



# NEWSLETTER

December 2024

European IFYE Alumni



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## Greetings from the President

My dear IFYE friends,

It feels like it was yesterday when I wrote the greetings for the December 2023 newsletter. How quickly a year can pass is indescribable. It has been a year

with many events for us IFYEs and for everyone as a private person. A year with pleasant events and less pleasant events, both in the private and public sphere.



I deliberately chose the same introduction as for the December 2023 newsletter. Unfortunately, many things in our lives have not changed for the better. Please allow me to express a few personal thoughts and words which are exclusively my opinion and in no way relate to the IFYE organization or the issues addressed. The unrest and conflicts on our beautiful planet have unfortunately increased and it currently does not look as if these conflicts can be resolved in peace in the short term. We have been at war in Europe for over three years, the region where Jesus Christ is supposed to have lived over 2000 years ago is currently more like a gunpowder barrel and the dissatisfaction of the population is increasing in many regions. How long will it be before peace reigns everywhere again or will there be further escalations? I sincerely hope that things will not escalate and that there will be a peaceful solution to all conflicts soon.



*From the magic and moist eyes.*

*The tree is decorated. Dad opens the balcony door, lights the candles, rings the bell. "The Christ Child!" Mom opens the sliding door, the little one's rush into the living room with wide eyes. "Where is it? Papa? - "I saw it scurrying out of the balcony." – Oh*

In our country the "Christkind" (Christ Child) comes and brings some gifts on the 24th (Christmas Eve). For me, this moment is special, when the children wait for this moment with joy and excitement.

Christmas 2024 is just around the corner and brings with it a special atmosphere of reflection and togetherness. Christmas is a special time of year that touches many people in different ways. For many, it symbolizes a time of reflection, giving and community. The festive atmosphere created by lights, decorations and Christmas markets creates a warm and welcoming mood that often brings back memories of childhood.

In the run-up to Christmas, many people take time to decorate their homes, choose presents and prepare festive meals. These traditions not only promote anticipation of the festive season, but also strengthen bonds within families and circles of friends. Baking cookies together or singing Christmas carols are activities that promote joy and cohesion.

Christmas is also a time of giving. Many people get involved in their community to help those in need, be it through donations, volunteer work or organizing aid campaigns. These gestures of charity remind us that the true spirit of Christmas lies in sharing and caring for one another.

For many, Christmas also has a spiritual dimension. It is a time to pause and reflect on one's own values and beliefs. The Christmas story, which celebrates the birth of Jesus, inspires many to reflect on themes such as peace, love and hope.

Overall, Christmas is a time for reflection, togetherness and gratitude. It offers the opportunity to reflect on the essentials and to deepen our relationships with the people we care about. During the hustle and bustle of everyday life, Christmas reminds us to appreciate the little things in life and spread joy.

For 2025, some good resolutions might be to set aside more time for personal development, whether it's by learning new skills or reading inspiring books. Promoting health and well-being, for example through regular exercise and a healthy diet, is also important. You could also resolve to spend more time with family and friends and maintain social contacts.

Finally, I would like to wish you happy holidays and a happy new year and hope to see you again soon in peace and

in good spirits. May the new year be full of joy, health and fulfilled dreams! Here's to a happy and successful 2025! Don't forget to register for the 2025 conference in England, it will be another great event for our organization. With these words I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you soon...  
Andi

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## Invitation to 65th IFYE European Conference 2025 - England

**Where:** Castle Head Field Studies Centre, Grange Over Sands, Cumbria, England (English Lake District)

**When:** Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2025 at 16:00 hours to  
Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 10:00 hours

**Bookings open:**

1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 (European IFYE members)

1<sup>st</sup> March 2025 (Rest of the world)

**Bookings close:**

1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 (or earlier if fully booked)

**Email:** IFYE2025@yahoo.com



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## IFYE Slovenia - innovations in the IFYE programme

*written by IFYE Slovenia team*

IFYE Slovenia officially established

To open the window into the world of new experiences, good practices, and personal growth! This is the mission of IFYE Slovenia. A mission that inspired us to establish our own IFYE association – IFYE Slovenia.

On Friday, 22nd November, representatives of 8 rural youth associations and the Slovenian Rural Youth Association (Zveza slovenske podeželske mladine, ZSPM) unanimously supported the establishment of IFYE Slovenia and elected Mateja Golc as the president for the 2025-2027 term. This means that after six years (the exchanges were coordinated by ZSPM since 2018), Slovenia now officially has its own association for organizing exchanges under IFYE Europe.

During the founding assembly, which was led by former ZSPM president Anja Kastelic, attendees reviewed the work plan for the upcoming year 2025, the association's statute, and listened to speeches by notable participants, including all three ZSPM presidents, which have supported IFYE exchanges since 2018. Although ten legal entities are among the founding members of the association, anyone who resonates with our values – honesty, open-mindedness, friendliness, solidarity, enthusiasm, and love for community – is welcome to join.



Our members include young men and women, farmers, students, and, above all, young volunteers from rural areas.

A special thanks goes to the hosts at the Pri Martinovih Tourist Farm (Turistična kmetija pri Martinovih), who had been a host family to many participants of the exchange, and to Julija Kordež, former IFYE Slovenija coordinator, for capturing the evening through her photography.

Key goals of IFYE Slovenia:

1. Connecting, collaborating, and engaging rural youth and those with a connection to rural areas. Through networking, we aim to educate and empower them for life in rural areas.
2. Facilitating youth exchanges to host farms abroad and within Slovenian borders, and help them with organization, financial help and mobility support.
3. Welcoming international rural youth to Slovenia, organizing their stays with host farms, and offering them mobility support.





An extended thanks goes to everyone who has in any way contributed to the association, among them; Rok Damijan and Anja Kastelic, former presidents of ZSPM, Polona Globočnik and Julija Kordež, former heads of international cooperation at ZSPM and Neža Špenko and Tjaša Stiplovšek, both IFYE Slovenia coordinators.

Furthermore, we're thrilled to announce that Slovenia will be hosting two exchanges in the year 2025. Namely, the first one will take place in June and July (3-5 weeks, arrival on June 23rd 2025) and the second in September and October (3-5 weeks, arrival on September 1st 2025). For any additional questions, please contact Mateja Golc via [ifye@zspm.si](mailto:ifye@zspm.si) by January 31st 2025.

We're looking forward to creating many wonderful memories, successfully organizing exchanges, and writing inspiring stories together – stories of good people from the rural areas.



## IFYE Swiss Winterweekend

ifye swiss winterweekend

10.-12.01.2025



Klewenalp NW

More information:

<http://www.ifye.ch/aktuell/agenda>

or:

[zuberei@bluewin.ch](mailto:zuberei@bluewin.ch) / +41 79 962 11 32

Registration until 30. December 24: [zuberei@bluewin.ch](mailto:zuberei@bluewin.ch) / +41 79 962 11 32



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## 67th Annual Young Farmers Ambassadors Reunion - Wrexham,

**Wales 25th-28th October 2024**

*written by Heini Daniels-Gower (IFYE from Wales to Scotland 2013 & Rally 2014 & 2018)*

*photos by Mary Turner (IFYE from Scotland to Switzerland 1977)*





The annual UK YFA reunion was held back in October at The Ramada hotel, Wrexham, North Wales. Over one hundred YFA members attended the 67th reunion. The reunions are a fun filled, four-day weekend that provide a great way to catch up with old and new friends, whilst exploring a small part of the UK.

Wrexham is a city located between the Welsh mountains and near the border of Chester in England. Wrexham is rich with history, a former hub of coal and lead mining, iron, steel and leather production, not to mention Brewing. More recently it has become famous for its A-list celebrity owned football club, providing the inspiration for the theme of the weekend.

The reunion weekend kicked off with an evening of Football fancy dress and lots of ice breaker, football themed games and music for everyone to enjoy. Many of the attendees got quite competitive with their dribbling skills and prizes were handed out for the best fancy dress costumes.



On Saturday morning, the attendees gathered for the annual group photo before departing for various trips. The trips on offer this year included a visit to Erddig, a National trust Estate, Pontcysyllte Aquaduct, Rhug Estate farm, Farmers Fresh Abbatoir, a Vintage tractor tour, farm tours and a visit to Llangollen.

I personally attended the Rhug Estate farm in the morning with a visit to Llangollen after lunch. At Rhug, we were given a Tractor trailer tour by the farm manager, Emyr Owen over the 6,700 acre organic farm.

Emyr highlighted their field to plate operation, and one of the highlights was learning about their farming of North American Bison as well as having the opportunity to sample Bison for lunch.



The afternoon was spent lazily exploring the beautiful town of Llangollen. It has a spectacular view of the river Dee and an impressive range of cafes, bars and hotels for visitors to enjoy.

In Keeping with the A-list celebrity owned football club, Saturday evening was a glamorous red carpet event, fit for Ryan Reynolds and Blake Lively. We even had our very own awards ceremony and red carpet photographer. We danced the night away with DJ Paul G Roadhouse.

Sunday morning started with everyone gathered for the religious service, followed by the regional meetings. At the England and Wales AGM, Andrew Spencer ended his term as Chairman, and Alison Roberts was elected as the new chair. Laura Flower was elected as Vice-chair, Kate Lyons re-elected as Secretary. Then on to the National AGM, before lunch and Sunday afternoon trips.

For the Sunday afternoon trip, attendees could visit St Giles Parish church, have free time in Wrexham or stay in hotel to relax. Sunday night was an evening of traditional Twmpath dancing with Dawnsywyr Delyn, where everyone had a chance to try out the different dances.

Before we knew it, Monday morning came around, time to say goodbye to friends old and new before heading home.

A big thank you to all who came to the YFA Reunion 2024 and made it a fantastic event for all. I'm very much looking forward to next years reunion at Omagh, Northern Ireland.





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## In Memory



**Anita Larsen Panman**

*IFYE from Norway to USA, 1988*

*9th March 1963 - 7th December 2024*

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Deadline next issue: 23rd March 2025

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European IFYE Alumni Association

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