



We create our rural future!

*Rural Youth & Young Farmers Workshop
22-25 October 2015, Dronten, the Netherlands*

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Repertoire of materials	Erreur ! Signet non défini.
Outlook	Erreur ! Signet non défini.



Background

The Forum Synergies' work programme creates space for ideas and initiatives of young people. It offers support for youth gatherings with the opportunity to exchange and develop their very own initiatives. FS facilitates a youth scholarship program offering opportunities to discover concrete local sustainable rural initiatives in other European countries. You can find more background information on our website <http://www.forum-synergies.eu/rubrique95.html>

Topics identified so far

The youth in rural Europe faces many serious challenges. The initial action of Forum Synergies to identify relevant issues related to youth occurred during the European Sustainable Development Gathering in Beaufort in 2014. Out of a workshop held at that occasion the following topics emerged:

1) **Networking:** How to motivate people to work on youth topic together/ with different stakeholders

Focus on: Agricultural cooperatives

Actions: To include youth managers and agricultural engineers in the cooperatives; -Creating networks of the cooperatives in the Europe to share experiences and improve markets

Resources: Rural development programs funds (in Macedonia)

Possibilities for provision of education and training to rural youth

FS to support with links on cooperatives topic on European level, facilitate programs and working groups on cooperatives linkages.

2) **Access to land and capital** as a key factor for young people to set up in rural areas

How? PLATFORM FOR INSPIRATION, INFORMATION, INTERACTION (documenting and sharing the successful stories; advocacy for newcomers; education about the importance for local organic and health food to all community members; motivation)

With whom? governmental organisations; private sector; NGOs; schools; successful farmers; NGOs local and wider

Resources: What we need: broadening the network; seed money; sharing experiences; guidance

What we offer: existing network across Europe; network of young sustainable farmers; supporting organizations; group of motivated young people

3) **Rural community and youth:** Preparation of areas for youth coming back; Youth as part of community

Focus: **Youth leaders.** (Youth understood as aged 23 and older)

Inspire: Share and exchange events of good examples or solutions or experiences in different countries related to the youth and youth leaders.

Give: Tools and practical suggestions about the position of youth in the communities

Exchanges: Looking at each region with helicopter perspective and the one that come should be involved in the development of the regions. Sharing and making real case studies.

Goal: Youth to be able to live, work and contribute to communities!!! Raise the number and community structures with young people and increase the companies owned by young people (not just agriculture)

Resources: The group indicated possibility to provide their local experiences and possibilities to exchange the ideas with the others in the group and the whole gathering.

The action will need support in structuring, networking and giving European dimensions to this idea



4) How to link education and rural areas:

The rural education should be different and adapted to the rural realities and needs apart from the vocational education nowadays.

It has to be close to the jobs in rural areas.

Decentralized schools and educations for rural areas, people and their needs.

“really understand what you are doing” Choice must be open, level of education equality should be different from the education in general - the new curriculums should be developed for rural education that is crucial for the rural needs: to learn and understand (biology and linked sciences, biochemistry, food, farming practices etc.)

Setting the scene

As the starting point of a series of workshops Forum Synergies organised together with the [Future Farmers Movement](#) a workshop in Dronten, NL. Forty one young people from 23 European Countries (including EU member states and neighbouring countries) participated in the event which was held in the Warmonderhof School Farm, situated in Dronten, Holland. Participants took the chance to go out and experience realities of youth in rural Holland, exchange with the local young entrepreneurs, local young farmers and community farms on the issues of organic production, cooperation, education and networking.

Goals

The main goals for the meeting are as follows:

- 1) Getting a better insight into the different realities young people have to face today in rural areas all over Europe.
- 2) Building upon the workshop held in Beaufortain 2014: get a clearer picture of the topics to be dealt with in the future
- 2) Commitments and next steps: get a clear picture on options for concrete next activities and potential actors.

Elements of the meeting

Location: Warmonderhof

Warmonderhof School Farm, situated in Dronten, Holland

Field trips - "Rural Reality Check"

This important part of the meeting is dedicated to getting to know the place and stakeholders, namely people who are living there and are involved in activities related to the main topic of the meeting.

Besides the experiencing of the local / regional realities participants focus on elements of sustainable rural development, on success stories and challenges

Topics addressed during the field trips:

Package A: Young people in nature & rural society

- Annette Harberink, Natuurderij Keizersrande - A starting young entrepreneur cooperating with the local nature organization St. Ijssellandschap. We will speak with farmer Annette Harberink and learn from her how she managed to start up this farm; <http://www.keizersrande.nl/>



- Aardehuizen, Ecol living distric De Aardehuizen - Mirjam Burema will give us a tour through the ecological living district of the Aardehuizen. At the Aardehuizen the participants joined and build their Earthship houses together. Earthships provide the residents with shelter, but also with smart and simple technology for water, electricity and food. The environmental impact during construction and living is extremely low. More information about the earthships can be found at <http://www.aardehuis.nl/en/>

Package B: Learning entrepreneurship

- Joost van Strien (farmer at Zonnegoed) offers a few hectares of his farm as learning ground for young agricultural entrepreneurs. Learn more about how Joost manages his land in partnership! We will also speak with Chris a young farmer on the land of Joost.
- LONK project - An inspiring new model where young people in the last phase of their studies from Warmonderhof get space to learn and practice entrepreneurial skills. Michael, Sune and Florian started producing and marketing their own spelt bread! We will speak with the supervisor Joost van Strien, as well as with the young entrepreneurs!

Package C: Young people and development

- Dronten Warmonderhof school farm (our workshop location) is a fast growing school for organic & biodynamic agriculture. Paul Fisher explains how he combines managing the arable farm at Warmonderhof with teaching and supervision of students; www.warmonderhof.nl
- We will visit Gaia and Maayke, former Warmonderhof students, who are currently managing a fruit orchard, Warmonderhof Boomgaard, on 12 km distance from the Warmonderhof.

Joint day: meeting ERASMUS

Simultaneous to the Forum Synergies - Future Farmers workshop a meeting of the ERASMUS + project on farm succession and new farmers is taking place. With regard to the potential of synergies between these two groups the joint day is bringing them together

Presentation of initiatives

Market of initiatives. During our "market of initiatives" we offer you the opportunity to share your project/ experience with other participants in a "market place". You will have a table at your disposal to put posters, leaflet etc. and to present your initiative. Your table will have visitors. Of course you can also do a presentation on your computer but please be prepared to do it on a small table without screening equipment.

We will organise 6 rounds: There will be 5-6 presentations at the same time, so visitors are free to choose where they want to go. After approx. 20-25 min. there will be a change and visitors can choose another table. So within one round you will be asked to repeat your presentation twice. We so create the atmosphere of a fair or a "market place". We open the space for a very lively discussion giving the chance for exchange of experiences in small groups.

List of 16 presentation given during the Market of Initiatives:

1. **Common soil**
Hannah Steenbergen, UK
2. **Estonian young farmers' association, YouthAgSummit, "Terra Madre - We feed the planet!" and IAAS**
Henriette Keuffel, EE
3. **Farm Experience Internship (FEI)**
Elske Hageraats, NL



4. **Food processing on farms in Slovakia**
Milos Homola, SK
5. **FRCivam Bretagne**
Hélène Roisille, FR
6. **Future Farmers Movement, Toekomstboeren and La ferma**
Monica Stanica, BE
7. **Help and Travel**
Tymur Pliushch, UKR
8. **Höfe gründen und bewahren**
Dorothea Pille, DE
9. **InterAfocg**
Mathilde Leriche, FR
10. **InTeRCeR**
Iztok Erjavec, SL
11. **Junge Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft (jAbL)**
Romy Horn, DE
12. **Landwijzer vzw**
Ineke Docx, BE
13. **Latvian Rural Forum**
Anita Selicka, LV
14. **Netzwerk Existenzgründung in der Landwirtschaft (NEL)**
Thomas Huemer, AT
15. **Rural Youth Europe**
Lukas Helfenstein, CH
16. **United Nations Development Programme**
Marijana Muhic, CR

Plenary. List of presentations given in plenary:

PREPARE - Partnership for Rural Europe <http://www.preparenetwork.org/>

Hannes Lorenzen, member of the board, DE

Forum Synergies - Linking Sustainable Practices throughout Europe <http://www.forum-synergies.eu/>

Liljana Tanevska, member of the board, MK

Youth Food Movement www.youthfoodmovement.nl

Micha Lubbers, chairman of the board, NL

Plenary sessions and working groups

Plenary sessions are dedicated to the presentation of initiatives respectively the main findings developed in the working groups.



Moderation tools and techniques

Inspiring elements like so called energizers (yoga, group games) or the land art session. These elements help to keep the energy high and to tackle the topic from a more intuitive approach. Story telling

International buffet.

All participants are invited to bring special food or drinks typical for the place they come from. During the "international buffet" these specialties are personally presented by the participants and through the stories behind give a further insight into different European realities.

Programme structure

Thursday, 22. 10.2015: Arrivals, registration of participants, welcome session

18.00 - 19.00 Tour at the Warmonderhof (optional for people that are early)

19:00 - 20:00 Welcome! by Forum Synergies and Future Farmers Movement

20:00 - 21:30 Dinner

21:30 - 22:00 Storyteller

Friday, 23.10.2015: Joint day! Discovering the place/ Field trips/ Market of initiatives

08:00 - 09:30 Breakfast

09:30 - 09:45 Energizer

09:45 - 10:00 Short introduction to the day

10:00 - 10:30 Inspiring stories of young entrepreneurs

10:30 - 12:30 Market of initiatives

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

13:30 - 18.30 Reality Check (Field visits) - field experiences including discussion with local young people. The visits will show the "success story", tackle problems and needs related to rural youth and young farmers.

18:45 - 20:15 Dinner

20:15 - 20:30 Energizer

20:30 - 21:30 Report of inspiration from the groups

21:30 - 00:00 Campfire

Saturday, 24.10.2015: Challenges and opportunities for Rural Youth and Young farmers in Europe

08:00 - 09:30 Breakfast

09:30 - 09:45 Energizer

09:45 - 11:30 Plenary session

11:30 - 12:30 Working in Groups

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

13:30 - 15:30 Working in groups - continued + Preparation of reports from Working groups

15:30 - 17:00 Creating Land-Art



17:00 - 17:35 Energizer
17:35 - 18:30 Plenary
18:30 - 19:30 Cool initiatives and organizations
19:30 - 00:00 Cultural dinner (songs, instruments, dances, music, fun)

Sunday, 25.10.2016: "We create our rural future"

08:00 - 09:30 Breakfast
10:00 - 11:00 PUT ACTIONS IN REALITY! Riding on the roads of our map.
11:00 - 12:00 Presentation of conclusions
12:00 - 13:00 Lunch

13:00 Departures
13.00 - 14.00 Tour at the Warmonderhof

Products

Topics for the future

Inspired by the visits and as an output of an open space session the participants chose five main topics to work on in the future. According to these topics five working groups were established in order to:

- develop ideas,
- define the needs to put activities into action
- think of options for cooperations

European future farmers movement, integrating all young farmers initiatives around Europe;

European seeds initiative and future Forum Synergies SEED gathering in Portugal focused on seeds policies and their development, practices for preservation of seeds, policies of the seed traders and farmers and sharing of local initiatives and practices with seeds.

Improving approach to rural development in Europe - with specifics to Eastern European countries and its neighbours, by identifying the problems of youth in rural areas to return including education and business start-up problems to development of hubs and decentralised local support to young people who like to live and work in rural areas;

Networking actions on Land concession, including promotion and exchange of various practices, legal frameworks and taxation issues related to land concession around Europe;

New ways, methodologies and concepts for establishment of individual and community farms which will serve communities. The working group have developed some details on working methods, residences within the farms, decision making structures, market outreach etc.

European Rural Parliament - Manifesto

The 2nd European Rural Parliament will be held from 4-6 November 2015 in Schärding, AT. As a contribution the following text was elaborated as an output of this meeting and will feed into the overall manifesto:

Many young people are ready to stay 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. We see the need to innovate while building upon traditions and good practices. But we need effective



education systems, vocational training, access to land, housing, credit and cultural activity, and specific support to young farmers and entrepreneurs. We call on governments and civil society to focus resources on this crucial issue of securing the energy of youth and promoting intergenerational cooperation for the sustainable future of Europe's rural areas