



# NEWSLETTER

April 2021

European IFYE Alumni



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## Greetings from the President

*What is Easter actually? Easter is always associated with spring. It is certain that Easter is not only celebrated by Christians, but also symbolically stands for the beginning of spring, i.e. a new awakening of nature, a new beginning, a start into a new chapter....*



Dear IFYE's

A year ago, a pandemic rolled over us and changed our lives from the very bottom up. Things we took for granted suddenly became impossible, our personal liberty was curtailed, and life slammed on the brakes at top speed.



Today, after more than a year of pandemic and restrictions, the expectations of being able to defeat this pandemic is germinating. Vaccinations are available and countries are pushing ahead with vaccination coverage at different speeds. It is our personal decision whether to accept the vaccination offer or to do without it. One thing is certain, only together can we achieve a victory here. I hope my words reach you in full health, that you are happy and surrounded by people who love you.

Spring is a new beginning - many things are starting to sprout and grow. New hope and confidence are emerging. This is another reason why I personally look forward to the summer and hope that everything will return to normal somewhat in the foreseeable future.

Unfortunately, one far-reaching decision has already been taken from us. Due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic in the United Kingdom, the UK government has announced regulations, which will not enable us to facilitate the conference this year. Therefore, with no alternative accommodation available, the organizing committee of IFYE 2020, with the support of European IFYE, have made the sad but sensible decision to CANCEL this year's European Conference. Hopefully by working together as a worldwide community we can stop this virus, and the IFYE conference will come back bigger and stronger in 2022 in Finland

IFYE is a volunteer led event and the European Conference is a highlight of the year for many people. Whilst this news is disappointing for everyone, we are sure you would agree that the health, safety and well-being of all of us is most important. I apologize for not having better news now and hope for your understanding for our decision. Thank you!

We still must discuss how the handover from England to Finland will be handled and how we will deal with the AGM 2021 in case no conference can take place this summer. One possibility would be to extend the term of office for another year, just as we did in 2020. An online vote could be organized once more among the members registered for the conference in England. Finally, England must also determine the repayment modalities for the conference contributions, considering the international and national rules, as well as the regulations of financial transactions.

I am sure that in retrospect some things could have been solved differently, better and no matter what action we take in the current situation, it can be wrong. However, we also have the chance to do a lot of things right, because nobody has been in this situation before.

I think we are doing it well, aren't we?

However, I am very confident that we will enjoy the hospitality of our Finnish friends next year. Finland will have put together a great program with something for everyone. Look forward to a great time with lots of fun and variety.

Have a beautiful spring and stay healthy!

Andi,

IFYE from Austria to the USA, 2000



## Virtual get-together in Finland

### Etäkalsarikännit? Drinking with your IFYE-friends while wearing long johns?

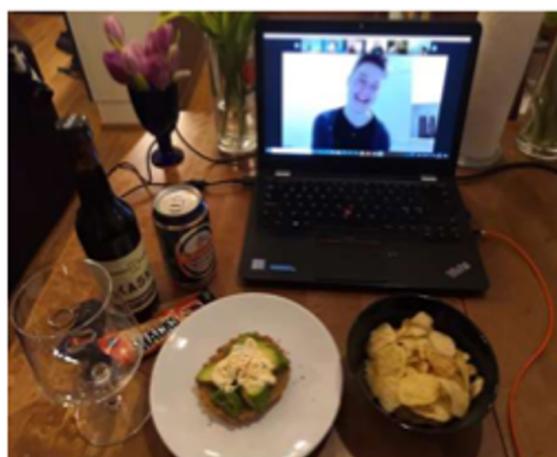
*written by Jenna Järvenpää (IFYE from Finland to Taiwan, 2018)*

“What to do when the corona situation starts to get frustrating? How to meet your friends online and still have fun? What is “etäkalsarikännit?” Sounds a bit fishy (Finnishh), doesn’t it? Indeed, “Kalsarikännit” is a traditional Finnish way of drinking at home alone while wearing your underwear or long johns!

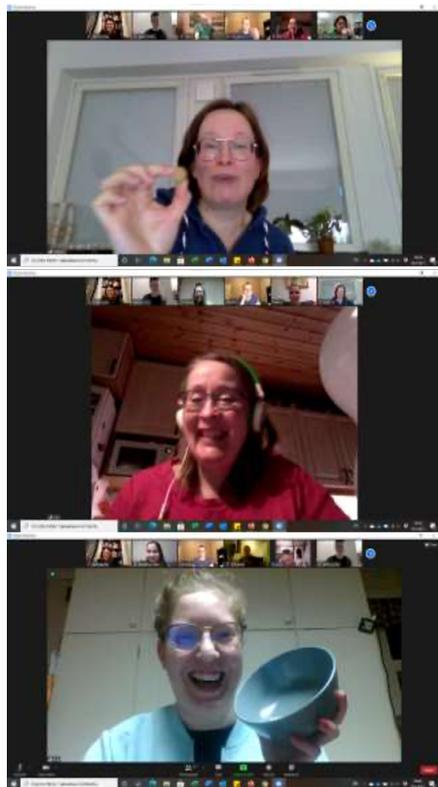


Etäkalsarikännit in the Finnish IFYE way.

“Kalsarikännit” is a traditional Finnish way of drinking at home alone while wearing your underwear or long johns. This time, Finnish IFYEs took the tradition to the next level and innovated a new way of social drinking, online kalsarikännit (etäkalsarikännit), through Zoom. The idea originated from our two junior board members, Minttu Varis and Sari Kämäräinen, who innovated and organized this hilarious event on Friday evening 26.3.2021.



There were 17 IFYEs, 4 future IFYEs, one spouse and at least two cats and one dog participating in this two-hour session. The participants were informed to gather delicious drinks, sweets, chocolate licorice and dishes for the show. The event was a blast!



There were IFYEs wearing their IFYE- t-shirts, traditional Finnish wollen socks, different long johns with holes or rabbits in them, drinking different beers, ciders, and Finnish “lonkero” and playing bingo on, who will get accidentally muted or drops out of Zoom. We also had “Silent Disco”, where everyone played their favorite song and danced like maniacs – while being muted. It was so much fun! Lastly, we played “Never have I ever” – drinking game, where it was argued whether it is driving a motorcycle, if the motorcycle is attached in the wall. Legendary gentlemen Kyltsi and Kultsi were also joining this super hilarious IFYE-moment!

Finnish IFYEs highly recommends every IFYE to join this “etäkalsarikännit” movement and meet online, with or without drinks and sweets! Perhaps, you could join us on our next “etäkalsarikännit” event on Zoom later this year?

Let’s beat the corona distancing together!

## Greetings from Slovenia

*written by Neža & Polona (Rural Youth Association of Slovenia)*

In 2017, the Slovenian Rural Youth Association joined the IFYE family with its first partnership agreement with Switzerland. Indeed, that year our first two IFYE delegates visited the Swiss countryside. In 2018, we additionally made agreements with Finland and Estonia and with the US, Montana, Austria, and Germany a year after that. In summer 2019 we also hosted our first IFYE incomings. Regula from Switzerland and Kristen from Estonia spent their summer on different Slovenian farms and in the company of the members of the Slovenian Rural Youth Association.



The Slovenian IFYE program offers a variety of different farms since Slovenia itself is very diverse. Incoming IFYEs come to Slovenia for 7 weeks and get to know our way of farming, living in rural areas and meet with many interesting people. Most Slovenian farms are very small and diversified and can offer a unique experience to all the incomings. On our host farms, IFYEs can experience very different kinds of agricultural production. They can visit farmers who produce crops, winegrowers, herb farmers, livestock farms, and also those who are dealing with agrotourism. During their stay, IFYEs can spend some quality time being tourists and visiting many natural jewels that Slovenia has, such as Velika Planina, Kranjska Gora, Bled, Bohinj, Soča valley.



If located near Ljubljana, they can spend a day in the Alpine region or spend some time by the seaside which both can be reached in less than one hour by car. We are very much looking forward to hosting some IFYEs again! If you have any questions you can reach out to us anytime.



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## Short notice from Alan Duncan

*written by Alan Duncan (IFYE from Scotland to Finland, 1977)*

Greetings from AJD on the Isle of Skye!

Another year passed and unfortunately, another cancelled "Gathering of the Clans"! Yes, we have to wait until the world comes back from what we knew as normal to a "new normal". So, for 12th June, 2021, we will have to find ourselves somewhere else on that day. My best to all until we can meet again.



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## News from Estonia – Gerda’s Confession Me and My Addiction

*written by Gerda Vares (Estonian IFYE Coordinator and IFYE friend)*

It all started in 2016 when I started along with an Estonian team to organize the IFYE Conference in Jõulumäe Health- and Sportcentre in Estonia. I had no idea what to expect and how it would eventually change my life and its future perspectives. The foundation of addiction had been laid.

It all started very slowly. It sneaks up on you stealthily and at first you have no idea what you have committed yourself to. There is first use, then regular use and it becomes more and more important in your life. When I googled about signs of addiction it all made sense – I am for sure addicted.



There is the following: loss of control, abandoning hobbies and activities, poor performance at school or work and unexplained financial problems. By the year 2019, I was at a stage where I needed dangerous amounts of it to feel good and I couldn't function in daily life without it.

I am of course talking about IFYE friends and IFYE Conferences. I have no other addiction that I admit except IFYE and we are not talking about chocolate or red wine 😊. But in my own defense I can say that I for sure have enjoyed every minute of it. Unfortunately, in 2020 and in 2021 there have been some intense cravings and withdrawal symptoms but don't want to talk about those no more. Its way better to recall good IFYE-memories.



As I said, 2016 was a turning point and I really mean it – all the memories and travels, joint events and moments, friends from all over the world... the list goes on and on. My best memories are midnight walks and talks, dancing until dawn, hiking and cycling in mountains, tasting national cuisines, listening to inspirational people and their stories as well as enjoying crazy room parties. The frequent problem has been how benefit most of the time while not feeling tired. I don't know about you, but usually after IFYE Conferences I feel like needing a big vacation and a week of sleep.

Despite the situation in the world, my life is pretty busy and versatile and thanks to that it has helped me coping with my addiction and withdrawal symptoms 😊. That and getting letters from IFYE friends and seeing pictures of you in social media. For those, who do not know me, I was dragged into IFYE world because my work as a CEO in Estonian 4H and I am now also as an IFYE coordinator. I now live in Estonian capital in Tallinn but I was brought up in Estonian biggest island called Saaremaa. Who wants to experience Estonian capital life or a small village life in a summer cottage where there is no running water but it is brought inside from a well and toilet is outside in a small hut with no water – you are welcomed to visit in the future.



I hope all of you are well and safe. I feel very grateful for my family and possibility to travel between two homes. I have them and my work and hobbies and friends who keep me from becoming insane between home office, my daughters' homeschooling situation and the partial lockdown. So don't forget that we all have each other, our memories and our joint addiction 😊. Let's be there for each other.

I wish you all a splendid spring and a colorful summer!



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## New in the online IFYE Museum

Tomas Gunnarsson informs about the latest addition to our online IFYE Museum. If you feel like traveling back in time and challenging your own remembering abilities, go have a look at the new Quiz under [https://archive.ifye.eu/qq\\_contributions/qq\\_1.pdf](https://archive.ifye.eu/qq_contributions/qq_1.pdf).

A big thank you to Alison Siphthorp from New Zealand for contributing with wonderful pictures!

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**Deadline next issue: 30th June 2021**

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**European IFYE Alumni Association**

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