

INFO EUROPE

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial • *Introduction*: Work. Smile. Stop. Reset. Start all over again. • *News from Europe*: COP 22 - a step forward? | A must-see documentary: «Before the flood» • *News from MIJARC*: MIJARC Europe Summer Camp «Rising temperatures, rising voices» | Our plans for 2017 • *News from movements*: FYCA Armenia - "Clean air, clean Armenia" campaign | S&G Turkey - Climate change and sustainable development | APDD-Agenda 21 Romania - "Do you want another?" Campaign in Romania | YMDRAB Bulgari - «Do you want another» - Bulgaria said «no»! | MJRC Spain - Let us change so that the weather does not change. • Calendar of upcoming activities in 2017



EDITORIAL

MIJARC Europe introduces the second edition of our magazine Info Europe this year. This issue is dedicated to our annual topic of climate change and sustainable development, focusing on the recent updates at European level, the final activities of our annual work plan and the local campaigns developed by our member movements. You will find information about our summer camp and the campaign «Do you want another» which was adapted by our member movements: FYCA - Armenia, YMDRAB Bulgaria, APSD-Agenda 21 - Romania, and S&G Turkey. You will also find out more about what we are planning for the upcoming year, including our annual topic and the activities we will develop.

Enjoy the reading!

INTRODUCTION

Work. Smile. Stop. Reset. Start all over again.

2016 has been a really challenging year for MIJARC Europe, but it has also brought a lot of satisfaction, meaningful results and many smiles on our faces. For the first time MIJARC Europe had a full year of activities with 12 member movements which has meant that our statutory meetings, our youth activities and our representation work reached new dimensions. Also, our founding principles, values and even our name were at the core of heated discussions, in an attempt to shape a strategic approach that would meet the very diverse needs of our numerous members while maintaining the spirit of what our organisation stands for. Our annual topic, climate change and sustainable development also challenged us to «look at the person in the mirror» and question the way we plan and run our activities to make sure that we practice what we preach. Is our approach sustainable? Do we take into account the impact our activities have on the climate? Do our decisions and actions reflect what our members claim in their position

papers? All these questions made us think seriously about the way we work and about what we can improve in the years to come. You will already feel this in 2017.

However, we cannot help but feel proud at the results we achieved this year: the courage to create an online training course and introduce this new method of learning for rural youth, which proved to be effective and highly appreciated; the passion to organize two international activities, a seminar and a summer camp, with more than 60 participants from 12 different countries; the patience to witness the local campaigns on climate change unfold and take so many different shapes: a flash-mob in Belgium, a guide for a sustainable lifestyle in Romania, planting trees in Armenia, an eco-march in Bulgaria or introducing climate change as a topic in an English Conversation Club in Turkey. All of these results with just three members in the European Team and two members in the staff: it brings a smile to my face every time I think of it and it gives me that warm feeling of a job well done. My only hope at the end of 2016 is that all our members feel the same way, that the people who joined us for the international events have great memories and a stronger will to join meaningful actions and that the next year, when we focus on combating extremism and making rural youth less vulnerable to radicalisation, will bring the same satisfaction to all those involved. Enjoy the reading and get ready for an adventurous new year!

Veronika Nordhus
President of MIJARC Europe

NEWS FROM EUROPE

COP 22 - a step forward?

Marrakech - Morocco was the host of the Twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change (COP 22), between 7th - 18th November. While the 2015 Paris Climate Pact to limit the rise in future temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) was a landmark accomplishment, one year later, it was clear that the Paris climate change agreement left many questions unanswered. This is why the conference in Marrakech was designed to address questions of implementation, the details of funding mechanisms and verification processes. The number of countries that approved the Paris agreement had been steadily increasing, and on the 4th of November, it finally reached the required threshold approval of at least 55 countries, representing 55 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. With that threshold reached, the Paris agreement became legally binding.

The Marrakech Action Proclamation for Our Climate and Sustainable Development was adopted calling for the highest political commitment to combat climate change, as a matter of urgent priority. It also called for further climate change action and support, well in advance of 2020, taking into account the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, the least developed countries and those particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. In spite of this proclamation and other side achievements, the enthusiasm is low considering the positions of some of the main players: the USA, Russia, the Netherlands, Switzerland and China. In the USA, the result of the Presidential election set a major drawback for the application of the Paris Pact, as the elected president, Donald Trump, promised to pull out from the Paris Agreement and has previously said «climate change was a hoax». Also, Russia, the Netherlands and

Switzerland have not yet ratified the Paris agreement. As a youth movement supporting sustainable development, solidarity and the well being of the entire planet, MIJARC Europe aligns its thoughts to those of the ratifying countries of the Marrakech Proclamation, who in the end of the document remind everybody that they «reiterate their resolve to inspire solidarity, hope and opportunity for current and future generations.»

Information retrieved from:
http://unfccc.int/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/meeting/9567.php
<http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/paris-climate-change-agreement-one-year-later>
<http://reliefweb.int/report/world/paris-marrakech-pacific-overview-un-climate-cop22-outcomes>



A must-see documentary: «Before the flood»

Launched on the 30th of October this year, on the National Geographic Channel, «*Before the flood*» is a must-see documentary on climate change. It reveals the results of a three-year journey that took its director Fisher Stevens and the well-known Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio all around the globe, witnessing the irreversible effects of climate change and the devastating impact it already has in many parts of the world. The documentary is thought-provoking to say the least as it questions humankind's ability to stop climate change. It also analyses how willing the world is to change its style of life in order to even begin to control this phenomenon. Showing compelling evidence of how the climate is changing and its devastating





effects, the movie also highlights how many «important» figures, governments and institutions are in climate change denial, especially in the United States of America.

As Leonardo DiCaprio described it at the European Premiere in London, in October this year: «Before the Flood» is the product of an incredible three-year journey that took place with my co-creator and director Fisher Stevens. We went to every corner of the globe to document the devastating impacts of climate change and questioned humanity's ability to reverse what may be

the most catastrophic problem mankind has ever faced. There was a lot to take on. All that we witnessed on this journey shows us that our world's climate is incredibly interconnected and that it is at urgent breaking point. ... We wanted to create a film that gave people a sense of urgency, that made them understand what particular things are going to solve this problem. We bring up the issue of a carbon tax, for example, which I haven't seen in a lot of documentaries. Basically, sway a capitalist economy to try to invest in renewables, to bring less money and subsidies out of oil companies. These are the things that are really going to make a massive

difference. ... We need to use our vote ... We cannot afford to have political leaders out there that do not believe in modern science or the scientific method or empirical truths ... We cannot afford to waste time having people in power that choose to believe in the 2 percent of the scientific community that is basically bought off by lobbyists and oil companies.»

The documentary is available on the National Geographic Channel website on demand and free screenings are scheduled all over the world.

NEWS FROM MIJARC

MIJARC Europe Summer Camp "Rising temperatures, rising voices"



Under the summer sun of the Maltese island of Gozo, 35 young people raised their voices to alert everybody on the rising average temperature causing climate changes. They did this during our international summer camp «Rising temperatures, rising voices» which took place between 18th - 24th August. As the second international activity of our annual work plan, the summer camp was built on the results of the international seminar and prepared the participants for the next phase, local campaigns. This is why they started their work with the presentation of the results of the online training course and the seminar, reading the manual of the TC and the position paper created by their peers at the seminar, watching the messages they had recorded and the playing a clue game designed during the seminar. The aim was for everybody to get familiar with the topic and the progress of our work plan in order to be able to plan its final phase: a common European concept of a campaign on climate change that they could each implement in their country. The first day ended with a session on successful climate change campaigns across the globe which gave the participants plenty of ideas and stimulated the discussions on what makes a campaign successful. The second

day took the participants out in the streets to interact directly with the locals and the tourists and get a taste of what is the general perception on climate change. For this activity they prepared a short questionnaire to use in their interviews asking random people how they perceived climate change and how it affected them. Upon return at the venue, each team presented to each other their findings and discussed on the found points. In the afternoon the participants were introduced to the concepts of «logo» and «slogan» and the different visual elements to be taken in consideration when building a campaign. Based on the information received and critically analysing what were their aims for the campaign, the participants came up with a slogan and a logo for the campaign: "Do you want another?" with the logo representing the earth in a cocktail shape with a straw. The fourth day was dedicated to learning how to put pressure on politicians and how to use a campaign in order to do this. The participants were split in two groups and each of them received one scenario for a debate. Prior to the debate the participants were given the time to prepare their pro and con arguments. The next session was dedicated to exploring the online and offline instruments of a campaign. The participants were split in two groups: one group focused on building a website for the campaign and ways to update it regularly while the other group designed different tools for the campaign. They created a flash mob, a video experiment on the streets of Gozo, a song, a poster and a flyer. The final day was dedicated to the planning of the local campaigns, as the participants were split in national groups and thought of how they could use the tools they had created in order to raise awareness on climate change in their movement and communities. The summer

camp ended with a fun farewell party and many promises to keep in touch once everybody was back home. The website of the campaign was updated regularly by some of the delegations and you can read their thoughts, opinions and the results of their local actions here: <https://risingtemperaturesrisingvoices.net/>

Summer camp website: <https://risingtemperaturesrisingvoices.net/>



Our plans for 2017



Following a consultation process with all our member movements we decided that in 2017 we could not focus on any other topic than extremism in Europe without ignoring its effects worldwide. We asked ourselves how does extremism affect young people from rural areas? What are the concerns of our member movements?



What changes are they already witnessing?

Where can we genuinely intervene and have an impact? What is our expertise in the field and which of our strong points match the current threats extremist attitudes have brought? The answer was easy: education and the power of our network. This is what we do best, we provide educational opportunities to young people, facilitating international meetings and bring them closer to experts, studies, reports and institutions that play vital roles at European level. Also we take a lot of pride in the power of our network because we represent young people from rural areas in 12 European countries and we have the infrastructure necessary to take important messages and encourage the development of skills at grass root level. Therefore, the concrete topic we chose was radicalization leading to extremism, a topic which reflects our concern on the vulnerability of the young people we represent who can become targets of initiatives or individuals that promote radical attitudes at all levels and on all sides: either radical attitudes towards any foreign element, be it religious, cultural or just of different nationality, or the embracing of extremism as a form of reestablishing justice in the world.

This is why in 2017 we will focus on reaching out to young women and men living in rural areas in Europe and on supporting them in resisting and countering radicalisation and violent extremism. The work plan for the upcoming year includes three interconnected activities: an international

study visit in Brussels, an international seminar in Germany and a series of round tables led by our member movements at local level. In addition to these, we will run several parallel activities such as an international summer camp, meetings with member movements and we will continue our work of external representation by being active in the governing structures of the INGOs we are part of. As our plans for 2017 depend a lot on the funds available, more information on our activities in 2017 will be released at the beginning of the year.



NEWS FROM MOVEMENTS

FYCA NEWS

“Clean air, clean Armenia” campaign



Fall is distinguished by its unique beauty which is almost synonymous to yellow and falling leaves. Every year in different regions, cities and rural communities of Armenia, people have a different approach to the phenomenon of destruction of fallen leaves. Some think that the ashes from the burning

of leaves increase soil fertility levels, some people just move them to central landfills, others accumulate them in the surface layer of the soil, and of course some are indifferent to this phenomenon. However, studies have shown that burning leaves not only reduces soil fertility four times, but also pollutes the atmosphere with many toxic substances that cause immune system disorders and respiratory system disorders among people. Moving leaves from their own tree areas reduces soil fertility by about 2.5 times. The most effective method is leaf mass injections to a certain soil layer.

Wanting to do something about all the negative points caused by leaf burning, the Federation of Youth Clubs of Armenia initiated the “Clean air, clean Armenia” project. The goal of the project was to inform people about





the harmful effects of the phenomenon of burning leaves, and to get rid of collected leaves in a more effective way, as well as to organize corresponding actions to enrich the atmosphere with oxygen. In the context of the "Clean air, clean Armenia" project, a tree planting was organized in Yerevan

Davitashen district, on an empty land. The program brought together FYCA members, representatives of all the regional youth clubs, local authorities, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the media, as well as the regional public organizations. During the event about 750 trees were planted, among them apricot, peach and other roadside ornamental trees. The tree planting also served as a platform for the presentation of the goal and objectives of the project. The project was covered by various media as well as by the official websites of all the organizations invited. The programme stirred a huge reaction among the people who consider the burning of leaves the only option for getting rid of them until now, and who were simply indifferent to it.

To make the results of the program measurable, the FYCA team also organized surveys with the help of FYCA regional coordinators, which revealed that about 62 percent of the population in rural communities considered burning leaves a way of getting rid of them, but 27 percent of those 62 percent was going to bury leaves in soil or make compost. It is worth to mention that the FYCA team initiated the project by using the knowledge and skills gained during the "Rising Temperatures- Rising Voices"

summer camp organized by MIJARC Europe with the financial support of the European Youth Foundation. The information and skills we gained on organizing successful campaigns played a vital role and enabled the FYCA team to design a successful campaign.

FYCA - Armenia



S&G NEWS

Climate change and sustainable development



After the summer camp in Malta our team from S&G started the Climate Change National Campaign and chose sustainable development as our main topic. We created numerous activities related to the topic, involving many local and international youngsters.

First, on 13th of October, we organized a flash mob and gave information in public on climate change in the Ataturk High School of Ankara. We continued our work in the office, by including the topic in our English Conversation Club which is run every Wednesday. We devoted one Wednesday for the topic, by discussing it with our participants. They shared how they were contributing to the environment and with what kind of actions they used to give examples to the other youngsters:

- mobilizing young people around global challenges (such as sustainable development, climate changes and the Millennium Development Goals especially Goal 7 - *Ensure environment sustainability*) and promoting the importance of having shared ecological values.
- promoting active citizenship as well as increasing the sense of global solidarity between the participants, because nowadays young people need to take an active part in shaping the decisions that will affect their lives.

The main idea of the activity was to provide young people with more information about ecological issues, to increase their ecological feeling as



well as the feeling that it is very important to take care of our planet and to see what ways there are to deal with global challenges.

Bledi Cami
S&G Turkey

APDD-AGENDA 21 NEWS

“Do you want another?” Campaign in Romania



The European Campaign created in Malta, in August, reached a lot of countries around Europe. APDD – Agenda 21 brought it to Romania last autumn through different activities realized by the European Coordinator, Andreea Tătaru and two volunteers, Raluca Tătaru and Mihaela Ioniță.

Thus, their first campaign activity, back in Romania, was the workshop on climate changes and responsible consumption in our daily life, held with students from “George Călinescu” High School from Bucharest. The event was organized on the 8th of November and was attended by 27 11th grade high school students. They debated in groups about our way of consuming water, food, energy, plastic and paper and the impact of our behaviour on the environment.



But.... since MIJARC Europe aims at giving new opportunities to rural youth, APDD – Agenda 21 team – Andreea, Mihaela and Raluca – went to a rural school from Buzău County – “N. I. Jilinschi” Secondary School from Vernești – and organized a challenging workshop. Why challenging? Because the 23 participants were aged between 11 and 13, were full of energy and had a lot of curiosities regarding the phenomena of climate changes. They created their own stories and posters using representative images about our behavior when it comes to consuming resources. By the way, the posters were created with images printed on recycled paper! So, we haven't



only raised awareness of our impact on the environment, but we've introduced these ideas into our work!

The second step of our campaign was to promote it in the online environment. For this, we created a brief guide about tips and tricks to reduce our wastage foot print in our daily life and shared through our social media channels. Also, we searched informative videos that helped us to reach our aim – raising awareness of climate changes and their impact on our common future among the public that is following us online.

Even if the campaign ended, we have to keep in mind that we have only one home – The Earth – and we have to take care of it. This means that each of us (people, companies, public bodies, states) should act in a responsible way in order to protect it!

Andreea Mirela Tătaru
APDD-Agenda 21 Romania

YMDRAB NEWS

«Do you want another» - Bulgaria said «no»!



As the summer camp “Rising temperatures, rising voices” went by, we (the Bulgarian delegation that took part in it) were as excited as the other members of the MIJARC family to share our new knowledge and great mood gained during the camp to the world. Right after we went back home with the mission of informing more youngsters about the seriousness of the sustainability and climate change issue, we, with the support of the YMDRAB board, decided to implement a short training camp in the countryside of Bulgaria in order to present all the knowledge we got in Malta and also to

do some real action. The venue we chose was the small mountain village of Semkovo, famous for its beautiful nature but with forests that are already affected by climate change.

We made a group of 20 determined Bulgarian youngsters from the two sides of the country in order to spread the information about our training to a bigger area. We meaningfully named the new training - «Do you want another?» due to the slogan that was created during the summer camp. The training camp took place from 4th to 6th of November 2016.

The first day was occupied by the arrival of participants and a welcome session which





included some icebreaker games and talks in order to get the people in the mood and help them get to know each other. The real work started at the beginning of the second day with two introduction presentations - *What is MIJARC and YMDRAB?* and a presentation about the annual work plan of MIJARC Europe on the issue of climate change and sustainability and the results achieved during the summer camp in Malta (Logo, Slogan, Flashmob, Video experiment, Discussions etc.).

The training then continued with a role play - «Me, myself and the nature» (people were divided in two groups and had to discuss whether the lumbering in Bulgaria should completely stop and the potential consequences of both decisions). During the game both groups were supported with information about the real lumbering level in the country and the example given by other countries in the EU on that

topic. After finishing the role play game, the training continued with an eco marche through the environmentally protected area «National Park Rila mountain» and a visit to the nearby landmark «The Panorama». During the eco marche the group was led and talked through the forest issues by a local forest worker. Once the group reached the final destination, we held a group activity - «Do you want another?» - photo contest, where participants had to take a creative photo of themselves and part of the nature showing the ruining of the forest (the bad example).

In the evening we decided to present the participants with the short thematic movie - «Climate Change - Revolution World Issue» (which can be found on Youtube) - and then take advantage of the new knowledge they gained during the day to start a discussion about the movie and the global issues it refers to.

Despite being a bit tired after the busy second day, there was no time for relaxation as the next day the participants met an expert from the Forestry Research Institute and attended an interesting presentation about the human impact on nature.

The last day of the training was also the day we chose to make a real impact on the dying forest by implementing a "plant a tree" session in order to help the resurrection of the nature.

Every participant planted a new tree and left something to remind new generations that people are also capable of building things, not only destroying them.

Tsvetilen Sashev Petkov
YMDRAB - Bulgaria



MJRC NEWS

**Let us change so that the weather does not change.
A Christian reflection that invites us to take action.**



Not until long ago talking about things like «climate change», «responsible consumption», «sustainable development», etc. seemed to be associated with certain people considered to be «party spoilers» with the intention of stopping the rate of growth which, it was thought, benefited us. Today this topic belongs to our «day to day» life because we are beginning to be aware that this growth rate is hurting us all by wasting the resources of the planet. However, being aware of something does not mean that we are claiming changes in our world (an economy-dominated world in

which even politics is subjected to it), nor that we are willing to change our own way of life. And as long as we do not assume that «the environment is a collective good, a patrimony of all humanity and the responsibility of all» (LS 95), it will be very difficult for us to change the course of history and its natural disasters. That is why starting with the MJRC we want to listen to the appeal of Pope Francis (through his Encíclica Laudato Sí) for people to work for ecology. And this is precisely the motto of our current campaign: «Let us change so that the climate does not change». As can be deduced, what we are trying to provoke is reflection, a reflection that wants to cover all strata of society, from a more structural level in which we can think what kind of democracy we are having when politics conforms to the economy, and in which finances are drowning the real economy (LS 109), to a more everyday level in which each of us consider the lifestyle we are leading, fruit of this «techno-economic paradigm» (LS 53). A reflection that does not only ask to remain within an interesting talk-show, but rather seeks to invite people to action because we can and must create an alternative way of life that makes possible «a change in society» (LS 208).

All this we do from a double conviction ... Firstly, that as rural young people we have a special privilege to be living in a more direct contact with nature and, therefore, a greater

responsibility for its care and in claiming its dignity. And, secondly, as young Christians, we assume that ecology, as the pope has reminded us, belongs to our faith.

But we do not want to make this campaign a build-up of wailing and crying. Our faith encourages us to generate hope and the Pope invites us to this when he tells us that «love can do more» (LS 149) and that «human freedom is capable of limiting technology, orienting it and placing it at the service of another type of progress, healthier, more humane, more social, more integral» (LS 112), and in addition «the liberation from the reigning technocratic paradigm actually occurs in certain occasions» (LS 112).

All of this requires dedication and effort, and in the MJRC we are willing to go out into the streets, out of respect and not violence, to exert a healthy pressure to cause the world of politics to react (cf. LS 179) and awaken the rest of the population. That is why we are committed to putting our hands and our hearts in the care and defense of our «common home».

Movement of the Rural Christian Youth - M.J.R.C. - Spain





Calendar of planned activities in 2017

When ...?	What...?	Where...?
7 th -12 th May 2017	Study visit	Belgium
24 th - 29 th July 2017	Seminar	Germany
23 rd - 29 th August 2017	Summer camp	Armenia
1 st August - 30 th October 2017	Round tables	All 12 member countries

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