



PRESS RELEASE

RURAL YOUTH HUB OF THE ALBANIAN NETWORK FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The Rural Youth Hub (RYH) is a youth activism platform that supports young people, especially those in rural areas, to exercise their voice to influence agricultural and rural policy-making, to make these processes oriented toward, and closely related to the concerns, interests and priorities of young people.

On 22 June 2022, 23 young people, members of the Rural Youth Hub from different rural areas of Albania and rural development enthusiasts organized the fifth networking and exchange meeting since the first meeting on 11 December 2019, thanks to the support of Rural-You project, funded by the European Union.

Inspired by the unique experience of AGIA-CIA - Association of Young Agricultural Entrepreneurs of the Italian Confederation of Farmers and the important role it plays in the agricultural and rural sector in Italy and Europe, thanks to two active exchange days with the Vice President of AGIA-CIA, Mr. Enrico Calentini in Albania (June 21-22);

Aware of the challenges, needs and concerns of young people in rural areas of the country, thanks to the organization of local Assemblies in 2021, which gathered more than 100 young people in the northern area of Albania discussing challenges and priorities;

Aware of the key role of youth in rural areas in the social and economic development of Albania, and in particular in the reform of the sector in the framework of the European integration process;

Challenged by the high expectations of society for our role as an agent of change and empowered through the knowledge gained within the project Rural Albanian Youth (Rural-You) and networking within the RYH platform;

Aware of RYH's vision for the sustainable rural development of the country;

Motivated by good practices and successful enterprises managed by RYH members;

Promoted and oriented by ANRD and continuously supported in the last two years (2021-2022) by Rural-You project funded by the European Union, enabling young people to be involved in the sustainable development of Albania, and in particular in the transformation of their rural communities through RYH.

We concluded that these times and their challenges require policies that reflect the real needs and priorities of rural youth, and that are guided by the aspirations of young people for their rural future. We are aware that time has come for a leap forward in the process of formalization of RYH, which is a priority towards a platform of functional youth activism that can be influential in the integrated development agenda of the country.

Throughout 2021, young people have met and worked with a participatory approach in developing RYH's mission, vision, objectives and work plan. They agreed:

The VISION that will guide the efforts of young people in RYH is: A future where rural youth actively contribute to the sustainable development and advancement of Albania's rural communities.

MISSION: To serve rural communities in Albania by empowering young people offering them opportunities to be active citizens and to generate income and sustainable livelihoods even in the most remote and impoverished rural area, as well as providing opportunities for fostering public goods and interests.

THE VALUES of the young people participating in the RYH are, among the most important: Integrity, Respect for the opinions of RYH members, Political Impartiality, motivation and enthusiasm to make a difference.

On 22 June 2022, committed to conclude RYH formalization process, young participants decided to follow the following steps towards success:

1. Establishment of a Working Group that will be directly engaged in the RYH formalization process. The members of the Working Group will meet and contribute regularly under the supervision of the RYH Guide with the aim of completing formalization by October 2022. The process will involve all members through open and regular communication.
2. Promote RYH to expand membership with young people of all backgrounds: entrepreneurs, farmers, students, rural development enthusiasts, activists, etc.;
3. Further institutional strengthening of RYH as an organization with good governance, open and transparent for the benefit of sustainable rural development; finalization of admission criteria in RYH and organization of thematic groups within RYH;
4. Promoting and establishing partnerships with public sector authorities, other organizations in Albania, the region and the EU as well as with the private sector;
5. Representation of RYH in the V European Rural Parliament to be organized on 12-15 September 2022, Kielce, Poland;
6. Strengthening relations with AGIA-CIA through a formalized partnership towards the internationalization of RYH action at European level. Rural-You project activities includes a study visit to Emilia Romagna in November 2022 and further exchange opportunities.
7. Enabling RYH to be a partner and contributor to the platform of the III Albanian Rural Parliament, with related preparatory effort that will begin in early 2023.
8. Organizing the first Assembly of RYH in June 2023.

The active contribution of rural youth through RYH will enable the integration of youth perspective on rural reality (challenges, needs and aspirations) in rural and agricultural development programs, strategies and policies. This perspective of young people is still not clearly and sustainably embedded in sector and other policies of the sector. Therefore, RYH is fully committed to make an extraordinary contribution in this regard!

For any further information, contact Ilda Metani, RYH Coordinator, at: rurayouthhub@gmail.com. Follow us at <https://anrd.al/rural/>

Rural-You is funded by the [European Union](#) and implemented by [Volontari nel Mondo RTM](#), in partnership with [ADAD Malore](#), [Albanian Network for Rural Development](#), [AgroPuka](#), [Partnership for Development Foundation](#), and [Association of Young Agricultural Entrepreneurs](#) of the [Italian Confederation of Farmers](#).

The contents of this press release are the sole responsibility of the implementing Consortium and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.