

Foreword

ACTIVITY REPORT 2017

Dear Young Friends,

Last year I wrote to you announcing a reorganisation of YFCS, which I am delighted to report is developing slowly but very well.

Firstly, I am very pleased that we have found great organisational support in Alberto Hermosel who works at the ELO office while allocating some of this time purely to supporting YFCS. Alberto has already proven to be an excellent organiser and was a driving force behind this year's events!

Furthermore, we co-hosted our General Assembly with the Friends of the Countryside in the Netherlands and Belgium. While we would like to increase attendance on our side, it certainly proved to be a great opportunity for intergenerational discussion, exchange of ideas and collaboration (besides us joining their fantastic programme!).

At this occasion, we also met our new sponsor the world-renowned private bank LGT, owned by the Liechtenstein family. They are very kind and helpful, fully embracing our idea and mission. It is a

great honour to have them sponsoring us and we are very grateful for their generous support!

Just a few weeks ago we have held our Forum for Countryside Entrepreneurship in Scotland, visiting Edinburgh, St. Andrews as well as Gilston Estate. Those of you who haven't been to Scotland yet missed a great introduction into this fascinating country and those of you who have – well, you can imagine what you have missed! While we did not venture into the deep Highlands (for obvious logistical reasons – maybe we should start organising 4-day discovery-trips in future?!), we did enjoy dinner and the Scottish Crown Jewels at Edinburgh Castle, a very interesting Forum in magnificent St. Andrews and a truly inspiring visit to Gilston Estate.

YFCS is in transformation and so is its board: We have decided to follow the very successful example of FCS and want to invite more members to the board to ensure maximum membership participation and reach across Europe. Whoever is up for an exciting challenge in a great team is most welcome to contact me and discuss joining the board of YFCS! Please do not hesitate to contact me under carl-philipp@voncroy.eu

With new members joining the board, inevitably some long-term board members are unfortunately leaving: Agnès de Liedekereke-Beaufort has left us recently after many years as an integral part of the YFCS board. She has been a very enthusiastic member and certainly left her mark over the years! Thank you Agnès!

I am greatly looking forward to the next year of YFCS starting with what promises to be a wonderful and intriguing General Assembly around Lake Constance in collaboration with FCS! Please do all come – and remember we have a generous Bring-a-Friend policy!

As ever, I and the rest of the board are always keen to hear from you and to discuss any ideas you may have... never shy away from raising an issue you see or sharing an ambitious idea!

We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours,

Carl-Philipp von Cröy
President of YFCS

About

The Young Friends of the Countryside (YFCS) is a European membership organization for rural business people, rural entrepreneurs, future and young private landowners aged between 20 and 35 years old. It is a relatively young Not for Profit Association. It was created in 2006 with the support of its parent organization Friends of the Countryside (FCS), the European Landowners' Organization (ELO) and the Union of European Historic Houses Associations (UEHHA).

The main idea was to focus on younger business people, rural entrepreneurs and landowners as they represent the next generation who will be in charge of the prosperity of our future rural economy. Their objective is to raise awareness amongst YFCS members about European environmental policies, European rural business opportunities and Estates and historic inheritance and management processes. Also, they promote educational philanthropy in the countryside. Another objective is to leverage on members' innovative countryside management related experiences. YFCS is represented and channeled at EU level through the European Landowners' Organization (ELO).

In the context of its environmental activities, YFCS actively promotes European citizenship, bridging the gap between young rural people and the European Union and stimulates its members to develop a sense of belonging and European identity.

YFCS Board

PRESIDENT

Carl-Philipp Prinz von CRÖY

SECRETARY GENERAL

Francesco KINSKY dal BORGIO

BOARD MEMBERS

Geoffroy DE CANNIERE (Belgium)

Louis-Victor de FRANSSU-DOUVILLE (France)

Marie-Christine SCHÖNBORN (Germany)

SECRETARIAT

José Alberto HERMOSEL, Coordination

Leonides GUTIERREZ, YFCS Accountancy

www.yfcs.eu





Events 2017

General Assembly

For the first time, the Young Friends of the Countryside organized their General Assembly alongside the General Assembly of the Friends of the Countryside in order to increase collaboration between the two organizations. This year the General Assembly of the Friends of the Countryside took place at Hex Castle in Belgium on the 1st of June 2017. It was a great starting point, with the Friends of the Countryside celebrating their 20 years of history of their organization.

The General Assembly of the Friends of the Countryside was opened by Michael SALM-SALM, who was followed by Thierry de l'ESCAILLE, Secretary General and CEO of the European Landowners' Organisation, who outlined that the fundament of the organization of the Friends of the Countryside is the belief into property rights and the private sector. The General Assembly was held in the light of the topic "Natural Capital Private Management". The Young Friends were fortunate to listen to some outstanding speakers, which were, amongst others, Ghislain d'URSEL, owner of Hex Castle and a FCS member and Dr. Heinrich HENCKEL VON DONNERSMARCK, CEO of

LGT Bank as well as Janez POTOČNIK, chair of the Forum for the Future of Agriculture and former Commissioner of DG environment. The Young Friends also had the chance to quickly introduce themselves to the audience and to congratulate the Friends on their 20th year anniversary and to show the projects the younger generation is engaging with. In the evening, the Gala Diner of the Friends of the Countryside took place at the Dutch family-owned Château St Gerlach. At the Gala Diner, Karl Grotenfelt, sponsor of the Famigro Award, and the Young Friends presented the Famigro Award, an entrepreneurial award to the best rural entrepreneurial project. This year, the Famigro Award was presented to Thomas and Sofia de DORLODOT as well as Charles LAMBRECHTS and Emile de DRYVER, founders of Wilderness, the first provider of "Tiny Houses". Wilderness seeks to rent and sell eco-friendly, movable 'Tiny Houses' across Europe in order to promote eco-friendly tourism in the most remote areas of Europe. We are particularly grateful to Karl GROTFELT for his continued support of the entrepreneurial projects of our members and are looking forward to hearing more about the development of 'Tiny Houses'!



On Saturday, the Young Friends of the Countryside held their own General Assembly at Aldenbiesen. At Aldenbiesen, after having presented some promising rural entrepreneurial projects of our members to the Young Friends, we had the opportunity to engage with our audience and to gather feedback from our members. We then were welcomed by William de GRUNNE at Schoonbeck estate and were introduced to various topics surrounding the Schoonbeck estate from the perspective of a Young Friend. In particular, we discussed topics of how entrepreneurs should prepare to take over an estate.

We would like to express our particular gratitude to the LGT Bank and their continued support of the Young Friends of the Countryside and are looking forward to further collaboration! Last, but not least, the Young Friends would particularly like to thank the Friends of the Countryside for their outstanding support of and vivid interest into the Young Friends of the Countryside! We are already looking forward to holding our next General Assembly together with the Friends in Constance in May 2018!

Marie-Christine Schönborn
YFCS Board Member





Famigro Award



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Particular focus of the Young Friends of the Countryside is on rural entrepreneurship and the support of promising rural start-ups. In 2013 Karl GROTENFELT created the FAMIGRO AWARD in order to award the best European rural entrepreneurship project of the year. With the help of the Famigro Award, we can support promising rural start-ups, which aim to support the development of the European countryside and to provide solutions to current challenges in the rural sector. The Young Friends fundamentally believe that entrepreneurial projects are a cornerstone in providing effective solutions to some of the most pressing problems in the rural sector and host regular seminars called the 'Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship'.

At the Gala Diner of the Friends of the Countryside at the Dutch Château St Gerlach on the 1st June 2017 Karl GROTENFELT, together with Carl-Philipp von CROY, president of the Young Friends of the Countryside and Geoffroy DE CANNIERE, head of the Forum for the Countryside Entrepreneurship, presented the Famigro Award to WILDERNEST's eco-friendly 'Tiny Houses'.

The concept, called the "tiny houses movement," was born in Canada where, in order to be able to fish in the middle of frozen lakes in sub-zero temperatures, local fishermen have been building small cabins on wheels or blades for centuries.

Wilderness, created in June 2016, is the first provider of 'Tiny Houses' in Belgium and one of the first of its kind in Europe.

The objective of the young company, led by world travelers Thomas and Sofia de DORLODOT and their friends Charles LAMBRECHTS and Emile de DRYVER, is to rent and sell Tiny Houses all across Europe and to promote eco-friendly tourism in remote areas and on private properties, changing location with the season. Wilderness advocates a "less is more"

philosophy and believes that embracing nature and simplicity is the key to a fulfilled life.

The Tiny Houses are self-sufficient with a low environmental impact. The company uses responsible sourced local wood for the walls and roof, recycled wood for the insulation, solar panels for the electricity and a rain water collection and filtration system and try to optimize the longevity of the materials as well as providing for the possibility of recycling the product at the end of its life.

Thomas de DORLODOT, whose father is a farmer, sees it as a solution for landowners to earn some income from their land. The concept is easy to manage, hassle free and quickly becomes profitable. As an added bonus the landowners get the opportunity to share their passion with fellow nature lovers and get to meet interesting people in return.

More info on www.wilderness.be or www.facebook.com/wildernesstinyhouse/. In addition, for more information on FAMIGRO award please visit : <http://yfcs.eu/famigro/>.

We are looking forward to receiving applications from our members and to provide advise and support to our members. Please do not hesitate to contact us under elo@elo.org.



Join the YFCS

YFCS – The Way Ahead

Over the past years, YFCS has celebrated many achievements. We have managed to grow our organisation to over 200 members and have organised fantastic events in different corners of Europe. Some of our members have become very successful business partners and other members managed to do the first step in their career through the network of the Young Friends. Other Young Friends build a stable network of friends in the countries in Eastern Europe whilst building up their family businesses.

In addition, with the Famigro Award, awarding the most promising rural business ventures, we have been able to support successful businesses of our members and to provide them not only with a monetary reward, but also with an invaluable network. We are particularly grateful to our sponsor, the LGT Bank, to help us to organise these great events



with many excellent speakers and many exclusive insights into family businesses.

Now the time has come to enter the next phase of our organisation. With the close support of and co-operation with the Friends of the Countryside, the YFCS board has decided to change YFCS' current structure. We aim to expand the YFCS board - similar to the board of the Friends of the Countryside - with several Young Friends representing a European country.

In addition, we also are looking forward to introducing the three new pillars on which YFCS will be based on: 'Rural Entrepreneurship'; 'European Rural

Policy Issues' and 'Orientation'. With these three pillars we aim to address the needs of next generation entering the Young Friends. With the increasing digitalisation, the wave of new start-ups and new political complexities, such as the Brexit, the Young Friends would like to provide up-to-date information about the most recent issues concerning our young generation. Furthermore, through the pillar 'Orientation' the new generation will have the opportunity to learn from Young Friends who have already carved way into successful careers. In short, we aim to continue the success story of the Young Friends by offering those services which our members are most looking for.

We are all tremendously looking forward to introducing the new opportunities for our members at YFCS. We are convinced that with these new structures we are able to address the needs which are most prevalent to the young generation.

Most importantly, we are always looking forward to hearing your opinion, ideas and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact us!

Marie-Christine Schönborn
YFCS Board Member



Perspectives

Perspectives for 2018

As Charly has mentioned in the foreword to this Activity Report, the YFCS is undergoing a period of transition and restructuring. As part of this effort here are a few topics the Board will be focusing on during the coming year:

Enlargement of the YFCS Board

The idea is to incorporate the Ambassador system into a larger YFCS Board, which should see representatives from different EU countries, as well as younger members.

As we now have Alberto to help out with the organization of events, administration and communication, this gives the Board greater freedom to focus on broader issues such as improving the organization's appeal for current as well as for new members.

Event organization

We have decided to focus on two – maximum



three – events per year. These will include the Forum for Countryside Entrepreneurship (FCE), the General Assembly (GA) and possibly one local event organized together with a partner organi-

zation. You are all of course still welcome to join other events such as the Forum for the Future of Agriculture (FFA) or the GA of the European Historic Houses Association. Also, the YFCS GA will be

held together with the GA of the Friends of the Countryside, in an effort to further strengthen the connection between “mother” and “daughter” organizations.

Recruitment and strengthening the links with the FCS

This remains an important topic for our organization, therefore I would like to encourage all YFCS members who are approaching the age of 35, to consider **moving on to the FCS** in order to continue together the journey we started already many years ago.

Also, I would like to remind you all that we need your effort in recruiting new members, therefore we encourage you to **invite a friend** to our events, whom you think shares our values and common interest in entrepreneurship and a prosperous European countryside.

I also take this opportunity to remind you that the very existence and scope of the YFCS depends on your active involvement and yearly financial contributions.

Since 2016 we have introduced an additional, faster method of payment of the annual membership fee - you can now subscribe to our new **Automatic Payment Form** by sending an email to Alberto Hermosel: elo@elo.org.

Please keep in mind that we still very much depend on your commitment and involvement, this means we need, and welcome, your ideas, opinions, concerns, and of course your presence to our events. The goal of our organization still remains that of providing information and assistance to its members, especially with the aim of helping current and future countryside entrepreneurs such as yourselves.

So please do not hesitate to get involved and keep in touch with us through the **YFCS secured intranet, LinkedIn and Facebook page**, and keep bringing your voice and ideas to us in order to better shape the future of the European Countryside!

Francesco Kinsky dal Borgo
YFCS Secretary General

