

Rural

Rural
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Voices

The Rural Youth Europe Magazine

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Rural Youth Europe

Rural Youth Europe (RYEurope) is a European non-governmental organisation for rural youth. Established in 1957, it is an umbrella for youth organisations working to promote and activate young people in the countryside. It provides international training possibilities and works as an intermediary between national organisations and youth organisations and public institutions at the European level. Rural Youth Europe is a member-led organisation: democratically constituted, the organisation is led by young people for young people.

Rural Youth Europe unites 21 member organisations across 18 European countries. The membership base is over 500,000 young people who either live in rural areas or have an interest in rural life.

If your organisation is interested to join Rural Youth Europe or you would like more information about our events, please contact office@ruralyoutheurope.com or check our website www.ruralyoutheurope.com

Rural Voices

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SECRETARY GENERAL: Pia Nurmio-Perälä

RESPONSIBLE EDITORS: Mikko Väitalo, Otto Kronqvist

ADDRESS: Karjalankatu 2A, 00520 Helsinki, Finland

PHONE: + 358 45 234 5629

E-MAIL: office@ruralyoutheurope.com

WEBSITE: www.ruralyoutheurope.com

CONCEPT & LAYOUT: Júlia Hentz

PHOTO-CREDITS: Rural Youth Europe, its members and participants of events

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Time to sum it up

The year 2014 will soon come to an end and so it's time to sum it up.

During this year many changes took place at Rural Youth Europe. A new board is elected every year, of course, but this year we also welcomed a new media and communications coordinator, Otto Kronqvist, to our team. We also launched a new website and magazine to improve our communication to our members and our member organisations.

One of the highlights of my year was the

Global 4H summit in Korea. I met lovely people and made many new friends. Friendships, in my opinion, are the best youth organisations can offer. Read a report from the summit on page 16.

I would like to thank all the volunteers, prep team members, board and participants for their effort for Rural Youth Europe activities. Without their time we would not be able to make these happen.

I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

*Mikko Väitalo
Board member
Group 3*



Our website is also mobile friendly - visit it now by scanning your mobile phone over this QR code!



Youth
in Action

Wales YFC hosted a new Rural Affairs Conference discussing 'Excellence and Innovation to inspire our future' and speakers included Michael Eavis, host of Glastonbury music festival!



60 years Rural Youth Austria:

Hundreds of young participants, guests of honour and friends of Rural Youth Austria (RYA) were celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the organisation on the 17th of October in Vienna.

Nowadays, RYA has more than 90 000 members and it is the biggest youth organisation of Austria. Since it was founded 60 years ago, the Landjugend has always been one of the most important motors for an active society within rural areas.

Michael Hell, the National Chairman and Elisabeth Gneissl, the National Chairlady, are sending the warmest greetings to all members of Rural Youth Europe.



Youth with future makes

Going on in Europe

12th of October: The day of the Swiss rural youth at OLMA

Every year in October the Swiss fair for agriculture and food (OLMA) takes place in St. Gallen, a city in the north east of Switzerland. It's the most popular and biggest fair in our country. This year it hosted some 380 000 visitors in 10 days. A visitor can see more than 620 companies and institutions in eight halls. A lot of special shows and events are presented in the arena. And also animals!



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The Swiss rural youth is also represented at OLMA. The first Sunday is always the official day of rural youth. A lot of our members came to St. Gallen. In the morning there was a public forum with the topic of 'Energy'. An expert told us about the facts and possibilities for a farmer to also be an energy producer. Not everyone agreed with the expert so there was a little friendly discussion. At the end of this part all attendees of the forum were invited for a cup of coffee and a piece of "Zopf", a kind of bread typical in Switzerland.

The most exciting event, the game show "Bet, that...", was held in the big arena at lunchtime. It was an exciting competition and a lot of fun! This year there were four groups fighting for the title of "King of the competition". There were a lot of crazy shows and in the end the audience decided which group was the best.

In the afternoon fair guests enjoyed dancing, talking and drinking in the "Moststube", one of the 14 restaurants. The restaurant changed to a party hall with live music and the celebrations continued until late at night.

Corinne Herzog
Swiss rural youth

Our Chairman Lukas Helfenstein participated in European Youth Forum's General Assembly 20-22 November in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

The new Rural Youth Europe Board gathered for the first time in Helsinki, Finland, 29-30 November. Future and past events, communication strategies and promotional material were on the agenda.



Youth Employment Event in Rome

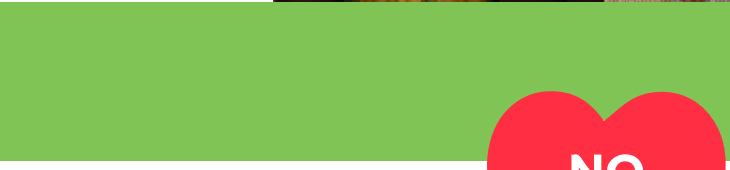
Gareth Laking from the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs in England participated in a Youth Employment Event in Rome, where he was representing the views of Rural Youth Europe.

The event, which was organised by the European Youth Forum and the Italian National Youth Council, took place between 12-14 November 2014 as a follow-up to the Summit held on youth employment in Paris in November 2013.

The Youth Employment Event was a chance to ensure that young peoples' voices are heard and that the issue of youth employment, which is affecting millions of young people across Europe, remains high on the political agenda and that European governments and the European Union act effectively to address this.

The conference focused on two themes: pure employment measures to tackle youth unemployment, and macro-economic policies to ensure the impact of the crisis on youth is adequately addressed.

history!



Rural Youth Europe is supporting the No Hate Speech Movement



The No Hate Speech Movement is a youth campaign of the Council of Europe, which aims to reduce hate speech and combat racism and discrimination in their online expression. Rural Youth Europe encourages its member organisations to join in to raise the awareness of hate speech and to support and show solidarity to people and groups targeted by hate speech online. You can read more about the campaign at www.nohatespeechmovement.org

Macra na Feirme's new service for connecting farmers



Macra na Feirme's new Land Mobility Service has exceeded all expectations for its first year of operation. This pilot project brings young farmers into contact with older land owners who are willing to work in collaboration and deliver a better financial reward for both parties. Fifty three collaborative arrangements have been finalised and there are already another 234 clients looking to establish new arrangements in the second year.



Muriteigen

Per Muriteigen
18 years old
Muriteigen,
Sør Fron, Norway

Family Farming

1. How is the work at the farm divided among your family members?

2. How much land and how many animals do you have at the farm? What are you producing?

3. Why do you want to be a farmer?

4. What is special about your farm?

5. What are the challenges of being a farmer?

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1. My father is mainly responsible for running the farm, but my mother, me and my three siblings all pitch in when he needs our help with something.
2. Our farm consists of about 150 ha of productive soil that we harvest. In addition to this we have a few smaller fields that we don't harvest, but where the sheep graze. We have about 250 sheep in total, and we produce mutton and wool.
3. I want to be a farmer because I enjoy working with animals and like working with practical things, rather than theoretical. I also think that agriculture is very interesting.
4. Our farm is a pretty ordinary Norwegian farm, nothing that special about it.
5. Both my parents have full-time jobs in addition to the farm, which is pretty common in Norway. All of my siblings, including me, go to school every day, so we are a little short on time sometimes. It works well if we all cooperate.
6. It's hard for us, as a small producer, to keep up with the prices that they can afford on the big, industrialised farms in Europe.
7. I wish to expand the production on the farm enough to be able to live off the farm, without having to have a second job.
8. To keep working hard, because farmers have the most important job in the world!

9. A few weeks ago, my father and I were gathering some of our sheep from one of our fields, and one of the lambs got away. We chased him for some time, and then he jumped into the river that flows past the field. He managed to cross the river, despite the strong stream, and made his way to a little island in the middle of the river. The story ended with me and my father having to pick him up with a boat!



Daniel Rüttimann

28 years old
Enikerhof,
Zug, Switzerland

www.enikerhof.ch

4 young farmers get interviewed...

6. How does the European legislation and international competition affect your farm?

7. How are you planning to develop your farm in the future?

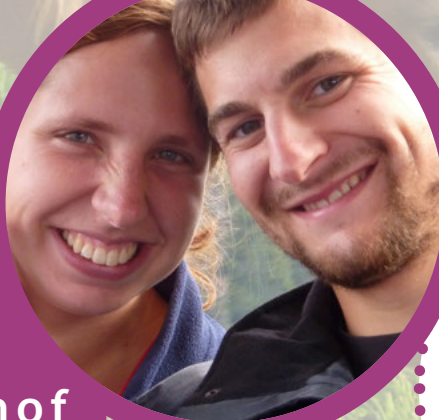
8. Any advices for young farmers?

9. Is there any special moment or event from the farm that you'd like to share with our readers?

1. My name is Daniel Rüttimann, I'm 28 years old and in charge of managing the farm. My parents are also still active and helping me on the farm. While my mom produces several homemade products, such as jam and bread, my dad is mainly supporting with the work in the barn and milking the cows. I also go to different weekly and monthly markets together with my dad to sell our products. My grandparents also still live on the farm and help us out with small tasks during busy times. Furthermore we have two employees and also some seasonal workers for the busy time over the summer.
2. We farm on 20 hectares and have 30 milking cows. On two hectares we have an orchard where we grow apples and beside that we have 250 cherry and other trees. We produce our own cheese, make apple juices, vinegar, syrups, dried apple rings, lot of different jams and chutneys. We also make our own bread and many other homemade products, which we sell in our farm shops or on different markets.
3. I like to be my own boss and enjoy the freedom and flexibility I have as a farmer. Also working in nature with animals is a great joy for me.
4. We have an event and party room in the farm which we rent out to groups. Every year at the Swiss national day on the 1st of August, we run a farmer brunch where over 600 people come to enjoy our products.
5. To promote our own products, so that we can sell them with a fair price and earn enough money to

make a living. The unstable and typically low milk price makes the situation difficult for all farmers. As I live close to an urban area, I'm also confronted with the problem of losing land for new roads due to the fast growing population.

6. Switzerland is adapting a lot of regulations from the EU. These regulations don't really fit the agricultural sector of Switzerland. In Switzerland we also have a lot stricter regulations for animal welfare than in other European countries. Foreign products with lower quality and cheap production costs flood the Swiss market and compete with the local products. However, I'm not that much affected by this, since I sell most of the products directly to the consumers.
7. In the future I plan to keep the farm as it is and to use the resources and infrastructure more effectively. I want to continuously expand the production and marketing of our specialities, as this helps to stay independent of the big players.
8. Don't just accept all the requirements and obligations of the authorities. Fight for your rights and needs. Don't give in, there's always a way for you to keep the farm.



Hauffäckerhof

Stefan König

26 years old

Hauffäckerhof

Thurgau, Switzerland

1. At the beginning of this year, I took over the farm from my grandfather. I grew up on this farm, but never had in mind to become a farmer. For several years I attended the ACRES conferences in the USA, where I learned about the other side of agriculture. I learned that farms don't have to always be larger and bigger, there are also other possibilities. Today I live at the farm with my girlfriend Martina. Most of the work we handle together, but we have family members and neighbours who can help out, if help is needed.
2. Our organic farm only has about 12 ha of land, but we produce many different things. We have a lot of different kinds of berries, mainly raspberries and this year we planted a half hectare of green asparagus. We produce wheat, triticale and soybeans on four hectares. There is also about 10 sheep and 8 cows living on our farm. Our passion is our cattle and that's why we'd like to extend our cowherd in the coming years. We have about 80 tall trees, most of them apple trees, but there's also some pears, cherries and plums. We also have three hectares of forest, where we work during the winter. We need the wood for heating and for building. When I have time, I also make furniture.
3. It's great to be in the nature and to work with animals. We can produce our own food and we know where it comes from, how it grows and what it consists of. In agriculture there is so much to learn and understand, there are so many topics. It never gets boring and every day is completely different.
4. Our farm is very versatile, so the risks don't depend on one product alone. You might think there's not much work on our small farm, but there really is! We don't have big machines, so a lot of the work has to be done by hand. We don't have to rely on one large customer, because we already sell a lot of our products to private people. With persuasion we're farming organically, maybe one day even biodynamically.
5. You need a great knowledge to be a good farmer. There're so many rules and legislations from the politicians that you spend almost more time on paperwork, than actually doing farming. They say that to save costs, farmers have to rationalize. But in our opinion it's not the best way, because the quality of the product falls down.
6. The international legislation doesn't directly affect our farm. But this could change in the future. In Switzerland our food is more expensive than in other countries. But we also have higher costs for production, as well as stricter animal welfare standards to follow. If we import food, our prices will fall down and that will influence many farmers. It's hard to understand why people prefer to buy an apple from the other end of the world, when they could have the same apple from the neighbour's garden. Sure, the price is a little more expensive, but it's definitely more fresh.
7. We try to sell all products to private people, with no intermediate trade. Maybe we can expand our farm, so that more people could work here. Our farm wants to welcome everyone. We like to see how our family and later our children, grow up on this farm.
8. Read, listen and think! Create your own experiences. There are so many opinions on agriculture, you have to find out, which one fits you. Try to get to the bottom of everything you don't understand until it all makes sense. Have the courage to take an unusual way, to try something new.



Glas pant Farm



Llion Davies
Glas pant Farm,
Ceredigion, West Wales



1. My family makes up the farm team with some part-time help from a neighbour. I am 28 years old and I'm in charge of milking the cows in the morning and my father does them in the afternoon. Our neighbour milks for us three times a week and this gives us some breathing space to do other jobs. My mother does the calf rearing and the paperwork, plus provide the catering, which is very important! I recently got married to our farm vet and now she helps out a bit too!
2. We have 180 dairy cows producing milk for a local cheese company. They are British Friesian cross Holstein breeding and suit our farm well. We rear our own replacement cows and other surplus offspring are reared for beef to supply a UK supermarket. We have 400 animals in total. The farm is 260 acres (105 hectares) and we buy in forage from another 40 acres (16 hectares).
3. I am the only son in the family so there was no competition for me to enter the business! I've been following my Dad around all my life, so I've grown up with it and I really enjoy it! I studied Agricultural Engineering at university, and then worked for JCB for a little while, but was keen to come home when my grandfather began stepping back from the family business. My time away actually provided me with a very useful set of skills that are now of benefit to the farm, such as management skills, and 'lean' techniques that help us be efficient. I've done lots of courses since I've been back and have been more involved with my local young farmers clubs which has helped me to develop my skills further.
4. This farm grows really good grass - we are only two miles from the sea so catch the warmth from the jet stream. In a mild winter the grass will grow all year round and this is great because it is the cheapest quality feed for our cows.
5. It is long hours: my day starts at 5am and I don't finish until 7pm, 7 days a week! At busy times the days can be even longer. It is difficult to maintain any kind of social life as I'm usually falling asleep by 9pm! However, I still enjoy it and at least I am my own boss.
6. We're currently being affected by the Russian trade bans and the fall in demand from China for UK dairy products. The abolishment of the European milk quotas in 2015 is also a topic of concern. Even though we supply to a local cheese company these things will still affect the price we get paid for our milk.
7. I want to continue streamlining the business to make things easier. There are many farmers in the area who are expanding their dairy farms in a big way and keeping their cows inside all year round. Expansion is not really an option for us and instead I want to optimise our systems and keep getting better at converting grass into milk.
8. Look carefully at your opportunities. Ask yourself: what are my farm's strengths? If you don't have your own farm then share farming is providing some really good opportunities to enter the industry. Don't be afraid to go and work for someone else for a while, either in the same industry or another one. You could also travel for a while. Going away and coming back with new skills is really valuable.
9. I'm very proud of my family history on this farm. My grandmother was the first to live in this farmhouse but my family have farmed the land since the 1800s!

Day 1

Participants arrived throughout the day. After the official registration process, it was time for introductions and ice-breaking games. Everyone's favourite was the one where everyone had to invent an animal that starts with the same letter as their name. We then had to repeat at least five peoples' names and animals. Playing the game really helped everyone to memorise the names of their new friends!



Autumn Seminar: Food for thought and solutions for the future



Day 2

Everyone was excited about the presentation videos the participants had made, which also included a peek into their fridges. It was like a small short film festival! Afterwards it was time for some team-building, which meant developing communication skills through solving challenging tasks in groups.

Day 3

The morning session included interesting talks on the future of food production. Each group brainstormed with a concept of an ideal farm in the future. The results included skyscrapers with a closed water system, farms with solar panels on their roofs and hydroponic horticulture farms. The participants also learned about the future of the planet from the perspective of limited natural resources and climate change.

The afternoon session included a workshop on food waste with Kristian Karnov, an environmental engineering student, and Sören Pihl, a waste management professional.



Rural Youth Europe's Autumn seminar was organised between 1st and 8th of November. 24 participants from 12 countries spent a week in Ribe, Denmark to discuss food production and create new solutions for the future. The week was full of exciting workshops and interesting excursions to farms and food production sites in the beautiful Danish countryside. The seminar was all about learning while doing and, of course, having fun at the same time.





Day 4

The participants spent a productive and interesting day in the countryside, getting to know local food producers. First the participants went for an excursion to Alex Månsson's vegetable farm, which produces 90% of the organic iceberg lettuce in Denmark and heaps of organic onions! The participants learned about horticulture and about maintaining a big vegetable business. After Månsson's farm the programme led the participants to Øselund dairy goats, where they had the chance to learn about organic goat farming and taste the award-winning cheese and goat milk.

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Day 5

The 5th day started with a session on climate change, where the participants calculated their own carbon footprint. After the workshop it was time to visit the historical town of Ribe and join for a guided tour. In the evening the seminar participants and prep team cooked a meal that had as low a carbon footprint as possible.

Day 6

In the morning the bus drove the participants to a farm, which hosts some 200 free range pigs. The group strolled in the fields and learned that the pigs live in their huts in the field throughout the year. In the afternoon the participants visited the most modern slaughterhouse in Europe, owned by the Danish Crown meat processing company.



Day 7

On the last day the participants worked in small groups to develop a new product based on the insights they had gained during the week. In the afternoon the teams presented their concept to an imaginary group of supermarket buyers.



Day 8

In the morning it was time for farewells. E-mail addresses and hugs were exchanged as the participants headed back to their home countries.

A lot of new friendships were formed and all the participants took new insights back home. Hopefully as many as possible will meet next year in the Autumn Seminar in Slovenia!





What did we learn at the Autumn seminar?

It was a pleasure to spend a week in the Danish countryside, learning about various food production systems. The idea of the Autumn Seminar was to show us participants the food production process “from field to fork”, so that we’d have the chance to learn from all parts of the process.

The theme of sustainability was also present in all of the activities and workshops. Calculating our own carbon footprint or reflecting the problems of food waste gave valuable insights on the problems facing our planet in the future.

When people from 12 countries and various different cultures come together, there’s always a lively exchange of different views and opinions. So, perhaps most importantly, we learned from each other!

- Otto from Finland



Supported by:



Erasmus+

SAYFC hosted a conference

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers hosted its first Agricultural and Rural Affairs Conference this November. The theme “Precision in Practice” allowed members to get closer to the industry through farm visits, presentations and networking opportunities.

Point of Light volunteering award to NFYFC’s Claire Worden

NFYFC’s Claire Worden has been recognised by the Prime Minister David Cameron for her work in founding the Rural+ campaign. Claire, who launched the campaign earlier in 2014, has been awarded a Point of Light volunteering award for her efforts in combating rural isolation. “Claire took an enormously brave step of using her own harrowing experiences to set up Rural+ and support young people feeling isolated in rural areas.”, Mr Cameron said.

Member greetings



Finnish 4H raises money for charity

Club members of the Finnish 4H baked and sold “Happy Red Nose Muffins” to raise money for charity on the Red Nose Day (Nenäpäivä) fundraising event.

Food School is Joy for Food

Ruokakoulu Food School, is a day camp for children aged 8 to 12. Every day the kids prepare breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for themselves. Between baking and cooking they play, exercise and learn about healthy nutrition and where the food comes from. Originally the Food School was developed by the Danish 4H. In Finland it’s organised in collaboration with The Finnish 4H Federation and Finlands Svenska 4H. Last summer there was altogether 30 Food Schools organised in Finland.



County Down in Northern Ireland gathered a sell-out crowd of 700 friends and family for the first Strictly Young Farmers dancing extravaganza! Geoff Thompson,

known to many in Rural Youth Europe, and his partner Linzi Stewart fought off opposition from ten other couples to take first prize. It was an evening of sparkle, dancing and laughter and raised money for the Young Farmers’ Clubs of Ulster.



Building Global 4H

The First Global 4H Network Summit was held 26 October - 2 November in Seoul, Korea. The summit gathered around 150 persons from over 50 countries, out of which two thirds were 4H representatives and one third representing other rural organisations or people with a will to establish 4H in their country. The summit aimed to share good practice, strengthen the 4H spirit, inspire growth of 4H and formally establish the Global 4H Network. The event offered excellent conditions for rural networking, many good workshops, contact with the local culture and spectacular traditional and modern Korean entertainment.



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The following song was performed on stage in nine languages.

(Music: I'm Yours by Jason Mraz)
"We are the Global 4H Network
We have the young people power
Listen to youth voice
We make the best better"

European 4H organisations from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia and Latvia were represented, as well as Rural Youth organisations from Austria and Germany, and Rural Youth Europe. It was decided that a separate European 4H network will coordinate European actions in the Global 4H Network, but it is likely that European Rural Youth and Young Farmer's organisations can take part also in future global 4H events as their model is very similar to 4H. A board of ten members, two from each region in the 4H world, was elected to lead the Global 4H Network. Finnish 4H's Päivi Haapasalo became Vice-Chair of this board and Erik Johansson from Swedish 4H is the second



European board member. The Chairperson of the board is Shannon Benner from Canada.

European youth activities are usually held for young people and by young people. Youth initiated and youth led processes are the main criterias for receiving grants for European youth activities for example from the European Commission and Council of Europe. In Europe the roles of the different generations might vary, but young, middle age and elderly adults all get similar appreciation for achievements in the work and civil life. The reality is different in other parts of the world. The Global 4H summit showed that in many cultures young people

The next Global 4H summit will be held in Canada in 2017!

The full youth speech and song lyrics in all nine languages can be found at www.ruralityoutheurope.com under “Past events”



has little or no influence on activities prepared for them. It is therefore important in global 4H cooperation to understand the cultural differences and aim for intergenerational dialogue. At this summit the young people were given the microphone only a few times along the week, which indicates that the road is long to equal partnerships between generations. This issue was addressed in the youth speech:

“At this summit you talked a lot about youth, but have you worked enough together with the youth? Who knows challenges facing youth better than the youth themselves? At the Global 4-H Network Summit 12% of the delegates were youth participants. Today more than 50% of the world’s population is under 30. Around the world adults are entering into equal partnerships with youth to change the world for the better and empowering youth to be the agents of change.

Do we have a dream? No we have the demand and the right that we as young people work together as equal partners in this Global 4H Network.”

Even if true youth involvement was lacking, this summit was a fantastic opportunity for new learning and networking. It was very valuable to get familiar with rural life on other continents

and the Global 4H Network is definitely needed to proceed with global cooperation. The Korean 4H, the National 4H Council and the organising committee made a tremendous job in making the summit happen and succeed so well. Thank you for this opportunity!

The most common 4H slogan in Europe is “Learning by doing” and it is used worldwide as well. Another common 4H slogan is “We make the best better”. This slogan was part of both the song and the speech the young people performed at the end of the summit. The speech brought it up like this: “What does it mean to make the best better? It means to take the very best of every generation and create responsible citizens capable of taking on the challenges of the world. Taking the best of every generation and combining them in equal partnerships to create the best world for the future.”



Leadership workshop for rural youth coming next summer!

The workshop is organised in Herrsching, Germany between 12 - 25 August 2015 by the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. The participants will

be developing their own, new strategies and specific concepts for sustainable youth work in rural areas. Read more: www.international-herrschingseminar.de

Coming up



Participate in Rural Youth Project of the Year competition, win two places in Rally 2015!

The target group for the competition are the members of Rural Youth Europe, with the idea to give youth an opportunity, to encourage the exchange of project ideas, increase the knowledge of each other's activities, and gaining inspiration for new projects. The prize is a Youth Trophy and participation of two winning team members to the European Rally! Read more from our website!

SAYFC's exchange to Scotland

The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC) is offering the possibility for an exchange to Scotland for two delegates in spring 2015. Scotland's rich and diverse culture can give delegates a real insight to rural and agricultural life in the country as they will be staying with rural families throughout their stay. Read more from our website!



RURAL YOUTH EUROPE'S EVENTS:

The general theme of the Rural Youth Europe activities in 2015 is young people's transfer to work life. At each of the activities we will work on the theme from different perspectives.



RURAL
JUNIOR
EVENT
2015

Easter time, Sweden

The Swedish 4H will host a 4-day long training, which focuses on leadership competences and introduction to work life for young people aged 14-17. It will be held at Easter time in Sweden. Check the "Future Events" section at our webpage for latest updates about this event.

Calendar

1-8 August 2015 in in Upper Austria region

Work Hand in Hand - Create Your Land

The Rally 2015 will be held at the Agrarian Educational Institution in Upper Austria. It will be about rural cooperation for a vivid countryside.



EUROPEAN
RALLY 2015



STUDY
SESSION
2015

Summer 2015 in Strasbourg, France

Unveiling Rural Realities, Unlocking Youth Potential

This study session is about rural identity and skills and how to make the most of it on the labour market and businesses.

7-14 November 2015, Parlekija region, Slovenia

Brand Me

At this seminar participants will learn how to promote themselves to get good employment possibilities or to market their own businesses or organisations.



AUTUMN
SEMINAR
2015



EUROPEAN
RALLY 2016
will be held in
Northern
Ireland



AUTUMN
SEMINAR 2016
will be held in
Norway



EUROPEAN
RALLY 2017
will be held in
Latvia

Partners' Events

NORDIC 4H CAMP will be held in *July 2015 in Nurmes, Finland.*

Herrsching workshop will be organised on *12-25 August 2015 in Herrsching, Germany*