

# *Dissemination & Exploitation Plan*

## **RURAL/ITER**

### ***Reintroduction Upon Rural Agricultural Lands of Innovative Training for Entrepreneurs on Return***

Greece, 24/11/2014

Project funded under Lifelong Learning Programme of European Commission  
PROJECT n° 2012-1-GR1-LEO05-10058 [www.ruraliter.eu](http://www.ruraliter.eu)



**RURAL/ITER**

Lifelong Learning Programme  
Leonardo Da Vinci sub-Programme  
Multilateral Projects "Transfer of Innovation"



Lifelong  
Learning  
Programme

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Significant emphasis is placed on the impact of EU co-financed projects and on the concrete plans for ensuring that what they produce will be widely known about and widely used. The results generated, the lessons learned and the experience gained by each project team should be made available to the widest possible audience.

The primary means of making this happen are the twin activities of dissemination and exploitation of results, also known together as *valorisation*. Their key objective is to maximize the impact of project results by optimizing their value, strengthening their impact, transferring them to different contexts, integrating them in a sustainable way and using them actively in systems and practices at local, regional, national and European levels.

The activities of dissemination and exploitation are closely related but distinct from one another.

Dissemination can be defined as a planned process of providing information to key parties on the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the results of programmes and initiatives. It occurs as and when the results become available.

Exploitation means making use of and deriving benefit from (a result). In the context of project results it primarily involves "sustainability" and the process of "mainstreaming":

Sustainability means that crucial activities and results are maintained and continue to deliver benefits to the target group, structure, sector or system after the end of the EU funding. Sustainability can be best achieved **within** the consortium because the take-up of the project results **outside** the project environment is not always within the control of the consortium.

Mainstreaming is the planned process of transferring the successful results of programmes and initiatives to a wider context: policy-makers, stakeholders and "end-users" outside the original project environment (in local, regional, national or European systems) adopt, for example, tools or practices developed by the project.



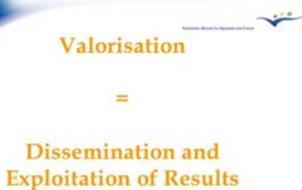
This document is aiming at providing the overall and concise information on the actions which can be taken by the partnership in order to ensure targeted dissemination and exploitation actions including awareness raising and visibility of project achievements.

The focus is put on the importance of proper dissemination and exploitation of the project results which is closely linked to the following issues:

- Sustainability of project results
- Improved quality of products/results
- Exchange of good practices and learn from each other's experiences within the partnership
- Feeding the policy processes while making a bridge between the policy and practice
- Enhanced the project impact on the target groups from short-term and long-term perspective

In line with the above-mentioned and in more concrete manner, the plan aims:

- To promote internally Rural/iter project advancement when the different working-groups will be held and led on;



- To promote externally to the partners and stakeholders the project outcomes for dissemination, follow-up and formal contribution;

## 2. RURAL/ITER PROJECT

Title: Reintroduction Upon Rural Agricultural Lands of Innovative Training for Entrepreneurs on Return

Funding mechanism: *Lifelong Learning Programme/ Leonardo Da vinci/ Transfer of Innovation*

Duration: *24 months [10/2012-11/2014]*

Total budget: *382.020 €*

Rural/iter project comprises of the Following Partnerships

- LP: Regional Center of Vocational Training and Lifelong Learning, Regional Unit of Achaia, Western Greece Region (GR)
- P1: Panhellenic Confederation of Unions of Agricultural Cooperatives (GR)
- P2: Agricoltura è Vita (IT)
- P3: Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (IT)
- P4: University of Trásos- Montes e Alto-Douro (PT)
- P5: European Council of Young Farmers (BE)
- *Associated Partner: European Farmers European Agro-Cooperatives (BE)*

The Project core idea is to:

- Develop both innovative training resources by in-depth updated needs analysis and new skills to be transferred to the new countries and target users
- Provide new competences from the most important trends for the development and competitiveness of the modern European farms

Rural/iter aims in short quotes at:

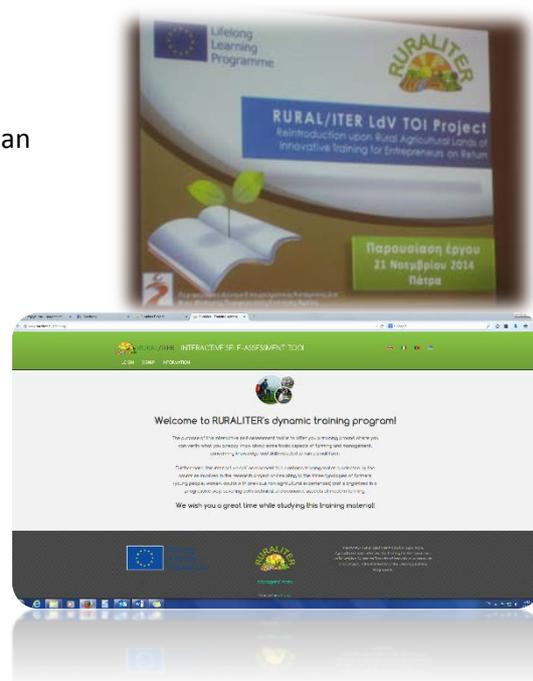
- user friendly training tools
- competences enabling to develop modern and innovative farms
- available and transferable experiences of agricultural multifunctional businesses
- training approach on development abilities of HR
- modern farm management in rural contexts
- quality of training products /continuous evaluation
- Reinforcement of employment and competitiveness of the European agriculture
- entrepreneurship & job making in rural areas
- Sustainable farming & green economy.
- tackling the digital divide in rural areas

RURAL/ITER Training Activities are set up in the following steps:

1<sup>st</sup> step: Survey on innovative trends and training needs in the 4 countries of intervention

2<sup>nd</sup> step: Development and adaptation of the training modules

3<sup>rd</sup> step: Pilot testing and evaluation



Apart from the training activities, Rural/Iter also offers complementary actions:

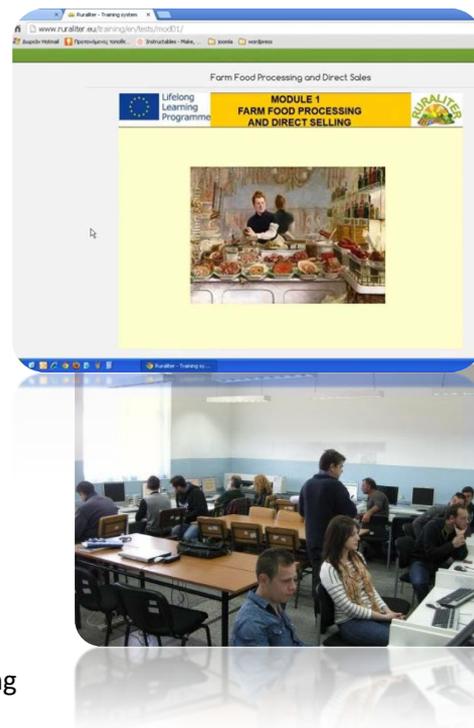
- Self-evaluation tool for the trainees
- Business Plan test
- Cases studies and Lessons Learnt presentation
- Useful Library
- Pilot testing and train the trainers sessions
- Publicity and dissemination activities
- Evaluation and quality assessment actions

Rural/iter main Target Groups are:

- Young farmers
- Female farmers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chance farmers

Rural/iter serves the following Lifelong Learning Programme Operational Priorities:

- Increasing the volume of cooperation between organizations providing lifelong learning opportunities in Europe
- Facilitating the development and transfer of innovative practices in the field of vocational education
- Improving the recognition of qualifications /competencies
- Developing innovative ICT-based content & services for Lifelong Learning



### 3. DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

When planning dissemination and exploitation, time should be spent on establishing who is expected to use the project's results and taking account of their needs. This should include all potential users, not just those from the project consortium itself.

The key elements of the plan are:

- The types of dissemination and exploitation activity that will be used – the methods and mechanisms;
- The resources that will be required – people and budget;
- The timetable for the different activities;
- The strategy for extending the activities beyond the project's lifetime (sustainability).

The partnership approaches towards dissemination and exploitation of results are focused on:

- **A clear and dynamic focus on user needs** – the project is based on a clear and well-argued presentation of the analysis of end-users and actual needs for the target group concerned and the results proposed are a response to those needs.

- **Shared responsibility across all partners** - responsibility for the dissemination and exploitation of results lies with the whole partnership in their capacity as the owners of those results thus each partner has a role to play.

- **Life after the end of the project** - include activities designed to ensure the continuing visibility, accessibility and use of the results after the end of the project, to ensure maximum impact and sustainability.

### 3.1 Dissemination Goals

Besides, there are some general communication (internal and external) objectives that should be achieved:

- Disseminate the achieved results as widely as possible,
- Develop simple and clear messages in different contexts: press releases, reports, newspaper articles, website page, etc
- Be clear about the target audiences and user groups and prioritize them according to importance
- Think about media/ information channels that the target audiences might use for reaching the maximum impact
- Make a full list and keep records of all the relevant dissemination activities
- Build awareness of the project among a wide but defined group of audiences and user groups
- Influence innovation (related to project results) development and adaptation in a training and learning processes.

### 3.2 Dissemination Target Groups

The target groups for the dissemination activities, as arisen during the project lifetime and are addressed for the after-the-project-end period, are the following:

- Member organizations of the consortium (internal diffusion)
- Associates and affiliates of the partners
- Local, regional and national authorities (municipalities, provinces and regions and their associations, ministries) related to the fields of rural development, agriculture, entrepreneurship and vocational training
- Farmers unions and representatives, consultants, agronomists
- Educational institutes and their human resources (staff and students) of diverse levels: higher education, technical education, vocational training, relevant high schools and labs
- Youth councils, cooperatives, local councils, NGOs in favour of social inclusion and quality of life –especially for women and young, rural communities
- Chambers, entrepreneurship hubs
- Specialized media
- General public



### 3.3 Dissemination Channels

The **channels** to be used are: the EU dissemination platform, existing contacts and networks, the partner’s websites and social media pages, internet/email, meetings and visits to key stakeholders, relevant public events, workshops, newsletters, presentations, video, media, reports, publications, & promotional material.

Each partner will use the tools that abide by their overall dissemination strategy, incorporating the project results into their channels and networks.

Some dissemination “vehicles” are:

**Mailing Lists–Email Lists**: drawing together a mailing list of key people to receive materials and information about the project results.

**Newsletters**: include the main project results into regular newsletters that partners send to their networks; the results can be updated or the newsletters may either present the story of the project or invite interested partners to test the results and give feedback.

**Posters/banners/leaflets**: the material will continue to be placed within organisations attracting visitors and affiliates to look for more information.

**Website/social media**: the project website will continue to host the project results and relevant information; the social media pages will act as rural development network giving opportunities for developing the project idea, identifying new needs and exchanging experiences.

**Newsgroups/Discussion Groups**: comprised of people involved in learning and teaching. Depending on the nature of your group, partners may be able to engage people in lively, active discussions around topics that you have introduced relating to the work of our project.

**Reports**: Reports are a useful way to publicize and disseminate findings from the project either in hard copy or available on corporate websites.

**Conferences**: either organized by the project team or by third parties (national authorities, other project teams etc) who are willing to host a presenter from the project team delivering news/activities/results.

**One-to-One**: having one-to-one meetings/conversations with target key people who enhance the chances of rendering the project sustainable.

**Media (TV, Newspapers, Magazines)**: Obtaining news coverage, whether at a national or local level, press releases on a newspaper or press conference and participation in TV broadcasts, targeting specialized journalists, sometimes for “free” space on publications.



## 4. EXPLOITATION STRATEGY

Exploitation of the project results requires the development of an appropriate mechanism to ensure the project’s sustainability. Therefore, as preparatory steps towards designing the strategy, we have to address the following four basic questions:

- **Why?** What is the aim of each partner’s individual exploitation plan?
- **To whom?** Identify target market(s), main target groups or end users suitable for the exploitation of project deliverables
- **What?** What are the project results that can be exploited? To which sector do they belong (academic, technology, education, institutions etc)?

- **How?** Which mechanisms and strategies are to be used for each type of project outcome and according to which user needs?

## 4.1 Aim of the Exploitation Plan

The main objectives of the exploitation activities are to:

- promote and raise awareness about the project contents, developments and results
- successfully transfer the results to appropriate decision-makers to achieve their sustainable promotion and support
- convince individual end-users to adopt and/or apply the results, also after the project with the voluntary support by the partnership
- ensure maximum impact and long term sustainability after the end of the project
- multiply the potential of the project results
- have exploitation activities adapted to and suitable for the project goals and beneficiaries
- ensure continuous interaction between project partners and actual or potential end users/beneficiaries of the results



## 4.2 Target Groups

The following table summarizes the key stakeholder categories and why we want to reach them. The target groups that can exploit the project results are alike to the ones we chose for dissemination activities above but the objectives for sustainability and the role they may be able to play is more clearly defined.

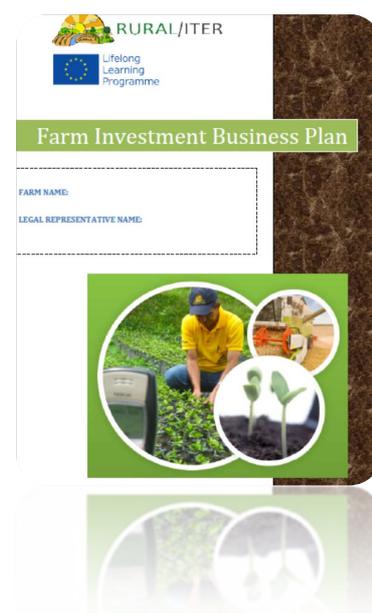
Stakeholder type	Why we want to reach stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Government</li> <li>✓ International Organisations</li> <li>✓ National Agency</li> <li>✓ Policy makers</li> <li>✓ Regulatory, administrative or public authorities (local, regional, national)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To inform them about policy issues addressed by the consortium</li> <li>✓ To engage them in a dialogue about these issues</li> <li>✓ To consider recommendations made by the consortium, notably with regard to the support of skills for young farmers</li> <li>✓ To engage them in the development of a generic model to link various methods, tools and assessments to prioritize farmers' training</li> <li>✓ To elaborate rationales for government intervention in specialized education and training in and in relation to rural areas</li> <li>✓ To bridge the gap between the worlds of academia, governments, economy and societies to create and promote cross-fertilization of insights from different domains</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Farmers' unions and associations</li> <li>✓ Rural consultants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To encourage industry to provide its views on the consortium's findings and recommendations as they are being developed and post formulation</li> <li>✓ To bridge the gap between the worlds of academia, governments, and industry to create and promote cross-fertilization of insights from</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Chambers</li> </ul>	<p>different domains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To incorporate the project main results and methods in their daily practices and promote in this way distance vocational training for incoming farmers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Media</li> <li>✓ Blogs</li> <li>✓ Journals</li> <li>✓ Newspapers</li> <li>✓ Radio/ TV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To encourage the media to raise stakeholder and public awareness on how training can improve the basis for rural economy development</li> <li>✓ Media attention will ensure issues of concern to the consortium become part of the public and policy-makers discourse.</li> <li>✓ To influence the setting of public agendas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Academia</li> <li>✓ research institutions</li> <li>✓ think tanks</li> <li>✓ VET providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To encourage discussion and feedback of the findings and recommendations of the project.</li> <li>✓ To collaborate with them on how to address the needs of continuous training for farmers and rural entrepreneurs</li> <li>✓ To engage them in a constant update process of the training system and its promotion within learning groups.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Project partners and affiliates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To draw the attention of players in other EC projects dealing with VET and rural areas development to the activities of Rural/iter</li> <li>✓ To exchange information and views with other project partners and even develop new project ideas and initiatives based on existing results</li> <li>✓ To leverage the inter-relation of project results towards the general aim of advancing skills and competences of farmers around EU rural areas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The public/ NGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To educate them and raise their awareness of available learning resources, the necessity of VET and the effective farm management.</li> <li>✓ To encourage the public to lobby their political leaders in support of rural development and farmers' education</li> </ul>

### 4.3 Project Results

The project results that can be exploited or further diffused after the end of the project approved lifetime are the following:

1. The Training System (Introductory Test+Modules+Business Plan tool/ User guides) (MATERIAL)
2. The Project Training Platform and its services (*Ruralpedia, case studies presentation*) (TOOL)
3. The project website and social pages (TOOL)
4. Train the trainers methodology (PROCESS)
5. Networks of beneficiaries (TOOL)
6. Final Conference (conclusions, policies) (REPORT)
7. Final Summary of Project results (REPORT)
8. Training needs analysis methodology (PROCESS)
9. Evaluation report on the training platform users' satisfaction (REPORT)



## 4.4 Mechanisms and Actions

The above project results are either tangible or not and they all can be exploited, enriched, to increase the impact of the project and lead to new strategic choices for regional or national interventions. In particular:

<b>1. The Training System</b>	<p>The training System is comprised of 6 Modules, a Business plan tool and an introductory test with accompanying Golden Rules. The training system itself can be exploited by the academia, VET providers, professional institutes on the basis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Correcting existing material</li><li>■ Adapting material on the particular features of the area of intervention</li><li>■ Proposing new modules to be examined</li><li>■ Propose interface changes according to their experiences with the learning groups</li><li>■ Incorporate the system into their educational routine (with students, VET learners, researchers, adult consultants, rural economy servants etc)</li></ul> <p>The educational material can be the basis for developing more comprehensive courses for farmers, more specialties, friendlier interface and even combine different disciplines in VET programmes (eg. farm management along with ICT use or economics or climate change, depending on the target groups' interests).</p> <p>The update can be done either voluntarily within partners organisations (who are already active in training/education) or from external experts and academia faculties through memorandums of cooperation and other collaborative initiatives.</p> <p>Rural Consultants could also use the business plan tool, suggest improvements and inspire their clients to use it as a first clue if business risk assessment.</p>
<b>2. The project Training Platform and its services</b>	<p>The Training Platform also host complementary training tools apart from the modules that lead to certificates. These tools are necessary to be updated and promoted among authorities that provide services and guidance to farmers. In particular:</p> <p>Partners will continue uploading interesting case studies related to rural entrepreneurship on the platform</p> <p>Farmers themselves can address the partnership in order to commonly develop the case study of the business idea the farmers have</p> <p>For participating countries as well as for the overall EU strategy, the Ruralpedia (the digital library that complements farmer's training) should be updated by all partners and their affiliates with interested articles, studies and material that can assist them in training and coming in contact with real-life situations.</p> <p>The services of the platform may be enriched under the initiative of the Lead Partner (who is responsible for its maintenance), the rest of the partners or their networks in the frames of new projects, adding for example e-agronomist and e-secretary services, creating regional registers for different aspects for rural occupations, adding video-lectures, operating for a and helpdesk etc.</p> <p>The users' guiding videos will always be promoted along with the platform itself.</p>

### 3. The project website and social pages

The project has included the operation of a multilingual website, a facebook page and a youtube channel. These communication means can be exploited after the project end facilitating the diffusion of educational and other supporting resources to farmers:

- The multilingual website <http://www.ruraliter.eu/en/> will be maintained by the lead partner and ask for constant contribution by partners and other interested entities with news, educational material and relative information. The website will be the official gate to the training system and keep records of the participating persons
- The Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Ruraliter> is currently managed by the Lead Partner and there is a possibility to add representatives of other partners as administrators. The intention is to regularly feed the page with latest news, legislations, parallel events and trends for rural development attracting people from different countries around EU. The members will see the news and material mainly in English but accompanying docs and links in national languages
- The YouTube channel [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMIG\\_82Dd2jtfRmDiBVxv-A](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMIG_82Dd2jtfRmDiBVxv-A) will host visualized parts not only from the project events (local workshops, training sessions, final conference) but any other part of events related to rural economy and farming. It will be managed by the Lead Partner and updated by any other stakeholder with the view to broaden farmers' horizon, transfer experiences and success stories and exchange good practices. English will be the operating language while all national languages will be hosted.

### 4. Train the trainers methodology

The session of training the trainers (as organized in Brussels, April 2014) can be used further in other target groups nationally/internationally taking advantage of future opportunities for learning-by-doing processes. The trainers can be found in the human potential of the participating organisations (VET center, university) or in their networks grabbing opportunities for disseminating the project training basis and possibly re-directing it in similar fields of education. The necessary elements for training the trainers sessions are at least:

- Deployment of a moderator (mentor, trainer) experience in trainers' motivation and skills advancement
- Thorough presentation of the platform, making users' guides available
- Guided visit of the trainers in the training system
- Discussion of experiences
- Noting of suggestions, problems faced and opinions for feedback
- Statistical elaboration of key points through a well-structures but not time-consuming questionnaire
- Exchange of such sessions results with the rest of the partnerships and targeted stakeholders
- Monitoring the trainers' further performance in using Rural/iter training system in their "students" and gathering impact and feelings

<p>5. Networks of beneficiaries</p>	<p>Insofar, all partners have collected lists of interested stakeholders as approached in workshops, conferences, open events, media and direct communications. These lists can be re-structured (in English) in order to meet the needs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Informing the interested parties for the project final outcomes</li> <li>■ Identifying new ideas for exploiting the project results in other programmes</li> <li>■ Attracting investors in adult training for rural areas and other collaborative</li> <li>■ Exchanging good practices and engaging a wide majority of multi-disciplinary experts in similar initiatives</li> </ul> <p>The lists will be spread within partnership and are advised to be divided in sub-groups as, for instance,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policy makers on different levels</li> <li>■ Farmers and their unions</li> <li>■ Trainers and educational institutes</li> <li>■ Authorities serving farms and respective private entities</li> <li>■ Town councils and civil society organisations</li> </ul>
<p>6. Final Conference</p>	<p>The final project conference organized during within the project grant period intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Summarize the experience of the partners</li> <li>■ Present the main project objectives and outcomes</li> <li>■ Collect the views of different stakeholders (research institutes, farmers, academia)</li> <li>■ Strengthen the network in favour of covering the training needs of farmers</li> </ul> <p>The conference package (invited speakers, dissemination material, information from the presentations and the open discussion, practices and stories from farmers and assistant institutes) can be used not only to present the conclusions and sensitize the public but also to commonly build up ideas and policies for supporting farmers toward rural economy boost-up.</p>
<p>7. Final Summary of Project results</p>	<p>The summary of the project results is a publishable report that can be disseminated through several means such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Websites and social media pages</li> <li>■ Scientific journals</li> <li>■ Relevant social networks</li> <li>■ Targeted sending to stakeholders combined with the promotional material already produced</li> </ul> <p>The scope of the summary is to present the project achievements in a cohesive way, easily understood for both public and experts, mainly focused on facts and figures and on the future perspective of the project idea.</p> <p>The summary will bear all contact means with the project, the dissemination features of LdV Programme and the project visual identity; it will be produced in English and translated in national languages. It will be circulated through online means plus direct diffusion to interested parties. It must be clear, attractive and –apart from stating the qualitative and quantitative results- it must be leaving the potential for future investment on the project</p>

	<p>idea by any network member.</p> <p>The summary should also reach the National Agency and the projects and products portal for Leonardo da Vinci <a href="http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/homepageView.htm">http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/homepageView.htm</a> and be part of regional policy papers and programmes.</p>
<p>8. Training needs analysis methodology</p>	<p>Within the project, national training needs analysis were conducted with the view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ investigate innovative trends in agriculture,</li> <li>■ analyze the "new farmer" wave, such as young farmers, 2nd chance farmers from other sectors,</li> <li>■ provide new inputs for training need analysis,</li> <li>■ set up a survey context for adaptation of countries receiving innovative tools, practices and case studies.</li> </ul> <p>The steps and means used to identify the training needs of a certain group of people could be gathered and transferred in other partnerships and fields of economy.</p> <p>Such analysis includes state-of-the-art identification, social-economic analysis to understand the role of certain “players” in rural and other areas, collection of data from national and European observatories, transformation of needs into draft skills descriptions and competence frameworks, structured questionnaires, samples of teaching materials.</p> <p>The methodological approach contains in particular the definition of the target groups and the incorporation of the programming docs pillars into the training material.</p>
<p>9. Evaluation of users' satisfaction</p>	<p>In the same rationale, the forms and methodology for evaluating the satisfaction of the people using an ICT based training system can be further adopted in other activities of the partners and their affiliates. The measurement of the users' satisfaction comes from a well-structured questionnaire in English that can be translated in national languages; the questionnaire intends to measure the overall training experience (presentation, usefulness, easiness etc), the link of modules with the daily farmer routine, demographic features and open questions to measure the impact of the training system.</p> <p>The evaluation process could be further recommended in VET and other educational institutes to judge a newly-launched training tool and adjust it to different users' groups.</p>

All the so far described dissemination and exploitation activities are lying upon the recognized needs and intentions of the participating organizations below:



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