



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



United Nations  
Decade of  
**FAMILY  
FARMING**  
2019-2028

# REGIONAL RURAL YOUTH FORUM

*Making Rural  
More Attractive*

*for Europe and Central Asia*

**29-30 November 2023**

*Budapest, Hungary*



## 29 NOVEMBER 2023 - WEDNESDAY

08:30–09:00

Registration - Coffee and tea

### Session 1 – Opening and setting the scene

Moderator: Susanne Shomali, International Specialist on Youth, FAO REU

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09:00–09:10

**Welcoming words and reflection on the importance of rural youth in the region**

Nabil Gangi, Officer-in-Charge, FAO REU, Deputy Regional Representative

09:10–09:20

**Overview of the Programme**

Katalin Ludvig, Regional Youth Focal Point, FAO REU

09:20–10:20

**Rural youth for sustainable development – Marketplace of participating countries**

10:20–10:50

Coffee and tea break

### Session 2 – Situation and needs of rural youth in Europe and Central Asia

Moderator: Susanne Shomali, International Specialist on Youth, FAO REU

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10:50–11:00

**Study on the situation and the needs of rural youth in the Western Balkan countries**

Ana Simonovska, Regional expert of Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of Southeastern Europe (SWG)

11:00–12:00

**Panel discussion**

- Ana Simonovska, Regional expert of SWG
- Irakli Tabagua, Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Food Sovereignty network, ELKANA Georgia
- Matteo Pagliarani, Vice President, European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA)  
Samarbu Kushubakova, Enactus Kyrgyzstan
- Mariza Rama, National Project Coordinator, National Youth Congress of Albania

12:00–12:20

**Questions, comments, and reflections from the audience**

12:20–12:30

**Group Photo**

12:30–13:50

**Lunch**

## *Session 3 – Generational renewal of family farming – agriculture, as a possible pathway in rural areas*

Moderator: Morten Hartvigsen, Regional Priority Programme Coordinator, FAO REU

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- 13:50 -14:00**      **Generational turnover in agriculture in light of the UN Decade of Family Farming - Outcomes of the Young Farmers Roundtable 2023**  
                         **Anna Korzenszky**, Partnerships Officer, Family Farming Engagement and Parliamentarian Networks Unit, FAO HQ
- 14:00-14:40**      **Panel discussion:**
- **Derenik Davtyan**, Young Farmer, Armenia
  - **Madina Sadirdinova**, Young Entrepreneur, Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Food Sovereignty network, ADI, Kyrgyzstan
  - **Milena Vulic**, Young Farmers of Serbia
  - **Mariam Kodua**, Agronomist, Representative of Youth Committee of the World Farmers' Organisation
- 14:40-15:00**      **Questions, comments, and reflections from the audience**
- 15:00-15:30**      **Coffee and tea break**

## *Session 4 – Rebranding agriculture and rural areas*

Moderator: Victor Muiru, Head of Local Youth Action | World Food Forum, Office of the Chief Economist, FAO HQ

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- 15:30-15:40**      **World Food Forum, a global network created for and led by youth**  
                         **Kitaoka Kazuki**, Senior Policy Officer, Coordinator of WFF, FAO HQ
- 15:40-15:50**      **Questions and comments**
- 15:50-16:10**      **Young entrepreneurs and innovators**
- **Ester Zakaryan**, a Community Reporter and Rural Entrepreneur, Armenia
  - **Endre Szűcs**, founder of bedrock.farm, Hungary
  - **Natalija Kirovska**, Honey East Beekeepers' Group, National Farmers' Federation, North Macedonia
- 16:10-16:55**      **Panel discussion on innovation, entrepreneurship, on-farm and off-farm diversification**
- **Ester Zakaryan**, a Community Reporter and Rural Entrepreneur, Armenia

- **Endre Szűcs**, Founder of bedrock.farm, Hungary
- **Natalija Kirovska**, Honey East Beekeepers' Group, National Farmers' Federation, North Macedonia
- **László Jónás**, CEO, Head of Strategy, Design Terminal, Hungary
- **Endrit Ameti**, Founder of "Biotech Agriculture", Kosovo<sup>1</sup>

16:55-17:10 **Questions, comments, and reflections from the audience**

17:10-17:15 **Closing of Day 1**

Viktoria Nagy, National Rural Youth Consultant, FAO REU

From 18:00 **Joint organized dinner**

## 30 November 2023 - Thursday

### Session 5 – Platforms for rural youth and their role

Moderator: Susanne Shomali, International Specialist on Youth, FAO REU

09:00-09:20 **The power of platforms for exchange**

09:20-10:00 **Panel discussion on how to develop rural youth networks at country and regional level**

- **Aleko Zoidze**, Senior Specialist, Economic Research and Analysis Division, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Georgia
- **Spyros Papadatos**, Secretary General, Rural Youth Europe
- **Matteo Pagliarani**, Vice President, CEJA
- **Ali Erim Ucluok**, Youth Deal Cooperative, Gencisi, Turkey

10:00-10:20 **Questions, comments, and reflections from the audience**

10:20-10:45 **Coffee and tea break**

### Session 6 – Working group on mapping priority actions and strategies supporting rural youth

Moderator: Katalin Ludvig, Regional Youth Focal Point, FAO REU

10:45-12:00 **Group work**

12:00-12:30 **Reporting back**

12:30-13:50 **Lunch break**

<sup>1</sup> References to Kosovo shall be understood in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

## Session 7 – Policy solutions for empowerment of youth – the voice of rural youth in policy making

Moderator: Francesca DallaValle, Programme Officer, FAO HQ

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**13:50-14:05**    **Conclusions and policy recommendations of the study on rural youth in the Western Balkan countries**

Emelj Tuna, Regional expert of Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group of Southeastern Europe (SWG)

**14:05-15:00**    **Panel discussion on policy solutions for youth employment and empowerment. How to properly address the diverse needs and constrains of rural youth at policy level? How to integrate youth in decision making processes?**

Panellists:

Piroska Kállay, European Economic and Social Committee

Irakli Tabagua, ELKANA, Georgia, Youth Representative of European Coordination Via Campesina as part of Nyeleni ECA delegation

Treasa Cadogan, Food Security Masters student at the University of Edinburgh

Emelj Tuna, Associate Professor, University Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje

Alisher Umaraliev, Youth Focal Point, Ministry of Agriculture, Uzbekistan

**15:00-15:20**    **Questions, comments, and reflections from the audience**

**15:20-15:50**    **Coffee break**

## Session 8 - Wrap-up and closing of the workshop

Moderator: Susanne Shomali, International Specialist on Youth, FAO REU

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**15:50-16:20**    **Wrap-up activity: “Reflections and resolutions”**

**16:20-16:30**    **Closing of the workshop**  
Raimund Jehle, Regional Programme Leader, FAO REU

### ***Venue: Mercure Budapest Castle Hill***

<https://all.accor.com/hotel/1688/index.en.shtml>

Budapest, Hungary

### ***Hybrid Event***

Registration for Zoom:

[https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Q2Gmu7LnTNSiR4c20u-0Aw](https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Q2Gmu7LnTNSiR4c20u-0Aw)