



Bringing Organisations & Network Development  
to higher levels in the Farming sector in Europe  
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# YOUTH FORUM

## a vision for the future



THE FUTURE OF EUROPE'S **FOODS & LANDSCAPES**





Bringing Organisations & Network Development  
to higher levels in the Farming sector in Europe

The vision  
of the new generation  
of farmers for the future  
of farming in Europe



# YOUTH FORUM



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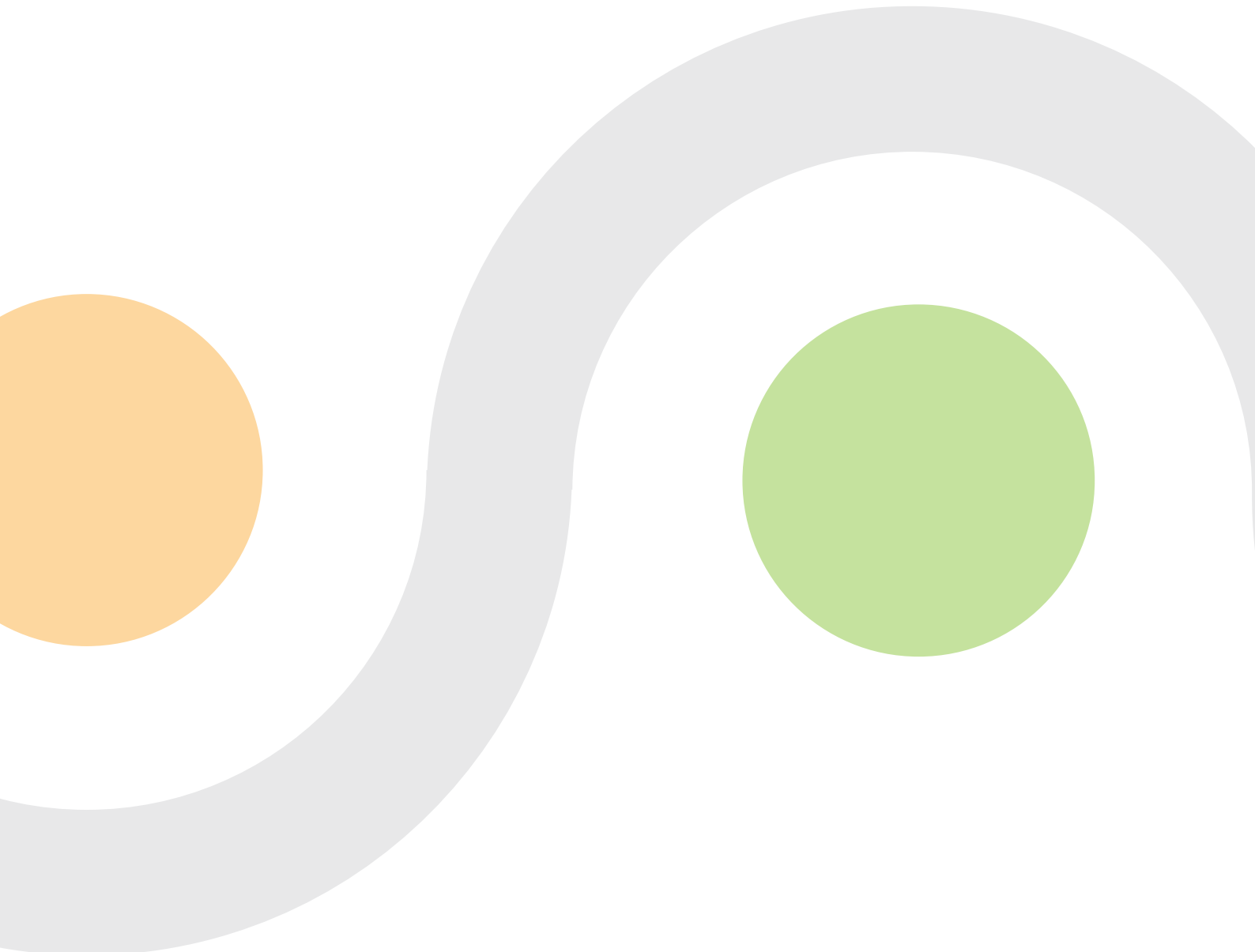
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## Executive Summary

In order to address the root causes that are aggravating the multiple social, economic, health and climate crises that our society is facing due to unsustainable, unjust and unhealthy farming and food systems, the voice of young farmers needs to be put forward in the process of shaping public policies. In order to do this, the space of articulation of the new generation of people working in rural areas needs to be promoted, protected and guaranteed. This publication showcases the Youth Forum “Young Farmers for the Future”, an activity organized under the BOND project (Bringing Organisations and Network Development to higher levels in the Farming Sector in Europe) involving 34 young farmers (half female/half male) under 34 years old from 34 European countries. The publication presents the process of organizing a complex space of dialogue and sharing of experiences between young farmers, leading to the elaboration of a joint Declaration for the Future of Farming in our region. The methodology of work was adapted to the Covid-19 crisis conditions and used participatory methods, support from experts in various fields related to markets, human rights, public policies and innovation and also key policy instruments, while it remained focused on the youth experience from the ground. The publication aims to help community organizers from the ground and also decision-makers to create similar spaces that would enable young farmers at various levels to express their vision and public policies recommendations. In that sense this publication offers an insight on the process of organization of the Youth Forum, presenting both the difficulties and the solutions identified along the way.



# Introduction



## Introduction

The BOND Project (Bringing Organisations and Network Development to higher levels in the Farming Sector in Europe) organized between July and September 2020 a Youth Forum entitled “Young Farmers for the Future” which actively involved 34 young farmers (half female/half male) under 34 years old from 34 European countries.

The Forum was organized by the Romanian partner, Eco Ruralis - a national peasant association. Initially planned as a physical event in Transylvania region, the Forum adapted to the changing and challenging conditions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 crisis had a dramatic impact on the rural area across Europe and was itself a very serious obstacle to overcome both the technical issue (lack of good connectivity in the rural area) and unforeseen emergencies that occurred in the personal life of the young farmers. This new context has obliged the organizer to review all the participatory methodology and to keep, anyhow, the Forum as an opportunity to create new links and networks. Therefore, the Forum was carefully planned through online conferencing channels, in different steps, taking into account the different time zones and the necessary time needed for preparation and scheduling.

The necessity to organize the Forum on line has allowed the project to test a new methodology of active participation by all the attendants. This was fundamental as we think that bonding relations between the youth is key for the future and the Forum has won this challenge also with the support of various means of communication, including social media.

### The Forum had the following OBJECTIVES:

1. To make the **voice of young farmers in Europe visible** to decision makers and all relevant actors.

Young farmers are the future of farming in Europe, but at the same time it seems difficult or impossible to hear their needs, their vision, and their solutions, while they are facing the failed attempts of the public and private sector to fix the problems in the middle of an aggravating crisis. The fresh perspective of the young generation is precious and needed, and cannot continue to be only used as a slogan, it needs to be transformed into action.


2. To facilitate the **exchange between young farmers**.

Horizontal exchange between farmers is a clear need expressed in all the occasions by the young people who participated in this project and beyond. The youth needs and wants to work together and they are looking to new model of collective work asking for clear policy support in that sense. The improvement of the capacity of sharing experience is a must and is certainly part of BOND project priorities. In that sense the Forum had built on the experience of the other activities that have been run in the project.

3. To offer **tools for the young farmers** to further develop their space of articulation.

The Youth Forum offered the possibility for participants to take on active roles in the development of the thematic areas, in all aspects of the elaboration of the final outcome and also in the promotion of their message towards the decision makers and other relevant actors. The Forum also created links with existing international platforms where the young farmers can engage beyond the BOND project.

The Forum was an occasion for this new generation of farmers to share visions, express needs and aspirations, and provide fresh insights that are translated into policy recommendations and solutions to policymakers throughout Europe that are well spelled out in the Forum Declaration. This platform will continue to harvest new ideas on the future of farming and bring forward concrete solutions for collective action in agriculture.

The image features a solid teal background. In the center, there is a large orange circle. Inside this circle, the text "Youth Forum for the Future Declaration" is written in a white, sans-serif font, centered and arranged in four lines.

Youth Forum  
for the Future  
Declaration

## II. Youth Forum for the Future Declaration

Eco Ruralis together with the BOND project partners are proud to have organized, facilitated and promoted the “Youth Forum Young Farmers for the Future” and the quality of the Forum Declaration show the richness of the dialogue between this group of diverse and extremely committed young farmers that well represented the European young farmers.



### Young Farmers for the Future Online Forum Joint Declaration

*In these extraordinary times, young farmers are more important than ever. Our voice is crucial, and we are not only working hard to build our future and become the leaders of tomorrow, we are also taking charge of leadership today. This Declaration is a tool to inspire anyone involved in food and agriculture public policy processes. It provides fresh insights from young farmers' day-to-day realities, and recommendations and solutions for European policymakers.*

**We are young farmers from across Europe. Every day we challenge the problematic food and agricultural political framework that claims to support us, but in reality increasingly limits our basic rights.**

The revival of European food systems cannot be achieved without the full participation of youth and respect of our fundamental rights. This is not only a matter of financial resources. Young people also struggle to be included across a wide breadth of and in all levels of agricultural policy.

This declaration calls upon society as a whole to build a sustainable food system in which we, as main actors, wish to play a central role. We have and can offer much more and we demand that the scope of our participation in the process not be limited to that of mere technology implementer – a simple tool of a food supply chain – while our position as farmers becomes increasingly marginal.

There is no future for sustainable food systems without farmers, and there may be no farmers to speak of if young farmers are not allowed to work and develop. As young farmers of Europe, all we are offered are empty policies that declare our important role in the future of agriculture on paper only, and deny the reality of its unfriendly political framework in our daily practices.

But, as young farmers, we are also hopeful. We want to be masters of our own future, of our capacity to produce and fulfil our part as a central component of society. We will guarantee the right to food for all without harming nature, and by putting our knowledge and capacities at the heart of our production model.

We represent innovation in every sense of the word. We provide a renewal that future sustainable food systems so desperately need, and we will not accept to lose control over our production.

We want to enjoy our rights to land and water, and to a decent life. We aim to create sustainable food systems that respect nature and all natural resources, and that allow us to produce safe and quality food for all. We wish to help those that feel disconnected from nature and oppose those that intend to destroy it for their own gain. We want our farms to fulfil multiple needs for society – from being a solution to climate change to providing food for consumers.

To ensure that everyone can have good food, and to add value to our products, young farmers wish to work together, to be supported collectively, and to have access to different options for food processing and to markets.

**To change the political framework and to achieve sustainable food systems centred on the rights of farmers and consumers, we need to address the following elements:**

## **EU FOOD AND FARMING POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE WITH YOUNG FARMERS AS CENTRAL ACTORS**

We need **new criteria** to render young farmers more visible. We want a new definition that is not only related to the age and dimension of the farm, but also the will to start a new profession.

**Knowledge and competences.** We want the right to have our knowledge recognised, beyond formal knowledge acquisition. We need basic agricultural education to better comprehend the relationship between soil, plants/vegetables, and animals. Practical agricultural knowledge should be taught from an early age (i.e. practical grafting workshops in the kindergarten and school). We recognise farmers' knowledge as essential and the transfer of this knowledge between generations as a central part of our training. We want to further build horizontal relations so as to encourage an increase in the transfer of knowledge.

Governments need to recognise young **farmers' demands as central in the governance of food and agriculture**, and we need to be heard at the local and European levels. Programmes for young farmers are currently very difficult to access, due to bureaucracy and inefficiency. Moreover, they do not meet our needs in terms of access to land, knowledge transfer, and access to markets, credit and grants.

A better future for farming must be based on **social justice**. We demand the cessation of all direct and indirect support to industrialisation processes such as biofuels or giant animal husbandry hubs. The unfair CAP payment system based on per-area payment must come to a halt.

**Public funds** need to become democratically accessible to youth. To improve access to funds, bureaucracy and corruption are the predominant obstacles we face. This is why we demand that immediate action be taken to effectively curb corruption and overcome bureaucratic hurdles.

**Direct payments** (subsidies) from public funding must prioritise small-scale local farmers (producers), while protecting local communities' right to development. Social conditionality (the number of people and high standards of decent work conditions) should be the main criteria for receiving subsidies.

Public policies at all levels, including CAP, must protect local communities from **land grabbing** and prioritise small scale agro-ecological young farmers, whilst ensuring **equitable and fair access to land at local, national and regional levels**, as well as reducing inequalities within and between countries in Europe.

Additionally, welfare schemes within the public system have to be improved, especially those related to maternity and parental leave, as well as policies in case of illness. This could ensure the viability of family planning and farm investment at the same time.

## **DEVELOP MARKETS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS**

We need a **legislative framework** that guarantees safety for our consumers without creating additional bureaucratic obstacles, including in food processing, especially for small-scale producers. Due to their production size, small-scale producers in particular face an extraordinary amount of unnecessary difficulties while processing food. The current legislation does not support us; instead, it facilitates corruption, and results in considerable bureaucratic and financial burdens.

**Guarantee health and quality food for all.** The relationship between the right to food and the right to

health needs to be at the centre of all policies concerning access to markets.

**Fair and affordable prices for all.** Food prices must reflect all hidden costs. For instance, in the production of very cheap food, the many issues related to hidden social costs (the exploitation of migrant workers, for example) and environmental costs (abuse of pesticides, and pollution of water and land) are not addressed. Public procurement can play a key role in improving access to quality products for low-income communities. Additionally, the issue of unfair competition with supermarkets and large surfaces calls for better regulation.

We demand **diverse models and schemes for accessing markets**, including public procurement and consumer awareness, as well as **investment policies** to support short value chains, from loans to investment in infrastructures.

**Knowledge.** We need to facilitate ways in which we can share our experience and strengthen our knowledge. Farmers' cooperatives are a unique starting point for developing and sharing knowledge about sustainable agriculture, as well as tools and other resources.

**Prioritisation of local markets** with the support of public policies is a must. Markets at all levels should function according to a democratic process, putting food producers at the centre, ensuring safeguards against conflicts of interest and against unfair commercial practices, and protecting small-scale young agroecological farmers' access to markets.

## GUARANTEE OUR RIGHTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES – LAND, SEEDS, AND WATER TO ENSURE A VIABLE FUTURE FOR YOUNG FARMERS

**Recognition of rights.** Our rights must be recognised, acknowledged and respected. We need to have the opportunity to exercise our rights as peasants.

**Raising awareness** regarding the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) is an ongoing challenge, not only in relation to peasants, but also in relation to states. We want actions and policies that put UNDROP provisions into practice, and that create tools to monitor its implementation.

**The right to land.** The right to land is a basic and inalienable right that enables us to be farmers. The few existing positive initiatives that recognise our right to land should be extended all over Europe, and the examples copied and implemented.

**The right to seeds.** We want to produce, share and sell our own seeds and we need to safeguard and share knowledge on how to produce our own seeds.

**The right to water.** Bureaucratic and economic barriers on access to water have to be lifted and water should be managed at community level to overcome the conflict surrounding the privatisation of water. Small-scale fisheries' right to water must be promoted and protected.

**Reference to food and agriculture policies.** The new food and agriculture policies should be based **on UNDROP**. We must abandon the trade-centric approach that has characterised these policies in the past, making farmers poorer and the environment more polluted, without effectively tackling hunger in the world.

## SUPPORT FOR YOUNG FARMERS TO WORK TOGETHER, INNOVATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE CREATIVELY

**Digital gap.** Rural areas are less well connected than towns, because the private sector invests less capital in broadband infrastructure there, given the short-term risks and the focus on long-term profit. This results in shortcomings in the overall process of digitalisation, as current broadband speed is far behind Europe 2020 goals for rural network coverage. We advocate expanding public investment in telecommunications, e-mobility and ‘soft’ infrastructure that links rural communities, and promotes ‘smart entrepreneurship’. We demand local digital solutions to close the gap between urban and rural areas. Gender and age equity in the usage of digital instruments should also be ensured through digital growth.

**Digitalisation and Data Ownership.** Data privatisation, data rights, concentration of the economy, and dematerialisation are all issues that need addressing immediately if the process of digitalisation of agriculture is to continue. Acknowledging farmers’ ownership of data is an obligation of legislators at all levels of governments.

**We demand social criteria to evaluate innovation for positive progress.** These will have to be assessed in four ways: 1) impact on labour and livelihoods, 2) disconnection from nature, 3) the relation between innovation and communities, 4) how technology can be used to protect our rights.

**The role of young farmers in the innovation process is central.** We use technology made by others, but we also generate innovation and are therefore transfer agents. We want young farmers’ ideas and data to be protected. We need young farmers to have better possibilities to organise common work, networking through digital innovation, and to keep control over the process in our hands.

**Digitalisation of markets and re-localisation of food markets.** We have developed new ways to access markets, many of which we are implementing, such as short supply chains that directly benefit local communities. We can also find many examples of eco-tourism that are managed digitally by young farmers. We need to exchange more widely these experiences and receive specific public support to this end.

Last but not least, in order to promote horizontal and democratic models of **education, knowledge transfer and public awareness**, such as traceability of food that takes consumers back to the source, innovation is key.

*This Declaration was conceived as part of the EU Horizon 2020 project BOND – Bringing Organisations & Network Development to higher levels in the farming sector in Europe. The process of consultation involved young farmers from dozens of European countries, taking part in the Young Farmers for the Future Forum organised between July – September 2020.*

18th of September 2020





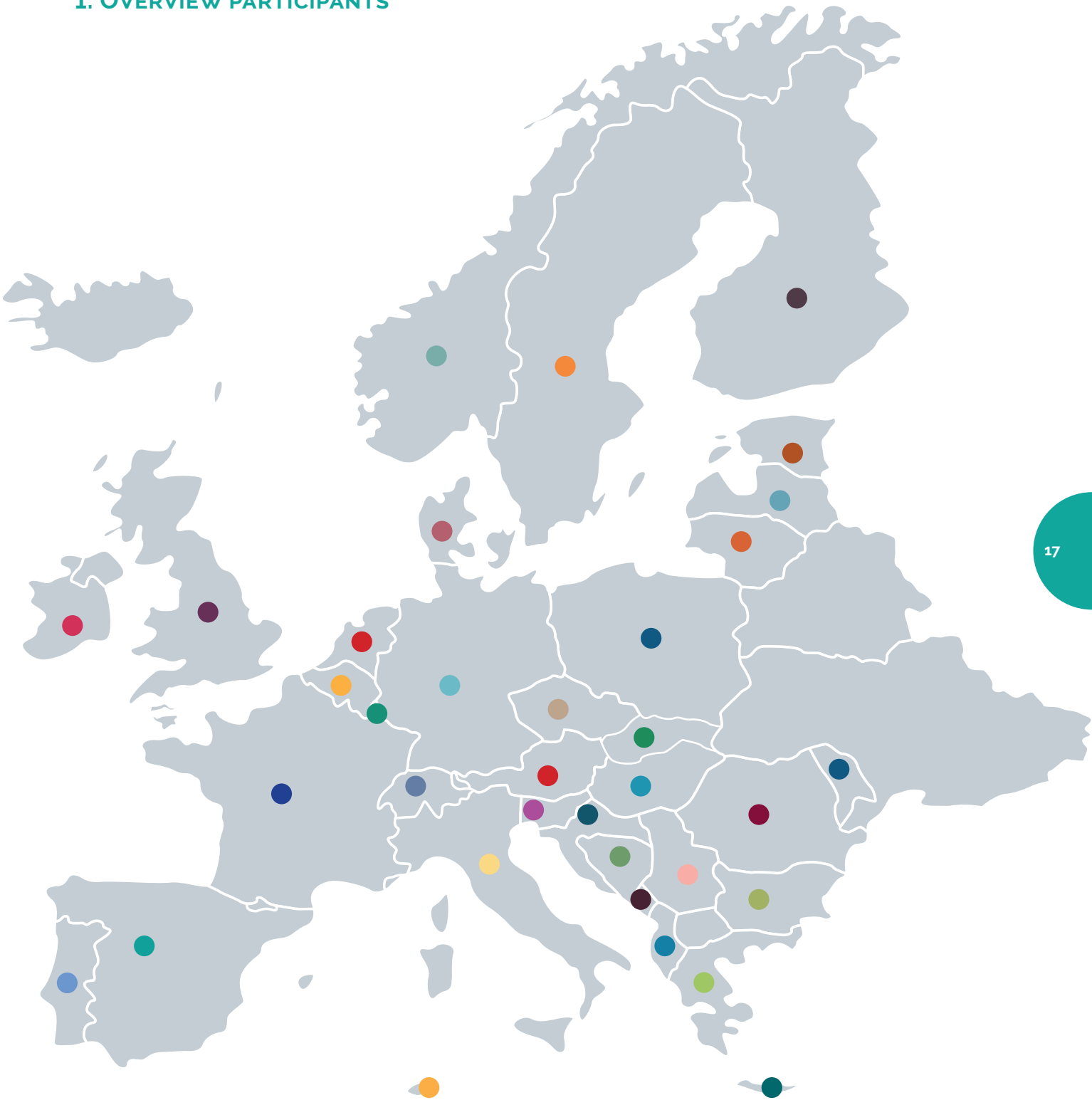


The participants



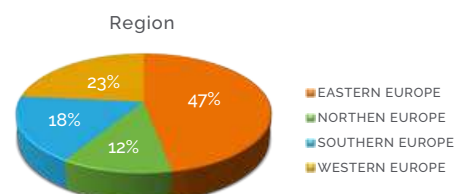
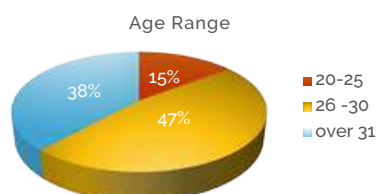
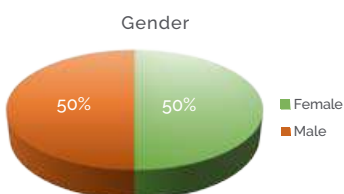
# III. The participants

## 1. OVERVIEW PARTICIPANTS



## OVERVIEW OF THE 34 SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

COUNTRY	GENDER		AGE RANGE		
	FEMALE	MALE	20-25	26-30	OVER 31
ALBANIA		1	1		
AUSTRIA	1			1	
BELGIUM		1		1	
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA		1			1
BULGARIA	1		1		
CROATIA		1	1		
CYPRUS		1		1	
CZECH REPUBLIC		1	1		
DENMARK	1			1	
ESTONIA	1				1
FINLAND		1			1
FRANCE		1			1
GERMANY	1				1
GREECE	1				1
HUNGARY	1			1	
IRELAND	1			1	
ITALY		1		1	
LATVIA		1	1		
LITHUANIA	1				1
LUXEMBURG	1			1	
MALTA		1		1	
MOLDOVA	1				1
MONTENEGRO	1				1
NETHERLANDS	1				1
NORWAY		1			1
POLAND		1		1	
PORTUGAL		1		1	
ROMANIA	1				1
SERBIA	1				1
SLOVAKIA	1			1	
SLOVENIA		1	1		
SPAIN		1		1	
SWEDEN	1		1		
UNITED KINGDOM	1			1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>



## 2. DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS. WHO ARE THE YOUNG FARMERS IN EUROPE NOWADAYS?

Based on the information and photos provided by the participants, the BOND project created public profiles which were published on the BOND project website. These profiles allowed all participants to find out more about each other in a friendly format and also allows to each one of them to promote themselves and their own work, even after the closure of the project.



**ALBANIA | GENT IMERAJ**

I have an electronic engineering education, working as a researcher and teaching assistant at a university, but my parents grew up in farming areas of Northern Albania, and I was raised to understand 'rural'! I became the youngest certified tour guide in Albania and I now coordinate the 'Albanian Alps Alliance.' Essentially, I am a digital farmer, working in projects and research on SMART Agriculture.

I think it is up to the young, to integrate technology into sustainable farming, foster farmer networks, organic food systems and safe farming products. We need to be aware of climate change and economic challenges and manage risk of self-investment in the land.

I think we can establish village-based chains of products, where every farmer produces certain links to those chains, adding up to a complete diverse production for every village. With the help of geo-spatial infrastructure (online mapping) we can develop SMART villages with better risk management.

**AUSTRIA | ANNEKE ENGEL**

With no prospect to inherit my own farm, being a farmer was an unrealistic dream, but meeting the 'eco scene' in Vienna I learned new possibilities and in 2017 myself and two friends bought a little farm as an association. We have 30 bee colonies, 0.5 ha vegetable garden, grassland, fruit trees and forest. We borrow money from 30 people from our networks. I'm keen to share ideas about this 'direct credit' system.

For Utopia (overcoming capitalism), farming concepts must be strengthened based on solidarity, especially for young farmers finding their role in a food system. Farm work needs to be attractive, offering a good life. The CAP should encourage quality and sustainability over higher production. CSAs can play a role in supporting anti-nationalist ideas of Food Sovereignty. Once farmers know what the consumers in their region want, they can cooperate with each other, planning produce, sharing machines and knowledge.

Austrian farmers are encouraged to keep together, but I have more in common with a small-scale farmer in Hungary or Slovenia, than a big salad producer here, who exploits water reserves and harvest workers. It's a big challenge to overcome national borders, but necessary to save small-scale agriculture.

**BELGIUM | JENS MOUTON**

My family have been farmers for all known generations. My older brother continues my parents' organic farm. I started my own, on an abandoned old farm, with my teacher-wife and 3 children. We milk 100 goats, breed small-scale pigs (10 females), grow 0.5 ha vegetables and 0.2ha strawberries. We sell to local restaurants, organic sellers and in our own shop in Brugge.

In our shop we sell the products of 30 local farmers, which means we can sell all year-round. A big group of farmers is a supermarket on its own. Challenges include the weather, access to water and missing hands to help on our farms. I'd like the possibility to rent ground, a smart-water vision which keeps water close to our fields and a fair sharing of financial support. Farming should be an appreciated job with a basic income. There should be support rather than control policy on manure, animal welfare and management.

I hope the future prioritises fields before machines. Young farmers can make sustainable farms and field-practices, learning how to diversify instead of growing and specialisation. We can make farms without walls, open to the local community.



## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA | NINOSLAV ŠEŠIĆ

I'm a young farmer with vegetables in production and fruit trees planned. I'm on my way to build a fully sustainable nature oasis – an animal and plant ecosystem.

What young farmers can offer depends on what you pursue in life: food will always make money, when you do what you love, you make love visible. For me it is the opportunity to do what I like, eat what I make, and be a self-sufficient community.

The biggest challenges are lack of knowledge and lack of serious effort. When you achieve some level of these two the rest will resolve.

We need mutual cooperation between young people eager to learn and work. For this we need social interaction, ideas that make you eager to get up from bed! I dream of a holistic approach to farming and life in general.



## BULGARIA | MIHAELA METODIEVA

I grow vegetables, fruit trees, spelt and einkorn wheat on 2 hectares. Everything is organic. Cooperation is difficult, but achievable. People need to overcome their egos.

There should be a subsidy policy. The problems we face are many, but the most important is lack of knowledge. When you start doing something, you have to study and plan, so you don't have serious problems in the future.

I've encountered other farmers who destroy soil biodiversity, don't know how to use the land profitably, or what crops to grow according to the conditions, or are unaware of hygienic practices, and more. Not only young farmers, but farmers in general, need more applicable knowledge. We have little information about new practices because they have not been tested enough. We need to invest in the future and look ahead, to monitor how climate and nature are changing, so we can change ourselves in order to enjoy clean food for longer. Being a farmer is harder than most people think. You have to be a good agronomist, breeder, meteorologist, machine operator, financial specialist, mechanic, trader but most of all – a parent.



## CROATIA | FRANJO TOIC

I live in a small village on the island of Cres. We have 25 sheep, fruits and vegetables and 20 beehives. Every free minute I spend working with the animals, but my main job is in an office, connected with EU funds, so I'm well aware of other agricultural associations. I'm acting as secretary in the local sheep association. I'm curious about everything and I try to learn as much as possible from any situation.

Need for ecological and sustainable products are increasing and I'm supporting the idea of small-scale farms in bigger number. Cooperation could work on a regional level or on the type of production. Land ownership, taxes and lack of knowledge stand in the way. The viewpoint on sustainable farming needs to change, but not only on a political/paperwork way, the governments should really start to think how to support basic elements of the society so the society can develop.

Since the tourism will crash this year due to COVID-19, I expect that the future for my region is bright. The problem will arrive when it won't be possible to sell all the extra produce from the island (olive oil for example).



## CYPRUS | NIKIFOROS PINGOURAS

I cultivate a small banana farm of around 500 plants, and I have plans for more seasonal fruits and vegetables in the future.

The power of large agricultural corporate importers over both the markets and the regulatory bodies is a big challenge. Similarly, the power that intermediaries have in stifling profit margins for farmers in both local and other EU markets.

I believe harnessing new technologies and the connective power of cooperatives, as a means to bypass intermediaries, will make small scale sustainable farming viable for local and European market consumption. We can employ collective action in order to make long term environmentally sustainable agriculture viable, primarily for local, and secondarily for other European markets. In an ideal world: small farms would be able to directly compete with large agricultural corporations within the European markets, via some form of pan European cooperation.

For this to happen we need a lessening of bureaucratic processes for economic support plans and accessing markets (procedures for licensing, opening shops, exporting products etc).



## CZECH REPUBLIC | PETR STEPANEK

I grew up on a farm, studied University of Agriculture in Prague, and I'm still working on our farm. We have about 120 cows and 100 sheep on 300 ha of grasslands. We also keep many different kinds of poultry. We are certified as ecological producers. Most of our production is sold to Germany and Austria (via our business partners). I was member of Young Farmers association.

I think our main challenges are access to land, access to finance and unfair competition by big farming enterprises. I fear we may be destroyed by big corporations – or not – I'm not sure just yet!

There needs to be more support for small farms, fewer administrative complications and bureaucracy, with easier access to local markets, fair prices, no GMO or imports from countries that use GMO, or from countries that are not ecologically responsible.

Cooperation through sharing knowledge, sharing business partners, cooperation in politics and lobbying for small farms will all help.



## DENMARK | ALINA TOMA

I am a new entrant to farming, really in the beginning process, farming together with a collective on some land we just got.

Access to land is a challenge, as well as regulatory/policy burdens, unfair competition, taxes and access to markets.

I'd like to see local farmers putting together resources and working together for a better production and access to the markets. I think urban farming will grow considerably where I am in Denmark and industrial farming will leave some space for more sustainable practices.

I'd like there to be new policies regarding land grabbing, access to land, farm succession as well as a good CAP system and knowledge support.



## ESTONIA | MAARJA UIBOKAND

I created my own agricultural business 'Mardimäe OÜ' in 2015 by the side of my parents' and brother's farm. My father started farming organically in 2001. We have organic oats, wheat, buckwheat and 250 sheep. Mardimäe Organic Farm unites three business on 400 ha.

A young farmer must be a strong person and a hard worker with a good sense of humour. I hope the number of young farmers, organic farms and small farms (under 500 ha) will grow in my region. I think different types of farm will come.

There are a lot of challenges. It is not so easy to start. Governments and the EU say they support young farmers, but the starting subsidy is not enough. I think when renting or selling state land, preference should be given to young farmers and as well as offering hectare and investments subsidies.

I support cooperation but it is not so easy to do in all fields – it should work on the drying, sorting and selling of cereals, as well as slaughterhouse and meat marketing.



## FINLAND | JAN VELTMAN

I live and work on a farm for a CSA food cooperative called 'Oma maa' (Own Land). There 50 hectares of farmland, a greenhouse and a food forest. About 100 chickens provide us with eggs and our 4 cows help with biodiversity. We produce grains, legumes, roots and tubers, oil plants, vegetables, fruits, berries and more, through ecologically sustainable production as well as old farming techniques. We have a kitchen to process our harvest into bread, oil, pasta, falafel etc. I have a background in cooking, so this kitchen is mostly my responsibility.

Hopefully farms like ours will flourish. But it depends on the consumers demand for local sustainably produced food. And if policy makers are willing to support the systemic change of our food system. I hope more small farms with similar values will unite and cooperate like we are trying with our recently founded CSA Finland.

The challenges are lack of knowledge, access to markets, access to credit and product prices.

In our case an important policy change would be something like basic income - offering more free choice to put energy into something important. For us it would mean we could get the workforce we need.



## FRANCE | GRÉGOIRE MINDAY

I began taking care of cows in 2015, during the struggle against an airport project in Notre-Dame-des-Landes. My activity was legalised in 2018. My 30 cows are on 60 ha of prairies. I share rotations with neighbours keeping sheep, horses, or growing other cultures. I work with members of 'La Coopérative Bocagère', a collective for farmers, builders and foresters. We share our living means, help each other financially, work together, and support social movements in our region. I'm the father of three young kids.

Access to land is a knot, related to the vocation crisis, the high price of legacies and land and the administrative burden. These leave an open field for agri-businessmen and projects destroying farming land.

Peasants should organise locally to make small farms financially and ecologically sustainable; and unite regionally and nationwide to face those whose short-term interests damage our environment. Loire-Atlantique makes me optimistic. It has a high rate of organic farms, with a farming goods supply network. Through demonstrations we continue to show solidarity with other activity sectors. Crises such as Covid-19, make consumers more conscious of their impact on our environment. This is a new opportunity to engage changes in farmers' production.



## GERMANY | **KIM-TINA NAVA**

I've worked as a fine art and biology teacher abroad and in Berlin. I studied social work and permaculture, which combines arts, biology and social care, for me, in a perfect way. My flat has a small garden. I keep bees and teach beekeeping and the importance of bees. Educating children and adults about sustainable local agriculture and engaged farmers increases the health of our future food systems. In schools the focus is on faster higher further, over living in harmony and appreciation with nature.

Of course, you need money to start – to buy land, animals, equipment, or seeds. Not everybody is able to find a foundation or fulfill an application. Finance sources are bureaucratic and quite selective. Access to land is limited and expensive.

I hope local farms expand to deliver their food to markets and individuals in Berlin. There are a few collectives in the city, showing people how to grow their own food and make them aware of the food system in general. I believe in a movement where people think about consumption, sustainability and healthier lifestyles connected to food. I believe in exchanging goods. When farmers are specialised, they often harvest more than they use themselves.



## GREECE | **NATASA ANTARI**

I began my career in IT. My friend Alexandros started growing seasonal vegetables and in 2015 we both decided to grow our own food, combining traditional cultivation and seeds with some key points of permaculture and natural cultivation. This is how EcoGaia Farm was created. Today we grow lentils, chickpeas, seasonal vegetables, fruits, almonds and walnuts. The Craft Law enabled us to create a series of new products using small-scale processing. We have hens, ducks, geese and guinea fowls living free in our trees and land. EcoGaia Farm has always welcomed visitors. Every year we host volunteers from all over the world. We have a CSA network in Athens and Thessaloniki.

There are not as many young producers as are needed, so the sustainability of each new venture is important. For us, organic food and farmers are vital, as are more consumers with environmental awareness. I would like to see tax exemption as an incentive to boost the primary sector, or funding to start new farms and access to land.

Historically cooperation is difficult in Greece as all previous years the farmers' cooperatives failed but we try. Developing CSA networks is really important.



## HUNGARY | **BORBÁLA LIPKA**

I recently bought a really small portion of land (3000 m<sup>2</sup>) with my boyfriend, where we grow fruits and vegetables for ourselves. I work for Magház (Seedhouse), a network developing agrobiodiversity and the conservation of landraces. I'm also involved in a project experimenting with dye plants in the village.

Challenges are CAP; access to land; bureaucracy; labour cost; an unsupportive legislation system; consumers' lack of knowledge about the food system. Instead of land-based subsidies, it would be better to support small-scale and family farmers, crop diversification and other adaptive agricultural mechanisms.

As young farmers we can establish short food chains; raise awareness about the weak points of our current food system and offer solutions for these weak points; developing regional cooperations, sharing best practices and experiences with each other; buying and maintaining vehicles and machines together.

In our region most land is cultivated by larger scale farmers, big monocultures, with huge amounts of fertilisers, pesticides and erosion. I don't see how this could change but some smaller scale farmers would prefer to develop a more nature friendly and more adaptive system by diversifying crops, establishing shelter belts and planting more fruit trees on the hillsides.





IRELAND | **BEN INGOLDSBY**

I'm a novice farmer. My wife, dad and I are converting a disused cattle farm into a vegetable farm for natural dye plants, medicinal herbs and food, initially for self-consumption, with the aim of becoming a CSA. We're inspired by the Fibershed model of soil-to-soil textile production within a local community of growers, weavers, dyers, makers and consumers. We're part of the Landworker's Alliance.

I see opportunities to establish short food chains and offer social farming programmes. Young farmers connecting and building strong community through alliances, organisations and events, will impact decision-making. They can create and agitate for tangible alternatives, based on a radical ethos of cooperation, not competition.

Cooperation starts by recognising the systemic industrialisation of farming is failing consumers, farmers and our environment. Farms could become hubs for local communities, acting as catalysts for genuine progress, equality and regeneration.

I'd like better access to land, policy advancements towards food sovereignty, and an EU trade policy that supports local, small-scale production, incentivising sustainability, so landworkers can earn a real living. Also, a divestment from over-fertilisation and livestock farming, a diversification of crops and farms (fabric, dye, food, animal, agroforestry,

ITALY | **LEONARDO PETRUCELLI**

I grow, cultivate, and grind with a stone mill, the ancient grains our ancestors consumed. My mission is to shift views around slow food, especially here in the south where there is little understanding. It's a calling, the dharma of my life on this earth!

I helped start Slow Food in Foggia, participating in festivals and markets and speaking at events. I collaborate with local likeminded producers – one makes artisanal beer from my grain.

Through WWOOF I host anyone who wants to experience Italian organic agriculture. It helps me spring and summer when the workload is heavy, and I like sharing my culture and learning about theirs. Cooperation can be done in a global context, with social media and apps that support agriculture and connect other members of our vibe tribe around the fire.

Meaningful change to the current system needs to come from top down and bottom up. Governments must be persuaded but ultimately people have the power. We vote with our dollar.

I sense a change in favour of alternative farming and products. People want artisanal flour, craft beer, organic wines, grass fed cows and eggs from open air chickens. I see community, organisations and movements growing up and building around this.

LATVIA | **VALTERS ZELČS**

I manage a farm with my Dad, growing winter wheat, winter oilseed rape, peas and beans. To ensure biodiversity we have areas of grasslands and red clover. Our farm is a member of the largest farmers' NGO and the largest grain cooperative in Latvia - 'Latraps'.

There is an uneven situation within the single market – many member states in Eastern Europe receive less support. This means our farms have to be larger to ensure some level of competitiveness on an EU scale, therefore, I envision that those few small farms that are still working in my region, will be bankrupt and bought by larger farms, if no changes are made within CAP.

Another big challenge is irrational green movement, if it has no credible scientific studies backing their initiatives.

The main CAP policy that needs changing is external convergence. Many political questions, especially regarding plant protection products, are being approached from a purely emotion-based perspective, with economics and science completely ignored.

Probably farms will have to become more independent of human workforce, due to urbanisation. I hope that many of the current cooperatives that sell goods will also start to provide machinery and other rental services.



**LITHUANIA | ASTA SLAPIKAITE**

I'm an academic researcher focused on agriculture, particularly interested in local food systems and urban gardening practices, empowerment of women, fighting against food waste and plastic pollution. I am involved in a CSA scheme in Copenhagen and small-scale dairy project in Africa. I have recently joined a farm in the Lithuanian countryside that promotes permaculture principles.

Young farmers can help create a better food system with trustworthy, transparent connections with consumers, strengthening local communities through mutual trust and cooperation, sharing skills and knowledge, supporting each other, applying multi-disciplinary perspectives to farming. Cooperation should exist between farmers themselves as well as consumers, local community, local government, business, NGOs etc.

One of the main barriers is access to land and to capital (if no land is inherited). Another challenge is finding like-minded motivated people to join activities, as farming on your own can be a huge burden. I'd like to see schemes to support and promote small-scale farming activities, such as special programmes offering agricultural land for young tenants. I envision networks of small-scale farmers offering production grown and processed in traditional and environmentally friendly ways to create local food systems promoting much healthier and more nutritious food.

**LUXEMBURG | SVENJA ZELDER**

We have a family farm in the middle of Luxemburg with 70 dairy cows and 100 ha. I work there 50% of the time. My main area is the 350 laying hens. We have recently started to grow small quantities of vegetables for our self-service shop. My boyfriend and I are in the Young Farmer organisation.

Agriculture is an old system – you can see it in the families, in the policy, in the rules: for example, you often don't have a salary. In times past, you took what your parents took. I'd like to see the system become easier and more flexible. I think as young farmers we have an opportunity to align our farm at our aims and strengths.

Many consumers have forgotten the production systems, and don't think about what country their products come from, but this is changing. Our region is going to change a lot. People will buy regional products – they like to buy from a farm shop. We will get a short food chain but will have to work more on farm promotion. The next steps are water solutions and organic farming. Luxembourg wants to make 25% of land organic farmland.

**MALTA | KARL SCERRI**

I'm a young poultry farmer, rearing 240000 broilers, continuing my father's business. I'm also an administrator of MAYA (a Farmers' Youth organisation).

I think access to land is a challenge and needs to change, as well as capping prices and a strategy for sustainability, and in Malta, finance and permits are a big issue. Young farmers have an opportunity to promote short food chains that support a circular economy – so you get an income from your area as well as contributing to other local business.

There is little training in my area, and I think cooperation between farmers from different member states is essential for training, pest management and learning from one another. Cooperation between farmers and other actors is important too: aspects such as agritourism, farm to fork that leave a positive impact on environmental and local conditions. It's difficult, particularly in these times, but I hope in the end we will reach our dreams.



**MOLDOVA | MARIANA SEREMET**

I manage, with my husband, about 3000 m<sup>2</sup> of land, piloting an agroecological farm in Moldova where we are multiplying seeds. In parallel, we are founders of an NGO, 'Gradina Moldovei', which has a mission to create a peasant seed bank and an open space for training in the topic of Agroecology. We are focusing exclusively on plants: vegetables, herbs, shrubs and fruit trees.

Our challenges are visibility on the market network, and delivery/proximity to customers. I'd like to see policy changes for access to land, fiscal facilities (at least during the first years) and guidance through administrative/certificate aspects.

Young farmers have an opportunity to establish direct contact with customers (open doors, CSA, delivering days). In my region I hope to see growing networks between farmers with different products, combined in a holistic CSA basket delivered directly to customers. I'd like there to be more links/interactions between producers and customers as well as diversity in production (not only fresh, but dried or canned products too).

**MONTENEGRO | ANDRIJANA DABOVIC**

My family and I grow grapes. We have small winery and our wines have won more than 50 awards from numerous festivals. We have many kinds of other vegetables and fruit, and we have animals for milk and meat. Our farm is registered for rural tourism and every day visitors come to try our wine and food. It is a family business – I think small family farms are the future of agriculture in Montenegro. Most of the work on the farm, I do with my younger brother, Acim. Produce on our farm is mix of modern and traditional.

I think the future of Montenegro farming is great. Our government do many good things for growing Montenegro farmers, but I would like to see some policy advancements that offer even better credit support in addition to existing ones, so that young farmers, just starting out, can begin their business and make it sustainable, then facilitate registration procedures and make tax relief.

The main challenges are access to credit, labour, appropriate technology, and lack of processing capacity.

I think that cooperation in farming is the future.

**NETHERLANDS | YEVA SWART**

I grew up in Amsterdam and France (where my mother had a large garden). I worked in policy and research, then for different farms in Italy, France and the Netherlands until I settled in Friesland. Currently I work for different farms and I rent a plot of land where I cultivate flowers, vegetables and keep chickens. I work on a 17 ha closed circuit mixed biodynamic farm and a 0.5 ha educational/care farm.

Unfortunately, it's impossible to buy land in the Netherlands because of the very high cost. I am a member of different farmers networks and food related organisations. It's important to organise ourselves on multiple levels of food production and the food chain, especially as farmers. I believe the solution and strength of our farms can be found in what we can share and collaborate – I'm particularly curious how we can extend this to solidarity between the global North and South.

I think some of the main opportunities are ironically linked to our challenges. The core solutions and opportunities can be found in food sovereignty and in reshaping the agricultural systems so that good nutritious food is available for all, without exploitation of people, animals or the land.



## NORWAY | ØISTEIN AASEN

Myself, my wife, our two sons and my parents work and live on our farm. We have cows and produce milk and meat. We are members of many cooperatives for milk and meat. We are young, positive and innovative in an old-fashioned way.

Cooperatives are a BIG strength, and very positive for the farmers. The opportunities will be different from country to country. We live in the mountains and cannot produce big quantities, so we need to go for quality.

A big problem is this: Money is king. The big groups have too much power. I believe the farmers need to have more power, not the big food-groups. We need to be able to earn money. Times are changing fast.

We need to produce safe, healthy, sustainable food, on the resources we have. Not buy food for our cows from far away. We try always to give the customer what they want.



## POLAND | ŁUKASZ CZECH

Our 250-ha family farm produces pigs in a closed cycle (2000 hogs annually), and cultivates oil seed rape, winter wheat, spring barley, sowing peas and buckwheat on rather poor soils. During less intense seasons I work remotely as a consultant in aspects of agriculture related to finance, economy, marketing, IT and European funds. Previously I worked as analyst in agriculture banking and IT.

I grew up on the farm. After my degree, I came back to my village in eastern Poland, close to the border between Ukraine and Belarus. I believe strongly in new technologies, especially digitalisation and precision farming. I organised some research groups related to sustainable apple processing, satellite-based fertilisation and watering, reuse of food waste in pig production or development of biggest internet market for agriculture goods in Poland. Using my networks, I have established the biggest internet group for Polish farmers – Rozmowy o Rolnictwie, with almost 80k users.

I'd like to see a CAP based on real economic evidence instead of popular myths and political aspirations. I'd like to see farms sharing data, equipment and works. I believe cooperation, consolidation and development of technology will lead to more sustainable and resource-efficient agriculture.



## PORTUGAL | ANTONIO FERREIRA

My Dad and I breed autochthonous cattle, 'Maronesa', on 150 ha of private land and 400 ha of common lands. We are slowly transforming the bush-covered area into pasture. Maronesa eat grass, but also some bushes with fresh growth. Grazing common lands reduces wildfire impact and 'cleans' the mountains in an economically viable way. We care deeply about animal welfare. I'm a member of 'Terra Maronesa', which encourages circular economy, local products, improves farmers' income and incentivises Maronesa cattle farmers' use of common land. I graduated in management and, besides farming, I teach short courses. It's hard to have a Sunday off or a holiday.

The biggest challenge I'm facing is regulation and legal paperwork. Most farmers in my region are over the age of 60 and have tiny farms (5 Maronesa cows). It's hard to access enough land for a sustainable farm. In Portugal to access 20 ha, someone would likely have to buy or rent 20 different lands, with 10 different owners. One opportunity I see is using land that has been abandoned.

I think cooperation is essential for the future of farming: sharing knowledge, visions, problems, concerns, helps us see things in different ways



## ROMANIA | BRÎNDUȘA BÎRHALĂ

I'm a 'new peasant' farmer and member of 'Eco Ruralis'. My partner and I produce vegetables and fruit for restaurants, food hubs and private customers, part-time. I aim to open a CSA in 2021. We work 0.5 ha (we own 0.2 ha) in an agroecological way. We built our home from straw-bales produced in the village and are interested in appropriate technology methods for farming and living. I envision more small farmers coming to the market as direct sales, shortening chains, and using local seed varieties that are well adapted to draughts and climate change.

Challenges include access to land, access to relevant training on farm, climate issues, low food prices, income gap and increased poverty, little labour availability (low incomes in agriculture), EU-funds leaked to non-food-producers (landowners, not active farmers), lack of processing capacity catered to smaller farmers, bureaucratic burden, unfair competition from industrial agriculture and retail sector.

I'd like to see cooperation within sectors for better bargaining power. It needs to be gender-balanced and inter-generational – so young farmers can benefit from the knowledge and experience of others. Policy changes need to stimulate young farmers to enter agroecological production over industrial and incentivise farm-transfer.



## SERBIA | LILLA HOLLO

We are a small farm, producing organic vegetables, spices and herbs in foil tents and outdoors. We work as a family, helped by a paid, casual worker. We operate a vegetable basket system with home delivery, but customers can also visit our farm on demand. We supply vegetables to shops and restaurants. In our countryside, I see an opportunity in processing, and farmers with larger areas who can produce quantities should consider exporting to western markets.

It's hard for young farmers in Serbia without existing possessions or some political background. Farmland is expensive due to its quality. Prices of tools and raw materials are close to those of the West, but salaries and crop prices lag far behind. Subsidies from the state are only symbolic. I'd like to see tax breaks introduced and increased subsidies, non-refundable applications and favorable bank loans to help novice young farmers. In addition, normal crop prices should be set.

Collaboration has an important role in market research and sales in larger markets. Farmers can help each other produce more efficiently through the exchange of experience, working together and representing a greater force – together it's easier to fight for the economical/political benefit of farmers.



## SLOVAKIA | EPONINE SELS

I've always felt concern about the environment and climate changes, wanting to study environmental science on route to saving the world. Instead I graduated in Agromonomical science with a new career plan: become a farmer. I work at small farm Ecovillage in Slovakia, with 20ha of meadow and a no-dig permaculture garden that produces food for our volunteers, and we produce cheese from our little herd of milking goats.

The biggest challenge is access to land. I think if you are really determined, it's possible to find land to rent or join a project. Competing with supermarket prices and large-scale farms is difficult, but the demand for high quality products from small producers is growing. Current regulation and policy seem made for large scale farms and are disconnected from the reality in the field.

Unity makes strength – you gain more cooperating than working on your own. I imagine a farmer shop that gathers product from several local farmers and every day a different farmer would take the role of a seller. I also image cooperation in farm management; If you keep animals, you are less free to go for short trip. I see my future farming in cooperation.



## SLOVENIA | ALEŠ RODICA

I belong to a family organic winery, in Istria, Slovenia. We have 15 hectares of vineyards mostly of indigenous varieties at the heart of our tradition, culture, history, present and I believe the future too. Our organic wines are produced with passion, dedication and love. On our farm, we offer wine tourism experiences, wine tastings, team-buildings, conferences and weddings.

Young farmers can target the local community, teaching the customer to value of buying local and as organic as possible, reducing the supply chain and transport of the food. Locally I'd like to see the growth of organic and biodynamic farms with the only middle-man logistic delivery.

Challenges are getting the land, the knowledge and information, successfully continuing family business, and policy limitations. Regulation for farmers and those starting a farm should be simpler and communication simplified and regular. I'd like to see a systemised connection institution-platform, aiming to keep young farmers in proximity, for efficient sharing of knowledge, practices, information and opportunities. And a simple platform for a common approach toward challenges, and effective and truthful communication with authorities and industry makers, to benefit and empower all participants and all affected by them.



## SPAIN | JESÚS FERNÁNDEZ HABAS

I grew up in an olive tree and sheep farm in the South of Spain where my family produce and sell organic olive oil under agroecological management. Nowadays, I am PhD student in agroforestry systems, and I farm with my family during my free time. I am mainly interested in agroforestry systems, ecosystem services, rural depopulation and preserving traditional agricultural landscapes in mountainous areas.

Challenges young farmers face include unfair competition by other farmers and farming enterprises and uncertainty associated with traditional farming. In 15 years, I think farming will be missing from my region. Farming land will be covered by scrub with the associated recurrent forest fires.

If policy makers and society in general finally understand that local and organic agriculture is essential to face humanity's main challenges, maybe that could push up the opportunities for young farmers. Policy needs to change – facilitating access to credit and land, reducing regulatory burdens and revaluing farmers' role in the ecosystem and provision for human beings' welfare.

Cooperation will be key to make visible the needs of young farmers and also essential to reduce production costs.



## SWEDEN | EMMA LUNDBERG

I run a vegetable CSA on 2500 square meters using the land of a neighbour for free. Last year, my boyfriend and I delivered vegetables to 40 households for 20 weeks. This year I'm working alone so must reduce my output. I'm a board member of CSA Sweden and I'm part of a Facebook group where small-scale farmers are colleagues, not competitors. I envision more cooperation between different fields.

Sweden is facing a consumerism anti-climax: we are one of the richest countries and have everything, but people are not happy. Interest for the local and societal integration has started to grow. CSAs and farmers' markets are on the rise. People worried about climate are motivated to buy organic local food. Hopefully Covid-19 will act as a wake-up call for Sweden's self-sufficiency.

We face a tradition of big companies and a huge amount of controlling for food production. It's difficult to be a small-scale entrepreneur. Small farms are controlled (and also have to pay the controls) formed for large scale companies. Some kind of free consulting for young farmers when it comes to taxes and controls might help as well as making land more accessible.



**UNITED KINGDOM | OLIVIA JAMES**

I am a new entrant farmer, growing organic vegetables and flowers in the south west of the UK. I grow with two others on one acre of land using hand-tools and minimum tillage practices. We farm to build healthy soils and hopefully a healthy ecosystem that will provide our community with food. I am a member of the Landworkers Alliance and the Organic Growers Alliance. We have also started to grow seed for commercial companies, and for our own regional seed co-operative.

We could shorten current supply chains and connect directly with local people and local businesses, utilising online platforms and software to reach people in our community. If policy changed to frame agriculture as a meaningful and skilled career, assisted with access to land and provided investment for small farms to employ new entrants and statutory funding for alternative/different/new farming models, this would make a huge difference.

Young farmers could develop food hubs/cooperatives for an established and reliable market, share tools and resources, socialise and share skills. We can make consumers aware of the negative impacts of modern agriculture, hopefully changing food habits.





# Youth Forum Methodology



## IV. Youth Forum Methodology

### A BOTTOM UP APPROACH

**The first step** was on identifying and selecting 34 young farmers from 34 different European countries, geographically balanced, that would ensure a wide and comprehensive collective of the young generation of farmers in our region. The young farmers in each country, conveying the “voice” of their peers, have been selected by the project through a thoughtful process, in order to represent a real, diverse and authentic picture of the young farmers of Europe.

**Selection process.** The selection process implied an extensive reaching out, calling for the participation to the Forum for young farmers across Europe. Many farmers’ organizations, informal groups, individuals, institutions were contacted and informed about the Forum. Following this call, we received many expressions of interest from potential participants, under the form of letters or video materials. In some cases, we received more applications from the same country and in these cases, we had to organize a selection process. From other countries we only had an application per country, which made our decision easier. The most important criteria in the process of identification of countries and selection of participants, were a) a wide and balanced geographical representation (Eastern-Western Europe) and b) gender balance (50% women and 50% men) which were both successfully accomplished.

**The second step** was focused on identifying **the themes and the experts** that could have supported the dialogue between the young farmers. The most important element of the process was the application of a survey, asking the participants for more concrete information about their experience, hopes and dreams. The answers served as basis to identify the thematic areas, that had to guide the agenda and methodology of the Forum. The programme was basically tailor made on the needs of the participants but also on their experience so that they could bring their best contribution. Some of the answers of the survey are presented above in the chapter dedicated to the participants. Based on the inputs of the young farmers, provided through the survey, the topics of discussions were established and structured into 4 main areas, respectively:

- a) public policies in food and farming sector;
- b) access to markets;
- c) human rights in relation to natural resources;
- d) innovation and sharing knowledge.

The experts identified to support the dialogue on these 4 areas, come from farming background, having also an international experience in policy making processes varying from UN to the EU and other regional processes.

By the time **the third step** was developed, the Covid-19 pandemic became a reality that posed obstacles to a physical event and process. Therefore, the organizers adapted to the situation and created a methodology to guarantee a fully participative Forum, but in an online format. One important necessity was to keep the connection with and between the 34 young farmers from 34 countries across Europe. All 34 participants were included on the BOND Facebook group where they could engage in discussions and remain in contact during the preparation phase, through and also beyond the Forum.

Progressively, the series of webinars and online workshops were shaped, while maintaining constant communication with the participants. The decision made was to start with an introduction webinar which brought all the participants together, followed by 4 online workshops where the participants were split into group discussions dedicated to the thematic areas and finally a webinar where everyone came together again, to approve the final outcome.

The work methodology was created in parallel, starting with the division of the participants into the 4 working groups (including 8-10 participants each), based on their interest and their experience. The criteria for definition of each working group included:

- a) a diverse representation of young farmers of various dimensions (50% large scale farmers / 50% medium or small scale farmers);
- b) gender balance (50% men and 50% women);
- c) geographical balance (50% Eastern Europe and 50% Western Europe);
- d) diversity in market access strategy (50% farmers engaged in direct selling and 50% in other food chains).

Also, through the methodology all participants were assigned active roles that engaged them in all the aspects of the Forum. The roles of participants were shaped so that they have to work collectively, engage in the preparation of the workshops and also build the outcomes in the following way:

- *Introduction* to the Workshop. This role implied that the participants had to collaborate with the ‘web browsers’ and research from the background documents provided by the experts. The introductions prepared in advance had no standard format and had to be shared between two people for each working group.
- *Note takers*. This role implied taking notes of all the discussions from the workshops. This role was also split between 2 participants for each workshop and it was used afterwards by the ‘rapporteurs’, to present the outcomes of the working groups in the final webinar.
- *Web browsers*. This role implied desk research, in order to find additional information on the topic of the workshops. The work was done prior to the workshops and the materials put together were shared with the participants. This role was also split between 2 participants for each workshop.
- *Rapporteurs*. This role was meant to present the outcome of the workshops in the final webinar. It was based on a strong collaboration with the ‘note takers’. This role was also split between 2 participants for each workshop.

These roles were supported and encouraged by the facilitator and the technical team through the Forum. The existence of these key roles made a real difference and generated a strong commitment for the process.

#### **The fourth step.** The structure and methodology of the **Young Farmers for the Future Online Forum**.

The First Webinar reunited all 34 participants of the Youth Forum. For 3 hours the discussions focused on a general introduction of the participants and the methodology for the upcoming sessions. The objectives of this first webinar included:

- To present the participant’s work, interests and personal vision and dreams for the future
- To define and assign different roles in the upcoming Thematic Working Groups (WG)
- To present documents and videos that will be provided to participants
- To explain the methodology of the next series of thematic workshops

*The 4 Thematic Workshops.* The participants were divided into 4 Working Groups (8 to 9 participants each), based on profiles, geographic area, gender balance, and personal interests for the thematic areas. The Thematic Workshops benefited from the presence of experts, the facilitator, support technical team. Also, BOND partners were invited to join as observers. After the end of the workshops each participant had the possibility to submit comments in written or through videos.

The themes were carefully designed to meet the needs of the young generation of farmers as they were expressed in the preparation phase. The 4 themes reflect the importance of farming collectives and the importance of networking, new entrants as a central element to regenerating farming in Europe, how to develop a vision for a project scenario at the individual and collective level, post COVID-19 scenarios, pride and reco-

gnition by society of the inherent value of farmers, the value of the environmental and social services delivered by farmers, fair prices for decent livelihoods guaranteed by a new pact between producers and consumers, cultural heritage for humankind and the transmission of traditional knowledge, and rights versus trade rules with a special focus on peasant rights.

*The Final Webinar.* The participants were reunited again all 34 together. Based on the outcome of the thematic workshops, the rapporteurs, with the support of the facilitator, drafted the Declaration of the Forum, which was discussed and endorsed in this final webinar. The result of the work shows the diverse youth visions for the future of food and farming in our region in this time of crisis and beyond, as a concrete outcome for public policies recommendations. After the approval of the Declaration, the participants discussed about possibilities to continue to cooperate beyond the BOND project. Representatives from 2 international platforms (the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism (CSM) for the relation with the UN Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Food Sovereignty Alliance) presented their work on youth and made invitations for the participants to join their upcoming events.

In order to guarantee the full participation of the young farmers, to the best of their abilities, simultaneous interpretation in Serbian was provided during the online sessions. The online sessions were recorded with the consent of all participants. As the Forum was developing, session after session, all the background materials, documents and multimedia, as well as the outcomes were published online on the BOND website - Youth Forum dedicated webpage (included also in the Annex).





<p><b>24 July</b></p>	<p><b>FIRST WEBINAR ON INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)</p>	
<p><b>28 July</b></p>	<p><b>First Thematic Workshop: WHERE DO WE (YOUNG FARMERS) FIT IN THE EU FOOD AND FARMING POLICIES FOR THE FUTURE?</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)  <b>Expert:</b> Geneviève Savigny (Confederation Paysanne / EESC)</p>	<p>Groups of 8 to 9 participants + facilitator + expert (3 hours duration).</p> <p><b>Agenda:</b>  5 ' introduction by 2 participants  20' intervention expert  10 ' comments of 1' each by participants  20 ' intervention expert  5 ' conclusion facilitator  Pause  60 ' discussion between participants leading to the identification of priorities  Pause  60 ' discussion between the participants focused on policies recommendation and conclusion</p>
<p><b>29 July</b></p>	<p><b>Second Thematic Workshop: HOW CAN WE DEVELOP MARKETS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS?</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)  <b>Expert:</b> Jyoti Fernandes (LWA / BOND)</p>	
<p><b>30 July</b></p>	<p><b>Third Thematic Workshop: HOW DO RIGHTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES – LAND, SEEDS, WATER - ENSURE A VIABLE FUTURE FOR YOUNG FARMERS?</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)  <b>Expert:</b> Ramona Duminicioiu (European Coordination Via Campesina)</p>	
<p><b>31 July</b></p>	<p><b>Forth Thematic Workshop: HOW CAN YOUNG FARMERS WORK TOGETHER TO INNOVATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE CREATIVELY?</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Ramona Duminicioiu (Eco Ruralis)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)  <b>Expert:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)</p>	
<p><b>18 September</b></p>	<p><b>Concluding webinar - ENDORSEMENT OF THE DECLARATION AND NEXT STEPS WITH ALL PARTICIPANTS.</b>  <b>Facilitator:</b> Andrea Ferrante (Schola Campesina)  <b>Technical support:</b> Raluca Dan (Eco Ruralis)</p>	





Next steps

## V. Next steps

The BOND project is committed to disseminate in all different political fora as National Institutions, European Institutions, UN Institutions and national and international media the Joint Declaration of the Youth Forum. The BOND project will use all the different communication tools and also this publication is entirely part of the effort to wider disseminate the outcomes of the Youth Forum.

The Declaration is a lobby document and roadmap that the participants of the Youth Forum can further develop in their grassroots organization. In this sense, every participant has prepared a communication strategy at local level to further disseminate the Declaration.

At international level youth platforms such as the Youth Working Group of the *Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism (CSM) for the relation with the UN Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and the Youth group of Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Food Sovereignty Alliance* can be fundamental spaces of work and networking to further develop the work started with Youth Forum. In view of this opportunities the BOND project has facilitated the Youth Forum participants to enter in contact with those two international Networks.

The **Youth Working Group of the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism (CSM)** is the space of work and building relation for youth from social movements, Indigenous Peoples and people's organisations from all over the world who are bringing political struggles for food sovereignty, human rights, and agroecology into international food and agriculture policy discussions at the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Designed by youth for youth, this working group is an opportunity to learn about why youth participate in the CFS, and how they contribute to the overall activities of CSM.

The BOND project facilitated the link between the participants of Youth Forum and the CSM Youth Working Group. This will lead to interactive session where they could ask questions about the Working Group, and learn how they, as European youth from grassroots organisations can participate in food and agriculture policy discussions that affect their future.

**The Youth Group of Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Food Sovereignty Alliance (Nyeleni ECA).** Nyeleni ECA is a political and social alliance of grassroots, community based movements and organizations, representing small-scale food producers: peasants/small farmers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, small-scale fisher people, agriculture and food workers; and supporting constituencies, such as urban poor, rural and urban women's and youth organisations, consumers, environmental, justice, solidarity, human rights organizations, community-based food movements .

The Youth have their own articulation in Nyeleni ECA to foster knowledge sharing and strength their political actions to represent their demands at European and Central Asia level. The Youth group, at international level focus on the work done by FAO REU (Europe and Central Asia Region) and the European Union. At FAO level they represent their demands to the FAO REU Regional Conference (every two year) that guide the activities of FAO in the Region. At European level main focus is to influence the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) and access to land for new entrants.

Nyeleni ECA Youth group denounces that there is no measure that tackles land concentration despite the fact that the phenomenon of land concentration has increased exponentially, especially in Eastern Europe. Also, an important problem noticed by Nyeleni ECA is that the young farmers in rural areas are facing a lot of political, economic and social discrimination. Nyeleni ECA Youth group believe that to put a strong focus on the incorporation of youth in farming for the regeneration of the future of agriculture, we first need to realize Food Sovereignty, rooted on the implementation of peasant rights and supporting agroecology.

Just like in the case of the CSM, Nyeleni ECA will remain in contact with the participants at the Youth Forum and offer them possibilities to join the work of the Youth Group.



# Annexes



# Annexes

## 1. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

### 1st Thematic Workshop

#### Where do we (young farmers) fit in the eu food and farming policies for the future?:

- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/ECVC-youth-demands-for-new-Entrants-2016.pdf>
- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/European-Coordination-Via-Campesina-Farm-to-Fork.pdf>
- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/European-Coordination-Via-Campesina-CAP-and-NEW-EN-TRANTS.pdf>

### 2nd Thematic Workshop

#### How can we develop markets for the next generation of farmers?:

- [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Soil-Association\\_Shortening\\_supply\\_chains.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Soil-Association_Shortening_supply_chains.pdf)
- [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FSN-forum\\_Schola-Campesina.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FSN-forum_Schola-Campesina.pdf)
- [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Committee-on-World-Food-Security\\_Connecting-Smallholders.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Committee-on-World-Food-Security_Connecting-Smallholders.pdf)

### 3rd Thematic Workshop

#### How do rights to natural resources - land, seeds, water - ensure a viable future for young farmers?:

- [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Nyeleni-ECA-for-Food-Sovereignty\\_Your\\_Land\\_My\\_Land\\_Our\\_Land1.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Nyeleni-ECA-for-Food-Sovereignty_Your_Land_My_Land_Our_Land1.pdf)
- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UNDROP-Book-of-Illustrations-l-EN-l-Web.pdf>
- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UNDROP.pdf>
- [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CSM\\_VGGT.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CSM_VGGT.pdf)

### 4th Thematic Workshop

#### How can young farmers work together to innovate and share knowledge creatively?:

- <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Paper-Innovation-for-Family-farmingSchola-Campesina.pdf>

## 2. BACKGROUND VIDEOS BY THE EXPERTS

WS1: <https://youtu.be/eyRu6aQ1N3>

WS2: [https://youtu.be/BI3Cdy\\_Bp6o](https://youtu.be/BI3Cdy_Bp6o)

WS3: <https://youtu.be/ZAdQ6alqwBk>

WS4; <https://youtu.be/MqbtN54wnhc>

## 3. EXPERT'S PRESENTATIONS

WS1: <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BOND-Young-Farmers-Forum-1-Workshop.pdf>

WS2: <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BOND-Young-Farmers-Forum-2-Workshop.pdf>

WS3: <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BOND-Young-Farmers-Forum-3-Workshop.pdf>

WS4: <https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/BOND-Young-Farmers-Forum-4-Workshop.pdf>

## 4. VIDEOS

WS 1 : <https://youtu.be/T2OO11uNU9c>

WS 2 <https://youtu.be/mdodFg9mQiI>

WS 3 <https://youtu.be/ql7n0oWVeOo>

WS 4: <https://youtu.be/a6iCcYQGcO8>

Final Webinar Video : [https://youtu.be/qMK3OUw\\_0Rg](https://youtu.be/qMK3OUw_0Rg)

## 5. NEXT STEPS

CSM Youth working Group: [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/EN\\_CSM-Presentation\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/EN_CSM-Presentation_compressed.pdf)

Nyeleny ECA Youth working group: [https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/BOND-presentation\\_Nyeleni-ECA\\_Olcay-Bingol\\_2020-09-18\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.bondproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/BOND-presentation_Nyeleni-ECA_Olcay-Bingol_2020-09-18_compressed.pdf)







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