How to promote women’s and youth’s economic opportunities in rural areas of Europe and Central Asia? (in focus: cases from Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia)

Across the region, rural youth, and especially young women, have fewer opportunities for higher education and decent jobs. Rural women have less access to critical productive resources, be it land, agricultural inputs and financial services, and are overrepresented in manual labor as informal, unpaid family workers. In some countries of the region, no more than 10 percent of registered landowners are women and fewer than 10 percent of agricultural enterprises registered on women’s names. Just one in ten clients of the extension services in some countries is a woman, which clearly demonstrates gender based divide in access to agricultural knowledge and technologies. Along with that, low wages, poor infrastructure and lack of social services, prevalence of social practices based on stereotyping and strict gender roles, - all contribute and serve as factors that push young migration in search of opportunities and a more dynamic quality of life in urban areas or abroad.

This side event will review promising practices, discuss and recommend actions that governments can put in place to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The panelists and participants
of the webinar will identify challenges that hold off the progress of rural women’s and youth’s economic empowerment and propose solutions for moving towards sustainable and inclusive rural economies, paying particular attention to the challenges in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual side event will bring together policymakers, development practitioners, expert community and civil society.

**Outcome**

The summaries and conclusions will be reflected in a summary booklet to inform policy-makers, civil society, academia and other concerned stakeholders. This discussion is part of the series of ongoing webinars under the FAO and HSE collaboration in support of organizing and carrying out the International Forum “Food Policy, Rural Development and Gender Equality in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia: current trends and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Panelists include:**

**Dr. Emine Erdogan,**
Honorary Research Member, Department of Sociology at Warwick University, UK

**Dr. Ilkay Unay Gailhard,**
Researcher, Department of the Structural Development of Farms and Rural Areas, Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO), Germany

**Dr. Nozilakhon Mukhamedova,**
Professor, Department of Agricultural Policy and Market Research, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany

**Raushan Sarsenbaeva,**
President of the Association of Business Women of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan

**Moderator:**

**Dr. Alexey Naumov,** Head of Department for Rural Development Studies, Institute for Agrarian Studies HSE University

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**Date:** Friday, 12 March, 2021  
**Time:** 11:00-13:30 (CET)  
**Location:** Online, Zoom  
**To register for this side event:** inagres.hse.ru/en/polls/442058795.html  
**The webinar will be livestreamed on the HSE website:** inagres.hse.ru/en/faogenderwebinars  
**Languages:** English/Russian. Simultaneous translation will be available.