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:	Her Voice, Her Power, Our Future! Women Leading the Way to Sustainability — HER VOICE
Participant:	European and Ibero-American Academy of Yuste Foundation
PIC number:	949589455

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	7
Event name:	Not Letting No One Behind, The Challegue of Rural Areas (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 12 (+ 4 & 16)[1]
Type:	- Open debate with experts - Open workshop with local stakeholders - Rural Deep-Dive - Ideas Market
In situ/online:	*In situ – Presential*
Location:	Monastery of Yuste, Cuacos de Yuste / Jarandilla de la Vera / Guijo de Santa Barbara / Pasarón de la Vera (Region of Extremadura, Spain)
Date(s):	01/10/2025 – 04/10/2025
Website(s) (if any):	• https://www.fundacionyuste.org/ • https://www.fundacionyuste.org/en/hervoieceyuste2025/ • https://www.fundacionyuste.org/en/her-voice-2025/ • https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1nVn2QzbZpbuHIAH2kJHKbSXqHH5kCKM4
Participants	

[1] - SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SGD 10: Reduce Inequalities
- SGD 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- SGD 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
-SGD 4 (Quality Education) & 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)

Total	61		
Female:	52		
Male:	9		
Non-binary:	0		
From Spain:	49		
From Romania:	2		
From Poland:	2		
From France	2		
From Slovenia	2		
From Italy	2		
From Latvia	2		
From Ukraine	0		
Total number of participants:	61	From total number of countries:	7

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The 7th International Event WP 7 was held in Cuacos de Yuste, Guijo de Santa Bárbara, Jarandilla de la Vera and Pasarón de la Vera, in the Comarca de La Vera (County of La Vera), Extremadura, Spain, between the 1st and 4th October 2025 for our joint project Her Voice.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS ATTENDING THE MEETING:

x ASSOCIAZIONE USAMBORGIA (Italy)

x UNED Denia (Spain).

x GMINA MIASTA SOPOTU (Poland).

x ASSOCIATION JEAN MONNET (France).

x FUNDACION ACADEMIA EUROPEA E IBEROAMERICANA DE YUSTE (Spain)

x SALDUS NOVADA PASVALDIBA (Latvia)

x PODJETNISKI INKUBATOR KOCEVJE, JAVNI ZAVOD ZA PODJETNISTVO, IZOBRAZEVANJE IN DRUGE DEJAVNOSTI (Slovenia)

x UNIVERSITY OF ARTS TARGU MURES, THEATRICAL AND MULTIMEDIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE (Romania)

INVITED ORGANIZATIONS :

- ADICOVER – Association for the Development of the County of La Vera

- Town Hall of Cuacos de Yuste
- Town Hall of Jarandilla de la Vera
- Town Hall of Pasarón de la Vera
- Town Hall of Guijo Santa Bárbara
- Federation of Asscociations of Women from the County of la Vera
- VERATÍSIMAS
- Oficina de Igualdad de la Comarca de la Vera (Equal Opportunities Office of the County of La Vera)
- Patrimonio Nacional (National Heritage)
- IDIOMATUR
- DOP Pimenton de La Vera
- AUPEX
- Las Galliciolas
- Interpretation Center and Musum "Los Escobazos"
- Asociation of Women of Jarandilla de La Vera – Flor de la Jara
- Entretantos Foundation.

I) DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES

- The La Vera county, in the region of Extremadura, Spain, hosted the 7th meeting of the European project 'Her Voice, Her Power, Our Future' to address the contribution of women to sustainable development in rural areas.

- More than 60 participants, mostly women, from various sectors of the La Vera region (Cáceres, Extremadura) gathered on October 2nd and 3rd at the Monastery of San Jerónimo de Yuste and in Pasarón de Vera for the activity 'Not Letting None Behind: The Challenge of Rural Areas,' part of the European project funded by the CERV program, 'Her Voice: Her Power, Our Future!' "Women Leading the Way to Sustainability" (Their Voice: Their Power, Our Future! Women Leading the Way to Sustainability), which also included representatives from municipalities, institutions, and universities in Slovenia, France, Italy, Romania, Poland, Latvia, and Spain.

- These sessions, focused on the essential role of women in the sustainable development of rural areas, were organized by the European and Ibero-American Academy of Yuste Foundation, together with the Association for the Integral Development of the La Vera County (ADICOVER), the Cuacos de Yuste Town Council, and the Federation of La Vera County Women's Association, and many other local organisations from the civil society, political, cultural, and women entrepreneur sectors.

- The activities developed had as result the increase of awareness about main challenges lived by European rural areas, specifically on topics related with depopulation and young women emigration, after the analyses and debate with local experts, politicians and stake holders, who showed the current situation and shared good practices and initiatives to face the challenges they face in the rural area of La Vera. The debate allow us to learn from each other, and partners had the opportunity also to share good practices on this topic from their territories, which helped to define priorities to be developed at European level (see the attached report).

- The two working days also contributed to reflect and debated about role of women on European strategies for rural development, including initiatives related with "Smart Villages", "from farm to fork" or "LEADER approach", showing how this initiatives, most of them lead by women can contribute to the development of rural areas.

- Finally many ideas and initiatives where shared, explored and debated to learn how important is to invest in capacity building of women and promote gender policies allowing

and fostering women entrepreneurship development in order to contribute to rural development in a sustainable way, either in terms of environment and on long term approach. Women entrepreneurs participating in the sessions, and experts from local development initiatives, digital development projects, social workers and other stakeholders, mostly women, showed participants the challenges, but also the opportunities that the rural areas can offer to women, but also the opportunities that women can offer also to the development and survival of rural areas, if they have the resources and political support to assure socio economic development, reduce emigration rates, and protect the areas where they live.

- For more information on the results and conclusions of the project, see the report below that appears as annex 1.

01/10/2025

- Arrival of Participants from each partner delegation
- Official welcoming from the Yuste Foundation
- Ice-breaking dynamics and networking between participants.

02/10/2025

- The Day started at the headquarters of the European and Ibero-American Academy of Yuste Foundation, partner of the project.

- The opening of the event was attended by the mayors of Cuacos de Yuste, José María Hernández, and Jarandilla de la Vera, Fermín Encabo, who, along with the Vice President of the Federation of Women's Associations of the La Vera Region, Julia Martín, highlighted the importance of this type of project in showcasing the work of women in the socio-economic development of the region; thus empowering their work to address the many challenges faced by the group, and sharing experiences with municipalities, associations, and women from other parts of Europe.

- **The opening presentation addressed the European approach to women in rural areas** and was given by Miguel Ángel Martín Ramos, Delegate of the Foundation, who explored the role of women in rural development, the challenges they face, emphasizing depopulation and the emigration of young women, and the European Union policies and initiatives aimed at improving both gender equality and the sustainability of rural territories. He discussed the importance of initiatives such as smart villages, farm-to-table initiatives, and the LEADER European development and participation approach, analyzing how these initiatives contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development of rural areas from a gender perspective. (SDG 5, 10, & 11)

- **Open debate with experts and local politician**s to exchange experiences with women mayor of La Vera county to define Women Strategies for rural development: During the first day, several women mayors of different municipalities of the County of La Vera, as Robledillo de la Vera (Marta Martín Fabián), Guijo de Santa Bárbara (Clara Jiménez Santos), Torremenga (Nuria Mateos Periáñez),, Valverde de la Vera (María Esperanza Mayero Sánchez), Gargüera (Feliciana Muñoz Fernández), and Tejeda Tiétar (María Dolores Paniagua Timón) participated in the panel and debate on “Exchange of Experiences with women Mayors of La Vera county: Women strategies for rural development”, where they shared with attendees the challenges their municipalities face, as well as their projects, experiences, and strategies for addressing key issues such as depopulation, female emigration, gender equality, and sustainable development. (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 16)

- **Open debate with experts addressing main challenges in rural areas facing gender equality depopulation, demographic change, women emigration and more**: The panel was followed by a workshop with local stakeholders on “Main challenges in rural areas: Facing gender equality, depopulation, demographic change, women emigration and more”, where participants could exchange with partners of the project good practices from their territories related with rural challenges and gender mainstreaming in rural areas. The workshop counted with the special active participation of some of the local women working on different projects and initiatives in the county which exchanged good practices and knowledge in different important topics jus as: o Beatriz Fadon. Head of Asociación Paisaje, Ecología y Género (Landscapes, Ecology and Gender) and the initiative VERATÍSIMAS, who share the experience (Promoting Equality and other initiates in La Vera promoted by women); Emma Simón Rodríguez and Raquel de la Calle Hidalgo, Technitians of the Joint Equal Gender Office of the County of La Vera La Vera who shared experiences on how to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and give effect to the right to equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in rural areas; María Calero Riveiro, from ADICOVER (Association for the Development of the County of La Vera) – who shared experiences on Smart Rural Living to face Inequalities through the Digital Technologies; Clara Jiménez Santos. Head of the Psychological Support Centre for Victims of Gender-Based Violence in the County of La Vera and Mayor of Guijo de Santa Barbara in the county of La Vera, who shared good experiences and information on how facing gender-based violence in rural areas. (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 12)

- In the afternoon, attendees visited the Monastery of San Jerónimo de Yuste, a place of European Memory certified with the European Heritage Label lead by a women (Elvira Prado). They also visited the German Cemetery (another unique place of memory of Europe with soldiers from the First and Second World War)

- **Rural Deep Dive and workshop from farm to fork and responsible consumption and production through the promotion of equal gender opportunities**: The day finished in Guijo de Santa Bárbara, another municipality of the county of La Vera, up in the montains, where we organised a workshop "From Farm to Fork - Responsible Consumption and Production & Other Projects Promoting Equal Gender Opportunities in La Vera" lead by Laura Arroyo and Susana Dauden from the Entretantos Foundations and coordinators of the project (La Vera nos Alimenta (La Vera feeds us), to debate on sustainable food and ecological projects lead by women on rural areas. (SDG 5, 11 & 12).

<u>03/10/2025</u>

- **Open workshop with local stakeholders and women entrepreneurs**: On the second and final day, attendees traveled to the Palacio de los Manrique de Lara in Pasarón de la Vera, where several women entrepreneurs from the region shared their life stories. The event focused on developing business ideas in the region with the aim of revitalizing the area and providing an economic boost. Speakers included businesswoman Ana Moreno, whose company, Idiomatur, specializes in rural tourism through guided and experiential tours; Pilar Díaz, manager of the La Vera Paprika Designation of Origin; Ruth Vicente, chef and owner of the Al Norte restaurant in Jarandilla de la Vera; María de los Ángeles Martín, owner of a digital development company; and leather artisans Elisabeth Muñoz and Virginia Muñoz. (SDG 4, 5, 10, & 11)

- **Rural Deep Diver** and Leather Craft Workshop lead by women: The morning finished with a workshop lead by women leather artisans which teach participants to work with leather and how a rural business based on craft can become a good example for local development and fix population in the rural areas. (SDG 5 & 12).

- The day concluded with a visit to the Escobazos Museum in Jarandilla de la Vera and a subsequent meeting with the La Vera Women's Association, who explained their activities in the area, including the Emperor Charles V Route (Rural Dee Dive & (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 12).

- **It was followed for an exchange of projects (Ideas Market**) **and good practices among partners** of the project who showed through ppt presentations main projects and strategies developed in their countries, regions or municipalities to face challenges faced by women in rural areas on the topics of depopulation, demographic change, women immigration, development of smart village approach and digital competences for women, on promoting sustainable communities and responsible and sustainable consumption, the development of women employment or how to foster active women participation on decision making processes in rural areas through women empowerment initiatives. (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 12).

- The day finished making balance of all the thinks learned and with a meeting to contribute to the development of the Practical guidelines on how to include the gender perspective in sustainable development initiatives, followed by a coordination meeting of the project to define next steps and final meeting in Salus, Latvia. (SDG 5, 10, 11 & 12)

28/05/2025

- Departure of participants.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	03/11/202025	Initial version (new MFF).

ANNEX I

Conclusions of the encounter in the Yuste Foundation and County of la Vera in Extremadura, Spain on Women and Rural Areas under the HER VOICE Project

The Challenges of Women Rural Europe

Rural areas cover around **80% of the EU's territory** and are home to nearly **30% of its population**. They are essential for agriculture, food production, biodiversity, and cultural heritage. Yet, they face persistent challenges:

- **Depopulation**: Many rural regions are losing inhabitants, particularly young people, due to limited job opportunities, lack of infrastructure, and insufficient public services.
- **Outmigration of women**: Young women are more likely than men to leave rural areas. The reasons include fewer employment opportunities, unequal access to land and resources, lower wages, and limited childcare and healthcare services.
- **Aging population**: As young people leave, rural areas become older, which increases the demand for care services and reduces innovation potential.
- **Gender inequalities**: Women often play crucial roles in farming, family businesses, and community life, but they face structural barriers such as:
    - limited access to credit and land ownership,
    - underrepresentation in decision-making,
    - and lack of recognition for unpaid care and informal work.

Awareness of these challenges is fundamental, because the sustainability of rural Europe is closely linked to the capacity to empower women and make rural life more attractive for younger generations.

The Role of Women in European Rural Development Strategies

Women are at the heart of several EU development frameworks. Three key examples:

a) Smart Villages

- Seeks to harness digital technologies and innovation to improve rural life.
- For women, digitalisation can be a game changer: remote work, online entrepreneurship, and better access to healthcare and education.
- Gender-sensitive Smart Village strategies prioritize childcare, mobility, and training alongside digital infrastructure.

b) From Farm to Fork Strategy

- Part of the European Green Deal, this strategy promotes sustainable food systems.
- Women play a central role in short supply chains, organic farming, and small-scale production.
- CAP support with a gender lens is essential to reinforce women's leadership in sustainable agriculture.

c) The LEADER Approach

- A bottom-up method for rural development through Local Action Groups (LAGs).
- Women-led projects in tourism, renewable energy, and social enterprises revitalise local economies.
- Female leadership in LAGs strengthens innovation and inclusive participation in rural planning.

Contribution of Women in Rural Areas to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

The EU's gender-sensitive rural policies are not only about regional development; they also contribute directly to the **United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**:

- **Goal 5 – Gender Equality**: Empowering women in rural areas addresses inequalities in land ownership, representation, and access to resources.
- **Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities**: Tailored support for women and disadvantaged groups in rural regions reduces social and economic gaps between genders, regions, and generations.
- **Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities**: By making villages more attractive through digitalisation, better services, and innovation, EU policies contribute to resilient and sustainable rural communities.
- **Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production**: Women-led projects in organic farming, local food systems, and the circular economy support sustainable consumption patterns and reduce environmental impact.

Through these links, Europe positions rural women not just as beneficiaries, but as drivers of sustainability and innovation.

Recommendations, Ideas and Initiatives for Sustainable Rural Development with a Gender Perspective

Looking forward, how can Europe ensure that rural development is both sustainable and gender-sensitive? Several ideas stand out:

1. **Strengthening female entrepreneurship**
    - Dedicated financial instruments and microcredits for women.
    - Training in digital skills, management, and marketing.
    - Networks and mentorship programmes connecting rural women across Europe.
2. **Improving access to services**
    - Affordable childcare and eldercare services in rural villages.
    - Improved transport and mobility solutions.
    - Ensuring universal access to healthcare and education.
3. **Promoting women's leadership**
    - Incentives for female participation in decision-making bodies.
    - Encouraging young women to take leadership roles in cooperatives, farmers' associations, and municipal councils.
4. **Encouraging innovation and diversification**
    - Support for women-led initiatives in renewable energy, eco-tourism, and the circular economy.
    - Linking traditional knowledge with modern technologies.
5. **Fostering a positive image of rural life**
    - Campaigns showcasing women as drivers of change in rural areas.
    - Role models combining entrepreneurship, sustainability, and community engagement.

Aprendizajes y buenas practicas

During the presentations and discussions at the meeting, the main barriers faced by women in rural areas were identified, highlighting the main problems we must address. Similarly, the project partners shared good practices that have enabled us to identify additional priorities and propose some recommendations that enrich those mentioned in the previous point:

- **Barriers faced by women in rural areas:**
    - Increasing depopulation of rural areas, with high migration rates among women.
    - Difficulty in achieving gender balance in rural areas.
    - Lack of support for women to achieve work-life balance, start businesses, or face the difficulties associated with living in rural environments.
    - Lack of necessary and essential services to help stabilise the population.
    - Lack of infrastructure, including that linked to digital technologies or logistics, which causes additional isolation in rural areas.
    - Low birth rates that hinder the development and growth of rural areas, which tend to become depopulated. This also jeopardises the identity of these municipalities, their culture and traditions.
    - Low involvement of men in policies and initiatives that promote gender equality.
    - Disaffection among young people living in rural areas due to the problems and challenges that surround them, and the additional problem of social isolation caused by digital technologies (i.e. lack of socialisation due to excessive use of mobile phones). The low participation of young women in cultural, educational, sporting or social activities in rural municipalities is noteworthy. In contrast, adult women tend to participate actively in all these types of activities, and in several rural municipalities in La Vera, for example, they are considered to be the driving force behind the social and cultural life of the municipalities.
    - Lack of job opportunities.
    - High levels of job insecurity.
    - Lack of investment in infrastructure, communications, leisure facilities and programmes that promote entrepreneurship and thus stabilise the population.
    - Women are mainly linked to sectors such as home help and care for dependent persons, services linked to commerce and hospitality, or agriculture and livestock farming (to a lesser extent). In some municipalities, there are women with very diverse job profiles, not only in the care and primary sectors, but in all professional fields, from education, health, business and digital technologies.
    - Women continue to shoulder a heavy domestic burden and face double shifts, and are often forced to reduce their working hours in order to achieve a work-life balance. The best educated tend to emigrate due to a lack of opportunities. This situation makes it difficult for them to progress in their careers and also perpetuates the glass ceiling. Local councils, especially those led by women, can be a determining factor in promoting women's employment in rural areas, although it is important that this solution does not depend solely on whether the council is led by a woman or a man.
    - The role of local councils/town halls, especially those led by women, in promoting programmes that encourage work-life balance and the active participation of women in rural areas is noteworthy, as is the implementation of programmes to support employment, promote entrepreneurship and encourage the participation of young women, the latter being a particularly complex issue that requires additional measures and greater attention.

- Gender-based violence is a latent problem in rural areas, partly entrenched and kept silent, even becoming a taboo subject. The need for resources to combat this scourge is highlighted, not only in terms of prevention, but also in providing women with the necessary support to rebuild their lives, security and greater psychological support.
- The opportunity that Covid represented for rural areas, with thousands of people moving to these areas, is being reversed by the lack of infrastructure, services and opportunities.

- **Recomendaciones:**

  - It is important to work on the narrative and communication regarding the role of women in rural areas (awareness raising), and to show positive examples and stories that encourage young women to develop their professional careers in the rural environment in which they live, and prevent them from emigrating, thus avoiding depopulation and contributing to the elimination of negative stereotypes among the general population.
  - Involve men in the process.
  - Promote the use of digital technologies through training programmes and by providing tools and infrastructure to rural areas, in order to connect women with the rest of the world and enable them to develop their ideas and entrepreneurial projects despite the difficulties posed by physical isolation due to a lack of logistical infrastructure.
  - Invest more in education to eliminate stereotypes and in training for entrepreneurship.
  - Promote economic support projects and programmes.
  - Implement more measures to promote work-life balance at home and at work.
  - Establish regular monitoring and evaluation programmes on the situation of women in rural areas in order to better target actions where they are needed.
  - Simplify administrative tasks when developing projects or promoting entrepreneurial activities.
  - Implement programmes that showcase the attractive and positive aspects of living and doing business in rural areas.
  - Develop networks and associations that enable women from different sectors, as well as men and different municipalities, to tackle problems together.
  - Encourage the exchange of good practices that can be transferred to other rural areas in Europe.
  - Promote the role of women in promoting local identity through their active role in society and cultural and traditional activities.
  - Encourage actions that promote intergenerational cooperation to spark interest among young women and highlight the importance of developing their professional careers in rural areas.
  - Encourage greater participation by women in politics, as it has been shown that where women govern, especially in rural areas, there are more actions and policies aimed at defending their role in society, gender equality, and female entrepreneurship. Women feel more secure, and their self-esteem grows as they see change as possible.
  - Promote local traditions through women and the creation of associations where women can feel heard and develop their skills.
  - There is a latent lack of recognition that needs to be addressed through communication campaigns, but also within the education system.

Conclusios

- Rural Europe is at a crossroads, facing depopulation, aging, and gender inequalities.
- Women are key actors in reversing these trends. Their roles in farming, entrepreneurship, and community life make them central to rural sustainability.
- European policies — from the CAP to Smart Villages and LEADER — show how a gender-sensitive approach can support equality, resilience, and innovation.
- These efforts also connect directly to the **2030 Agenda**, contributing to gender equality, reduced inequalities, sustainable communities, and responsible production and consumption.

Empowering women in rural areas in the European Union is not only about justice or equality — it is also about shaping a sustainable and inclusive future for all.