

# EUROPARC Youth Manifesto

A CALL FOR **CHANGE**  
IN RURAL COMMUNITIES  
AND PROTECTED AREAS

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK  
SCOTLAND, UNITED KINGDOM  
SEPTEMBER 2018



WE NEED TO **CREATE** MORE  
SELF-SUFFICIENT, DIVERSE AND RESILIENT  
RURAL COMMUNITIES ACROSS EUROPE.

**Protected Areas have a central role in this.**  
This, we believe cannot be done unless we  
**ENGAGE** young people fully into the work of  
Protected Areas, biodiversity and rural  
community development.

Young people bring new and creative ideas  
to sustain our rural areas.

WE CAN HELP BUILD COMMUNITIES TO  
BECOME MORE **CONNECTED, OPEN**  
**MINDED AND ACTIVE.**

WE WANT TO **PROTECT** AND **CONSERVE** OUR ENVIRONMENT,  
TO DEVELOP A DEEP **NATURE CONNECTION**  
THAT HAS POSITIVE IMPACTS ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

We must be given the opportunity to remain in rural areas  
and to prevent us losing touch with our **FAMILY ROOTS** and  
**CULTURAL TRADITIONS**. We can offset some of the  
problems associated with an ageing rural population and  
build resilient and sustainable communities.

WE WANT TO **CONNECT** WITH EACH  
OTHER, ACROSS THE GENERATIONS AND  
WITH OUR **COMMUNITY** AND PLACE,  
TO **SHARE** OUR IDEAS.

This Manifesto is a source of **ideas and inspiration** for decision makers in Protected Areas and rural communities **to ensure the involvement and empowerment** of young people.

A clear, consistent and coordinated approach to engaging young people meaningfully in rural communities and the natural environment is needed for the benefit of all and future generations.

Rural communities suffer from depopulation; innovative projects and equal opportunities are required to enable independent living and to encourage a balanced and healthy economy, for all.

All young people have creativity and imagination, and these talents should be fostered to help us develop as the successors to inherit our rural landscapes.

## **1 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT**

## **2 LIVING**

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## **4 WORKING**

## **5 OUR CALL TO ACTION**

We want to show we **CARE**  
for our nature and culture,  
to be a part of the community;

**WE WANT TO WORK  
COLLABORATIVELY WITH YOU  
TO CREATE OUR COMMON  
FUTURE.**

**PROTECTED AREAS,  
OTHER RURAL ORGANISATIONS  
AND DECISION MAKERS MUST  
LOOK TO THE FUTURE,**

**LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE  
AND GIVE US THE CHANCE TO TAKE THE LEAD.**

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# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Young people are the future of Europe's Protected Areas and we CARE about sustaining our rural landscapes but we are **under-represented** in the decision making process.

We want to **CONNECT** with our **COMMUNITY** and are capable and willing to give input and implement change if given the chance.

We can **SHARE** our straightforward solutions to engage a technology based generation.

We can help **EMPOWER** the next generation to develop experience and skills that will prepare us for an **ACTIVE ROLE AS THE FUTURE LEADERS** in our Protected Areas and rural communities.

We want to be **HEARD** and **ENTRUSTED** with the opportunity for direct involvement in decision making.

## WHAT WE NEED YOU TO DO

- **ESTABLISH** youth councils to bring young people's ideas and needs to local and national decision makers.
- Provide a place on boards for one of the youth.
- **CREATE** a youth project fund for projects planned, implemented and reported upon by young people.
- Deliver an induction scheme that enables adult board members to **UNDERSTAND** youth representation.

## COMMUNICATION

- Use of online platforms for consultations, surveys and referenda with face to face awareness raising sessions on issues to **CONNECT** with young people.
- **ENABLE** Youth groups to **SHARE** their achievements and express their views and concerns to reach an older audience through traditional media.

# LIVING

Supporting young people to live in rural areas helps us to remain **CONNECTED** to our **COMMUNITY** and to share in developing its **FUTURE**.

Rural areas are often difficult to reach and to travel around. Young People need to **CONNECT** in the real and virtual worlds to thrive.

Society cannot afford for young people to continue to leave rural areas.

We need **SUPPORT** to be a part of the **COMMUNITY** and build its **PRESENT** and **FUTURE**.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- **PROVIDE TRANSPORT** throughout the year. Funded collaboratively by protected areas, national and local government, businesses and tourists.
- **IMPROVE** digital connectivity to allow innovative business and social models to develop.
- **CREATE** Active Travel networks and initiatives to encourage cycling and walking to aid health and well-being and offset climate change.

## COMMUNITY

- Young people are part of the culture and history of the area. **CONNECT** with them and provide engaging activities and social opportunities for young people, that focus on learning about and **PARTICIPATING** in the cultural heritage and history of their common area.
- Develop intergenerational buddy schemes/skill shares to combat rural isolation and build a sense of community. Young people can **SHARE** their understanding of technology and social media; older people can help them **LEARNING** rural skills.
- **CREATE** fun, safe places for young people to **CONNECT** with each other.

## AFFORDABILITY

- Many young people want to stay in their communities. Introduce a scheme to allow young people to purchase goods and services at a reduced rate to fully harness an affordable existence in rural areas.
- Develop a housing scheme for individuals living and / or working in Protected Areas and rural communities on a low income. Short term and permanent options should be provided to cater for different employment opportunities.

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# LEARNING

We want to create more self-sufficient, diverse and resilient rural communities across Europe, we want to learn about, care for, sustain and **SHARE** our local cultural and natural heritage.

Access to academic, practical and vocational education is an effective solution to empower young people and to spark our interest in rural careers.

Young People want to **CONNECT** to our **PLACES** and use that learning to stay and develop our **COMMUNITY**.

We need investment in training for the **FUTURE**.

Please pass on **WISDOM** and **INSPIRATION** to Young People.

## MORE NATURE EDUCATION

- **CREATE** opportunities for young people from an early age to learn about their local natural and cultural heritage through volunteering, Junior Ranger Programmes and other nature based clubs.
- Make **CONNECTIONS** between local schools and Protected Areas to include teacher training, Ranger visits and educational trips.
- Develop educational resources about local natural heritage to help teachers take learning outdoors.

## MORE SUPPORT

- **CREATE** more young people-led businesses by providing courses on entrepreneurship to learn about self-employment and how to create your own business.
- **CREATE** links between rural businesses and higher education establishments to inform young people about potential rural careers and to provide special training and work experience.

## INSPIRE INTEREST

- **CREATE** a social platform and programme of events in Protected Areas and rural communities to help young people **SHARE** and **CONNECT**.
- Use social media effectively to inspire environmental awareness and use youth ambassadors to **ENCOURAGE** posts and content.



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# WORKING

We **BELIEVE** that providing jobs and developing the local economy **SHOULD NOT** take place at the expense of the natural environment;

equally, the need for environmentally friendly practices should not compromise the standard of life for local residents.

Successful youth employment initiatives should therefore be creative, flexible, innovative, financially self-sufficient and create sustainable job opportunities.

All young people have **CREATIVITY** and **IMAGINATION**, and these talents should be fostered to help us develop as entrepreneurs.

## NEED JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Young people want to work. Businesses and organisations in Protected Areas and rural communities to provide opportunities that can realise the potential of young people through apprenticeships, internships with training and / or jobs tailored for young people in full time education *e.g. after school, evening and weekends.*
- **CREATE** partnerships between schools and local businesses to offer jobs for young people. These jobs should include progression, pay rises and offer references as incentives.

## NEED MORE TRAINING

- Provide youth entrepreneurship schemes in schools and colleges that will help young people to build and create their own rural businesses by giving them support and encouragement.
- **SHARE** the wisdom of inspiring young people and successful rural entrepreneurs from across Europe, inviting them to give talks in schools, youth clubs and local cafés.

## LOW WAGES

- Pay the living wage or equivalent to all rural workers at national age of majority, to counteract the high living and transport costs in rural areas.
- Employers provide incentives to counteract the high living and transport costs in rural areas *e.g. subsidised housing costs, opportunities for progression and training.*

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Let's put the  
**EUROPARC**  
**Youth Manifesto**  
into action and  
co-design a  
sustainable  
future - now!

# OUR CALL TO ACTION

**Connect with your local youth, visit schools and youth clubs.** Encourage them to share their thoughts to inspire their peers to create a common initiative.

photo by Mark Hambling



Apply for funding for projects to engage with young people if necessary and reach out for **community support**.

**Monitor** and **evaluate** your progress, **sharing responsibility** with young people.

Put your project plans into action – working out **leadership opportunities** and **governance involvement** in collaboration with your young partners.

Together, select the priority issues you want to address from the Manifesto, **start planning a project together**, work on a shared understanding of the local needs and solutions.

**Report** and **publicise** your ideas, progress and results via local and social media.

**Stay in touch** with EUROPARC to **share your experience and your Youth projects** at a European level – **learn and inspire!**

[youth@europarc.org](mailto:youth@europarc.org)

[facebook.com/europarcyouthmanifesto](https://facebook.com/europarcyouthmanifesto)

[europarc.org/youth-manifesto](https://europarc.org/youth-manifesto)

**#EUROPARCyouthmanifesto**



# We look forward to working with you to create a vibrant future

for young people, for nature  
and for our rural areas.

*All projects emerging from the EUROPARC Youth Manifesto must aspire to the highest environmental standards with regards to habitat protection, resource depletion and mitigating climate change.*





Tapadh leat! Thank you! Kiitos! Merci! Aitäh! Dankeschön! Takk! Dëkuji!  
Paldies! Teşekkür! Hvala! Grazie! Dank je! ευχαριστώ! Tack! Дякую!  
D'akujem! Diolch ichi! Dziękuję Ci! Mulțumesc! Tapadh leibh!  
Faleminderit! Köszönöm! Þakka þér fyrir! Хвала вам! Gracias!  
Благодаря ви! Obrigado! Təşəkkür! გმადლობთ!  
Շնորհակալություն! Gràcies! ありがとう!  
Buíochas a ghabháil leat! Ačiū! Спасибо!  
كل اركش  
תודה

The EUROPARC Youth Manifesto Team

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# EUROPARC Youth Manifesto



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