

Invitation letter | Joint meeting

Dear Sir/Madam,

Many rural areas in the EU are marked by a demographic exodus of skilled YOUNG people looking for jobs and better living conditions in the city. As a result, the less skilled or less mobile rural youth is frequently left with no employment, education, training, or life perspectives. In this respect, economic change in the West or societal disruption in the wake of post-socialist regime change in the East seem to have produce similar outcomes.

In spite of these challenges, there is ample need for many skilled workers to tackle the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, or social services deliverance, especially in an aging countryside that is vulnerable to ecological decline. In recent years these societal needs have led to an emerging trend of skilled and engaged people moving from the cities towards rural places to start innovative businesses, frequently focused on agro-ecological farming and sustainable local services. This leads, for instance, to the creation of newcomers' networks with very positive local effects on rural job market and on communities and individuals' social capital and self-esteem.

The COST Rural NEET Network and the RURALIZATION project are initiatives under the Horizon Europe framework that have analyzed these complex social problems and opportunities for European rural areas, for the past 4 years. The RURALIZATION project (2019-2023) documents and analyzes such cases in 12 EU countries and derives policy recommendations in the field of rural development. The Rural NEET Youth Network reports and papers detail how the most vulnerable young people can benefit from these opportunities emerging in the countryside for their own social inclusion.

Considering our efforts and the existing societal challenges for rural areas, we would like to invite you to a meeting with representatives of the RURALIZATION project and the COST Action Rural NEET Youth Network in COST Association Headquarters Avenue du Boulevard – Bolwerklaan 21, 1210 Brussels, on 12.04, from 10.00 to 12.30. Our meeting is intitled **Green Jobs for Young People: Implications for Rural Development and Rural Societies Future**. The session will include a workshop followed by a work session.

The agenda of our meeting is provided as an attachment.

The objectives of the meeting are:

1. To share conclusions of both the RURALIZATION project and the COST Action Rural NEET Youth Network that are relevant for further development of green jobs in rural areas, particularly for the younger generations.
2. Assessing stakeholders' needs and priorities in face of the present feedback about these results.

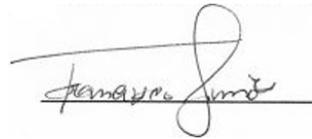
3. Discussing future avenues including possibilities for collaboration under the European Rural Youth Observatory, an upcoming initiative of the Rural NEET Youth Network.

We are kindly asking you to attend the meeting and participate in discussions. The session is mostly interactive and based in semi-structured discussions, so there is no need for you to prepare any presentation.

COST Action Rural NEET Youth Network and RURALIZATION project are looking forward to a fruitful collaboration and exchange of ideas around the main topics of the session.

For more details about the Rural NEET Youth Network and the RURALIZATION project feel free to visit the following links: <https://www.rnyobservatory.eu/> and <https://ruralization.eu/>

Best Regards,



Francisco Simões | Chair of the Rural NEET Youth Network



Titus Bahner | co-ordinator Ruralization WP 7