

Abstract id 44

Abstract category

Maaatalousyrittäjyys ja hyvinvointi
Monivaihteinen luomu

Abstract presentation type

Suullinen esitys

Abstract title

Idea and practice of inclusive farming

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Abstract text

Inclusive farming (INCLUFAR) - Transfer of concepts, experiences, skills, and training tools for social farming and eco-social inclusion is an innovation transfer project within the Lifelong Learning Leonardo da Vinci funding scheme of the EU. The results were gathered during the project period from October 2013 until September 2015.

Why INCLUFAR? First, Finland signed the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and is presently adjusting the legislation accordingly. Second, the results of the public consultation on the review of the EU-policy on organic agriculture conducted by the directorate general for agriculture and rural development in 2013 shows that economic and social dimension have the highest priority. Third, social farming and green care enterprises put the multifunctionality demand of policy makers into practice.

Because green care enterprises emerged in the past decade rapidly, there is a lack of qualified staff specialised on both agriculture and social work related professions. The results of the past EU funded green care projects SoFar, DIANA, MAIE, and others reflect this fact addressing development of appropriate VET curricula as a concern.

INCLUFAR meets the need for appropriate curricula suitable for social farming and green care enterprises which link care for individuals with special needs and nature in organic farms. INCLUFAR transferred a new on-farm developed curriculum and the gathered experiences with it to green care enterprises and to related institutions following the principal of inclusion. As a result better labour opportunities emerge, fostering rural economic development. Exploiting the specific agricultural work and life-setting may improve social welfare structure in rural areas.

Outcomes of the project are: 1. The INCLUFAR handbook, providing background knowledge of and concepts for inclusive farming. 2. The INCLUFAR curriculum, available in all partner country languages. 3. An occupational profile to meet the practical steps implementing the INCLUFAR idea.

The skills gathered in the partner countries through coaching team visits to Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands, and Turkey contributed to improve the quality of work on farm as well as on the rural area and its different professions (farmers, gardeners, handicrafts, nurses, social workers, civil servants, etc.). The term inclusion, as a central concern in the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities was also applied to improve the cultural landscape and its biotopes. Thus, the project contributed to improve and support the training path aims of creating a greater awareness of social and ecological inclusion.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.