

Abstract - Erasmus+ KA152 “ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE”

1. Context and rationale

ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE is a European youth exchange that responds to a reality shared by many European regions: the progressive loss of biodiversity, increasing pressure on natural resources, the effects of climate change, and the growing disconnection of younger generations from rural territories, local ecosystems and traditional knowledge.

Agricultural and environmental heritage contains a wealth of knowledge and practices developed over generations to adapt to local ecosystems, manage natural resources and produce food. However, this knowledge is increasingly at risk of being lost, while young people are often disconnected from the territories and practices that have shaped their communities.

At the same time, young people are increasingly confronted with complex environmental challenges that will directly affect their future. Addressing these challenges requires not only technical solutions, but also environmental awareness, critical thinking, creativity, a sense of belonging and opportunities for meaningful participation.

ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE is built around a central question:

“What can we learn from the knowledge and practices developed by previous generations in our territories in order to build more sustainable ways of living where younger generations are the protagonists?”

The project will use the agricultural heritage of the Huerta de Murcia as a “living classroom”, connecting local knowledge with the experiences and heritage of other European territories. Rather than presenting traditional practices as solutions in themselves, the project will encourage young people to investigate, question and critically assess them, identifying which lessons can be adapted to current environmental challenges.

In this way, the project will connect three dimensions: environmental sustainability, European natural heritage and youth participation.

2. General objective

To empower young people to understand, value and critically reinterpret European agricultural and environmental heritage as a source of knowledge and inspiration for addressing current sustainability challenges and developing more sustainable ways of living in which young people play an active role.

3. Specific objectives

1. Increase young people's knowledge and awareness of environmental challenges, particularly water management, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and local food systems.

2. Discover the agricultural and environmental heritage of the Huerta de Murcia and compare it with the realities and heritage of other European territories.
3. Develop critical thinking by analysing the relevance of traditional knowledge and practices in the context of current environmental challenges.
4. Strengthen creativity, problem-solving, communication and cooperation through experiential and participatory learning.
5. Promote intercultural learning through the exchange of knowledge, traditions and environmental experiences.
6. Explore what young people need to become more actively involved in the care of their environment and communities.
7. Support participants in transforming learning into concrete ideas and actions that can be transferred to their local contexts.

4. Description of activities

The exchange will take place over five activity days in Murcia, with the Huerta de Murcia serving as the main learning environment. The programme will combine non-formal, experiential and participatory learning, following a progressive process from discovery and reflection to participation and action.

The project also builds on the experience gained by B-LIVE through the 2025 KA153 “Empowering Youth for Urban Sustainability”, transferring and adapting tools previously tested with youth workers, educators and volunteers to direct work with young people.

Day 1 – Our roots: heritage and territory

The first day will establish a safe and inclusive environment. Participants will review the infopack, programme, practical arrangements and safety aspects. In the afternoon, the project and its central question will be introduced.

Through intercultural and participatory activities, young people will identify and share examples of agricultural, natural and rural heritage from their own territories, creating a first comparative picture of the different European contexts represented in the group.

Day 2 – The Huerta as a living classroom

The second day will take place entirely in the Huerta de Murcia. Participants will explore how local communities have historically used, managed and cared for natural resources, focusing on water, biodiversity, agriculture, food systems and relationships with the territory.

Through field-based activities, environmental education and practical challenges, participants will observe, investigate and document what they discover rather than simply receiving information.

Day 3 – Common challenges, possible futures

Participants will identify environmental challenges affecting their different territories, distinguishing between common European challenges and specific local realities.

They will then reflect on what an ideal future environment could look like and which values, knowledge and relationships with nature would be needed to achieve it. International groups will express their visions through a theatre activity, using creativity and collective expression to explore what can be learned from the past and what needs to change for the future.

Day 4 – From heritage to youth participation

The fourth day will focus on local examples that combine environmental care, the valorisation of natural and rural heritage and active youth participation.

Through case studies, encounters and reflection activities, participants will explore what enables or prevents young people from becoming involved in environmental issues. They will discuss what young people need in order to move from being recipients of environmental information to active protagonists, and how heritage can become a resource for participation, learning and community engagement.

Day 5 – From roots to action

The final day will focus on transferring learning to participants' local contexts. Working in international groups and considering their own territories, participants will develop practical ideas or small action plans addressing environmental challenges and promoting youth involvement.

The afternoon will be dedicated to individual and group evaluation, reflection on learning outcomes and a Youthpass session to help participants recognise and express the competences developed during the exchange.

5. Expected results and impact

Participants are expected to increase their environmental awareness and knowledge, develop a deeper understanding of agricultural and environmental heritage, strengthen critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving and teamwork, improve intercultural communication and gain greater confidence to participate in initiatives within their communities.

The project will also generate tangible outputs through the creative activities, group reflections and local action proposals developed during the exchange.

At community level, participants will act as multipliers by transferring learning and ideas to their local contexts. Partner organisations will support follow-up activities and dissemination, helping to extend the impact beyond the mobility.

At a wider European level, ROOTS FOR THE FUTURE aims to strengthen connections between young people and their territories while creating a space for European exchange around shared environmental challenges and different local responses.

6. Evaluation and follow-up

Evaluation will be integrated throughout the project. Before the exchange, participants will identify their expectations and personal learning objectives. Daily reflection activities will monitor learning, participation and group dynamics.

The final evaluation will combine individual self-assessment, group reflection and feedback on the activities and objectives. Youthpass-related reflection will support participants in recognising the competences developed through non-formal learning.

After the exchange, participants and partner organisations will be encouraged to transfer the learning through small-scale local actions, dissemination activities and the sharing of project outputs. Follow-up information will be collected to assess longer-term impact and identify opportunities for future cooperation between partner organisations.