



Executive Agency, Education, Audiovisual and Culture



**LivOrg**  
**Design and testing new VET frameworks for  
the transfer and recognition of organic livestock  
management skills in Europe**

Progress Report

Public Part

## Project information

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## Executive Summary

This interim public report provides a synthesis of the results of the EU-funded LivOrg project, with the title “Design and testing new VET frameworks for the transfer and recognition of organic livestock management skills in Europe”. The first period of the project is from December 2013 to November 2014. LivOrg is a Leonardo da Vinci large scale Development of Innovation project involving seven organisations from six different EU Countries, which have been working for one year in the field of organic livestock and organic agriculture sector.

As reported in the Agriculture and Rural Development web portal of the EU Commission, *the EU organic sector is developing rapidly. On average over the past decade, the area of organic farmland in the EU increased by half a million hectares - every year. There are now over 186 000 farms cultivating organic farmland across the EU. Awareness of animal welfare issues has been also growing in recent years. Under the Lisbon Treaty of 2009, which acknowledges that animals have feelings, the EU and its members must take animal welfare into account in all agricultural, fisheries, transport and research policy ([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/index_en.htm)).*

The overall objective of this project is to address the increasingly relevance of the Organic Farming system in Europe organizing a harmonic and common VET (Vocational Education and Training) framework in the organic livestock management area, encouraging the conversion from high-input agriculture to organic agriculture systems in Europe.

The Consortium has been working to increase and promote the awareness in organic livestock management across EU, and to extend the *Sector Skills Alliance* networks in order to meet the organic sector and policymakers’ needs across EU, developing innovative contents, methods and procedures within the VET system.

In order to facilitate the matching of skilled young people and farms in the organic agriculture and livestock sector, PILOT training courses and Counselling Laboratories (LABS) have been organized, involving farmers and experts.

After one year of activities, the project’s approach has been developing through four strands:

- I. Defining a multi-actor approach, particularly thanks to different strategic networking groups composed of skill-based members, creating new conditions for expanding employment chances and promote “soft” skills in sectors with growth potential (green jobs) as organic livestock management.
- II. Developing of new training paths, VET tools, insights and opinions by different working groups composed LivOrg and supporting participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualification in organic livestock management sector, facilitating personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market.
- III. Continuous evaluation and quality-assurance system based on internal evaluation methods.
- IV. Dissemination and capacity building via an active strategy involving all partners and keeping a visible profile in relation to dissemination and exploitation. The structure of LivOrg and the active involvement and co-operation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe have been improving the quality and increasing the volume of dissemination and follow-up through every stage of the Project.

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## 1. Project Objectives

The LivOrg Project's main strategic aims are to:

- A. Increase the awareness of organic livestock management area to meet the sector and policymakers' needs in EU improving the system to be competitive with conventional processes.
- B. Extend the sector skills alliance activities reinforcing the effective cooperation between OF and stakeholders.
- C. Develop and deliver a specific-sector curriculum with a stronger package of "VET" Units in organic livestock management area, strongly connected with EQF and ECVET system for the transfer and recognition of organic farmers' skills in EU.
- D. Improve the quality of training systems through the development of innovative contents, methods and procedures within VET system in response to evolving skills needs.
- E. Encourage the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit through a double transition:
  - from organic family owned and managed business farming to the next generation family members;
  - from conventional agriculture to organic farming.

In order to meet these aims, the partnership is working together to:

- 1) Designing and adapting of "VET" Units package for a new joint curriculum related to organic livestock management qualification covering production, processing and certification areas.
- 2) Designing and testing pilot VET courses through an integrated blended approach: classrooms, e-learning activities (indoor) supported by learning on the job methods (outdoor).
- 3) Defining a multi-actor approach, particularly thanks to a) the T.O.P Team activities; b) the initiatives of LivOrg strategic networking groups composed of skill-based Actors; c) the scientific workshops thematically organized between partners, targets groups and stakeholders.
- 4) Designing and testing: a) business incubator laboratories where developing models of organic farming and entrepreneurial capacity building b) on-the-job training pathways and mobility for those new organic entrepreneurs who will apply the "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme".

## 2. Project Approach

The methodological approach taken by LivOrg Consortium to achieve the implementation of the project with high standards is the one of mutual decision taking and regular exchange of information in order to ensure that all consortium members are involved in the network's developments. Furthermore, other approaches have been defined, namely in the following working areas:

### **Management – Quality Assurance**

- Strategies to manage, monitor and assure the quality of the project development:
  - Drafting the operational plans to provide and manage with the LivOrg Activities.
  - Defining the members for the two strategic working groups (T.O.P Team and Monitoring Unit) to carry on the scheduled activities
  - Providing evaluation activities and reports across the Consortium through the support of Monitoring Unit members in order to assess all LivOrg activities developed during this first year, including the partnership meetings, promotion workshops and training activities.
  - Organising on-line meetings through skype and on line communications through e-mails, in order to share knowledge, feedbacks and remarks about the development of the activities and the work plan agreed
  - Attending two transnational partnership meetings to facilitate deeper discussions and encourage team building & cooperation approaches throughout the working package activities of the Project.
  - Drafting and promoting two Newsletters to keep constantly update all relevant stakeholders at national and European level about the development of the activities.

### **Implementation**

- Strategies to provide an extensive investigation to design and adapt, operational and transferable “organic skills and knowledge” Units for organic livestock management profile (curriculum) in accordance to NQF, EQF and based on a strongly link with ECVET to facilitate the recognition of learning outcomes achieved by learners and to support lifelong learning. Particularly, the LivOrg Consortium:
  - With the specific support of the T.O.P Team members and sharing experiences and opinions with stakeholders, has been working to define, describe and select the skills, knowledge and competence to include in the Training Plan.
  - Has been engaged to draft the Training Toolkit, describing the training methodologies to provide during the PILOT and LABS activities and the learning outcomes assessment procedures for formal and not formal learning paths.
  - Has been involved in designing, collecting and sharing some training contents across the PILOT and LABS Training Units.
- Strategies to deliver the PILOT and LABS activities at national level through the effective engagement of learners. Consortium has been working to:
  - Schedule the national PILOT and LABS activities organising the training paths through innovative and integrated-blended training methods: indoor, outdoor and E-learning:
    - PILOT (80hs) – 30hs classroom – 45hs outdoor – 5hs E-learning

- LABS (80hs) – 10hs classroom – 20hs outdoor – 50hs Enterprises Incubator
- Select the learners to attend the PILOT and LABS activities at national level.
- **Dissemination and Promotion**
  - Strategies for dissemination and promotion at Local, National and European Level, particularly focusing on two key audiences (I) the participating organisations (horizontal approach) and (ii) external audiences, at the local partner context and lifelong learning community level (vertical approach) through:
    - Establishing the LivOrg Facebook Group - LivOrg Project with the most relevant results achieved by the Consortium.
    - Establishing the LivOrg Internet Website (not foreseen in the Application Form) thanks to the volunteer support of Italian young students.
    - Collecting the most significant contacts throughout national Sector Skills Alliance organisations to include in the mailing list for dissemination activities.
    - Arranging the first promotion workshop at national level, involving external stakeholders and target groups, to promote the Project's mission, the activities developed and the launch of PILOT and LABS activities.
    - Drafting the first E-Brochure describing the aims and goals of the Project and promoting the PILOT and LABS activities.
    - Drafting the first on line or printed press releases issued at national context to promote PILOT and LABS with the most relevant activities developed during the first year of the Project.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

In the first half of the project, LivOrg has met many key objectives and produced interesting results. The following results target different aspects of the LivOrg project. Some address the partner consortium itself; some others address the target groups, external stakeholders and wider public.

#### □ MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY

From a management perspective, the project is going according to plan in terms of workload, finances and results. Project management was helped by operational tools as Project **Management Plan** and **Internal Communication and Cooperation Plan**, which have been giving the coordinates to the Consortium on how to implement and develop the activities in a correct and effective way. The project is also managed through a constant communication among partners through e-mails, bilateral skype calls and **skype meetings**. To reinforce the team building aspect and the cooperation and exchanging experiences among the partners, **two transnational partnership meetings** have been arranged: in Rome on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2014 and in Valladolid on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2014. The **T.O.P Team** "Towards Organic Production Team" has been appointed at the early stage of the project involved one trainer/researcher for each partner organization (7 people tot.) and belonging to different sectors (VET, business and labour). It has been assisting and supporting the rest of the partnership to define the skills, knowledge and competencies for the innovative professional Curriculum and providing contents and instruments for the Laboratories activities. As relevant outcome, TOP Team has been working to reinforce the alliance among VET Organisations, labour market and social partner's representatives. The first results and deliverables has been assessed in accordance with the aims of the **Quality and Assurance Plan**. The evaluation of the project activities has been considering as an ongoing process. Through the first **two evaluation reports**, including the **Interim Evaluation Report**, the appointed **Monitoring Unit (M.U)** members have collected and analysed the feedbacks and remarks from the partners at the end of each transnational partnership meeting delivering fundamental suggestions and recommendations to improve the next transnational activities.

#### □ THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE

In the first year of the project, Partners have defined a common competency framework, defining some reference learning outcomes that are customized and implemented at national level. The following three action points have been proposed by the Consortium, with the specific support of the T.O.P Team members, for implementing the selected strategy and achieved the project results with the effective definition of the skills, knowledge and competence to include in the Training Plan for PILOT and LABS activities.

##### 1) The LivOrg Competency-based framework

In order to define, describe and select the skills, knowledge and competence to deliver and assess, Consortium has been developing a methodological path through three main steps:

##### STEP 1:

- Break down the occupational profile into 4-6 macro working-areas, characterized by a high degree of autonomy.
- Sequence the macro working-areas following the order described in the Application form (i.e. according to the logic of the sequence of training activities to provide within the training plan through PILOT Training Courses and Laboratories).

### **STEP 2:**

- Break down each activity into main working-themes considered as fundamental to implement through LivOrg Curriculum and intended to develop through Pilot Training Courses and Labs arranged according to the National contest and National Qualification Framework.
- Finalising the working-themes in relevant thematic “topics” to describe the Training Units.
- Associating each Training Units using the infinitive verb to achieve the “Performance-Area of Activity”.

### **STEP 3:**

- Articulating each Area of Activity in learning outcomes per each Country defined in:
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
  - Competence

#### *Particularly:*

The following basic principles made it easier to reach an understanding between the partners describing learning outcomes (LOs) in Knowledge, Skills and Competence:

- Using of active, clearly understandable verbs: Verbs describe measurable or observable actions, e.g. "explain", "represent", "apply", "analyse", "develop", etc.
- Specification and contextualization of the active verb: It describes what the knowledge and ability refer to in concrete terms, or what type of activity is involved. The learning outcomes formulation consists of a verb and the related object as well as an additional (part of a) sentence describing the context.
- Avoiding vague, open formulations: Learning outcomes describe briefly and precisely, complicated sentences have been avoided, learning outcomes have not been formulated in too general or in too concrete terms; clear (simple and unambiguous) terminology have been used as far as possible.
- Orientation towards minimum demands for achieving learning outcomes: learning outcomes comprehensibly describe the minimum demands for achieving/validating a unit of learning outcomes.
- Qualifications-/competence level are described comprehensibly: formulations, particularly verbs and adjectives reflect the level of qualification/competence (EQF or sectorial framework) of a unit of learning outcomes. The learning outcomes description comprehensibly depict whether the vocational competences can for example be applied under supervision, autonomously or responsibly and competently.
- As for the professional level of Training Units, in the application form is reported 4 EQF Level, but Consortium is adopting a flexible approach linked to the different national training and target groups contexts (*from 3 to 4*). In this sense, using “Area of Activity” is a flexible way to describe the training itinerary. Each of these units can be acquired and ‘stored’ through the variety of participating organisations that are independent but linked with each other by their common acceptance of minimum standards.

## **2) The Training Plan**

The Training Plan (English and National language versions) collects and outlines the training contents described in the Competency-based framework, explaining **who** delivers

the Training Units, **when** and **where** the PILOT and LABS activities are provided through each national context.

Consortium considers the training plan as a working document describing it through:

- The name of the curriculum profile to be issued (**Practitioners in Organic Livestock Management**).
- The reference of the qualification according to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level and, where appropriate, the national qualifications framework.
- The title of the Training Unit.
- The *Area of Activity* references.
- The skills, knowledge and competence described in Units of Learning Outcomes “LOs”.
- The time-frame for achieving the skills, knowledge and competence (80hs).
- The ECVET points associated with the unit.
- Some details (*when*, *how* and *how much*) to deliver the training paths.
- Who is responsible for the training (PILOT/LABS) delivery.
- Any other specific requirements to be met in accordance with the particular training contract in question.

*Particularly,*

As far as “*how*”, the Training Plans illustrates the training methodologies provided in accordance with the Application Form through a flexible blended learning approach (indoor; outdoor; E-learning/Business Incubator) and applied for each training unit throughout each national context.

- *PILOT: Classroom – Outdoor – E-learning*
- *LABS: Classroom – Outdoor – Business Incubator*

### **3) The Training Toolkit**

To accompany the Training Plan and the PILOT and LABS activities, an accompanying Training Toolkit has been produced for Italy, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Poland and Spain. The Toolkit contains information and references, as well as relevant guidelines in English, for partners from each of the countries concerned. The Toolkit is being robustly tested with the target audience to optimise the training methodologies delivered, the relevance and the impact of PILOT and LABS activities in each National context. Particularly, the Training Toolkit has been designed for trainers to allow them to deliver skills, knowledge and competence through PILOT and Counselling LABS editions in organic livestock management sector. The Toolkit has been produced as a resource for people who will be involved as trainers or experts during the LivOrg PILOT and LABS activities. The tool aims to facilitate the training coordination among the partners during the PILOT and LABS editions. Since LivOrg supports interactive learning experiences, the Toolkit is supporting trainers to:

- Define, design and describe the skills, knowledge and competence to develop National Training Plans adapting the training units to EQF system.
- Experiment and testing the selected training units through national PILOT and LABS editions to develop the professional Curriculum for “**Practitioners in Organic Livestock Management**” connected to the EU requirements (EQF and ECVET system).
- Reflect on the key training strategies and methodologies to deliver PILOT and LABS editions at National level through a blended learning approach (indoor; outdoor; E - learning) and into innovative learning environments as for the business incubators during the LABS editions.

- Assess the learning outcomes achieved by the learners creating assessment strategies, procedures and good training evaluations. These will help trainers measure how well their participants are learning, how they might apply their new skills and knowledge in the work place, and how they experienced the training, including suggestions for training improvement.

The Toolkit is also a technical support for delivering PILOT and LABS editions making available some tools to use during the training activities and developing guidelines to assist trainers and experts in establishing the processes and procedures related to the *LivOrg E-learning course* and the *LivOrg Video Lesson*.

## □ THE PILOT AND LABS TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Also on the basis of the Competency-based Framework and the Training Plan results, the partners are working on delivering the professional Curriculum for “**Practitioners in Organic Livestock Management**” through 80hs started in each participating Country between October and November 2014 and which should be implemented up to the end of January 2015 or during the month of February. Partner are involved in delivering the training contents and in the assessment of the learning outcomes testing the educational and training approaches and methodologies described in the Training Toolkit.

### 1) The LivOrg PILOT

The Pilot VET Courses have to be considered as social and educational activities aiming to integrate skills enhancement purposes with a multi-cultural and inclusive approach. The partners involved in the PILOT activities are delivering the Four Training Units of the Curriculum in accordance with the Training Plan (80hs) and adopting the training methodologies mentioned in Training Toolkit. The LivOrg PILOT activities are directed to explore and learn the following issues:

- I. Disease prevention and alternative treatment methods.
- II. Feeding and housing systems in organic livestock production.
- III. The set-up of an Organic Certification Action Plan for a company in conversion.
- IV. The health and safety rules for the organic livestock management activities.

Each partner following the training contents described in the Training Plan and in accordance with the training methodologies defined in the Toolkit is delivering the course by a flexible blended approach as follow:

- Classroom – 30hs
- Outdoor – 45hs
- E-learning – 5hs

### 2) The LivOrg LABS

The Laboratories have to be considered as social and educational activities aiming to integrate skills enhancement purposes with a multi-cultural and inclusive approach. The partners involved in the LABS activities are delivering the Three Training Units of the Curriculum in accordance with the Training Plan (80hs) and adopting the training methodologies mentioned in Training Toolkit: The LivOrg LABS are directed to explore and learn the following issues:

- A. Intergeneration Lab to explore and define innovative methods to support the transition “from fathers to sons” – To stimulate the “individual hidden entrepreneurial skills” (soft skills).

**B.** Interethnic Lab to explore and define innovative methods to support minority ethnic people to convert their conventional business to organic area” or “to reinforce their organic skills in the organic livestock sector”.

Each Laboratory is articulated in three training phases and approaches:

- *Classroom – 10hs*
- *Outdoor – 20hs*
- *Business Incubator – 50hs*

#### **DISSEMINATION AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES**

Partners are currently committed to provide an intense activity of promotion and dissemination using different instrument and tools.

##### **1) Dissemination materials**

The first Project **E-Brochure** has been realized in order to give a general overview of the project describing aims, main activities and PILOT/LABS edition. The Brochure has been disseminating in electronic format and in printed version. It has been realized in English, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Estonian, German and Greek version.

Partners have drafted and disseminating through e-mail and social media two **Project Newsletters**.

Partners have collected the most significant contacts through local, national and European stakeholders and target groups to include in the **C. Mailing List for Dissemination and Exploitation**. It can be considered a database of contacts in order to ensure the maximum level of dissemination also outside partner’s countries. The updating of the tools is on-going process throughout the entire Project lifetime.

Partners have also promoted the project through some **press/on-line releases** using social-media or local magazines in order to disseminate the project activities and announce the launch of PILOT and LABS editions effectively.

##### **2) Social Media and the New Web Site**

Partnership is paying particular attention in implementing online promotion - dissemination and social media activities. In order to extend the project network and to maximize both the collection of feedbacks, the impact of the activities and the diffusion of information about project and its activities/outcomes/results. Partners are implementing:

- Website - <http://www.livorg.eu>
- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/220075864857744/>

##### **3) Promotion Workshops, International and Networking Events**

As basic and fundamental LivOrg activities, Partner have planned to organize national Promotion Workshops to make local community aware about the project goals, strategies and the upcoming activities during the next months. During the first year, each participating Country has realized one promotion Workshop.

In **Montecatini (Italy) ENFAP Toscana** has organized a Promotion Workshop (27.09.2014) aimed to explore and compare the current situation between traditional agriculture and

organic sector in Italy as well as to make participants aware about the project activities particularly on the launch of PILOT training courses. The workshop took place in the “Mercato della Terra” open space in Montecatini (Pistoia) belonging to the “Mercati della Terra” worldwide network (<http://www.mercatidellaterra.it/ita/network/montecatini-terme>) with the support of “Condotta Slow Food Val Di Nievole”. Slow Food “is a global, grassroots organization, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life and combat people’s dwindling interest in the food.

In **Warsaw (Poland) EkoConnect e.V** has organised the Promotion Workshop (01.06.2014) at the 9th Organic Marketing Forum - European East-West Organic Trade Exhibition and Networking Conference promoting the LivOrg project and introducing its aims and activities to a wide range of international stakeholders. About 250 professional visitors including farmers, producers, processors, public institutions, media etc. from 23 countries attended the Organic Marketing Forum 2014. The workshop was open to all participants of the 9th Organic Marketing Forum.

In **Rethymno City, region of Crete, (Greece) MAICH** has organised the first Promotion Workshop (05.09.2014). The objectives of the workshop were to: present, discuss, document and disseminate the Livorg project’s activities and results achieved from its start; promote the Pilot courses of Livorg which were to be held after the workshop in the same city. The workshop was developed taking into consideration the need to explore the organic agriculture sector for the local community (farmers) and to share and transfer experiences of activities undertaken in the local community.

In **Rusocin City (Poland) IPED** has organized the first Promotion Workshop (18.11.2014). The objectives of the workshop were to present, discuss, document and disseminate the Livorg project's activities and results achieved from its start; promote the LABS courses of Livorg, which were to be held after the workshop in the same city. The workshop was open to participation of any interested person but main group were students of *Agro-school*.

In **Tartu (Estonia), the Estonian University of Life Sciences** has organised the first Promotion Workshop (19.09.2014). The workshop was organised in three parts with a short presentations: 1) In the first part, project manager Elen Peetsmann gave an overview about the LivOrg project aims, activities and expected results. In the second part, assistant professor Ragnar Leming and Professor David Arney introduced the general framework and training plan of the LivOrg pilot course to be implemented by the project. 3) In the third part, an active discussion about the project aims and the need and opportunities for organic farming (including livestock management) education in Estonia took place.

In **Valladolid (Spain) INFODEF** has organized the first Promotion Workshop (10.11.2014) with these objectives: a) Presentation of the Projects’ topic, results and products achieved b) Issues about qualification, credits system and skills certification describing the approaches developed by the project partnership c) First impressions about the training product innovations delivered d) Presentation of the Interethnic LAB in Spain. The workshop has been a key activity in Spain for the dissemination of the project LivOrg. The participants were from 12 organizations, including Public Administrations, VET Centers, Universities, NGOs, Foundations, Trade Unions and professional associations. Furthermore, INFODEF attended **bilateral meetings** with relevant local stakeholders and target –groups in the area of Valladolid.

The partnership has also a very wide network and can reach and involve a number of important stakeholders and participants in the organic farming sector. Each workshops have been important occasions to build up and enhance networks and institutional relations

in order to realize forthcoming specific project activities (pilot courses, laboratories and networking initiatives). Furthermore some partner have promoted LivOrg through some relevant international events, enlarging the networks of stakeholders, institutions, farmers and organizations involved in the organic agriculture and livestock sectors.

**EkoConnect was the Organiser of the Organic Marketing Forum – 9th European East-West Organic Trade Exhibition and Networking Conference from 1st - 2nd June 2014 in Warsaw. The first LivOrg Promotion Workshop took place during the Forum.**

About 250 professional organic visitors from 23 countries came to the Polish capital to meet other representatives of the European organic markets and to make new business contacts.

**Indeed, MAICh has attended the 18th IFOAM Organic World Congress in Istanbul, from 13rd to 15th October 2014.**

The most important congress about organic lasted 3 days and had 3 plenary and 8 breakout sessions with more than 250 presentations of impressive personalities providing latest insights. It gathered more than 2500 people from the organic sector worldwide (scientists, practitioners, trainers, farmers, processors, traders, etc.).

## 4. Partnerships

The LivOrg Project partnership is composed of seven organisations from six EU Countries. The choice of consortium partners is based on five criteria: **A)** the experience as VET Provider. **B)** Direct knowledge, expertise and competences in the organic farming sector. **C)** The experience in terms of entrepreneurship training and counselling. **D)** A strong financial soundness proven by a long experience in EU projects. **E)** A multi-actors diversification and complementary to reinforce the Sector Skills Alliance profile.

- I. **(P1) ERIFO – Ente per la Ricerca e la Formazione (Italy)** is the Applicant. ERIFO and its leading staff bring some 14 years of experience in the lifelong learning sector in Italy and Europe, and an extensive portfolio of project work in relation to research, quality assurance, evaluation and EU transnational projects. ERIFO is an accredited VET provider, authorized by the Region Lazio. ERIFO's mission is to contribute to the reinforcement of Vocational Education Training system at Local, National and European level to ensure the development of the human capital and cover the ever-growing needs and demands of the labour market. ([www.erifo.it](http://www.erifo.it))
- II. **(P2) ENFAP Toscana (Italy)** is the Regional Professional Training Agency belonging to the National Trade Union U.I.L. ENFAP is a not-profit organization, which has been operating since 1964 throughout Tuscany with a large-scale of activities targeted at professional training, counselling and advocacy. ENFAP is involved in European, national and local projects most of them are concerned with the creation of new initiatives to support disadvantaged workers and learners to progress to mainstream education and employment opportunities to maintain job post. ([www.enfap-toscana.org](http://www.enfap-toscana.org))
- III. **(P3) EkoConnect e.V. – International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe e. V. (Germany)** is a charitable non profit organization founded by organic agriculture experts 2003 in Dresden. EkoConnect works for a sustainable growth of the organic agriculture sector throughout Europe with focus on Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). ([www.ekoconnect.org](http://www.ekoconnect.org))
- IV. **(P4) Estonian University of Life Science (Estonia)** is the only university in Estonia whose priorities in academic and research activities provide the sustainable development of natural resources necessary for the existence of Man as well as the preservation of heritage and habitat. The institute performs high-level modern teaching and R&D activities in the field of animal nutrition, animal production, including aquaculture, animal genetics and breeding, reproductive biology, biotechnology, normal and pathological morphology, animal health, infectious and invasive diseases, therapy, food hygiene, food technology, and other subject areas related to animal science and veterinary medicine. ([www.emu.ee](http://www.emu.ee))
- V. **(P5) INFODEF - Institute for the Promotion of Development and Training (Spain)** is an institution founded with the intention of providing management services, advisory and consultancy for projects development in the field of professional qualification, local development and promotion of entrepreneurship, knowledge of the socio-economic environment and management of European and International projects. ([www.infodef.es](http://www.infodef.es))

- VI. **(P6) MAICH - Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania (Greece)** is a constituent institute of the International Centre of Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM). It is an intergovernmental organization comprising thirteen member countries from the Mediterranean Basin whose purpose is the development of scientific cooperation by providing postgraduate education, research and training in economics, management, and applied biological, technological and environmental sciences related to rural areas. ([www.maich.gr](http://www.maich.gr))
- VII. **(P7) IPED - "Institute for the Private Enterprise and Democracy" of the Polish Chamber of Commerce (Poland)** was established at the beginning of 1993. It is one of the first independent research institutes in Poland and a leading Polish think tank. The Institute supports market reforms, development of democratic institutions and creation of friendly climate for economic activity by realizing projects, conducting objective researches and analyses, education and preparing recommendations for economic policy. ([www.iped.pl](http://www.iped.pl))

### 3. Plans for the Future

#### The activities planned until the end of the project period

##### I. The PILOT and LABS activities

The partners are engaged in a detailed two-year work programme to develop a professional Curriculum for “**Practitioners in Organic Livestock Management**”. During the second period of the project, partners will be committed to conclude their training experiences through the Training Plan agreed as follow:

##### **A. PILOT training course edition**, running in *Italy, Germany, Estonia and Greece*.

Partners are going to complete the test of the four training units through an innovative, flexible blended learning approach of 80hs:

1. Disease prevention and alternative treatment methods.
2. Feeding and housing systems in organic livestock production.
3. The set-up of an Organic Certification Action Plan for a company in conversion.
4. The health and safety rules for the organic livestock management activities.

##### **B. Counselling Laboratories (LABS) editions** running in *Poland and Spain*.

The 80hs LABS editions are aiming to develop innovative counselling methods to support the intergenerational business transition and to reinforce the skills of farmers belonging to ethnic minorities to develop professional experience in the organic livestock sector.

Partners will be involved in fulfilling the training activities around the three training units composing each Laboratory:

1. Business plan for the set-up of a new Organic Farm.
2. The administrative and legal frameworks to run and manage an Organic farm.
3. Entrepreneurial skills framework and entrepreneurial spirit, with an interethnic and an intergenerational approach, respectively, in each LAB.

##### II. Portfolio

The identified Training Plan and professional Curriculum contents will be assessed and evaluated at the end of the PILOT and LABS activities. The results of this process will flow into the Portfolio. Portfolio will describe the methodologies delivered for the recognition and validation of the learning outcomes acquired through each of the pilot and labs training modules as well as the references for appropriate utilization.

Portfolio is considered as a strategic tool and each participating organisation will be committed to integrate it into ongoing VET activities, facilitating the repeat of the project Pilot experiences through each national context.

##### III. Compendium

Through the Compendium, Consortium will collect reports and results for exploitation obtained at the end of the project lifetime. Specifically, Compendium will focus on the PILOT and LABS activities and the final LOs assessment approaches delivered in each participating Country.

Compendium will reinforce the exploitation and follow-up of the project across Europe through the activities of the *Strategic Networking Project Group*, which will be appointed during the second period of LivOrg.

#### **IV. Promotion and Exploitation**

The main aim of this phase will be the promotion of 'exploitation' activities by regional/European/sectoral networks with the aim of promoting a virtuous circle between policy development and practical experiences around organic livestock management sector. In this sense, from the early stage of the second period of the project, Consortium will be involved in defining the strategies to ensure the sustainability of the project and the effective impact of methods, tools and good practice developed on policies and national/local rules. In this project, the dissemination and exploitation strategies are understood as forming part of an overall valorisation process. For this reason, they will be working closely together to integrate the project results in other contexts. To reinforce the impact of the project activities and to build an institutional texture up able to value the LivOrg results, Consortium will be especially involved in through the following main tasks:

- Providing national Focus Groups with public/private entities that have a regulatory function for educations and training systems (at local, regional or national level) in order to ensure legacy aspects and official recognition of the results achieved.
- Editing the final version of the Video Lessons and Video Trailer about the PILOT and LABS national experiences.
- Arranging the second national promotion workshop and the final international seminar aimed to maximise the dissemination and the potential impact of the LivOrg activities and results.
- Drafting and submitting a new EU proposal with strong references of LivOrg results, in order to improve organic farmers' skills and their employability opportunities across Europe.
- Facilitating the exchange programme and experiences for new or aspiring entrepreneurs in organic agriculture sector and attended the PILOT/LABS activities, giving them the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other Participating Countries through the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme (2014-2020).

## 4. Contribution to EU policies

The LivOrg project will enhance the quality and attractiveness of the Organic Farming system in Europe organizing a harmonic and common VET (Vocational Education and Training) framework in the organic livestock management area and encouraging the conversion from high-input agriculture to organic agriculture systems in Europe. The project's aims are strictly linked to the contents issued in the EU documents as: a) promoting the sustainable development of EU agriculture and to ensure the wellbeing of its rural areas (2012 Management plan – DG Agriculture and Rural Development). b) The European Development Models showed in some flagships as “An industrial policy for the globalisation era” and “An agenda for new skills and jobs”. c) The main proceedings of second IFOAM Animal Husbandry Conference held in Hamburg from September 12 to 14, 2012. The current LivOrg project activities will be carrying on by the Consortium, keeping on these strong EU references further enhancing the area by:

- Increasing the awareness of organic livestock management area to meet the sector and policymakers' needs in EU improving the system to be competitive with conventional processes.
- Extending the sector skills alliance activities reinforcing the effective cooperation between organic farming sector and stakeholders.
- Developing and delivering a specific-sector professional curriculum with a stronger package of “VET” Units in organic livestock management area, strongly connected with EQF and ECVET system for the transfer and recognition of organic farmers' skills in EU.
- Improving the quality of training systems through the development of innovative contents, methods and procedures within VET system in response to evolving skills needs.
- Encouraging the growth of an entrepreneurial spirit through a double transition:
  - From family owned and managed business farming to the next generation of entrepreneurs and farmers;
  - From conventional agriculture to organic farming sector.

Furthermore, the LivOrg project envisages the following concrete objectives strictly referred to Lifelong Learning Programme (now ERASMUS + 2014-2020) strategies and to the Leonardo da Vinci Sector Skills Alliances initiatives by:

- Supporting participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market ⇒ PILOT and LABS activities.
- Enhancing the attractiveness of vocational education and training and mobility for employers and individuals and to facilitate the mobility of working trainees ⇒ Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs.
- Improving the quality and increasing the volume of cooperation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe ⇒ T.O.P Team, LivOrg Strategic networking Groups; Focus Group; Promotion workshops.
- Improving the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning ⇒ Portfolio, Compendium.



