

ANNOUNCEMENT

Euracademy Association and South and East Cork Area Development Partnership invite you to take part in the

16th Summer Academy

On

“Resilient communities: pillars of sustainable rural development”

to be held in Cork, Ireland, and the surrounding area, from 3rd to 8th September 2017

The theme: *How can rural communities become more resilient and face the 21st century’s challenges so that their sustainable development can be assured.*

Background and aim

Resilience is a complex concept with a variety of interpretations. It means the preparedness of the community to deal with disasters, but also ecosystems management and community planning. Resilient communities cannot only handle shocks in a planned and organised way, including earthquakes, fires, floods etc, but also deal with stressful situations that may emerge from economic crises, such as high unemployment, endemic violence, food and water shortages or even inefficient public transportations systems. It is argued that by being able to address both the shocks and stresses, a community is more likely to deliver basic functions to all its members, in both good and bad times.

Resilience is the ability to anticipate risk, limit impact, and bounce back rapidly by activating a communities’ potential for survival, adaptability, evolution and growth in the face of radical change; and by building self-help mechanisms that fortify the community against unforeseeable events and situations. Hence it is important for the community to plan forward for different options in the future, and apply wise ecosystem management methods. The many crises that emerged in the 21st century – energy, environmental, economic and equity crises, are posing complex and often unpredictable challenges to communities. Rural communities are smaller and more vulnerable than urban communities, but can more easily muster their capabilities and mobilise their members, so that they address the challenges when they arise: they need to build their resilience so that they can plan their future and manage their environment when they are stressed and only part of the needed support may come from outside sources.

The **16th Summer Academy** of Euracademy Association aims to explore how resilience can be built and sustained within rural communities, and what are the options for these communities to plan their future in times of economic and environmental stress, mobilising their own resources and managing emerging crises in ways that assure the community’s sustainability.

Discussion topics

Questions to be addressed by this year’s Summer Academy include the following non-exhaustive list:

- What are the definitions of resilience and how can they apply to rural Europe?
- What are the converging economic and ecological challenges rural communities in Europe face today?
- What are the links between resilience and sustainable rural development?
- What are the changes in lifestyle rural communities need to bring about in order to become more resilient?
- What can we learn about resilient communities from best practices in Europe and elsewhere in the world?

- How can we identify community resources and needs, and design an environment from which creativity and collective effort can emerge?
- How can we organise strategies and models to shift current policies to support and foster community resilience?
- What are the steps a rural community needs to take in order to establish a resilience-building plan?

The Target Group

The 16th Summer Academy welcomes participants from all over Europe who are working in the field of rural development. For this year's summer academy, we are targeting managers and staff of Local Development Agencies, and in particular LEADER LAGs, NGOs working in rural areas, other managers and animators of rural development; local and regional authorities or similar organisations; policy and decision makers; researchers, academics, training providers, students and experts in related fields.

The course is designed for around 40 participants, who will be invited to share their experiences, to acquire new knowledge and skills and to benefit from the wide networking opportunities offered by Euracademy and the co-organising partner. Participants should have a reasonable command of English.

The Format

The summer academy includes lectures; discussion groups in the form of workgroups of up to 8 participants following each lecture; study trips to the rural areas surrounding the summer academy venue, focusing on specific local development issues related to community resilience; study trip reports which the participants prepare and present; panel discussions and special-topic workshops. Collective work is strongly promoted during the summer academy on the principle that all the participants learn from one another, sharing knowledge and experiences on an equal basis.

This year's innovation

This year's summer academy aims to develop a learning model that builds the experience of the participants on practical issues rural communities face in a more focused way, working closely with representatives of these communities and devising jointly created solutions for the identified problems.

We are going to adopt a stronger emphasis on "problem solving - finding solutions" and give a higher profile to the study visit investigations and greater importance to meetings with the communities. Thus, following initial lectures/plenary sessions from expert lecturers, the study trips will be redeveloped as topic-specific case studies to investigate real community-based challenges. The participants will be tasked to explore these challenges and identify and present real potential solutions during the summer academy. In this way, we hope participants will be able to develop their skills of community-based investigation/appraisal, analysis and solution/action plan presentation.

The Programme

This summer academy will benefit from the experience of 15 previous Summer Academies held in an equal number of different locations around Europe, on different themes relating to sustainable rural development. Following the arrival of participants on Sunday 3rd September 2017, an international dinner is held in the evening to warm up the group and give opportunities for participants to meet and discuss in a relaxed environment. The first two days are devoted to lectures and discussion workshops. The following two days are dedicated on the Thematic Study Trips. Each trip covers a specific area and includes practical examples on the chosen study theme. Study Trip reports are prepared by participants, which describe their experiences and make proposals for implementing activities and strategies in the area to enhance the resilience of local

communities. These reports are presented and discussed in a plenary session on the day following the study trips, which is also the final day of the summer academy, when the conclusions are drawn and an evaluation of the summer academy is performed during lunch. The participants will depart in the afternoon of Friday 8th September 2017, from 14:00 onwards.

Location and organisation

The 16th Summer Academy will take place in Cork, Ireland, and is co-organised by Euracademy Association and South and East Cork Area Development (SECAD) Partnership Ltd., a not-for-profit company that was set up in 1995 with the purpose of implementing European and Irish government-funded programmes and initiatives. <http://www.secad.ie/>

County Cork

County Cork in southwestern Ireland has been shaped over the millennia by nature and by natives, invaders, explorers, by saints and by sinners! Modern-day Cork is a thriving multi-ethnic society where fishing villages and organic goats' cheese makers live alongside state-of-the-art designers and crafters of high technology for medical devices and mobile communications. Cork comprises about 11% of the island of Ireland making it the largest county in the country with a multitude of opportunities for exploration and social enrichment. The county itself has a little over half a million people while the city has close to 120,000 residents. The forty shades of green in the countryside offer unlimited opportunities for biking, ecotourism, hiking and running. The Wild Atlantic way takes in the magnificent coastal views of Cork via what might seem like impossibly narrow roads at times which offer an opportunity to slow down and meet the locals! In some parts of Cork, locals still practice their native tongue and traditions. However, in those same places where you'd find road bowling and sheep farming, more exotic and modern cultures have also been embraced, as can be seen in the Dzogchen Beara Buddhist Temple on the Beara Peninsula and in the adoption of the international Saturday morning 5km Park Runs (in Ballincollig and Beara Island). Cork has developed a reputation as the gourmet food capital of Ireland with most food locally grown, harvested and prepared for the table.

Cork Harbour (claimed as the second largest natural and navigable harbour in the world), has seen pirates and tradesmen, the Titanic ship and titans of industry and over the course of its history developed a reputation captured in its motto 'Statio Bene Fide Carinis', meaning 'A Safe Harbour (and welcome) for ships'. To this day, the motto reflects the welcoming attitude of residents and merchants alike towards foreign investors and visitors who come from near and far, many of whom choose never to leave!

Course Support

Course materials will be provided during and after the Summer Academy in printed and electronic format. They include a Participants' handbook, which contains practical information and the methodology that will be used in the Summer Academy, as well as tasks for participants to prepare before arriving to the Summer Academy. Administrative and tutorial support will be offered by Euracademy Association. Lecturers and facilitators are recruited among Euracademy members and other experienced professionals in sustainable rural development.

A Thematic Guide on "***Resilient communities: Pillars of Sustainable Rural Development***", will be published after the event, which will draw on the lectures, the discussions and the conclusions of the summer academy, as well as on the research carried out prior to the summer academy by Euracademy members and other experts.

Participation Cost

The cost of attending the Summer Academy is kept to a minimum. There is no attendance fee, but only a charge to cover accommodation, full board and travel for the study tours. The cost is 500 Euro per participant for a shared room and 600 Euro for a single room. A number of scholarships (250 Euro each) are available covering part of the participation cost.

The subscription fee for one year's membership at the Euracademy Association should be added to the above cost, for those who are not Euracademy members. The subscription fee for individuals is set at 50 Euros (25 Euros for students). For corporate membership subscription fees, please follow the link: <http://www.euracademy.org/join-us/>

Registration

In order to participate in the Summer Academy, you need to fill in the online [Registration Form](#) or alternatively fill in the Registration form (text file) you will find in the website of Euracademy www.euracademy.org and return it to us by 15 July 2017.

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