



FASST

Formazione per Agricoltura Sociale e Sviluppo Territoriale

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IO2 - Capacity Gap Assessment

Final Report



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Introduction

Social Farming (SF) is the practice of using farming and agriculture to provide educational services and social care to vulnerable groups, like people with disabilities (mental and physical), people with addiction (alcohol, drugs, gambling), elderly, convicts, etc.

Social Farming is reshaping various dimensions of European economy and society, serving many purposes:

1. Inclusion of disadvantaged groups
2. Educational and occupational opportunities for people at the margin of the labor market
3. Land and rural recovery
4. Eco-sustainability of farming and agricultural produce

Social Farming has a great unexplored and unexploited potential for social inclusion, employability and rural development. Such potential is undermined by the lack of a coherent regulatory framework and definition at EU and national levels. Very few EU Member States have a regulatory framework in place.

The situation is exacerbated by the lack of structured platforms and networks to share good practices across the EU. In sum, Social Farming in Italy and Europe is undermined by:

- => lack of training resources specifically designed for and targeted to social farming
- => lack of structured network for exchange of case studies and good practices
- => fragmentation in practices, regulation and definitions

Against this background, FASST project will develop Social Farming Open Educational Resources (OPEN and FREE available training).

This document describes the findings of "Intellectual Output 2 - Capacity Gap Assessment".

Fasst Project

FASST brings together 9 partners from 5 European countries, to provide concrete answer to specific capacity needs in the field of Social Farming for Sustainable Territorial socio-economic development.

The project addresses the specific training needs in Social Farming identified by EU and National Papers:

1. Overview of Social Farming and Rural Development Policy in Selected EU Member States
2. Supporting policies for Social Farming in Europe

More recently, in 2016 a group of Members of the EU Parliament promoted a motion to define/redefine social farming at EU level with a view to creating new training opportunities in Social Farming.

These policy papers and initiatives confirm the socio-economic importance of Social Farming (social inclusion, economic empowerment, environmental protection) and at the same time recognise an immediate gap in the European Social Farming system as a whole: there is an immediate need to develop and deliver concrete training in support of social farming.

Partners represent the various dimensions of training in social farming, and will rely on their experience and expertise to ensure that FASST training is relevant, punctual and concrete.

FASST is structured along 4 Intellectual Outputs, aimed at designing, developing and testing innovative training courses tailored on specific needs of Social Farming entities, organisations, entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs-to-be, facilitators and stakeholders.

The Intellectual Outputs are the following:

- IO1 FASST OER Platform & Virtual Community
- IO2 Capacity Gap Assessment
- IO3 Content OER – Social Farming Training in 5 languages
- IO4 Target Groups trained in 5 Countries - Test and Validation of FASST

This document describes the findings of “Intellectual Output 2 - Capacity Gap Assessment”

IO2 - Capacity Gap Assessment

In "Intellectual Output 2 - Capacity Gap Assessment" partners directly involved and engaged the target group to better capture their specific needs for enhanced Social Farming to then develop the most appropriate training solutions.

The Capacity Gap Assessment for Social Farming of Intellectual Output 2 is aimed at outlining real and perceived barriers to Social Farming, qualitative and quantitative data and information on the real and perceived drivers and inhibitors to Social Farming (in their different dimensions of regulation, access to finance, design and implementation of Social Farming training and initiatives).

To identify specific skill needs in Social Farming, partners involved 127 target group representatives in the in-depth Capacity Gap Assessment in the countries represented within the Consortium.

IO2 is instrumental to provide crucial information to feed "Intellectual Output 3 - Content OER Social Farming Training in 5 Languages" about content, structure, delivery means, etc. on the basis of the specific needs of the target groups.

Specifically, in IO2 partners:

1. Set methodology to be followed by all partners, on the basis of what already agreed upon at preparation (i.e. general scale and scope, overall methodological approach, timing and sequencing of specific activities, etc.)
2. Identified sources and resource both for primary and secondary assessment
3. Defined criteria for selection of target groups to be involved
4. Defined literature and other sources for secondary assessment
5. Analysed documents: elements to be extrapolated in the benchmarking
6. Set of questions to be asked to respondents
7. Structured reporting and aggregation tools
8. Agreed upon a common schedule
9. Defined common tools for the analysis

All the partners have been involved in the assessment about the dynamics of Social Farming. This activity was structured along well defined and identified tasks, as follows:

- Primary Gap Assessment:
 - identify respondents: all partners involved their networks; partners reached a total of at least 127 target groups in the countries involved
 - involve respondents with various means: email, face-to-face, clipboards, internet/social media, associations, etc.

- Secondary Gap Assessment:

Partners carried out desk/secondary assessment to investigate existing literature, policy papers, analysis and diagnostics on Social Farming, skill sets and needs, capacity building needs, etc. to ensure coherence and accuracy in the consolidation of findings.

The combination of primary and secondary efforts will allow the partnership to perform assessment at European level on the dynamics of competitiveness and development of Social Farming at real European dimension.

Methodology

To perform the capacity gap assessment partners developed guidelines to set the common methodology to be followed by all partners, to identify sources and resource both for primary and secondary gap assessment.

Primary Gap Assessment:

- Primary assessment guidelines and approach:

The primary assessment was implemented through a questionnaire based survey, involving Social Farming stakeholders in the period between 1 January 2018 and 30 April 2018 in the countries involved (plus the research at EU level) in the FASST Project (Bulgaria, Italy, Macedonia, Spain, EU).

- Define criteria for selection of target groups to be involved:

The target groups to be involved in the primary research are all those stakeholders that participate in the domain of Social Farming. In the project, the "Social Farming ecosystem" participants are identified in the set of stakeholders represented by NGOs, associations, promotion agencies, public sector, business association, VET and AE providers that have an interest in Social Farming as providers, users, facilitators and policy makers/practitioners.

Other stakeholders interested in the phenomenon of Social Farming could be represented by the private sector and the Third Sector (civil society at large, organized in NGOs or associations, such as civic groups).

- Set of questions to be asked to respondents:

A questionnaire was prepared by all partners under the supervision of the Coordinator P.A.R.S. "Pio Carosi" Onlus as main research partner. The questionnaire was a streamlined set of 7 questions, closed-ended and multiple choice questions to guide respondents in answering technical questions pertaining to their views and perception about the specific training needs of the Social Farming system.

For ease of use, each partner translated the questionnaire from English into their national languages so as to ensure appropriate dissemination of the questionnaire and meaningful response rates. A total of 127 responses was collected by partners. A balanced number of responses have been gained, so as to have a quantitative homogeneous base for the comparison of findings.

Partners decided to administer the questionnaire through any means of choice: each partner was responsible to define the most suitable and appropriate means of administration of the questionnaire, and use any means at their disposal to disseminate the questionnaire and secure responses. Some options was:

- Face to face interviews
- Focus groups
- Distribution of the questionnaire in seminars, training sessions, and other events
- Web-based questionnaire (through institutional website or other web means)
- Email correspondence

Once completed, the questionnaire was managed by each partner that consolidated findings and provided a unique response to the main research partner P.A.R.S. "Pio Carosi" Onlus.

- Interview guidelines:
 - Schedule interviews in due time considering the busy schedule of respondents
 - Send reminder and link to project website
 - Always make reference to EC co-financing, Erasmus Plus and FASST Project
 - Have a standard follow-up / thank-you message to be sent right after the interview
 - Keep track of the interviews: assign codes to questionnaires, scan them and keep a digital copy
 - Keep record and report: time, date, place, name/position/contact info of respondent

Secondary Gap Assessment

- Define literature and other sources for secondary research / Identification of comparable scientific and policy documents:

Each partner carried out secondary desk research to identify documents able to provide useful insight in the identification of specific training and capacity gaps in the Social Farming sector, both at local and national levels in their respective countries. The distribution of labour in terms of geographical scope is that each partner covers its respective country with IHF asbl (www.ihfeurope.eu), the Belgian partner, carrying out research at EU level rather than limiting the research to Belgium.

In terms of the type of documents that partners was supposed to identify, those vary depending on many factors, i.e. publishing organisation, country, sector, etc. In general terms, partners was supposed to identify all those pieces of literature that can be of relevance for the purpose of the research – identify specific training and capacity needs for Social Farming as a whole – irrespective of their name or definition. Examples of names of literature resources could be:

- Paper
- Policy brief
- Memo
- Analysis
- Research findings

The FASST project is interested in those documents that relate to all the various facets and aspects of Social Farming from definitions to analysis of the phenomenon in any form.

- Guidelines on the type of documents Partners should look for:

Policy documents can go under various names (Policy document, memo, strategy, action plan, memorandum, programme document, etc). Irrespective of the name of the document, the key elements that guide FASST in the identification of the relevant documentation are:

- Source: any document emanated by public authority (at any level of governance, i.e. from municipality to national/federal agency), private sector (including business associations), third sector and NGOs and academia/universities
- Date of publication: no document dating earlier than 2012
- Theme: any policy document that shows relevance to Social Farming, agriculture for social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, and training needs in the sector
- Analysis of documents.:

After having created a reference list, each partner analysed documents to extrapolate elements that fed into the final report, in order to highlight the specific training needs of the Social Farming sector in the countries investigated and at EU level. The partners hence looked for those information, data, findings and narrative descriptions that support the definition of specific training needs of Social Farming as a system.

Social Farming in Europe

The EESC¹ - European Economic and Social Committee defines Social Farming as an innovative approach that puts together the multipurpose farming and the social services/health care at local level. It combines the use of agricultural resources and the multi-functional productive process with social and educational activities and services aimed at empowering groups of individuals with particular needs (people with a physical or mental disability; people seeking recovery from drug addiction, imprisonment, or failure in school; the elderly; abused women; unemployed and farms that are failing). Thanks to its capacity to generate economic activities that contribute to local and regional progress, the EESC considers the Social Farming territorial framework as a useful instrument for local and regional development.

Within Europe, there is no single definition of the term "Social Farming", which has spread in a variety of guises that have some similarities but also numerous differences in terms of approach, how they relate to other sectors, and funding. Moreover, there is no EU regulatory framework for Social Farming, but a lack of coordination can be noticed between the various policies or institutions concerned and the available statistics on the topic are few and partial.

Recently, FAO² - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nation noticed a consistently increasing in Social Farming initiatives among different contexts as well as in the European Union as a whole, where about 10.000 Social Farming initiatives has been recorded in 2015.

They can be distributed into four groups of countries:

1. Pioneer status – several projects are being developed that implement social farming concepts (Slovenia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria)

2. Moderately developed status – the number and diversity of social farming projects is growing, specific user networks are developing and consolidating but political backing and financial support is not yet guaranteed (Central Europe: France, Portugal, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Luxemburg). Two particular cases are also covered by this category:

2a. Ireland and the United Kingdom, where the actors are outside of public institutions and the management is the responsibility of civil society with private or foundation funding, or partial support from the public sector

2b. the Mediterranean countries (Italy, Spain), where the system is very fragmented: the public health system, increasingly weakened, is complemented by a private system that is expanding because of government policies. Moreover, the strong presence of the civil society means that some services are no longer offered by the public system, but they are delegated to non-profit organizations, in which families have often an active role. Nevertheless, in Italy Social Farming is largely spread.

¹ European Economic and Social Committee - <http://www.eesc.europa.eu>

² Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations - <http://www.fao.org/home/en/>

3. Well-developed status - In The Netherlands, health and healing sector has discovered social farming as source of therapy and employment; the statutory framework is well developed and public subsidies are becoming available.

4. Officially recognized status - Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden). More than 60% of the services are offered by a city or county and social farming initiatives are subsidized and supported by policy.

Concerning training provision, the EESC only points out that “particular attention should be devoted to the training of those involved – those with particular needs and benefiting from these services as well as service providers – in order to ensure a high level of quality and skills in social farming operations” and that Social Farming should be planned and implemented under the new 2014-20 rural development policy because of the positive results obtained.

Training are regularly organised by the public system in the countries of Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden) and Central Europe (Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, The Netherlands, and Luxemburg) for people hosted by Social Farms:

- Training in new marketable skills for those being released from penitentiary centres, young people who failed in school, and others needing to enter the workforce.
- Professional training for groups that had no previous opportunity to learn or who left school
- Training activities based in learning about farm life and production cycles (farm-school, school garden plots, etc.) for students with various problems who requires activities that facilitate learning in general and job skills or the trades in particular
- Cultural activities that re-assess and communicate rural values and customs as part of the social integration of groups at risk.

Training of practitioners involved/interested into Social Farming initiatives has been mainly addressed by some European projects developed during the last years:

Within the CARE-T-FARMS³ Project (Erasmus + Programme, 2017) three education and training modules will be developed in order to provide farm workers, farmers and practitioners from social care and psychiatry with the necessary tools to allow good design and implementation of social or care farming all over Europe:

- The "Care Farm Tutor" module, aimed at farmers, farm workers and secondary school students. It aims to give a basic understanding to learners of the day-to-day activities associated with tutoring people on farm activities in a social or care farm setting (European Qualifications Framework level 3-4)
- The "Care Farm Manager" module, directed towards farmers who have experience in hosting people on their farms and in being part of teaching activities in order to give them a detailed understanding of planning care farm activities on their farms, with a strong focus on suitability and accessibility for all participants (EQF level 4/5)
- The "Care Farm Social/Health Educator" module, designed for social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists who have experience in therapeutic help and assistance. This module will provide specialist

³ CARE-T-FARMS: Care Activities Raising Employment and Training on Farm Adaptation to Responsible and Mental-health Services (2017-1-PL01-KA202-038380) - <http://www.care-t-farms.eu/index.php/en/>

knowledge on planning social or care farm courses as an extra-clinical treatment or intervention (EQF level 5/6)

Partner countries: Poland, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Belgium

The REVITALIST⁴ project (Erasmus + Programme, Strategic Partnerships for vocational education and training) intends to take further the concept of Social Farming by elaborating a new curriculum based on a social and therapeutic method of education (Practical Skills Therapeutic Education, PSTE), by creating and collecting a pool of background materials and by establishing a network of professionals. The target groups of the new curriculum are social farm employees, and social and agricultural professionals.

Partner countries: Hungary, UK, Czech Republic, Italy

INCLUFAR – Inclusive Farming⁵ - Transfer of concepts, experiences, skills and training tools for Social Farming and eco-social inclusion (Leonardo da Vinci Programme, Transfer of Innovations, 2013) focuses on transferring experiences made with persons with special needs and with their work in social farming and with nature, taken from two already existing training programs – the German FAMIT and the Scandinavian “Baltic seminar”, which is tailored to qualify staff in Nordic countries including Russia, into other target countries which gathered little or no such kind of experiences at all.

Partner countries: Germany, Austria, Finland, Norway, Netherlands, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Estonia

DIANA - Disability In sustainable Agriculture: a New Approach for training of practitioners⁶, Leonardo da Vinci Programme, 2009) developed training tools for practitioners who work with mental or psychiatric disabled employed (or available to be employed) in agriculture. Throughout the development of innovation in the training addressed to tutors, trainers and practitioners, this research aims at filling a serious double gap: the lack of technical competencies of the trainers / tutors with psychological or educational background; the lack of educational and psychological competencies of agricultural technicians.

The project MAIE -Multifunctional Agriculture in Europe – Social and Organic Impacts on Organic Farms⁷ (LLP Programme) elaborated a curriculum for training farmers basic knowledge to start social services on their farms. The curriculum is a framework syllabus for qualification as a social farmer, resulted in a training package comprising 120 hours and available in 7 different languages (English, Bulgarian, Czech, Italian, Portuguese, Finnish and German). The syllabus meets the criteria of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, ECVET).

Partner countries: Italy, Finland, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Portugal, the Netherlands and Germany.

⁴ <http://www.revitalist.eu/>

⁵ Van Elsen Thomas, Herz Gerhard, Ehlers Hartwig, Schafer Winfried, Merckens Klaus, INCLUFAR – Inclusive Farming, A new educational approach in Social Farming, Proceedings of the 4th ISOFAR Scientific Conference, 2014; van ElsenThomas, European Leonardo Projects to educate Social Farmers: DIANA, MAIE and INCLUFAR, European Academy for the Culture of Landscape c/o University of Kassel, Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences, 2013

⁶ van ElsenThomas, European Leonardo Projects to educate Social Farmers: DIANA, MAIE and INCLUFAR, European Academy for the Culture of Landscape c/o University of Kassel, Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences, 2013

⁷ Multifunctional Agriculture in Europe, MAIE Project, Entrepreneurship in Social Farming' Curriculum Overview and Guidelines, 2013; <http://www.maie-project.eu/index.php?id=89&L=4%2Findex.php>; van ElsenThomas, European Leonardo Projects to educate Social Farmers: DIANA, MAIE and INCLUFAR, European Academy for the Culture of Landscape c/o University of Kassel, Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences, 2013

The key European stakeholders and actors in the Social Farming field are:

- The European Economic and Social Committee, Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment: it points out in its Work Programme 2018-2020 that “the social dimension of farming will also be stressed, e.g. by following up on the EESC's previous work on social farming”. It also drawn up in 2012 an opinion on “Social farming: green care and social and health policies”
- Euro+Med Agri-Social Forum: an association open to agricultural organisations, the social cooperation, to the no profit organisations within the EU area
- European Network for Rural Development: hub for exchange of information on how Rural Development policy, programmes, projects and other initiatives are working in practice and how they can be improved
- AGRI - European Parliament Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development
- ELO - European Landowners Organisation: headquartered in Brussels, is committed to promoting a sustainable and prosperous countryside and to increasing awareness relating to environmental and agricultural issues. ELO develops policy recommendations and programmes of action
- Social Farming National Networks and Social Farming National Forums
- International Network Platform and Competence Center for Social Farming (project MAiE, Multifunctional Agriculture in Europe – Social and Organic Impacts on Organic Farms, LLP): It provides a platform for linking Social Farming stakeholders: the research institutes, educational establishments and associations from Italy, Finland, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Portugal, the Netherlands and Germany

Primary Research

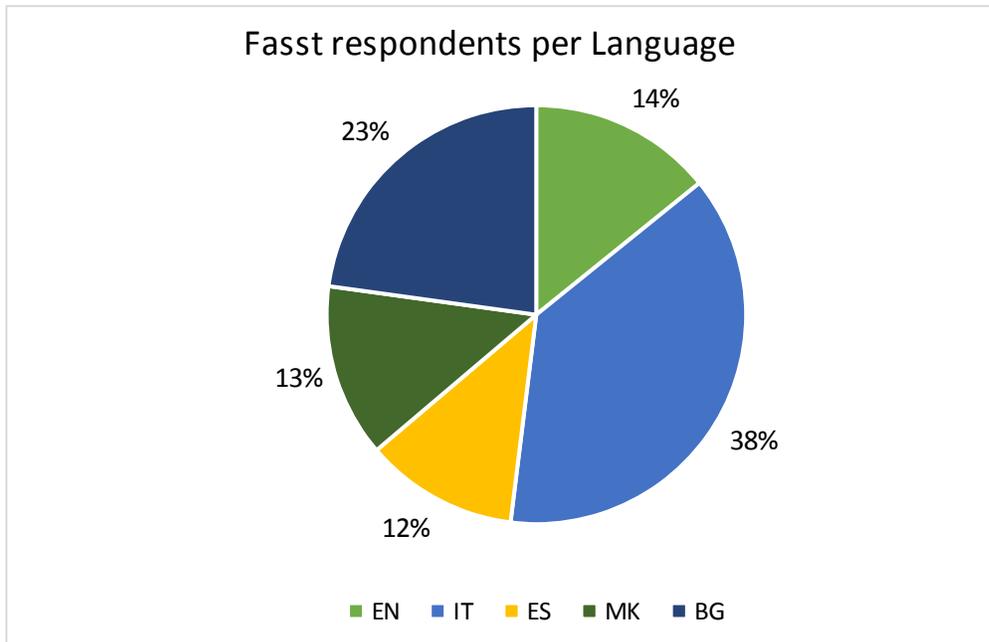
In this section, the primary research results are summarised and a brief comparative analysis among project Countries is provided.

Total Number of Respondents

A total of 123 stakeholders, Social Farming organisations, entrepreneur, entrepreneur-to-be and people interested or involved in the Social Farming ecosystem answered the FASST questionnaire providing relevant and valuable inputs to draw a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon in the Consortium countries and in Europe.

Specifically, the number of respondents is divided as follows:

Europe: 18
 Bulgaria: 29
 Italy: 48
 Macedonia: 17
 Spain: 15
Total: 127



A common trend emerged in all countries is that FASST target group showed extremely low responsiveness and an important lack of online presence (low use of email, outdated websites etc.). Hence, most of FASST partners choose to engage stakeholders face to face by directly contacting them or by attending forums/events.

For instance, the Belgian partner IHF asbl attended the Forum for the Future of Agriculture⁸ held in Brussels on 27th March 2018, P.A.R.S. "Pio Carosi" Onlus (Italy) attended the "Tipicità" Fair held in Fermo, Italy on 3rd-5th March 2018 and Cooperativa Sociale San Michele Arcangelo Società Cooperativa Agricola Onlus (Italy) took the chance to involve stakeholders during the FASST Multiplier Event held in Corridonia, Italy on 6th March 2018.

Some qualitative comments resulted from face to face interviews are that stakeholders showed a good understanding of Social Farming and they were very interested when engaged offline. In addition, Social Farming is seen as a good way to enhance participation and engagement in the farm sector as well as to foster farm sector development.

⁸ <http://www.forumforagriculture.com/>

Type of respondents

Europe:

- Social Farming Entrepreneur: 3
- Social Farming Entrepreneur-to-be: 3
- Social Farming Entity/Association: 2
- Social Farming Trainer: 1
- Social Farming Facilitator: 0
- Other: 9
- Total: 18

Bulgaria:

- Social Farming Entrepreneur: 0
- Social Farming Entrepreneur-to-be: 6
- Social Farming Entity/Association: 2
- Social Farming Trainer: 6
- Social Farming Facilitator: 0
- Other: 15
- Total: 29

Italy:

- Social Farming Entrepreneur: 10
- Social Farming Entrepreneur-to-be: 5
- Social Farming Entity/Association: 5
- Social Farming Trainer: 0
- Social Farming Facilitator: 4
- Other: 24
- Total: 48

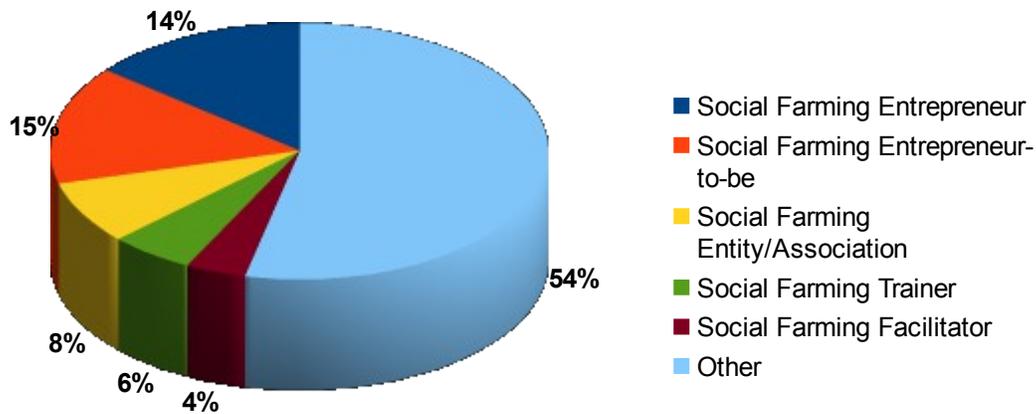
Macedonia:

- Social Farming Entrepreneur: 3
- Social Farming Entrepreneur-to-be: 3
- Social Farming Entity/Association: 1
- Social Farming Trainer: 0
- Social Farming Facilitator: 0
- Other: 10
- Total: 17

Spain:

- Social Farming Entrepreneur: 2
- Social Farming Entrepreneur-to-be: 2
- Social Farming Entity/Association:
- Social Farming Trainer: 0
- Social Farming Facilitator: 1
- Other: 10
- Total: 15

Type of respondents



With regard to the type of respondents, the majority of respondents ticked "Other". As expected, Social Farming is an already developing sector and people not always feel comfortable in defining their organisation/activities or do not want to limit the scope of their organisations to Social Farming, since they are active in Agriculture as a whole.

Indeed:

- In the European research, one respondent ticked "Other" because his organisation is active in the field of Agriculture and is currently implementing a project on Social Farming, and the same did other two organisations that are interested in starting Social Farming initiatives, confirming that Social Farming is seen as a branch of Agriculture and not as a stand-alone business/activity;
- In Bulgaria, slightly more than 50% chose the category "Other", coming from the Agriculture sector (businesses, policy makers, facilitators, consultants);
- In Italy, the high number of respondents in the category "Other" represents mainly people that shows an interest in Social Farming but don't recognized themselves in the categories proposed (some of them were social worker and university students);
- In Macedonia, 5 respondents ticking "Other" are prisons' operators carrying out or interested in Social Farming activities as a mean of social redemption;
- In Spain, 7 respondents did not feel comfortable in choosing the option Social Farming entity/association, and 3 respondents were Social Farming lovers that did feel "too much" defining themselves social farmers entrepreneurs-to-be.

Drivers and Inhibitors

This section is aimed at understanding whether or not FASST target group do engage in training activities and what are the causes for them not engaging in any training, so to identify drivers and inhibitors to attend training sessions. Qualitative analysis is carried out in aggregate form among all project countries, specific information on each country can be found in the Country Snapshots in annex.

- Did you engage in any training in the last 12 months?

EUROPE:

- Yes: 1
- No: 17
- Total: 18

BULGARIA:

- Yes: 16
- No: 13
- Total: 29

ITALY:

- Yes: 15
- No: 33
- Total: 48

MACEDONIA:

- Yes: 12
- No: 5
- Total: 17

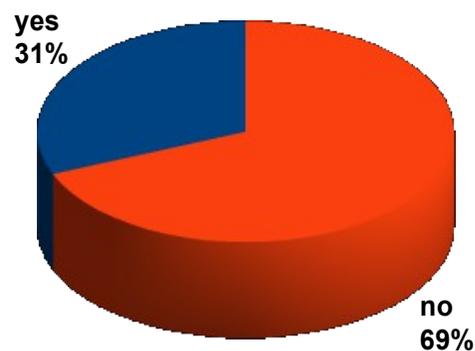
SPAIN:

- Yes: 7
- No: 8
- Total: 15

AGGREGATE:

- Yes: 48
- No: 75
- Total: 123

Training in the last 12 months



The analysis shows that Mediterranean countries (Italy and Spain) and European stakeholders did not engage in any training during the last 12 months.

"Limited training offered" in my area is the most relevant reason for not engaging in any training, confirming that Social Farming organisations, that are usually based in rural areas, have no or very limited access to training. This circumstance clearly constitutes a barrier not only for the Social Farming sector development but also for the whole Agriculture ecosystem growth and competitiveness.

The second most relevant reason for not engaging in any training is "Training offered not relevant to Social Farming", meaning that even those organisations who wish to undertake training activities are not able to find training solutions to suit their needs.

The third one is both direct/indirect too high. Social Farming activities are often carried out by very small realities, understaffed organisations and geographically isolated entities. Such circumstances make it very difficult for them to attend training courses, that are usually delivered in the main urban centers of their region.

Bulgaria and Macedonia are the only countries in which most people said they engaged in training activities, but the training they attended is not relevant to Social Farming.

The analysis from Macedonia shows that only one respondent attended to Social Farming training. Other respondents answered that they attended different kind of trainings (management, finances, family economy, safety and health at work, energy efficiency, rural development, development of rural tourism, agricultural development, entrepreneurship, lobbying and advocacy, networking, and strategic planning).

Bulgaria shows the same situation, most of the respondents received free training under the Measure 111 Vocational training and information schemes, Rural Development Programme 2007-2013, but they are not relevant to Social Farming topic (for example - Course "Vegetable Production", Small and Medium Business Management, Protection of the environment, Direct payments, Food quality).

The most striking result is that there is in Europe and in the FASST countries a lack of (formal nor structured non-formal) educational and training offer available in support of Social Farming.

Aggregated Results on Training Needs

The very last objective of the Capacity Gap Assessment is to identify Training Needs of FASST target group so to develop training courses tailored to them.

Partners identified at proposal the following training fields with the objective of adjusting, modifying and integrating them according to IO2 results:

- Socio-economic context and Social Farming
- Community Driven Development & Social Farming
- Project Management Techniques for Social Farming
- Networking and Fundraising for Social Farming

Furthermore, at project inception and during the definition of IO2 Methodology partners identified the following training modules:

- EU centralised programmes for Social Farming
- Financial management in Social Farming
- Project Management Techniques for Social Farming
- Networking and Fundraising for Social Farming
- Social Farming and Rural Skills
- Planning and Deploying Effective Social Farming Initiatives
- Building capacity in Social Farming
- Tools and resources for Social Farming: Business Planning, Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR
- General overview of Social Farming
- ICT literacy skills for Social Farming
- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment

According to the above list, respondents have been asked:

"Please, specify which are the most relevant training themes/topics that would help you engage in Social Farming and/or sustain Social Farming at systemic level. (Leave boxes for topics not relevant to you BLANK)".

The answers are as follows (only the most relevant topics identified by respondents are listed, in order of importance as ticked by respondents):

EUROPE:

- EU Centralised programmes for Social Farming
- Project Management techniques for Social Farming
- Networking and fundraising for Social Farming
- Tools and resources for Social Farming: Business Planning, Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR
- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment

BULGARIA:

- Social Farming and Rural Skills
- EU centralised programmes for Social Farming
- Building capacity in Social Farming
- Tools and resources for Social Farming: Business Planning, Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR

ITALY:

- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment
- Social Farming and Rural Skills
- Planning and Deploying Effective Social Farming Initiatives
- Tools and resources for Social Farming: Business Planning, Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR
- Project Management Techniques for Social Farming
- EU centralised programmes for Social Farming

MACEDONIA:

- Project Management Techniques for Social Farming
- EU centralised programmes for Social Farming
- Building Capacity in Social Farming
- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment
- Social Farming and Rural Skills

SPAIN:

- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment
- Social Farming and Rural Skills
- EU centralised programmes for Social Farming

To sum up, the most relevant topics identified by respondents in all countries are (ordered by frequency):

- How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment
- EU centralized programmes for Social Farming
- Project Management Techniques for Social Farming, Networking and Fund-raising for Social Farming
- Social Farming and Rural Skills
- Tools and resources for Social Farming: Business Planning, Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR
- Networking and fundraising for Social Farming
- Building Capacity in Social Farming
- Financial management in Social Farming
- Planning and Deploying Effective Social Farming Initiatives

Delivery Means

As far as delivery means are concerned, FASST target group have been asked the following open question:

"Please suggest improvements to training including means of delivery (face to face, online, workshops etc.) that, in your opinion, must be considered to strengthen training for Social Farming."

Most of the people interviewed showed a great interest in delivery means that involve a direct contact with real experience of Social Farming. Face to face training is resulted to be the most mentioned delivery mean, showing that people involved in Social Farming activities (and, maybe, in the Agriculture and Social sector as whole) need direct contact and concrete training solutions to improve their capacity and enhance their organisations' competitiveness.

Even if to a less extent, online training was often mentioned by respondents as a good delivery mean, since it may represent a way to balance training and operational needs (not subtract too much time to daily activities, save travel and attendance costs).

Secondary Research

Legal definition of Social Farming

In Bulgaria, Macedonia and Spain there is no definition of Social Farming in the regulatory framework.

However, in Bulgaria Social Farming is often informally defined as "a model of sustainable agricultural community, which also comprises social activities, mainly living and job opportunities for people with disabilities or disorders, as well as former drug addicts, long-term unemployed, homeless, elderly people living on their own, former prisoners".

Similarly, in Spain Social Farming "is an innovative approach that combines two concepts: multifunctional agriculture and social services / health care at the local level. In the framework of the production of agrarian goods, it contributes to the welfare and social integration of disadvantaged people with specific needs".

In Italy, the National Law n. 141/2015 - "Provisions on Social Farming" describes social agriculture "as an aspect of the multi-functionality of agricultural enterprises, aimed at the development of social services and socio-sanitary, educational and socio-occupational placement interventions, in order to facilitate plain and proper access to basic services granted to people, families and local communities in all of the national territory, particularly in rural or disadvantaged areas".

Such law in Italy has a "soft" nature, meaning that the legislator tried to provide a regulatory framework but, at the same time, leaving the space of expression owed to vocations in the local level. This because an exclusive competence on agriculture and social policies is left to Regions in Italy. It follows that a number of definitions have been produced within each Region, but all of them are very close to the national one.

Social Farming definitions always entail the two key aspects of such phenomenon: Social and Farming.

Within each country and all over the Europe Social Farming is recognised to serve many purposes:

1. Inclusion of disadvantaged groups
2. Educational and occupational opportunities for people at the margin of the labor market
3. Land and rural recovery
4. Eco-sustainability of farming and agricultural produce

Formal education/training definitions of Social Farming

In Bulgaria, the legal framework does not give any education/training definitions of Social Farming. However, given the available written sources, the following definition can be proposed:

"Promoting motivation and acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills for starting / upgrading initiatives related to the implementation of social farming."

In Italy, the term Social Farming refers to that set of activities that employ the resources of agriculture and livestock, the presence of small groups, family and non, who work on farms to promote therapeutic, rehabilitation, recreation and useful services for daily life and Social inclusion"(Di Iacovo, 2009, page 2).

Social farming, based on the proposed definition, includes all those practices carried out on a territory by farms, social cooperatives and other Third Sector organisations that combine the use of agricultural resources and the multi-functional production process, complementing agriculture processes with social activities, aimed at generating inclusive benefits, to favor therapeutic, rehabilitative and care, to support the social and labor inclusion of disadvantaged and / or marginalized population groups, and to promote social inclusion.

In Spain, general entrepreneurship education is included in the national framework curriculum and is compulsory for all VET fields (technical, industrial, commercial, etc.). Entrepreneurship programs and activities as part of the established courses normally account for a minimum of 35 hours per year, distributed in three hours per week in the second year of studies.

There are a lot of institutions and business support networks providing entrepreneurial training in general, but, unfortunately, such training is characterized by a huge variety of objectives in entrepreneurship and business creation at national or regional level; therefore, a need for a more sectorial type of training is evident.

In Macedonia there is no formal education/training definitions of Social Farming.

Training available on Social Farming

In Italy, Social Farming activities are considered a reliable system of social care. The providers are normally organised in social cooperatives. However, there are also private farmers offering Social Farming services.

They offer a range of initiatives, yet the two main fields are work placement and employment oriented initiatives, as well as childcare, education and training.

In 2005 was established the Social Farm Network, the first Italian network of social farms (www.fattoriesociali.it) which through the years became a reference for information on good practices and active participation in the territory. The task of the Social Farm Network is to promote Social Farming initiatives, giving information about the possibilities offered by public announcements, and sharing the most interesting news and good practices. The Network also provides training courses for starting a social farm, and it gathers the most important evidence and documents regarding Social Farming. Particularly interesting is the online course “Social Farming on the web” facing the following themes: “SF in the new rurality”; “Possible social agricultures”; “The SF political framework in Italy”, “The SF law”; “SF stories”; “How’s it done?”; “How to fund a SF project? Public support/Markets and financing”; “SF in the world”; “Synthesis module”⁹.

Furthermore, Universities in Italy offer Post Graduate Masters and High Specialization Courses in Social Farming. Specifically:

- Master in Social Agriculture (MAS) of the IaD School, structure of the University of Rome "Tor Vergata"¹⁰;
- Advanced training course post Graduate in Social Agriculture - University of Bologna Department of Sociology and Economic Law – SDE¹¹

Finally, there are courses offered by the Regional VET Centers, for instance:

SKILLS IN THE FIELD FOR SOCIAL AGRICULTURE is a long-term path (800 hours: 480 hours of laboratory / classroom + 320 hours of training) in the agricultural and agri-food sector offered by Formazione Mantova - FOR.MA, the Special Company that the Province of Mantua established to foster VET provision¹².

In Spain, in terms of sectorial training offered there are a lot of initiatives directed to rural and agricultural microenterprises related to extremely specific areas like:

- Biological and ecological farming - Empowerment of women in cooperatives
- Training sessions on business dynamism and cooperativism
- Seminar on cooperativism and leadership in rural areas
- Cooperativism, entrepreneurship and business innovation
- Women Entrepreneurship in Business Innovation in the Agri-Food and Forestry Sector
- Self-employment and network marketing - Marketing and marketing of agri-food products, diversification in the rural environment
- Rural tourism
- Ecological agriculture
- Renewable energy, empowerment of women in agricultural and livestock exploitations

⁹ <http://www.fattoriesociali.it/i-servizi/corso-informazione-line-agricoltura-sociale>

¹⁰ <http://www.master.scuolaiaid.it/course/view.php?id=50>

¹¹ <http://www.unibo.it/it/didattica/corsi-di-alta-formazione/2017-2018/agricoltura-sociale-formazione-permanente-5534>

¹² <http://www.formazionemantova.it/index.php/news/160-competenze-in-campo-per-lagricoltura-sociale>

- Motivation and self-esteem
- Management of farms
- Economic management of holdings
- ICT applied to farming
- Basic Informatics and Internet
- Social networks and google applications for business management in rural areas
- English for marketing in internationalization of agri-food products, ecological agriculture, organic farming, ecological livestock as a contribution to sustainable rural development

In Bulgaria, even if “Rural Development Programme for Bulgaria, 2014-2020” puts strong emphasis on social inclusion and economic development in rural areas that require increased training on Social Farming, Social Farming as a phenomenon is not widespread. For this reason, training opportunities are not available. The same applies for Macedonia.

Key stakeholders/actors in Social Farming

BULGARIA:

- Human Resources Development Operational Programme: Public authorities have not yet recognised the positive role of Social Farming for labour integration and socialization of disadvantaged groups. Consequently, initiatives are not funded by State resources and by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The only opportunity for funding Social Farming initiatives is under the Human Resources Development Operational Programme, Priority Axis 2 "Reducing Poverty and Promoting Social Inclusion", specifically in the "Social Entrepreneurship Development" Procedure. The purpose of the procedure is to facilitate access to employment and to provide support for the social inclusion of vulnerable groups via creating appropriate conditions for their professional integration. The programme finances activities aimed at providing support for the creation of new and expanding activities of already existing social enterprises, specialized enterprises and cooperatives of disabled people related to generating employment.
- NGOs and Universities: Erasmus-funded projects that operate in the field of Social Farming. Under the MAIE Project - Multifunctional Agriculture in Europe - Social and Ecological Impacts on Organic Farms at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, the NATIONAL COMPETENCE CENTRE IN SOCIAL FARMING was established. It advises farmers on how to develop social agriculture activities and where to find funding (www.u-plovdiv.bg).
- Land Source of Income Foundation: it helps Roma communities to engage in farming. It provides financial support (a certain percentage of the investment in land or machinery) in the form of a loan that is paid to Bulgarian Roma people for a certain period (<http://landsourceofincome.org/>).
- Orphanages for children deprived of parental care engage children in growing fruit, vegetables and spices in special gardens into their territory.
- Horse-riding represents a major form of therapy for some infant physical and mental disorders.
- Media: they promote the results of the projects and bring forth the interest in Social Farming. When an idea is presented to the public, it gradually gains strength, especially if people are ready for it, and it is the media that support it.

ITALY:

- National Social Agriculture Forum (FNAS): established in 2012 with a specific Charter of Principles used as a value reference for its members (www.forumagricolturasociale.it). Among the over 360 members of the Forum, 70 are social cooperatives and farming companies performing SA activities, 25 belong to associations, 6 are consortia and 3 are communities; others participate as individuals or represent municipalities, provinces, universities, research bodies. Members of the Forum are also the SA Provincial Forum of Rome, Sicily's social farm network, themselves bringing together a number of local realities. The National Forum promoted the establishment of regional forums, present nowadays in almost every Italian region, encouraging the participation of different subjects, from farming companies to social cooperatives, universities and research centers.
- Social Farm Network: was founded in 2005 and was the first Italian network of social farms. Even today it continues to work every day against social problems and has over time become a reference point for information on good practices and active participation on the territory. (<http://www.fattoriesociali.it/IT/>)

MACEDONIA:

- Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water economy and Ministry of Labor and Social policy – in Macedonia law for Social Farming (SF) does not exist. Efforts are currently made by NGOs and public bodies for creation of law framework for social entrepreneurship.
- Local self-government - 2/3 of territory of Macedonia represents rural area. On local level, Social Farms and agriculture in general should be more included in Local development strategy of Municipalities, because Macedonia is agricultural country.
- Stakeholders that are directly or indirectly involved in Social Farming:
 - Directly – Users, Social Farmers to be - the direct beneficiaries of these practices are disadvantaged people who could be integrated into a living context where their personal capabilities are valued and enhanced. Through Social Farming, it is possible to support a range of less-empowered or marginalized people, including those with intellectual, physical or sensory disabilities, people with mental health issues, those with a history of addiction, prisoners and ex-prisoners, women, young people, the elderly, immigrants and ethnic groups, HIV-positive people and others. In the same time, all this people are they are Social Farmers to be. Considering the five prisons and few churches that have land in their possession, the only known social farm in Macedonia is Pokrov. “Pokrov” is the first long-term rehabilitation program for drugs, alcohol and hazard withdrawal in Macedonia. In “Pokrov”, the program beneficiaries have work engagements within the social enterprise. As part of the social integration, they are dealing with organic farming and they place their products on the market. The revenues are used for financing the enterprise and for covering the fees of beneficiaries. “Pokrov” is a self-sustaining model of a social enterprise, which enjoys the support of the local community. (<http://izborstrumica.com/?lang=en>)
 - Indirectly – local community, farmers, public health sector, private sector, professional organizations etc. - the farmers are indirect beneficiaries because they can build networks with consumers, create short supply-consumption chains, involve more stakeholders in agricultural activities. Farmers can also enhance the image of agriculture in society as well as their own reputation and visibility. All these impacts could increase their empowerment, giving farmers a voice in planning and engaging in social activities. Local community will also be more aware about the concept and the situation of Social Farming in Macedonia. In the same time private sector and professional organizations should be included in work of Social Farming through different initiatives.

SPAIN:

- Sociedad Española de Agricultura Ecológica (SEAE): The SPANISH SOCIETY OF ECOLOGICAL AGRICULTURE / SPANISH SOCIETY OF AGROECOLOGY (SEAE), was created under the Organic Law 1/2002, of 22 of March. It is a private no profit entity which has been created to bring together the efforts of farmers, technicians, scientists and other sector representatives, to develop sustainable systems of agricultural production based on the ecological and socio-economic principles promoted by the Ecological agricultural movements, whose fundamental objective is to obtain food and raw materials of the highest quality, respecting the environment and conserving the fertility of the land, through the optimal use of local resources, empowering rural

cultures, respecting ethical values of rural development and quality of life. (<https://www.agroecologia.net>)

- Fepeco - Federación española de empresas con productos ecológicos: The SPANISH FEDERATION OF COMPANIES WITH ECOLOGICAL PRODUCTS (FEPECO) is a professional non-profit organization of national scope, which incorporates many organizations for the defense, representation and promotion of the interests of the Spanish companies that elaborate, transform or commercialize officially certified organic products (<https://www.fepeco.es/>).
- Asaja - Asociación Agraria de Jóvenes Agricultores: ASAJA was created on July 14, 1989, as a result of the merger agreement of CNAG, CNJA and UFADE, thus constituting the largest professional agricultural organization in Spain with more than 200,000 members working directly on farms, both owners and tenants. ASAJA has been founded for the representation, management, defense and promotion of the professional interests of the agricultural sector in general and of its member organizations with full legal personality and subject to strictly democratic principles (<http://www.asaja.com>)
- UPA- Unión de Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos: The Union of Small Farmers and Cattle Ranchers (UPA) is the professional organization that groups, represents and defends the interests of professionals in agriculture and livestock in Spain. UPA is the organization that brings together the majority of the agricultural sector: family farms whose owners are small and medium farmers and ranchers. (<https://www.upa.es/upa/inicio>)
- Service-users of social farms and their organisations, providers of social and health care services where social farming is used as a way to improve social and health wellness, other stakeholders in social and health care and local, regional and national authorities, such as municipalities and other governing authorities.

Training Content to be created under IO3

According to IO2 results and findings, FASST partners decided to develop 12 Training modules to support Social Farming and to bridge the identified gap:

<u>TRAINING MODULES</u>
General overview of Social Farming
How to operate Social Farming with the dual challenge of social inclusion and economic empowerment
Planning and Deploying Effective Social Farming Initiatives
Building capacity in Social Farming
Communication in Social Farming Settings
Social Farming and Rural Skills
Business Planning
Project Management Techniques for Social Farming
Financial Management in Social Farming
EU Centralised Programmes for Social Farming
Visibility, Networking, Marketing and PR
ICT literacy skills for Social Farming

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