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EDITORIAL

MIJARC Europe is pleased to present the second edition of our magazine Info Europe this year. The topic of this issue is about agriculture and rural development. Here you will find news from Europe, MIJARC Europe and best practices from its member movements - KLJB Germany, YMDRAB Bulgaria and MRJC France. In this issue we want to introduce you the new members of the European Team. You can also find the calendar with upcoming activities for 2015!

Enjoy the reading!

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture at the heart of the European integration: let's listen to young people's ideas!

Because it is at the center of our daily lives, our jobs, our landscapes and our families, agriculture is definitely our concern as young rural people all over Europe. Indeed, whether Spanish, French, Belgian, Polish, Romanian, Portuguese, Bulgarian or German, we can eat and therefore live thanks to farming. Agriculture is also an important source of employment in Europe: over 11 million people work in that sector, even if they are not paid in relationship to their work... In addition, it shapes and maintains the landscapes we live in as rural youth on a daily basis. It is therefore natural for MIJARC to consider this topic as central, and as a matter of fact, it marked last summer with our seminar in France on the issue of "Eating, Producing, Deciding: Our Voice and our Choice for the Future of Agriculture in Europe." It is also clear that different agricultural systems coexist today with their own specificities. Productive agriculture is based on crop specialization aimed at producing foodstuffs in large quantities. That model relies on the use of fertilizers, energy and pesticides. It needs the most capital and is receiving today the most aid from the EU. Its productivity is high but its environmental impact casts doubts on its long-term sustainability. A new model is developing beside it, organic farming. This type of farming does not

pursue productivity but most of all a production which matches the natural resources available, using fewer inputs. This agricultural production is expanding rapidly and its yields are gradually getting close to those of conventional farming. At the crossroads of those systems, there are some agricultural alternatives which try to minimize the inputs and to maintain high yields. For the participants at the seminar, this seemed to be an avenue to be pursued.

Although those production choices appear to be reserved for farmers, we note that as citizens, we can act to choose and influence the method of production. As a matter of fact, our consumer choices have direct influence on the agricultural production. Moreover, the model of agricultural production is largely influenced by public aid, which comes from the citizens' taxes, which should prompt us to give our opinion on the type of farming we want to support.

MIJARC Europe's GA also took a stance against TAFTA. It is an important action since this treaty can have serious impact for the European agriculture and for consumers. Furthermore, it would allow the import of products that are potentially dangerous for Europeans: hormone-treated beef, poultry washed in chlorinated water, GMOs...

While agriculture plays such an important role, we should be concerned about its image. Indeed, we affirm that agriculture is a business with a future. Far from the deep-rooted stereotypes it is stuck with, it really is a major stake today and can provide opportunities for young people in the future. Young people want to become involved in this activity but it is difficult for them to set up in agriculture today, to have access to the land, the basis of farm work. Young people's setting-up and access to land in their countries is a priority for MIJARC!

As a conclusion, agriculture rooted in the local economy, in the region, is deeply European today. This policy has been at the center of European policies since the introduction of the CAP in 1962, and it still represents 44% of the European budget! Farmers are a little bit like MIJARC, rooted in their rural life and interested in European issues... This is why at MIJARC, we will continue cultivating agricultural issues because they are at the center of our day-to-day lives as European rural youth!

Thibault Duisit

Vice-President of MIJARC Europe

NEWS FROM EUROPE

CAP and rural development

The new Common Agricultural Policy (2014-2020) recognizes the role of organic farming in responding to consumer demand for more environmentally friendly farming practices: In the first pillar organic farms will benefit from the green direct payment without fulfilling any further obligations because of their overall significant contribution to environmental objectives. The Rural Development Policy is a very important and relevant tool to support the sustainable development of rural areas and agriculture including organic farming, in the EU.

Support to organic farming can provide an important contribution to the objectives of this policy, since as a quality measure it helps to improve the competitiveness of agriculture and

as a farm management system it contributes to improving the environment and the countryside. Rural development is implemented by Member States and regions under a common legislative framework and guidelines in the form of rural development programmes. These programmes are co-financed by the European Union and Member States and are implemented in seven year cycles. There are numerous measures proposed within rural development legislation which can be implemented by Member States in order to support and stimulate the development of organic sectors. The measures range from support for applying organic farming practices and methods to providing aid for marketing and promotion.

The new legislative framework for the program-



ming period 2014 – 2020 will further stress the importance of organic farming and increase its visibility in rural development through creating a separate "Organic farming" measure eligible for rural development funding.

Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/eu-funding/cap-and-rural-development/index_en.htm

NEWS FROM MIJARC

Seminar 2014: "Eating, producing, deciding: our voice and our choice for the future agriculture in Europe"



Jeroen Decorte (KLJ Belgium) with Jan Vanwijnsberghe and Olivier Dugrain from the European Team.

First two days the participants were divided into two groups:

1st Group: The production and consumption behaviours



2nd Group: The place of Youth in Agriculture



French village, beautiful castle, organic food... all this for participants of this year's MIJARC Europe seminar "Eating, producing, deciding: our voice and our choice for the future agriculture in Europe". It took place from 28th July to 2nd August in Marconne (France).

Thanks to the support of the Council of Europe through the European Youth Foundation and The Arkleton Trust Fellowship young people coming from different European countries could gather together and discuss the rural reality in Europe (the place of the youth in farming, training facilities, consumption behaviour, the process of policy making), judge it, through field visits and expertises and at the end propose actions and remedies to what they've found out. All the points of programme prepared by Think Tank group composed by six volunteers: Severin Kessler (KLJB Germany), Marina Grigorova (YMDRAB Bulgaria), François Bausson (MRJC France),

Those days were full of interesting discussions, games, theatre plays and field visits. Each evening the groups were presenting what they were doing during the day.

On the third day in the morning there was a meeting with experts: a former farmer, a vice-president of the Regional Council and a journalist at the L'Humanite. After that meeting the participants started to plan how they can act! First their task was to plan what kind of actions they could prepare - actions connected to the topics discussed during the seminar. The next step was to prepare different actions and show them to the people - inhabitants of Hesdin, small town in France, next to Marconne.

The last afternoon the participants spent in Hesdin - playing Agricupolis (game about importance of Education in Agriculture), singing songs about problems of young people with access to land, discussing with people about rural areas and sharing the knowledge they gained during the seminar.

*Magdalena Puć
European Secretary Assistant*

Report of the Think Tank experience

Each year we're looking for volunteers from the member movements to join the preparation team of the seminar - the Think Tank. The task of the group is to prepare the content of the seminar. The team is also responsible for the facilitation of the activities during the event. Of course - all the work is coordinated and guided by the European Team members. We believe it is a great opportunity for young people to get involved in the process of creating something important for MIJARC Europe and its member movements, to gain the knowledge and skills which can be profitable in the future!

Severin Kessler from KLJB Germany took part in the preparation phase and we was a facilitator during the seminar 2014: "Eating, producing, deciding: our voice and our choice for the future agriculture in Europe". He described his experiences as a Think Tank member.

My decision to apply for the Think Tank was quite spontaneous. The call for participants convinced me by the topic: "Eating, producing, deciding: our voice and our choice for the future agriculture in Europe" and I decided to apply for it, although I had no contact to MIJARC so far.

For most organisation meetings we used Skype. At the beginning, it was queer to meet on telephone conferences with people I did not know. I had no faces in mind connected to the voices. Nevertheless, every time it was a nice



discussing atmosphere. After three months a first physical meeting of the team took place in Brussels. At this weekend, I got to know all the members of the Think Tank the first time. It was a nice weekend and we had a lot of fun additional to the work we had to do for the seminar. Back from the weekend, everyone had some tasks to do until the seminar in 7 weeks. So from now on, the seminar was present in my mind and I looked forward to meet everyone again on the seminar.

As expected, the seminar was the time to see the new mates again but also many new faces – the seminar participants. As facilitator of the seminar, you have to motivate all the participants and care for the group building process. In cause of this task, you get in contact with each person in the group. This was a deep experience. During the seminar week, you get a leak of sleep and sometimes you have to meet when the participants

have free time. Nevertheless, I had a lot of fun and I have had many new friends at the end of the week.

In summary, it was a great experience to join the Think Tank and for me it was the right decision. I want to encourage everyone who is thinking about joining the Think Tank team. You get in contact with rural youth from all over Europe, even deeper than you will get as a normal participant of the seminar.

Especially to people who have no contact to the MIJARC Europe so far, I want to say: every time you will feel welcome in the team and it is a valuable international experience.

Severin Kessler
KLJB Germany

Summer Camp 2014: Better together – we care about rural areas



Thanks to the support of Erasmus+ and Katholischer Fonds MIJARC Europe and KLJB Germany together with KLJ Belgium, YMDRAB Bulgaria, EiR Poland, GUG Malta and APSD Agenda 21 Romania organised a summer camp "Better together - we care about rural areas". It took place from 24th to 31st August in Germany, in „The Three Rivers City“, Passau. The participants from six European countries – Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Malta, Poland and Romania – gathered together to experience international learning.



The facilitators from KLJB Germany and MIJARC Europe prepared different kind of activities: games, workshops, field visits. Each national team prepared an energizer or an activity. All together they also had a chance to integrate better thanks to workshop on team building leading by professional trainers. All this to give the participants a chance to analyse and exchange the realities in the communities and best practices on the topic, to discuss about realities in rural areas in Europe and rural development and to develop solidarity and tolerance.

For some of the participants it was the first international experience and they really enjoyed the time they could spend together especially in such a beautiful place. And of course – they all could im-

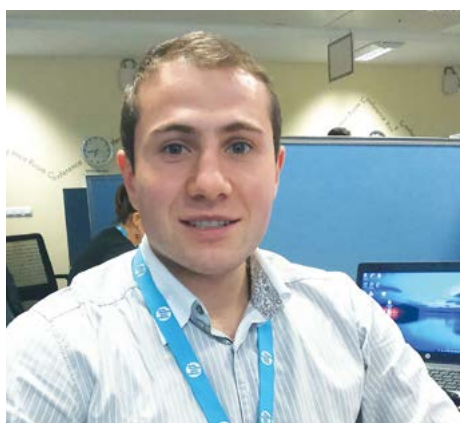
prove their English skills.

We hope this Summer Camp was a great adventure for every participant and we do believe it's not our last meeting. It's an amazing feeling to see a group of young people from different countries, with different backgrounds and different realities creating a very well integrated group and enjoying every minute spent together!

Magdalena Puć
European Secretary Assistant



2014 – a year of changes



In 2014 there have been many changes in the executive board of MIJARC Europe. First, in March Anna Caryk resigned from her position, then in July Lyubomir Todorov resigned also. In August the mandates of Florian Aurbacher and Olivier Dugrain has finished. We want to thank them all for their hard work, commitment and dedication. It was a great pleasure to work with you!

At the same time we want to warmly welcome the new members of the European Team – Veronika Nordhus (Germany), Jeroen Decorte (Belgium) and Thibault Duisit (France) who were elected

during last General Assembly in July. We hope they will continue the development of the organisation!

"Youth work is about young people having fun while learning to love, to grow up and to be free!" Giuseppe Porcaro

This quote is probably the best description of all I have been experiencing over the last five years in my involvement in MIJARC Europe. Only 18 years old, I became part of the Board of MIJARC Europe.

Irrespective of the lack of experience I dedicated all my being to the struggle for the wellbeing of the European rural youth. Over the years I learnt to truly believe in and really love what I am doing. I learnt to be responsible and dedicated to every aspect of my studies, volunteering and life as a whole. In parallel to that, I also learnt to be free, to feel free and to think free.

Now, when the time has come for me to step back from the Board of MIJARC Europe, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me over the years and has stood by my side. Indeed there were many challenges, many complicated situations and many uncertainties. However, it

is also important to underline that we have had many things to be proud of, many successful projects and many occasions for celebration. Here I would like to mention the National board of YMDRAB. I would like to thank Yonko and Yordanka in particular for their support and for the trust that they have given me to represent YMDRAB internationally. I would also like to mention Ana Silva, the former Secretary General of MIJARC Europe. Throughout the years, she has also been right beside me in realizing all these crazy ideas for new projects and initiatives that I always had. In conclusion, I would like to say that probably the biggest lesson I have learnt from the last five

years is that there is a huge need for values in our society as well as for a strong platform to represent and effectively struggle for the wellbeing of the rural youth. Therefore, I hope that MIJARC Europe will develop in future as a strong platform, which effectively empowers young people, which educates young people and which creates a clear impact on the European society and the politics that guide the development of the society.

*Sincerely Yours,
Lyubomir*

NEWS FROM MOVEMENTS

Rural development in Kenya

In August 2014, nine delegates from KLJB went to Kenya to explore how rural development works on the spot. In Kenya, they met with eight young people from Lamu, a region at the coast close to the Somali border. Staying two weeks in Thika, they visited various projects to learn more about sustainable agriculture and how people implement it under harsh conditions. The aim of the journey was also the intense exchange with the two Kenyan partners with whom KLJB and the International Rural Development Service (ILD) have had a project called Lamu Jamii since 2013.

The white gold of Africa: Cotton



To learn more about the value chain of cotton was one of the foci of the exchange. The participants had the opportunity to pick cotton and had discussions with a community in Makueni. The community members started to cultivate organic cotton recently and they told the group about their challenges in doing so. Furthermore, the young people got to know the next stages in cotton production, e. g. the ginning of cotton and spinning of textiles. For decades, KLJB has

been active in the area of critical consumption. Seeing and experiencing the complex value chain of cotton with their own eyes, helped all participants to see how important it is to buy organic and fair clothes.

Project Lamu Jamii

Another aim of the exchange was to meet the partners of Lamu Jamii personally and to talk about the progress and development of the project. At the end of the journey, a great meeting was taking place where all four partners were present. At this meeting, a major part was given to the Kenyan youth since the project will open up new opportunities for them so that they can make a decent living. Most people have no other chance than to move to big cities to find work. Apart from that, the project aims at helping the community in Lamu called the Lamu Cotton Growers Association in organisational development, marketing of their cotton, conversion to organic cotton and small measures to protect their environment.

Sustainable agriculture as the model of the future

The German as well as Kenyan youth have learnt a lot by visiting various projects. They kept one message clearly in mind: Sustainable agriculture is the model of the future, for humans and for the environment. The participants found out that organic agriculture has a great value for producers. It is often the little things that make a huge difference for them: An opportunity to cultivate their fields with water through newly-constructed pipes, the production of organic fertiliser or a small tree nursery to find out how to plant

trees in periods of serious droughts. The voice of smallholder farmers are thus essential when talking about the future of agriculture and how it should be designed. The expertise has surprised and encouraged all participants greatly.

Same dreams in life

One of the highlights of the journey was the continuous exchange with the Kenyan youth. The two groups laughed together, discussed challenges and differences but learnt that they all seem to have the same dreams in life. They found out that one should always focus on the commonalities. There are more than it appears at first glance.

The exchange was financially supported by the German Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and by the Catholic relief agency MISEREOR.

*Natalie Hohmann
KLJB Germany*



A really great success for the first YMDRAB's project within "Erasmus+" Programme

YMDRAB in partnership with another 4 organisations from different European countries implemented a project named "Bridges for ideas and practices". This was an international training course for increasing the capacity and better quality of work of youth workers who are involved in non-formal education of youngsters with communication disorders in rural areas of Eastern Europe. The project was funded with support from the "Erasmus+" Programme of the European Commission, administered in Bulgaria by "Human Resources Development Center".

The training course took place from 22nd to 31st of August, 2014 in St. St. Constantine and Helena Resort, Bulgaria. The event brought together 50 youth workers and experts from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria, who actively support the social integration and career development of rural youngsters with speech and language disorders in their countries.

The training was conducted by an international trainers team. The activities were entirely based on the methods of non-formal education. There were



presentations, working groups, workshops, group discussions, field visits, group games and others. Through them, the participants learned about the essence and applicability of the latest methods for non-formal education and systems for work with young people with different communication disorders - hearing impairments, stuttering, specific comprehension impairments of oral and written language, dyslexia and others. Moreover they exchanged ideas and experiences and acquired practical skills for encouraging inclusion of the youth with disorders to the educational system and labor market.

An important part of the training was presenting of the opportunities offered by the "Erasmus+" Programme to the organisations which work with rural young people with fewer opportunities and planning of ideas for further interaction and cooperation among the partners.

Of course there were many funny activities for intercultural learning - sightseeing, thematic evenings, art workshops, movie night and others. The participants also took advantage of the proximity to the Black Sea and they enjoyed many summer seaside entertainments together.

All participants really liked very much this event and we are strongly motivated to plan our next joint project.

On behalf of all participants, I would like to say: Thank you very much "Erasmus+" for this unforgettable summer experience!

Yonko Dodev

Vice-President of YMDRAB

Raising awareness about agriculture and food during summer trips: a manager tells us more about it!

This summer in August, MRJC Limousin organized a stay in the Dordogne region on the topic of short food chains.

Dimphi and Wieger, a Dutch couple who set up in the region quite a few years ago, is running the Fontanelles campsite, a place that is part of a network gathered under the Accueil Paysan (rural accommodation) label, where they grow vegetables, make walnut oil and produce eggs. Their whole production proceeds from organic farming.

The youth group stayed in this small corner of paradise in the Périgord Vert for ten days. On their agenda: outdoor activities (canoe-kayak, climbing, big outdoor games, walk in the forest), discovery of

the area (visit to a former paper mill, participation in a producers' night market...) but also involvement in some farm activities and preparation of meals! The camp was a good way for those young people to discover organic farming.

Special attention was given to food, this is why the ingredients were organic whenever possible, and local as much as could be! The meals (cooked by the youths) were prepared with vegetables from the Fontanelles farm, and sometimes meat from a farm in the vicinity (4km). Dry products had been bought at an earlier stage through the consumers group organized to get organic products in large-sized packs.

At the Fontanelles campsite, the youths could get a lettuce in the vegetable garden, a bit of basil and mint in the garden to garnish their dishes! This enabled those young people to be introduced to market gardening. Discovering the farm, preparing meals indeed helped to raise the young people's awareness about farming and food at affordable prices. Dimphi and Wieger have a small self-service grocer's shop with organic products to help out campers.

After this first experience which was positive for everyone, they are ready to welcome new groups for a stay at the Fontanelles campsite!

Florentin, a word from a young man who is setting up in farming

Florentin, 24 years old, has set up on a breeding farm in Mont d'Or, in the Rhone region... He told us how he feels about this setting-up.

"As an agricultural engineer and a breeder's son, I chose not to settle on the family farm so that I could reconcile my professional life with my personal life. I set up on a farm as a company, near a big city because my girlfriend does not work in the rural field. The main problem for me was to find the capital

needed to purchase shares in the farm since they are very expensive because of the technical investments for a dairy farm and the necessary equipment due to our isolation. Moreover, our farm is located in a special environment since it is in a "mountain and peri-urban area", which makes the access to the land complicated.

I also struggled with the administrative complexity through the various installation aid stages in

France. I understand why half the eligible beneficiaries do not even apply for aid."

Florentin also expressed his concern about the uncertainties surrounding the dairy sector with the discontinuation of milk quotas. He emphasized, however, the beauty of his farm project which led him to embark on this adventure.

MRJC France

INTERVIEW



Name: Thibault Duisit

Age: 27

The country you come from: France

Your position in the team: Vice-President

What can I bring to MIJARC Europe?

Since August I have been elected to the MIJARC Team. Thank you for the trust you have given to me!! It is with great envy that I start this new mission. I want to put in it what keeps me going: Commitment, projects, ideas and good mood!

After several trips, internships and work experience in France, Europe and South America, I also want to share this know-how and experiences that I have discovered.

Moreover, I think it is important to go beyond the boundaries and enable young people to meet and build project, ideas and experiences, by the encounter with other cultures, other practices. That's what I want to share and offer as a Team member.

After several years of involvement MRJC I also want to discover the other movements of MIJARC to learn about your practices, to help if possible and to be able to express the desires of young people at the European level .

To conclude, I think I can help MIJARC to move forward and to be a voice for rural youth in Europe. I can also help MIJARC to keep organizing activity for young people, by doing this giving young people an opportunity to meet, exchange, and invent new solutions for a best present and future!

Name: Veronika Nordhus

Age: 29

The country you come from: Germany

Your position in the team: Vice-President

What can I bring to MIJARC Europe?

My first experience with MIJARC Europe was 2010 when I attended the seminar about food-sovereignty in Strasbourg. I directly liked the atmosphere, the enthusiasm of the participants and the way MIJARC presented itself at the seminar. The best experience was to me, the fun I have been meeting all these great people from different countries, with different ideas and opinions. So I ended up, going to any MIJARC event I was able to join. Some Ga's, a summer camp, seminars, etc. Preparing the seminar in Toledo was a great experience. So, it just took a short time of thinking when KLJB asked if I could imagine to become part of the European team.

A strength of MIJARC is its diversity. KLJB is quite a big member-movement with a lot of campaigns, activities, positions and ideas. So I'd like to throw the experiences I made in all the years that I'm active in KLJB into the "MIJARC-pot". I'm sure that mixed up with the ideas of my team-colleagues and other MIJARC members it will be fruitful.

I'd like to use my energy and motivation to bring people together to connect, share ideas and different perspectives.





Name: Jeroen Decorte

Age: 26

The country you come from: Belgium

Your position in the team: Treasurer

What can I bring to MIJARC Europe?

I've been an active member inside KLJ since 2007, and in the summer camp of Portugal I got to know MIJARC. This was eye opening for me and I felt that I should keep going to MIJARC as it was such a nice experience. I was really stimulated by the experience and was sure that it changes the mind of the people participating. After the summer camp KLJ gave us the opportunity to start a working group to work around MIJARC and to get it more known under our members. This helped me to keep in touch with MIJARC and it is how I could get the experience of being a facilitator in the seminar in Poland. Inside the GA that was together with the seminar I could get to know how MIJARC works. Being a facilitator was a nice step up into MIJARC and it was great to see how the participants were very active and actively involved. That is why I decided to be a facilitator for a seminar again a year later, this time in France. Here the GA was in front of the seminar. Again I saw how much needed the work of the European Team is.

I want to help MIJARC continuing its good work and help organizing its activities and everything that comes with it.

Calendar of upcoming activities in 2015

When...?	What...?	Where...?
July 2015	General Assembly	Belgium
July 2015	Seminar	Belgium
October 2015	Training session	TBC

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