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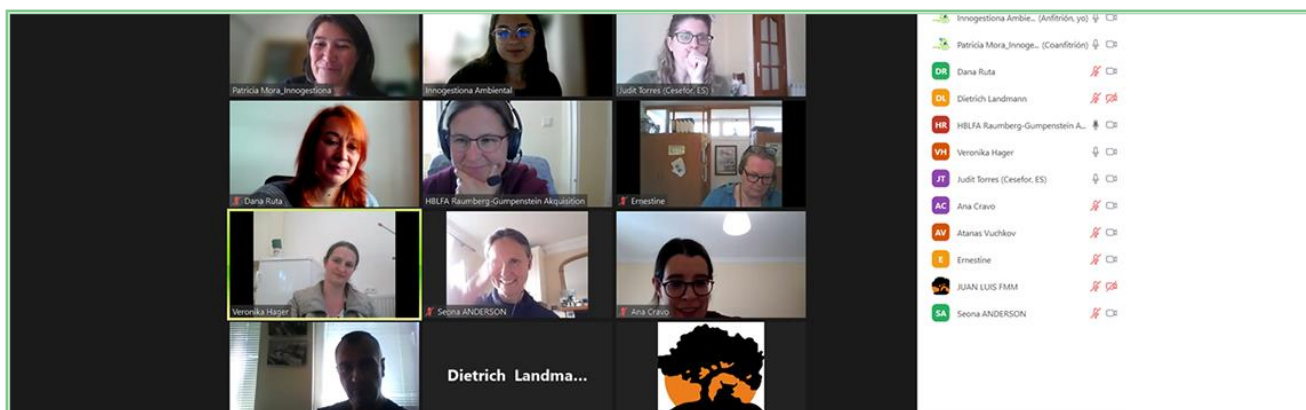


## August 2022

# NEWS

## 8TH EU4SHEPHERDS COORDINATION MEETING

22.05.2022



An extraordinary EU4Shepherds meeting was held on 12 May. Besides following up on all the tasks of the project, the meeting also aimed to specify the procedure for the presentation of the contents of the Shepherds Curricula in the training platform that is being developed.

Progress of each task will be presented at the follow-up meeting that will coincide with the C3 workshop in Austria in July. The C3 workshop will focus on **"Innovative, flexible and adapted training methods"**. Its aim is to present and propose training methods for flexible training of pastoralists and to identify the profiles of trainers for such training. There will also be visits to nearby organisations with interesting good practices. The participants of this workshop have knowledge of pastoralism and experience in training.

## C3 WORKSHOP: "INNOVATIVE FLEXIBLE ADAPTED TRAINING METHODS" AND MANAGEMENT MEETING IN AUSTRIA

22/07/2022



From 5 to 7 July 2022 a new Management and Coordination Meeting and C3 Workshop took place at Agriculture Research and Education Centre (AREC) Raumberg-Gumpenstein, Irtding-Donnersbachtal (Austria).

Both events were attended by all partners: the hosts (AREC and University College for Agrarian and Environmental Pedagogy, UCAEP, Austria), AGROM-RO (Romania), ARCHNETWORK (Scotland), Fundación Monte Mediterráneo (Spain), Cesefor (Spain), Agrarian Chamber of Lower Saxony (Germany). ADIRAM (Portugal) and Agricultural University Plovdiv (Bulgaria) participated online.

Experts also participated and provided valuable input to the workshop.

**The Coordination Meeting** focused on updating the project justification, the presentation of the next steps and the presentation of the deadline for the intellectual outputs.



During the **C3 Workshop**, training methods for a flexible training of shepherds were discussed, taking into account the barriers identified in the IO1 of the project (“Shepherds Curricula”). Participating experts and partners made proposals for the definition of the pastoralist trainer’s profile.



Part of the facilities of the Federal Institute for Agricultural Education and Research Raumberg-Gumpenstein



Also within the workshop, two visits took place: one to the facilities of one of the host partners, AREC, Raumberg-Gumpenstein, and one to LFS - Grabnerhof, Technical College for Agriculture, Forestry and Alpine Livestock, Admont.

During the visit to **AREC**, the participants were able to learn about the organisation’s research lines aimed at optimising pasture production, guaranteeing the biodiversity of alpine pastures, animal welfare, etc.

7 July was reserved for a visit to **LFS – Grabnerhof**, which is a technical school of agriculture, forestry and alpine livestock. Students are trained in these disciplines in a holistic way, from production in the field or in the forest until the final products reach the consumer. It is a 3-year vocational secondary school, aimed

at acquiring theoretical and practical skills. Practical training is particularly important and characteristic of Grabnerhof. It takes place in 3 focus groups:

1. Agriculture and forestry
2. Food processing and sales
3. Preparation for commercial network learning with leading companies in the region.



Part of the LFS - Grabnerhof facilities.

On the afternoon of the 7th we also visited a mountain area where this training centre is developing a **project to protect sheep from the wolf**. They are testing technical herd protection with typical herd size (en Styria average 20 animals/herd):

- Paddock grazing operation for sheep and goats at the beginning of the grazing period.
- Free grazing with night protection with a fence on the high-altitude areas in the second half of the grazing period for the sheep.

Visits were really enriching, obtaining reference data and relevant information for the development of the IO2 (“Guideline for trainers”).



Free grazing with night protection with a fence on the high-altitude areas

# “ Testimonials...

08.08..2022

Through 7 interviews we get to know a little better the day-to-day work of shepherds in different countries. Here are some of their testimonies.



**Christina Ziegerhofer. Age: 38. Country: Austria**

How long have you been working as a herder? *I worked two summers as a shepherd on the mountain pasture. Before that I worked eight summers on different cow and goat mountain pastures.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *I have no training in pastoralism.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *What I like most about being a shepherd is working with animals in nature. I also love the physical challenge.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *Shepherd is not my profession. I would suggest that there be more training and that the work be better paid. Also the accommodation for the shepherds should be a little more comfortable.*



**Georgi Varshilov and Dimitar Varshilov. Age: 46/21. Country: Bulgaria**

How long have you been working as a herder? *Our family is represented by three generations of shepherds. We are descended from old shepherd ancestors and we continue to raise sheep in now days. My grandfather raised sheep, my father, and now I and my son continue to raise our sheep.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism?

**Georgi:** *We learned from our father and grandfathers who raised sheep. I have been among them since I was a child and I know very good the work and life of the shepherd*

**Dimitar:** *I have been with the sheep since I was a child and I help my father and grandfather. I learned from them. I am currently studying for a bachelor of Zooengineering.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *I have liked the shepherd's way of life since I was a child. we are three generations of shepherds and our family has made a living from sheep farming. This way of life is in our blood. I can't do another job, and I don't want another job to. I like being with the herd in the mountains. I love the peace when I am with the sheep in the summer pasture. I like listening to the bells of sheep, and the barking of the dogs. I like to observe the behavior of dogs. I want my sheep to be the best, my flock to be the best.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *I would like to change the state policy regarding sheep farming and in particular towards extensive sheep farming. The bureaucracy and state administration in our industry are killing us. The rental of pastures for our animals is becoming increasingly difficult. I want to be changed the market situation in Bulgaria in terms of purchase prices of sheep products and its free sale from the farm.*

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**Jonas Dankert.** Age: 34. Country: Germany

How long have you been working as a herder? *I have been working as a shepherd for 11 years.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *I did an apprenticeship as a gardener. I acquired the knowledge about sheep farming in several internships on other farms. In addition, I have completed a course on the slaughter of sheep.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *What I love about shepherding is the closeness to nature.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *The danger posed by the wolf must finally be taken seriously and the sheep farms must be better protected from the wolf.*

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**Ana Teresa Matos.** . Age: 29. Country: Portugal

How long have you been working as a herder? *After attending the School of Shepherds in 2019/2020, I created my nature conservation project, so more or less 4 years ago. Last year, in 2021, I bought my first animals and started shepherding then, on my own. I have now 40 animals of the local breed Bordaleira Serra da Estrela.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *When I was a child I used to come to the mountains with my family, and it triggered my desire to work on nature conservation fields. So I have a Biology degree, a post-graduation in Ecology and Environmental Management and a forest engineering master degree. I also attended the School of shepherds in the Agrarian School of Viseu.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *The daily feeling that I am leaving a better and more sustainable world for the next generation. Also watching the birth of sheeps is magical, in the past week I had a beautiful little female lamb, the first one of 2022 and I'm so happy for that.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *We need more cases like mine, I moved from Lisbon (Mafra) to Casais de Fôlgosinho (Gouveia), in the mountains of center of Portugal, and started my nature conservation project, without waiting for any support. People should be encouraged to become shepherds through training opportunities such as the School of Shepherds.*

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**Ciucanu Nicolae.** Age: 48. Country: Romania

How long have you been working as a herder? *For about 35 years, I have been both a shepherd and a sheep breeder. I currently own about 200 sheep as an Authorized Natural Person.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *Yes - Mountain Shepherd*

Qualification course, Level 2, 720 hours (November 2014-May 2015) organized in Asău, Romania

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *The pleasure of shepherding them. I have been attached to this occupation since I was a child. I like to see them grazing, drinking water, how the lambs romping...*



**Charlotte Blacker.** Age: -. Country: Scotland

How long have you been working as a herder? I was given four lambs in 2013 to help keep the grass down around our house. From this I have developed a flock of around 30 breeding ewes and started my own free range meat business with sheep, pigs and poultry. ([www.herbmajesty.co.uk](http://www.herbmajesty.co.uk))

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *No formal training. I worked closely with my neighbour who has a commercial flock and helped with sheep selection, lambing and medication. There 9 was no online training when I started out but I am a member of Facebook groups like "women in agriculture" to share skills. I attended an Erasmus+ course on agropastoralism in Spain in 2018.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *My favourite time is definitely lambing. It is a tiring and sometimes sad time when you loose an animal but it is also the best time when you get to see new life and to see the lambs thrive and grow.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *To have access to local rural or mobile abattoirs which are small, humane, and less stressful for the animals. Also to be part of a smallholders collective especially for access to small quantities of pharmaceutical products and machinery*



**Carlos Diez Roldán.** Age: 53. Country: Spain

How long have you been working as a herder? *Since I was a child. With 13 years I was all alone in the mountain meadows with a herd for 2 months.*

Have you received any training in pastoralism? *No, just learning from parents and older professionals and family members.*

What do you like best or most about being a shepherd? *Mountains, being in the mountains, the tranquility, observing the animals.*

What would you like to change about your profession? *Nothing, everything is fine nowadays. Nothing to do with the conditions we had when I was a child and a young man.*

## NEWSLETTER 3 - EU4SHEPHERDS PROJECT

August 2022