

This workshop, part of the ENRD's work on [Generational Renewal](#) and [Social Inclusion](#), looked further into how to make rural areas more attractive for young farmers and new entrants and how young entrepreneurs can contribute to rural prosperity through their work. This included an overview of practices supporting young farmers and new entrants, land mobility and access to land in different Member States.

The programme of the event included presentations by young rural entrepreneurs from Italy, France, Germany and Ireland. The participants also had a chance to discuss the proposal for the future Common Agricultural Policy with focus on generational renewal. Finally, the programme included a visit to a local farm where a younger farmer is taking over the business from his parents.

Event Information

Title: ENRD Workshop on Generational Renewal: Attracting Young Farmers and Entrepreneurs in Rural Areas

Date: 22 February 2019

Location: Athlone, Ireland

Organisers: ENRD Contact Point

Participants: National Rural Networks, farmers organisations, EU institutions

Outcomes: useful ideas to make rural areas more attractive for young farmers and new entrants; role of future CAP to support generational renewal; sharing of concrete examples from several Member States (MS).

Web page: https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/enrd-workshop-generational-renewal_en

Supporting young farmers and new entrants

The ENRD Contact Point team [contextualised](#) the workshop in the framework of the ENRD's work on [Generational Renewal](#) and [Social Inclusion](#). The main obstacles to generational renewal in European rural areas [include](#) increasing land concentration (the decrease in the number of farm holdings coupled with an increase in their average size), an ageing farm population and barriers to access to land. Young farmers can benefit from a series of EAFRD measures, and some Member States (MSs) are trying to support generational renewal in agriculture through specific measures; the ENRD [has analysed](#) examples from France, Italy, Lithuania and Ireland.

Maura Farrell (NUI/Galway) [presented](#) Irish initiatives and policy tools – all based on solid academic and field research – aiming to attract young farmers and entrepreneurs in agriculture. These include early retirement schemes for those transferring their holdings, investment schemes and farm partnerships between generations. The conclusion was that for Irish agriculture to remain innovative and dynamic, young farmers and new entrant schemes should continue to be supported in the new CAP.



Shane Conway (NUI/Galway) [described](#) land mobility as the greatest barrier facing young people attempting to enter the agricultural sector in Europe. He presented the Irish Land Mobility Service, an initiative successfully linking landowners and farmers, young and old, interested in collaborating and developing viable and sustainable farm enterprises. The European Access to Land Network offers a comprehensive map of similar match-making programmes in other MS. A shared goal is to diversify the age structure of the sector while acknowledging old farmers' attachment to land and the human side of land mobility.

Successful examples of youth entrepreneurship

The workshop included the presentation of successful initiatives carried out by young rural entrepreneurs.

Thomas Gibert (France) is one of the founders of the collective farm [La Tournerie](#). It supports 11 young people who have realised their dream of engaging in organic agriculture on a human scale, creating strong social bonds with the community. Rotating roles allow them to enjoy spare time on week-ends.



Camilla Bizzarri (Italy) presented [Agricolus](#), a software developed to support precision agriculture. Through images produced by drones or satellites, geo-localisation and mathematic models, Agricolus provides farmers with updated and precise maps of their fields, using modern technology to complete traditional knowledge. Agricolus offers free subscriptions and paid functionalities and the company provides free training to farmers.

Jonathan O'Meara (Ireland) is the founder of [Mid Ireland Adventure](#), an adventure tourism enterprise located in Mid Ireland. His project, initially supported through LEADER, led to a wider regeneration of the area and economic spillovers.

Giorgio Arbato (Italy) is an 18-year-old student at the Istituto Agrario Ciuffelli in Todi, which [offers](#) job placement projects to students. Thanks to this, Giorgio is collaborating with a company producing cosmetics using organic agricultural products and is gaining an invaluable experience in rural business.

Amadé 'Mogli' Billesberger (Germany) is a [young farmer](#) who decided to restructure and take over the family farm. A supporter of the Slow Food movement, Mogli directly supplies local shops, bakeries and restaurants who are willing to pay a better price for locally-grown organic vegetables and grains.

Generational renewal and rural development

Kristine Bori (DG AGRI) [presented](#) how the current CAP takes into account the various dimensions of generational renewal, both in farming and in terms of more general business development in rural areas. She mentioned the example of [Newbie](#), an H2020 project on business models for innovation, entrepreneurship and resilience in agriculture.

Chiara Dellapasqua (DG AGRI) [presented](#) European Commission's proposal for the future CAP, which includes support to generational renewal as one of its nine specific objectives and foresees several types of interventions. MS will play a key role in developing a sound strategy in the CAP plan for generational renewal.

Outcomes and actions

Rural entrepreneurs are essential for the sustainability and development of rural Europe. The examples of young rural entrepreneurs included in the workshop, then further explored through group discussions, highlighted some key elements making rural areas more attractive for young people:

- a sustainable quality of life, including links with the community and the possibility to enjoy some time off the farm (e.g. La Tournerie);
- the role of technology to support knowledge transfer between generations (e.g. Agricolus);
- the authenticity of the experience provided (e.g. Mid Ireland Adventures);
- the importance of linking education in agriculture and the job market (e.g. Green Jobs project);
- the role of local products as part of the attractiveness of an area (e.g. Mogli's experience).

Generational renewal requires a broader and collective reflection on how to make rural areas more vibrant. This is a positive process in which opportunities for exchanges and mutual learning among rural stakeholders in different MS are crucial. Stakeholder consultation continues to be key to ensure that MS develop ambitious national strategies to support generational renewal, that can feed into the future CAP strategic plans.