Fast Food U Grow Project Hosts Hybrid Transnational Meeting

Irish Rural Link (IRL), the national network representing the interests of rural communities, is the lead partner in the Erasmus+ funded project *Fast Food U Grow*. The first in-person transnational project meeting was scheduled for Friday, 4th July, in Esmoriz, Portugal, hosted by the Portuguese partner, Uniao das Mutualidades Portuguesas (UMP). Unfortunately, due to the French Air Traffic strikes and resulting flight cancellations, the meeting was moved to a hybrid format.

FAST FOOD U GROW represents an integrated 'back to the future' learning journey. The project addresses the interrelated societal problems of a growing obesity and environmental crisis by promoting the simple growth and production of Healthier Fast Food from the garden to the kitchen.

Irish Rural Link is joined in the project from Ireland by Galway City Community Training Centre, which delivers training in Culinary Skills, Horticulture and Mechanics for early school leavers. The third project partner, Uniao das Mutualidades Portuguesas (UMP), is a network of 53 associations representing the social economy at national level. With 2.5 million beneficiaries, the organisation is one of the most influential social economy voices in Portugal.

Empowering the younger learner participant to fully 'own' the fast-food production cycle from the seed to the fork by promoting a healthier approach to diet and more sustainable consumption practices is the overall aim of the project. The project will demonstrate the relative ease, adventure, enjoyment, sense of achievement and affordability this approach to 'Fast Food' offers. Uniquely, the project involves time spent in the Classroom, Kitchen, and Garden for all young participants in both Ireland and Portugal and will result in inspiring ‘Hands-on’ Garden and Kitchen Guides, which can easily be taken up by young people everywhere with very little help.

Speaking about the project, Seamus Boland, CEO of Irish Rural Link, said: “We are delighted to be part of this exciting ‘hands-on’ project and enjoy working with both Galway City CTC and UMP in Portugal, partners we have worked with over a number of years. This is a great opportunity to bring back older skills which our parents and grandparents simply took for granted, but which today might be less common”.

For further information, please contact (anytime): Seamus Boland (Chief Executive) 0862491153 or Louise Lennon (Policy and Communications Officer) 0861069244
About Irish Rural Link: Irish Rural Link represents the interests of locally based rural groups in disadvantaged and marginalised rural areas by highlighting problems, advocating appropriate policies, sharing experiences and examples of good practice. It has a membership of nearly 600 rural community groups dedicated to sustainable rural development and represents rural communities at a national and international level.

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