



A School for Young Shepherds - Training and co-design of innovative ideas  
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Thematic Group on Rural Youth Employment, EU CAP Network  
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## “A School for Young shepherds” - Training and co-design of innovative ideas

*The School for Young Shepherds is an action-research project, focused on young people living in Italy's mountain areas, promoted by the **Association Riabitare l'Italia** and **CREA** within the **Italian National Rural Network***  
**Donor: Fondazione Cariplo**

[for more information:](https://www.reterurale.it/giovanipastori)

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# The implementation in Piedmont Region

*The School on livestock farming practices, processing techniques and design for young or aspiring shepherds has started on 26 of September 2022. There are 15 young participants, men and women who had the opportunity to join a network of exchange between shepherds, operators and researchers. **Training is delivered in collaboration with local farmers and adopts participatory didactics.***

*The offer, completely free of charge, includes 2 weeks of in-presence training, 1 online, support and participatory planning for the development of individual participants' projects and business ideas.*

**Presentation video : <https://youtu.be/qEjpN93GDS8>**



Applicants

50



Participants

15



Mean age

28,4

## PARTECIPANTS



### Degree

University  
degree

3

Middle  
School

1



11

High  
School

### Geographical origin

Piedmont

8



Lombardy

4

Central  
Italy

3

### Sector of activity

6



Farmer

5



Plan to start a  
farming business

4



Other sectors of  
activity





Applicants **50**



Participants **15**



Mean age **30,6**

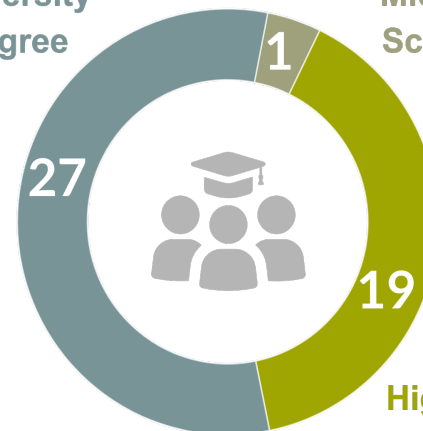
## APPLICANTS



### Degree

University  
degree

Middle  
School



\*3 applicants missing

Male

Female

52%

48%

Gender

### Geographical origin

Northern Italy

**33**



Central Italy

**10**

Southern  
Italy and  
Islands

**7**

### Sector of activity

**15**



Farmer

**11**



Plan to start a  
farming business

**24**

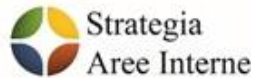


Other sectors of  
activity



# Why a School for young shepherds : trends and needs

2015



Technical Committee  
for Inner Areas

2020

CREA-NRN is  
a partner



2022



THE INTENSE FIELD WORK  
CARRIED OUT BY CREA  
WITHIN THE NATIONAL  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM  
CREATED TO HELP ACTORS  
IN INNER AREAS - THE MOST  
MARGINAL RURAL AREAS -  
TO DESIGN INNOVATIVE  
STRATEGIES TO STOP  
DEPOPULATION

READ FOR MORE:

[LUCATELLI, STORTI, 2019](#)

**Territorial  
diagnosis** based  
on open data and  
scouting of  
relevant actors

**Pastoralism** is  
embedded in the very  
cultural identity of these  
areas and it is at risk

AN ACTION-RESEARCH  
INVESTIGATING THE  
OPPORTUNITIES AND  
CHALLENGES  
FACED BY YOUTH IN  
ITALIAN INNER AREAS (18-  
39 YEARS OLD)

READ FOR MORE:

[VOGLIA DI RESTARE](#)

DONZELLI EDITORE, 2023

**Young people in rural  
areas are willing to stay  
(69 %) because of quality of  
life (79%) and human  
relationship (67%)**

**Growing interest  
towards **pastoralism** and  
agriculture, as a lifestyle  
choice not only a source  
of income (agroecological  
perspective)**

IN RESPONSE TO  
THESE TRENDS, IT IS  
NECESSARY TO INVEST  
IN THE CAPACITATION  
OF YOUNG PEOPLE  
THROUGH TRAINING  
AND ASSISTANCE  
ACTIONS CONSISTENT  
WITH THEIR NEEDS





# Main aims of our School

- to give access to a training offer linked to the needs of enhancing extensive livestock farming in marginal areas
- to build a places to compare and share operational practices and knowledge useful for developing one's own projects
- to support to the development of entrepreneurship ideas in interactions with local communities
- to provide assistance for the design of breeding farms ecologically sound
- to create a network of exchange between shepherds, operators and researchers

***The school adopts a participatory and experiential approaches to facilitate knowledge exchange, creating in the process a community of people with a shared vision on grazing livestock farms and a closeness to cultivated and farmed species***





## Next steps : in October 2023 the School will be implemented in Sicily in the «Madonie» with two specificity

- is designed for the young people from the Madonie Mountains but is also open to young people from other Regions and/or other Countries who are interested in living and working in this mountain area;
- it has also the aim to trigger **innovative processes and practices of land recovery** in favour of the young people who **will be trained**.
- it will be implemented in **collaboration with the Mayors and the Administrative Union of the territory**, in coherence with the strategic vision that this territory has given itself as part of the **National Strategy of Inner Areas**





## First results and lesson learnt

For young people returning to land, growing wheat, breeding animals is a cultural process of social innovation

They are creating communities that are more ecologically sound and socially just

The School can help to build initiatives that are place-based without becoming place bound, by supporting shared knowledge and visions, though projects co-designed by local communities, public institutions and research centres at national and regional level (***multi-scalar approach***)

***Desirè Ferrero, Student:***  
***The School helped me to understand who I really want to become in life ...***  
[\*\*https://youtu.be/kAz2RGXsHdk\*\*](https://youtu.be/kAz2RGXsHdk)





The School is an example of how to enhance rural and social innovation while helping young people to fulfil their projects





# THANK YOU!

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