



RURAL YOUTH EUROPE ANNUAL REPORT 2022





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FOREWORD

Niall Evans

Rural Youth Europe Chair

Dear members of Rural Youth Europe. On behalf of the board of Rural Youth Europe, I provide the Annual Report for 2022 for your attention.

2022 was a year of many challenges, some new and some old but one thing is for certain we had many experiences along the way. We saw the organisation emerge out of the pandemic and return to a way of life that we are each use to.

For the first time since 2019, we were able to hold a full year of events starting in Budapest for the study session, before heading to Nienburg, Germany for the flagship event of the year, the European Rally and finally finishing up with the Autumn Seminar in Ireland.

In August 2022, we held our 65th General Assembly in Nienburg, Germany in conjunction with the European Rally. I had the honour of being elected as Chairman of the Organisation with Patricija Prindule standing into the interim

vice chairperson position. Within the meeting, we welcomed Shane Quigley and Julija Kordez to the positions of regional representatives for group 1 and group 2 respectively. We also welcomed back to the board Iristiina Heinonien and Birgit Kuslap as the regional representatives for groups 3 and 4 respectively on a temporary basis. Our thanks to both members for standing in at short notice and helping at a time of need.

On behalf of all within Rural Youth Europe and its extended network, we give our thanks to the outgoing Chairperson Linzi Stewart, regional representatives Elen Williams and Martin Siemen as well as special interest board member Siobhan Gallacher for their time, dedication and commitment to the organisation during an extremely trying mandate period. We faced the challenges head on and got through the other end to tell our tale.

At the start of December 2022, we held an Extraordinary General Assembly where we welcomed Nicolai Olsen into the position of Vice Chairman and Particija Prindule returned to the previous position of regional representative for group 4. The financial statement was also presented at this time.

On a staffing front, we were extremely light with the workload being shared between all on the board as well as part time staff. During the Autumn we went through an extensive recruitment process after our project manager John Gillon left the organisation to go on to projects new. In December, we welcomed to the organisation Spyros Papadatos to

the position of Secretary General and Tomas da Cruz Machado to the position of project manager on the COCOREADO Project.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your continued support through what have been trying times and for your participation during our events.

Your continued support ensures the success of the events that you know us fondly for, which help in developing the skills and opportunities available to grass route members throughout our wider network.

The use of online technology still plays a vital part in our operation even with us now being able to meet up. With logistical challenges across Europe, virtual meetings are playing as much of a part now as before the pandemic and will always be used to allow the organisation to thrive and grow.

We look forward to growing the organisation in 2023 and building a strong and sustainable future for all involved. Most importantly we wish to see the organisation thrive and provide the opportunities that you expect from us and with any luck we will still be providing these opportunities and more in another 65 years and beyond.

If we can be of any help, please do not hesitate to get in contact and we will do our best.

Many thanks and hope to see you all soon.

Niall Evans




MEMBERS

GROUP 1

UK & IRELAND



National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) **16,777 members**

YFC Centre, 10th Street, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth CV8 2LG, UK (England)
www.nfyfc.org.uk



Macra na Feirme **10,500 members**

Irish Farmcentre Bluebell, 12 Dublin (Ireland)
www.macra.ie



Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster (YFCU)

475 Antrim Road, Belfast BT15 3BD, UK (Northern Ireland)
www.yfcu.org



Scottish Association of Young Farmers' Clubs (SAYFC) **3,400 members**

Ingliston Young Farmers' Centre, EH28 8NE, Edinburgh, UK (Scotland)
www.sayfc.org



Wales YFC / CFfl Cymru **5,223 members**

YFC Centre, Llanellwedd Builth Wells, LD2 3NJ, Powys, UK (Wales)
www.yfc.wales

GROUP 2

CENTRAL EUROPE



Landjugend Österreich (ÖLJ)

91,308 members

Schauflergasse 6, 1014, Vienna, Austria
www.landjugend.at



Bund der Deutschen Landjugend e.V. (BDL)

100,000 members

Claire-Waldoff-Str. 7, 10117, Berlin, Germany
www.landjugend.de



**PLATTELANDS
JONGEREN NL**

Plattelandsjongeren NL

Bemuurde weerd oz 12, 3514 AN Utrecht, Netherlands
www.plattelandsjongeren.nl.pjnl



Slovenian Rural Youth (ZSPM)

3,000 members

Celovska 43, 1000, Ljubljana, Slovenia
www.zspm.si



Schweizerische Landjugendvereinigung (SLJV)

2,666 members

c/o AGRIDEA, Eschikon 28, 8315 Lindau, Switzerland
www.landjugend.ch

GROUP 3

NORTHERN EUROPE



Danmarks Landboungdom and Danish 4H

2,500 members

Agro Food Park 15, Skejby, 8200, Aarhus N, Denmark
www.4h.dk



Suomen 4H-liitto

40,000 members

Karjalankatu 2A, 00520 Helsinki, Finland
www.4h.fi



Finlands Svenska 4H

3,200 members

Elisabetsgatan 21 B 12, FIN-00170, Helsinki, Finland
www.fs4h.fi



4H Norge

10,698 members

Postboks 113, N-2026 Skjetten, Norway
www.4h.no



Norges Bygdeungdomslag

6,630 members

Schweigaardsgate 34B, oppgang 2, 3. etasje, Grønland, Oslo, Norway
www.nbu.no



Sveriges 4H

9,902 members

Box 2012, 64102 Katrineholm, Sweden
www.4h.se

GROUP 4

EASTERN EUROPE



Eesti 4H

820 members

Allika 2a, 80036, Pärnu, Estonia
www.eesti4h.ee



Umbrella

140 members

Leri Lagurashvili 4, fl 46, Tbilisi, Georgia
www.facebook.com/umbrellageo



Latvijas Mazpulki - Latvian 4H

1,200 members

Ezermalas 28, LV-1014, Riga, Latvia
www.mazpulki.lv



Latvian Young Farmer's Club (JZK)

207 members

Krišjāņa Barona iela 40, Jelgava, Latvia
www.jzk.lv

BOARD MEMBERS

The Board of Rural Youth Europe is democratically elected by the General Assembly of the organisation, directly by the membership. The board implements the decisions and policies agreed by the General Assembly, monitors the financial situation, is responsible for

employment related matters and supervising staff, and prepares and evaluates the international activities of the organisation. The board also makes decisions on a strategic level and at the same time monitors and develops the organisation's strategic direction.



Niall Evans
Rural Youth Europe
Chairman



Nicolai Olsen
Vice Chairman



Shane Quigley
Group 1
Representative for
UK & Ireland



Julija Kordez
Group 2
Representative for
Central Europe



Patricija Prindule
Group 4
Representative for
Eastern Europe

SECRETARIAT

The secretariat of Rural Youth Europe provides support and guidance to the Board of Rural Youth Europe. These young professionals are responsible for the everyday functioning of the

organisation, the implementation of the decisions of the board and the General Assembly, and in general supporting the fulfilment of the mission and the strategic plan of the organisation.



Spyros Papadatos
Secretary General



Tomas da Cruz Machado
Project Manager



Dan Grist
Communications Officer

BOARD MEETINGS 2022



STRATEGY

RURAL YOUTH EUROPE STRATEGIC APPROACH 2021-2023 YOUTH FOR A SUSTAINABLE RURAL FUTURE

WHAT

In 2021-2023 RYEurope:

- Works as a platform for dialogue on issues that rural youth, organisations and communities face in today's world
- Provides training for rural youth for them to be able to claim their rights and strive for inclusion
- Advocates for rural youth to have equal opportunities

HOW

The tools we use are:

1. Non-formal education and intercultural exchange for rural youth and rural youth organisations
2. Support for learning through communications and materials
3. Policy work

RESPONDING TO CHANGES

Democratic way of life is declining and opinions are becoming more polarised.

How we work on this:

- We strengthen youth participation
- We build good dialogue and offer platforms for it

In the world of opportunities not everyone has equal opportunities

How we work on this:

- We support the building of Inclusive rural communities through education
- We advocate for equal opportunities for rural youth
- We highlight inequalities that exist, and inspire advocacy of these rights in rural areas

Rural communities are becoming more international due to globalisation and immigration

How we work on this:

- We strengthen the European network of active rural youth and rural youth organisations - We build understanding and celebrate traditions and cultures through intercultural exchange, which forms an integral part of our activities
- We see diversity as a strength for rural communities and for the European rural network

The world is changing at a faster pace and rural communities are facing new challenges

How we work on this:

- We empower rural youth to use their capacities, build resilience and support rural communities' adaptability
- We provide online tools and training alongside our physical events

VISION

Young people in rural communities feel part of a larger European community where human rights and equality are respected regardless of opinion, gender, sexual orientation, background and beliefs. Rural youth have equal social rights compared with their urban peers and their wellbeing is supported. Rural youth are empowered, educated and supported to be active members of the society on local and European level. The European community has a positive image of rural areas and rural lives. Rural Youth Europe is known among European institutions as an educational organisation and its learning outcomes are widely recognised.

MISSION

Rural Youth Europe works to enhance the lives of rural young people through providing intercultural learning opportunities which encourage advocacy and respect for others, and:

- Bring together and develop a network of European rural youth in order to enable the sharing and promotion of best practice in an interactive, inclusive and collaborative community. We encourage a safe and supportive environment where young leaders can be empowered to reach their full potential.
- Provide the tools, skills and knowledge for rural youth to develop and be motivated to work towards a sustainable and resilient rural Europe.
- Provide a voice for rural youth to be heard by European institutions and decision makers on key topics. Act as a bridge between decision makers and rural youth in both directions through disseminating information and opportunities back to rural youth.

VALUES

1. **INTERCULTURAL**
2. **EDUCATIONAL**
3. **EQUALITY**
4. **INCLUSIVE**
5. **EMPOWERING**

STUDY SESSION 2022

“FEED IT FORWARD – FOOD AS A HUMAN RIGHT”

Julija Kordez

Our study session “Feed it Forward – Food as a human right” took place in Budapest at the end of April 2022. The study session was organised in co-operation with the European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA) and hosted by the European Youth Center in Budapest. The aim of the study session was to understand the theme of food as a human right in terms of availability, access, sustainability and to provide awareness of different aspects of food supply chain and food system.

24 participants participated in the study session from the member organisations of CEJA and RYEurope. The participants explored the theme through different activities, workshops, external speakers and the use of non-formal educational methods. Before the event, each participant was asked to bring one recipe from their home country. At the end of the week the participants had a look at their recipes and edited them into a more sustainable form, with help from the team members. Participants needed to reflect as to the impact on climate, but also cultural importance of food while considering the changes on the recipes.



In general, the participants of the study session learnt how food is a human right in terms of availability, access, adequacy and sustainability. They additionally had the opportunity to learn to define sustainability in terms of economic, social and environmental dimensions, as well as looking at innovative ways to participate in the food systems and how to increase participation in the political processes involving food systems.



EUROPEAN RALLY 2022

“SHAPING FUTURE – DIALOGUE FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN RURAL AREAS”

Niall Evans

Finally in 2022, after a digital transition during the pandemic, the European Rally took place as a physical event in its full scale as Rural Youth Europe is used to doing it. From the 31st of July until the 6th of August 2022, rural youth from all around Europe gathered in Nienburg, Lower Saxony in Germany. There were 57 active, excited and inspiring young participants who dove into the topic of “Shaping the Future - Dialogue for Sustainability in Rural Areas”. The event was hosted by the Rural Youth Association of Lower Saxony “Niedersächsische Landjugend”, organized by the German umbrella-organisation of Rural Youth Clubs “Bund der Deutschen Landjugend” and Rural Youth Europe.

During one full week, rural youth learned what is sustainability, how successful dialogue should look like, what sustainable actions are existing in different European countries and

more. Each morning there was a group energizer, followed during the day by diverse sessions led by the prep-team and focused on non-formal education approaches. At lunchtime participants could join ‘Discovery Time’, where DEULA-Nienburg showed them their estate and the activities that they undertake at their educational centre. Every evening there were social activities, to give participants challenges and the necessary space to bond with youth from other countries, for example during the Sustainable International Buffet where it was possible to taste and explore Europe in all its grandeur. With sport activities, Games without Borders, they were challenged to do diverse tasks as a team and a Lip Sync Battle gave them opportunity to become professional singers. During one day of that week, the participants went to local host families where they spent time with local families and learned about the culture and life in

Germany. During the evening, there was an organized BBQ with their host families and the dance floor was open for learning traditional dances. On the last day each participant received a certificate for attending the European Rally.

The atmosphere during the week was relaxed, but also energizing; the prep team was rewarded for their huge volunteering efforts by seeing the happy faces of rural youth and were repaid for all the effort they made for this big physical event. The Rally was co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, and the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe.

AUTUMN SEMINAR 2022

“RURAL OUT LOUD”

Patricija Prindule

Even after a very long 4 years of planning, delayed twice by the pandemic, Macra na Feirme finally played host to 24 international participants between the 5th and the 12th of November 2022 in An Grianan in Termonfeckin Co Louth the headquarters of the ICA for the Autumn Seminar 2022 “Rural Out Loud”.

The event was originally scheduled to happen in November 2020. It was actually back in 2018 that planning for the event began and after surviving the pandemic it proved worth the wait for the participants who attended. The theme of the event was centred around the rights of LGBTQI+ people in rural areas and creating safe spaces for them to be themselves. Participants came from all over Europe to take part in the week long seminar which included sessions during the day and cultural activities during the evenings.

The sessions were on everything from how to create a safe space to learning how to use social media and other forms of media to promote their organisations to LGBTQI+ members as a safe space. The highlight for many of the participants was the Living Library on the Tuesday morning. There were 3 guest speakers, Maria Walsh MEP, Michael Cullinane (a TikTok sensation), and Erica Coates who is a transgender farmer from Co Cork. “Hearing the stories of the speakers really resonated with the participants. And we are really thankful to these and all the speakers we had all week, its not easy to share your story especially in front of a crowd of strangers” said Shane Quigley, Chairperson of the Autumn Seminar Prep Team.



There was also a day trip to Dublin where the participants heard from The Switchboard who offer a confidential & non judgemental listening and support service to members of the LGBTQI+ network 7 days a week. After this they had a choice to do a tour of the Guinness or Jameson factories and a great time was had by all in attendance. The participants all returned home to their own organisations with fresh ideas and motivation to help make their organisations and countries a better place to be a member of or to live in. The seminar was co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, and the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe.



THE COCOREADO PROJECT

The COCOREADO project really reached its peak in 2022 with the development of its ambassadors, after their selection, in order to represent the project and co-create results with the project consortium. This development concerns the consolidation of the co-creation of educational materials such as the ambassador toolbox, and the further dissemination of the project results as NOFAS and SEED initiatives, developed from the beginning at the 1st training, in March 2022 in Brussels, and at the 2nd training, in October 2022 in Pamplona. Especially during this 2nd training, the focus was on the co-creation aspect by the ambassadors, but also on ambassadors' skills regarding interaction with regional stakeholders, strategies for innovative farmers to lead food chains and training in relation to social media dynamics, such as the two podcast episodes produced in the framework

of the training.

The 13 partners have also developed several reports on important tasks, which step by step will make, for anyone who wants to consult it, a key document in order to understand the important and noble work of farmers to provide our societies with food.

The COCOREADO project is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme.



POLICY, ADVOCACY AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Rural Youth Europe Policy Work Sub Committee met 5 times; it was made up of representatives from 11 member organisations. The subcommittee looked at the topics of importance to our grassroots members and decided we would like to focus on creating position papers to better strengthen RYE's position in Europe. The aim of this committee was to gather opinions on topical issues relevant to our membership and to use this when engaging with various stakeholders at the European level.

At the same time, the European Youth Forum (YFJ) remained the main youth platform we engage as a full member. RYEurope has been always engaged at YFJ Policy Commissions and represented in the statutory meetings of the platform by its board members. RYEurope remained an active member of the Exchange Group, a coalition of international mobility of organisations from the YFJ membership, in order to have a stronger voice within the platform. Additionally, our member Anja Fortuna completed in 2022 her second year as Vice-President of the YFJ, nominated by RYEurope.

The 25 Percent project (a project in which RYEurope was in the core consortium) concluded in 2022 and its closing ceremony took place in May followed by the COMEM where a workshop on EU elections 2024 & the YFJ statutes took place. Several motions were debated and passed including an urgent resolution for the support of youth in Ukraine and refugees and for the

implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in Europe. Motions were also put forward on the non-discrimination of young Belarusian activists and support for democratic principles in Europe and Combating Antisemitism: Young People's Responsibility. RYEurope was involved in the consultation on digitalisation of the YFJ and contributed to this policy paper.

At the EU level, RYEurope was selected as one of the European INGyOs taking part in the 9th cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue "Engaging together for a sustainable and inclusive Europe" (January 2022-June 2023), which covered Youth Goal 3 "Inclusive Societies" & Youth Goal 10 "Sustainable Green Europe". The first EU Youth Conference of this cycle took place virtually and was hosted by France from 24th - 26th January 2022, followed by the second EU Youth Conference in Czech Republic from 11th - 13th July (to be followed by the EU Youth Conference in Sweden in March 2023). Smaller events are held amongst the INGyOs such as seminars with experts, stakeholders and decision makers.



MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Daniel Grist

The aim of Rural Youth Europe's communications is to share information about our own activities, as well as the work of our member and partner organisations. Key channels for our communication continue to be our website, social media, e-newsletter and podcast. The website is frequently updated with event information and blog posts.

Facebook continues to be the platform with our largest reach, with private Facebook groups used for events, as well as the 'Friends of Rural Youth' page providing an online space to communicate with alumni. We also have a growing following on Instagram, with the reels function extending our reach further afield. We also post on our Twitter and LinkedIn in order to maintain our professional network and further extend the visibility of our work.

RURAL VOICES PODCAST

In 2022, we published the podcast's third series, with 7 episodes covering a range of topics, as well as our events. This series, we also produced more visual content to promote the episodes and highlight key messages on social media; video highlights of interviews were posted to both Facebook and Instagram. You can listen to the podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and on the Rural Youth Europe website.

Episode 1: Study Session 2022

Featuring our Study Session's prep team, participants and experts.

Episode 2: COCOREADO Training 1

Featuring COCOREADO ambassadors.

Episode 3: Make the Moove

Featuring Macra na Feirme President John Keane to discuss their farmer-led mental health program.

Episode 4: Jiggy with it June!

Featuring Lauma Apine from Latvian 4H to discuss her ambitions to raise awareness of sexual health education within rural communities.

Episode 5: European Rally 2022

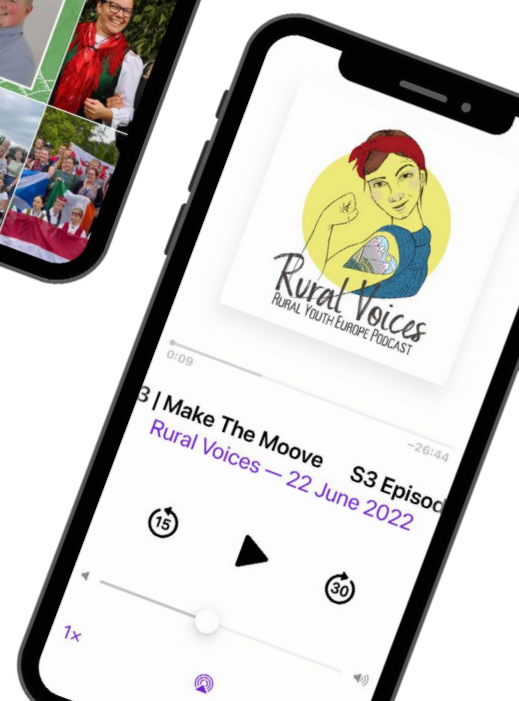
Featuring participants, prep team members and board members throughout the course of the week.

Episode 6: COCOREADO Training 2

Featuring COCOREADO ambassadors discussing their seed initiatives.

Episode 7: Autumn Seminar

Featuring participants, prep team members and experts, including Tilly Taylor from the LGBTQ+ charity ShoutOut and AGRI TikTok star Micheal Cullinane.



Rural Youth Europe is supported by the
European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe.



Erasmus+