

Project Partners

Organic Retailers Association /ORA/ Austria



International Umbrella Association for Organic Retailers and Stakeholders of this branch. Main focus is know-how transfer, professional qualification and education. ORA offers support in capacity building for emerging

national and international organic markets through consulting, training and lobbying. ORA also is the Internal Body for OR Issues in IFOAM.

www.o-r-a.org ~ www.ifoam.org ~ www.ifoam-eu.org

Higher School "Agricultural College" Bulgaria

The Higher School "Agricultural College" is the biggest higher school in Bulgaria, which trains professionals at Bachelor degree in the field of agribusiness and rural development. It provides training and education in the field of animal husbandry, crop production, horticulture, tourism and other specific occupations, which are developed in the rural regions. The college has experience in development of projects in PHARE, Socrates Comenius, Leonardo da Vinci programs.



www.agricollege.com

Eurocentre "Land and Environment" Bulgaria

Eurocentre "Land and environment" is a small-size NGO that is based in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. It comprises of experts and specialists in the field of organic farming, agroecology and environmental protection. The experts and volunteers work to provide proper and timely advice to farmers, small producers and processors, students and teachers, so these groups may benefit from EU and Bulgarian financial support.



www.eurocentre.hostoi.com

Institute Equalita Germany

Institute equalita is a non-profit organisation for qualification and networking in Europe. Since 1992, it has carried out numerous projects, trainings and consulting for ecological and social institutions and business. One focus is the education for organic retail and farming, others are North-South topics and Global Learning. Since some years institute equalita is also engaged in eLearning and web-based activities.



www.equalita.de

C.V.T. GEORGIKI ANAPTIXI Greece

CVT Georgiki Anaptixi is a non-profit organization founded in 1995. The Center performs a range of activities in the field of Agriculture, Finance and Administration, Computers, Health and Social Care, Culture, Pedagogics, Tourism and Services, Technical and Transport, and Environment: organizing and implementing programs of continuous non-formal vocational training, in-company training, distance learning education and other related activities.



www.geoan.gr

Romanian Resource Centre for the Promotion and Marketing of Organic Products "EcoRPartner", Romania

"EcoR Partner" has been created through the joint initiative of a number of organic retailers from Romania and of a group of experts with solid knowledge in the field of organic marketing, consulting services, inspection and auditing of organic units and technical education and vocational training in the organic business. The main goal of the RRCPMOP-EP is to create an interaction platform between Romanian retailers, manufacturers and farmers for a more successful organic trade in Romania.



www.ecor.ro

Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University Turkey

Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University was founded in 1992. The university has expanded rapidly over the last few years and currently has over 27,000 students participating in a wide variety of programmes in 2 graduate schools, 9 faculties, 2 polytechnic colleges and 11 vocational colleges. The Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University has been involved in several projects within the Life Long Learning Programmes.



www.comu.edu.tr

Organic Product Producers and Industrialists Association (ORGÜDER) Turkey

ORGÜDER has members who are active entrepreneurs. It is growing, getting stronger and more active structure each passing day. Main aims: to contribute to the development of the Organic Agriculture in Turkey, to improve the competitiveness of the Turkish Organic Product Industry both in domestic and international markets, to follow the latest developments in the area and inform the members and consumers about the organic products development by combining all the organic product industry sector under one roof.



www.orguder.org.tr



EcoQualify III

Implementation of a Quality Assurance System for training in organic food retail

LEONARDO DA VINCI
Transfer of Innovation
Project

2010-1-GR1-LEO05-03967



Lifelong Learning Programme

More information: <http://www.ecoQualifyIII.org>

Qualifications in retail of organic food are important for the expansion of the organic food market

The market of organic products in Europe is expanding with about 10-15% annually. There are well developed as well as newly emerging national markets.

In **Greece**, organic agriculture has its roots in the ecological movement of the early 1980s. Currently, there are ~ 24.000 producers, ~1.600 manufacturers and a dozen importers. Almost 3,5 million hectares of land is organically cultivated. The Greek organic market has focus on olive oil, olives, wine, citrus and grain, as well as on animal products (feta cheese, sheep- and goat-meat, dairy products, eggs). In 2009 the organic-food-market increased by 6%, in previous years even by 25-30%. Greece offers ideal conditions for the further development of organic farming due to its excellent climate and good infrastructure.

In **Bulgaria**, the national market for organic products is still developing. More than 90% of the certified organic produce is exported mainly to the EU (essential oils, herbs, vegetables, berries, honey). Retailing is largely in the hands of wholesalers, importing most of the products from the EU. In Sofia more than 200 stores offer organic products. The organic market would expand faster if there were more Bulgarian products available. Super- and hyper-markets are increasingly searching for organic products.

In **Romania**, the results of the Eco Qualify III project have the potential for a significant impact on the development of the national organic market. They could support the entire organic movement and especially improve marketing. At this moment there is no structure or offer for genuine training and professionalization of key actors engaging in retailing of organic products.

Turkey with its immense experience in farming practices, different climatic conditions and rich biodiversity possesses a high potential for organic agriculture. As a major producer and exporter in various agricultural products Turkey produced in 2009 around 210 different organic products from 35.000 producers on 500.000 hectares (~ 1 million tons). From 2004 to 2008 the number of organic farmers increased by 25%. Turkey targets 3% of the total agricultural area to be organic until 2013.

For the ongoing expansion of the internal organic-food-market, qualifications of the managers and employees in organic retailing become increasingly important. The introduction and implementation of the QAS EcoQualify in all 4 countries offers a unique opportunity in this area.

The ECO QUALIFY QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (QAS) for the further education in organic food retailing

The organic food production is strictly regulated in the EU. Particular competence requirements need to be developed not only to achieve economic production while ensuring compliance with the regulations, but also new knowledge, skills and competences are required for others, like organic food retailers.

The highly successful Leonardo-da-Vinci project "*EcoQualify II - Dissemination and implementation of a quality assurance system for further education in organic retail trade in Europe*" has anticipated this development in 2007 and created a comprehensive QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (QAS) for the further education in organic foods retailing. This is to ensure that the further education measures in the various member countries of the EU will be carried out on the same high level of quality.

The current *Eco Qualify III Project* will transfer this successful project into 4 countries: Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Turkey. Partners of the initial project (Institute Equalita, Germany and ORA, the International Organic Retailers Association based in Austria) will present their experience and views.

Target groups and users are providers of adult-qualification and training, professional associations, businesses, entrepreneurs and employees, as well as other stakeholders in the organic sector. Training institutions and stakeholders of professional education in the participating countries will learn to know, apply and implement the QAS in their daily training and education practices.

The main focus and **objectives** of ECO QUALIFY III are:

- adaptation and testing of the Quality Assurance System at national levels in BG, GR, RO and TR.
- modification and adaptation of the QAS for the national needs and conditions
- the transfer and implementation of the QAS in the practise of educational institutions (universities, colleges, vocational training centers, etc.) for retailers as well as farmers in the receiver countries.

The **main products** will be: Quality Assurance System for Further Education in Organic Food Trade; Licensing Guidelines; Quality Handbook, National quality assurance systems for further education in natural food trade in the four partner countries (BULGARIA, GREECE, ROMANIA AND TURKEY).

The most important impact will be a nationalized version for BG, GR, RO, TR of a comprehensive European Quality Assurance System for further education in organic retailing based on the ECO QUALIFY Qualification Standards, which will support the VET system, organic farming and food-production, retailing and the labor market.

Transfer of Innovation Project

The EcoQualify III was developed within the frame of Lifelong Learning Program - Leonardo da Vinci - as a project for transfer of innovations. It will transfer innovations in the field of education and training in a very specific sector – the organic retailing. The transfer of innovation will be possible by the integration of institutions relevant to the EcoQualify concept and with the following profiles:

- Institutions, representing the vocational training and education in order to prepare the transfer and implement the QAS EcoQualify to the local training systems and to lay the foundations for a European recognition with the necessary local coordination.
- Training centres for adult education in order to develop partnerships dedicated to the experimental implementation of QAS EcoQualify and to plan its continuity and expansion.
- Organisations in the field of organic production and marketing in order to identify the needs of the sector and to boost the motivation of managers and employees to improve their knowledge, skills and competence in organic retailing.
- The know-how donors that will support the process of transfer and will contribute to the current project their experience from the original development activities and will be involved in the process of transferring, testing/monitoring and feedback.
- Media and other organisations outside the partnership will also assist in promoting the project and will facilitate the process of transfer.

Project Coordinator

The project coordinator and contractor is the **University of Thessaly**, Greece. It was founded in 1984 through presidential decision 83/1984, which was modified in 1985 through presidential decision 302/1985. The seat of the University is the town of Volos (Magnesia). University of Thessaly includes today the School of Agricultural Sciences, the School of Human Sciences, the School of Engineering, the School of Health Sciences and the two Independent Departments of Physical Education and Economics. It has a remarkable number of projects (more than 500) undertaken in the University up today through the various European Programmes and some other worldwide cooperations on various subjects.



UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

<http://www.uth.gr>