Group 1
Creating youth-friendly spaces through place-based initiatives

Challenges

- harmful stereotypes about rural areas
- lack of experience in working with youth
- lack of funding
- difficulty of dealing with local administrations - not always aware of funding mgmt
- lack of infrastructure & capacity to identify funding & other opportunities
- lack of ability/competence/knowledge to identify & analyse opportunities for youth
- youth orgs not always driven by young staff - not easy to understand youth issues

Practical solutions

- training, mentoring & political advocacy
- bridge between local organisations
- let & help young ppl create small associations
- rural network of small, local, youth orgs/associations
- Rural Youth Parliament (LAG Napoca)
- involve youth in Eur. Solidarity Corps
- practice-sharing platform/toolkit
- Democracy reloading (PL LAG)
- Youth Councils (FI) - as a legal requirement
- LAGs to support youth projects on issues identified by youth and driven by youth (FI)
- EL: youth to advise eval. committee on selection of all/any LAG projects (not just youth); youth can visit the projects

Lessons and recommendations

- promote bottom-up, grassroot ethos
- organise activities to promote digital skills, sports, heritage
- Strategy: use social media; fun activities; participants' enthusiasm
- use values, knowledge & skills as pillars of initiatives
- dedicated strategy: create & promote youth-friendly spaces (ES LEADER Network)
- active listening to identify real needs
- youth participation to offer solutions (create dedicated spaces)
- identify new, informal ways of reaching out to youth
- youngsters are needed at all levels of governance - what to give them in return for their involvement?
- involve youth in LAGs & ask them what they want to do in rural areas (FI)
- small association of youths involved constantly - activities, events etc
- add intt/EU dimension into local work with youth (initiatives such as Erasmus+ etc)
- structures (linked to official bodies) allowing young ppl to be present & participate
- how to make transition from youth organising activities to policymaking
- mainstream youth in all debates on rural dev-t

- starting youth involvement at an early age
- snowball effect starting from a small group of enthusiasts
- active listening to identify real needs
- strategic approach
- structures (linked to official bodies) allowing young ppl to be present & participate
- add intt/EU dimension into local work with youth (initiatives such as Erasmus+ etc)
- Youth Councils (FI) - as a legal requirement
- Democracy Reloading
- youth 14-17 involved in LAG project selection
- European Solidarity Corps