



Quality-Certified Training of Farmers on Organic Agriculture

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www.cerorganic.eu

Validation Training for Farmers in User Countries Czech Republic

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Lifelong Learning Programme

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Version

Version	Date	Contributor(s)	Summary of Changes
0.1	02-12-2011	Lenka Fiserova	First Draft
0.2	11-12-2011	Carolyn Owen	Revisions
0.3	15-12-2011	Lenka Fiserova	Final Version

List of Definitions, Acronyms and Abbreviations:

Term/Acronym/Abbreviation	Description
VT	Validation Training
QA	Quality Assurance
ToT	Training of Trainers
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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1. Executive Summary

This document provides information about how the Validation Training exercises were carried out in the Czech Republic. The document is divided into two parts, as was the validation. The first part covers a dissemination event held to familiarize local stakeholders including providers of vocational training and education in OA providers with the CerOrganic Project and products, and to request their feedback. The second concerns the Vertical Training, in included a session in which two Czech ToT graduates produced seminars to inform farmers, after which all parties involved were asked to provide feedback on the quality of the training provided. The information collected during both events is summarized here, together with the opinions of the participants and the recommendations of invited experts.

2. Introduction

This document provides the information about how the Validation Training was carried out in the Czech Republic. This document is divided into two parts – the first covering an initial dissemination event in which the project, and in particular the ToT programme was presented to interested stakeholders, the second covering a similar event which also incorporated a vertical Training exercise in which CerOrganic graduates who had successfully completed the Pilot ToT programme informed farmers. Discussion sessions were conducted at both events to elicit information, and all stakeholders present at each event were also requested to complete questionnaires to record their levels of satisfaction with the proceedings and the information imparted. This document includes a record of these validation events, together with a summary of the participants' opinions and the experts' recommendations. The purpose of these events was to examine how the CerOrganic ToT training could be applied in the Czech Republic.

2.1 Scope

This project describes the two validation events held in the Czech Republic, following the ToT training, within the scope of the CerOrganic Project .

2.2 Audience

The document is addressed to all CerOrganic consortium partners, and all interested stakeholders.

3. The Validation Seminars

3.1 Dissemination event

On October 17th, 2011, a dissemination event was conducted to familiarize Czech stakeholders in OA advisor education with the CerOrganic project, and also to inform them of the teaching methodologies proposed, to determine their level of interest and to discuss whether this type of training would be suited to local conditions. Every effort was made to invite the widest possible range of stakeholders from the area of organic farming.

Among the participants were representatives of universities, the Ministry of Agriculture, organic farming organizations (ProBio, ZERA, the association of private farmers), agricultural associations and independent private consultants from both organic and conventional agriculture. Many participants were already familiar with the project, having attended the CerOrganic Czech National Workshop seminar which took place in the spring of 2010.

After a brief introduction of the project, a short discussion followed on the topic of the education of advisors and farmers in organic agriculture. An introduction was made to the latest projects addressing education in organic agriculture. Educators introduced the courses currently being offered in this area. All agreed that eLearning training will be used increasingly in the future, but that this type of training could not replace personal contact, which is very important. The blended learning training approach used by CerOrganic was seen as a valuable means to combine e-Learning with conventional training. In the next section, the experts discussed various topics from the CerOrganic ToT curriculum. Most of the experts felt that the coverage of all subjects was not consistent, and that some important aspects of organic farming had not been mentioned at all. The curriculum tried to include the whole organic farming and coverage was thus very general. Some topics were more suited to local conditions and others less. Modules on animal husbandry had not been included in the CerOrganic Pilot ToT, and this aspect of the training will have to be developed if the training is to be transferred into Central and Northern European countries such as the Czech Republic.

The two Czech participants in the CerOrganic Pilot ToT Training presented their experiences of the training. They very much appreciated the opportunity to interact with other participants during the Summer School. The field trips were evaluated very positively, especially as they provided opportunities to consult with farmers, and to experience other consultation approaches.

All participants in the dissemination exercise agreed that a presential component in the training, incorporating demonstrations field trips and workshops was irreplaceable. In particular, the farmers themselves put emphasis on practical training, which young people often fail to receive when completing trainings. In the second half of the dissemination event, the attendees were given the opportunity to learn about the CerOrganic MOLE e-learning platform (<http://cerorganic.moleportal.eu>).

The uses made of the internet and e-learning as educational tools for educators as presented in the CerOrganic MOLE platform represented nothing innovative for the Czech trainers. The MOLE platform was found to have good good graphics, but it was also quite

confusing. Many participants did not find navigation within the MOLE environment to be easy.

During the session the MOLE platform was compared with the GOPAS educational support platform platform that is used by many educational establishments in the Czech Republic. The GOPAS platform was rated very positively by the participants for its great interactivity. Many experts also pointed out that despite the advantages, skills, such as communication techniques were difficult to teach at distance. In agriculture, being a specific sector, practical experience and practical exercises are of paramount importance and cannot be replaced. Participants often chose online classes to keep abreast of subjects which are developing rapidly and subject to changes in practice – i.e. legislation, accounting standards. The CerOrganic training was rated positively in that it combined e-learning with a face-to-face training element.

At the end of the event there was a discussion on how the CerOrganic ToT resources might be used in the Czech Republic in the future. All participants agreed that only some materials/sources would be useful. Czech universities and VET institutions already provide e-learning programmes, and there is no need to adapt the MOLE platform, as a suitable platform exists. The course materials could be helpful for the university as additional material, and it will not matter that the material is not all available in Czech as the university has many foreign students and many local students are keen to study in the English language. The participants from the Farm Associations found many units less useful than they had expected. They stated that they would have appreciated a course that reflected the current needs of farmers and more focused on practical applications. This is not surprising as the CerOrganic ToT material was developed to train trainers and not for direct distribution to farmers.

CerOrganic Czech Partner UZEI provides e-learning programmes in agricultural education through the e-learning platform Edoceo (please see the Annex). On this platform programmes are offered in ICT, Economics (with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises), agricultural topics, and legislation concerning agriculture. Some topics from the CerOrganic MOLE could be used to extend the Edoceo repertory on organic agriculture. This material is in the process of being translated into the Czech language and some chapters will require modification for the interactive platform of Edoceo. The e-learning form Edoceo is currently available to approximately 12,000 users including government institutions, farm advisors, teachers in vocational schools, and farmers, all of whom have who have attended at least one courses produced by UZEI in the last two years, in which they were assigned a password an access to the system. The validity of a passport is initially for six months, but access rights may be extended on request. The Marketing unit prepared by UZEI for the ToT, and which described the situation in the Czech Republic will be included in the first instance in this platform.

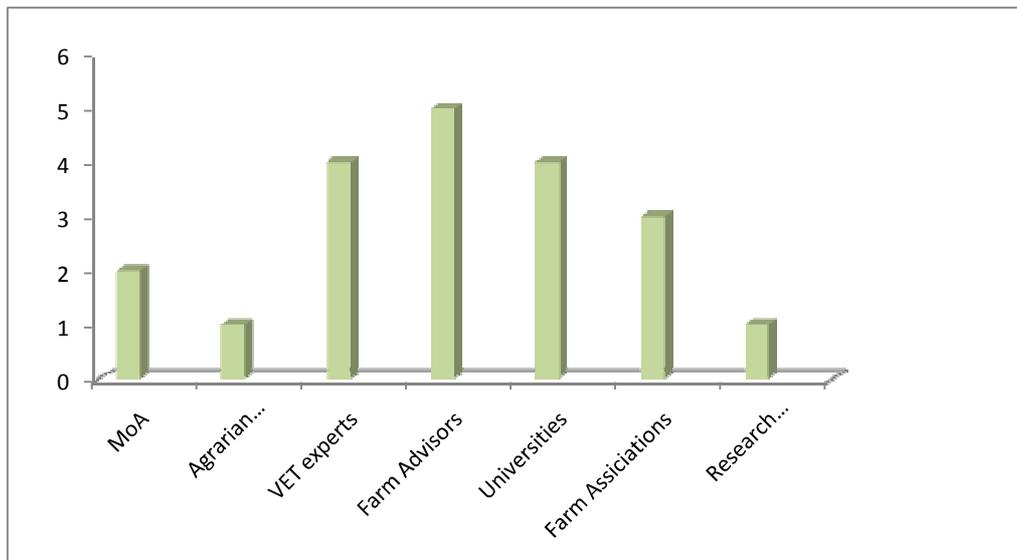
3.2 Vertical Training

3.2.1 Preparation Phase of Vertical Training

To maximise participation by farmers, the CerOrganic Czech vertical training (information of farmers) was held in conjunction with a mandatory training event for farmers operated by the Farm Association. Information was collected, materials prepared and updated materials, and the CerOrganic feedback questionnaires were also translated before the event. After

consultation with farmer groups it was decided that the topic of the seminars would be Marketing of Produce, as this is a topic of high importance to the farmers.

Graph 1 – Dissemination Event Participants (twenty participants)



Two OA training experts, both from the Czech Ministry of Agriculture, were asked to check the material for the training course and to suggest improvements. With the help of these experts the planning agenda, materials and topics were prepared. The event was planned to last three hours during which time it would not be possible to cover all aspects of Marketing in Organic Agriculture. The experts tried to select the most interesting and appealing subjects.

The VT was held on November 15th, 2011, at the village of Beneso, near Prague, with an invited audience of aimed at organic farmers. This afternoon event was organized as interactive section. Twenty two farmers participated in the event and of these, twenty provided feedback by completing the questionnaire. The training was conducted by two trainee-graduates of the CerOrganic Pilot ToT – Dr. Perla Kuchtova and Mr. Jaroslav Tomášek.

Dr Kuchtova studied at the Agricultural University in Prague, and has a a PhD in crop protection. Currently she is an assistant professor at the Czech Agricultural University (Departure of Crop Protection), with interests in organic farming and energy recovery plants. Jaroslav Tomášek is finishing his PhD at Agricultural University (Faculty of Agrobiolgy Food and Natural Resouces). His dissertation work is focused on the studying of organic potatoes, but he is also interested in renewable energy sources. He has spent three years as a vice president of the student environmental organization ÚESS-SPODEK.

Both trainees used the blended learning methods taught during the ToT training to produce their seminars. They focused on collaborative sessions, group interaction and discussion. During the lectures they tried to encourage participants to be actively involved in the discussion. The VT was divided into four sections (lasting approximately forty minutes each). The sections “Introduction to the Marketing” and “Promotion of Bio-products” were accompanying by PowerPoint presentations. In creating these presentations and preparing accompanying materials it was followed instruction and examples from the ToT training. After every section information about the resources and additional information were provided.

Subject of the Training: ***Marketing in OA and Promotion of Bio-products***

- Introduction to the Marketing
- Promotion of Bio-products
- Practical examples & group exercises

The first (introductory) lecture was on the topic **Marketing** – “why is Marketing needed, how to understand Marketing in OA”. The 40 minute presentation was accompanied by many examples and discussion took place after almost every slide. The aims of this part was to give an outline of marketing, and to illustrate the basic definition with the examples. The presentation was designed to be easy to read and to orientate within, and using easy-to-understand terms. The slides were accompanied by open-questions, to encourage the participants to actively contribute to the discussion and to think about the issue.

The second presentation was focused more practically on **Promotion of Bio-products**. Due to the long and very interesting discussion with participants was the scheduled time (40 minutes) was overrun by 20 minutes. The lecture aimed to answer the questions – “How to promote your business, How to use the promotion mix”. During the presentation participants provided their own experiences with selling (why they prefer selling from farmyard, why other participants regularly offer their goods at the organic markets events, how new possibilities for selling have arisen through use of the internet, etc).

After short coffee break followed **Group Exercise (Brainstorming)**. Participants were divided into four small groups and every group was presented with the same problem. Each group tried to find the best solution to make recommendations.

After the Group Exercise there remained a little time for the provision of **Practical examples** from successful organic farms.

Before the end of the event participants were given information about resources providing additional or more detailed information.

Finally all participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback about all aspects of the event, and the concept of the training.

3.2.2 Phase of realization

During the registration every participant was given a package which included a meeting agenda, printed materials and a small present in the shape of a book about organic agriculture.

The teaching schedule was divided into the theoretical part, and practical examples, and many attempts were made to include participants in the discussion.

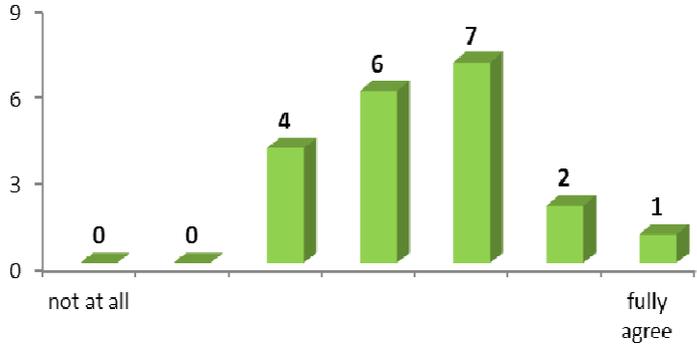
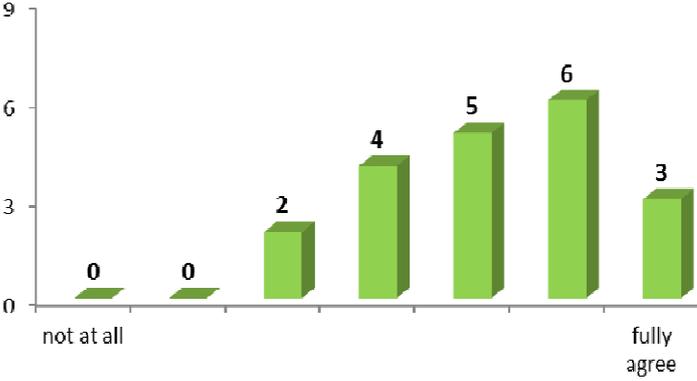
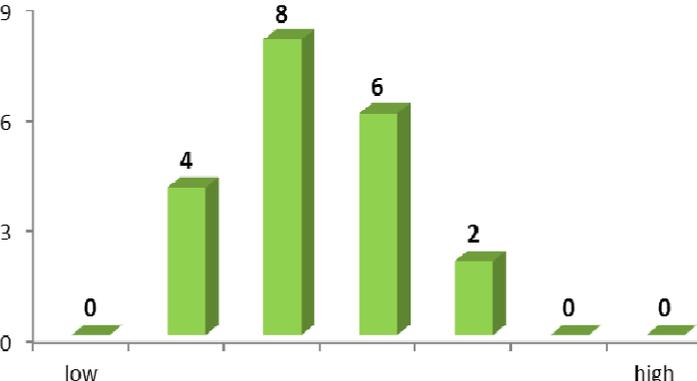
The theoretical part included presentations (selected slides of presentations, from the Pilot ToT). After every slide a discussion followed to actively involve participants in the discussion. Focus was concentrated on the use of practical examples, and participants were requested to share their experiences of how they had managed a problem, or what they would do in a particular situation. The floor was opened for friendly discussion and the sharing of opinions. After a short coffee break we went on to a group work. The group work was organized as a brainstorming, where the participants were encouraged to demonstrate their ability to put across their opinion and find the best solution. The participants were divided into 4 groups and every group dealt with a specific task concerning organic agriculture. Every group had 20 minutes to prepare their task and then the representatives from every group presented the work of the group.

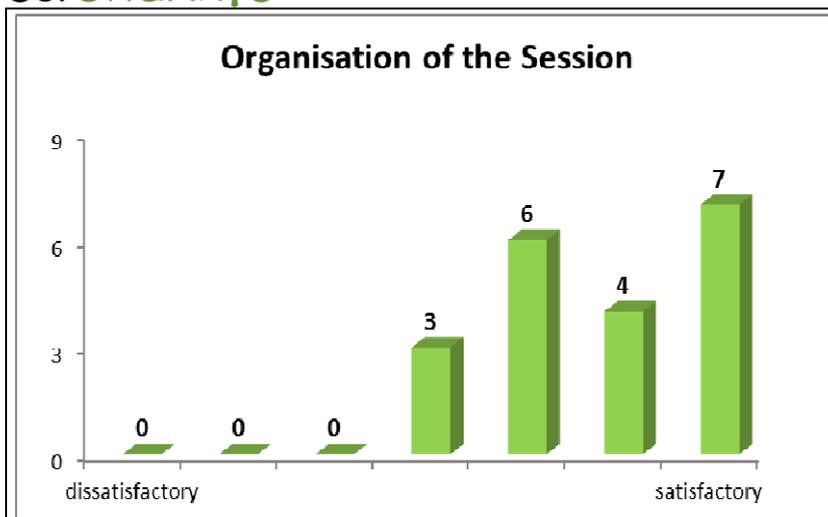
3.2.3 Feedback Evaluation

The feedback-questionnaire was a multiple choice with a possibility to describe the opinions into details. Twenty of the twenty participants provided feedback on the training. The results of the questionnaire are summarized below as a set of charts that represent the distribution of answers given by the participants to 11 multiple choice questions and two open questions requiring detailed comments.

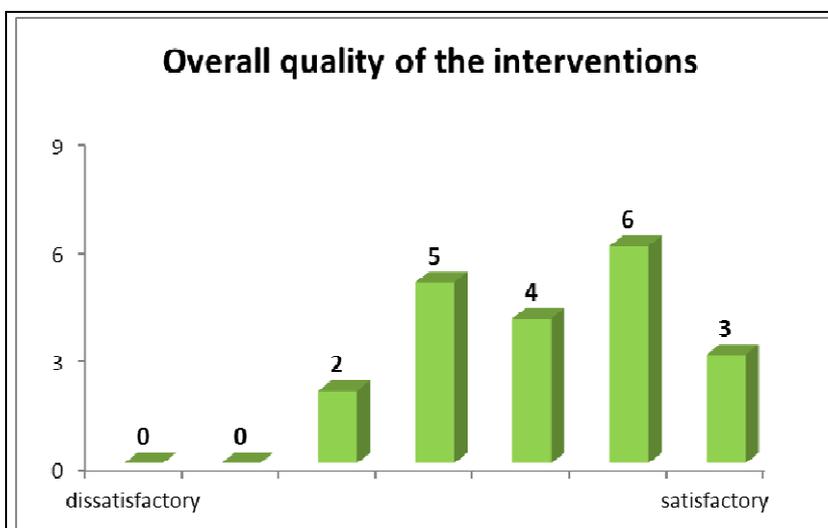
The questions were in a form of statements to which the participants indicated their level of agreement or disagreement (high level of satisfaction or low level of satisfaction, agree or disagree). Each chart below represents the distribution of answers to one particular question. Next to each chart a brief interpretation of the data is included as short comments offering interpretation and preliminary conclusions.

Concerning the questions “Would you recommend this session to others?” participants appreciated the need for this type education, but most of them were not sure that they would recommend it to others. They preferred individual consultation, where they tried to find the best solution. The modules should have contained more details, and better reflect the current situation and problems in the Czech Republic. Some participants could imagine this section as a part of a teaching session at colleges or vocational schools.

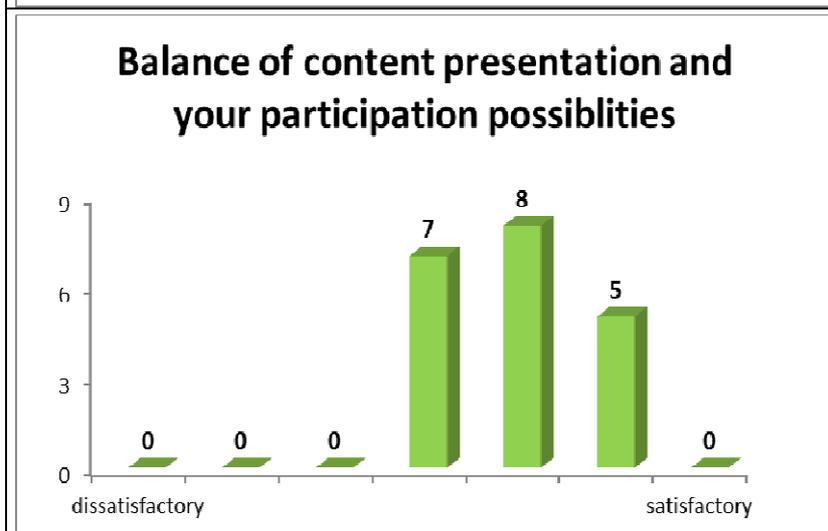
<p style="text-align: center;">Was the Session able to meet your expectations?</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1	0	2	0	3	4	4	6	5	7	6	2	7	1	<p>Comment: Chart 1 shows a positive rating of the session. In spite of the fact that nobody believed that “the session fully met their expectations”, there was no low negative rating. In the space below it was mentioned that the expectations reflected what was promised in the agenda and during dissemination event the participants were introduced all aspects of the VT, materials sent a few days in advance.</p>
Category	Count																
1	0																
2	0																
3	4																
4	6																
5	7																
6	2																
7	1																
<p style="text-align: center;">Overall usefulness of the Session</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>3</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1	0	2	0	3	2	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	3	<p>Comment: All participants are willing to attend an additional training and it was not surprising for us that they rated the session positively. Most appreciated the importance of sharing information and being updated.</p>
Category	Count																
1	0																
2	0																
3	2																
4	4																
5	5																
6	6																
7	3																
<p style="text-align: center;">Relevance of the Session for your work</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1	0	2	4	3	8	4	6	5	2	6	0	7	0	<p>Comment: Chart 3 shows many different attitudes and no matter how subjective they signaled that some participants did not find marketing to be of a close connection with their jobs or did not think that marketing could help their products. Many of them take advantage of favourable local conditions (long standing relationships with local people etc).</p>
Category	Count																
1	0																
2	4																
3	8																
4	6																
5	2																
6	0																
7	0																



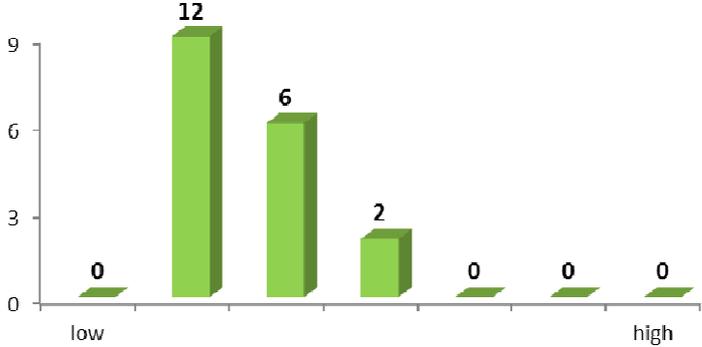
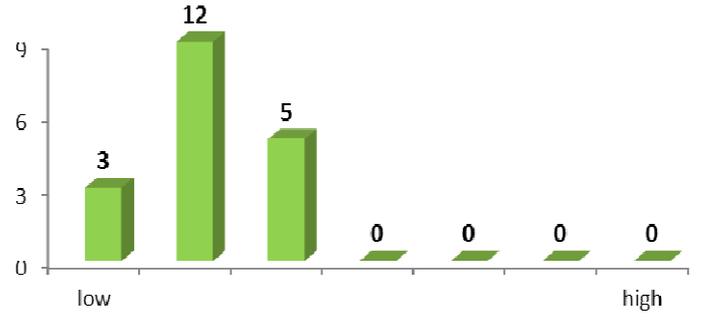
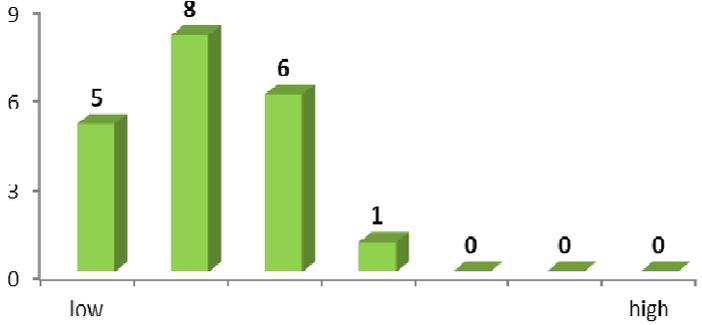
Comment: Even though this event was organized as a half day session, participants appreciated that this event was coupled with with an previously-planned training.



Comment: The quality was rated positively. All participants were given materials in advance so that they could prepare related questions. The teachers tried to use modern teaching methods – interactive boards during the power point presentation, the lesson was prepared as an interactive discussion section. The theoretical part took approximately only 30 % of the course.



Comment: We think that participants very positively rated the less theoretical presentation and focused more on the interactive discussion. The group work (brain storming) let them demonstrate their opinions concerning the problem, which was also very much appreciated during the event.

<p style="text-align: center;">Relevance of the outcomes/results for your own interests/work</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 (Lowest)</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>7 (Highest)</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1 (Lowest)	0	2	12	3	6	4	2	5	0	6	0	7 (Highest)	0	<p>Comment: : During the session there was not enough time to introduce the whole concept of the project. (Only a few participants has participated in the related dissemination event). Most did not consider that the outcomes could be relevant to their work. We think that this rating is due to a lack of information and a sceptical stance regarding innovation</p>
Category	Count																
1 (Lowest)	0																
2	12																
3	6																
4	2																
5	0																
6	0																
7 (Highest)	0																
<p style="text-align: center;">The knowledge gained during the course can be transferred easily and efficiently into my working practice.</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 (Lowest)</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>7 (Highest)</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1 (Lowest)	3	2	12	3	5	4	0	5	0	6	0	7 (Highest)	0	<p>Comment: The participants during the session agreed that they had obtained many interesting suggestions and that the discussion during the session, sharing the experience and interactive teaching were for them mostly positive. However, they were sceptical about the easy transfer /application of the training subject into practice.</p>
Category	Count																
1 (Lowest)	3																
2	12																
3	5																
4	0																
5	0																
6	0																
7 (Highest)	0																
<p style="text-align: center;">Transferability of the outcomes/results</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 (Lowest)</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>0</td></tr> <tr><td>7 (Highest)</td><td>0</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Count	1 (Lowest)	5	2	8	3	6	4	1	5	0	6	0	7 (Highest)	0	<p>Comment: This question reflects a similar answer to the question above. It was not easy to answer how to assess the quality of the project or application and using it in the future, as most participants were pessimistic about whether they would use the project outcomes.</p>
Category	Count																
1 (Lowest)	5																
2	8																
3	6																
4	1																
5	0																
6	0																
7 (Highest)	0																

During the both events (the dissemination and the validation training) participants appreciated the attempt to establish a new type of training in organic agriculture. However, many participants did not see much innovation in the outcomes of this project as the some



key methods used – ICT support, and a platform similar to the CerOrganic MOLE platform are already in operation in this sector in the Czech Republic.

The marketing module of CerOrganic has now been incorporated into the Ecedeo training platform of UZEI.

Further analysis of the Czech validation training can be found in CerOrganic deliverable D4.5.

4. Annex

Agenda – Dissemination Event



Dissemination Seminar Prague

17th October 2011

10:00 – 10:30	Introduction to the CerOrganic Project & Outcomes
10:30 -10:45	Related projects in Organic Agriculture
10:45 – 11:00	The Farm Advisory System in Context of Education
11:00 – 11:15	Discussion / Coffee Break
11:15 – 11: 45	CerOrganic ToT Topics (Plenary Discussion)
11:45 – 12:00	CerOrganic ToT Experiences, Outputs
12:00 – 12:30	The CerOrganic MOLE e-Learning Platform
12:30 – 13:00	Future of the CerOrganic Project



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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Registration Form



Contact:

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.....
Name

.....
Company

.....
Street/No.

.....
City Code/City

.....
Contact/Tel./Fax/E-Mail

.....
Date/Signature

Agenda – Vertical Training



Validation Training

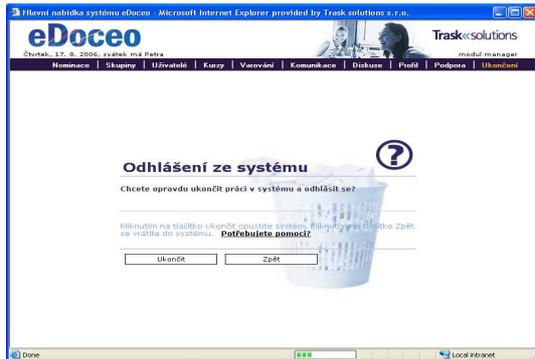
15th November 2011

14:00 - 14: 15	Introduction
14:15 – 14:55	Seminar 1: Introduction to Marketing
14:55 – 15:35	Seminar 2: Promotion of Bio-Products
15:35 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 - 16:45	Group Exercise
16:45 – 16:55	Practical Examples
17:55 – 17:00	Final conclusions and Future prospects for the CerOrganic Training in the Czech Republic

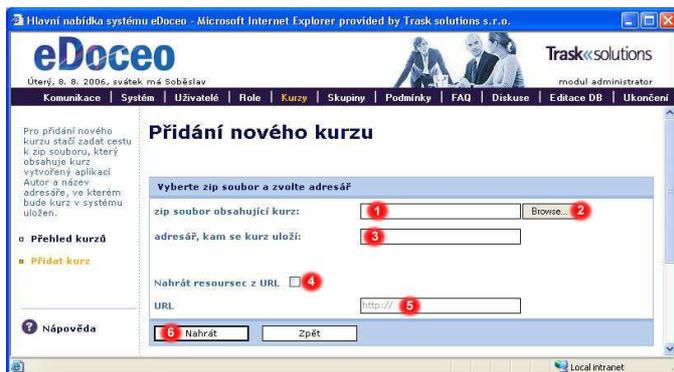
E-learning Programme eDoceo

eDoceo is Learning Management Systems (LMS) provided by company Trask solution (www.trask.cz). The system eDoceo is added by application Autor version 2.66, which is intended to create structures of courses.

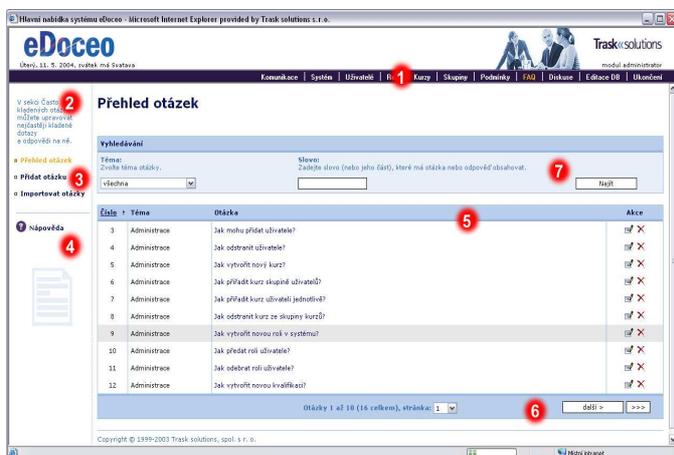
Log in/Log out into the e-learning programme:



Process of uploading the new course into the eDoceo e-learning programme:



Uploaded courses in e-learning programme eDoceo



Photos

Validation event 1: Dissemination of the CerOrganic ToT at UZEI, 17/10/2011.



Validation event 2: Vertical training of farmers at Benešov (town near Prague), 17/11/2011



Project Information

CerOrganic is a two year Leonardo da Vinci Multilateral Project financed by the European Commission that aims to develop and test a quality assurance procedure for the vocational education/training of agricultural advisors/trainers in Organic Agriculture, based on the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF).

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Corvinus University
of Budapest (Hungary)

<http://www.uni-corvinus.hu>



Federal Ministry of Edu-
cation, Arts and Culture
(Austria)

<http://www.bmukk.gv.at>



Association for Hungar-
ian Organic Farming
(Hungary)

<http://www.mogert.uni-corvinu.hu>



Institute of Agricultural
Economics and Informa-
tion (Czech Republic)

<http://www.uzei.cz>



European Federation
for Quality in E-Learning
(Belgium)

<http://www.efquel.org>



DIO Inspection
and Certification
Organization (Greece)

<http://www.dionet.gr>



Department of
Agriculture of Cyprus
(Cyprus)

<http://www.moa.gov.cy/da>



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