li>☐ Kindergarten, schools – closing kills the community and value of housing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggested actions / policy – and who should implement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Give youth the opportunity to see other countries to bring knowledge and inspiration back. International exchanges.</li> <li>☐ Governance is important – who has power? who takes charge to deliver youth forum? Include youth in main decision process, not just in separate forums</li> <li>☐ Youth Bank?</li> <li>☐ Build cooperation in villages for jobs</li> <li>☐ Education through technology – computers, online-learning</li> <li>☐ Challenge universities, free universities, Universities of Applied Sciences to work in different ways – even informal education?</li> <li>☐ Search for suitable jobs in rural areas – innovation, on-line jobs</li> <li>☐ On-line infrastructure</li> </ul>
<p><b>How should ERP work in the future in this theme? What is the role of the ERP partners?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrated in ERP – youth pre-event</li> <li>2. Positive attitude to co-operate in a youth theme – tasks to negotiate and suggest to boards</li> <li>3. Open network (co-ordinated by Rural Youth Europe and/or MIJARC)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Amendments or messages to the manifesto</b></p> <p>Rights should not be asked for but demanded - realisation of rights Youth as participant, responsibility of organisation or government to include youth</p>

<p>More opportunities for poor areas (Erasmus?) Not all agreed the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence – willing to move on or stay</p>
<p><b>Messages to the Venhorst Declaration</b> E-possibilities in rural areas: technology, e-tools, broadband, teleworking Education in how they work together with youth Integrating youth aspect in the Manifesto and Declaration ☐ Youth's voice by youth important ☐ The Manifesto and Declaration don't speak about governance ☐ UN Convention states obliged to provide support services – time to demand respect of UN Convention ☐ Activating youth</p>
<p><b>Ideas and case-study examples relating to the theme</b> Better use of EVS/ Erasmus/ Leader Local economy activities by youth cooperatives</p>

### INFORMAL MEETING ERYP MIJARC

MIJARC:	Works often with important themes like refugees, climate, unemployment. MIJARC has a bit more political agenda than Rural Youth Europe
Rural Youth Europe	Non political, members mostly rural youth organisations, uk farms, 4h in nordic countries. Has also thematic "rallies": democracy, participation aso...

Both organisations interested in ERP and to develop the youth theme within the ERP-network. It has to be accepted by the Boards and the activities defined. Latvian Rural Forum and partially SYTY from Finalnd are interested to develop the youth theme within the ERP-framework.

### YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS BY YOUTH (ERYP has it's own results)

The geographical coverage beeing low, the results are only **directive**. Most of the youngsters who answered lived quite near city or town. To get more representativeness and strength in the youth network, more marketing and activating should be done.

### General statistics

53 answers  
age 14-18 mostly. answers from 3 countries  
68% male  
75% in community of less than 1000 people

### **Activities**

Education available in the close neighbourhood

quite easy to find a job

not regularly organised activities for youth 50-75%

Beach, Monastery. Ensemble of popular dances, Children's Palace, Recreational and Water Sports Center, Concerts, volunteer activities and sports, Sports and artistic activities, Folk ensemble, horse contest, folk dances. horse contest, contests for calluses, Sports activities: football, table tennis

### **Who to ask about activities and support (education, career, business)**

Don't know 50-75%,

Mom, village mayor, City Hall, Local Council, Patrons, City Hall and Local Council, The Hall, village Hall, my cousin, my supervisor

### **Support: 75% no,**

Mom, A.J.O.F.M. School psychologist, Europe Direct Centre, my supervisor

Young people feel that there are not very much organised activities, and don't know where to ask about them. Activate to do themselves?

### **Will you start/continue your family life in the place you live now?**

yes 75%, 5% maybe 13-18yrs youth

### **Are many of your friends moving away from your neighborhood (town/village/rural area)?**

53 responses: quite even answers with yes, maybe, no

leave because no job, money mostly, some because not enough activities, family, friends house, farm,

Not so much people 2. Safety 3. The social network between villagers, church school, friends

### **What do you miss**

Jobs (9), places to meet and activities, restaurants, pharmacy, health care. leisure centers

Activities, jobs and services are on the most wanted list

### **How to make life better**

To grow my family business (2), own farm, businesses, setting up shops, be veterinary, grocery store. set up a football team, organise youth activities, A youth club I want to do a business in rural areas with European funds. We need money for agriculture and a market to sell our products properly.

Entrepreneurship is one solution. Closeness of educational institutions.

## **SPARCE Youth Project – PROVISIONS PART**

This thematic was dealt with by a survey (See results and analysis below) and in the Youth workshop at Venhorst (see above)

## Answers from national partners – PROVISIONS

11 answers – 5 countries, two youth organisations

### 91% had contacts/cooperation with youth organisations, the rest through projects

- ☐ Youth council's and organisations
- ☐ Youth leader method
- ☐ improving entrepreneurial skills in colleges and high-schools
- ☐ combining education and entrepreneurship
- ☐ vocational training
- ☐ a resource center for youth work and youth policy development
- ☐ common working spaces and facilities
- ☐ youth parliament at county level
- ☐ youth participate in strategic development work

Analysis:

The activities are related to participation, influencing, education, development and premisses  
→ real political and financial impact? A resource center covering youth services.

### What roles do youth/youth organisations have in your network

- ☐ Can apply for grants
- ☐ Non-formal education skill improvement, inputs on education and entrepreneurship
- ☐ depend of their organizations incl YLC - board, volunteers, participants
- ☐ Member of board, project implementors and they do information tasks.
- ☐ A youth network in the Leader group with about 10 youngsters to activate youth, make action plans, plan projects and learn about project management.
- ☐ In municipal youth work we try to participate youth in everything we do.
- ☐ There is 4H club once a week, but it is only for children from age 6 to 12.
- ☐ Decision making, running community projects, campaigning.
- ☐ Various roles in youth councils, scouts, and other youth groups

### Analysis

Activities like implementing own projects, campaigning, being part of a board or working as a thematic subcommittee or even running an own cooperative for creating jobs are opportunities to learn, activate youth. Youth themselves should be able to see the benefits for them.

### Are youth leaving your area? 100% yes

- ☐ Economic necessity
- ☐ (Higher) education.

- ☐ No jobs
- ☐ No access to basic services,
- ☐ Looking for an improvement in living conditions
- ☐ More trendy to live in bigger cities, more action and hobbies in centers of cities
- ☐ Lack of affordable housing

### **Village where youth stay or move into**

- ☐ None (majority of answers)
- ☐ People/families that want to live in a rural way, close to the city.
- ☐ Related to economical opportunities
- ☐ Related to quality of life
- ☐ Related to closeness of educational possibilities

### **Analysis**

Youth are leaving and the reasons are well known: Money, education, job, building family, activities...

### **Employment opportunities**

- ☐ They mainly centre jobs that pay just above the minimum income range and which have no proper career path.
- ☐ More experienced people get them.
- ☐ safety, social protection difficulties
- ☐ bad in general as youth have no experience but in specific professions - very good in case youth have proper education (IT, teachers, medical workers for instance)
- ☐ Being close to city, other options quite easily available
- ☐ It really depends of the area and the industry in the area.
- ☐ Entrepreneurship should be encouraged more.
- ☐ Good, mainly in tourism and leisure industries.
- ☐ Bad, some seasonal tourist jobs, some rural businesses but most need to travel to towns to get jobs and transport is then an issue

### **Analysis**

Youth unemployment is high, wages often minimal, jobs temporary or seasonal, so it is difficult to build up the future. Transport is often an issue. Cooperatives and entrepreneurship could be a solution. National programmes.

### **What educational opportunities are there?**

- ☐ Good if close to cities, worse or bad if remote. Further or higher education in cities.
- ☐ They are quite good across all types, primary, college, high-school, vocational, academic, trades and professional, universities of applied sciences.
- ☐ Closing schools issue
- ☐ Because of the austerity, apprenticeships have disappeared.
- ☐ Adult education carried by SMEs (training providers) and NGOs financed by EU funds.
- ☐ problems with transport to the venues
- ☐ Thematic education

### **Analysis**

It depends on your location. Closing of schools, transport, disappearing of apprenticeships issues. Adequate education (strengths in the region) far away.

### **Support systems for youth**

- ☐ In terms of mental health there is a lot to be desired.
- ☐ Financial support for investments through EU funds.
- ☐ Social benefits (for NEETs)
- ☐ support to do sport, transport support to reach the schools)
- ☐ Municipalities social and youth work, some associations and schools.
- ☐ Municipal youth services and youth NGO's for activities, learning and job opportunities.
- ☐ Municipal youth work, outreach youth work, a little amount of hobby associations, support systems of comprehensive school (health nurse, curator, study advisor etc.), child welfare
- ☐ Our village provides summer jobs for every young person in our village from the age 14-20. We also have a youth facility in our village center, but it is closed for the moment (we are about to open it again next autumn).
- ☐ Limited, mainly there to support hard to reach and disadvantaged young people.
- ☐ School pastoral teams, a jobs service, various services run by the county Council

### **Analysis**

Many ways exist to support youth through local governments, national programs, youth /hobby NGO's, welfare programs. A village providing summer jobs for every young is excellent: Villages and communities could create cooperative (see good practices below) and hire their own youth (first experience, local people etc...)

### **Organised activities for youth**

- ☐ remote: few
- ☐ Mainly by NGOs; However they are few.
- ☐ Sporadic activities supported by the church, local authorities or youth clubs.
- ☐ Depend of the municipality. At least all of them providing sport, hobby, trainings, etc.



- ☐ Organised by the community/Village: events, summer theatre, sports etc

#### Analysis

The community can arrange activities, not waiting for others to provide them. In some villages youth work is developed by the people living in the villages themselves, and getting paid for it. Trust.

#### Issues related to rural youth

- ☐ Access to Transport (studies, see friends), accessible housing, poor broadband, poor opportunities for socialisation and work, the run-down of services, youth have no places to go.
- ☐ Violence. Personal and professional unfulfillment.
- ☐ No future scenes, low value to be and live in rural areas.
- ☐ Security issues, drugs and some problems with use of social media are increasing and should be taken care of, prevention preferably.
- ☐ The general opinion seems to be, that it is normal and beneficial for the youth to leave rural areas, that the rural life is something that is only temporary and that only the "losers" stay in their home villages. Village life is seen as outdated and anti-progressive.
- ☐ Activate youth to do things themselves.

#### Analysis

Personal and professional unfulfillment, security, sexier in the city?, social media laziness? Preventive and activating activities

#### Manifesto

- ☐ Agree on wording (all answers)
- ☐ The feeling of security could perhaps be included (unemployment, feeling of social exclusion etc)

#### National policies or initiatives in your country/region supporting youth in rural areas

- ☐ National Program for Rural Development. National Program for Human Capital.
- ☐ Mobility support policy (Youth Action Plan 2016-2018).
- ☐ Support for young farmers, municipal youth workers covering the country
- ☐ Leader groups provide funding for youth projects.

#### Good, transferable practices

- ☐ Some of the Finnish LAGs have their own grant (100-500 €) for young people. The aim is to get young people making their own ideas to happen and also teach people to think positively about different grants. A youth section planning their own activity, with own responsibilities, learning and financing under our Leader group has potential to activate youth in rural areas

- ☐ Development Calls for proposals for youth initiated by local municipalities - either with specific target (develop the voluntary work, business ideas competitions...) or in general
- ☐ Cabana Motilor, from Marisel, Cluj county, <http://www.cabanamotilor.ro/en.html> is a good example of entrepreneurship and young people using the local landscapes and local cuisine.
- ☐ The guesthouse is an example of community involvement, innovation in services and market adaptation.
- ☐ Having EVS volunteers in our village, has given us a youthful boost and increased our "points" in the eyes of the young
- ☐ Community cooperative by the community/Village creating first (small) jobs for youth

Some picks  
 call for proposals and small grants for youth  
 youth sections by youth in NGO's  
 Community cooperative for youth

#### **Other comments**

- ☐ Organise within LEADER together with public administration funding for youth initiatives.
- ☐ Less bureaucracy when it comes to applying for EVS volunteers. International youth exchange between villages would be a good way to make the rural areas more attractive and up-to-date.
- ☐ Youth council/youth parliament benchmarking and cooperation internationally

Analysis  
 More cooperation and international cooperation  
 Less bureaucracy

### **YOUTH INPUT in the ERP leading documents**

#### **The Manifesto**

**12. Youth** Many young people are ready to remain in, or move into, rural areas and to take responsibility as farmers, rural entrepreneurs or citizens for the future well-being of rural economies and communities. Young people need competitive and sustainable employment, well-targeted systems of education, volunteering and vocational training, apprenticeships based on local needs, access to land, housing and credit, social and cultural activities suited to young people, and advisors and specific support to young farmers and entrepreneurs. We recognise young people as key drivers of rural development, and warmly welcome the contribution they can make to the programme of advocacy and action based on this Manifesto. **We call on** governments and civil society to recognise and meet the needs of youth and to enable young people to participate actively in political processes and in rural action.

**27. Education** In a changing world, people everywhere need constantly to enhance their ability to adapt and innovate in social and economic activity. For this reason, education and lifelong learning – starting in early childhood – have a crucial place in enabling rural communities to thrive, with the necessary cooperation and networking, and to participate fully in developmental processes. They have particular importance in enabling young people to understand the opportunities for a rich and viable life in the countryside, to attain and constantly renew the skills which are needed, and to participate as citizens. **We urge** educational authorities to ensure effective access for rural communities to education services, including primary schools at village level, secondary and adult education, distance learning, volunteering and vocational training suited to the realities of rural life.

**28. International exchanges** We believe that the work to achieve sustainable rural development throughout the wider Europe can be greatly assisted and accelerated by exchange of good practices among rural stakeholders and governments in all European countries and further afield. East and West can equally contribute to, and gain from, such exchanges. **We call for** a truly pan-European approach to exchange programmes, through cooperation between governments, NGOs, multi-national donors and others within and beyond the EU. Young farmers, professionals and other youth must be included as equal partners in these exchanges. A leading contribution to this process should be made by the European Network for Rural Development and the EU-funded National Rural Networks in all EU member states.

### **The Venhorst Declaration**

Young people are crucial for the future of rural areas. Their rights are protected under the United Nations Convention. We place high importance on enabling young people to find a good life in the countryside. This includes sufficient services that fit their needs as well as inclusion of youth in the development of rural areas. We urge governments, public authorities and LEADER groups to ensure that young people can take part in funded programmes. We ask ERP partners to link up with rural youth initiatives and support them wherever possible, for instance by involving young people in community initiatives and by supporting international exchange between young people in different European countries, among others through gatherings like the recent first European Rural Youth Parliament.

### **Future steps**

- To become recognised as ERP-partner
- To develop the youth theme network within the ERP framework – voice of youth, projects, exchange mechanisms, enlarging the ERP youth family...making ERP known, advocacy and policy suggestions through ERP.
- Prepare for an European Rural Youth Parliament event connected as pre-event to the main event



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