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

Lifelong Learning Programme

Newsletter No. 5

LIVORG

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

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Dear readers,

after two intensive years of work the project LivOrg is almost finished. The consortium successfully developed and tested the VET curricula "practitioner for organic livestock management" for organic livestock management in all partner countries. The consortium created sector skills alliances to actively involve stakeholders in the different project phases such as developing VET curricula, implementing the Pilot Courses and LAB activities but also developing possible ways of integrating and transferring the developed methods and curricula into national frameworks. Various dissemination events took place in all partner countries. At the end of November 2015 the Final Meeting and LivOrg Conference on Perspectives of organic animal husbandry in Europe with focus on VET education, labour market and entrepreneurship took place at the University of Live Sciences in Tartu, Estonia. Detailed information on the final project meeting and final seminar in Tartu as well as transferability of the project experience at Nation Level and further steps are provided in this Newsletter.

Fifth project meeting and Final Seminar in Tartu, Estonia – 23rd and 24th November 2015

The fifth transnational partnership meeting and Final LivOrg Seminar were held in Tartu, Estonia, on 23rd and 24th November 2015. Both meetings were organized and hosted by the Estonian University of Life Science. On the first day the LivOrg consortium discussed further steps in order to successfully finish the LivOrg project. An excursion to the nearby organic farm of Airi Külvet was an interesting experience for all project partners on organic beef production in Estonia.

LivOrg consortium and invited stakeholders from partner countries outside Estonia

The second day was dedicated to the Final LivOrg Conference. The purpose of the seminar was to introduce the aims, activities and results of LivOrg project with focus on VET education and entrepreneurship. More than 80 people from 6 different European countries participated in the Final LivOrg Conference. All LivOrg partner invited their national stakeholders

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to the final conference. The conference programme covered a great ranch of topics. After introduction of the project, important topics concerning organic European agriculture were discussed. Dr Smaragada Sotiraki from the Greek Veterinary Research Institute & Hellenic Agricultural Organisation "Demeter" for example gave an introduction to the Health and welfare in organic verses conventional sheep and goat farming. The German expert Werner Vogt-Kaute from Naturland Association for Organic Agriculture talked about the perspectives and challenges on 1000 % organic feed in animal husbandry. Stakeholder from Estonia gave interesting insights on organic beef and lam production.

Stefano Bini (ERIFO) presenting the LivOrg project

A highlight of the conference was the presentation by Emanuele Busacca from the IFOAM EU group. Due to the difficult security situation in Brussels, he was not able to come to the conference personally but was well connected to the audience via Skype. He gave a lecture on the current situation regarding the New European Organic Regulation. In the afternoon topics regarding labour market and education in the organic sector were discussed. Dr Gonzalo Palomo Guijarro from BBB Farming, Animal Health & Organic Farming (Spain) talked about Role of organic farming and animal husbandry sector in the labour market: challenges and opportunities for young aspiring entrepreneurs. The role and opportunities of VET/Educational system in the organic farming in Germany was presented and discusses by Kai Pönitz, an experienced organic farmer and VET teacher from Germany.

Interested audience at LivOrg Final Conference

The experiences of the LivOrg Pilot Courses and LABs were presented by Stefano Bini, representative of LivOrg lead partner ERIFO and Prof. Przemysław Kulawczuk from the Institute for Private Enterprise and Democracy (Poland).

Transferability of the experiences at National Level

One important aspect of the LivOrg project is transferability of projects results and LivOrg experiences at national level. How will the project partners use the results achieved by the project after the project lifetime? In which way can each partner adopt and include their results at national and regional level and who are the main stakeholders involved in the "transferability" process?

Polish Focus group meeting

The Focus Group of the project in **Poland** recommends adding entrepreneurship elements to the agricultural schools curricula. It also recommends dissemination of Laboratory Programs developed in the framework of LivOrg

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project among the higher and vocational education institutions. In order to achieve this the Polish partner IPED makes the Entrepreneurship Laboratory Program for Organic Agriculture available for all the stakeholders free of charge and for their independent use. Conclusions and recommendations resulting from the project were included in the Project Agreement presented to organizations, institutions as well as public and academic authorities who have influence on VET curricula and are interested in the development of agriculture and ecology (among others: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, National Centre of Agricultural Education in Brwinów, Ministry of National Education, Chambers of Craft and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, engaged in vocational training and Vocational Education Centres). The Institute also disseminated the project's results during the meeting with participation of interested groups' representatives on 19 November 2015 in Warsaw.

The **Greek partner MAICh**, besides having successfully accomplished the pilot LivOrg courses and the Focus Group meeting, has realized two promotion workshops and several media releases for the dissemination of the project's results. In addition the outcome of LivOrg has been delivered to the Greek National Qualification Agency, in order to make known the output delivered and the potential uptake of the project results at national level.

In order to develop an effective impact of the project activities and results after the LivOrg experience at local level, **ERIFO and ENFAP Toscana** established a stable network of stakeholders, experts and regional authorities. The project has been successful in launching this networking process via focus groups and meetings at local level. Networking activities have been undertaken to disseminate the results at local level, promote shared decision-making and other initiatives for the Curriculum contents regional implementation in Italy. The focus group represent farmers, experts in agriculture and livestock, agronomists and VET providers and gave opportunity to present and discuss about the LivOrg Curriculum. The main goal of each Focus Group was to exploit and analyse the possibility to transfer the main and innovative contents of the "practitioner in livestock management activities" curriculum to the local authorities, which have a regulatory function for VET (Regione Lazio and Regione Toscana). In accordance with the LivOrg framework, ERIFO and ENFAP Toscana have described and collected the main results, the key remarks and recommendations arisen from the focus groups in two final agreements to be presented and transferred to the local authorities. The main goal is to implement and /or modify existing professional figures within the "agricultural/livestock sector" with the new and innovative contents developed through the LivOrg project. In order to ensure a lasting sustainability of our experience in favour of new training solutions that will meet the needs of the "practitioner in organic livestock management" profile, two project agreements were signed by the stakeholders. Through the agreements, we will be expecting to ensure new and innovative training packages in organic livestock management sector at local level through other funding: Regional; National or European like the European Social Fund 2014-2020.

Participants at the Italian Focus Group

The **German partner EkoConnect** is in close contact and exchange with other organisations dealing with the improvement of organic agriculture in German VET system. Together with stakeholders of the German Focus Group EkoConnect discussed the possibilities of further development of organic agriculture in German VET system at a workshop in Oct.2015. Germany has a National Framework for vocational educational training (VET) for the profession "farmer". In this framework 80 hours are planned for alternative agriculture in the second and third year of training. Every federal state has an own curriculum based on the national framework but with slightly different focuses. In

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Saxony for example, where the German LivOrg Pilot Course and Focus Group meeting took place, organic agriculture is planned to be a topic in the second and third year of training, about 40 hours are dedicated to organic animal production and marketing within the second and third year of the training. If the curriculum created during this project could be part of the regular training of farmers in VET, training time for organic agriculture has to be increased, in fact doubled.

Future steps

As described above each partner will help to transfer the projects results at national level and provide, disseminate and transfer projects results at national level.

New Erasmus+ proposal (2016)

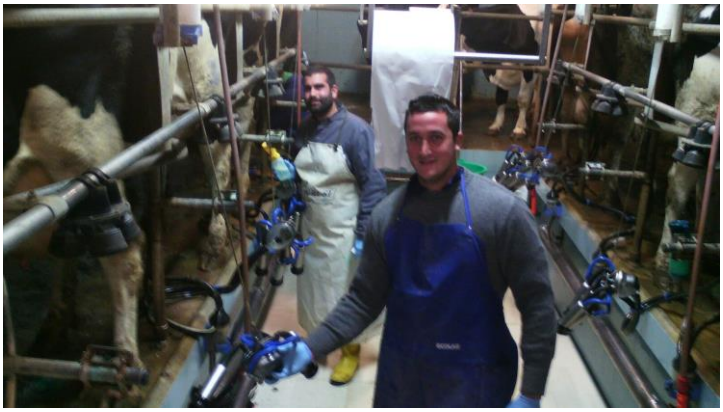
Furthermore, the consortium is working on a new Erasmus + project proposal. Starting from the LivOrg project experience, over the next months, the partners will be involved in defining a new ERASMUS + proposal (KA2-Strategic Partnership) working for the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate learning, employability and labour mobility in the organic farming system across Europe. Indeed, partners will be committed to develop innovative high-quality training pathways for experts and professionals to support the rural contexts and the organic agricultural systems in Europe.

European Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme

Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs

As already mentioned in the last Newsletter the LivOrg consortium is supporting young entrepreneurs applying for grant within the "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs" programme. Within this cross-border exchange programme new or aspiring entrepreneurs are give the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs running small businesses in other participating countries. The exchange of experience takes place during a stay with the experienced entrepreneur, which helps the new entrepreneur acquire the skills needed to run a small firm. More information can be found here.

All LivOrg project partners supported young entrepreneur applying in the "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs" programme. Here are some experiences from the Greek, Italian and Polish partners.



Young Greek entrepreneurs taking part in the "Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs" Program at an Italian Farm.

The Greek project partner MAICh already sent 2 young entrepreneurs to Italy *(see photo)*. They had the opportunity to learn from an experienced Italian farmer and further developed their entrepreneurial skills. Both of them were hosted in two cattle-dairy production farms based in the area of Florence (Mugello) where they shared and experienced new methods and techniques for working and managing within a farming system. The two Italian hosting entrepreneurs are part of our Strategic Networking Group.

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In the meantime, also the Italian partners ERIFO and ENFAP Toscana supported three aspiring entrepreneurs in order to get a grant from the European Commission within the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme. Two of them attended the LivOrg PILOT training courses.

Three applications were prepared and registered by young entrepreneurs in Poland, supported by the polish LivOrg partner IPED. Since farming in Poland is still often not considered as a real business, the entrepreneurial approach of these applicants and the experience gained abroad will be an added value for the applicants and the Polish organic business sector as well.

Follow the LivOrg project activities on:

LivOrg Project

.livorg.eu

Now you can learn more about the LivOrg National experiences watching the Video Lessons made by the partners on:

LivOrg Project

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