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June 2021



1
NEWSLETTER

WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

We are glad to present you the first newsletter of Erasmus+ KA2 eu4shepherds and hope you'll enjoy the information provided and get "hungry" to get to know more about us!!

EU4Shepherds, Innovative training for sustainable shepherds

Extensive livestock exploitation models are crucial for the sustainable maintenance of important rural areas in Europe. These models are the paradigm of ecological, social and economic sustainability. These models fight against depopulation in rural areas and have a positive impact in animal wellbeing and human health compared to other non-extensive models. These models supply consumers with quality food products in many EU territories and promote the sustainable development of our society.

The **future of such livestock exploitation models**, currently under threat due to the effects of climate change and administrative barriers (droughts, animal health problems, increase in parasites, administrative limitations for transhumance, etc...) depends on the availability and capacity of extensive Shepherds. But the problem is that it is increasingly difficult to find well trained shepherds that have the knowledge and experience to face all the aspects involved in extensive livestock shepherding. Shepherds are an ageing social group, the younger ones lack proper training, education and experience and nowadays there is no motivation to become a shepherd due to the low social standing and lack of a specific professional training offer and The shepherds – key actors and basis for extensive livestock – carry out innumerable functions in rural, disadvantaged and under populated areas.

EU4Shepherds seeks to **improve and update the training offer for extensive shepherds** taking into account current barriers (administrative mainly...) threads (new climate scenario and its consequences) and opportunities (ecological production trends, agro tourism, etc...) to ensure a sustainable maintenance of extensive livestock exploitations (economical, social and environmental) giving them tools to become resilient. The project will adapt the training methods (both for trainers and trainees) for a work-based learning taking into consideration current barriers and logistical problems for extensive shepherds (many of them are distributed along rural isolated areas) in order to ensure the sustainability of the profession and of extensive livestock exploitations. Furthermore, the project will provide a training platform designed for extensive shepherds (not used to complicated interfaces or texts) and will promote the use of digital tools for training.

These objectives will be satisfied with the development of three IOs:

1. New curricula for professional shepherds.
2. New flexible training methodology for trainers.
3. New on-line adapted training platform for extensive shepherds

Although Shepherds are the main objective of the project, we can say that trainers involved in the training of extensive shepherds are the key element for making possible the needed change in the training of professional shepherds, and therefore, trainers are the main target group of key project actions (IOs and training workshops).

Partners

9 entities from 7 participating countries are partners in EU4Shepherd. The countries participating in the project represent some of the most important territories in Europe when speaking of extensive livestock models. **Spain** and **Portugal** in the south west, **Scotland** in the northwest, **Romania** and **Bulgaria** in the east or **Austria** (the Alps) together with **Germany** in central Europe. The EU4Shepherds partners represent all actors needed to develop the project efficiently and to implement the results successfully, giving special importance to the link between VET entities and the needs of extensive livestock exploitations, in order to include the necessary curricula and methodologies for trainers to implement in a further phase a certifiable shepherd training course.



[Cesefor](#) (**Spain**) provides large experience applying new management models in the field of forestry and mountain areas, habitat conservation and training in the field of forestry, both for public managers and private owners.

[Cesefor Presentation](#)



[Agrarian Chamber of Lower Saxony](#) (**Germany**) has a long training experience with apprentice internships in collaboration with sectorial public institutes, including also further contracting of school leavers with companies. Training plans are carried out according to curricula developed by the Agrarian Chamber, together with evaluations and exams addressed to practical competences. Contents and learning methods subjected to continuous updating.

[Agrarian Chamber of Lower Saxony Presentation](#)



[ADIRAM](#) (Portugal) is an Association dedicated to promote the integrated development of a mountain villages network and rural development (Serra da Estrela) where sheep and goat farming are important activities.

[ADIRAM Presentation](#)



[Agricultural University Plovdiv](#) (Bulgaria): University chair focused to autochthonous sheep breeds; extensive livestock management involving shepherds; rural development through sheep farming in remote áreas.

[Agricultural University Plovdiv Presentation](#)



[ARCHNETWORK](#) (Scotland) provides training in natural and cultural heritage management. We work with a consortium of key nature and heritage organisations in Scotland and with training organisations in Europe. Our aim is to share best practice across borders and develop innovative solutions to managing our common heritage of nature and culture.

[ARCHNETWORK Presentation](#)



AREC (Austria) is an Agriculture research and education institution having large experience as VET center providing training programs to agro-livestock sector.

AREC Presentation



University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy, UCAEP, (Austria) is a science and pedagogic center for the education of teachers and consultants in the professional fields of agriculture and forestry as well as environmental education. Both the rural and the urban Austrian economic area will be influenced more and more by structural, ecological and social change in the future.

University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy Presentation



AGROM-RO (Romania) is Well-recognized association that coordinates training projects in collaboration with sheep breeder organizations and federations, introducing professional/occupational code for mountain shepherds in Romania.

AGROM-RO Presentation



Fundación Monte Mediterráneo (Spain) is an organization deeply committed with pastoralism during the last 10 years (mainly sheep transhumance) and involving Municipalities, neighborhood councils, farmers, shepherds, sheep cooperatives.

Fundación Monte Mediterráneo Presentation

Realized actions

First of all, it should be mentioned that the timetable of activities of the EU4SHEPHERDS project was adapted according to the circumstances brought about by COVID-19. The adjustment made to the timetable was about the delay of the start of all activities from September 2020 to December 2020. The timeline, project management methodology and Budget distribution were carefully read and approved by the Project team.

At the moment, all activities foreseen in the timetable are being implemented:

- Management, an explanatory document of the Project Management Structure, a Project coordination handbook, an excel file with the details of contact list with technical and administrative contacts per partner.
- For the supervision, monitoring and evaluation a Project Monitoring and Quality Plan was made and validated for all partners. Each partner realized 2 internal periodic reports and Cesefer prepared the first interim report to be sent to the National Agency.

- Respect the IO1: Shepherds Curricula, a common assessment of the situation of extensive/roaming pastoralists in Europe has been carried out, based on a previous in-depth needs analysis already carried out by the partners at EU level.
- Every partner analysis for the actual situation of sheep breeding in their country was performed, research the shepherd's stories and testimonies about their (formal and non-formal) training; recompilation of information to the presence of technologies for sheep rearing in each country; Identification of existing formal and informal shepherd's training courses and identifying shepherds & trainers to take part in the more detailed questionnaires and swot analyses in February and March 2021.

What's next?

Each partner has studied the **situation of Vocational Educational Training** for shepherds and extensive sheep breeding in their countries complementing it with interviews with persons involved in sheep breeding, extensive sheep pastoralism, etc. which is the basis for the first intellectual output.

Definition of the educational and training contents for professional shepherds.

Creation of a **repertoire of educational and training material** for the various modules.

The manual will also define the **profile** of the trainers who will have to implement the course defined before.

Identify the **needs/difficulties/challenges** of the trainers via interviews with experienced shepherds in each country.

NEWS

EU4SHEPHERDS. INNOVATE TRAINING FOR SUSTAINABLE SHEPHERDS

27.02.2021



Extensive livestock exploitation models are crucial for the sustainable maintenance of important rural areas in Europe. These models are the paradigm of ecological, social and economic sustainability. These models fight against depopulation in rural areas and have a positive impact in animal wellbeing and human health compared to other non-extensive models. These models supply consumers with quality food products in many EU territories and promote the sustainable development of our society.

The future of such livestock exploitation models, currently under threat due to the effects of climate change and administrative barriers (droughts, animal health problems, increase in parasites, administrative limitations for transhumance, etc...) depends on the availability and capacity of extensive Shepherds. But the problem is that it is increasingly difficult to find well trained shepherds that have the knowledge and experience to face all the aspects involved in extensive livestock shepherding. Shepherds are an ageing social group, the younger ones lack proper training, education and experience and nowadays there is no motivation to become a shepherd due to the low social standing and lack of a specific professional training offer and The shepherds – key actors and basis for extensive livestock – carry out innumerable functions in rural, disadvantaged and under populated areas.

Although they are an important element in rural societies, shepherds lack social recognition, and they don't have access in many cases to a well-structured, methodical and validated training for the sustainable management of extensive exploitations. The project idea arises after a need analysis of the current situation, being the most important problems, among others:

- Difficulties to find professional shepherds.
- Lack of more structured and updated training and education offers adapted to current needs and threats, as well as adapted flexible training tools for current or future Shepherds.
- Lack of motivation to become a shepherd.

U4Shepherds seeks to improve and update the training offer for extensive shepherds taking into account current barriers (administrative mainly...) threads (new climate scenario and its consequences) and opportunities (ecological production trends, agro tourism, etc...) to ensure a sustainable maintenance of extensive livestock exploitations (economical, social and environmental) giving them tools to become resilient. The project will adapt the training methods (both for trainers and trainees) for a work-based learning taking into consideration current barriers and logistical problems for extensive shepherds (many

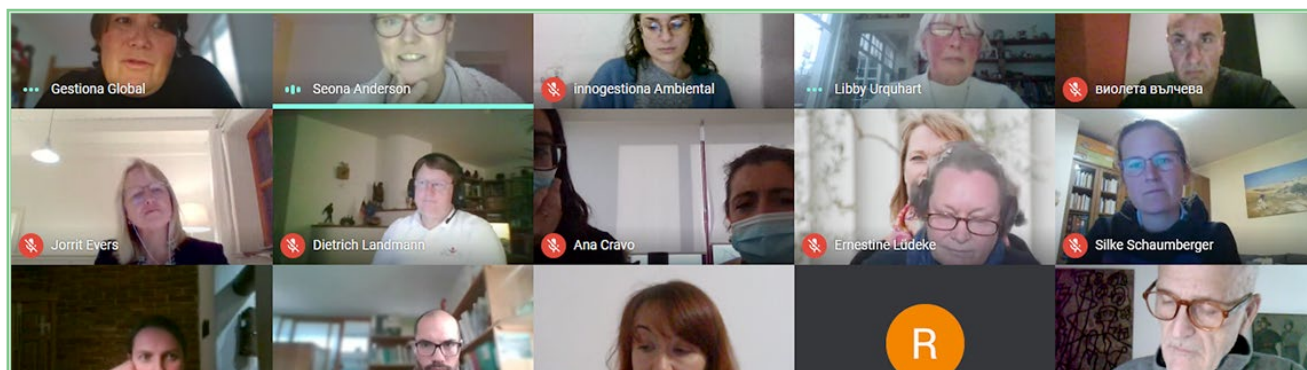
of them are distributed along rural isolated areas) in order to ensure the sustainability of the profession and of extensive livestock exploitations. Furthermore, the project will provide a training platform designed for extensive shepherds (not used to complicated interfaces or texts) and will promote the use of digital tools for training.

These objectives will be satisfied with the development of three IOs (New curricula for professional shepherds; New flexible training methodology for trainers; New on-line adapted training platform for extensive shepherds). Although Shepherds are the main objective of the project, we can say that trainers involved in the training of extensive shepherds are the key element for making possible the needed change in the training of professional shepherds, and therefore, trainers are the main target group of key project actions (IOs and training workshops).

This project faces a common problem of many rural European areas, especially in countries where extensive livestock models have an important presence and effect in local societies. Most part of these countries are represented in this project. The [EU4Shepherds partners](#) represent all actors needed to develop the project efficiently and to implement the results successfully, giving special importance to the link between VET entities and the needs of extensive livestock exploitations, in order to include the necessary curricula and methodologies for trainers to implement in a further phase a certifiable shepherd training course.

KICK-OFF MEETING OF THE EU4SHEPHERDS PROJECT

26/03/2021



The opening meeting of [EU4SHEPHERDS](#) was planned to take place in Spain, but has been held online on 15 February 2021 due to the Covid-19 health emergency.

Representatives of all the partners attended the opening meeting. It has been the best occasion to start working, planning activities and making the first fundamental decisions about the development of EU4SHEPHERDS Project.

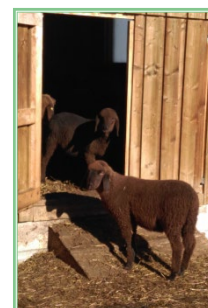
POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES OF SHEEP FARMING

16.05.2021



Austria has a high proportion of grasslands, especially in mountain areas. Even if cattle grazing is dominating, small ruminants like sheep are also important “landscape keepers”. Typical pastoralism in the sense of transhumance is rather the exception in Austria; sheep are mainly kept in (often extensive) pasture systems. With the increasing presence of predators like wolves, this kind of sheep husbandry is getting rather difficult, especially in remote alpine regions. Some other current challenges are the high share of sideline farms (often hobby sheep keepers), low profitability, rising land prices and difficult marketing of products like old sheep meat and wool. In contrary, possibilities arise in increasing demand for halal meat, the positive image of sheep farming in public perception concerning sustainability and animal welfare and the high potential of sheep as grassland converters with low environmental impact.

In order to meet the challenges constructively and make use of the opportunities, appropriate educational offers are of utmost importance. The offer for training and further education in the overall field of sheep farming is very wide-ranging in Austria. On the one hand, there are different agricultural schools as Agricultural and forestry professional schools (LFS, 3 years) or secondary agricultural and forestry schools (HBLA, 5 years, and universities. On the other hand, further education is offered through various adult education institutions. The most important player in the non-formal sector is The Rural Training Institute LFI, which is the further education organisation of the Chamber of Agriculture. Additional providers are Bio Austria, the Rural Youth Organisation or the the Association for Sustainable Animal Husbandry Austria.



Many offers focus on the sheep and goat sector together and are specialised in specific topics such as feeding, health, husbandry, breeding but also processing of products.

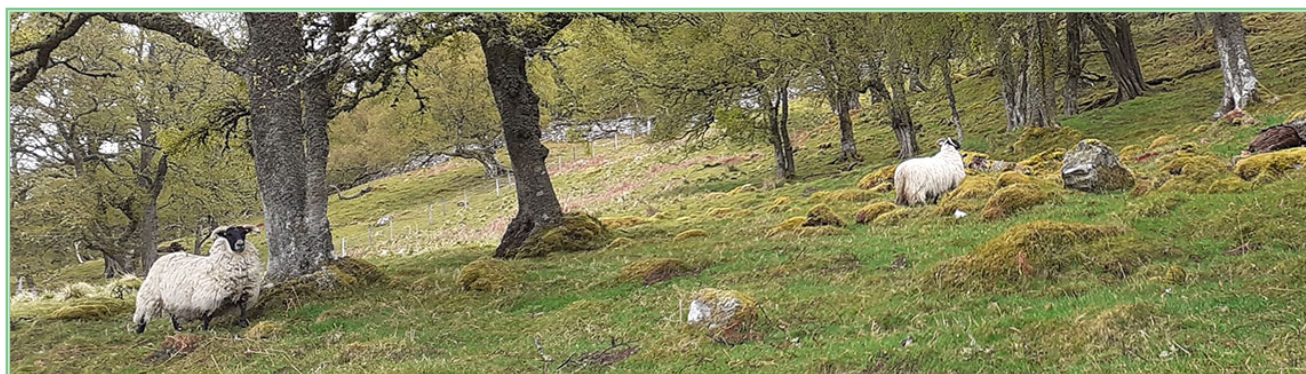
Currently there are 3 longer training courses in Austria, whereby one specialises in alpine pasture husbandry.

SCOTLAND HAS MORE SHEEP THAN PEOPLE, OVER 6.5 MILLION SHEEP, AND A WIDE RANGE OF SHEPHERDS, HABITATS, SHEEP BREEDS AND BUSINESS TYPES

30.05.2021



We have a range of training opportunities of different lengths and types for shepherds. There is a dedicated **Sheep Keeping course at Border College** and sheep keeping course units at Scottish Rural Colleges (SRUC) and Orkney College. There are a range of 1 and 2 day courses (formal and informal) available through LANTRA and other private training providers. These courses include shepherding for small holders, lambing, dog training and conservation grazing. There are strong professional and peer to peer networks such as the National Sheep Association, the Farm Advisory Service and specialist forums (generally online) including the Nibblers Forum of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust, the Pasture Fed Forum, the Mob Grazing Forum, Women in Regenerative Agriculture. The Farm Advisory Service run a mentoring service linking existing farmers to new entrants.



We interviewed a range of sheep keepers and sheep trainers and several themes related to training and shepherding were common to many of the shepherds. Many of our respondents did not have formal training but learned from family members or existing shepherds but maintained strong links with professional and peer networks. We asked which elements should be central to shepherd vocational training and these included business and direct marketing training, habitat and biodiversity management including incorporating agroforestry, genetics and breeding, digital record keeping, sheep dog training, health management. Most of our respondents discussed the problems of wool, and the lack of rural abattoirs was identified several times as an ongoing problem. The costs of shearing are often more than the price of fleeces and there is a desire to have a more strategic and workable model for using the abundant wool produced. Most discussed the barriers to entering or continuing in the profession including the low income related to the high costs and high risk, and the barriers to accessing training

were costs, travel from remote rural areas and finding cover to look after animals to allow them to take part in training.



Perhaps one of the less known factors about shepherding in Scotland is the number and range of female shepherds. There is also a women in agriculture training fund to support training of new shepherds and farmers. The Farm Advisory Service (FAS) has case studies about women in agriculture, such as Dawn Desto-McKinnon (<https://www.fas.scot/downloads/women-in-agriculture-case-study-dawn-desto-mackinnon/>). FAS also run a shepherd mentoring scheme matching up new entrants with more experienced shepherds.

There are many innovative female shepherds in Scotland setting up new businesses, maintaining heritage traditions, and helping to conserve Scotland's biodiversity. Cara Cameron has set up a youth and new shepherd training centre up in Highland Scotland (Lochview Rural Training <https://lochviewruraltraining.co.uk/>). Charlotte Blackler has set up a sustainable local food business in Perthshire (Herb Majesty - <https://www.herbmajesty.co.uk/#/>). Liz Gaffney runs Heartfelt (<https://www.heartfeltbyliz.com/#/>), keeping sheep and processing the wool herself for a range of products & creative activities. Scotland has its very own conservation shepherdess, Laura Cunningham, who runs a mobile flock to help conserve the biodiversity of key habitats. (<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/how-to-help/make-a-donation/appeals/flying-flock>).

Along with many parts of the world, online communication and training in Scotland has increased significantly during the pandemic. Jasmine Grant has set up an online sheepdog training course (<https://www.facebook.com/braehillor/>).

LOWER SAXONY SHEEP FARMING, QUOTED FROM: DR. JOHANNE WAßMUTH, LOWER SAXONY MINISTRY FOR FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, HANOVER

02.06.2021



Linen sheep in Göttingen. These animals graze the meadows on a leash. The Leine flows through the university town of Göttingen. The animals graze on the edges of the water in an environmentally friendly and nature-friendly manner.

“In **Lower Saxony** there are around 210,000 sheep in around 10,450 farms. The herdbook breeding is of particular importance, taking a leading position in a national comparison with over 500 farms and more than 21,000 herdbook animals. Four extremely active and successful sheep breeding associations have contributed to the fact that Lower Saxony breeding animals are in demand all over the world today. The East Frisian milk sheep in particular have become a real export hit. The average herd size in sheep farming in this country is just under 20 animals per herd. However, this number hardly reflects the actual situation. It can be assumed that around 80% of all farms only keep very small herds and that the majority of sheep are counted in significantly larger herds.

One of the most important tasks of our many sheep breeds is coastal protection and landscape maintenance in the various regions of Lower Saxony. They shape rural areas and preserve landscapes and biotopes. Dike maintenance is of particular importance here, which would be inconceivable without sheep farming. The sheep thus make an important contribution to society in maintaining and shaping our diverse landscapes. At the same time, many of the local sheep farmers have committed themselves to preserving genetic diversity. Among the 40 or so breeds that can be found in Lower Saxony there are many that are threatened with extinction and can only be preserved as a living cultural heritage for our society through the great commitment of the sheep farmers. Sheep farming in Lower Saxony has a wide range of different products available to consumers. Whether it is the high-quality lamb, which is often served as fillet or roast at Easter, or the versatile milk that we enjoy processed as cheese or pure, or the warm woolen sweater that we appreciate so much on cold days: these are significant achievements in sheep farming. High product quality and regional production in sheep farming stand for animal and environmentally friendly production that deserves our appreciation.”

The **Lower Saxony State Sheep Breeding Association** (in existence since 1916) has 1400 sheep breeders as members - the smallest farm has 4 sheep and the largest has a herd of 2500 sheep. The association represents the interests of its members in advice and support, and it regularly offers advanced training. The training for young shepherds takes place in Triesdorf and Halle. In Lower Saxony there is no longer any special training for shepherds. There are 0 trainees from Lower Saxony and will be trained in Halle. For our research we looked for holdings in very special and extreme locations in **Northern German**.



Sheep with a sea view on the dike on the south coast of the island of Sylt. These sheep serve to protect the dykes from flooding. You operate dyke maintenance through browsing and representation. The vegetation is very special and the salt content of the North Sea makes the meat of the animals a specialty

EU4SHEPHERDS IS THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL PROJECT OF ADIRAM

05.06.2021



Pastoralism is very important in the mountain territory of **Serra da Estrela**, and this project is a very innovative way to promote this activity that is the base of an important mountain ecosystem.

In the workshop of April 28th, ADIRAM presented the first draft of the analysis of the Portuguese reality regarding the training offer related to pastoralism. ADIRAM has been studying the portuguese reality of pastoralism training and the current panorama is still very ineffective.

Despite having a large agrarian training school system with a good territory coverage, the current curricular offer is mainly dedicated to form livestock breeding technicians and engineers, and not

extensive shepherds. Within the formal system, there is a lack of a specific offer to form who wants to work as an extensive shepherd.

The most related available options are the **Master of Mediterranean Agro-Silvo-Pastoralism** in a Polytechnic School and the Short Cycle course on **Mediterranean Farming in a Polytechnic school**.

The most interesting offers in Portugal are available only in the non-formal system, the recently created projects of “School of Shepherds”: one in the Central Portugal and the other in the North of Portugal. The first one has a more traditional approach of pastoralism, under the supervision of 2 polytechnic schools, and offer classes such as food management or how to drive a tractor. The second option of School of Shepherd has a much more modern approach, with innovative classes such as Rural tourism or Business Planing.

After the workshop, ADIRAM has been interviewing shepherds, local breeds associations, the leaders of the school of shepherds and academic experts on pastoralism. For instance, one of the most interesting experts we have talked to is Dr. *Martinho*, an university expert who has several works about pastoralism. In the 1970s he was responsible for the (only) survey about pastoralism in **Serra da Estrela**, gathering several and important data about their way of living, transhumance, pastures, etc, by interviewing 638 sheep and goats shepherds. This data is still nowadays the only trustworthy source of information about shepherds we have in Serra da Estrela.

Queijeiras

Finally we give you details of ADIRAM latest project, known as “**Queijeiras – Female Cheese makers in Serra da Estrela**”.



Who are the females who make cheese in the Serra da Estrela territory in Portugal? They are women, mothers, rural entrepreneurs, family business managers, fighting and holding a unique ancestral knowledge – the secret of cheese production in this region of Portugal.

ADIRAM is very proud to announce that we want to empower the true ambassadors of the Serra da Estrela territory by offering a training and personal/professional development course specifically designed for these women. We want to give them the skills to be effective entrepreneurs and to be the rural sustainable development leaders.

To this end, this project called “As Queijeiras” includes the sale of a beautiful Burel cape, with a design inspired by a cheese, whose sales will fund the course; and also the production of a book that will perpetuate the knowledge of female cheese makers.

The Burel Cape will be produced with a 100% natural portuguese textile called Burel, made with portuguese wool and handmade in Manteigas. There are several sizes and colors including a kid cape.

We already have 30 women that are on board with this project, but we plan to empower as much women as possible! If you are interested in helping these women, either by ordering a Burel Cape, the book or simply to support a training course spot for these women, let us know!

www.queijeiras.pt (will be available in english very soon)

FIRST WORKSHOP OF THE EU4SHEPHERDS PROJECT

10.06.2021



The partners of the EU4SHEPHERDS project held last 28th April the workshop C1: **"Analysis of Training needs and barriers for an updated curricula for professional shepherds"**, coordinated by the partner **FUNDACION MONTE MEDITERRANEO (FMM)**, and carried out online due to the current health situation.

The data presented and discussed by the partners were:

- Diagnosis of the current situation of VET for pastoralism and extensive livestock farming in the partners' countries.
- The existing training offer related to extensive livestock farming in each country.
- General aspects of the interviews carried out with owners of extensive sheep and / or shepherds.
- SWOT analysis.
- Needs detected in each country: training needs related to production techniques; training needs derived from the management of extensive livestock farms; training needs derived from the valorisation of production; training needs derived from the application of new technologies; training needs derived from the regulatory framework and other training needs derived from the surveys carried out.

The information presented will be used for the following stages of the Intellectual Output number 1: "Shepherds Curricula".

AGROM-RO IS NOW A WELL-RECOGNISED TRAINING CENTRE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

12.06.2021



AGROM-RO ASSOCIATION was founded in 1999 as part of the cooperation program between Switzerland and Romania. AGROM-RO is now a well-recognised training centre in rural development and is authorized as a vocational training provider by the NCAT.

The objectives of the AGROM-RO programme are to improve the productivity of agricultural households and to improve efficiency in the domestic domain.

Through its activities, which are highly needed on the ground, it aims at giving a new dynamic impulse to the Romanian education system in the field of rural development. During its development, the AGROM-RO Association oriented itself towards the most stringent problems of Romanian rural development, namely the limited knowledge and the minimal experience of the majority of households in how to deal/act in a market economy.

AGROM-RO in collaboration with Mountain Shepherd Federation of Romania and County Association of Mountain Sheep Breeders - A.J.C.M.O „Dealul Negru” from Bistrita Nasaud took all the necessary steps, (elaboration of documentation, obtaining approvals) for introducing in COR the occupations Mountain shepherd, Mountain sheep breeder, Mountain sheepman and Mountain herder.

The introduction in COR and then in NC gave to sheep breeders the possibility to certified qualification courses in the occupation of Mountain shepherd (720 hours in total – Level 2 qualification), Mountain sheep breeder (360 hours in total – Level 1 Qualification) and Mountain shepherd (120 hours in total – Initiation Level).

Within the project “EU4Shepherds” for the “ANLYSIS OF THE ACTUAL SITUATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAINING (VET) AND OTHER TRAINING IN EXTENSIVE LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND PROFESSIONAL SHEPHERDING” the territory proposed by AGROM-RO ASOCIATION for carrying out this analysis at the country level is the mountainous area of Romania, which comprises 27 counties¹, located in 7 Development Regions.

¹ ORDER on the approval of the criteria for classification and the list of localities in the mountain area, MARD No. 97 of 19.02.2019 and MRDPA No. 1332 of 14.03.2019.

In 2018, the Mountain Law was adopted, which provides both for adapting the initial training to the specific requirements of economic, agricultural and zootechnical activities, the environment and the mountain-type way of life, as well as to encourage and support continuous training for farmers and other relevant occupational categories².

According to the Classification of Occupations in Romania³ occupations in the field of livestock farming are included in major group 6 - *Skilled workers in agriculture, forestry and fisheries*, with the following divisions and subdivisions:

- **6121 Livestock farmers for milk and meat production:** 612101 shepherd (sheepman), 612102 breeder-carer of domestic animals for milk and meat production, 612103 feed shredder, 612104 skilled livestock worker, 612105 cattle breeder, 612106 pig breeder, 612107 pig “mamos”, 612108 mountain shepherd, 612109 mountain shepherd, 612110 mountain sheep breeder, 612111 mountain herder.
- **6130 Farmers and skilled workers in vegetable crops and livestock farmers:** 613001 farmer in vegetable production, 613002 farmer in animal production, 613003 farmer in vegetable crops and breeder
- **6320 Livestock farmers whose production is intended for their own consumption**
- **6330 Mixed farm workers whose production is intended for their own consumption**



The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) estimates that in Romania more than 20%⁴ of all jobs that will be created by 2030 will be in the agricultural sector.

Vocational education and training in the agricultural field in Romania can be achieved both through **initial⁵ vocational training** and **continuous vocational training**.

Initial vocational training is provided through vocational and technical education and regulated by the National Education Act No. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions and implementing regulatory acts.

² Law of the mountain, no.197 of 20 July 2018

³ COR ISCO 08, source: <http://www.mmuncii.ro/j33/index.php/ro/2014-domenii/munca/c-o-r?id=46:cor-isco>

⁴ CEDEFOP 2018 Skills Forecast Romania

⁵ Romanian Vocational Education and Training Strategy for 2016-2020

Continuous vocational training, is post-formal to initial vocational training, ensures lifelong learning and is carried out in two dimensions⁶:

1. **Vocational training through qualification, initiation, training, specialisation programmes** (organised by authorised vocational training providers under the law) and **workplace training** (organised by employers for their own staff);
2. **Assessment of competences obtained by non-formal means** (through competence assessment centres, authorised under the law).

VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAINING AND OTHER TRAINING IN EXTENSIVE LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND PROFESSIONAL SHEPHERDING IN SPAIN

17/06/2021



In **Spain**, Vocational Educational Training has an offer of more than 160 different degrees belonging to 26 different professional families. Each training cycle is made up of different theoretical and practical modules that facilitate learning and putting the acquired knowledge into practice.

Within the Agrarian professional family you can find the following levels:

- Basic Vocational Training (from 14 to 16 years old).
- Middle Grade Training (16-18).
- Higher Degree Training (18-20).

Some of this official diplomas have European recognition (**Europass Diploma Supplement**), for example: higher technician in livestock and animal healthcare, technician in livestock farming production and technician in agro-ecological production.

Vocational Training is adapted to the needs of each student and, like other studies, such as university studies, is offered in different modalities: face-to-face, distance learning and with free exams.

Despite this varied offer of vocational training qualifications and Spain being a country with a great tradition in transhumance, also well documented, there is no specific training in extensive livestock farming.

On the other hand, in contrast to this whole panorama of non-specialized regulated training, there is a varied offer of courses related to extensive livestock farming, but none of them within the scope of formal academic training. Many entities, both private and public (agricultural unions, environmental organizations, agricultural universities, etc.) organize short-term training activities (courses, talks, conferences, seminars, etc.). The topics that are most offered in this type of non-formal training activities are: sustainable pasture management, genetic improvement, livestock routes and transhumance, etc.

There are also several shepherd schools in different parts of Spain where students receive imminently practical and dual training: theory (depending on the case, from 80 to 288 hours) and practical training on farms (from 600 to 900 hours). The objectives pursued in these schools are: to understand the extensive livestock system, to acquire skills and training in ways of teaching, tutoring and evaluating students when they are in practice.

Cesefor and **Monte Mediterráneo Foundation**, as partners of the Eu4shepherds project, have conducted interviews with transhumant shepherds to diagnose the training needs that exist within their profesión in Spain. All the people interviewed would be willing to teach and share their knowledge and experience in the trade, working directly with those who need to learn. All of them have the common feeling that their trade is being lost mainly due to the lack of generational change, the depopulation of the rural areas and the difficulties and lack of support.

In Spain, there are some trades, such as rancher, in which the profession can be exercised without the need to prove prior professional training. These circumstances do not favor the implementation of new forms of professional training, it is very difficult to implement training if to exercise a trade does not require prior training accredited with a degree.

An example to implement the training is similar to what happens with the courses of incorporation to the agricultural or ecological sector where the certificates allow obtaining a subsidy. Any farm from a certain size and that wants to access subsidies should have a mandatory professional training certificate.

FUNDACIÓN MONTE MEDITERRÁNEO

21/06/2021



Fundación Monte Mediterráneo (www.fundacionmontemediterraneo.com) is an environmental foundation founded in 1994 dedicated to:

- Organic and sustainable management of a 700 hectare agro-sylvo pastoral “Dehesa” in Andalusia
- Direct marketing of their products (www.ceribeco.com)
- Biodiversity and conservation projects on the farm
- Training Center on the farm
- Investigation projects – mainly on ink disease
- Regional development projects
- Social projects

Since 2009, FMM is engaged in transhumance – moving sheep from Andalusia and Extremadura to the mountain pastures in the León, Burgos and Palencia provinces is not only a tradition which is thousands of years old or an intelligent use of natural resources, but also bears in it the secret of biodiversity. This way of livestock keeping is extremely endangered and should be revived. Fundación Monte Mediterráneo works to reinforce it so that there will be a positive impact on all natural processes and species – especially endangered ones.

In the transhumance the following occurs: the Mediterranean dehesa recovers since it is not trampled nor cropped to the last blade of grass and is prepared to absorb the first rainfalls of the fall properly. The labor on the dehesa, due to the absence of the sheep, is less and the workers deal better with the high temperatures in summer.

On the mountain pastures in the León, Burgos and Palencia provinces the bush encroachment is reduced producing grazing land – both measure reduce the wildfire risk. The bush encroachment changes landscapes and leads to a reduction of biodiversity which affects most the less adaptable species, like the Brown Bear, the Cantabrian Capercaillie or the Bearded Vulture.

The sheep do their “natural job” eating fresh green grass, fertilizing naturally and creating pasture land. And incidentally, the sheep do not need any concentrated feed which reduces the CO₂-footprint as well as the use of water and transportation – consequently, transhumance is an activity which is independent from the international market. Seasonal employment in deprived areas is created and old professions can be rehabilitated and integrated into modern, ecological processes.

Besides the importance of the transhumance for livestock breeding we have the opportunity to appreciate a profession which has molded Spain for centuries accumulating an enormous knowledge and experience concerning nature and livestock breeding and is threatened to disappear. Therefore training and education programs are part of the project.



Extensive pasture farming with sheep and goats essential for the conservation of species and ecosystems in Spain, is at a crossroad which will be decisive for Spain's nature and natural processes in the future.

OVINNOVA (www.goovinnova.org) is, up to now, the largest project in scope referring to sheep: in 2021 13.800 sheep have been moved – either by truck or walking 34 days and 580 km on the livestock trails – from South to North within the project.

The acquisition and training of new and young shepherds is a central issue in OVINNOVA.

FOURTH MEETING OF EU4SHEPHERDS

26.06.2021



The fourth online project meeting took place last June. The main topic of the meeting was to remind the partners about the necessary documentation for the justification of the project in the first period. The new actions to be carried out in the coming months were also presented.

Next Transnational meeting in Austria

Some partners may not be able to travel at the end of August due to Corona's restrictions, but some of the members have raised the possibility that it may be possible to travel in September. Therefore, after a consensus of all members, it has been decided to move the date of the workshop to **8-10 September**.

NEWSLETTER 1 · EU4SHEPHERDS PROJECT

June 2021