

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.



Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	From the GroundUp: Fostering Rural Youth Participation in the EU Agenda
Participant:	LAG Sdruzeni SPLAV, z.s.
PIC number:	939372736

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	7
Event name:	<p>Life quality of young rural residents today – the role of conservative shifts in politics. Oxford Debate: Gender dimension of politics.</p> <p>(The original title was: European conference: Conservative shifts in politics - how do they impact the life quality of rural residents? Oxford Debate: Who do we vote? Gender dimension of politics and local development.)</p>
Type:	Conference, Workshop, World Cafe, Oxford Debate
In situ/online:	in situ
Location:	Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Czechia
Date(s):	11-13.06.2025
Website(s) (if any):	From the GroundUp: Fostering Rural Youth - Sdružení SPLAV, Z.S.
Participants (CLLD Halland):	
Female:	63
Male:	40
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Czech Republic]:	77
From country 2 [Finland]	2

From country 3 [Austria]:	2	
From country 4 [Poland]:	3	
From country 5 [Portugal]:	2	
From country 6 [Italy]	4	
From country 7 [Bulgaria]	2	
From country 8 [Sweden]:	2	
From country 9 [Germany]	1	
From country 10 [Spain]	2	
From country 11 [Slovakia]	2	
From country 12 [Ireland]	2	
From country 13 [Holland]	2	
Total number of participants:	103	From total number of countries: 13

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

1. Target groups

Project partners, policy makers, civil society organizations, youth, local actors, European Parliamentarians and other high policy makers.

2. Description of the event and its activities/ context :

Held in Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Czechia between 11th and 13th June 2025, the GroundUp event brought together young participants, local stakeholders, and European partners to explore the evolving political and social realities affecting rural youth. The discussions focused on how conservative political shifts, disinformation, and social polarisation are influencing quality of life and democratic participation in rural Europe. **One of the successes of the event was to use the formats which allowed us to actively youth from local schools, who stayed with the project group throughout the day, participated in discussions, World Cafe and the Oxford Debate.**

MAIN SUCCESSES OF THE EVENT

The event gave me a better understanding of the challenges rural youth face and how conservative shifts affect them. The World Café and Oxford Debate were insightful. I gained useful ideas for community engagement and intercultural communication that I can apply in my work.



I've learned to listen to young people. I've learned about debating skills and forming arguments. I've learned about the influence of politics in decisions we make and how we can interact with politicians."



The dynamics of the coffee table, associated with the colors, were very interesting because we were able to exchange opinions and experiences. We also really enjoyed the debate with a gender perspective, especially because the young people were the protagonists.



I will apply these experiences both in my professional life – especially when working with diverse teams – and in my private life, for example through more open communication and the courage to incorporate new perspectives.

The conference day opened with a keynote by Josef Bernard discussing “Left-behind places in Czechia and Europe: challenges and opportunities, with a focus on youth”, followed by a student-led World Café on youth perspectives. In the second part of the day, Jonáš Syrovátka presented his talk “Conservative shifts – theoretical framing and the case of the Motorist Party”, followed by Max Gede who offered a broader understanding of “Shifts in political spheres”.

The programme featured a World Café session with local students, where participants engaged in structured small-group dialogues on challenges such as youth unemployment, depopulation, and political disengagement. These conversations created a space for listening, reflection, and collective insight into the lived experiences of rural youth.

One of the highlights of the event was the Oxford Debate on the gender dimension of politics, where young delegates presented well-researched arguments on current political dynamics across the EU. The exchange helped build critical thinking and dialogue skills among participants.

The conference also included expert inputs on the conservative wave across Europe, discussions on rural youth aspirations, and informal moments of cultural exchange such as a château tour and live music. The event fostered transnational dialogue, built mutual understanding, and contributed meaningfully to the project’s mission of empowering young citizens from the ground up, as it very well shows in the feedback we have collected from the direct participants (please see below).

3. Agenda of the event + infopack



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GroundUP Conference is UP

Life quality of young rural residents today –
the role of conservative shifts in politics

Oxford Debate: Gender dimension of politics

Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Czech republic
11-13/6/2025

GROUNDUP





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Wednesday, 11/6

17:00

Departure by common bus from Prague Main Railway Station
Upper parking lot (Flixbuses departure point – Wilsonova 300/8,
120 00 Praha 2-Vinohrady)

How to get from the Airport to the Railway station:

1. Airport Express Bus:

- Direct service between the airport and the main train station.
- Duration: Approximately 40 minutes.
- Ticket: 100 CZK for adults
- Frequency: Runs every 30 minutes.
- The bus stop is in front of Terminal 1.

2. Public Buses & Metro:

- Take buses 59, 119, or 191 to metro stations on Line A, or bus 100 to metro station Zličín on Line B.
- Duration: Around 30 minutes for the entire trip, including transfers.
- Ticket: Use a standard public transport ticket (e.g., 40 CZK for 90 minutes).
- You'll need to transfer to the metro at the appropriate station and then take the metro to the city center.

20:00

Dinner (after check-in)

Hotel Havel, Staré nám. 61, 516 01 Rychnov nad Kněžnou

CONTACTS

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Thursday, 12/6 - Conference, Rychnov nad Kněžnou Chateau

9:00	Opening and welcome
9:10	Introduction to the conference topic
9:45	World Café with local students Tackling youth unemployment and depopulation in rural areas
11:15	Coffee break
11:30	What are Conservative shifts and how do they influence today's issues? How do the rural youth live and what do they want? Current trends in Germany and Western Europe: the Conservative wave
12:30	Lunch
13:15	Oxford Debate: Gender dimension of politics Introduction to the topic and the current affairs
13:30	Oxford Debate
15:00 - 16:00	Coffee break & wrap-up



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Thursday, 12/6 – Post-conference informal program

16:00 – 18:00

Tour of the Chateau, Live music concert

20:00

Dinner

Hotel Havel, Staré nám. 61, 516 01 Rychnov nad Kněžnou

21:00 – 24:00

Social evening

Friday, 13/6

7:00

Farewell and Departure to Prague (original pick up location)

Packed lunch sandwiches before leaving to go!

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4. Presentations used by the experts:

[Presentations - Google Drive](#)

Left-behind places and political discontent

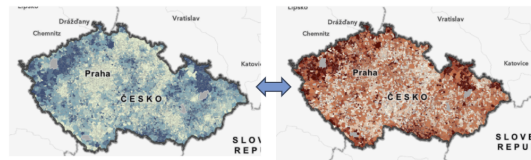
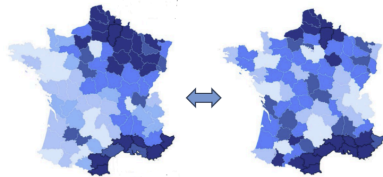
- „Revenge of places that don't matter“
 - Anti-system parties and populist parties draw support particularly from left-behind areas
 - Inhabitants of disadvantaged places express discontent with mainstream politics and with societal elites.

France – Le Pen 2017

France – unemployment

Czechia – Babiš 2023

Czechia – unemployment



Left-behind places and young people

- **Civic engagement and politics**
 - Feeling of alienation from local politics and cultural life, political disillusionment, but also: some are inspired to join local politics
 - „No one gives a damn about us“
 - „We waited 10 years for the skate park, and when we stopped riding, they built it.“
 - „The young are starting to take much more interest in politics.“
- **Community life**
 - Tight-knit communities, but also social fragmentation and ethnic conflicts, safety concerns, racism
 - „We all know each other. You just need to be careful who to trust.“
 - „The people are so bad here I wouldn't even go to a disco“
 - „The best solution is to send them 20 km away“

Conclusion and Outlook



Life in left-behind places is challenging for young people.



A lot of them leave.

Would they eventually return back after university?



Those who stay.

How to take their needs and wishes seriously?

How to involve them in local decision making?

What to make of conservative shift in today's politics?

From the GroundUp Conference
12. 6. 2025

Mainstreaming of illiberal periphery

• Main principles

- National sovereignty
- Majoritarian rule and strong leader
- Cultural hegemony of nation
- „Natural“ social hierarchies

• Main opponents

- EU, universal rules
- Check and balances, „deep state“
- Migrants, outsiders
- „Woke“ progressivism, LGBTQ+

5

5. Selected photos of the event:

[selected photos - Google Drive](#)

6. Main takeaways/ findings from the event:

"The event influenced a better understanding of the current needs of rural youth and the challenges of unemployment and migration from these areas".

"I really enjoyed the morning activities at the World Café. It's interesting to connect with the students and see how they think and share their opinions".

"World café was great! And the seminary about rural areas!"

"Young people are facing the same problems all over Europe."

"The topics on inequality of living conditions between richer and poorer regions were the most instructive for me. And I have enough ideas for improving life in our region in the future".

"For me it was interesting to see that our young people face the same issues and possibilities in all participating countries."

"Realizing the difference between peripheral areas and left-behind areas was the most surprising."

"Through my participation, I learned about the problems of young people in the Czech Republic and the reasons for leaving the rural area, which can be identified with my country."

"Great to hear youths' problems/concerns and great to learn the different cultures' problems."

"I learned how to structure a debate and although each place has their individual issues, a lot of issues that young people in rural areas face are linked."

"That young people in many rural areas in the EU are struggling with similar things."

"That even in the 21st century, there is discrimination against women."

"Attending the conference gave me a better understanding of how conservative changes affect young people in rural areas and what their expectations and challenges are, especially in the context of unemployment and depopulation".

"Participating in the GroundUP event in Rychnov nad Kněžnou was a very enriching experience for me. I was particularly impressed by the intercultural exchange and collaboration with people from different countries and backgrounds. I learned how important openness, teamwork and creative solutions are – especially in an international context".

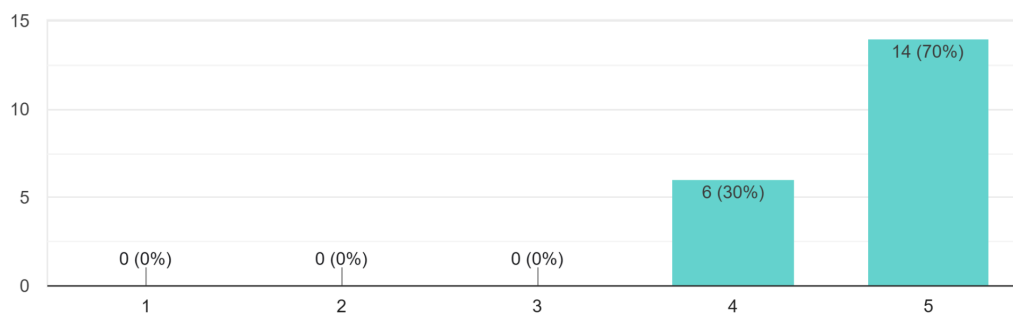
"It was particularly useful for me to learn about practical methods for project development and to apply them directly. This showed me how ideas can be successfully implemented with commitment and a clear structure".

"I will apply these experiences both in my professional life – especially when working with diverse teams – and in my private life, for example through more open communication and the courage to incorporate new perspectives."

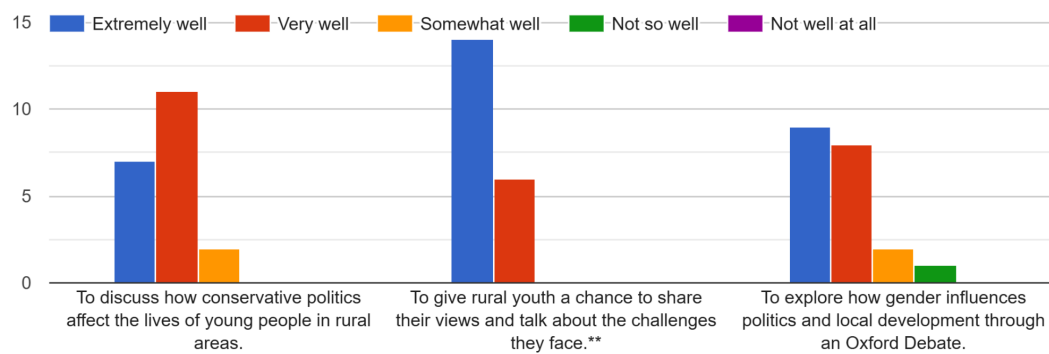
7. Feedback from participants


1. How satisfied are you with the event:

20 responses



2. In general, how well event reach the objectives of....



<p>Great hospitality</p>	<p>Our hosts were really great</p>	<p>The event was extremely well organised by the host. it flowed really well, it was great to work with the young people and partners from other EU areas. We were very well looked after and the venue was amazing</p>
<p>The organisation of the conference was perfect in every detail - from the substantive speeches to the atmosphere conducive to open dialogue</p>		
<p>Many congratulations to the entire SPLAV team for the excellent welcome and organization of this event. They thought of every detail, including the packed lunch. It was very good.</p>	<p>Thank you to the hosts and the entire GroundUP project team for the warm welcome, excellent organization, and meaningful program. The event created a valuable platform for dialogue, reflection, and exchange of ideas. I truly appreciated the opportunity to engage with participants from different countries and backgrounds.</p>	
<p>Very thank you to providing a safe space for these really important discussions and topics</p>	<p>I would like a conference to be two days instead of one. The conference day felt like a warm up and it would have been nice to dig deeper on a second conference day. You arranged the conference very well! Thank you!</p>	
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"Thank you so much for providing a safe space for these really important discussions and topics"

"I would like the conference to be two days instead of one. The conference day felt like a warm-up and it would have been nice to dig deeper on a second conference day. You arranged the conference very well! Thank you!"

"The conference was organised to a very high standard and the reception by the project leaders was extremely warm and professional. Many thanks for creating an inspiring atmosphere and for the opportunity to participate in such a worthwhile event:)"

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).