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Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members – Original language compiled

ERC/22/INF/12 – Information paper on FAO support to rural youth in the Europe and Central Asia region

Member	ERC Document reference	Statement
European Union (received 03 May 16:18)	ERC/22/INF/12	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The EU and its Member States welcome the information note, and thank the FAO Regional Office for a very good overview of the situation of rural youth in the Europe and Central Asia region, and for the update on its latest activities.2. The role of youth as agents of change in revitalising rural areas and in food systems transformation cannot be overemphasised. Therefore we fully acknowledge the special focus on youth, creating decent rural employment in an inclusive green economy, supporting youth participation in rural development, strengthening digital solutions and other innovations, such as agroecology, building adequate rural services and investing in young people.3. We welcome the inclusion of youth as a crosscutting theme of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, and mainstreaming the activities of the organisation for and with the youth aiming to create an enabling environment and to support the dialogue with all stakeholders and include them in the policy decision-making processes. What are concrete programmes and activities that the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia is planning in support of decent employment and dignified livelihoods for youth in the rural area?4. Keeping young farmers in agriculture and in rural areas through investments and measures supporting generational renewal of smallholder and family farms is an important priority. In this sense, we welcome reference to the UNDFP and encourage implementation of the transversal Pillar No 2 of the UNDFP Global Action Plan.

		<p>However, we would like to highlight also the potential of promoting farming and the contribution to food systems transformation as a career challenge for urban youth. Is the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia planning to include also this aspect in its activities? If yes, how?</p> <p>5. The document highlights many differences between countries and between rural and urban areas, requiring territorial and context-specific approaches. How is the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia going to help countries to fill the gaps in development, education, employment opportunities, economic activity, health and rural services, social and other infrastructure?</p> <p>6. Young women in particular, often face more difficulties in securing financing and employment opportunities. This calls for gender-sensitivity in relation to youth interventions.</p> <p>7. Finally, we would like to refer to the CFS workstream on the preparation of policy recommendations on promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems as an important guidance for the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia when planning interventions and activities for youth employment and empowerment for agriculture, rural development and food systems transformation.</p>
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