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Forum Synergies' activities

ERSG 2017 - European Rural Sustainable Gathering on social economy, cooperatives and grassroots initiatives in rural GREECE - Registration OPEN!



This year Forum Synergies' European Rural Sustainability Gathering will take place in Karditsa (region of Thessaly, Greece), from 17-21 May 2017.

The three-day gathering will be an opportunity to meet people with a spirit of cooperation and action for sustainable rural development from across Europe. We will visit highlights of local sustainable initiatives and development action around Karditsa and Plastiras Lake.

Have a look to the [programme](#) and [form](#).

Register before April 30th.

As an appetizer, have a look to the **interviews realised by Hannes Lorenzen to Greek partners:** [Vassileios Bellis](#), General Director of the Development Agency of Karditsa and one of the initiators of a movement of social enterprises and cooperatives ; and [Yiorgos Psychas](#), member of Iliosporoi grassroot network working towards social, political and ecological transition in rural and urban areas of Greece, engaged on access to land topics.

Report on the 2nd workshop on Sustainable Forestry available: focus on pressures and solutions



Last November 30 participants from 10 countries met in the Tara National Park in Western Serbia to discuss the state of forestry in the Balkan Region.

Over the two full days of the workshop we visited the National Park and areas of High Nature Value as well as small local businesses that were dependent on forestry. Overall, we found

that, while the forestry sector was functioning, there were many challenges and problems that seemed to be growing rather than receding. **The main findings and conclusions related to: Pressures on and solutions for sustainable forestry - each topic seen from a regional (e.g. Balkan) level, an environmental and a community perspective,** can be read now in the [report](#).

Transylvanian Herb Garden



Monika Pakot from Civitas Foundation shares the outputs of this initiative aiming at the "**Social integration of disadvantaged people in rural areas through sustainable collection and processing of medicinal and aromatic plants**". Started in 2015 this project is a good example of how the work related to the collection, processing and using herbs can contribute to sustainable rural development. Integrating social, environmental and cultural (traditional knowledge) aspects. Main activities cover trainings and knowledge transfer mainly on a local level. The [Transylvanian Herb Garden](#) project was initiated and financed by CIVITAS Foundation and supported supported by a grant from Switzerland through the Swiss contribution to the enlarged European Union. [Read the full description of the experience.](#)

Other organisations and rural territories' news

Rural Depopulation and Food Sovereignty highlighted in 10th Spanish Rural Forum for a living countryside



A few weeks ago, on March 3rd to 5th, Marina Guédon participated - as member of a consumer group and of Valencia Food Sovereignty Platform – in the X Forum for a living countryside 2017 (Foro por un mundo rural vivo 2017) held in La Venta de Contreras in Minglanilla, a small village in the heart of Spain, in Castilla region. This biennial event was organised by Plataforma Rural, a Spanish platform linked to Via Campesina that gathers rural organisations, environmentalists, NGOs, Farmers trade unions and Food sovereignty movements. More than 350 people – farmers, rural inhabitants, mayors, but also urban consumers and activists coming from all over Spain took the opportunity to exchange on rural, food and farming challenges and to agree on proposals for the future. Since the motto for this 10th Forum was "*Transforming municipalities for a living countryside*", the conference started with testimonies of mayors of small villages . [Read the full article](#)

Sigma Infty Think Net: Team with us to solve your problems.



Slobodan Ocokoljic who participated in ERSG 2014 in Beaufortain, has started a new initiative and presents it to us. "*We are glocal think net of development experts, researchers, managers, translators, economists, designers, lawyers, Human Resource and marketing experts, fundraisers. Imagine this network as the best project consortium you have ever worked with. The common denominators for all members are pro-activeness, dedication and problem solving attitude*". [Read the full article.](#)

AgroEcoCities: a network of cities engaging towards Agroecology



Read the [conclusions](#) of the public seminar 'Walking towards a European Network of AgroEcoCities' that was organised in Zaragoza (Spain) last December 13th and 14th. It gathered represents from cities engaged in the development of this network - signatories of Milan urban food policy pact - and other

Upcoming events

Calendar of events: The new calendar of events related to rural sustainable development is [online!](#)

Farming for biodiversity: 30 March 2017 - conference on of results-based payments for biodiversity achievements in agriculture

Guardians of the territory. Social innovation in rural areas. 1 April 2017 - Spanish workshop within SIMRA project.

ERSG 2017: 17-21 May 2017 - Forum Synergies 'European Rural Sustainable Gathering in Greece.

What's new on our website!

Experiences from forestry workshop in Serbia:

- Supporting the associations of Private Forest Owners in South East Europe: [read](#)
- Forest conservation and executing national law with regard to biodiversity : [read](#)
- Fact Sheet "Forests and Woodlands in Western Balkan" : [read](#)

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