

# GETTING READY!



## Dear Friends,

We have a busy autumn ahead of us in ViSEnet-project: there is much to look forward. The project has been applied six months extension and is coming to a final quarter of its duration. The intellectual outputs of the project are coming together and we will have very busy last months to share our learning and results with you.

The learning material in the Community platform is being finalized and the Guidebook of Good Practices based on our experiences in the project is coming together as we speak. To build a bridge over Covid-19 we have organized the Rural Community Online Seminars and Talks of different topics. So far we have had an inspirational presentation about social entrepreneurship in Romania countryside, experiences of renovating the community shop and post office in Leesi Village, Estonia and learned about using the partnership table as a tool in rural development to mention a few. As the aim of the project is increasing the knowledge exchange between our pilot areas and supporting networking, we have been actively inviting participants in the rural community online seminars with open invitations.

In addition, there will be networking opportunities also in autumn in the international Virtual Round Table discussion we are organizing on 14th September. There is an introduction of the discussion topic and guest speakers presented later in this newsletter. The newsletter also shares the latest news with ViSEnet Junior – a group of children and youngsters interested in international networking.

Meantime, please check out the [Learning material](#) created in the project and join in [the Rural SE Hub!](#)  
Have a nice and relaxing summer!

**Katja, project manager**

University of Helsinki Ruralia Institute

# JOIN IN THE VIRTUAL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE OF RURAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN EUROPE

DATE: Sept 14th 2021

TIME: 13.00–14.30 EET, 12.00–13.30 CET, 11.00–12.30 UK

Please register for the seminar by Sept 6th 2021:

[Registration link](#)

The aim of the discussion is to encourage European communities to work together to better meet the contemporary needs of rural areas and to support rural social enterprises and share the ideas and exchanging knowledge of rural social enterprises.

We have wonderful guest speakers to give introductory remarks for discussion

**DR. MARY O'SHAUGHNESSY** is Head, Department of Food Business and Development at Cork University Business School, College of Business and Law, University College Cork. Her teaching and research interests include sustainable, place-based rural development, community/collective social entrepreneurship, and social enterprise. She is a director at Micro Finance Ireland, director and founding member of EMES (International research network, comparative research, social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, social and solidarity economy and social innovation), former member of the National Social Enterprise Task Force (Ireland) and academic advisor to Ireland's First National Social Enterprise Policy (2019). She was awarded the UCC Research Supervisor of the Year Award in 2019. She is UCC PI on the MSCA ITN PhD Research Project RurAction, with a focus on social enterprise, social innovation and sustainable rural development. She contributes to national and Europe policy on social enterprise and rural development.

**LUCAS OLMEDO** is as a researcher based at the Department of Food Business and Development, University College Cork (Ireland). His research interests include social enterprises, community social entrepreneurship, local, rural and regional development. Lucas has recently finished his PhD on 'Exploring Irish Rural Social Enterprises as Neoendogenous Development Actors' conducted with a H2020-MarieCurie research fellowship within the project RurAction. Lucas latest research publications include 'Rurality as context for innovative responses to social challenges – The role of rural social enterprises', published in the Journal of Rural Studies, 'Rural social enterprises in Europe: A systematic literature review' published in Local Economy and 'Community-Based Social Enterprises Fostering Inclusive Development in Peripheral European Rural Areas' published in the United Nations Knowledge Hub for the Social and Solidarity Economy.

**CHRIS RAFTERY** Chris joined Scottish Government and including some its agencies has undertaken a total of 10 different roles. Whilst, most of the these roles have been within the Health portfolio, Chris has also headed up a number of Chief Executive's offices, led development of a new support fund for disabled people and worked in Pensions.

Chris is currently Head of Enterprise Third Sector and Social Investment within Scottish Government. Chris currently has responsibility for Third Sector Covid support/recovery which provides the context for implementing the next 3 year Scottish Social Enterprise Action Plan and associated investment. The action plan, recognises the unique challenges and opportunities for Social Enterprise within Rural area, which often lead to local people providing vital support to their communities, supported by their enterprising activity. The action plan is supported through a range of social investment activity which ensures a pipeline of Social Enterprise is supported throughout their potential journey.

**ROGER EVANS**, PhD is a Senior Specialist at the Estonian University of Life Sciences (EMÜ) working in project development, education and training for communities and small enterprises in rural areas, the development of vocational education & qualifications, and with an emphasis on social entrepreneurship, rural community development, micro business development, rural tourism, craft and local food production, rural community and rural development education, training and curriculum development.



# VIENET JUNIOR – GET INSPIRED

ViSENet Junior – Get Inspired' took place on Saturday 19th June with the aim to help young people build confidence, learn new skills, meet other young people with similar interests, and get inspired to engage more with social enterprise.

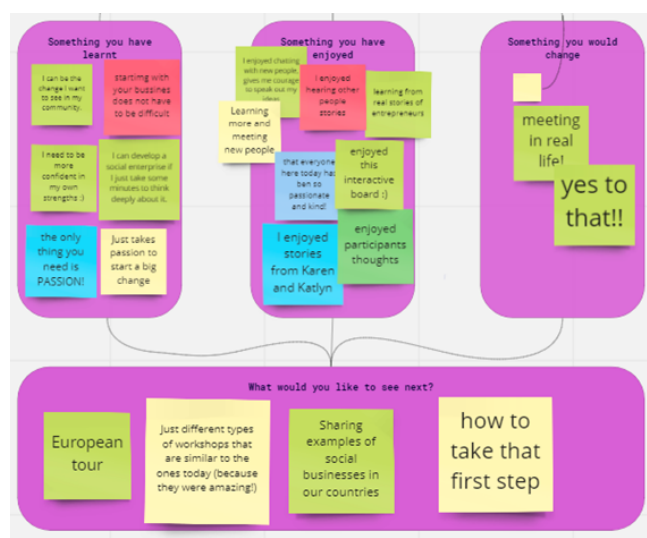
The event was attended by 4 young people from across Scotland and Estonia and started with designing dream holidays in partners to get to know one another. Jayne Hamilton, Director of Study Seed facilitated a workshop on Empowerment and Confidence in which young people learnt what it means to have confidence, how to support others to be empowered, and how to keep moving forward and overcome obstacles.

*“We don't have to be perfect, we just need to be passionate”*  
Jayne Hamilton

After lunch, Kerly Piirsalu, Marketing Manager at Change Makers led the second workshop of the day on creating a social enterprise. In pairs young people chose an issue they were interested in then decided how they would solve it. Young people presented a community produced website and hub for learning languages and a programme to tackle poverty by proving free courses for people to attend and then add to their CV's, and free resources such as books for children who may not otherwise be able to afford them.

The afternoon session consisted of a question and answer session with inspiring social entrepreneurs followed by a consultation on the future of rural communities. Speakers at the Q+A were Karen Anderson, Director of SHE Scotland, and Kätlyn Jürisaar, Co-founder of Huggy Est. Young people were left feeling incredibly inspired and uplifted after hearing about their journeys in social enterprise and the impact of their work.

*“If you have motivation, if you know why you are doing something then even if you have difficulties, you can face them”*  
- Kätlyn Jürisaar



Finally, the day finished by looking to the future as young people created and recorded their vision for the future of rural communities.

In evaluation, young people said they had learnt that they need to get better at identifying their own skills, and that they have the potential to create their own social enterprise if they are passionate. They said they enjoyed hearing the stories from all the different speakers and facilitators, and having the opportunity to meet new people. In the future, they would be interested in more workshops and getting the opportunity to meet in person!

*“Every single one of you can make a change”*  
-Karen Anderson

### **The Rural Social Enterprise Guide Book of Good Practices: Experiences from Finland, Estonia, Germany, Romania and Scotland to be published in the autumn**

One of the outcomes of the project will be a guidebook based on our experiences in the project. There will be chapters about lessons we have learned and advice we would like to give to others, five interesting cases from each of the participating partner, policy recommendations and a list of important international stakeholders and networks in supporting rural social entrepreneurship and enterprises.

### **COMING UP!**

- Virtual Round Table discussion on Sept 14th, please register by the Sept 6th
- Rural Community Online Seminars and Talks: next meeting will be on October 2021
- Project Closing Online Seminar on November 2021
- The Rural Social Enterprise Guide Book of Good Practices: Experiences from Finland, Estonia, Germany, Romania and Scotland will be published on August–September 2021

# Together we can do it



### **More information will be available in project partner's websites:**

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