



EUROPEAN AGRO- FOOD VOCATIONAL TRAINING:

**State of the art and prospective related
to new farmers and agricultural new businesses**

**A Report to European Authorities for the State of the
Art and prospective according to EQF Guidelines**

**Based on data provided by the partner countries
of the Agro-MAC VET Leonardo da Vinci Partnership
Project:**

**Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary,
Spain, Turkey**

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INTRODUCTION

It is well understood and documented in the literature and practice of EU organisations that there is a gap between theoretical and applied guidelines regarding the development of SMEs of the Agro- Food Sector in European and other countries. This gap becomes quite critical when it refers to the training of young farmers, who intend to start or continue agricultural activities in which contemporary techniques and approaches are required.

In order to fulfil the above mentioned lack of training, it is not obviously required always a tertiary education diploma or equivalent degree, but at least it is necessary to obtain formal training and acquire a knowledge **Generally Recognised As Minimum** (GRAM), before starting or continuing the Agric businesses.

This training and knowledge is certainly provided by various post secondary or technical schools in the participating countries, but it was observed there is neither a uniform approach, nor fulfilment of the EQF criteria. These gaps of training and conformity with the EQF criteria were the main objectives of the Agro MAC VET project. Eleven partner organisations of eight participating countries have documented the State of the art in their countries and have proceeded to the development of common tools and guidelines, in order to meet the existing lack of vocational education and training (VET). The methodology has been tested through a **Multi Actor Cooperation** (MAC) of training institutions and centres specialised on training for the Agro- Food Sector.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

The Agro-MAC VET approach had the following objectives:

- To increase the level of dialogue between agro-food SMEs and training institutions throughout a broader Europe
- To foster a **pro-active cooperative transnational network**, including all the actors of the entire agro-food chain, “from the farm to the fork”, and, more important, “from the fork to the farm” (as to put emphasis on the customers and the needs rather than simply *productivist* approach).
- To create a **sustainable Multi-Actor Cooperation (MAC)** of the various key topics addressing the needs of young farmers
- To give **equal access to information** and **cross dissemination** to all eleven partners and third level partners also
- To provide references and guidelines for training according to EU legislation
- To approach the **training needs** as well as **anticipation of future trends** of the Agro-Food Sector in accordance with the EQF priorities

The above objectives were achieved by the following tools, which also constitute some of the main deliverables of the Agro-MAC VET deliverables

1. Definition of a GRAM curriculum

Based on the above approach, the GRAM curriculum has been developed as a proposal to address the needs of farmers and workers in agriculture without any officially recognised professional level or access to the profession who may have some experience and practical knowledge and who are outside academic/school systems. This curriculum is a syllabus based on which common training materials and solutions can be commonly developed later including room for adaptation depending on each national system.

The 9 days course can be organized as adult-education, in the form of two-week daytime course, one day/week evening course, including distance learning or e-learning when relevant.

Curriculum:

Total Hours: 63 (Total Days: 9)

Part 1: 42 Hours of General Course (6 Days), 7 hour/day)

Part 2: 21 Hours on Special Sectoral Topics (3 Days)

1. Plant Production
2. Animal Production

Detailed curriculum is available on line at the root of the Agro-MAC VET library:
www.agro-net.eu/index.php?option=com_docman&Itemid=75



2. Compendium

The Compendium integrates the principle milestones of the Agro-MAC VET Leonardo da Vinci Project, i.e. aim and outcomes, relevance with the EU legislation, the European added value, partners, case studies, purpose of the mobilities, target groups, list of schools relative to vocational training of the Agro-food sector.

3. Case Studies

The case studies prepared by the Agro-MAC VET project are available on-line www.agro-net.eu. These case studies illustrate the approaches taken by some countries and which could be relatively easily transferred to other countries (e.g. Belgium), or some cases of farmers/farmers.

The Case Studies and their executive summary are available on the webpage of the project: www.agro-net.eu/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=97&Itemid=58

The developed case studies are:

- ✓ Vocational Training in Agriculture in Belgium for new farmers, developed by MAC-Team aisbl (BE)
- ✓ Technical and Agricultural School Avgorou, developed by European University of Cyprus (CY)
- ✓ A pioneer training model, developed by ACTIF- Europe sarl (FR)
- ✓ Agro-Tourism in the Mosel Valley, developed by Fachhochschule Trier (DE)
- ✓ Elimination of allergenic proteins with electromagnetic irradiation, developed by TEI of Athens (GR) and Fachhochschule Trier (DE)
- ✓ The Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute developed by ATEXCELIXI (GR)
- ✓ Raising the added value by developing farm-cheese production, developed by Istvan Szechenyi Agricultural Vocational Education and Internship School (HU)
- ✓ Consortium of Training Centres, developed by METE - Hungarian Scientific Society for Food Industry (HU)
- ✓ a training model, developed by Foundation of the University of La Rioja (ES)
- ✓ Seedless Lemon Cultivars, developed by ALATA Horticultural Research Institute, Turkey
- ✓ Anavra, a sustainable agriculture (community) model, developed by TEI of Athens (GR)

4. Web-site (www.agro-net.eu).

The web-site services as a free database of training material delivered with Agro-MAC VET Project. People involved in Agro-food Sector can be informed for the dissemination activities of the project, communicate with the partners, find useful links and read articles relative to Agro-Food Sector.



CONCLUSION / PROPOSAL

The Partnership believes that this integrated Agro-MAC VET approach, developed through the corresponding Leonardo da Vinci Project can be proposed to educational authorities responsible for the Agro-Food training in order to assist young farmers and technologists in their every day practice. With this Agro-MAC VET approach local actors will be assisted in the development of their business in accordance with the principles of total quality and ecological management.

Institutions and teachers can be found in the compendium, short courses and training material can be developed according to the GRAM curriculum, best practices can be applied using the case studies as models and continuous information and CBT can be received from the networks' website (www.agro-net.eu).

Since legislation and equivalent formal training indicate various differences in European and other countries, the database, the tools and the products developed through Agro-MAC VET have to be incorporated in the formal educational guidelines of the participant countries and should be accredited according to the EQF principles.

The present GRAM can be seen as a proposal from the Agro MAC-VET partnership project built after the analysis and cases developed in the various countries.

The next steps would be:

- To extend the approach to other European countries and to spread out the model towards more actors in the existing countries in order to finalise a model with stakeholders involved in VET in agriculture and rural development.
- To develop corresponding training content and test it in the various countries by involving actors identified in the annex of the Agro-MAC VET Compendium (list is still open and will be revised/updated, on an on-going basis). This content can be easily compiled by the various partners and actors based on existing content in the various countries (objective is to also build a common content with room for adaptation depending on the specificities of the different countries and type of rural/farm structures).
- And most important to really integrate that approach as well using ECVET with the support of the various relevant national authorities and VET actors.

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