



RURALIZATION

RURALIZATION

The opening of rural areas to renew rural generations,
jobs and farms

D5.4 Technical report: Comparative analysis on rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm succession



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¹ PU= Public, CO=Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services), CL=Classified, as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC

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Acronyms & Abbreviations



AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CdP	Champs des Possibles
MOPS	Maximising Organic Production Systems
NC	Newcomers
NE	New entrants into farming
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
RDP	Rural Development Programme
SC	Farm Successors
SCIC	Cooperative society of collective interest

Executive summary

This report has been compiled as part of the EU Horizon 2020 financed project RURALIZATION on ‘The opening or rural areas to renew rural generations, jobs and farms’.

Rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farms successors are considered key players for developing innovation into rural areas and facilitate rural regeneration and generational renewal.

The report provides a comparative analysis of:

-  30 case studies on promising practices on rural newcomers (10 cases), new entrants into farming (10 cases) and farm successors (10 cases), executed in eleven countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom).
-  20 confrontation activities, aimed at sharpening the lessons learned in the case studies, conducted in less successful context in twelve countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom).

It is based on the Reports prepared by the Consortium partners who have executed the case studies and the confrontation activities in the period September 2020 to January 2022.




The comparative analysis provides insights on the *ruralisation* process as framed by the Conceptual Guidelines of the project (Murtagh et al 2021c), deepening the understanding of the condition and drivers that can support resilience of rural areas; the dynamics of capital resources and the innovation processes going on in the rural context and their adaptability to wider rural context.

In what follows a summary of the key findings for each group of actors and the key learnings emerging from the confrontation activities is presented.

Rural newcomers

The contribution of newcomers to rural regeneration is widely acknowledged in the case studies, both in terms of efforts to demographically renew rural areas and in terms of local and regional development activated by the economic, cultural and social activities they promote.

The comparative analysis shows their role as contributor to a “new rurality”. Although rural newcomers’ practices are not a common panacea for rural development, they can achieve and generate strategic progress in several essential dimensions:

-  advancement of fundraising, professional project expertise, but also dissemination of knowledge capital and technical modernization, as well as expanding economic and project networking, can be associated to rural newcomers’ ideas and practices;
-  awareness and acceptance of new forms of governance may also be part of the spread of rural newcomers’ institutional and corporate innovations;
-  rural newcomers initiatives, even if not massive and continuous, have a direct and strong impact on the social and economic reorganization of local communities. Among the

positive impacts we can list new economic demand, distribution and offer of new and traditional local products, cultural goods, the development of tourist activities, the creation of new community connections and synergies. As a result, more jobs are created, infrastructural development is spurred; innovative activities and new forms of enterprise are generated; fresh urban-rural relations are engendered, novel values are introduced;



rural newcomers practices build and preserve rural resources: in all the cases, newcomers are playing an active role in nurturing and reinterpreting traditions and in reviving local culture;



over two-thirds of rural newcomers practices shows also a direct or indirect environmental impact, contributing to environment protection and sustainability.

As for innovation processes, individual strategies are less able to promote rural renewal than corporate, collaborative actions and programs, although they can be significant where comprehensive strategies are lacking.

Cross-sectoral strategies are a prerequisite for successful multi-stakeholders strategies, while sectoral developments may have a limited impact.

Finally, even though rural newcomers are contributing to rural regeneration, they remain in the shadows. No statistical data are on the demographic appearance and activity of newcomers in rural regions, resulting in knowledge and recognition gap and, consequently, in a lack of appropriate European and local policies and projects. A reform in the practice of European rural development policies is needed, to enable and encourage the initiatives of rural newcomers, through financial resources and cross-sectoral programs at regional level that are also open to the adoption of individual actions.

New entrants into farming

New entrants into farming are new farmers “that start a professional existence in farming or that are integrated into an existing farm” (Kinsella et al 2020, p.12). They can also be distinguished by their previous connection to farming as there is “a substantial grey area between the extremes of ex novo new entrants and direct successors to farming businesses” (EIP-Agri 2016, p.6), and they may or may not be ‘rural newcomers’. They can enter farming at any stage of their working lives, with the status of full time, part-time or salaried farmer.


The comparative analysis highlights the specific contribution given by the new entrants’ activities to a “new rurality”:





new entrants practices produce and bring new knowledges, new point of view and consequently new narratives on rural areas, including enhancing food literacy and more awareness on new rural jobs;



most of the practices are characterized by a great networking capacity, favoring also the development of rural-urban connections and of bottom-up governance approaches;


- 


the multifunctional approach is widely developed (except in Hungary) and - as highlighted also by the results of the confrontations and in the case studies on successors - could offer economic and social stability to the community as well as contribute to build more resilience through farming, training and community building;
- 


new entrants are deeply aware of the impacts of their styles of farming and, where opportunities are given, they embody biodiversity and environment protection in sustainable agricultural methods. Environmental awareness appears to be related both to ethical worldviews and also to higher levels of education;
- 


small scale agroecological and multifunctional farms contribute to address rural disparities, increasing female (and other groups of people such as migrants, black people) participation into farming. However, gender issues are still an open question.

New entrants case studies show/highlight a prominent openness to social and technological innovations, keeping together different innovative approaches from ethics to markets, always based on the adaptation to local environmental and social conditions. Several innovative organizational models that can favour rural regeneration are promoted:

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wide networks to sensitize school students on rural jobs, contributing to change practices and mentalities around agriculture and food;
- 

multi-actors governance, involving farmers, politicians and local communities; bringing together several stakeholders who rarely communicate together favor knowledge transfer, information availability, support to common project, etc.;
- 

farm incubators specifically oriented to new entrants into agriculture, which offer different services, training, access to land and to the market.
- 

farming with a collective organizational structure, where farm management involves different actors (farmers, citizen, sometimes local municipalities/institutions) or where farmers, on the base of a voluntary cooperation, pool their land, labour and capital and share costs and profits, without forfeiting their private property rights. Farms with a collective organizational structure are managed mainly by cooperatives/associations, helping new entrants to get into agricultural activities, overcoming issues such as access to the land and high start-up cost that are mutualized. This model of farm generate also intangible resources: community socialisation around the farms (social capital), volunteers and trainees' skill-building (human capital), development of alliances and political mobilisation with citizens and agricultural organisations (political capital).

To favor the increase of new entrants into agriculture there is a need to operate along all the new entrants' pathway. Upstream actions should facilitate the establishment of enabling territorial conditions, as, for example, through a multi actors governance; or by the establishment of networks among different actors. Similar measures may contribute to create a public space of debate on rural regeneration and rural jobs and facilitate the emergence of projects of common interests; furthermore, may also enhance awareness on the opportunities and may favor the establishment of new entrants into farming. Downstream actions should directly support new entrants entering into the farming, for example through Farm Incubators, economic supports, new model of business (such as farm with collective organisational structure, short food supply chains), etc.

A critical issue raised by the comparative analysis is the lack of specific policy measures targeting new entrants into farming: farmers over 35/40 years can't access the Young Farm Payment; salaried or part-time farmer cannot access CAP measures; very small farms where new entrants operate do not have access to CAP measures. Specific policies and strategies are suggested, including more widespread localised food policies and public procurement; integration in formal educational curricula of new sustainable agriculture methods; reduction of bureaucracy on accessing CAP measures; the need of statistical data on new entrants; promotion and institutional support for farm incubators; etc.

Farm successors

Farm succession is a complex process that often occurs over a long timescale. It is a key stage in family farm development and renewal.

Empirical evidence clearly shows that farms with a strong multifunctional approach have positive effects on rural regeneration and opportunities in rural areas. More broadly, this points to the importance of the multifunctional approach to farming as a pathway to rural regeneration, generational renewal and farm succession.

Innovation and improved levels of succession appear to go hand in hand. An aptitude for innovation has been observed on the farms examined, and a number of different types of innovation are documented by the case studies, showing also the importance of non-technological innovations. Enabling innovation is also relevant and is linked to a wider and more systemic framework of resources and actors.

Indeed, networks are of crucial importance both for supporting successors and for enhancing the improved innovation and sustainability of farming. They can bring benefits such as facilitating knowledge exchange and collaborations among producers.

Generational change is a time of opportunity, and taking over the farm marks a time of change. Perhaps this could be better harnessed with new business and novel organisational models: the case studies provide evidence to support the widening of the lens beyond joint ventures (e.g. farm partnerships, contract farming, share farming) towards a range of new business models to facilitate improved farm succession and generational renewal. New models could include, for example, short food supply chains and direct connections with community on farms; Solidarity Purchasing Groups and Community Supported Agriculture.

The cases studies link to the concept of “new rurality” where the approach to farming works towards building community connections, urban-rural connections, local food culture, environmentally sustainability and multifunctional farming. There is evidence that this “new rurality” also emerges in the context of family farms and during the process of farm succession.

Confrontations Activities




The majority of the confrontations confirms the need of bottom up and collective participation to adapt the practice to the local context and modulate it to the local available resources. It could be useful to start a facilitation process, in order to help the community to identify their collective needs and their strengths, and then the proper selection of a promising practice can be done to address these

needs. In this way the motivation and engagement of the community will be higher and stronger and the capacity to overcome difficulties and remove barriers would be much more potent.

Furthermore, presenting the promising practice has work as a “wake up call” for participants, meaning that it reminded them that there is even more potential and more to do in their region than they have been currently focusing on, even if sometimes the ideas and the set of next steps that they developed were different from the actions presented in the confrontations.

The confrontations confirmed the assumption of the neo-endogenous development approach. The starting point for a development process should be based on the local resources, but the process should be conducted with the consideration that non-local forces could strongly influence the outcomes. In a positive manner, non-local forces such as regional, national and European networks, subsidies, public and private funds could play a role and would influence and enhance the outcome.

From the confrontation some indications related to the single practice confronted emerged but also some key actions are identified that would potentialize the transferability of the practices. These are:

-  investment in learning and sharing hubs (peer-to-peer learning, knowledge centers, consultants network, resources databases); new innovative educational/training models can have a relevant role in generational renewal;
-  rural development agents (e.g. LAGs) should explore the local creative and innovative potential of the areas, act as catalyst and link the activities, the new ideas, the new projects to the resources, already available in the numerous European and national projects;
-  incentivise municipalities to create a green belt, or dedicating unused and abandoned land for the creation of new farms with a collective organizational structure.

Introduction

The RURALIZATION project is based on the premise that rural regeneration is needed to generate opportunities for new generations of existing and potential rural inhabitants. Rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farms successors are considered key players for developing innovation into rural areas. In RURALIZATION, innovation is seen as a multi-faceted concept that includes technological, social and cultural innovation. The RURALIZATION project looks directly at how farming can be part of this new rural reality created by ruralisation and devotes particular attention to wider issues around facilitating new entrants and succession.

The task was the development of an empirical focus on promising practices that facilitate these three different groups of actors (rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors) in promoting generational renewal, innovation and rural development. The aim was to provide insights on the background from which the promising practices emerged, including the constraints and the favorable conditions.

The report presents, for each different group of actors, the multiple aspects characterizing the promising practices, analysing the way crucial challenges in concrete are addressed and novel behaviors are put in place. The potential for further use of promising practices - as for limitations of their use – is also discussed.

The research framework on “Rural newcomers and new entrants into farming” acknowledges as a starting point the *“inadequate/incomplete understanding of how and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and successors in different European countries favor generation renewal and development of rural areas”* (Sivini et al 2019). The research questions that moved all the activities were the following:

- 
 How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors contribute to generation renewal and rural development (main research question).
- 
 How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors address rural disparities and bring about a more equitable distribution of opportunities and resources; how and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors foster new opportunities and resources for local community (social aspects).
- 
 How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors foster innovation and entrepreneurship in their rural areas (socio-cultural aspects).
- 
 How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors address rural gender disparities and overcome traditional gender roles (gender aspects).
- 
 How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors are sustained by policies measures; how local institutions, other organisations (public, private and third sector) and local groups support rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors; How bottom up collective action favors the settlement of newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors; How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors are integrated/promote networks and co-operate with various actors in the long-run; to what extent can rural newcomers, new entrants and farm

successors support the functioning of local institutions and local groups (political-institutional aspects)

- How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors create positive (or negative) economic effects in their rural areas (economic aspects).

- How and how well rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors address environmental degradation and protect and improve the natural habitat of rural areas (environmental aspects).

The comparative report builds on 30 case studies (10 case studies on rural newcomers, 10 on new entrants into farming and 10 on farm successors) and on 20 confrontation activities executed by the Ruralization regional teams in the period September 2020 to January 2022.

The case studies were selected through a desk analysis, following the RURALIZATION assessment framework (Murthag et al, 2021b). The aim was to improve the understanding of the current situation of rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors (including human, social and professional characteristics, gender issues and their role in generational renewal development).

For each case studies, the analysis was based on:

- secondary data (statistical data, on-line evidences, policy documents and grey literature);

- primary data (on average 20 semi-structured in-depth interviews, one public discussion event or focus group with stakeholders and policy makers and a meeting to present research findings)

The confrontation activities aimed at sharpening the lessons learned in the case studies to help identify key factors of success to be evaluated for policy conclusions which favors an increase in the number of rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors in rural areas.

The activities, conducted to discuss the outcomes of case studies in 20 different areas which are comparable but do not show promising results, consisted in:




- three brainstorming sessions, with several stakeholders, to present one (or more) promising practices and to discuss critical factors. The aim was to get feedbacks on issues and barriers in executing similar practices in the less successful contexts;

- one focus group, with various stakeholders, discussing the consolidated results of the three brainstorming sessions. They described solutions, identified measures, addressed obstacles that are limiting newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors to successfully establish themselves in the context. They identify also potential new innovative ideas to promote rural development.

In total, the RURALIZATION teams conducted:

- 601 in depth interviews;

- 30 public discussions events/focus groups;

-  30 meetings for data restitution;
-  60 brainstorming;
-  20 focus group.

The present report illustrates the results of the comparative analysis of the 30 case studies and the 20 confrontation activities, looking at the collected data in the promising practices of newcomers, new entrants into farming and successors (D5.2 30 Case studies on rural newcomers, new entrants to farming and successors) also in relation to the results of the activities conducted in the less successful contexts (D5.3. Report on lessons learned from the confrontations and fact sheets based on this report with 20 appendices describing the activities in the 20 less successful context).

The method of multiple case studies allowed to understand differences and similarities between the cases (Yin 2018), as well as strengths and weakness. Cross-cases analysis has been based on the RURALIZATION assessment framework principles used for the selection of the practices, as summarized in the following table (Table1)

Table 1. Principles of the Assessment Framework

Principle	Dimension
Efficiency 'Investment' to pursue aims and use of resources efficiently.	Investment is justified
	Sustainable natural resource use
Legitimacy A legitimate approach through its basis in evidence, governance approach or has wider local legitimacy.	Evidence-based
	Governance
	Local legitimacy
Rooted Resources underpinning development and locally rooted benefits.	Local resources
	Local benefits
Interconnected Addressing interconnected decline issues and strengthening rural networks.	Integrated
	Creates connections
Innovation Vital importance of innovation and its potential transferability.	Technological and non-technological innovation
	Innovation transferability
Adaptability Strengthening local capacities to adapt and respond.	Capacities
	Diversity

Source, Murthag et al 2021b, p. 7









The effort to reconstruct actions and processes (such as individual and collective agency, relationships and networking on different scales), going beyond the variance-oriented approach (Krehl and Weck 2020), permitted to highlight the key factors characterizing the functioning of the practices.

The comparative analysis of the confrontation activities followed a specific structure in order to illustrate the potential for further use of the promising practices discussed, considering separately rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors; the limitations of further use and the potential impact of a wider application emerged in the context where these practices were presented.




In sum, the results of the comparative analysis presented in the report provide insights on the *ruralisation* process as framed by the Conceptual Guidelines of the project (Murtagh et al 2021c), deepening the understanding of the condition and drivers that can support resilience of rural areas; the capital resources dynamics and the innovation processes going on in the rural context and their adaptability to wider rural context.

Report structure

This comparative report is divided in four chapters. The first three chapters analyse the promising practices of rural newcomers (chapter one), new entrants to farming (chapter two) and farm successors (chapter three), focalizing on the following issues:

-  influence of local contexts;
-  characteristics of the three groups of actors;
-  origin of the practices and resource mobilization;
-  actors involved and legitimacy;
-  sustainability, innovation and adaptability of the practices;
-  connections and networking;
-  institutional support and policies;
-  effects and perspectives.

The last chapter analyse the novel insights derived from the 20 confrontations and related to the potential for further use of 15 practices initiated by rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors, applying the patterns of six regeneration pathways: smart specialisation, rural-urban relations, multifunctional farming, agroecology, bioeconomy and building human capital. It focuses on:

-  potential for further use of positive practices;
-  limitations of further use;
-  potential impact of wider application of the approaches.

1. Newcomers into rural areas

(by Kovách Imre and Megyesi Boldizsár)

1.1 The context

In the followings we present the different contexts of newcomers' promising practices: their territorial level, the rural-urban typology, and also the basic demographic, socio-economic and agricultural characteristic of the regions. The partners of the project collected cases from Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland.

We found no cases at national level, 3 cases are at regional, and seven cases at local level. Most of the cases are not only focusing at local level, but also linked to the initiative of very few people, to one single person, to a pair or a family. We will present the initiators later in paragraph four on actors involved.

Analyzing the local context we see that most of the cases are in intermediate areas, three of them are from predominantly rural areas, and only one is from a rural area. Even some of the regions classified as intermediate are described as peripheral and back-warded.

Each of the case study areas are facing a population loss, or very low population growth. Also the income is lower in the rural areas, then in the cities. The areas used to have an agricultural character, but in most cases it is already lost, which is a reason for the population loss, and the back-warded character of the area.

The economic and social decline resulted also a decline in the public order on the one hand, but opened up possibilities on the other: in the two Dutch cases, in the Eastern German case or in the Italian case we can see that the economic, infrastructural difficulties and the lack of services resulted in lower real estate prices which made possible the described initiative. Also new infrastructures, the innovations of Info-communication technologies were necessary to develop the Irish, and "The redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes" case, but it is probable that it played a role in the success of other initiatives as well.

According to the case study descriptions there are two or three exceptions: the Landwege initiative, the French and the Hungarian case presents newcomers' initiatives from areas which are from better performing regions. These three areas are in exceptional position: the German case study was conducted near bigger cities, centers of industry and services; these cities are also reliable markets for the products of the case. The following table (Table 2) summarizes the basic data of the ten different context of the promising practices of newcomers.

Table 2. Rural newcomers case study context

Code	Country	Local context	Scale	Type of Region
IE_1C	Ireland	Remote work as a promising practice to attract newcomers to rural areas Rural north-west of Ireland: Based on the CSO urban/rural classification, over the 2011-2016 period the overall population of rural areas increased, but at a lower rate to urban (1.7% versus 4.8%). Issues of service and	Local – below NUTS3	Predominantly rural

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		<p>infrastructure still plague rural areas. For most services distances are three times greater.</p> <p>Comparing different areas of Ireland, they demonstrate that overall the data reveals an ageing population, but with the greatest increase in highly rural/remote areas. Those living in Ireland's cities have higher disposable income than other areas. The difference is biggest in highly rural/remote areas.</p>		
PL_2C	Poland	<p>Artystyka: an ecotouristic farm that shows how art, local engagement and mutual respect can help newcomers take roots in a rural community</p> <p>Artystyka is located in South-Western Poland, in a mountainous region of the Klodzko Valley near to the Polish-Czech border. The subregion suffers from very strong rural decline.</p>	Local	intermediate
NL_3C	Netherlands	<p>The redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes</p> <p>There is a general lack of available housing space for all sorts of functions in the NL both for housing and commercial purposes. Agricultural is declining, new functions can emerge. Farms are still scaling up and many farm stables do not meet the requirements of today in terms of health, adaptability to modern techniques and animal welfare rules. These are the farm stables that are likely to become empty. Meanwhile, the rural economy is also diversifying. The number of companies in rural municipalities such as Boekel and Raalte is increasing (CBS, 2021). These companies also require locations, sometimes beyond the already available business parks and retail space. Empty farm stables may form an alternative for these companies.</p> <p>According to the report, old agricultural buildings can be drugs laboratories, another crime scenes (Schotman, 2016; Backx, 2020).</p> <p>Although originally, agriculture and, to some extent, nature conservation, have been the most important functions of rural areas, there are also arguments being made for increasing the number of residents and/or businesses in areas outside of the cities and villages (Van Rossem, 2020; Van der Meer et al., 2021). Currently, relatively strict rules often prohibit the re-use of empty farm stables for residential and/or business functions. The exact policies on empty farm stables differ between provinces and, especially, between municipalities. Raalte and Boekel are relatively flexible in their policies and thus experimental in dealing with empty farm stables.</p>	NUTS3	Intermediate
NL_4C	Netherlands	<p>Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions.</p> <p>The Oldambt municipality in the Groningen province, in the Northeast of the Netherlands, is a peripheral and relatively rural Dutch area. Although Groningen city is a quickly growing province capital, the surrounding areas, especially those in the north and the east of the province, are dealing with depopulation and an outmigration of young people. The area has seen quite a long period of relative economic decline, with relatively high rates of unemployment (Thissen et al., 2010), and a natural disaster (earthquakes in xxx, with almost 500 houses in the area in need of reinforcement (Nationaal Coördinator Groningen, 2017; Nationaal Coördinator Groningen, 2021).</p> <p>The ratio of highly educated and young citizens is lower than the regional average (Thissen et al., 2010).</p> <p>Also the socio-historical context is special: there were huge class differences between the wealthy farmers and the small local elites and the large working class of industrial and agricultural workers. Consequently, the left parties are still strong in the area.</p> <p>There was a huge real estate project in the area, which proved to be less successful than planned, thus Groningen province has a very active role in the Oldambt area; which is not common in the Netherlands.</p>	NUTS3	Intermediate
IT_5C	Italy	<p>Castel del Giudice- Municipality as an active agent of territorial marketing and economic initiative voicing community needs</p> <p>Castel del Giudice (CDG) is a small town in High Molise with a population of 350, set at an altitude of 800 metres. The town tried out various socio-economic initiatives, moving from conditions of social exclusion. In fact, the high percentage of aged population, the neglect of farmland and livestock</p>	Local – below NUTS3	Predominantly rural

D5.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON RURAL NEWCOMERS, NEW ENTRANTS INTO FARMING AND FARM SUCCESSORS

		<p>farming have become the spearhead for launching new economic initiatives.</p> <p>The municipal council of small villages normally has a limited budget and a limited planning capacity, often oriented to the maintenance of public spaces, having to refer to the Province, the Region and the national government to promote development projects involving the territory and infrastructures. Cultural activities are often reduced to traditional and religious events.</p> <p>The southern part of the area suffers from a strong migration of young people towards the big centers, to have access to an adequate level of education and to have job opportunities. The consequence is the absence of schools, health services, the lack of transport infrastructure (both road maintenance and public services). Usually, infrastructural isolation also leads to the abandonment of agricultural activities and land, resulting in a lack of landscape maintenance and in some case in more difficult access to markets.</p>		
FR_6C	France	<p>Renewal of the local development policy: personal networking and interknowledge</p> <p>Within Normandy region, the Manche is a peripheral department, far from the inhabited landscape of the metropolises.</p> <p>The population is ageing with more deaths than births, with also the arrival of young retirees, and thus an increase in the proportion of the population aged 60 and over (INSEE, 2017), higher than the departmental average. In terms of population distribution, the area follows the pattern of the surrounding areas with a dense network of highly interconnected towns and villages.</p> <p>Agriculture is traditional in the area, recently tourism became important, and the SME sector working in it. The preserving of the coastal environment is the main challenge of the area.</p>	Regional NUTS3	Intermediate
DE_7C	Germany	<p>Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG - Social innovation initiates ecological and economic strength.</p> <p>The Eastern German region in which Rohrlack is located appears very rural, is only scarcely populated and has a limited availability of infrastructures. Large parts of land are covered by agriculture or reserved for nature conservation, especially in the centre of the area around the town of Temnitztal itself. Agriculture is very significant to the region, which is also true for the larger region of northern Brandenburg with ecological farming playing a more important role than in other parts of Germany. The region is still increasing in population and the educational and economic level is comparable to other regions. However, a large share of the population growth and the economic activity potentially concentrates on certain larger towns.</p>	Local – below NUTS3	Predominantly rural
DE_8C	Germany	<p>Landwege e.G. - A producer-consumer cooperative enables regional and ecological food supply.</p> <p>The initiative is located in south Schleswig-Holstein; the region offers a diverse picture. The city of Lübeck and some areas in its surroundings can be considered the urban centre of the region. The district of Stormarn is located between the cities of Lübeck and Hamburg and therefore represents the comparatively wealthy commuter route of both cities. This can be interpreted by the rather small agricultural activity, a low unemployment rate and a high educational level. The other districts have their own individual features, but they can generally be described as more rural. Especially in the district of Ostholstein, there is more agricultural activity, fewer young people and lower levels of education. Like in the whole federal state of Schleswig-Holstein, the farming style seems to be rather conventional than organic.</p>	Local – below NUTS3	Intermediate
FI_9C	Finland	<p>The Come Home project in Punkalaidun municipality in 2018-2020.</p> <p>Punkalaidun municipality region: Due to decreasing and aging population, the labor force of Punkalaidun has decreased 15 % in last ten-year period and the economic dependency ratio has gone upwards to 177.9 in 2018 which is much higher than average in the province of Pirkanmaa of the</p>	Local – below NUTS3	Intermediate

		whole Finland. The unemployment rate, on the contrary, is lower in Punkalaidun than at regional or national level. There were 232 farms in Punkalaidun in 2019. Private persons owned 85.3 % of the farms. Less common were farming syndicates (8.6 %), heirs (4.3 %), limited companies (1.7 %). Males dominate farming in Punkalaidun. Females were the main farmers only in 15 % of the farms. The average age of farmers is 52.5 years, about the same as the average farmer's age in Finland. Tourism is not relevant in the area.		
HU_10C	Hungary	Newcomers artisans. The case studies were conducted in two Eastern-Hungarian counties, with agricultural character; although each county has a strong urban center, with developed industrial and service sector. The settlement structure of the area is heterogenous. The migration balance is negative in both counties for all types of settlements. The economy in the rural areas is based on agriculture, tourism is less important.	Local – below NUTS3	Rural area

1.2 Characteristics of newcomers

We analyzed the origin of practices in all ten cases classifying the main actors, the newcomers themselves who initiated the practice according to the regional context and the character of the actor: we differentiated individuals, group of individuals (non-formal cooperation), association, enterprises, municipalities and the church.

Reviewing the ten promising practices on newcomers, we found that the local level is the most common operational context, and, especially at the beginning individuals are initiating the practice. The other relatively frequent pattern is when a local institution, the municipality (IT), the church (FI) or a local enterprise initiates (see *The redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes* case - NL_3C) the practice, and they organize. Usually the initiators involve other people, as we saw in the case of the *Artystyka* (PL) or in the case of the *Cultural Festivals* in north-east Netherland later an informal association is taking over the initiative. Also, in the Italian case the promoter of the practice involved other actors: social enterprises and tourism enterprises.

While the practices are organized locally, the initiators are non-locals, newcomers according to the selection criteria, later the organizers build strong and dense networks with the different local actors. In some cases national level actors appear around the practice (IE, IT); the presence of regional level actors as promoters is rare.

Table 3. Promoters and Territorial scale

Actors	Operational Context		
	Local	Regional/Supra-municipal	National
Enterprise	NL_3C		IT (social enterprise)
Associations		PL; DE-8C	IE
Group of individuals	NL_4C		
Individuals	NL_4C; HU	PL; DE-7C	
Church	FI		
Local council	FR; IT		

Non-local individuals were very active in initiatives aiming to bring cultural activities to the rural areas: the Polish and the north-east Dutch cases have several similarities: towns people decided to start something new in a remote rural village, far from a flourishing city and as the initiative turned out to be popular, a local association linked to the founder took it over.

As the Polish report emphasizes: “the personal traits of the newcomers, such as perseverance in the initial period, play a role in the success or failure of such initiatives.” (Sivini et al 2021, p.967) It shows a general pattern: most of the initiatives are very much person bound, there are only three exceptions: the Italian, the French and the Irish cases.

If the promoters belong to a bigger organization the uncertainties deriving from personal commitment are less stressing: we see that in the case of *Castel del Giudice* (IT), or in *The Come Home project* in Punkalaidun municipality in 2018-2020 (FI) such risks are lower. By involving a stable organization, as it happened in the case of *Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG* (DE_8C) the uncertainties can be handled and reduced. Also in the case of *Landwege* (DE_7C), and the two Dutch cases (NL_3C & NL_4C) we can see that it is not linked to the activity of one person or a pair, but it seems to be a result of a longer process, through which the newcomer involved other local or non-local actors as well.

The occupational back-ground of the newcomers is often not clear: it seems that although the initiatives are linked to agriculture, and different (social) enterprises, there are almost no entrepreneurs, and the newcomers does not have experience in agricultural production. The newcomers are artists, or artisans in some cases (HU, PL, NL_4C).

In the analyzed cases not only the initiators, but also the target group of the initiative is newcomer: most of the initiatives would like to offer local, rural goods and services to urban people. Consequently, several initiatives are dependent on the urban consumers, or urban users of the offered services (NL_3C, IE_1C, It, DE_8C, NL_3C), and there are very few initiatives which are not linked to urban consumers somehow (FR, PL, HU).

Analyzing how long term are the presence of the urban consumers in the region, we see that some initiatives are planned for a longer term (IE_1C, NL_3C, NL_4C, FI), but most of them are temporary (IT, DE_7C & DE_8C), or does not even require the presence newcomers attracted by the initiative. From this perspective the Finnish example is a bit exceptional, as it aims at attracting people into the rural area for a longer period, for permanent residence.

Considering the activity described in the initiative we can see that in the intermediate areas we find initiatives which offer services to the townspeople: comparing the rural urban context of the ten newcomers promising practices, we found that six of them are intermediate areas, and four of them are predominantly rural.

1.3 Origin of practices and resources mobilization

In the following paragraph we collect the constraints and resources of the different promising practices of the newcomers and analyse, how the newcomers tried to build the initiatives on the local resources and link them to the local needs.

We also review the main barriers they had to face. In some of the cases we did not find real barriers: *Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions*; although these are slightly back-warded regions, with few jobs, the report does not emphasize barriers.

The analysed initiatives, as all over in the world, could be built on external or internal resources. There were three cases which explicitly stated that state funds were important resources, the Italian, the Finnish, and the Irish, but we can assume that those played a role also in other case, like the Hungarian, the Polish or the French.

According to the scientific literature it is a cliché that sustainable initiatives are based on local resources. Also local cultural heritage is essential according to the literature on rural development. There are several theories, like the concept of cultural capital of Ray (2002) which argues that development activities can be sustainable if those are rooted in local characteristics. It is also widely shared idea that developments should be built on local needs. From this perspective the promising practices are showing huge diversity. Not all of them can be seen as classical development initiatives (for example the French and the Hungarian ones are of other character). Available, affordable land (DE_7C) can also be an important and valuable local resource (see *Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG* case), and the favorable geographical location, like the vicinity of a large city, like in the *Landwege* case (DE_8C) also.

Table 4. Constraints & resources in the initiatives of newcomers

Constraints & resources	Strategies promoted by promising practices
<i>Rigid rules</i>	Attractive offer by the initiator → The municipality is interested in the initiative, and supports it.
<i>Administrative burdens</i>	In that specific case it was not solved (the eligibility criteria made it impossible to go for a project).
<i>Skeptiscism of the locals</i>	By local actions (involving the locals in the initiative)
<i>Natural resources (landscape, clean air)</i>	By exploring and showing it to the locals & visitors.
<i>Agricultural traditions</i>	Building new production methods on the existing practices and traditions.
<i>Cultural heritage</i>	Revitalizing and presenting it to visitors.
<i>Reinventing or importing cultural capital, into the area.</i>	Through existing networks






If we analyse the different local resources the initiatives use, we can see that local or regional agricultural traditions play an eminent role in four cases: in the *Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG*, *Landwege*, the Italian *Castel del Giudice* and *The redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes* (NL_3C) cases. Local nature had a main role in the Polish, the Hungarian, the Italian case and also to some extent in the Dutch case on *Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions* case. The role of cultural heritage and cultural capital in the initiatives is more complex: local cultural heritage played important role in the case of *Castel del Giudice* (Italy), but a kind of invented tradition also became important in the Hungarian and Polish case, although in these two latter initiatives newcomers re-invented and re-produced local cultural heritage. In these initiatives newcomers mobilize local resources and combine them with external resources to improve

local conditions. As the following quotation says: “combine honest respect for the local context with a willingness to introduce new perspectives that genuinely improve the life of the community.” (Sivini et al 2021, p. 978). In the Dutch case (*Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions*) cultural capital plays an important role, but it is definitely not linked to the locality; the initiator uses her own cultural capital, her own networks and brings them into the area.

In certain cases we found that rural idyll can be seen as local resource: the Finnish, but to a certain example the Polish and Hungarian initiatives can be examples for this.

Focusing on the issue, how the initiatives respond to the local needs, we find, that most of them does not answer to local needs: some of them are bringing completely new practices into the region, like the Polish, the *Redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes* case - NL_3C or the East-German (*Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG* - DE_7C) one, while others seek to understand the locals and answer somehow their development ideas, like the Italian case of *Castel del Giudice*, by attracting tourists, or the Dutch case on *Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions* and the Irish case which develop local services, or the Finnish case which helps to overcome the problem of depopulation and the French which explicitly answers the issue of local development.

Whether an initiative could answer somehow to the local needs and could build on local cultural heritage influenced very much, which barriers the newcomers had to face. If we have a look at the list of barriers, it mirrors the connection between newcomers and locals. The main barriers affecting the people to move to rural areas were complex:

-  Funding (IE_1C, IT, PL)
-  Rigid rules (NL_3C)
-  Administrative burdens (PL)
-  Find volunteers (IE_1C)
-  Volunteer burnout (IE_1C)

Not surprisingly funding, the lack of decent income proved to be the most frequently mentioned barrier. As a contrast to it, the lack of infrastructure was not mentioned in the case studies, as a barrier, although we know from the description of local context, that it is a more or less general problem in most of the areas.

Rigid rules and administrative burdens were also mentioned in two cases (PL & NL_3C), while the lack of volunteers was mentioned only in the Irish case.

1.4 Actors involved and legitimacy

In the following paragraph we analyse the involved actors and the legitimacy of the initiatives. Both are linked to the issues discussed in the previous paragraph on resources, local needs, and barriers.

As we saw previously the initiatives did not necessarily build on local resources and local needs, but in almost each cases the newcomers tried to involve other local actors as well. In certain cases these

efforts proved to be insufficient, like the Irish case, but in most case these aspirations resulted that beside of the newcomer other, local and non-local actors were involved in the project:



Locals individual actors (FI)



Distant individual actors (DE_8C, PL)



Locals and distant individual actors (NL_4C, DE_8C)

As the German (DE_8C) report on *Landwege* case states it is a result of “many years of voluntary commitment, perseverance and personal dedication of the pioneering work” (Sivini et al 2021, p.1191). Such involvement is also a proof of legitimacy.

In several cases not only individuals, but also local and regional policy-makers were involved in the project:



Local and regional policy makers (NL_4C, IT, FI)

Not only the character of the initiative could play a decisive role in the involvement of other stakeholders, but also the behavior, everyday practices of the newcomers. The German report emphasizes that the trust toward newcomers was strong thanks to the fact that the newcomers moved to the area and they employed locals (see *Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG* case - DE_7C).

Also clear plans could help a lot to persuade local policy-makers (DE_7C, FI, Fr), and other local actors, like in the Dutch case on Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions happened.

As we wrote previously, most of the cases are directly linked to some kind of cultural activity (HU, NL_4C, PL), agricultural activity (DE_7C & DE_8C, IT) and other services related enterprises (IE_1C, NL_3C), in this perspective it is worth noting that we found very few cases in which entrepreneurs would have been involved in the initiatives; as main actors they appear only in the *The redevelopment of empty farm stables for commercial purposes* case - NL_3C case, which redevelops empty, abandoned stables.

We could see in the case of several initiatives that newcomers leave or step-back from the initiative at a certain point, and involved actors became the main stakeholders within the project.

1.5 Sustainability, innovation and adaptability of the practices

1.5.1 Sustainability

According to the results of the case studies, it is worth distinguishing in the analysis between the aspects of *environmental sustainability* and the *possible continuity of newcomer activities*.

In the *Landkorb* and *Rohrlack*, the German examples of environmental sustainability-oriented newcomer activity, biodynamic farming began in small areas. The *Lindenhof* does not use synthetic fertilizers or chemical pesticides in vegetable production, the land is fertilized with green plants, a vegan garden market has been opened. The *Landkorb* only offers organic products for sale, together

with ecological bakery it strives to minimize food transport, they try to solve big city sales with emission-free, e-cargo bikes. The aim of the Polish *Artystyka farm* is to spread knowledge about local plants, demonstrating their practical use and finding new uses for local plants. Within the framework of agro - tourism and following the principles of permaculture, food production is carried out for their own needs, supplementing the supply of visitors with food made from fresh, high-quality ingredients.

It is not typical for the most cases examined to focus directly on environmental sustainability. The recycling of abandoned stables in the Netherlands reduces the number of new constructions, but they can also use less landscape-friendly and environmentally harmful building materials to rebuild buildings. Analysts write that farm stables for commercial recycling could reduce the pollution associated with the intensive keeping of livestock. The use of -environmentally unfriendly materials may also be prohibited in re-use contracts for empty buildings as it was the case in Green East. The success of business activity outside settlements can increase transport and the built-up of the rural landscape. The environment issues are rather unimportant in the other Dutch case study about cultural festivals.

Nor did the Castel del Giudice project in Italy explicitly set specific sustainability goals. The overriding principle is to maintain the protection of the environment to ensure the quality of local products in an area where chemicals have not been used before.

The *Remote work* program studied in Ireland also has an indirect positive environmental impact insofar as reducing the commute travels time and effect of emission. Protecting green areas and rural natural resources is of great value to environmentally conscious remote workers. In the absence of public transport and renewable energy, the heating of homes and the frequent driving to remote work hubs are somewhat at odds with the environmentally friendly values and practices of remote workers, which can only be balanced by development policy decisions.

Although the primary purpose of the production and marketing of ecological food is the *Landwege* case in Germany, it did not lead to directly perceptible positive environmental effects due to incomplete legislation of land use. The cooperative encourages the transition to organic farming and the start-up of organic farming, as well as more conscious consumption through ecology education for children.

In *Granville Terre et Mer* (France), the environment is a generally shared value, but the French report makes no mention of specific green actions for rural regeneration. Local education pays special attention to environmental education, but activities related to the specific environment, such as replanting the hedge, adapting to the climate by reducing water consumption and changing cultures, are more individual initiatives.

In Finland, the *Come Home* action does not have an environmental program at its center although four-fifths of the participants consider the landscape to be one of the main strengths and attractions of the place. As one interviewee said, this is likely to be the case elsewhere in Europe: “*Here, like everywhere the environment is the issue that we talk about, in one way or another and we take care of the environment. But I do not know what it means to these native people or if they appreciate it.*” (FI9C/Int.9 in Sivini et al 2021, p. 1236).

There are several environmental projects in case study – Punkalaidun - region (e.g. wood-chip-biomass-fired power plant, transfer from fossil fuels to wood-based bioenergy, solar panels), but these are not linked to the project set up to recall outmigrant descendants.

The Hungarian case study found only one of the twenty researched newcomer cases, which can be specifically linked to environmental issues. This NGO activity, which, based on the village's characteristics, undertook nature conservation and species protection activities, as well as environmental sensitization of the population, combined with a livestock breeding program. They see their activity as a kind of networking *"a bridge between city people, rural people and their activities. They're getting people interested in how an 8-900 kg animal can be as friendly and handsy as a dog. This makes them listen to us and all senses are affected when they come out here, they can touch, see, smell, and hear everything. Also, I can tell them information about our daily activities that are very well incorporated in the knowledge of either the children or adults, because when they are asked questions at the end about our activities to see if they were listening, it shows that they are being taken out of institutional education and given an education outside of the institution, like some sort of an experience-rich training"* (HU10C/Int. 1 in Sivini et al, 2021, p.1266).

1.5.2 Innovation and adaptability

For the purposes of the research project, newcomer activities were selected to adequately represent promising practices, and as a result, successful innovations can be learned from the case studies. First, it is worth emphasizing the significant difference between the forms, opportunities and results of innovation implemented within an **individual or corporate, group** framework.

The Irish case study, an example of corporate action, highlights that innovation is a multi-faceted concept and practice that is linked to individual and active groups, enabling remote work in many forms. **Business innovation** connects teleworkers (managers, companies, freelancers, employees) and creates space for employers and employees through communication and information channels, enabling and promoting collaboration. **Digital Innovation** offers a free online platform for community leaders and managers to learn and practice how to build a remote work network and community in rural areas, making remote work accessible and reliable to locals. *"ChangeX (the platform) is fantastic for community and cause building. If I'm honest and kind of critical in a constructive way the platform itself can still be sort of wonky. Like we kind of go through the motions of you know if you're interested you sign up and you become a member and you know you're sort of tagged within that community. But we also kind of recognised how people wanna communicate. We have a Facebook group, we have WhatsApp, we have Slack and those are kind of the tools that people are using for communicating. And frankly that's where you know we're constantly having more people join the chapters"* (IE1C/ Int. 2 in Sivini et al, 2021, , p.930).

Isolation is a recognized barrier to making visible the potentials of remote work. The **social innovation** program of the Grow Remote movement has therefore developed different platforms for each potentially interested group (remote workers, companies, and local communities) to exchange and discuss ideas and information. This model requires stakeholders to collaborate with employees to grow the community of remote workers. They operate an interactive platform "Slack" to instant connection for remote workers. *"I think is really effective because the way it's set up with different channels you know if you're interested in events, if you're interested in you know just the whole move from an urban area down to a rural area, if you're interested in policy you know there are different Slack channels set up and you can always add more"* (IE1C/ Int. 2 in Sivini et al 2021, p.931)

Grow Remote introduces **innovative governance/organizational innovation** practices across the country through the availability of specialized online platforms. There is an example that following the

guidelines of this, the rules for electing members of a community council and their obligations to mobilize remote work have been defined.

In the *Netherlands*, the *recycling of farm stables* is fundamentally innovative, as abandoned, dilapidated buildings are being renovated. Reconstruction of the building is seemingly a sole proprietorship, however, there are strict regulations governing how it can be carried out and also what the previously vacated farms can be used for. As the architectural rural renaissance is initiated and encouraged by a local company-led Green East movement and a local patriotic entrepreneur initiative, The Mouthoeve, and regulations dictate technical and usability details, farm stable reconstruction is best exemplified by **corporate innovation**. According to the case study the re-use of farm buildings for commercial purposes is highly transferable. The innovatory dimension of cultural festivals case of the Dutch study is much more limited because each aim to strengthen the countryside by combining well-established, proven methods and attractions.

In rural Molise (Italy), the culture of cooperation was not common before and innovations remained individual. The *Castel del Giudice* project, which, like the Dutch case study, aimed at recycling outdated farm buildings and lands, has brought a real innovation turn, replacing individual innovation initiatives with corporate, institutional innovation. The collective approach to the recycling of rural sites and buildings and the community cooperatives introduced an innovative form of management and thus the farm-site previously managed by the individual owner farmer was brought under collective action. The shift of innovation towards a corporate, community principle has led to clear competitive advantages: the cultivation and marketing of organic products, the introduction of non-traditional truffles and honey in the local offer, new governance through communication with the inhabitants, and involvement of young generations which *all can be and should be transferable for less developed European regions*.

The *Rohrlack* (Germany) case study presents the complex innovative practices of a single village. Social institutions revived the village by creating living and working places (integration of disabled, delivery service for organic food, organic bakery, active civil participation, annual farm festival). This is an example of effective social and business innovation, although adaptability is an open question because the components of success in other European regions are unclear, it is not known how one newcomer could convince local politicians of the feasibility of his ideas and how could persuade the residents to join. *Landwege* is an example of business innovation with a large, regional-level direct marketing that can be transferred to most European regions.

In Normandy, rural regeneration research has found promising cases of **social innovation** in two well-functioning networks. The *Mission Locale* provides social services for youth, and the *Silver Days* for the elderly. The *Terre at Mer* is rather a business and social innovation, which combines elements of complex innovation according to the following principles (see down), in which the interests of newcomers are also strongly taken into account. It is not entirely clear what the role of newcomers is in complex innovation to maintain local balance, but it would be worthwhile to make social innovation on an equal footing with economic innovation a transferable principle.

"The living well together must find its full expression with a redistribution of wealth between the coast and the hinterland, we must find a balance throughout the territory ... we must not break the existing network which is a wealth of the territory. To regroup everything in Granville would not make sense... We must recognize the different scales, recognize the role of centrality of Bréhal, La Haye Pesnel, Cérences, all these functions must be shared to bring solidary and collective answers" (FR6C/Int.23, in Sivini et al 2021, p.1131).

The innovative nature of the Finnish *Come Home* project (Punkalaidun) for local residents was the involvement of the local parish community and parish through the LEADER project. Active marketing and numerous media appearances have strengthened residents' identities and local knowledge. The *Come Home* project, although activated as a whole community, is more of a **unique innovation** with a rather limited repeatability and adaptability.

A successful example of **individual innovation** compared to corporate, group or community innovations is the Polish *Artystyka*, of which three are presented in the case study. The 'Secret spaces of the town' was an outdoor exhibition of works by artists from the region, where young locals guided interested visitors. Local residents spontaneously joined the organization of the exhibition, which proved so successful that the following year a major city biennale organized in a similar way. As the authors of the case study evaluate, "Soft 'aspects such as communication style, sensitivity to the context or symbolic appraisal of the organizers can be decisive in such a case - and the hosts of *Artystyka* seem to have been able to navigate these challenging waters successfully" (Sivini et al 2021, p.971).

A second example, the 6-month series of workshops "A three-faced woman" was organized to involve local women with aiming to create a space for their reflection, dialogue on different sphere of personal, professional and relational aspects of their life. The workshops had a lasting impact, according to interviews with participants, and effectively contributed to women's recognition of the causes and determinants of their own social position in patriarchal social settings, which also led some to take an active part in the local organization of the national strike against anti-abortion law. The third individual innovation example are the regular workshops on preparing hand-made cosmetics from locally available plants. All three of *Artystyka's* innovative initiatives have proved successful, in which the talent, openness and flexibility of the young newcomer couple paved the way in a local social environment where this was not the case before. Individual innovation is likely to be a prerequisite for the success of newcomers taking an active role in a more traditional social setting, but *the repeatability, transferability, and adaptability of the unique and personality-bound success "technology" may be questionable.*

All Hungarian newcomer respondents follow an **individual economic strategy** and look at **innovation primarily in a technical** sense. In terms of innovation, there are two groups: those who do not use innovative technologies, but who are aware of them, know about them or would like to work with them and who consider themselves innovative. Among those who do not use innovations due to a lack of opportunities, technological innovations (especially in agriculture the precision technologies) are widely known. This is considered important not only to increase productivity but also to ensure a "stimulating" working environment. They believe that they can attract young people to the jobs they offer if their needs and interests can be met.

"Well, in terms of engaging young people, I still see an opportunity in the use of gadgets. You have drones, precision farming, tractors that have computers. Young people are interested in these things. That is an important aspect. And it's really important to create a working environment that is stimulating, because I think it's stimulating even without the gadgets, but they already demand these things" (HU10C/Int.1 in Sivini et al 2021, p.1274).

When the introduction of new technologies is not the result of collective or corporate incentives, *generational conflict* can often arise concerning the innovations in technological applications. As one respondent reported, *"anytime there was a new machine, it has always been used by people who have been working there for a long time, and this is still alive in the minds of older tractor drivers, so when a*

new machine comes along, and it has a computer, and then it has to be him, not the young one, but him, who can't operate it, because he has no idea how to do it, and he can't even use 60-70% of the machine.” (Sivini et al 2021, p.1274).

The lack of capital and networking are the strong **constraints of individual technological** innovation that is difficult to overcome without collaborative patterns and practices. As an artisan newcomer reported about the negative outcome, all this does not allow technological knowledge and skill to prevail. *“So there are things that are known and I've seen abroad, but I just couldn't take advantage of them, I couldn't build a business on what somebody else has done.... That is still not available in Hungary. But I feel that I am too small to start dealing with this, to import it. I don't see a big enough opportunity to build a business in this area, because the cost of acquisition is too high. But you can't get it here in Hungary, and when I needed it, I just didn't want to pay an astronomical price to have it (HU10C/Int.3 in Sivini et al 2021, p.1274).*

But what is *behind the success* of individual innovators and how adaptable their performance is?

They avoid raising non-equity rather than credit or loan, using family resources instead. Their access to Community (EU, National, Regional) development funds is not very effective. Their success is primarily in market sales, which they have developed step by step and are unwilling or unable to connect with development programs, economic, sales, advocacy and professional organizations. A motivation for those who are constantly innovating is that they have an established customer base that they want to keep, while they also need new customers. To achieve this, they have their own innovations and novelties, which are mainly processed foods and other natural ingredients, possibly cultural products. In addition, the national and international reputation (awards, recognition, press articles) also encourages producers to maintain an innovative attitude. The market success of individual innovation may have an **incentive effect** even if its individual elements are **unlikely to be transferable**.

1.6 Creating connections

It is not entirely clear to what extent there has been an increase in the number of newcomers in the project regions. One demographic dimension of rural regeneration may be the immigration of newcomers, but there is little quantifiable data in the case studies. Really successful practices such as Remote Work in Ireland, the German examples or the Italian Castel del Giudice are rather external projects that contribute greatly to the strengthening of rural communities, create networks of new connections, but these are more institutional initiatives. It is not known to what extent *newcomer individuals* or their organizations are involved in launching and running these practices, or to what extent they are *attracting more immigrants*. The managers of the institutional, corporate development programs are mostly *not locals*, as the local administrative staff, stakeholders *are not newcomers*.

The advent of newcomers, even if not massive and continuous, has a **direct and strong impact on the social and economic reorganization** of the local community. New **economic demand and offer** have arisen for local products, goods (Hungarian cases, Terre et Mer in France, Rohrlack, Landwege in Germany), or empty stables, (as in the Netherlands), **more jobs** are being created, and in all regions newcomers are playing an active role in **nurturing traditions** (Castel del Giudice, Come Home project in Finland) and **reviving local culture** (local festivals in the Netherlands, the Polish Artystyka farm).

"I saw in the school recently as well like they're pretty much all Irish speakers or you know the families that have moved in are learning Irish to support their kids which is you know a really big deal in the community here as well. So its very positive and I love to see it happening" (IE1C/Int. 22 in Sivini et al 2021, p. 947) - expressed satisfaction with one Irish respondent.

Newcomers induce or reinforce four types of networking. **Without synergies and good relationship of newcomer institutions and individuals with local society no external, institutional or individual, economic or cultural, social initiative can succeed.** Projects that create an extensive network (Terre et Mer, Castel del Giudice, Remote Work, The Dutch Green East) or individual Artystyka are all successful in connecting with locals. According to the Hungarian cases, where most of the obstacles to local community relations have been listed, it is also clear that this is due to the weak networking of rural society, which also limits the growth of newcomer enterprises, as opposed to the German Landwege where producer - consumer cooperation enables a new food supply chain. In the newcomer - local connection the mutual synergies with different efficiencies but present in each studied cases and this can also rearrange *the internal relations of local society and lead to their renewal*, as was the case with the Finnish Come Home movement or the Castel del Giudice project.

The outer **economic business and cultural relations** of the newcomers can involve significant **external resources** in the local development, raise local taxes, create jobs (Remote Work, Green East, redevelopment of empty farm stables in the Netherlands, the Hungarian cases), increase the awareness of the place (the Dutch cultural festivals, Landwege in Germany) open cultural and innovation channels (Artystyka, the Finnish Come Home movement) and increase the local capacities by importing knowledge capital (Castel del Giudice, Terre et Mer, Landwege).

The fourth networking can enrich complex **urban-rural relationships** with new initiatives and projects. The development of the Terre et Mer in Normandy or Finnish Come Home seeks to directly counteract rural depopulation by facilitating urban immigration and tourism, resolving conflicts between newcomers and locals, consciously changing the image of the countryside and persuading local stakeholders. Terre et Mer encouraged a network of villages, small towns, central towns. *"We do not find this elsewhere.... many actors are pushed to work together and once the network is created, it becomes systematic"* (FR6C/Int.2 in Sivini et al 2021, p.1113) as a French respondent highlighted the benefits of networking.

The Finnish village of Punkalaidun has achieved marketing success in recalling migrants as a result of the local reputation of the local newspaper (Punkalaitumen Sanomat) and the efforts of local businesses, LEADER action groups and voluntary organizations.

1.7 Institutional support and policies for newcomers

The success of newcomer promising practices may be highly correlated with multivariate institutional and political factors, the common determinant of which is dependence on external sources and regulations. Regulatory, legislative, structural, and political campaign issues can only be addressed in the broader political field, and this is faced by most of those involved in the newcomer issue. All that can be said is that a detailed regulatory and incentive system at the state or provincial level is not in place, even in countries where the essence of the rural newcomer issue is recognized. The gaps in legislation are mentioned in most reports even though the challenge of rural depopulation cannot be successfully addressed by local actors alone. The taxation system, building regulations, new jobs,

investments in infrastructure and convincing persuading campaigns which all determine rural depopulation/repopulation, should be on the agenda of the national, provincial level of politics.

In the case of *Remote work*, the broader policy field acknowledges the validity of the initiative against rural depopulation, but the detailed elaboration of support and regulation is at an early stage. The Irish case study mentions further necessary policy measures and rules in the area of taxation and housing (due to inconsistencies in locationless employment but not locationless pay rates and unresolved tax issues for remote workers in non-Irish companies). *"Yeah it's kind of difficult. So while I am considered an employee of the company by the company I'm actually self-employed because the laws are that you can't be employed by a company that doesn't have an entity within Ireland. So they'd have to be a legal Irish entity to employ me so they can't employ me so I'm an independent contractor which means I'm basically self-employed as far as the Irish government is concerned so I have all of my taxes and my own accounting to do and my husband is the same"* (IE1C/Int. 12 in Sivini et al 2021, p.939).

The expanding housing opportunities for remote workers in Ireland requires cross-sectoral public development, which can best be created at the state level. Cross-sectoral development is also a practical approach in the Italian *Castel del Giudice* and the French *Terre et Mer*, which, although municipal programs, but transferability of their local success are not conceivable without the effective intervention of the state.

The two Dutch case studies did not report any particular state support, nor did they report constraints. The reusing of empty land stables and cultural festivals are more subject of development policy at the provincial and municipal levels, which is a kind of progressive decentralization.

The development of *Castel del Giudice* is a promising practice for the harmonization of public and private resources, rather at the municipal / local level, linked to the national policy level by the local managerial project class and the municipal council in a successful fundraising activity.

French public policies on rural development have failed to ensure that good practices are transferable, remain operational beyond the duration of the project, and eliminate the conflicts of power in competing for resources. The French *Terre et Mer* project is just a good example of how to counteract the weaknesses of national development programs to overcome these constraints and realize a rural regeneration.

The Finnish interviews highlighted difficulties in obtaining and using external funds, EU and national, and regulating projects. *"One thing that is bothering me is that often in these kinds of projects, the idea and goals are very good but many times they are alive just the time when that project is running. They rarely have any permanent effects"* (FI9C/Int.6 in Sivini et al 2021, p.1244).

The rigid and overcomplicated project bureaucracy, the lack of direct link between the administration, the project class and the locals in the top-down system, the insufficient project efficiency, all items which are on the Finnish critical list that are symptomatic of most areas studied in the project. After unsuccessful attempts, *Arystyka* Farm also stopped applying for development project funding. Hungarian young newcomer artisans primarily use family resources because they have difficulty integrating into the power networks required for successful application. In *Rohrlack*, the decisive promoter of the village doesn't use public subsidies and after the village was merged into a larger administrative unit, it also became difficult to obtain local subsidies.

Newcomer activities are not really the focus of public policies, the more they are integrated into the local / municipal policy environment, without the contribution of immigrants to local development is

not very feasible. Cooperation with local politics is not always conflict-free. Despite all successful initiatives, *Arystyka* Farm has not been able to gain the support of the local council in accessing development funds. Finnish or Dutch projects to renovate buildings have been severely hampered by rigid building regulations and slow and cumbersome administration. The German *Landwege* practice has been debated with local regulations regarding the interpretation of bio-land use rules. The Hungarian case has shown most clearly that local stakeholders can also consider newcomer artisans to be rivals in the competition for development funding or controlling over them.

There are three successful examples of newcomer - local stakeholder collaboration in the case studies. In the practices of *Castel del Giudice*, Local Mission at *Terre et Mer* action, and *Rohrlack*, the representatives of newcomer developments are personally integrated into the power networks of local stakeholders, able to persuade and sometimes lead local representative bodies and institutions. Reconciling the interests of local social actors in such networks is successful. Effective newcomers can be expert / manager integrators of project class (*Castel Del Giudice*), custodians of development visions (*Rohrlack*) or harmonizers of solidarity-based, multidimensional networks (*Terre et Mer*, Local Mission).

The other successful form of cooperation is more the world of economic/business-oriented newcomers (*Dutch cases, Landwege, Remote work*). The stakeholders-newcomers collaboration is less personal than institutional in nature, of which the case studies list many effective and fruitful examples. Reconciliation of interests takes place through rules and less through personal networks, but the conditions for successful rural regeneration are the same as for the more embedded relations context.

In Finland, the promising practice of *Come Home* project is in fact the least similar to the other cases because in village it was not the newcomers who started activities for rural regeneration but the local council, parish and entrepreneurs became the agent and actor of recalling the descendants. In Europe, this is not a unique direction for reversing rural depopulation, in which it is not newcomers but committed locals play an active role.

1.8 Impact on generational renewal/rural regeneration and perspectives.

The impact of the "newcomers" on rural regeneration is **widely understood in the case studies** and includes efforts to demographically renew the countryside, the contribution of immigrants' economic, cultural and social activities to local and regional development. The *individual* newcomer innovations are *much less able to promote* rural renewal than corporate, collaborative actions and programs, although individual initiatives can also be *significant* in municipalities where *comprehensive strategies are lacking*. *Cross-sectoral strategies* are a prerequisite for successful multi-stakeholder strategies, while sectoral developments may have a limited impact. Multisectoral initiatives *focus primarily on* economic / *trade and tourism* links and expect demographic renewal (moving to villages, retaining young people, resettling descendants) *as a kind of automatic recovery* of cooperation of locals and outsiders in mostly external origin development programs. The already established immigrant-local population relations, where depopulation is not the primary threat, but rather the increase of internal coherence and sustainability of regional society, which require even more multisectoral and multi-objective strategies.

The aim of the research project was to find and compare promising practices. We do not have data on the demographic appearance and activity of newcomers in rural regions and settlements in Europe as an added value for the development or maintenance of the place. Based on our research, we can say with certainty that although newcomer practices are not a common panacea for rural development, they *can achieve and generate strategic progress* in essential dimensions. There is no newcomer activity that does not have a positive *economic* impact, be it job creation, income, production and distribution of new and traditional products, cultural goods or the expansion of tourism, all of which can bring infrastructural developments, new activities and forms of enterprise, the urban-rural strengthening relations and introducing new values. The advancement of *fundraising, professional project expertise*, dissemination of knowledge capital and technical modernization can also be associated with newcomer ideas and practices, as well as expanding economic and project *networking*. The direct and indirect *environmental impacts* are not necessarily part of all newcomer contributions, but the study also appeared in two-thirds of cases. *Social impact and cohesion* are a common consequence, even for those who follow individual innovation, from entrepreneurial example to conscious social organization and the revival of traditional values, to the transformation of environmental attentiveness and coexistence norms. Awareness and acceptance of *new forms of governance* may also be part of the spread of newcomer institutional and corporate innovations.

In order for this to have a massive effect, it is necessary **to reform the practice of European rural development policies and projects**, which will enable and encourage, through financial means, cross-sectoral programs at regional level that are also open to the adoption and embrace of unique, individual initiatives.

2 New entrants into farming

(by Silvia Sivini, Annamaria Vitale and Mauro Conti)

2.1 Introduction

New entrant into farming (NE) is a complex multi-faceted concept and as pointed out by EIP-AGRI (2016), should be defined in specific contexts so that it is fit for purpose.

Ruralization aim to **distinguish the innovative practices that facilitate new entrants into farming and the focus is on the farm activity and on the enabling territorial conditions**; the ten case studies on new entrants were selected as considered promising.

We acknowledge that new entrants may or may not be a ‘rural newcomers’ and can enter farming at any stage in their working lives. They can also be distinguished by their previous connection to farming as there is “a substantial grey area between the extremes of ex novo new entrants and direct successors to farming businesses” (EIP-Agri 2016, p.6). As shown by the previous literature analysis (Kinsella et al, 2020) mainly five different elements can be identified in the definitions of new entrants formulated by scholars in different European countries. These are related to: their background, the establishment of a new farm, the farm succession process, the age of farmer and the innovations introduced into the farm. Even if a definition has proven to be challenging, we defined new entrants as “a person that starts a professional existence in farming or that is integrated into an existing farm” (Kinsella et al 2020, p.12). As underlined by the NEWBIE network “they comprise a wide range of ages, agricultural experience and resource access”.

The comparative analysis highlights different issues in the pathway to enter into farming which is articulated in different phases. We may distinguish at the poles an upstream phase where the enabling factors and the territorial conditions to enter into farming are created (focusing on: raising awareness on rural jobs; generating knowledge/education on sustainable farming; promoting of farmland/farm accessibility; favoring access to information and knowledge exchange); and a downstream phase when new entrants enter into farming (the focus of the analysis is on actors involved, legal forms adopted by the farms; style of farming; resources mobilization; innovation introduced; networking; institutional and policies supports).

In selecting the case studies, the European [urban-rural typology](#) applied to NUTS level 3 have been considered to ensure a diversity of the sample.

The ten case studies compared are detailed in Table 5. The predominant phase of the new entrants’ pathway, the scale and the type of agriculture promoted have been highlighted.

Table 5. New entrants into farming case studies and main characteristics

Case study	New entrants pathway	Country	Scale	Region Typology	Location	Type of agriculture
1. The UK Farmstart Network: supporting new farmers to build their skills – (UK_1A)	Upstream	United Kingdom	National	Crosses all region types	North Europe	Agro-ecological approach

2.Farma Martinika: an ecotouristic and educational farm showing that changing from urban to rural life is difficult but possible (PL_2A)	Downstream	Poland	Local	Intermediate	Central-East Europe	Organic/ Multifunctional
3.Farms with strong citizen participation (NL_BE_3A)	Downstream	Netherland and Belgium	Local	Predominantly urban, intermediate	North West Europe	Byodynamic/ Organic
4.Farming AgriCultures. The case of Apulian new entrants: Association and Agricultural Cooperative “Casa delle AgriCulture – Tullia e Gino” (IT_4A)	Upstream/ Downstream	Italy	Local	Predominantly urban	Mediterranean	Agro-ecology/ Multifunctional
5.The Versailles Plain’s Association and peri-urban agriculture diversification (FR_5A)	Upstream	France	Regional (below NUTS3)	Predominantly urban	North-West Europe	Multifunctional/ Organic/small scale farming
6.Farm collectives: a lever for an agricultural and rural transition (FR_6A)	Downstream/ Upstream	France	Local	Predominantly rural	North-West Europe	Organic/ agro-ecology/ Multifunctional
7.Gut Wulksfelde GmbH-Entrepreneurial approach and ecological goals well balanced (DE_7A)	Downstream	Germany	Local	Intermediate	North-West Europe	Organic/ Multifunctional
8.Rural Professions Association (Maaseutuammattiin ry) in North Savo (FI_8A)	Upstream	Finland	Regional	Predominantly rural	North-West Europe	All
9.The successors and new entrants in Hungary. Dr.Krisztina Pocsai and other farmers (HU_9A)	Downstream	Hungary	Regional	Intermediate, Predominantly rural	Central-Est Europe	All
10.Dávid Deilinger-New entrants in farming (HU_10A)	Downstream	Hungary	Regional	Intermediate, Predominantly rural	Central-Est Europe	All

2.2 The context

A comparative overview of the territories in which the ten promising practices compared are located shows commonalities and differences.

The context where the practices are displayed seems to have effect in the establishment and in the implementation of the practices analysed. The information in Table 6 summaries the basic demographic, socio-economic, and agricultural characteristics of each practices’ context.

Table 6. New entrants into farming case studies contexts

Case study Code	Contexts
UK_1A	The farm incubators involved in the network are located in eight local contexts (in Scotland, Wales, England), mainly intermediate, with population ranging from 48,085 to 653,798 inhabitants. General process of ageing and wealth gap widening. Main employment sectors are wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles, human health, social work activities, education.

D5.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON RURAL NEWCOMERS, NEW ENTRANTS INTO FARMING AND FARM SUCCESSORS

	Agriculture dominated by livestock, dairy, and cereal production, with ageing farm population. Farm management and ownership identified as white British.
PL_2A	<i>Farma Martinika</i> is located in Jarosówka, a small rural village (less than 300 inhabitants) of the municipality of Chojnów (13.000 inhabitants - population density 40,9 inh./km ²) with limited availability of infrastructures. Most of the territory (68%) is used for arable land; due to fragmented land ownership structure and poor quality soils, agriculture tend to become a complementary activity to other forms of activity (grazing animals, growing hay for horse feed). Presence of several horse studs mainly run by people coming from other areas and not involved in local social life.
NL_BE_3A	The <i>Herenboeren Land van Weert farm</i> is situated in the municipality of Weert (Western Limburg, Netherlands) where only one third of the area is used as cultivated land (main occupational sector are industry, services and commerce); the <i>De Wassende Maan farm</i> (DWM) is located in Astene, which is part of the the municipality of Deinze (Eastern Flanders) where almost two-thirds of the area has been zoned as agricultural land and characterized as 'intensive livestock farming and cattle'. Both municipalities are medium cities, with a population respectively of 50.109 and 43.580 inhabitants and a population density of 479,24inh./km ² and 342inh./ km ² ; good infrastructures, with relatively ageing but affluent population (low unemployment rate) and resident population and local government very sensitive to environmental issues.
IT_4A	The Association and the Cooperative <i>Casa delle AgriCulture</i> are situated in Castiglione d'Otranto, a small rural hamlet (less than 1000 inhabitants) of Andrano Municipality (4.666 inhabitants - population density 301 inh./km ²) in the Apulian Salento peninsula, characterized by ageing, but also by a high level of youth education; the share of migrants is higher than the regional one. Agriculture land fragmentation, small-scale farming system and ageing farm population results in land abandonment, a process strongly accelerated by the desiccation of olive trees by the <i>Xylella</i> bacterium. However, over 41% of the holding managers in Andrano are women.
FR_5A	The <i>Versailles Plain's Association</i> operates in the plain of Versailles (in the Yvelines department); it is articulated on 25 municipalities and 5 communities of municipalities, constitutes an agricultural and natural area in the middle of centralized and urbanized metropolis of Paris, affected by urban sprawl drove by expanding housing and commercial areas. Its agriculture is traditionally characterized by relatively small farms and activity, especially cereals, with little diversification, but recently development of local and diversified peri-urban agriculture. Although a diversified social mosaic (rural municipalities mostly inhabited by executives of the upper classes and large cities with working-class neighborhoods), the plain is located in a rather rich department, where a large consuming population with high incomes offers economic development prospects for quality products.
FR_6A	The three farms investigated, <i>Toussacq</i> , <i>Belêtre</i> and <i>Champ Boule</i> , are respectively located in Villenauxe-la-Petite (located in Seine-et-Marne Department, the largest agricultural department of the Île-de-France region), Dolus-le-Sec (located in the Indre-et-Loire department) and Barjac (located in the Ariège department) are small municipalities, with few inhabitants (respectively: 419, 671 and 42 inhabitants; 20 inhab./km ² , 25 inhab./km ² , and 15 inhab./ km ²). Classified as rural (Villenauxe-la-Petite, Dolus-le-Sec) and very rural (Barjac), they are situated in the area of influence of larger cities (Paris-adjacent urban towns, Tours, Saint-Girons), register a good rate of employment and a high proportion of residents commuting to nearby towns and cities to work; the economic weight of agriculture remains significant, but provides a relatively small percentage of jobs.
DE_7A	<i>Gut Wulksfelde GmbH</i> is situated in Tangstedt, a rather wealthy small town of 6,466 inhabitants (about 160 inh/km ²), one of the more populated town of the Stormarn district (Schleswig-Holstein), registering a population increase due to a higher in- than outmigration. Agriculture plays an important role, since more than half of the land is used for agriculture. Being part of the commuter belt of Hamburg, it is very well connected (several bus lines and the national road 432 crossing the town); it is characterised by a high level of education and a low unemployment rate, an aging population and high- income households.
FI_8A	The <i>Rural Professions association (Maaseutuammattiin ry)</i> operates in the province of North Savo, situated in the zone of boreal forests, is covered mostly by forests and inland waters, and is characterized by a low population density (14.4 inh/km ² ; 249.003 inhabitants). Economy is dominated by agriculture and forestry: the agricultural production structure is based on dairy and beef cattle farms, to which the use of farmland is strictly connected (fodder grasslands, feed barley, oats, mixed crops and whole crop cereals); the importance of forest industry (wood-products industries and the pulp and paper industries, industrial roundwood removals from the forest) is also connected to the most significant industrial sector (machinery and energy technology industry). Rural areas suffer from aging and depopulation; decrease of working age people results in shortage of skilled professionals, also due to decreasing attraction to the education and professions of agriculture and forestry.
HU_9A HU_10A	The <i>farmers interviewed</i> (20 for each case study) operates in the two counties of Hajdú-Bihar (Intermediate region) and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg (Predominantly rural) situated in the North Great Plain region, a key strategic area for Hungary's agricultural development, since a large part of its territory is suitable for intensive agricultural farming, and the soil quality is of outstandingly high quality. In both counties, the decisive form of agricultural production is the family farm and the role of agricultural enterprises in providing employment and income significantly exceeds national indicators, although the average income is significantly lower than the national average.

	<p>However, there are important differences between the two counties. With a lower population density (85 inh./ km²- total population 528.000 inhabitants), Hajdú-Bihar County is nevertheless advantaged by the quality of the land, the resulting different sowing structure, income-generating capacity, the development of the processing industry and infrastructural dotation. Most of the area is occupied by settlements with an agricultural town past, and most still boast city status; the threshold for urbanization is high (around 10,000 inhabitants) and a large number of settlements with more or less urban functions. The majority of the village population, with a significant number of people with higher education degrees, lives in a more populous environment, with a structured local society, able to provide locally to the primary needs of the residents.</p> <p>Szabolcs-Szatmár County has a population density of 93 inh./ km² and the total population is 553.000 inhabitants; has an higher number of farms, agriculture is mainly based on small farm, whose dominant activity is fruit growing. While the south-western part has the same endowments as Hajdú-Bihar County, the other half includes a much smaller population and a much larger number of small settlements, with poor network of institutions; in the small villages, basic services are inadequate, housing and infrastructure are scarce, unemployment is well above average and commuting is difficult due to poor public transport. There is significant out-migration from the area, especially among the educated and physically active people.</p>
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2.3 Origin of practices and resources mobilization

The case studies can be analyzed by considering three groups of practices on the basis of different types of promoters and their territorial scale of action (Table 7). It must be recognized that practices that operate at local level have effects (in terms of subjects involved, markets, networks of relationships) beyond the municipal level in which they operate.

Table 7. Promoters and Territorial scale

Promoters	Scale of action		
	Local	Regional / Supra-municipal	National
Associations		FR_5A, FI_8A	UK_1A
Group of individuals	IT_4A, FR_6A (Champ Boule, Belêtre), DE7A, NL3A		
Individuals	PL_2A, BE_3A, HU_9A, HU_10A, FR_6A (Toussacq)		

The main promoters of the first group are Associations formally established. In the United Kingdom, in 2019, a *National network of Horticultural and agroecological farm incubators* were set up by the Land Workers' Alliance (LWA) to develop best practice and increase opportunities for new entrants into sustainable agriculture; in Finland, in the province of North Savo the *Maaseutuammattiin ry Association* was established in 2011 to promote the availability of new entrepreneurs and skilled professionals for agriculture and forestry as well as to increase the awareness and networking of the field; in France, the *Versailles Plain's Association*, a multi-actors governance operator, was set up in 2004 to facilitate the emergence of projects of common interest around the agricultural areas of the Versailles plain –an agricultural and natural area surrounded by big cities. **When the practices are promoted by Associations operate at a territorial level higher than the single municipality, mainly regional or national level, focusing mostly on the enabling factors that facilitate new entrants into farming.**

The second group is composed by the practices where the main promoters are informal group of people. In the Netherland, the *Herenboeren Land van Weert Farm* it was inspired by a group of local conscious consumers; it is run by the Herenboeren Cooperative that started farming in 2015. It is one of the farms that operate under the umbrella of the Herenboeren Netherlands Foundation. The aim is






to create a farm that can feed approximately 200 households that are the shareholders of the cooperative; in Italy, a group of friends, after a few years of informal activities, set up in 2013 the Association “Casa delle AgriCulture”. Their aims are two-fold: develop a new narrative on sustainable farming and living in the countryside and promote demonstrative actions related to the protection of the landscape, to the production of a healthy and good food through organic farming, the re-use of abandoned land and the recovery of ancient biotypes. In 2019, to manage all the farming activities a Cooperative was created. In France, exchanges within groups of friends, during the university and their first professional experiences, on the possibility to set up a farm collective is at the basis of the two farms - *Belêtre* and *Champ Boules*. The former was set up in 2014, the latter in 2012. In Germany, in 1989 two organic groups (in total 6 people) lease the *farm Gut Wulksfelde* from the city of Hamburg under the condition of ecological farming. They have different motivations ranging from social or political issues to the creation of a “nice, big agricultural project” (DE7A/int.1 in Sivini et al 2021). It is managed by a holding that include four company with limited liability. **When the practices are promoted by informal groups of individuals they operate mainly at the local level and the most common organizational structure adopted is that of the cooperative or association. Shareholders can be conscious consumers like in the Netherland, farmers as in *Champ Boule* in France or multi stakeholders like in Italy, Germany and in the *Belêtre* farm in France.**

Finally, there are practices where individuals have been the promoters. In 1979, in Belgium a woman decided to start biodynamic farming, accessing land in an informal way, and setting up *De Wassende Maan Farm*. Over the years many changes occur. The business is actually run by a cooperative and a nonprofit association. Farmers, since 2016, are employed full time by the cooperative. Shareholders of the latter are mainly consumers (customers of the farm shop, biobox subscribers). The Association was set up to acquire land that was leased to the farm and coordinate the work of volunteers’ that are involved in activities like the construction of farmers’ educational path or pruning trees. In France, in 2009 a farm’s owner, in connection with the Île-de-France CSA network, promote a project of a farm incubator in *Toussacq*. His aim was to “find ways to get young people in agriculture” (FR6A/int.2 in Sivini et al, 2021). Gradually, the *Champs des Possibles* (CdP), a cooperative society of collective interest (SCIC) acting as business incubator, took over the entire farm lease. In Poland, a couple decided in 2013 to move in the countryside from Warsaw to start organic and multifunctional farming. Selling their flats in the city they were able to buy *Farma Martynika*. They did not want to live in the city, escaping from stress, noise, rush and smog, they chose to live in peaceful surroundings, healthier and tastier. Their basis idea was to completely change their way of life and the aspect of self-sufficiency was also important to them. In Hungary, mainly family farms established by young people (less than 37 years old) where analysed. The new farmers were motivated by “the desire to set up an own farm but in many cases also by the uncertainty of job opportunities” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.426); for several of them “the idea of self-sufficiency and sustainability emerged as a specific motive” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.393). Working outdoor and love of nature are also dominant motivations among them. The vast majority start with a small area and after some years many have over 100 hectares. Several of them, operating in the more underdevelopment eastern region of the Country, established a direct “almost friendly” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.395) relationship with the consumers and their production is market through short supply chains, although they acknowledge the difficulties related to the attitude of local people in recognizing the value of quality products. The new farmers are either full time and part time. Two main vision emerged among them. On one side there are farmers who decide to not grow at all cost as they prefer to maintain their current production avoiding stress, but are open to diversification. And on the other side there are farmers that are looking to expand their production and their farm through acquiring new lands, introducing technologies into the field, diversifying products, open new

market segment, etc. In Hungary, the entry of new generations is “strongly succession-bond” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.409) as without inherited financial, material, knowledge capital is extremely difficult to enter into farming. “Supportive family background (material, financial, resources and knowledge transfer) played a major role in their commitment to agriculture” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 426). They are typically not involved in alternative farming; they do not follow agro-social principles and a peasant style, as conceptualized by Ploeg (2008). It is not typical that new entrants form a collective but they usually have strong connections to the localities where they set up the farms, being integrated into the local community. **When the practices are promoted by individuals operate mainly at local level. Over the years, some of these have undergone many changes; especially when strong links are established with local consumers and civil society, a cooperative/association/company have been set up to manage the farm, like in Germany, Belgium and in the Toussacq farm in France. In Poland and Hungary most of new entrants run family farms and their entry into farming is strongly facilitated by inherited financial, material and knowledge, like in Hungary, or by personal financial capital, like in Poland.**

2.3.1 Constraints and solutions adopted

The main barriers affecting the entry of new people into farming are:

-  lack of information mainly on land available; on public grants (available and how to access it); on profitable markets;
-  knowledge and limited training opportunities, especially on multifunctional agriculture and «agroecological farming»;
-  access to land;
-  high start up cost;
-  cultural barrier. Low awareness and interest towards rural jobs, agriculture and livelihoods (also due to low prestige of agricultural professions especially in some countries). Low awareness on the inclusive capacity of the agroecological and strong multifunctional agricultural model. Distrust/resistance by local residents/local community on the establishment of new farms/new way of farming.

The promising practices analysed show different strategies to overcome these barriers (Table 8).

Table 8. Constraints in the establishment of new entrants into farming and strategies promoted

Constraints	Strategies Promoted by promising practices			
<i>Lack of Information</i>	Farm incubators	Multi-actors local governance	Consultants/association of young farmers	
<i>Knowledge and Limited Training</i>	Farm incubators	Multi-actors local governance		
<i>Access to land</i>	Farms with collective organizational structures	Local policies	Citizens and consumers as farm shareholders	Parental help

<i>High start up cost</i>	Farms with collective organizational structures	Local policies	Citizens and consumers as farm shareholders	Family economic resources/ public grants
<i>Cultural Barriers</i>	Multi actor network to sensitize students and society to rural jobs	Events, public debates, cultural actions	Adoption of specific measures to face local communities' concerns	Farm visits

Establishing farm incubators at local level, creating a network of farm incubators at national level or setting up a multi-actors local governance are example of strategies that could be implemented to guarantee the availability of information, knowledge and training, also on multifunctional and agroecological farming. In Hungary, village farmers, consultants, tender writers and interest representative organization provide information and help in accessing grants as well as the Hungarian Association of Young Farmers (AGRYA).

Accessing land could be facilitated by local policies by setting up farm in urban surrounding on public lands. Strong citizen involvement, for example as shareholders of farms, could also be a land access strategy as well as the adoption of a collective organizational structure by the farm. The same measures are helpful in facing the startup cost of the farm.

Parental help (in terms of land, family/partner's family assets, knowledge transfer), availability of own economic resources gained through selling own assets and compensation vouchers seems to be the more common measures to face high start-up cost and access to land in the Eastern Countries.

Local meetings and events can be very helpful in overcoming distrust/resistance on the part of local residents/communities, as well as taking specific measures by the farm to respond to any concerns of local communities. For example, in the Netherlands, before starting the farm, many public meetings were organized, especially targeting those who live around the farm, and specific measures were taken to address the concerns of neighbors.

A new narrative on rural regenerations and sustainable agriculture maybe facilitated by the organization of events, cultural actions, farm visits, public debates, involving local communities and schools. Examples could be the organization of the Green Night event - five days of meetings, shows, debates focused on sustainable agriculture and the organization of collective sowing involving children, young people, elderlies, migrants promoted by *Casa delle AgriCulture* Association; the creation of a network among universities, vocational schools, farmers associations/unions with the specific aim of sensitize secondary school students and the society more in general on agricultural activities/professions, like the Finnish *Rural Professions* Association; the adoption of a multi-actors local governance (involving farmers, politicians and local communities), like the *Versailles Plain* Association, is also a measure that could contribute to change practices and mentalities around agriculture and food.

2.3.2 Resources mobilization

Main resources mobilised and turned to advantage the emergence of the practices have been:



Natural resources mainly land (acquired, leased or free leased) and soil;



Human resources (in all the practices): knowledge, skills and competencies of the promoters, acquired through formal education or/and developed informally;



Cultural resources (all the practices) mainly linked to the common values of the promoters with particular reference to sustainable agriculture methods and to a common vision of rural regeneration and not specifically to the cultural capital of the territory where the practices are implemented;



Social capital; it seems to have an important role in setting up practices that act mainly in creating the enabling conditions for the establishment of new entrants; and in the development of all the practices (see Par.2.8).



There is evidence that political capital is not relevant for the emergence of the practices, unless in the German case where the Hamburg Senate decided to promote a public call for tenders to lease Gut Wulksfelde farm.



Financial resources were found involving consumers/citizens in the farms adopting a collective model structure organisation, like in the Netherland, Belgium, France and Italy. In Poland and Hungary, the financial resources for setting up farms come mainly from the personal assets of promoters or their families, and to a lesser extent from access to the “Young Farmer” grants and the compensation vouchers. In the practices promoted by associations financial resources for establishing the initiatives have been found through Charitable Trust, like in the English case or by the contributions of the associated partner, like in Finland and France.

It seems that intangible resources (human and cultural) are determining factors in the emergence of promising practices, although cultural resources are shared in many cases by the promoters and actors involved in the practice but are often not immediately shared by the whole local community.

2.4 Actors involved and legitimacy

Cross case analysis highlights different type of actors involved in the practice. We may distinguish four main groups of case studies on the basis of the specific aims and organization model of the practices.

1. Practices operating mainly upstream in the new entrant’s pathway to create an enabling territorial context;
2. Practices supporting individuals into their decision to enter into farming. The organizational model is the Farm incubator or Farmstarts.
3. Practices of farms adopting different collective organizational model. Shareholders can be only conscious consumers; only farmers or multi-stakeholders.
4. Practices of family farms operated by new entrants.

Although, in some cases there is a substantial grey area between the groups.

In the first group a variety of actors are involved directly in the practice, including farmers, farmers’ union, association and NGO, municipalities, local community, research institutions and vocational schools. The aims are to create a public space to debate on rural regeneration and rural jobs, to facilitate the emergence of projects of common interest around the agricultural areas, either referred to a geographical and historical context, as in the Versailles Plain either to a regional area as in the case of the Finnish Nort Savo Province. Enhancing awareness on the opportunities related to rural jobs and

intervening on the enabling factors for the establishment of new entrants to agriculture and facilitating the permanence of farmers characterize these two practices.

The *Finland Rural Professions Association*, with over 50 members, is a non-governmental organization established to promote the availability of new entrepreneurs and skilled professionals for agriculture and forestries and to increase the awareness and networking of the field. The decreasing trend of number of students in agriculture and forestry and the awareness that there would be, in the near future, scarcity of skilled persons and employees in agriculture and forestry have been the push factors that favour the establishment of this wide network. It includes all the relevant actors “from primary production in agriculture and forestry to big industrial companies” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 363).

The French *Versailles Plain Association* has been set up as a multi-actors governance involving farmers, civil society and elected officials. The risk of a rapid deterioration of the Versailles Plain and the necessity to preserve and develop agricultural activities in the area were the push factors that favour the aggregation of the actors. This issue has been recognized in the public debate after an audit process that involves over ninety stakeholders (farmers, elected officials, associations, state services). It is based on a tripartite organization that include a consultative body (college of elected representatives; college of farmers; college of association, individuals and companies – or civil society); a technical team and an executive body. This kind of organization allow to bring together several stakeholders who rarely communicate together and “it manages to unite them around common values and projects” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.221).

In the second group the promising practices are referred to the model of Farmstarts/Farm Incubators of broadly small-scale and agroecological farming. These kinds of practices involve more specifically new entrants, farmers and farmers organization.

The aims of a Farmstarts/Farm incubators are to support new entrants into farming offering different services, training, access to land and to the market.

Farmstarts may offer different services, as shown by the *English network of Farmstarts* where there are mainly three model:

“Model 1 - Access to land, some (limited) support with infrastructure, business planning, and routes to market, but Farmstarters are essentially running their own businesses on a given piece of land.

Model 2 - Formal practical and theoretical training programme, including visits to and talks by other farms, run by an experienced trainer, to meet the needs of a range of experience levels of participants, with some access to land or established routes to market. There are different levels of decision-making or independence within this model - Farmstarters may have some input into crop planning, markets and so on, but this is usually decided upon and facilitated by the Farmstart organisation.

Model 3 - Access to land/infrastructure only.” (Sivini et al 2021, p.38)

The *English network*, that actually include 8 Farmstart, it has been created to coordinate and exchange information, through events, meetings or farm visits, between existing Farmstarts and research into and piloting of accredited training and mentoring programmes. “Events, meetings or farm visits are organised to share experiences among Farmstart, learn from each other (e.g. by comparing lease documents) and strategise” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.38). The network has developed a Farmstart Guide, a successfully resource not only for the network members but also for the organisations thinking about setting up a Farmstart.

In France, the *Champ des Possibles* (CdP) farm incubator is structured as a cooperative society of collective interest (SCIC), which has a legal trading status. The members of the cooperative “belong to

seven different panels: employees, counsellors, local authorities and public institutions, salaried entrepreneurs, citizens, farms and related structures, and technical and economic partners” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.264). The farmers in the CdP have two possible status: incubated entrepreneurs associated with the cooperative via a “support contract for business setting-up” (*contrat d’appui au projet d’entreprise [CAPE]*) during the test period; or, often after a trial period, salaried farmers. The aim of the Cooperative is to “bring together aspiring farmers and addresses material and economic aspects related to entering agriculture” (Sivini et al, 2021, p.258).

Building better coordinated and mutually supportive local food systems and more generally social and ecological justice imperatives are the push factors at the basis of the collaboration among Farmstart/Farm incubators/ex Farmstarters and the local community or local association/institutions. As described in the case studies reports:

“The community members may act as volunteer labourers at the Farmstart or ex-Farmstarters’ businesses (e.g. to support with particular peaks of labour or to enhance their own mental health and wellbeing) (...) They may also buy products from the Farmstart or businesses established by ex-Farmstarters, either at the farm gate, through box schemes, via traditional markets (e.g. grocery or farmers’ market stalls in nearby urban centres) or newer online platforms. (...) Some Farmstarts are linked to local NGOs which work on sustainable food issues and can raise awareness of their work, provide small pots of funding, or even open up routes to market” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 33-34)

“Locally, we can observe the development of clientele for the farm shop and more and more young people from the local area are hosted on the farm for training courses or apprenticeships” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 278)

Cultural capital, in terms of common values, seems to be relevant in the involvement of different actors (not only at local level) in the activities carried out by the farm incubators.

“This farm has the specificity of maintaining strong links with more distant citizen communities, notably CSA community located in the urban areas of Montreuil and Pontault-Combault (80-100 km from the farm). CSA members organize participatory work on the farm, convivial moments and support producers when necessary” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 278).

In the third group, we have practices that are characterized by the movement from individual to collective way of farming. As Agarwal and Dorin (2019) underline is a third way of farming that goes beyond family farms and corporate agriculture. These kinds of farms, managed mainly by cooperatives/associations, seems to help new entrants to get into agricultural activities, overcoming issues such as access to the land and high start -up cost that are mutualized.

Main actors involved are new entrants into farming, farmers, consumers and civil society. Most of the practices involves also volunteers in their activities.

In some of the farms analysed farmers have the status of salaried or the cooperative has a legal trading status, like in the *Belêtre farm*, and can’t be eligible for CAP measures.

Strategies adopted to add production value are: marketing through short chains (CSA, bio boxes, farm shops, local market, small organic shops), on farm processing and mutualization strategies around work.

The creation of cooperative where shareholders are mainly consumers seems to involve a target of medium-high income level, as in the Netherland.

In most of the cases land is leased and not acquired to reduce costs.

These farms generally develop strong links with the territory. Members of the cooperative/association are involved in the local social and cultural life. Farms became meeting venue for the area.

“These collectives’ moments (...) the sowing, the concerts or the presentation of books make it possible to create a community (...) with which we have the possibility to dialogue (...) on a series of issues, not only strictly agronomic issues, but also on political ones” (IT4A/int.2 in Sivini et al 2021, p.186)

“They (...) have been great, they have resisted, (...) they have managed to create consensus in the village, which was not easy because is a village (...) lying on its routine” (IT4A/int.20 in Sivini et al 2021, p.187)

These relationships lead to a change in local food practices.

“At the beginning very few people from Dolus were in the CSA. And today they are (...) It’s maybe at least a quarter, maybe a third” (FR6A/Int.11 in Sivini et al 2021, p.277);

“(...) This has raised awareness, more people are starting to plant cereals of a certain type (...), doing organic farming”; “Today even the patisserie has begun to (...) convert most of its production, using flour from ancient grains produced and milled here” (IT4A/int.13 and IT4A/Int.15 in Sivini et al 2021, p.188).

In some cases, the relationships with the local municipality are well developed. In the Netherlands, for example, where the municipal vision of future agriculture is based on the idea that products have to be grown close to the buyers, the municipality support the establishment of the farm providing a location for information meetings in the start-up phase, potential options for land, the necessary local permits and two subsidies. In Belgium, on the contrary, the relationships with the local municipality are limited but the farm received a grant from the municipality of Ghent, the main near big city. The latter is an important market for biodynamic sales and the city has launched a food strategy based on short food chain; sustainable food production and consumption; reduction and re-use of food waste.

Human resources in terms of skills and knowledge and relational resources, also in terms of external supports, seems to facilitate the activity of these kind of farms.

The last group of practices analysed are related to family farm established by new entrants in Poland and Hungary. While *Farma Martinika* is managed by a couple of newcomers arriving from Warsaw; in Hungary most of the farmers interviewed were grew in the countryside and the majority have at least a bachelor degree.

Some of them farmed part-time “to provide a stable income and freedom for themselves and their immediate families” (Sivini et al 2021, p. 391).

Most of the farmers started with a small area, frequently acquired from compensation vouchers or by land inheritance, and increase over the years their land.

The bigger farms involve also employees but a shortage of skilled workers and even low-skilled people for seasonal work have been highlighted in Hungary. All respondents in Hungary highlight that non-permanent labour for seasonal work is one of the biggest organizational burdens *“During harvest time, if there was any workforce, I would be happy to employ them, but unfortunately there isn’t”* (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 403). Consequently, most of them are adapting over time their agricultural structure to less labour-intensive farming technologies: *“(...) we realized that there is already an area that we didn’t*

harvest last year, because we simply don't have the capacity to reach it with people, so we want to convert this area (...) we don't have the capacity to plant more elderberries, because we don't have the people to harvest them" (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 403).

Farmers – in the Hungarian cases- are well integrated in the local community. In Poland the collaboration within local community seems to be “not sufficiently developed” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 88) although the owner of *Farma Martinika* is involved in the activities of the Rural Housewives' Circle receiving support from local community women.

Local cooperation in the Hungarian small villages is “informal, mostly consisting of a few farmers cooperating in a barter-like mutual friendship on a specific work process.” (Sivini et al, 2021, p. 440); even if the legislation encourages formal cooperation joint investment in machinery, in the construction of common facilities or in production are not common. In Poland, the farm does not collaborate with other agritourist located in the village but being a multifunctional farm has facilitated *Farma Martinika*'s collaboration with schools and cultural centers from the region; being involved in social media networks of people who want to start a new life in the countryside allows to get support in many aspects and to share knowledge and experience.

Summarizing, the practices working upstream involve a wide range of actors including farmers, association, farmers' union and NGO, municipalities, local community, research institutions and vocational schools. Their actions have a wider local legitimacy.

Farmstart/farm incubators are an innovative model that may support the decision of new people to enter into agriculture, offering the possibility to experiment this kind of work, testing their ideas, developing their skills before taking on a farm. The type of farming promoted by both practices analysed is broadly small-scale and agroecological. A lack of sustained funding for farmstart programmes has led in some cases to charging participants and consequently their inclusiveness character has been reduced. The main actors involved in these practices are farmers, new entrants and farmers organization. In both of the practices compared, relationships are established mainly at regional or national level with pro-agroecology networks.

Downstream in the new entrant's pathway two types of practices are distinguished:



farms adopting a collective way of farming. Innovative organizational models have been developed involving new entrants into farming, farmers, consumers and civil society. These grassroots practices allow to overcome issues such as access to the land and high start-up cost that are mutualized. Farmers may have the status of full employee and can't be eligible for CAP measures but are insured of pre-agreed wages and entitled to holidays and pensions. Strong links with the local community are generally developed by these farms that adopt multifunctional and/or agro-ecological approaches.



family farms established by new entrants. These practices are developed in the Eastern European Countries. Farmers may be full time or part-time. Some of the farms have employees and most of them needs seasonal helps. In Hungary the entry of new generation into family farming is strongly succession bond; typically, they are not involved in alternative farming, neither follow agro-social principles. In Poland, where the owners are newcomers the practice refers to a multifunctional farm adopting an agroecological approach. In both countries the idea of self-sufficiency emerged as a specific motive for the establishment of the farms and the farming activity is not only focused on increasing income. Hungarian

farmers are well integrated in the local community as in most cases they grew up in the locality; in Poland the farmers, who are newcomers, have developed relationships mainly at regional and national level with other similar national eco-practices (e.g. agritouristic farms, permaculture farms, permaculture NGOs).

2.5 Gender issues

Farming remains a male-dominated field, although women participation seems to be increasing in the last decade. The practice analysed highlights some changes, even if in most of them gender issues are not directly addressed.

The English case study highlighted clearly a differentiation among large scale industrial farms and small-scale farming and market gardening in relation to the involvement and the role of woman. In the former case, farming is typically a male affair while in the latter there is more a mix of participant, so woman seems to be more frequently involved in this kind of farming. Indeed, a recent survey of new entrants, who were members of the Land Workers' Alliance, recorded that 54% of respondents were female (Land Workers' Alliance 2020: 3). As it pointed out: "The Farmstart Network seems to be a place where woman can find acceptance and develop fulfilling livelihoods" (Sivini et al 2021, p.67). This trend is confirmed also by other case studies like, for example, in Flanders where the De Wassende Maan Cooperative currently employs 24 people, equivalent to 17.3 full-time, of which 10.8 women and in France where, in the three farms analysed, 36% of farmers are women.

In Italy, due to the high levels of exploitation that women workers have experienced in the past in the Salento area, agricultural work became a prospect to be disregarded:

"Even now there is a great distance from agricultural works ... it was a world of sacrifices ... especially for the woman ... to all the women that we know, even very young, the parents have said never be in the land, go to study, do other things. But never you, as a woman, go back to the land because they had this idea of almost slavery with respect to agricultural work" (IT4A/Int.13 in Sivini et al 2021, p.163).

Nevertheless, the adoption of a multifunctional approach have open a new perspective and foster young women in approaching agriculture, especially in the activities related to social agriculture, processing and agritourism *"There is still a cultural heritage on the land and the countryside that with the association we clearly try to dismantle ... it is difficult to see a woman in the fields, who cultivates the land ... with these new forms that are pet therapy ... and education to environmental eco-sustainability ... many girls ... are approaching ... finding new jobs in this" (IT4A/Int.17 in Sivini et al 2021,p.170).*

Relevant has been the action of the Finnish practice of *Maaseutuammattiin ry* in renewing the gender roles as the rural professions are presented systematically as suitable for females as males. They also promote a special project called "Naisista voimaa metsäalalle" (Women bring strength to forestry) focusing on women's attitudes and opinions about the forestry, the jobs and the entrepreneurship of it; developed activities to foster rural professions just to females and in the website of the association many professions are presented by female representatives. The network created by the establishment of the Association improved the equality of people and genders in North Savo region. As an interviewee point out:

"It has improved the equality in education, given possibilities to introduce oneself in practice to new possibilities. It has smoothed the differentiation of professions: many young women have chosen the education path for traditional masculine type jobs after getting to know them" (FI8A/Int.24 in Sivini et al 2021, p. 372-373).

In Hungary, the situation of women entrepreneurs is unique among new entrants. Their share among farmers is very low, and still traditional gender roles are widespread, although some minor changes have been registered; it seems that especially when women become mothers traditional role are re-affirmed: *"Until I had the baby, I used to come and help"* (Sivini et al 2021, p.406).

Women involved into agriculture have to face the absence of *"an appropriate technology for female body size"* (Int. Donna in Sivini et al 2021, p.65) and the preconceptions versus woman, especially if young woman, seems to complicate interactions with other people as clearly highlighted by a Hungarian respondent: *"...if I happen to be the only one on the premises, I am looked at as if I were a cleaning woman. I think that if it happened in the city, there wouldn't be so much negative discrimination towards me, but here in the countryside it's very much the case"* (Sivini et al 2021, p.439) and by an English one: *"(...) when a deliver driver comes into the yard with a delivery note (...) and it's clearly got a female name on it but as soon as they see any guy (...) they'll rush off towards them"* (Int. Charlie, in Sivini et al 2021, p.65).

Even in the farms, as the French one's, managed by collective organisation that claim to be sensitive and attentive to the relationships of domination, gender issues don't seem to be much discussed. Only the Champ Boule farm has established a stable relationship with a feminist cultural association and regularly hosts a market of women artisans as well as events (shows, conferences) dealing with the theme of gender.

2.6 Characteristics of new entrants into farming

Cross-case analysis shows that new entrants have diverse backgrounds, depending on how different context of origin and experiences has shaped personal and collective trajectories. Illustrative examples are the Italian and Hungarian cases on the one hand and the French and Poland cases on the other.

Hungarian and Italian new entrants come from an agricultural context, building their choices on material or immaterial assets deriving from the family framework and from the personal link to the place, although the tradition is followed in one case and rejected in the other. In Hungary, supportive family background (material, financial resources and knowledge transfer) played a major role in their commitment to agriculture: without inherited financial, material and knowledge capital, the possibility of engaging in agricultural production as an independent farmer is practically extremely limited. In Italy, they share the peasant life of the grandparents or parents, the migration that many of them faced, in order to escape the conditions of exploitation and fatigue related to agricultural work and, finally, the return to their native village. It is not an accident that in both contexts new entrants are burdened by negative stereotypes, often held by urban residents.

In contrast, the vast majority of the French new entrants does not come from an agricultural context (*non issus du milieu agricole* - NIMA) and/or settles outside the family framework (*hors du cadre familial* - HCF). They have no agricultural background and many of them are career changers, and their

decision to take up farming often reflected a path of rupture from family socialisation or salaried work models.

It was common that, before entering in farming, some of them started another activity, such as working on farms before, doing qualifications at college, or simply having enjoyed recreational gardening previously. An illustrative example is the life path of the new entrants running the Martynika Farm in Poland: experienced in business and working with children (oligo-phrenopedagogics), they decided to leave the city of Warsaw for a living in the countryside, acquiring new skills for running on farm workshops.

Motivations for entering agriculture vary. In some of the cases is the search for wellbeing and happiness that leads to a strong desire to work with the land or to completely change the own way of life or the aim of living and making a living in the countryside, or social and ecological justice imperatives; the desire to return to the rural area of childhood and adolescence or to build a future in the own village, that often one is forced to leave either for studying at the university or for finding a job. In other cases, participation in farming was motivated by the desire to set up an own or collective farm, but in many cases also by the uncertainty of job opportunities. Sometime, they are related to family circumstances, such as unexpected death or planned change, as in the case of the transfer of family farm.

Although these differences, comparative examination highlights a common profile, mostly related to the much younger age composition of the farmers surveyed: the majority of new entrants has post-secondary education and, in many cases, a high and higher-than-average education level such MSc and PhD. University training has been focused on agricultural sciences (food, livestock, agriculture engineering, phytosanitary degree), biology, agronomy, nature management, and rural development; but also logistic and marketing.

Reports on cases study underline that adequate training and education of human capital is essential not only for competitive and efficient agricultural production, but also for sustainable style of farming, as well as for the acquisition of modern entrepreneurial, marketing and technological knowledge necessary for a skilled, qualified workforce.

New entrants show a prominent openness to social and technological innovations, whether stemming from education, as in Hungary, or from world visions as in other cases study: they are able to bring together different cultures of innovation, moving from ethical choices, to economic and market reasons of innovation. Part of this innovative potential is often not enough reflected in formal educational curricula, especially with relation to the practices of agro-ecology or biodynamic agriculture, local food networks and multifunctional agriculture as new income opportunities.

Professional knowledge comes not only from university, but also from experiences. Many new entrants feel the need to gain the necessary experience and professional skills through practical on field training as employees or trainees also to test their attitudes towards agriculture and learn how to implement his/her own project. Support mechanisms developed outside of existing institutional structures are farm incubators: the comparative analysis of the Farmstarts Network (United Kingdom), training on farming and on marketing products, and of one of the French farms operating in Toussacq show that much of the effectiveness depends on the possibility of providing testing contracts suitable to cover the time of experimentation.

Cases study indicate that new entrants develop additional skills. Broad skills regard communication skills to provide information via website, social media and blogs, and, more importantly, relational

skills to negotiate with workers, citizens, volunteers and consumers. The Italian case is expressive: new entrants shoot documentaries on their land, the cultivation of olive trees, the need to take care of them, in order to generate a new vision of the rural within the perspective of *restanza* (the “remaining”) as a political choice of life, in the sense that those who remain aim to build a “new polis, a new way of living organizing spaces, economies, relationships” (Teti, 2019, p.22).

They do not approach their agricultural career in a traditional way. Many of them are farming full-time and some prefer not to be involved as self-employed, but to have the full employee status. Their connection to agriculture can be only temporary: some farm part-time to provide a stable income and freedom for themselves and their immediate families, preferring to have a different occupation outside agriculture, including, for example, university lecturers.

A common characteristic concerns environmental consideration, which appear to be related both to ethical worldviews and also to higher levels of education. New farmers are deeply aware of the impacts of their styles of farming and, where opportunities are given, they embody biodiversity and environment protection in sustainable agricultural methods although not in all the cases this orientation is necessarily implemented in concrete agricultural practices, as in some of the Hungarian farms. For large farms environmental protection and biodiversity can be also an income-generating activity that provides access to agri-environmental subsidies; for other farms it allows to meet consumer requests for quality products, with or without labels, depending both on the relationship producers-consumers and on the ability and willingness to deal with costs and complex bureaucratic procedures. However, cases studies show that also those in conventional agriculture tend to greatly reduce the use of chemical inputs.

In short, new entrants’ different backgrounds (familial or not familial framework, educational level, previous working experiences in non-agricultural sectors) play a relevant role both in shaping motivations (farm continuity, way of life and careers change, living and making a living in the countryside, attachment to the own place, uncertainty of job opportunities) and in making crucial assets (land, capital, networks, formal/informal skills and knowledge) available to enter farming. Secondary and tertiary education provide multiple knowledge (environmental, entrepreneurial, marketing and technological) for efficient and sustainable style of farming, although new skills (multifunctional, relational, communicative) are acquired in the concrete involvement in innovative production and supply chains practices. Agricultural career is approached both in traditional (full-time farming, self-employed) and new (temporary or part-time farming, full employee status) ways.

2.7 Farms’ profile

In total 48 farms established or involving new entrants have been analysed; in most of the countries the promising practices are related to the operation of one or few farms while in Hungary an higher number of farms have been surveyed (Table 9).

Table 9. Farms surveyed, by new entrants case study’s code and by country:

Code	Country	N. of farms surveyed
PL_2A	Poland	1
NL_BE_3A	Netherland, Belgium	2

IT_4A	Italy	1
FR_6A	France	3
DE_7A	Germany	1
HU_9A	Hungary	20
HU_10A	Hungary	20
TOTAL		48

The first important finding of the comparative analysis is that in all countries access to farm by new entrants is constrained not only by high land prices, but also by the competitive advantage of big and modernized farms. To deal with the high start-up costs – land first and foremost – different ways of accessing land and other assets have been developed, both via ownership and via lease. In general, East European new entrants prefer individual access by ownership, leasing land afterwards for farm expansion purposes: property is obtained through purchase (*Martinika* farm in Poland) or through inheritance of assets, where the distinction between new entrants and direct successors is blurred, as in the Hungarian cases: here, the land on promising farms is mostly a legacy from the land privatisation of the 1990s, which the parental generation has added to with additional purchases in some cases in varying degrees, but the high concentration of land use limits the size of inherited land, because the testator cannot buy or rent separate land for the descendant. On the contrary, western new entrants tend to access land by lease, although non-trading partnership of proprietary farmers that jointly exert agricultural activities is present (as in the *Champ Boule* farm).

New entrants are integrated in farms with different legal forms and operative organisational models.

Out of 48 farms surveyed, 45,83% are family farms and 14,58% are primary producers, almost all of them operating in Hungary. This is due to the particular agrarian history of this country: in almost all Hungarian cases, family farming started from land privatisation after the political restructuring, with the previous generation (parents, grandparents) acquiring property, which constitutes the basis of, or sometimes the whole holding; also the category of so-called “primary producers”, producing partly for their own consumption and partly for sale, has been a result of economic restructuring. While the size of family farms can range from 1 to 400 hectares held in ownership, primary producers’ farm size does not exceed 10 hectares.

20,83% of the farms, those of several hundred hectares, are run in the form of limited liability companies (9 Hungarian farms- and one German farm), whether the land is on lease or in ownership. These farms provide the highest level of permanent and seasonal jobs: for example, one of the Hungarian farms of 3000 ha (300 in ownership and 2700 in lease) provides permanent jobs for 400 people; the German *Wulksfelde* farm operates on 460 hectares and provides more than 230 jobs, plus 40 seasonal jobs, most of them beyond agricultural production. Only one farm is under the form of a Private Company Limited by Shares (*Zártkörűen Működő Részvénytársaság*² - Zrt), a business legal status usually chosen for big enterprises in Hungary.

Other legal forms emerging from the cross-case analysis define a type of multi-stakeholders dynamic, where farmers, citizens, consumers and also institutional actors are engaged as shareholders. In Netherlands, the farm is formally run by a non-profit consumers’ organization; the *Toussacq* and *Belêtre* farms (France) have a legal trading status: cooperative society of collective interest (*Société coopérative d'intérêt collectif* or SCIC) the former and cooperative and participative company (*Société coopérative de production* or SCOP) the latter; *Champ Boule* is a non-trading partnership of farmers

² https://www.companyregister.hu/services/company_forms_in_hungary.

(*Groupement agricole d'exploitation en commun* or GAEC), the most classic association structure in agriculture; the Italian farm is run by an agricultural cooperative society (*Società Agricola Cooperativa*), in Flanders by a cooperative company with limited liability (*Coöperatieve vennootschap met beperkte aansprakelijkheid* or *cvba*).

The type of operating structure chosen has many implications in various areas: how the investment is managed and risks are addressed, how entries and exits are organised, how land can be owned and transferred. Farmers who are owner and manager of the farm are obliged to address individually all the barriers in entering to the land and the risks inherent in the farm business. In Hungary, for example, many of them had inherited considerable debts in addition to the farm, and, in many cases, only the economic boom of the last decade has enabled them to pay off these debts; the situation is even worse for small farmers, given the fragmented structure of the land and the difficulty in ownership transparency.

In contrast, multi-stakeholders legal forms permit risk sharing among different actors and enable self-financing capacity, facilitating farm entry by limiting debts and operative costs. A relevant example is the presence of national foundations holding the land in ownership and providing access by lease to local farms, as in the cases of *Herenboeren Land van Weert* in Netherlands and *Champs des Possibles* (FR6A-Toussaq) in France. In both example, the national foundations (Stichting Grondbeheer and Terre de Liens) purchase agricultural land via citizen investment (donations and perpetual bonds) in order to rent it on the basis of long-term leasehold contracts. The access to the land and the concrete farm operations is mediated and supported by an external organisation: in Netherlands, the Herenboeren Netherlands Foundation (*Stichting Herenboeren Nederland* or Herenboeren), a national small organisation of professionals that supports local initiatives with expertise (legal issues, automation, real estate matters), and specific services (land and lease contract, local permits and zoning, legal and organisational aspects– including the salary for the farmer) for which the local cooperative pays a one-off entrance fee (€75,000 as a compensation for all costs incurred) and a yearly fee (€20,000 euros per local cooperative) for annually purchased services (website, insurance, PR activities, etc.): annual cultivation plan (livestock farming, if available at the local farm), farmer's salary, and budget are locally arranged and covered by the initial fee of 2000 euros plus 11 euros per week per person; in France, *Champs des Possibles*, acting as a farm incubator, holds all the production assets (land lease, buildings, equipment) and re-invoices employed farmers to divide the costs, regulated the use of common areas and materials, and accounts for the distribution of costs between employed farmers and decision-making processes involving the cooperative's council for certain costly investments.

Other relevant examples are the following. To secure the investments made by the tenants leasing land owned by the City of Hamburg, the *Wulksfelde* farm's managers asked customers for private loans (*genussrechte*: "profit participation rights") of at least €10,000 at an interest rate of 7% per annum, paid in merchandise at the farm shop and so costs the farm only about 5% (Bahner 2011, 14–15). In Italy, the *Cooperative Casa delle AgriCulture* accesses abandoned land via leasing agreement free of charge (*comodato d'uso gratuito*) by mostly private local landowners.

In France, the establishment of SCOP and SCIC seems a promising change in a context marked by the overcapitalisation and increasingly difficult transfer of farms, since these legal forms are facilitating farm entry by limiting debts and granting producers the status of salaried employees; as a result, farmers have the advantage of a better social protections (such as unemployment rights and higher retirement pensions) and the transfer of the production assets is easier. However, some mechanisms can hinder the full success of these models: in the SCOP and SCIC, for example, members may not

"recoup" investments in the production tool financed by their work, since there is no capital gain on shares held in the company (shares remain at their nominal value) and their associates can't access the Young Farmers Grant and more in general the agricultural public measures.

Risk sharing capacity is strengthened along the whole chain from production through processing and marketing activities by different strategic tools in order to bear costs jointly. These include the sharing of means of production (capital, labour, land) and production assets (such as equipment and buildings) among farmers, allowing the joint exercise of agricultural activity or the expansion of production (supply chain pacts); providing and sharing on-farm processing infrastructures (as the community mill), offering also services to local farmers; pooling the marketing of the production (farm store, pick up points, cafeteria, restaurants, small scale supply to wholesalers, CSA); managing different areas of the business, to improve the division of labour, whether among individual owners or among producers and volunteers. A central role is assumed by both the direct or indirect involvement of consumers and the sale through short chains. Customers can be tied through loyal purchasing as subscribers of the food boxes, through membership as shareholders; or simply through a positive evaluation of the freshness and quality of the products, whether certified by quality labels (such as Demeter for biodynamic cultivation, AB for organic production and Nature & Progrès for organic and additional environmental responsibility label, or internal informal checks) or on the base of trustworthiness in consumer-producer associations. Even in the cases study where the formal involvement of consumers is not completely developed, farmers express the advantage of, and their own need for, a direct, 'almost friendly' relationship between the buyer and the producer of the product in short supply chain sales.

The most relevant example showing the effectiveness of these partnerships is the Dutch cooperative-run farm *Herenboeren Land van Weert*, a small scale (an acreage of 11.9 hectares) and less capital-intensive farm using the CSA model. Member-shareholders had to invest a one-off sum of €2,000 per household upon joining the cooperative - membership period of at least three years, upon termination the deposit will be returned – and, additionally, each household member ('mouth') pays a weekly contribution (of €11) for the purchase of a weekly food package, feeding the yearly exploitation budget which has to cover the costs incurred by the farm. Since shareholders are formally co-owners of the farm and the sole consumers of the products, the quality of the production does not have to meet formal quality labels as it is only distributed to members of the cooperative. The farm is no profit so to remove any economic incentive, overproduction of vegetables or fruits will not be offered for sale, but offered to the food bank, used to feed the animals or submerged in the ground as fertilization; if there is a surplus on the budget, members can decide to invest, save or make the package cheaper.

However, it should be emphasized that these experiences tend to work better within specific local socio-economic and political contexts. Local quality food supply can easily find conscious – often urban – customers with relatively high incomes, short supply can more easily be developed in the proximity to urban centers and where proactive local municipalities support sustainable agriculture and short circuits.

The last point to be discussed is the status of the farmer. The different operating structures governing land access and the way farms are managed have different implications for the status of the farmers and his/her space of autonomy in the decision-making productive processes. Where farms are not directly controlled by the producers (eg. farm and land owned by foundations, consumers, citizens, etc), the full employee status provides farmers all the benefits related to social protections (pre-agreed wages, unemployment rights, access to compensation in case of illness, entitlement to holidays and pension). However, this status seems to erode the farmers' independence related to the managerial control of the farming activities, despite the productive function for which they are given responsibility

and paid is that of managers (and not simply farm workers). In some of the cases study, strong inputs come from owners of the land, employers, citizens and demands of the consumers. These inputs concern the style of farming, for which farmers are selected and trained according to specific visions of agriculture, as, for example, the conditions for the leasing of the land posed for organic production by the City of Hamburg, for agro-ecological model by Terre de Liens, or biodynamics by Stichting Grondbeheer; it concerns also the annual cultivation plan, the scope of production and processing, and, as a result, which activities will be further developed on and around the farm.

2.8 Sustainability, innovation and adaptability of the practices

New entrants show a prominent openness to social and technical innovations, keeping together different innovative approaches from ethics to markets, always based on the adaptation to local environmental and social conditions.

There is evidence that external ideas can play a role in favoring social innovation in rural places (Bock, 2016). In many of the promising practices analyzed the promoters found directly inspirations in other initiatives already implemented in other territories. External ideas have been adapted to the local context and played an important role in fostering the establishment of these new practices. In the United Kingdom the promoters of the *National network of farm starters* visited similar experiences in France and were particularly inspired by the national network RENETA; in the Netherlands, the establishment of the *Herenboeren Netherlands Foundation* was inspired by the English Farming Communities. In Italy, the promoters of *Casa delle AgriCulture*, before deciding to set up the Association, visit one of the first Italian organic farms with which they have still maintained close relations; in France, the *Belêtre* promoters visited farms and met professional farmers to get inspiration and refine their idea of collective farming. The *Wassende Man* was the first farm to initiate vegetable or bioboxes subscriptions in Flanders. This concept was inspired by the Swiss example of Le Panier. In Poland, *Farma Martynika* has been established by a couple of newcomers from the city of Warsaw that was influenced by similar initiatives in other parts of Poland.

The innovative approaches adopted consist mainly in applying ethical and ecological principles to make agriculture more sustainable both addressing the need for socially equitable food system and ensuring a regenerative use of natural resources.

These approaches can be reconducted to the five phases identified by Gliessman (2007) in making agroecological transitions towards more sustainable food systems. The first three operate at the agroecosystem level and involve: (i) increasing input use efficiency; (ii) substituting conventional inputs and practices with agroecological alternatives; and (iii) redesigning the agroecosystem on the basis of a new set of ecological processes. The remaining two steps operate across the broader food system and involve: (iv) re-establishing a more direct connection between producers and consumers; and (v) building a new global food system based on participation, localness, fairness and justice.

Indeed, most of the practices maintain and enhance organic and ecological processes in agricultural production and consumption, which are equitable, environmentally friendly, locally adapted and controlled, in order to reduce the use of purchased inputs that include fossil fuels and agrochemicals and contributing to more diverse, resilient and productive agroecosystems, embracing management of interactions among components, rather than focusing only on specific technologies, with minimal negative externalities and fostering the environmental and social sustainability.

This innovative organisational farming models are being developed as multi-stakeholders networks of organizations, communities, enterprises and individuals within which changes are generated and spread to shape a new design, production or recycling of food production, processing, distribution and consumption, goods and services, as well as changes in the surrounding institutional environment, including changes in practices, norms, markets and institutional arrangements.

These new forms of organization allow risk sharing among different actors and facilitating the creation of new farms acting as farm incubators, supporting access to land, trainings, business planning and new markets limiting debts and operative costs. Risk sharing capacity is strengthened along the whole chain from production through processing and marketing activities by different strategic tools in order to bear costs jointly: sharing of means of production and on-farm processing infrastructures, joint exercise of agricultural activity and offers of services to local farmers; pooling the marketing of the production (farm store, pick up points, cafeteria, restaurants, small scale supply to wholesalers, CSA). A central role is assumed by both the direct or indirect involvement of consumers and the sale through short chains.

So the new entrants in agriculture respond to the ambition to connect environmental sustainability and social innovation, production and consumption, global concerns and local dynamics through the support to locally adapted solutions based upon participation and the mobilization of local knowledge.

In this context the adaptability of these sustainable innovations depends on the capacity of adapt the multiple dimensions of the innovations to the local context. The adaptability relies therefore on the enabling environment at local level, depending from the support of the local authorities, private organizations or entrepreneurs or the community and the final consumers. A change in the European and national policy framework could foster the spread of these sustainable innovations.

2.9 Creating connections

Learning from prior works on social capital in the farming sector suggests that sustainable small-scale farming and effective collective action are the result of three interdependent types of relationships that farmers need to develop, i.e. bonding, bridging and linking relations. The former are related to ties within a group or community (intragroup relationships). The second refer to horizontal ties between social groups (intergroup relations) and the thirds are vertical ties that can be developed with influential actors belonging to the economic or political arena such as governments. Linking relations with policymakers helps actors create an enabling environment and conditions to thrive and develop sustainably. The ways in which these relationships and social networks grow are illustrated by the social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, et al. 2001; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000.)

The different practices have been analyzed on their capacity to create synergies and connections

- a) in the local community (bonding)
- b) with similar organizations and experiences at local, regional or national level (bridging)
- c) with institutions (linking).

Moreover, it will be relevant to differentiate among these levels for what concerns the agricultural activity and the other multi-functional activities (e.g. education, tourism, culture, etc.)

For what concerns

- a) the creation of synergies with the local community, on the agricultural side, almost all the selected practices have some components bonding the connections at local level.

The only exception is in Poland where the promoters are not really involved in the social life of the village, but rather they live on the sidelines, in their farms, focused on their own affairs. In this case, the farm is not even collaborating with other agritourist sites located in the village (it is not very touristic area and maybe they either represent or see themselves as competitors). It has to be noted that the promoters were citizens of Warsaw that moved in the countryside buying *Farma Martinika*.

On the opposite site, the case of the *Versailles Plain Association* (VPA) is based on the convergence of territorial actors and individuals that until that moment had not met. Since 2000, the VPA and other stakeholders of the Versailles plain have built an effective network based on common values and representations. The plain is recognized by all the stakeholders for a set of characteristics building a common representation. The Versailles plain is thus defined by all the actors as an important historical agricultural and natural territory. The VPA network is very inclusive and based on an open-minded philosophy, but it does not integrate all the farmers of the plain, since it actively works with a third of them.

In some cases, bonding local community connections have been critical to securing routes to market through direct sales, supply chain agreement, bio-boxes and bio-shop, especially for location near residential area, (which were even more important during COVID-19), access to land and agricultural materials such as manure or equipment.

Some practices express the full potential of connections at local level, where the farms contribute to the territory by the collective investment in local organizations and by contributing to changing practices and mentalities around agriculture and food, while citizens invest in the farms supporting their development and providing support to the collective's local integration.

Many practices developed multifunctional areas for the local community as welcoming visitors on the farm and fostering social links, local recreation (e.g. hiking, small theater, horse riding tours, festivals, etc.) and experiencing nature (e.g. guided tours for schools and tourists, rental of gardens).

In the Hungarian cases there are vivid ties to the local community because these farmers grew up locally and are well known by the local community, have better local acceptance and can work together smoothly on an informal basis, whereas more structured forms of cooperation are not contemplated.

- b) the creation of synergies and networking with similar organizations and experiences at local, regional or national level (bridging).

The practices focusing on agriculture that are promoted from a national organization as in England and the Netherlands are trying to bridge the engagement with a wider community of practices. In the case of England the Land Workers Alliance focus on new installment of agroecological farms allowing to increase its national network. In the Netherlands, *Herenboeren* has grown into a national organization of professionals supporting local initiatives with expertise, both during establishment and operation of local farms.

In Belgium, *De Wassende Maan* (DWM) is not part of a larger network of comparable farms or businesses, but has an informal consultation and exchange with colleagues such as *Kollebloem* and *Zonnekouter*, two farms which are also cooperative based farms and involved in biodynamic agriculture with bio boxes and a bio shop. It is interesting to highlight how DWM is more related in networking of the city of Ghent than in its own municipality. This is because of the strong and proactive policy focus of Ghent on sustainable agriculture. Also, the farms adopting a collective organizational structure in France interact effectively with neighboring farms. In Italy, *Casa delle*

AgriCulture is characterized by a strong networking capacity, collaborating with numerous local associations and many experiences located in other Italian region, with whom share aims and modalities of action. They are aware that networks foster the development of new ideas, offer new opportunities, enable them to solve problems collectively and help to consolidate their action. It is worth to notice how a strong territorial approach as the case of the *Versailles* multi-actors governance has difficulties opening up to actors located outside the plain.

The practices that are focusing on bridging multifunctional activities are mainly focusing on education and promotion of farming with different modalities.

In Poland, *Farma Martynika* cooperates with schools and cultural centers from the region, for which they organize various workshops social media networks of people who have left the city and started a new life in the countryside or are planning to do so. In addition, the farm is working with other eco-touristic sites from the region (these are practices with the strong focus on permaculture, ecological building, etc.), but not with other agritourist sites located in the village.

In Germany, the *Wulksfelde* farm is part of the association Eco Regional Initiative North that promotes awareness of sustainable agriculture, rural agriculture farming and food sovereignty, while the sponsoring association also maintains close contact to the local branch of the environmental group Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union. At the institutional level, the farm is also on the executive board of the Alsterland Active Region, receiving funding to expand the educational offers for kindergarten groups, school classes and other groups and creating an off-campus learning experience and taking part to a hiking network of over 300 km. The hiking trails often lead to, start or end at local farms, such as in the *Wulksfelde* farm.

Also the French farms (*Toussacq*, *Belêtre* and *Champ Boule*) analysed are supported by advisory organisations, generally from pro-agroecology and pro-peasant networks—e.g. different from traditional advisory networks formed by agricultural chambers and majority farmer unions—which provide them with technical and human counselling.

In Finland the *Rural Professions Association* (Maaseutuammattiin ry) relies structurally on networking in the daily operations of the association to promote the education of farming and food system issues in comprehensive schools and the promotion of agricultural professions. It is worth to notice how the Rural Professions Association is partnering with national associations nationwide to develop new ideas, material and tools for regional operations. On the other hand, it has been a good regional partner to those national organizations in taking their tools in practice, giving feedback and ideas and building the regional and local networks to their message too.

c) the creation of synergies and networking with institutions (linking) assume different practices working to link the experience at the institutional level with local authorities, considering their role in agricultural policies. In some cases the local authorities are actors involved in the experience. In Finland the holistic approach of the network integrates private farms and other small primary sector operators to big companies covering the large bioeconomy sector.

In general, networking at different levels with different stakeholders is a common strategy to all the practices in order to strengthen the economic sustainability and receive support from the communities, institutions or general public.

In particular, the **networking with the local community is important for the agricultural activity to access to markets and natural and productive resources, while networking with similar organizations and experiences is central for the multi-functional activities that only in few cases are responding to the needs of local communities. The work with institutions, mainly local authorities, is a prerogative of the most organized practices.**

2.10 Institutional support and policies for new entrants

The practices will be analyzed on their connection with institutions and policies at EU, national, regional and local level.

As for the previous aspect, when appropriate we will focus on the differentiation among these levels for what concerns the agricultural activity and the other multi-functional activities (e.g. education, tourism, culture, etc.)

Many practices received very little funding or institutional support at all the levels, facing high barrier to entry into farming.

In the English case it is underline that there is a general consensus about the constraints in current policy and institutional support in terms of access to land, finance and training. Even if in some cases Farmstart organization received little public funding for training programmes, the issues of long-term planning and uncertainty around the length of government schemes have been highlighted.

For ex-farmstarters, subsidies are usually unsuitable, because they often claim for a 5 hectares farm size; equipment are reimbursed on receipt and frequently the small farms do not have the necessary cash flow; or foreseen too large amounts/required too quickly repayment.

In Belgium, the *DWM* farm, started as a small voluntary practice and slowly evolved into the current business not relying on public policies and direct institutional support. Also in Poland, there was a lack of institutional support.

In the Italian case, the practice opened to institutional collaboration, dialogue, and funding without any fear of being coopted only after having consolidated the content: this was summarized as *“radical in content, but conciliatory in method”* (IT4A/Int.20 in Sivini et al 2021, p.194). In this practice the collaboration with the Regional Natural Park, has to do with recovery of local biotypes and the care of the landscape, an ecological weeding in an area of the Park, with the grazing of goats and donkeys, without using pesticides.

In Finland, the basic funding comes from the membership organizations; more public funding and national efforts to promote rural professions are claimed: *“(…) There should be more public funding also to the basic actions because now this is almost like charity work”* (FI8A/Int.23 in Sivini et al 2021, p. 370).

In Hungary, the state provides significant support (12.5 million HUF) to start farming through the "Young Farmer" grant but it only helps young people who are self-employed full-time farmers and partially helps with a large investment; the access is limited (through tenders). Consequently, not all the farmers investigated receive adequate support.

The only practice that has a considerable institutional support and public funding is the German one. The *Wulksfelde* farm benefits from the agricultural support in a great manner. The subsidies received (direct payments – pillar 1, payment for rural development- pillar 2 EAFRD; and national funding for organic farming) were decisive for the development of the practice. The institutional support received by the Senate of Hamburg has been notably.

In the Netherland, notable is the support received by one of the farm operating under the umbrella of the *Herenboeren Netherland Foundation* (not the one that has been surveyed). In this case the institutional support implied an ad hoc exemption from the normative framework of existing rules

(from local to EU level). These rules can (intentionally or unintentionally) hinder the sustainable development of nature-inclusive farming; for example, the legislation do not distinguish between transport to industrial slaughterhouse to a transport to a local butcher. Based on a Green Deal these rules have been temporarily set aside with government permission which gives the farm room to experiment. The results will inform policies for small scale nature inclusive farming in general.

From many cases, the barrier to entry into farming is very high, especially in terms of buying farmland and starting up. So what is suggested is to provide institutional support to farm incubators; develop new Young Farmers programmes for young educated rural people; facilitate sales networks to support the initial stage of the agricultural activity.

Another important characteristic is the focus on access to land and not ownership. In the Netherland, local *Herenboeren* farms do not own their land, in Italy the land is accessed by free lease. On the land issue, local authorities can play a role creating a buffer' systems, whether to enable temporary land storage - as underlined by a French interviewee: *"we need to be able to tell local authorities 'it's your role to store land, and look, it works, some have done it"* (Belêtre, FR6A/Int. 11 in Sivini et al 2021, p. 290) - or longer-term collective land ownership.

This is happening in the framework of the limitations of the current model of EU and national agricultural policies: e.g the CAP has long been dominated by a strong focus on large scale and intensive production while small scale farming and the agro-ecological approach are not adequately supported. The access to RDP measures requires high technical support (that is not always available at affordable cost for young farmers) and, in some countries, takes a too long time to receive funds. The current organic certification system does not seem to meet the needs of those who choose to adopt an agro-ecological model and work on recovering ancient seeds. In general, there is the need for policies helping the switch to organic farming which needs careful analysis on financial feasibility of the traditional way of farming as compared to the organic one. Even the practices that received public funds consider bureaucratic processes as too complex. Once local authorities are involved in the practices, there is an issue on continuity of policies and commitments across the different administrations

2.11 Effects and perspectives

The effects and impacts are analyzed in the economic, social and environmental dimension.

From the economic point of view, the practices created new agriculture jobs and consequently also external jobs: the farming approach creates further fields of economic activities and revenue opportunities that diversify the local economy.

For some practices, the basis of the success has been flexibility, since the multi-functional activities originally planned as additional ones (e.g. organization of workshops and agrotourism) are so far the main source of income and enable further development, as in the polish case. Through the relationship established with local restaurants; the organisation of many events involving several people who are hosted by local B&Bs; enhancing local biodiversity and impacting on the production choices of other farmers, like in the Italian practice.

From the social point of view, despite the impacts have to be observed in a long term, working on narrative and at the same time implementing concrete action has produced a new imagery of farming

and rural life in general, the education increased the local (social) capital as the establishment of the practice have managed to build a good operational network and a culture of collaboration. Farms with a collective organisational model are seen also as generating intangible resources: community socialisation around the farms (social capital), volunteers and trainees' skill-building (human capital), development of alliances and political mobilisation with citizens and agricultural organisations (political capital).

From the environmental point of view, most of the practices create an ecological benefit, as the farming method protects the soil and promotes biodiversity.

Concrete measures for nature conservation have been implemented on the farmlands by many practices, such as the creation of ponds and hedgerows.

The experience of the Saragolle Pact, signed by *Casa delle AgriCulture* with an association operating in another region with the aim to start the production of this traditional grain and to create another community mill, serves as an example to stimulate other rural territories to imagine and practise another way of living the countryside based on preservation of the ecosystem.

The German and many Hungarian farms also use renewable energy.

The reduction of packaging is common in many farms selling through short food chains, and reusable options are also available for their customers.

Assuming that most of the practices are one piece of the puzzle in terms of transforming the national food and farming sector, more political work and lobbying is necessary to improve the challenging context in which the practices are currently operating.

The perspectives concern different aspects and action that should be developed.

Some farms analysed do not wish to grow at all costs, but rather maintain their current production framework, eventually further diversifying their current production structure, giving importance of livestock and short supply chains for sustainable and efficient farming through a long-term view of farming. Some other are looking to expand their farm and production by exploiting new market segment, introducing the latest technologies into the fields, new crops, new animals' species, new services and acquiring new land, through lease or purchase (mainly Hungarian farms).

The reduction of the energy consumption and source was also mentioned to reduce the ecological impact and, in the case of the Waulksfelde farm to become a climate-neutral business in the long term.

On the products marketing side, a stable distribution and sales network to offer a complete package to citizens caring for organic food and sustainable production have been underlined by many practices. This requires mastering the ability to function in a new business environment, including both farm production, direct sale of the farm produce via bioboxes and shop and adding additional products and services, a complete package can be offered to citizens caring for organic food and sustainable production. This could be complemented by the construction of an e-commerce platform, the opening of restaurants where it will be possible to taste the local products, developing the agri-tourism base and the creation of network between artisanal processors and small producers.

Some practices propose the model of local farms run by employed farmers, being less capital intensive (no need to invest in land, real estate and machinery), focusing on better quality of local food production, and guaranteeing a fair monthly salary and right to a pension. The risks associated to these

models is the loss of autonomy of the farmers that become wage workers: there should be attention to secure an independent way of working for the farmers.

Other practices that are working on the networking and supply chain agreements, preserve the autonomy of the farmers but are facing some cultural constraints in deepening cooperation.

New financial approaches to support the sustainability of the practices have been suggested: citizens can contribute to acquire farmland by issuing obligations, shares, crowdfunding by foundations and farmers asking customers for private loans ("profit participation rights"), as underlined by the Dutch and the German practices.

Institutional support for "farm collectives" to document and raise awareness developing a narrative and appetite for farming as a group is required and it must integrate i) work to document innovative experiences and ii) efforts to raise awareness and provide information to different target audiences, as highlighted by the French case.

At the educational level, many Finnish interviewees mentioned that influencing the educational policy should be done at national level "to raise the awareness about the importance of rural livelihoods, about rural jobs and about the needs of labour, about the attitudes of the youth towards rural professions" (Sivini et al 2021, p. 375). In addition, many of the farms analysed plan to further expand their educational offer. The provision of correct practical information to agricultural students has also be mentioned as a future goal. In the practices with a strong educational/capacity building component, the future perspectives are linked to supra-local networks.

In general, all the practices can be considered as just one piece of the puzzle in terms of transforming the food and farming sector, more political work and lobbying is necessary to improve the challenging context in which they are currently operating. This speaks to the fragility and potential bi-directionality of new entrants' position on the 'Access to Land Pathway' proposed by the RURALIZATION project (Loveluck et al., 2020). Moreover, the practices should move to a much more global joint project, in which agricultural and natural areas will appear as solutions and levers of positive change for rural areas.

2.12 Conclusion

In relation to the research questions that moved this research (see Introduction), the comparative analysis shows:



The practices promoted/involving new entrants **address rural disparities. Small-scale agroecological and/or multifunctional farms seem to attract a more diverse group of new entrants**, opening opportunities, for woman and immigrants, coming from non-farming families.

Promising practices are framing new narratives on rural regenerations and sustainable agriculture, contrasting farm abandonment and depopulation, focusing also on the inclusive capacity and environmental sustainability of the agroecological and strong multifunctional agricultural model, in which women may have a satisfactory leading role. New opportunities and resources for local community in terms of knowledge, new narrative on rural areas,

increase of food literacy, jobs creation, access to land, more awareness on rural jobs have been developed.

The creation of networks among universities, vocational schools, farmers associations/unions with the specific aim of sensitize secondary school students and the society more in general on agricultural activities/professions and the adoption of a multi-actors local governance (involving farmers, politicians and local communities) are measures that could contribute to change practices and mentalities around agriculture and food.



Farming remains a male-dominated field. However, **female participation seems to be increasing among new entrants** even if there are differences among the countries. In Hungary, for example, their share is very low and, even if some minor changes have been registered, traditional gender roles are widespread. Women seem to be more involved in processing and marketing farms products; in the administrative tasks and in the educational/recreational activities promoted by the farms and less in the managerial task and in handling the agricultural equipment. The absence of “an appropriate technology for female body size” (IUK1A/Int.Donna in Sivini et al 2021, p. 65) has been detected. The interactions with other people appear more complicated as many times there are bias against woman, especially if young woman. Outside the farm women seem to be more involved in cultural or school parents’ associations than in the political representation functions. Furthermore, even in the analyzed practices, it seems that gender disparities in rural areas and gender issues in general are still an open question, little discussed and not specifically addressed.



Promising practices tend to develop strong linkages with the territory: participation in cooperatives/associations gives the opportunity to be involved in the local social and cultural life (organization of events, cultural actions, farm visits, public debates, involving local communities and schools). This, in turn, tends to set conditions for the involvement of new and different group of people (children, young people, elderlies, migrants).

Examined practices foster linkages with other rural and urban areas. Marketing through short chains favour the development of urban-rural connections. An important leverage for the establishment of the promising practices is the opportunity to interact with actors operating in other contexts. In various cases the promoters found directly inspirations in initiatives already implemented in other territories: external ideas have been adapted to the local context and played an important role in fostering the establishment of the new practices.



New entrants show a prominent openness to social and technological innovations, whether stemming from education or from world visions: they are able to bring together different cultures of innovation, moving from ethical choices, to economic and market reasons of innovation. **Innovative organisational models of farms are being developed** as multi-stakeholders legal forms. This permits risk sharing among different actors and enables self-financing capacity, facilitating farm entry by limiting debts and operative costs. Risk sharing capacity is strengthened along the whole chain from production through processing and marketing activities by different strategic tools in order to bear costs jointly: sharing of means of production and on-farm processing infrastructures, joint exercise of agricultural activity and offers of services to local farmers; pooling the marketing of the production (farm store,

pick up points, cafeteria, restaurants, small scale supply to wholesalers, CSA). A central role is assumed by both the direct or indirect involvement of consumers and the sale through short chains. Innovative instruments to foster rural regeneration are the farm incubators, specifically oriented to new entrants. They offer support for accessing land, formal practical and theoretical training programme, business planning, and routes to market.



From an economic point of view, the **examined practices create directly new agriculture jobs, both in the form of self-employment and salaried employment**. The farming approach creates further revenue opportunities that diversify the local economy.

Practices tend to operate as local cooperation catalyst among many different actors along the entire chain, generating new economic opportunities for other farms in agricultural and non-agricultural spheres, supporting the consolidation of local economy (for example by creating positive conditions for the reactivation of abandoned land) and creating new services, jobs and new sources of income.

This is especially the case of multifunctional farms, more able to generate forward linkages with non-farm sectors; for example, through the relationship established with local restaurants; the organisation of many events involving several people who are hosted by local B&Bs; enhancing local biodiversity and impacting on the production choices of other farmers.

Strategies adopted to add production value are: marketing through short chains (CSA, bio boxes, farm shops, local market, small organic shops) and on farm processing.

Moreover, products sold on short chain base and delivered directly to consumers provide local actors continuity in accessing fresh vegetable, fruits and meat.



A common **characteristic of new entrants concerns environmental considerations, which appear to be related both to ethical worldviews and also to higher levels of education**. New farmers are deeply aware of the impacts of their styles of farming and, where opportunities are given, they embody biodiversity and environment protection in sustainable agricultural methods, although not in all the cases this orientation is necessarily fully implemented in concrete agricultural practices. Many farms use renewable energy sources. A reliable quantitative picture is given by the two Hungarian cases: on 40 farmers interviewed, more than half (24) use renewable energy sources and 7 are planning to use them.



There are **not specific policy measures targeting new entrants**, most of the practice analysed received very little funding or institutional support and their establishment is mainly a result of bottom up actions. Farmers' support policies are ill-suited to new entrants into farming who have few means, since they do not take into "account farmers establishment in the long run and do not allow farmers to develop their farm over a sufficiently long period to make it profitable and sustainable, especially for crops that require several years to develop" (Sivini et al, 2021, p.237). For example, aid for installations does not consider that in some cases, as tree growers, the profitability of the farm will arrive after 3 years from the installation.

The public system, mainly at European and national scale, does not seem to provide adequate support. European policies support young farmers through the Young Farmer

payment (YFP) which ensures a modest amount of money and can't be accessed neither by new entrants having the status of employees nor by new farmers farming part-time. Difficulties in accessing RDPs measures have been detected due to high bureaucracy, access to information, delays in receiving funds. Subsidies frequently required upfront payment for equipment and small farms don't always have the requisite cash flow.

Small scale farming and the agro-ecological approach are not adequately supported and existing rules (from local to EU level) can hinder their sustainable development as there isn't a distinction in the regulatory requirements to be fulfilled by them and by agro-industrial farms. The adoption of a Green Deal, as in the Netherlands, gives farms the room to experiment new rules as regulatory requirements can be temporarily set aside with the government permission.

On the contrary, in some context the local level is more active. Local authorities support new entrants in different way: favouring access to land, offering economic support, making available information and facilitating the interactions and the dialogue between new entrants and other local services, as shown by the actions of the Versailles Plain Association in France and of the Senate of Hamburg in Germany.



Specific policy and strategies targeting new entrants into farming have been proposed. Favouring access to land in the long period for new entrants, benefiting farmers actively working the land more than investors buying up property for speculative purposes through regulating land markets and land prices; opening more public and private land; facilitating longer-term agricultural tenancies to allow new farmers to invest in infrastructure that would boost their productivity; putting in place more democratic means by regional/municipal land use planning in relation to land use and cultivation plans.

Promotion and institutional support for farm incubators to offer free services to new entrants, including access to information, business and marketing support.

Paid traineeships and income support for new entrants, to allow them to concentrate on their training (without having to balance this with other paid employment), and room for genuine experimentation and a safety net in the first few years of their business or training, also by assisting new entrants into farming and linking them up with local food hubs. Eligibility for and access to finance for start-up or scale-up capital costs, tailored to the needs of small-scale agricultural farmers, for example, for small machinery or infrastructure for processing.

More widespread localised food policies and public procurement schemes at local level to guarantee markets for sustainable growers.

More funds for agricultural education institutions as potential developers of local agriculture. An appropriate level of local vocational training will help to address the otherwise problematic qualified labour shortages.

Integration in formal educational curricula of new sustainable agriculture (agro-ecology, biodynamic, organic) methods, local food networks and multifunctional agriculture as new income opportunities for new entrants.

Promotion of housing for people wanting to live on or close to their farmland.



D5.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON RURAL NEWCOMERS, NEW ENTRANTS INTO FARMING AND FARM SUCCESSORS

More investment in better roads and broadband internet in rural areas to make farm and non-farm-based livelihoods easier.

3 Farm successors

(by Aisling Murtagh, Maura Farrell and Louise Weir)

3.1 Introduction

Farm succession involves a farm successor taking over a farm enterprise, but it is more than the transfer of farm managerial control between the generations. It is a complex process that often occurs over a long timescale. Two key direct actors in the process are the farm transferor and farm successor (Lobley, 2010; Handl et al., 2016; Chiswell and Lobley, 2018). It is also a key stage in family farm development and renewal (Lobley, 2010). For example, Conway et al. (2022, p.2533) discuss how farm succession can also be linked to “the ‘infusion of ‘new blood’ into the agricultural industry...in order to ensure future prosperity of the farming sector, as well as long-term sustainability of food production systems”.

The ten succession cases studies in this comparative analysis bring to light different issues at different stages of the succession process. To put the cases in context, it is useful to understand the succession process as a series of stages. Handl et al. (2016) outline eight phases in the succession process: awareness, wish, education, experience, search/decision, form, handing/taking over and running the farm. The phases are not necessarily linear and can cross-over. Being aware of the profession as a potential career option by young people and others seeking careers is the ‘awareness’ phase, while ‘wish’ represents the desire to be a farmer. ‘Education’ relates to learning how to farm through more formal training, while ‘experience’ is the practical on the ground learning of the required expertise, knowledge and skills. ‘Search and decision’ relates to finding a successor for the existing farmer but also links to the successor within the family deciding to enter the profession. ‘Form’ relates to the legal form under which the farm is run and legal issues around transfer, while ‘handing and taking over’ is the formal step where this takes place, which may be gradual. Finally, ‘running the farm’ sees the successor enter farming, often working alongside the existing farmer for a period. The succession case studies represent a set of practices selected as promising in their potential to facilitate farm succession. The wider context in which the case studies emerge is detailed in Table 10. The case studies are categorised based on their type of agriculture, which identifies a **strong presence of multifunctional farming**. Based on the Handl et al. (2016) categorisation, they are also categorised based on the predominant phase of the succession process they represent. Three case studies also focus to some extent on new entrants to farming (no.2, 9 and 5) who are among the farmers analysed as part of the promising practice. This does not take away from their relevance to farm succession. The case studies are analysed for the potential to facilitate farm succession. This does not hinge on only focusing directly on the farm successor.

Table 10. Profile of the Farm Successors Case Studies

Case study	Succession phase	Country	Scale	Typology	Location	Type of agriculture
1.Maximising Organic Production Systems (MOPS)	Running the farm	Ireland	Regional	Predominantly rural/ intermediate	North-West Europe	Organic/ Multifunctional
2.Cydr Chyliczki, Ludwik Majlert's Farm and Rysiny Farm: Sustainable family food	Running the farm	Poland	Regional	Predominantly urban	Central-East Europe	Multifunctional

D5.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON RURAL NEWCOMERS, NEW ENTRANTS INTO FARMING AND FARM SUCCESSORS

production and processing at the outskirts of Warsaw						
3.Farm diversification at succession	Running the farm	Belgium	Regional	Cross all regions	North-West Europe	Organic/ Multifunctional
4.Successful agro-ecological and multifunctional successors in Sicily region	Running the farm	Italy	Regional	Intermediate/ Predominantly urban	Mediterranean	Agro-ecology/ Multifunctional
5.Slow Succession, Slow Revolution: Regenerating the agri-food system in the Catalan Western Lands	Running the farm	Spain	Regional	Intermediate	Mediterranean	Multifunctional
6.Training in “nature professions”: A driving force for the rural regeneration of “Pays Coutançais”	Education and Experience	France	Local	Predominantly rural	North-West Europe	Multifunctional
7.CSA Hof Pente GbR: Success through community, education and ecology	Running the farm	Germany	Local	Intermediate	Central-East Europe	Organic/ Multifunctional
8.Vital agriculture and forestry in Uusimaa region: The ELINA Uusimaa project	Education, Experience, Form, Handing/Taking over	Finland	Regional	Predominantly urban	North-West Europe	All
9.Wine Community of Mór Wine Region	Running the farm	Hungary	Regional	Intermediate/ rural	Central-East Europe	Multifunctional
10.Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland	Form/Handing/ Taking over	Ireland	Regional	Predominantly rural	North-West Europe	All

Most of the case studies are focused on specific farms, how they operate and their wider approach to farming in a particular region (Table 10, no. 1 to 4,7,9). This represents the ‘running the farm’ stage of succession process, a crucial stage to focus on because it interlinks with all others. No successor will be at this stage without having passed through the others described by Handl et al. (2016). These cases can touch on issues across the phases of the succession process, however they primarily illustrate issues in the last phase of ‘running the farm’. As a result these seven practices provide a group that are beneficial to compare closely together. In addition, the case studies embody ‘multifunctional’ farming where it has functions beyond food production. Multifunctional farming contributes to public goods and services, such as contributing to cultural landscapes and environmental services (e.g. biodiversity, soil and water quality preservation). It can also involve developing higher value farm produce, such as adding value to farm produce or taking an artisan or organic approach to production. In addition it can involve developing synergies between the farm and wider rural economy such as in areas like rural tourism or social farming (Wilson, 2008; van der Ploeg and Roep, 2003). The activities analysed can also go beyond the farm itself and intersect with for example local and short food supply chains. In some cases activities also go beyond the agri-food economy with activities that intersect with for example the education (e.g. *CSA Hof Pente*) and tourism (e.g. *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region*) sectors. Three others predominantly intersect in more specific stages of the succession process. They also still provide wider insights into the issues facing and process of supporting succession, however they are not as closely compared as the first seven cases. *Training in Nature Professions* (Table 10, no. 6) links closely to the education and experience stages, while also in the wider local influencing of the wish and awareness phases. The *ELINA Uusimaa* project (Table 10, no. 8) is focused on the education and experience stages, but is also closely linked to the form and handing/taking over phases as training supports this process. *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland* (Table 10, no. 10) deals with issues in

the form and handing/taking over stage where the existing farmer is close to retirement and successor is taking a more involved role.

3.2 The context

The **broad local context characteristics** (e.g. land and agriculture types, demography, economy) **do influence the existence of the practices. However, other factors appear as more strategic drivers, such as the actors involved, the resources mobilised and the networks supporting them.** For example, while the farm-focused case studies are embedded in and are a product of their local contexts, they also represent more exceptional practices that do not reflect dominant types or models of farming in the context they emerge from (e.g. CSA, organic farming, agroecology, horticulture, viticulture, short food supply chains). The practices overall do respond to needs presented in their contexts in different ways. They do this in very different ways and this is closely tied to the specific orientation and goals of the practice, alongside a range of diverse characteristics from the region. The case *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* highlights how being on the outskirts of a significant urban area allows farms to serve urban consumer demands which creates opportunities for community connected farming and to tap into the market base interested in local, organic, plant-based food. While in a very different way *MOPS* enables organic farmers to work together collectively to tap into the market opportunity for local organic horticultural produce, currently served by imports. In relation to each case study, Table 11 below further details the key characteristics of the context and linkages with the nature of the practice.

Table 11. Case Study Description and Characteristics of the Contexts

Case study – (and code)	Brief description of the practice and characteristics of the context
Maximimising Organig Production System (IR_1B)	The MOPS project spans seven different Irish counties (Kilkenny, Cork, Galway, Laois, Wicklow, Kildare and Wexford) covering a regional span of the country. Organic farming is a small, but growing part of Ireland's agri-food sector, however its further development is important to meet growing market opportunities. In the horticulture sector imported produce currently dominates to meet current demand. Land farmed under organic standards represents 1.4% of the total utilizable agricultural area. MOPS involves a group of eleven organic farmers coming together under an EU and Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine funded European Innovation Partnership in Agriculture project to enhance their knowledge and create an organic food chain supply. It has a mix of male and female organic farmers. The project resulted in enhanced farm viability. Combined with a family orientated outlook, the enhanced viability of the organic growers encouraged the family to consider succession patterns and practices.
Cydr Chyliczki, Ludwik Majlert's Farm and Rysiny Farm: Sustainable family food production and processing at the outskirts of Warsaw (PL2B)	Three family farms (Cydr Chyliczki, Ludwik Majlert's Farm and Rysiny Farm) oriented towards sustainable food production and shorter supply chains make up this case study. The outskirts of Warsaw, Poland's capital city, provides the location for the three family farms. The city's cultural context presents a space for novel alternative ideas, including trends such as veganism and local food preferences, which is an important part of the context that enables these farms providing a key market base. Another trait of the region is the presence of apple orchards, and cider production is the focus of one of the farms. Some apples from this region have the EU designation of Protected Geographical Indication (PGI).
Farm diversification at succession (BL3B)	This case focuses on two farms located in the province of East Flanders in Belgium. They represent farms that changed their orientation on succession. Biohoeve Hof te Muizenhole converted to organic farming. De Speiboerderij added another dimension (goat milk) production processing to the original organic enterprise. The farms are in two neighbouring municipalities Herzele and Lierde. Both municipalities are in the Natura 2000 area of the 'Flemish Ardennes'. In both municipalities farm succession is an issue facing agriculture. There is a generational change process at work in farming the region. These cases represent a particular

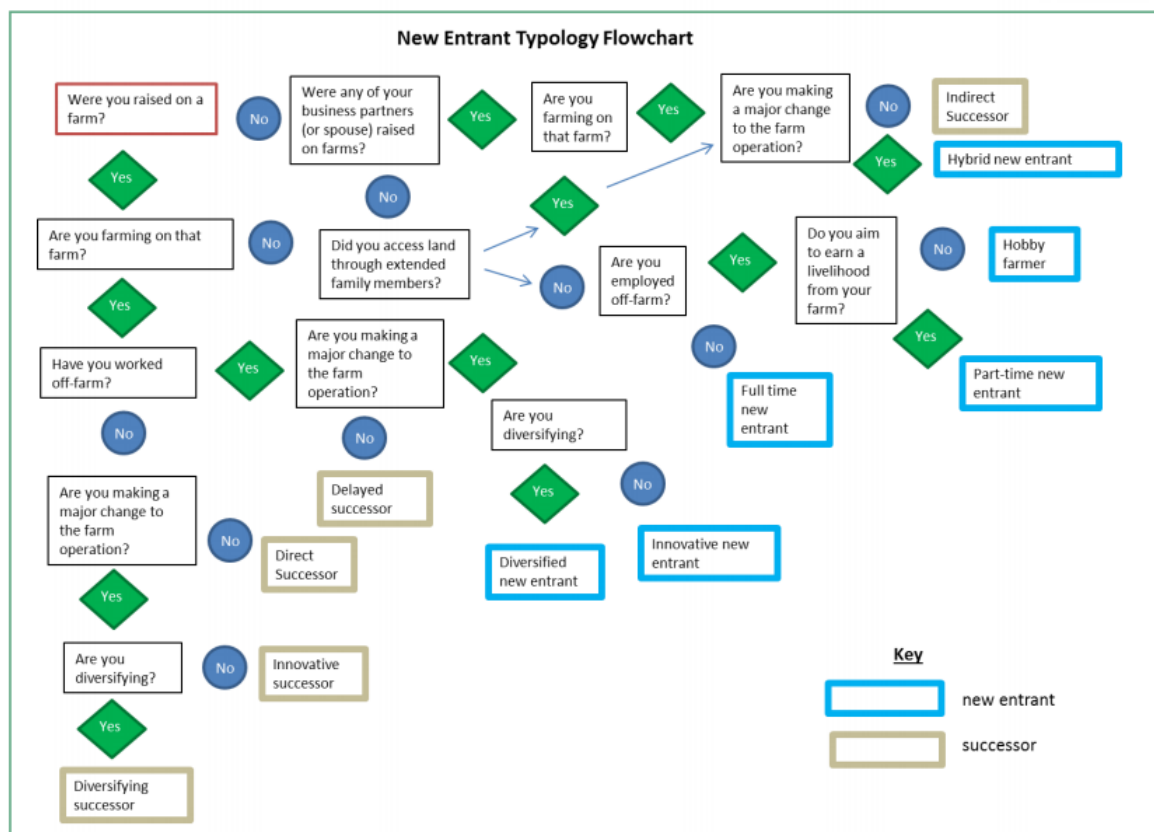
	angle on this trend where in both cases changes to agricultural management and diversification occurred on succession.
Successful agro-ecological and multifunctional successors in Sicily region (IT4B)	Family farms taken over by successors in Sicily (15 farms in the provinces of Catania, Enna, Palermo) and taking an agro-ecological and multifunctional approach are the focus of this case study. Sicily has a rich heritage embedded in its rural and agricultural landscapes and possesses strong biodiversity in terms of the wider Mediterranean area. Farms are generally small and in general there is an ageing farming population. It possesses a strong presence of organic farming with 26% farmed organically.
Slow Succession, Slow Revolution: Regenerating the agri-food system in the Catalan Western Lands (ES5B)	The 'Cultures Trobades' Slow food project is a collective of producers aiming to preserve and build food cultural heritage and support more sustainable farming. It is located in the Catalan Western Lands, which has a population of 367,016. This is increasing, with in-migration a strong recent trend. An ageing population is not a significant trend, however has emerged in recent years. The region has a higher farmland share and there is a greater importance of the farming and food sector than others in Catalonia. Agriculture is dominated by arable crops. No data is available on the share of organic farming in the region, but conventional, more intensive systems are thought to dominate. Farmers in the region are mostly male and there is an ageing farming population. Family farms are the dominant model with family labour important.
Training in "nature professions": A driving force for the rural regeneration of "Pays Coutançais" (FR6B)	The Agricultural School of Coutances (or Coutances Nature Trades Campus) focuses on agricultural education to support the ecological transition in society. It also includes an on-site farm and boarding facilities for students. Pays Coutances is rich in architectural heritage and attractive natural landscapes such as its hills and coastal sandy plains. Overall it has demographic stability, however this also varies within the region, such as the decline in the town of Coutances. The region's positive aesthetic can attract newcomers to the area, including directly attracted by the Agricultural School, such as new entrants into farming.
CSA Hof Pente GbR: Success through community, education and ecology (GE7B)	The CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) biodynamic farm Hof Pente is located in the village of Pente which is located in the Bramsche municipality. In addition to the CSA, that involves consumers being members of the farm and paying a subscription for produce, activities also include education supporting sustainable development. The village is also close to Osnabrück city in North-Western Germany and is linked to good communications networks. The population of the wider region is relatively stable and relatively young. The area is better described as semi-rural. However, agriculture is an important sector in the region. In Osnabrück 2.5% of farms are ecologically farmed. The CSA ideas has been welcomed by the local population and local community can engage with the farm in different ways (e.g. as CSA member, through the kindergarten).
Vital agriculture and forestry in Uusimaa region: The ELINA Uusimaa project (FI8B)	The ELINA Uusimaa project is a training and information programme that focuses on farm succession, but alongside wider issues facing the region's farmers (e.g. inter-farm cooperation, entrepreneurial skills, product development, environmental issues). It is an area based response tailored to the needs of farmers in the region, who often farm part-time. Farm numbers are declining in the region with profitability an issue leading to a focus on farm enterprise issues. Relatively low levels of organic farming in the region and environmental issues facing farming is also a key area of concern. The region is predominantly urban enabling part-time farmers to access employment outside of farming in the wider economy of the region.
Wine Community of Mór Wine Region (HU9B)	The Wine Community of Mór wine region is a cluster of wine producers but also a public body operating according to the 1994 Wine Community Act. Many of the family wine producers are entering a stage of generational change. Mór wine region is in the north-west of Hungary in Fejér County. It is predominantly rural, but with good accessibility and close to a number of cities, making commuting to work in cities a pattern evident in the region. In the broader context of wine regions in Hungary it is less well known, but growing in popularity. In addition to a tradition of wine-making, the region is also popular for its landscape, such as the Vértes Hills attracting hikers, and also a quality food scene.
Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland (IR10B)	The West Region, which is region of focus of this research, is a NUTS Level III statistical region in Ireland. It is located on the western sea-board of Ireland with the Atlantic Ocean to the west and consists of Galway City, which is the regional capital, as well as the counties of Galway, Mayo and Roscommon. It is predominantly a rural region, with only one third of its population living in an urban centre.

3.3 Characteristics of farm successors

A number of the case studies provide direct insight into the process of succession, however the extent of their direct focus on the farm successor differs. They also represent a set of ten different European contexts (as outlined in Table 1 and 2 above). **We do not attempt to offer further succinct definition of the successor here, particularly as the complexity of defining this actor and debates on the boundaries is clear from existing research.** For example, the grey area between direct successors and ex-novo or complete new entrants to farming is highlighted by EIP-AGRI (2016), as well as drawn out

pragmatically and depicted through pathways illustrated in a flowchart (see Figure 1). This typology illustrates a number of pathways to different types of succession (i.e. direct successor, innovative successor, diversifying successor, delayed successor and indirect successor). While Zagata et al. (2017, p.19) argue very clearly that: “Most young people who start farming because they take over a farm as part of a farm succession process are not ‘new entrants’”. **What is possible here is to present some insights on the process of succession in the context of these cases.** The end goal is to find ways to facilitate new generations entering farming. Building on the EIP-AGRI (2016) approach of teasing out different pathways to succession, some patterns and wider characteristics suggested by the cases are next explored.

Figure 1. Typology of farming new entrants and successors



Source: EIP-AGRI, 2016.

Intergenerational farm succession through the family (often sons, sometimes daughters) is the dominant pattern of succession represented by these cases. However, farm succession appears as often occurring after the successor has gained education and/or professional experience in areas outside of agriculture, corresponding to the ‘**delayed successor**’ identified in the EIP-AGRI (2016) typology. This also has positive benefits to farm practices and innovation. In the case *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* half of the successors had worked outside agriculture before entering the profession. This pattern has positive benefits for the farm where new skills and knowledge can shape improved farm viability and innovation. From *Farm Diversification at Succession*, on one of the farms studied (Hof te Muizenhole family farm) succession was uncertain as the succeeding son originally established another career, but later developed an interest in organic

farming after studying it through an introductory course. However, his mechanical professional background also benefited the farm through introducing specialised machinery and innovative cultivation techniques. The delayed successor was also prominent within the *MOPS* project with many farmers alluding to a ‘professional detour’ (Errington, 2002). A diversity of careers including, pharmaceutical, construction and hospitality prior to taking over the farm provided a sense of ambition, vision and courage to look beyond conventional farming. An interesting dynamic is observed in the case *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* where in a small minority of cases the existing generation did not want the successor to leave a permanent, well-paid job to enter farming. This highlights the **potential risks associated with the delayed succession pathway. Successors may intend to return but when professional and social connections are made in other fields, as well as the issue of the financial viability of the farm livelihood, this can create barriers to returning to farming.**

Successors can also bring changes to the farm and the phases of succession ‘handing and taking over’ and ‘running the farm’ can be particular times of change. In *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland*, the young farmers introduced new technologies and innovations on the farm, which increased productivity and efficiency. But it appears that it is **the process of succession rather than the successor per se that drives the change in direction for the farm.** The Hof te Muizenhole farm analysed in *Farm Diversification at Succession* was converted to organics, re-oriented towards shorter supply chains and changed to a full-time operation when the successor took over. While this represents a significant change, it cannot be separated from the previous generation’s influence on the farm. The father on the Hof te Muizenhole farm was also an advisor in organic farming and his existing expertise had a key influence. Also during the process of deciding to convert both father and son were involved, such as visiting other organic farms and carrying out a feasibility study. The degree of influence of the existing and entering generation differs. Some successors build very strongly on the path of the previous generation. For example, a number of the successors on *MOPS* farms are continuing in organic farming started by their parents. In the case of *CSA Hof Pente* the farm was already farmed non-conventionally, but the successor added another dimension to this through the CSA model. When there is a greater departure there may be tensions with the existing generation. For example, this is seen to a small degree in the cases *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* and *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region*, but mostly it appears not to be the case and is not the dominant pattern. The majority of the farmers engaged in the *MOPS* project had generational support when embarking on their switch to organics, although a small number of farmers did suggest considerable family tension as they deviated from traditional farming practices.

The case studies also help to illustrate the **wider nature and dynamics of the succession problem.** For example, *Farm Diversification at Succession* points to how while in the municipality of Lierde in Flanders only 50% of farms are thought to have a successor, it is **on smaller farms identifying a successor is a greater problem than larger farms.** This can also have the wider effect of farms based on smaller farmland having the land sold or leased. But also land prices make farm takeover by an ex-novo new entrant to farming difficult. The **intensely personal, individual also potentially slow and emotional nature of succession** is also highlighted. In the cases examined as part of *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* examples where the process occurs without tensions and delays are presented, but also one in particular highlights issues where it was considered if the family should seek the support of an external organisation to assist the process. Farm succession is a sensitive and emotive topic. Planning for it, or even discussing it among the farm family, can occur only to a small extent. In the case studies the *ELINA Uusimaa* project and *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland* **external spaces** to discuss and explore this issue and **external people** (e.g. farm advisors) bringing up the topic can be

an important starting point in the process. These types of external resources have a **key role in these early steps of starting the conversation on farm succession and planning for it.**

Predominant patterns around more traditional gender roles in farming can be identified in some of the case studies. In the case of Biohoeve Hof te Muizenhole in *Farm Diversification at Succession* the daughter is still involved on the farm but in administration tasks. She is not formally part of the farm through ownership of shares, her compensation is planned for the future. While in the De Speiboerderij farm in *Farm Diversification at Succession*, the daughter is formally involved with her role focused on the processing and sales of farm produce. This is a role previously played by her mother showing persistence of more traditional gender roles on farms through the generations. The case *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* points to the existence of gendered work roles and attitudes with the older generation where it is seen as a 'male world'. But it is also highlighted that with time women's professional role on the farm can become better recognised. However in Sicily while farming is male dominated, the amount of women in farming is increasing. The female initiated Solidarity Producer Group FOODia ca Furria also provides evidence of collaboration among a growing network of female farmers. The *MOPS* project was somewhat contradictory in its gender outlook, with male farmers describing wives or partners within the traditional 'assistant' or administrative role, but, also willing to accept a more central role for daughters interested in organic production farming.

3.4 Origin of practices and resources mobilisation

3.4.1 Origin of the practices

Farm succession can represent a time of opportunity and change. A number of the case studies show how in different ways times of change are also a time of opportunity. Nevertheless, **there is not always a departure from the past and existing resources** (e.g. skills, knowledge, attitudes and networks). Resources **build over time and are key to the origin of practices, but can also combine with new resources.** For example, the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* originates in the post-socialist era when family farms emerged due to privatisation of state farms. However strong local often domestic-based skills in viticulture pre-date this era and also crucially supported farm-based wine enterprise development. Professional training of the succeeding generation also emerges as important to farm business development. In the case of *CSA Hof Pente*, two of the farms analysed in *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* and the farms analysed in *Farm Diversification at Succession* they are generational family farms. The farm system did experience change in these cases, however the existing farming generation had built a farm already embedded with crucial resources essential for the successor.

A number of the practices, rather than just representing individual farms, are **groups of farmers working together or are a project with specific goals. These practices can also have a specific motivational trigger that can be identified as an important driver for their origins.** For example, while *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* depends on existing networks and resources the triggering driver for the formal organisation of Cultures Trobades is to preserve and build on the value of food cultural heritage, also supporting more environmentally sustainable agriculture. *MOPS* is driven by a group of organic farmers who want to increase both their economic viability and environmental sustainability

and working together can help achieve these aims. *The ELINA Uusimaa project* is driven in response to the challenges facing farmers in the region and develops tailored training to improve their capacities to adapt to these issues.

3.4.2 Resource mobilisation and capitals

From a number of case studies it is shown how in different ways **financial capital facilitates farm succession**. The low attractiveness of the farming profession when compared against the earning potential in other occupations emerges as an issue in the *ELINA Uusimaa* case study. More specifically **the importance of farm viability and sustainable farm livelihoods to the likelihood of succession** is shown. The issue is for example made clear in the case study *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland*. This is evidenced by the fact that the farm partnership model is more often found in the dairy sector where there is greater farm viability. So despite the model's potential to facilitate a more planned, formalised and gradual taking on of a farm, it is in more economically viable sectors its uptake is more commonly seen. This factor is a clear precursor to the origins and motivating factors underpinning the farm-based case studies that focus on developing a farm business model that sustains a livelihood for the successor. The *MOPS* project participants showed a willingness around the succession process, with farmers encouraging younger family members to consider taking over the farm, however similar to traditional farming, small farms were a limiting factor, particularly if two families needed an income from the farm. In the region focused on in *Farm Diversification at Succession* a pattern is identified where if smaller farms have a successor, they may farm part-time in combination with an off-farm job. However it is also shown how this pattern can also be avoided by changing the farm business model. The specific case of the Hof te Muizenhole family farm in the *Farm Diversification at Succession* case study shows how conversion to organics and focusing on short supply chains can turn a part-time farm livelihood into a full-time one. The father in this case was a part-time farmer. However on succession to the son, and conversion to organics, the farm was then capable of supporting a full-time livelihood for the successor. Similarly, farmers engaged in the *MOPS* project saw a substantial increase in the viability of their farms as a result of their organic supply chain. This enhanced viability allowed farm families to embrace farm succession confident the farm could support additional family into the future.

Cultural capital is also an important factor in the case studies that can both act as a **constraining or facilitating factor**. For example, consumers holding specific values (for local, organic, artisan, heritage, sustainable food) becomes a type of capital that the farms in the case studies can tap into and this facilitates their niche business model. The extent of this capital can also constrain the practice. In the case of *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* it is noted how the majority of consumers do not hold this value system which creates a challenge to achieve economic sustainability. Cultural capital can also be a factor driving the origins of the practice. In the case of *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution*, the Cultures Trobades project is fundamentally built on traditional food culture under threat and preserving it, which is also a key cultural capital facilitating the project. Another example is the long tradition of winemaking as a key influence on the presence of the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region*.

Cultural capital in the form of attitudes and more traditional world-views can also be a constraining factor. This can be with the existing farming generation and the wider local farming community. While not a dominant pattern, in the case of *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* scepticism to the new changes is identified among the previous generation. Similarly conservative attitudes of the previous generation emerged as a constraint for successors in the case of *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* and in the case of the *MOPS* project. Farmers in the *MOPS* case

study alluded to a low level of acceptance of organic farming in Ireland, from the previous generations and traditional farmers, with many still considering it a 'way of life' or 'hobby farming'. However cultural capital in the form of world-views and attitudes is not static. For example in the case of *CSA Hof Pente* the existing farmer was at first reluctant to embrace the CSA model, but changed to become favourable to the idea. This pattern can be linked to the wider issue highlighted in farm succession research around a successor's compatibility with the existing farmer and how a more compatible match can facilitate succession (e.g. Ingram and Kirwan, 2011). The case studies show how this is the case, but that the entering farm successor can also generate an attitude shift. But also where there are incompatibilities in outlooks tensions also can emerge. Nevertheless the case studies show a deeper understanding of this dynamic and attitude shifts may depend on how much of a leap the new ideas and approach is. For example, in the case of *CSA Hof Pente* the farm was already operated by biodynamic methods showing an already present affinity to more alternative approaches.

Human capital in the form of both formal (e.g. gained through education and training) and informal (local knowledge, self-teaching, testing new ideas) skills and expertise plays a crucial role in the farm-based practices. A key target for the *MOPS* project revolved around organic training and education, with the production of a video for dissemination amongst the project participants, but also the wider community considering organic farming. Even though all farmers engaged in the project are certified organic growers, additional education and skills training were crucial in networking and bonding the group to ensure the success of the food supply chain. *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* demonstrates the importance of both formal and informal skills and knowledge. The Manresa city Farming School in the neighbouring region of Central Catalonia provides specialist training in agroecology, while local knowledge on for example ancient crop varieties is crucial too. Building the local knowledge aspect of human capital is highlighted as a potential challenge because it is harder to gain through formal training. The multifunctional approach also demands skills beyond agriculture and horticulture. The case of the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* points to the importance of marketing skills to tap into wider opportunities such as tourism or to connect to new market outlets. Similarly, marketing skills emerge as important in *Farm Diversification at Succession* to enable organic farmers effectively operate in shorter food supply chains. Further to this, it is also a challenge for one person to possess all of the required skills and different family members take on different core roles (e.g. farm operations, marketing and sales, administration). In the case of the De Speiboerderij farm in *Farm Diversification at Succession*, developing marketing and processing skills were necessary to gain, but training was hard to access so these skills were gained primarily through self-teaching by the daughter. Other skills needed could be gained through more traditional channels through the son's internship on a goat farm. Educational background can also influence the approach to farming. In the case of *CSA Hof Pente* the farmer's educational background in ecological agriculture and food culture was a strong factor determining the farm's orientation towards non-conventional agriculture. Biohoeve Hof te Muizenhole studied as part of *Farm Diversification at Succession* also had an educational trigger for the switch to organics when the son took a starter course in organic farming as at the National Agricultural Centre.

Two of the case studies also focus directly on human capital development - *Training in Nature Professions* and the *ELINA Uusimaa* project. They represent different approaches to education. The Agricultural School of Coutances analysed in *Training in Nature Professions* takes a distinctive approach that is integrated and tailored to the local territory it emerges from. It has a multi-faceted mission to provide training in 'nature professions' (e.g. agroecological and sustainable approaches to farming) while supporting the developing of its territory. It also aims to support the educational, social and professional integration of young people and adults, as well as research to stimulate the improved

development and innovation of agriculture and food. International cooperation and exchange is also practiced such as for students and teachers at the school. The *ELINA Uusimaa* project is developed in response to the education and training needs of farmers in relation to farm business management and aims to ensure they have access to new, up to date information and research. Its delivery approach was focused on smaller group training, peer support and peer learning.

The **dynamics of how human capital is harnessed, built and exchanged** is also an important pattern. In some of the cases the successors are continuing the innovations of the previous generation or adapting them, following and extending the path already taken (e.g. organics to short supply chains). The existing generation's human capital is a crucial resource that the next generation benefits from. More broadly in relation to the types of farmers in an area and how their human capital can combine, the co-existence of family successors and new entrants to farming in a region can support more robust farm renewal on succession. For example, the case of the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* includes both successors and new entrants but shows how newcomers in particular introduced new, more ecologically sustainable approaches to viticulture and novel ideas such as place-marketing based on natural assets and wine culture. The case of *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* also shows how both successors and new entrants are important actors underpinning the Cultures Trobades project and the regenerative, innovative practices (agroecology, heritage food preservation, local food cultures) it works to support.

Poor levels of farm succession can also be a threat to human and cultural capital. The case studies highlight this in particular in relation to locally embedded culture, knowledge and skills that needs more informal social places to enable transfer rather than formal education. This is particularly the case in relation to the *MOPS* case study, where traditional farming and agriculture is locally and regionally embedded in Ireland, yet farm successors are often keen to consider changing farm practices to organics. One of the core goals of the Cultures Trobades project in *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* is preservation of traditional food culture and the successors who orient their farm business towards this type of production directly contribute to its preservation.

3.5 Actors involved and legitimacy

In general, the practices depend on a core set of actors who are at the centre of the practice, but also a wider, diverse network of actors at different scales (e.g. local, regional, national or sometimes international levels). Depending on the nature of the practice who these actors are differs (see Table 3). Looking at the actors involved also begins to highlight the origins of some institutional supports (discussed in section 3.8). **The variety of actors involved highlights how the practices are embedded in a wider system, which shows the importance of interconnections among actors and networks.** In terms of the core actors that are at the centre of the practices and drive them, the following patterns emerge:



The family unit is a core actor: Successors in the farm based case studies are supported in different ways by their wider families. They may work collaboratively together to run the farm business, on an ongoing and/or seasonal basis as labour demands change. The older farming generation who has developed the farm and has years of expertise often remains active to some degree on the farm when the successor takes over and can influence the farm's new orientation on succession. In addition there may be more than one individual successor where other family members are also involved in the farm business.



An organisation as the core actor: Two cases have a specific organisation at their core (*Training in Nature Professions* and *ELINA Uusimaa*) who are responsible for the practice and the services (education in these cases) provided. In others, organisations and groups are also core actors (*MOPS*, *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* and the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region*) which are made up of producers and serve particular shared objectives of these producers.

Looking specifically at the wider actors involved, the roles these actors play differs. For example, actors can:



Provide support at a specific stage of development: For example, the German Federal Environmental Foundation funded *CSA Hof Pente's* marketing for a number of years helping build its consumer base.



Play a specific role because of the actor's expertise: For example, the expertise of an agronomist in *MOPS* provided assessment of each farm to direct production aligned with market demands and gaps. The *ELINA Uusimaa* project was realised by a wide network of actors but core were a range of experts providing training that supported the core function of the project. *Farm Partnerships* in the West of Ireland demonstrates how the legal requirements of entering into a farm partnership requires the expertise of different experts, such as a solicitor and Teagasc (Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority) specialists, who facilitate the succession process.



Play an ongoing role to connect the practice to a broader ethos or system of standards: For example, in the case of organic farms this can be a certifying body or for biodynamic farming the international federation Demeter in the case of *CSA Hof Pente*. *Slow Food* also provides this role in relation to *Cultures Trobades* in the *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* case study.



Function as part of short food supply chains: Market actors who act as intermediaries between producers and consumers are crucial to these practices and their operation outside of conventional supply chains. Examples are Bio Planet shops and the Organic Goat Cooperative in the case of *Farm Diversification at Succession*. In addition the community of consumers are also crucial as part of these market actors.

Table 12. Core and wider actors in the practices

Case study	Core actors	Wider actors
1. Cydr Chyliczki, Ludwik Majlert's Farm and Rysiny Farm: Sustainable family food production and processing at the outskirts of Warsaw	Family farms	Seasonal migrant workforce; market actors (e.g restaurants, shops, food processors); local community
2. CSA Hof Pente GbR: Success through community, education and ecology	Family farm	Consumer members of the CSA, wider supportive community e.g. local mayor, wider local population; German Federal Environmental Foundation; Demeter (Biodynamic Farming Federation); UNESCO Nature and Geopark TERRA vita; Organic Food System Programme of the UN Environment Programme; wider education networks

3. Wine Community of Mór Wine Region	Wine producers (some newcomers, mostly family farms)	Touristic Destination Management Association of the Mór Wine Region; local Mayors; Rural Managers; Tourism entrepreneurs
4. Successful agro-ecological and multifunctional successors in Sicily region	Family farms	Simenza—Cumpagnia Siciliana Sementi Contadine (local association of farmers); Sicilian Consortium 'Galline Felici' (Solidarity Purchasing Group); Simeto River Agreement Participatory Presidium, FOODia ca Furria (Solidarity Purchasing Group); Municipality of Troina
5. Slow Succession, Slow Revolution: Regenerating the agri-food system in the Catalan Western Lands	Cultures Trobades collective of producers	Agroecological farmers supportive of the collective; Catalan Western Lands Slow Food Association; Slow Food Restaurant Network; Alternative Farm Workers Union; Catalan Goat Shepherds Association; wider market actors (e.g. processors, restaurants); Terra Madre Network
6. MOPS	Family farms	Agronomist; Researchers; Irish Organic Association; Market outlets
7. Farm diversification at succession	Family farms	Inagro vzw/ Interprovincial Research Centre for Organic Cultivation; Other advisory services e.g. BioForum Vlaanderen vzw; Market actors (e.g. Bio Planet shops, Organic Goat Cooperative); Department of Agriculture and Rural areas in the Province of East-Flanders; local Municipality (Lierde and Herzele)
8. Training in "nature professions": A driving force for the rural regeneration of "Pays Coutançais"	Agricultural School	Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, local elected officials; local farmers; other wider associations/organisations
9. Vital agriculture and forestry in Uusimaa region: The ELINA Uusimaa project	Farm advisory organization Proagria Etelä-Suomi; Farmers; Training and development experts (from Central Union of Proagria Centres of Finland and Työtehoseura TTS)	Regional Farmers' Union; ELY centres (regional body on Economic Development, Transport and Environment); Regional food industry (dairy industry, cereal processing industry); Local and regional agricultural public administration; Farmers' Union; Farmers' Social Insurance Institution; Financial institutions
10. Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland	Family farms	Teagasc supported by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine – (both developed farm partnership model); Department of Finance; Revenue Commissioners; Law society; Solicitors, Accountants (IFAC), and other legal/financial professionals; Farm Management Specialists and Farm Collaborative Specialists; Farm Advisors and Farm Consultants; Various co-operatives; Farming representative bodies.

3.6 Sustainability, innovation and adaptability of the practices

The succession case studies represent a number of different types of innovation. More broadly an aptitude for innovation is observed on the farms studied, such as through small innovative adaptations on farms, learning novel approaches by testing in action or particular specific more innovative methods of farming. This helps to improve farm viability, sustainability and productivity. For example:



In the case of *MOPS* a number of small innovations are described as having important impacts on farm viability such as a simple database for record-keeping and farm micro climate monitoring.



In the case of the *De Speiboerderij* farm that is part of the Farm Diversification at Succession case study the farm family displays an aptitude for testing new ideas and their

approach is described as following ‘trial and error’, where adaptations are made based on testing approaches.



The practice of polyculture is found on many farms part of the *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors* in Sicily Region case study which is an innovative approach where multiple types of plants and varieties are grown tailored to the farm location and size.

The cases also illustrate the importance of non-technological innovations in rural regeneration and generational renewal. The type of actors involved and resources mobilised, which are detailed in the above sections, illustrates how replicating or adapting innovation is linked to this wider more systemic framework of resources and actors. Based on the types of innovation classified in the RURALIZATION Assessment Framework (Murtagh et al. 2021) the following are identified in the case studies:



Entrepreneurial innovation: All of the farm based case studies (no. 1 to 7) have an element of innovation through entrepreneurship where the farm businesses have added more innovative approaches to the farm business model, such as conversion to organic farming or agroecology, orienting the farm towards shorter supply chains and/or diversifying into other sectors such as education and tourism.



Organisational innovation: Innovation through collaboration is present in the *MOPS*, *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* and the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* case studies. *Farm Partnerships* in the West of Ireland illustrates the farm partnership model which is an innovative approach to collaborative farming. The important role of organisational innovation and innovative business models in the succession and generational renewal context is expanded on further below.



Social innovation: Innovations that meet social needs are evident in the case of CSA Hof Pente where a farm enterprise plays a role in providing childcare. A number of the specific farms studied as part of other cases also embed agricultural-based social innovation as evident in *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* where one farm is described as playing a role as a ‘community centre’. The farms studied as part of *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* are involved in social farming, agri-wellbeing, education and agri-kindergarten. The Agricultural School of Coutances in *Training in Nature Professions* focuses on training and innovative pedagogical approaches, but also to serve the needs of the region as well as the ambition of its young people.



Cultural innovation: In the cases the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* and *Slow Succession*, *Slow Revolution* both harness cultural assets to support new opportunities in the region.



The *ELINA Uusimaa* project also embeds an innovative approach more broadly. *ELINA Uusimaa* innovates by dealing with succession issues in tandem with other farm business management training and education needs elevating the issue to a place alongside other key challenges facing farmers.

Innovative approaches to **collaborative farming**, but also wider farm business operation are important models in the context of improved farm succession. Generational renewal and taking over the farm is as a time of change and opportunity. Innovative farm business models appear an important part of the approach to harnessing this. The potential of collaborative farming or joint ventures (e.g. farm partnerships, contract farming, share farming) to facilitate farm succession is pointed to, as well as the need for real world testing of these models in different contexts, alongside mind-set change to realise this potential (McKee et al., 2018). The rationale behind farm partnerships as envisaged with the succession issue is that they incentivise a new set of working arrangements between older and younger farmers, as a way of providing more options for younger farmers to enter farming. They also create more opportunities to maximise efficiencies and profitability through combining expertise, experience and resources and through convincing older farmers of the benefits of earlier farm transfer (Leonard et al., 2017).

A number of the case studies compared in this analysis **provide evidence to support the widening of this lens beyond joint ventures to a range of business models to facilitate improved farm succession and generational renewal**. The case *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* highlights how the farm business model can involve **short food supply chains and direct connections with community on farms**. It is also noted how this type of business model can improve the economic viability of small farms (the Ludwik Majlert Farm is 10 hectares and Rysiny Farm 15 hectares) but the business model makes the operation economically viable and has also resulted in effective succession on these farms. The case study *Farm Diversification at Succession and Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* both highlight the important role of shortening supply chains. The Sicily case study also points to the importance of a wider **multifunctional approach where farms offer wider services beyond food production** (e.g. social farming, tourism). The more specific approach of the **Solidarity Purchasing Group** or Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale (GAS) is discussed in the Sicily case study. This is a group of producers and consumers who come together. Production and consumption of products within the group is governed by set criteria and values. Another alternative model of farming is presented through the case of *CSA Hof Pente* where the farm operates through the **Community Supported Agriculture** model where the farm cooperative has 350 consumer members who receive the farm produce. Alongside this the farm also fits the multifunctional approach where education services are provided, through a kindergarten and agriculture school providing apprenticeships, internships and seminars.

More environmentally sustainable farming practices underpin the farm-focused case studies, such as agroecology, biodynamic and organic agriculture. Improving the environmental sustainability of farming is also a driver in *Training in Nature Professions* and the *ELINA Uusimaa* project. Their education and training focus is on methods of farming or wider adaptations on farms to improve environmental sustainability. Another important point is that **improving farming's environmental sustainability can be an important motivation for successors as a core part of their farming ethos** which makes it an important part of the nature of the generational renewal and change that occurs in these cases. This is seen for example in *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* where the successors embed a 'holistic vision' for their farms that combines innovative new and traditional environmentally sustainable farming methods. It is also evident in *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* where a movement towards an alternative agroecological system is identified underpinned by agrobiodiversity and local food culture. In addition, **where the sustainability focus already existed with the existing farming generation, it can be an enabling, supportive factor for farm succession**. For example, the *MOPS* project provides a good example of farm families who have a collective connection to the environment with children on organic farms embracing issues of

environmental sustainability. This youthful passion for the environment and connection to the land can potentially lay the groundwork for farm families to consider the issue of succession, and in turn for intergenerational farm transfer to occur without negative issues.

3.7 Creating connections

The **growing importance of networks to support the improved innovation and sustainability** of farming is made clear in the concept of Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) and its importance in CAP post 2020. AKIS involves people and organisations coming together for mutual learning and where knowledge is generated, shared and used. A diverse range of actors create, use, exchange and need agricultural knowledge (e.g. farmers, advisers, researchers, education and training providers) (EIP-AGRI, 2018). The *ELINA Uusimaa* project supports networks among farmers, but also other actors in the AKIS, such as agricultural researchers, supporting peer learning through small group training. The *ELINA Uusimaa* project also underlines the importance of networks to support knowledge and innovation in the context of our knowledge-rich society where knowledge also evolves in the AKIS. Underlining the importance of AKIS in the particular context of farm succession, the **crucial importance of networks for successors** emerges from the case studies. The *ELINA Uusimaa* project connects groups of successors and potential successors enabling peer to peer support and knowledge sharing. Successors can also participate in specific networks that are linked to their farming approach. For example, formal producer networks are created by some of the practices directly. Cultures Trobades in *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* is a network of producers concerned with preserving local food culture and agro-biodiversity. *MOPS* is a network of producers collectively supplying the market. Beyond the primary activities of the networks, they have the spin-off value of **facilitating knowledge exchange and collaborations among producers**. *MOPS* particularly highlights the importance of intergenerational knowledge transfer (both formal and informal knowledge) and the wider intergenerational support and encouragement as a benefit of the network. The collaborative activities of producers from the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* happen in a rather spontaneous way, but the network is key to enable this. In *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* a number of specific networks emerge (Simenza, Galline Felici and the Simento River Valley Agreement) and it is argued networking is more important as a resource than institutions. **Networks can also assist with innovation transfer** where innovative approaches inspire others. In the case of Cydr Chyliczki farm that is part of the *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* case study the growing of unconventional apple tree species has the effect of raising the interest of other farmers in also doing this.

The **orientation towards shorter supply chains in the farm-focused practices means important networks along the food supply chain emerge to facilitate this**. These networks are crucial to underpin how these farms achieve their economic viability and the farm livelihood of the existing and succeeding generation. They do this differently showing the diverse ways that shortening food supply chains between primary producers and final consumers can occur. For example, it can be facilitated by networks that represent different approaches:



Collective: Producers work together to gain critical mass so they can supply the market at greater economies of scale. *MOPS* producers work together to collectively supply retailers allowing them to mimic the capacity of a large organic horticulture enterprise. The Organic Goat Coöperatie brings organic goat milk producers together to supply the market and

process goat milk which the De Speiboerderij farm in *Farm Diversification at Succession* is a member of.



Direct to consumer: A number of the farms directly connect with consumers. In the case of CSA Hof Pente its consumer members receive produce produced on the farm. In the Ludwik Majlert and Rysiny farms part of the *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* case study on-farm outlets sell farm produce. Proximity to more urban consumer markets facilitates these direct to consumer connections highlighting the importance of rural-urban interconnections.



Connecting with value-driven intermediaries: Retailers and restaurants that focus on sourcing local, organic and/or sustainably produced food can provide important outlets for the farms to supply their produce directly to. In the *Farm Diversification at Succession* case study the Hof te Muizenhole farm potatoes are sold at local Bio-Planet shops, which is a national network of shops managed by the Bio-Planet organisation. In the *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* case study, while there are weaknesses highlighted, the Slow Food accredited restaurant network provides an important outlet for the produce of Cultures Trobades farmers.

A number of the case studies provide insights on the **how producer networks operate**, with a more informal and flexible governance approach appearing more effective. The *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* created the Ezerjó Wine-route Association where formal collaborative activities among farmers did not work well, however wider, less regularised activities (e.g. festivals, open cellars) and a strong informal network and relationships still exist. This has the drawback of potential synergies not being harnessed, such as activities that could benefit from running parallel (e.g. joint selling to increase scale). The *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* shows how a potential wide range of areas of cooperation exist, perhaps collaboration in specific areas could assist harness this potential. The *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* case study shows how this may be starting to happen where the new generation is working to collaborate to achieve common high quality standards, also to achieve the collective goal of upholding the wine quality perceptions and standards of the wider region. The Cultures Trobades project analysed as part of the case of *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* operates effectively with a relaxed governance style where rules around participation and activities are not set, however importantly members share the same objectives around preserving environment, farming and food culture.

3.8 Institutional support and policies for successors

The case studies illustrate a **range of institutional supports and policies that help to facilitate improved farm succession**. These can be policy instruments and programmes that directly target facilitating improved levels of farm generational renewal and aim to deal with specific barriers such as:



Training and information to facilitate farm handover: Alongside other areas of training need in farm business management, the *ELINA Uusimaa* project focused on generational renewal issues helping to network farmers with potential successors.



Support for collaborative farming to facilitate phased farm handover: The *Farm Partnerships* in the West of Ireland case study identifies a number of measures in Ireland

targeted at the establishment of Registered Farm Partnerships (RFP): the Collaborative Farming Scheme, Succession Farm Partnerships scheme and an income tax credit scheme.



Financial supports for young farmers and successors: National level Rural Development Programmes (RDP) under the second pillar of CAP emerge as a source of financial start-up supports for young farmers. *Successful Agro-ecological and Multifunctional Successors in Sicily Region* identifies a regional initiative ‘Terra ai giovani’ (Land to Young Farmers) that assisted young farmers access uncultivated or abandoned land with more favourable payment terms, as well as the Business start-up aid for young farmers, a measure under the Sicilian Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020. Farmers analysed in the *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* case study also benefited from financial supports for young farmers to set up a farm, a CAP support administered through the Ministry of Agriculture of Catalonia. The investment aid and takeover support provided through the Flemish Agricultural Investment Fund emerges as important in *Farm Diversification at Succession*.

The case studies also illustrate how the **practices are also more broadly supported by wider agricultural and rural policy instruments and institutional support frameworks, as well those from other areas such for environmental sustainability, organic farming, biodiversity and innovation. The wider policy and institutional support framework can therefore provide an indirect support to facilitate improved farm succession.** Some examples are as follows:



European level funding from the agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) for operational groups supported the *MOPS project*.



National level funding from the German Federal Environmental Foundation funded *CSA Hof Pente’s* marketing for a number of years helping build its consumer base. In the case of Cultures Trobades from the *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* case study the importance of funding in the project’s early stages is also noted.



A mosaic of funding is utilised by the Cultures Trobades group in the *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* at regional (Noguera County Council and Catalan Ministry of Agriculture European funded Rural Development Program grant to support cultivated biodiversity) and national levels (The Spanish Ministry of Ecological Transition organisation Fundación Biodiversidad). This helped to facilitate the project’s initial work to preserve local horticultural varieties and the Catalan goat.



The *Farm Diversification at Succession* case study highlights a range of different types of specialist supports for organic farming. Inagro, the public-private expertise centre on organic farming, and its Interprovincial Research Centre for Organic Cultivation provide important advisory and training services. Organic sector organisations are also important in this respect, such as BioForum Vlaanderen. Organic sector organisations also help to support those converting to organic farming, as well as the multi-organisation ‘Organic looks for Farmer’ project. Marketing and sales expertise is available from the Flemish Centre for Marking of Agriculture and Fishery.

Some weaknesses in existing policies and more broadly some areas of future policy need also emerge. This is not an exhaustive or comprehensive list of policy needs, but reflects issues emerging in a small

set of case studies. Nevertheless, some insights emerge for reflection in relation to future policy which are:



Need for loans for bridging finance: In the Sicilian context, a weakness of the RDP supports for young farmers is highlighted. When grants are provided they are only paid after investment is made by farmers, meaning they have to initially source finance to support activities covered by the start-up aid. The timeframe of payment of subsidies and under agri-environmental schemes are also criticised in *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* with producers waiting significant periods within which they may face debt issues.



Timeframe of support for young farmer set-up: *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* highlights that the financial support for young farmers to set up a farm had to be spent in 6 months. Investing large amounts in the early stages of farm establishment could be a disadvantage as the orientation of the farm could still be forming and being tested. Potentially a longer, phased timeframe could be beneficial.



Targeting of supports so they reach those most in need of them: The *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland* case study identifies that it is often the farms that are already in a good economic position in terms of their financial viability (e.g. dairy farms in particular) that most often avail of the various RFP supports.



The sustainability of practices when reliant on project-focused funding: The *ELINA Uusimaa* project points to issues of funding continuity. Practices build up a network which can break down when funding ends. Projects also need to look beyond shorter-term funding if the needs they serve are more long term and build a self-sustaining financial model. The case of Cultures Trobades from the *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* case study also raises the issue of financial supports being supportive at the beginning of the project but have gradually reduced, but the project is also conscious of this and working to build its own economic stability.



Better targeting of EU farm policies to the characteristics of specific farms and more niche farming: This issue particularly emerges in relation to horticulture. For example in *Slow Succession, Slow Revolution* it is noted that to be eligible for basic farm payments the farm must be at least one hectare. Similarly this issue is raised by the organic horticulture producers in *MOPS*.



Feasibility studies on adaptations to farm enterprises: Succession can often represent a time of change on farms. One of the farms studied in *Farm Diversification at Succession* conducted a feasibility study on its diversification plan. The wider importance of successors carrying out feasibility studies on planned adaptations to the farm enterprise is also noted, as well as policy instruments to support this.

3.9 Effects and perspectives

Evidence from the case studies show how **farms with a strong multifunctional approach have clear effects on rural regeneration and opportunities in rural areas**. In relation to economic opportunities, the more multifunctional approach creates added employment directly on farm or indirectly in the

wider rural economy. The case of De Speiboerderij Farm illustrated in the *Farm Diversification at Succession* case study shows how more labour intensive organic farming and local processing created jobs for three people on the farm (son, daughter and brother in-law), as well as the original farmer and his wife staying involved. The activities of the farms in the case *Sustainable Family Food Production and Processing at the Outskirts of Warsaw* also has spin-off economic effects, such as to local artisans who provide services to the farms. Provision of employment not just to one farmer is also found in other cases. A trend of employment of family members in the business is described in the *Wine Community of Mór Wine Region* case study.

The multifunctional approach also supports improved social and cultural opportunities in farming and rural areas. In earlier sections, these aspects of the case studies are already discussed. Cultural capital can be generated by the farms in different ways by the focus on local food supply chains and culture (section 3.4). Some of the case studies are also identified as sources of social and cultural innovation (section 3.6). More broadly this points to **the importance of the multifunctional approach to farming as a pathway to rural regeneration, generational renewal and farm succession.** The notion of multifunctionality can also be seen on a continuum and the stronger the multifunctionality the greater the rural regeneration benefits (van der Ploeg and Roep, 2003; Wilson, 2008). The *MOPS* project for example displays characteristics of strong multifunctionality, with participating organic farmers embedded in their local communities, individual farmers increasing the viability of their farms, strong sustainable practices throughout, in addition to high levels of trust amongst participants and common goals for a strong environmentally friendly food supply chain. *CSA Hof Pente* is also a strongly multifunctional farm as a place of food production and direct to consumer supply, as well as its education functions. Also based on all of the other case studies (apart from The *ELINA Uusimaa* project and the *Farm Partnerships in the West of Ireland* because of their different focus) it can be argued they represent strong multifunctionality. The scale of the farms (relatively small scale) appears an important factor also in achieving these benefits and in some cases they do not aim to expand to ensure their wide functions continue.

3.10 Conclusion

Ten case studies that presented promising practices to facilitate improved levels of farm succession have been comparatively analysed in this chapter. The insights emerging reflect a small set of practices in particular regional contexts. The findings need to be seen in this context. Nevertheless, some wider insights on the strategic factors that can facilitate improved farm succession, where new generations of successors enter and stay in farming, can be presented in conclusion:



Continued attention to gender equality is needed in the context of farm succession. Predominant patterns around more traditional gender roles existing in farming can be identified in some of the case studies.



There is not always a departure from the past and existing resources can also combine with new resources. In human terms, this provides a rationale for **the need for 'intergenerational solidarity'** as a part of the policy logic for farming and succession.



Innovation and improved levels of succession appear to go hand in hand. A number of different types of innovation are represented by the case studies and they also illustrate

the importance of non-technological innovations. More broadly an aptitude for innovation is also observed on the farms studied.



Enabling innovation is also linked to a wider more systemic framework of resources and actors. The importance of networks to support the improved innovation and sustainability of farming is also evident.



More broadly, the crucial **importance of networks for successors** emerges from the case studies. Networks can bring benefits such as facilitating knowledge exchange and collaborations among producers.



Generational change is a time of opportunity and taking over the farm is as a time of change. Perhaps this could ~~this~~ be better harnessed with new business and organisational models. The case studies provide evidence to support the **widening of the lens beyond joint ventures to a range of business models to facilitate improved farm succession and generational renewal**, such as Solidarity Purchasing Groups and Community Supported Agriculture.



A range of institutional supports and policies aim to support farm succession. The practices can also be more broadly supported by wider agricultural and rural policy instruments and institutional support frameworks, as well other areas such for environmental sustainability, organic farming, biodiversity and innovation. **The wider policy and institutional support framework can therefore provide an indirect support to facilitate improved farm succession.**



Evidence from the case studies show how **farms with a strong multifunctional approach have clear effects on rural regeneration and opportunities in rural areas.** More broadly this points to the importance of the multifunctional approach to farming as a pathway to rural regeneration, generational renewal and farm succession.

A number of wider conclusions also emerge as important. Newcomers to farming have been connected to innovative trends in rural regions such as helping to revitalise declining areas and agriculture representing a ‘new rurality’ (Monllor i Rico and Fuller, 2016). The farm-based cases studies analysed here also link to this concept of new rurality where the approach to farming works towards building for example community connections, urban-rural connections, local food culture, environmentally sustainability and multifunctional farming. **The case studies illustrate how this new rurality also emerges in the context of family farms and during the process of farm succession.**

The practices contribute to building local capacities for potentially improved levels of farm succession, but also illustrate how a mix of factors come into play across the succession process stages (described in the introductory section of this chapter). In relation to farm succession, previous research points to the development of a desire to farm and identity as an important stage in farm generational renewal. This can be linked to ‘awareness’ and ‘wish’, which are early stages of the succession process. Research also indicates the importance of understanding succession as a complex process with varied influences such as those of economic, social and cultural nature. Focusing on the later stages of the process, such as ‘handing and taking over’ equally does not address the complex nature of this issue. The comparative analysis further underscores the multifaceted nature of the farm succession process. **Dealing with any stage alone will not build capacities for farm succession because of the wider barriers and resources weaknesses.**

The cases also illustrate how the characteristics of the farm itself are a crucial asset that facilitates succession. On top of dealing with succession as a phased process, another important focus potentially is **facilitating succession from the inside out and starting with the farm itself**. One crucial issue to address is sustainable farm livelihoods and the economic resilience of farms. In addition, when looking from the inside out at the farm itself the issue of intergenerational solidarity between the entering and exiting farmer must be considered. Both the value they bring to the farm and needs they have must be considered.

4 Comparative analysis of confrontations

(by Ciane D. Goulart)

This chapter highlights and indicates novel insights derived from the 20 confrontations³ and related to the potential for further use of 15 practices⁴ initiated by rural newcomers, new entrants into farming and farm successors. The potential of the approaches derives from the information collected during confrontations and relating to their individual acceptability and suitability to produce the expected impact in the researched context. The analysis is made by applying the patterns of six regeneration pathways: smart specialization⁵, rural-urban relations⁶, multifunctional farming⁷, agroecology⁸, bioeconomy⁹ and building human capital¹⁰. The chapter also highlights the limitations for further use of the practices, which can be mainly related to the difficulties that change makers encounter to realise the potential of a given practice in a context different than the initial one. While the potential impact of wider application of the practices across Europe have proved to be generally high and ample, this potential is limited by unfitting resource availability of the context and the critical success factors required by the practice.

4.1 Potential for further use of promising practices

One of the outputs of the confrontation workshops was an evaluation made by the participants regarding their level of interest in applying the practice to their context. In this chapter we evaluate their reasons for acceptance and interest and derive the potential for further use of the practice in similar contexts.

4.1.1 Confrontations of Rural Newcomers (NC) practices

Economic, demographic and social benefits from fostering Remote Work

The *“Remote work as a promising practice to attract newcomers to rural areas”* raised interest and positive reactions in both contexts where it was presented: an area representative of rural municipalities in the **Netherlands** and one in rural **Finland**. Stakeholders in the Netherlands mention the potential of more employees from the service sectors and highly educated people staying in the region, if current rural citizens could work and/or study remotely. Remote work also allows people to combine jobs, to work when it pleases them and to spend more time and money in their own

³ See for details: Goulart C.D. et al., 2022. D5.3 Report on lessons learned from confrontations, Ruralization Project.

⁴ See appendix 1 for a full list of the practices covered in this chapter and the contexts where they were presented.

⁵ Woods et al., 2018.

⁶ OECD, 2018, further explored on Murthagh A., 2021a. D3.1 Review Report and Factsheets, Ruralisation Project.

⁷ Van der Ploeg and Roep's, 2003.

⁸ Van der Ploeg et al., 2019.

⁹ Marsden, 2012.

¹⁰ Loveluck W. et al, 2020. D6.1 Typology of actions based on analysis of current innovative actions and discussion with stakeholders, Ruralization Project.

community, thus positively impacting the economy of rural areas where remote work may establish. This could also improve the livability, service levels and economic prospects of rural areas. It may, for example, enable more businesses to relocate to or locate themselves in the countryside.

An increased number of remote workers could also demographically balance ageing rural areas. According to some stakeholders, newcomers from urban contexts could culturally enrich rural areas and reduce the experienced divide between urban and rural life-styles. Furthermore, stakeholders point at the environmental and sustainability benefits of this practice. This being on the one side the reduction of commuting to work on a daily basis and thus mitigating CO2 emissions. On the other hand this opens the opportunity to share office space that leads to a more efficient use of equipment and energy. . Participants generally also seem to support the idea that it will inevitably lead to more workers who want to live in rural areas.

In rural Finland, where infrastructure for remote work was considered good to very good and where there are potentially many jobs that can be done remotely, the added value of the practice was seen in different aspects: first the possibility to increase the networking and community building among already established remote workers. Those are generally living isolated and lonely in the sparsely populated rural context and would profit from hubs for interaction. Those hubs could be supported by the municipalities and would also have a function to attract further newcomers. New arrivals of remote workers have an even stronger positive impact if they bring along spouses willing to engage in the local labour market, thus helping to alleviate local labour shortage as well. In regions similar to this rural area in Finland, where many summer holidays cottages are available left empty off-season, nomade remote workers settling for some months could also help improve rental income and boost the local economy.

Cultural festivals and artisans as strategic development tool and attraction for newcomers

The practice *“Cultural festivals: Creating a more positive image for peripheral regions”* was confronted in rural **Poland**. Organising cultural festivals in their respective localities within rural areas was considered by the participants of the workshop as an important element of both regular rural life as well as a broader, strategic development tool for rural areas. Also the indirect potential of the practice in attracting rural newcomers is recognized, theoretically and by the own experience of some participants. While the respondents were interested in the practice, there were also some reservations, possibly even reluctance, that will be highlighted in the limitations section.

Similarly, the participants of the confrontation of the practice *“Newcomer artisans”* in a predominantly urban area of **Poland** also expressed strong acceptance and interest in the potential of the practice to increase the in-migration of newcomers. In this practice, this happens by supporting newcomer artisans by settling in the region, understanding the way they develop their activities in a new rural place and harnessing this potential for the development of that rural area. The role of newcomers in rural development, both in terms of social and economic impacts, and especially by means of engagement in local crafts and liberal professions, was widely recognized.

Igniting the process of participatory governance with territorial marketing

The large and active participation from a wide range of stakeholders in the confrontation of the *“Castel del Giudice: Municipality as an active agent of territorial marketing and economic initiative voicing*

community needs” practice in rural **Italy** indicates the strong interest of people from different age groups and with different roles in contributing to a community constitutive act. This participative consultation was recognized as a precondition for the development of territorial marketing run by the municipality and supported by community involvement.

The practice has the potential to transmit the itinerary that led the original community to be successful. It helps identify the existing connections that could be activated to dispose of the resources already structurally present in the context. This means that under similar conditions, the practice has the potential to unleash the energy and ignite the first step in the direction of a common view for the future and the use of the available community resources.

*The practices Remote Work, Cultural Festivals and Territorial Marketing rely on the **smart specialisation pathway**. This means that the local opportunities and capacities present in the context are efficiently used by the initiative and are brought to their full potential. In the case of Remote Work the competitive strength is broadband and housing opportunities, for the Cultural Festivals is the presence of culturally, historically or architecturally valuable buildings and for the Territorial Marketing is a village with a strong community, historical buildings and unused land.*

Enabling ecological food supply and participative management via consumer-producer co-operatives

The practice “**Landwege eG - A producer-consumer cooperative enables regional and ecological food supply**” presented in an intermediate area in **Hungary** inspired participants. They saw the potential of the practice if applied in a context with similar starting points and goals, which was not the case in the specific confrontation. The area and the local, regional and national context were very different in rural Hungary and in the intermediate original area in Germany. Some of the limitations discussed in section 1.2 are strongly connected to these differences.

If the context is well matched, the two-fold organisational form (structure of co-operative along with an association with different goals) and the management methods of the co-operative (board members representing all types of stakeholders such as consumers, producers and executive operations) are the most interesting and important application and implementation aspects for the potential further use of the Landwege practice.

The practice was also presented at national level to highly interested participants in the workshops in **Germany**. Participants were mainly “wanna-be” coops willing to learn from the well known and established Landwege eG. The potential of the practice to enable regional and ecological food production and distribution starts with the human and social effects it creates: (a) the ability to connect a broad range of people from different target groups and with similar interests - namely ecological food production - (b) the valorization of the customers as individuals (c) the contribution to the development of a higher consciousness and self-awareness of consumers through knowledge transfer and (d) responsibility sharing via consumer-producer binding. Participants mentioned other benefits of having a consumer-producer co-operative present in a given region, that opens opportunities for new entrants, such as: providing an entrepreneurial-friendly environment, possibility to achieve greater commitments from partners and members, joined forces that enable the operation of larger investments, longer-term production planning, enhanced direct-marketing reach, market proximity via a cooperative shop, possibility to add an additional sales channel to direct selling, financial stability,

resilience and independence. Under this perspective, independence from the market structure was highlighted, which is beneficial for both consumers and producers.

*The Landwege practice combines the benefits of three rural regeneration pathways: **the rural-urban relations pathway** profiting from the proximity to an urban market, the **multifunctional agriculture pathway** and the **agroecology pathway** because of its supportive role of family farms and organic production.*

4.1.2 Confrontations of new entrants into farming (NE) practices

Resilience, economic and social stability through community supported multifunctional agriculture

“Farma Martynika ” was presented in rural **Romania** and generated a lot of interest. Not only because it successfully related to participants' own “life journeys”, especially in leaving behind the urban landscapes and setting up activities rooted in rural life-style. But also for holding a big regeneration potential for communities with this type of background and presenting relatively good social cohesion, as well as willingness to support diversified activities. The multifunctional approach, e.g. through farming, training and community building, could offer economic and social stability to the community as well as contribute to building more resilience.

Another practice making the case for multifunctional agriculture was **«Casa delle agricultura Tullia e Gino»**, which was presented in rural Spain. Participants indicated a high level of interest in the different actions comprising this practice. Many of these actions happen independently in rural areas in Spain similar to the practice's region, however, to succeed in promoting rural regeneration processes and particularly long-term consolidation and impacts the actions needed to happen not independently, but in a concerted way.

Commoning as a way to relieve access to land limitations and fulfil younger generations wish to collaborative work

The practice **“Farm collectives: a lever for an agricultural and rural transition”** was presented in two different contexts: one intermediate area in **Belgium** and one rural area in **France**. The participants of both confrontations had high affinity to the content of the practice and expressed interest and enthusiasm about exploring it.

Among the motivations farmers expressed to be or become part of collectives were the ideas of commoning, organisational forms valuing equality, easing the way for new entrants, achieving autonomy as a collective and becoming free from confining relationships. Farm collectives also have the potential of bringing new entrants to agriculture and more experienced farmers together and of sharing knowledge and infrastructure that facilitates their installation.

*The Farma Martynika, Tullia & Gina as well as the Farm Collectives practices all base on the **multifunctional agriculture pathway**. They all have the potential to regenerate rural areas if applied in contexts striving for economic activity and are able to implement strong multifunctionality. Through the application of interconnected activities aiming to produce (a) higher quality food, (b) process*

artisanal products, (c) interact with and mobilise the surrounding community, (d) provide cultural and educational activities, as well as (e) local economic cycle, the practices contribute to rural development through broadening, deepening and regrounding processes.

Ensure healthy food production via strong citizen participation

The practice **“Farms with strong citizen participation”** (The Herenboeren model) generated great enthusiasm and interest when presented to stakeholders representing rural **England** - typically having areas with lots of people living relatively near farmland. The concept offers a structure to allow the nearby living community to co-own and to support farms nearby, thus ensuring the access to healthy locally produced food. The practice has a great potential for further use in areas with this type of structure and the limitations discussed in the next section can potentially be removed with appropriate policy measures.

Potentializing the benefits of agricultural land protection through collective governance

The practice **“The Versailles Plain's Association and peri-urban agriculture diversification”** was presented in two peri-urban areas in France. The practice has a great potential to inspire and ignite further actions in other similar communities wishing to protect and further develop the agricultural land that surrounds them, while valuing agriculture as a local economic, social, cultural and landscape asset. The practice is of great interest especially in France, where the Egalim law is supporting school canteens to be supplied with 50% local and quality food products by 2022. This created a dynamic that allows new entrants into farming to settle close to urban centers. The decision making structured under collective governance, led by three colleges of farmers, civil society, and elected officials, proved to be a highly suitable way of pursuing common goals or visions for a territory.

The practices Versailles Plain and Herenboeden are both complex projects that effectively combine the rural-urban relations, the multifunctional agriculture and the agroecology pathway. They have built robust initiatives that have a great potential to regenerate great areas of agricultural land in the vicinity or urban centres. They are potentially successful in areas presenting certain competitive advantages such as the presence of organisations (associations, co-ops, NGO's or other) seeking to buy land and offer long term leases to small-scale agro-ecological farmers, and of networks that support a range of models of community involvement in farming¹¹. Community members with knowledge of how to tap public and private funding are also important to leverage and speed up results, such as in Versailles Plan where LEADER funds were accessed.

Supportive actions for the bioeconomy pathway

The **“Rural Professions Association”** practice was presented in rural **Finland** and participants agreed that this type of practice could greatly benefit regions where bioeconomy¹² is installed or is in the process of installation. The need for skilled labour and trained professionals is increasing in this type

¹¹ In the case of Herenboden in England it was the Ecological Land Cooperative and CSA Network UK. But other coops and organisations exist, please check the Access to land Network <https://www.accesstoland.eu/>.

¹² In the researched region, bioeconomy encompasses the forest industry that had made big investments in recent years for developing their business and new innovations that are based on renewable wood fibres (e.g. a modern pulmill that is producing bioproducts, such as pulp and many side products from the wood raw material).

of region and therefore there is a need to promote rural businesses, rural professions and the rural “way of living” among the youth and among the population in general. The bioeconomy industry has improved the profile of the forest industry and made the cooperation of the whole community more intensive. Still, the initiative can enhance the connections across the community and further strengthen collaborative actions.

*Rural Professions association is the only practice researched that relates to the **bioeconomy regeneration pathway**. Its potential is to support areas where bioeconomy is installed or is in the process of establishing itself. The practice has the potential to promote professions related to the bioeconomy industry, thus ensuring a greater pool of trained professionals to support the industry. It could also relate to other pathways, as it successfully links universities, schools, farmers organisations and NGO’s, thus creating opportunities for the development of **agroecology and multifunctional farming**.*

4.1.3 Confrontations of farm successors (SC) practices

Diversification practices as teasers for further innovation

The “**Farm diversification at succession**” practice presented in a rural island in Spain was well received and functioned as a catalyst for questioning and debating the current situation related to subsidies provided to successors. Different than in the original practice context in Belgium, the researched context did not benefit from such subsidies¹³, neither from an appropriate support and supervision in case of provision of funds by the government.

The “**Slow Succession, Slow Revolution: regenerating the agri-food system in the Catalan Western Lands through agrobiodiversity and local food cultures**” presented in rural Germany also raised initial interest but the discussion that followed developed in a different direction. The case was considered very specific to its original context and difficult to reproduce in a different cultural setting.

*If looked upon from the initial reactions, the confrontations from Farm Diversification and Slow Succession, Slow revolution could be classified as “no potential for further use”. Nonetheless, the obstacles identified during the confrontations and the solutions proposed were very rich, and in both contexts concrete further actions were agreed. The practices have therefore a potential for further use in dormant regions, as practices capable of attracting curiosity and therefore the participation of the community in a discussion. The act of analysing a foreign project together raises a territorial self-analysis and by these means sparkles the potential for further initiatives and actions. Both practices rely on the combined **multifunctional agriculture and agroecology pathways**.*

An attractive agroecology education centre as a magnet for successors (and new entrants)

The practice “**Training in “nature professions”: a driving force for the rural regeneration of Pays Coutançais**” was presented in rural Romania and in rural Germany. In both contexts the participants were persons interested and involved in educational initiatives, rural development and farming. The

¹³ The subsidies of the Flemish Agricultural Promotion Fund, either to continue with the family business or to create a new one, by adding an additional branch in the succession of the business.

practice was well received by both audiences and rated as very inspirational. In the context of Romania, the practice was complemented with information from another practice combining education and farmings¹⁴. The practice was considered complex and the approach difficult to grasp. The limitations caused by these characteristics will be discussed in the next section.

Nonetheless in both cases the practice offered many possibilities for further investigation, sparking the appetite for further development and connection of educational activities with agroecological farming.

Education has the inherent ability to catalyze change, and this pathway carries therefore great potential for regeneration in areas where the demand for agroecological education is high. Because the level of resources - financial and human - to launch such an initiative is high, the presence of political capital as it was given in the original practice context is critical. In Germany, because of the decentralized educational system, the practice would have the potential to be applied and targeted to the "Bundesländer" (NUTS1 level) with corresponding interest. The practice serves also as a reference for individual private schools searching for examples of innovative educational approaches. In the Lycée Coutances those were (a) the involvement of the students as key agents of the agricultural transformation process, (b) the collaborative development of new rural professions - such as the *paysan boulanger*¹⁵, (c) workshop-style education with practical and interactive knowledge transmission, (d) more hours in the field and more practical experience than theory in the class and (e) intense exchange with the surrounding community via open to public activities such as sowing, planting, environmental education and culture festivals. Those elements have the potential to attract a younger generation of students and potential farmers, who after training would be willing to stay and contribute to the regeneration of the area.

Early and continuous intervention to support farm succession

The "**ELINA Project**" was presented in rural **Ireland**, where the practice served as a tool for context diagnosis. The potential of the practice is to help regions identify strengths and new learnings from their context, to support the emergence of a range of considerations that could enhance existing programmes or start a new one, as well as improve the wider succession support framework already existing in the context. Aspects of its strength were: ELINA's attention to both the successor and the existing farmer, its focus on peer to peer learning, its engagement with farmers not just through formal training; and its multi-pronged approach elevating the succession issue to a place sitting alongside other central farming issues.

*Both Pays Coutançais and the ELINA Project apply the **building human capital pathway** to foster rural regeneration by increasing the access to training, supporting knowledge transfer and skills development of farm successors and successors candidates, and confirms previous findings¹⁶ from the RURALIZATION project.*

¹⁴ The practice CSA Hof Pente is included in the report D5.2 and is not further explored in this chapter.

¹⁵ Baking cereal farmer

¹⁶ D6.1 – Typology of actions based on an analysis of current innovative actions and discussion with stakeholders

4.2 Limitations of further use

Among all the confrontations conducted there were no general limitations for further use of the promising practices in other contexts. Nonetheless, in some contexts where research was conducted, specific limitations were identified, that go beyond identified barriers and obstacles that could be (easily) removed. These could be related to the fact that individuals from different contexts - even with similar characteristics or similar ambitions - have a different view on how to approach a problem or to develop a solution to a given issue. We will describe the limitations mentioned by participants in the confrontations and specific to the context and related practice.

Limitations identified during confrontations of newcomers practices

Despite the general enthusiasm regarding the **Remote Work** confrontation in the Netherlands, participants also mentioned some potential limitations of this practice. Within organisations, team dynamics may be lost to virtuality, potentially impacting their innovation capacity. For remote workers, continuous remote work may cause social isolation. For rural communities with limited housing, remote workers relocating may evict poorer residents from their rural communities. Livability in socially close-knitted rural communities could be hurt, especially if newcomers are not willing to take part in social activities. Consequently, current inhabitants may get less enthusiastic about further newcomers, which would in turn lead to less integration. Even though remote work is currently a popular topic - especially driven by the Covid pandemic – there is no specific organisation currently promoting it, neither in the Netherlands nor in Finland. The majority of the projects are focussing on the extension of the broadband network coverage in rural areas, leaving other aspects such as dissemination of its wider benefits (e.g. climate benefits and saved money) untackled.

Regarding the confrontation of the **Cultural Festivals**, the experiences of participants in the rural context in Poland was that earlier festivals gathered visitors mostly from other parts of the country, mostly from upper income classes, and with demand for a particular type of events or activities, not necessarily matching the local aspirations. Therefore, while the general idea of festivals is broadly accepted and can be used as inspiration, the transferability is limited by the numerous aspects that require adaptation to local taste, festival type, size, frequency and target audience.

For the **Castel del Giudice** territorial marketing practice, one limitation is the size of the municipality. While the practice proved adequate to municipalities with less than 1000 inhabitants, smaller municipalities such as the original Castel del Giudice (approx. 350 inhabitants) can more easily implement an informal participative process to engage citizens. For bigger municipalities, achieving citizen collaboration may prove to be a difficult task in terms of communication, logistics and coordination.

As for the **Landwege** practice in Hungary, the limiting factors were the different social and economical circumstances between the shopping community located in a relatively small town in Hungary and its micro-region, with limited development possibilities, compared to the original context of the practice near an affluent town in north Germany.

Limitations identified during confrontations of new entrants practices

In the confrontation of the **Versailles Plain Association (VPA)** in central France there were also doubts regarding the applicability of the practice in the context. In the original context about 10% of the territory (2000 ha) is protected by a very strong legal mechanism designating the area as a “classified site”, which cannot be urbanised. In the researched contexts, no such legal protection exists. This fact would require stakeholders working in the project to implement more proactive strategies to protect the land such as mobilising collective and community investment to concretely acquire and preserve land. Concerted action and dialogue facilitation strategies as applied in the original context may not be enough to achieve the preservation goal in contexts where the real estate market is under pressure or where the agricultural fabric is already largely dismantled. Finally, the VPA reached a fairly institutionalised status through financing and public support for the project. Even though there is moral and financial support of some public authorities for the land protection effort in other areas, the participants doubted that the initiative would ever achieve a similar recognition, status, and level of formalisation as the VPA’s.

The limitations of the **Farm collectives** initiative in France were mainly related to legal aspects: while some collective presented chose a cooperative and participative company (SCOP) status, others chose the cooperative society of collective interest (SCIC). Both forms of organisation in France are considered “non-agricultural” and don’t allow benefiting from agricultural subsidies. However, they present other advantages, which were debated by the participants. For instance, the SCOP allows it to enshrine in the company’s statuses workers’ equal rights and duties regarding decision-making, risks or profit sharing. It also allows farmers to be considered “salaried workers”, which provides better social coverage (unemployment rights, higher retirement pensions, etc.) and facilitates the entry of new associates in the company as well as later transfer of the farm to new generations.

The contradictory judgement of some aspects - as being on one hand a limitation but on the other hand a specific advantage - was also present in other topics. For instance, among the reasons why some new entrants find collective farming models appealing are that collectives can allow easier entry and exit from agriculture. Others thought that farming activity should remain a long-term - if not lifetime - commitment. A “short-termist” vision of agriculture should not be promoted. Consideration should therefore be taken to the fact that many new entrants are career-changers who had prior professional experience and many times aspire to have other experiences after farming. To give more people the chance to try and test the agriculture profession would have a positive outcome, even if some chose to “exit” after a few years.

The **Rural Professions Associations** practice was seen as positive and useful if the regional, social and timing context could be taken into consideration. This means that the main limitation identified was the coordination of efforts among the community, the bioeconomy industry, the actors of primary production and food industry as well as actors of the forest sector. To activate this cooperation, there was consensus about the need for some coordinating unit or organisation within the context.

Limitations identified during confrontations of successors practices

The main limitation encountered for a successful transfer of the **Farm diversification at succession** in the Canary Island in Spain was the lack of interest on the part of the successors to continue the family businesses. The phenomenon of rural exodus from the rural areas of the islands to the cities, as well as the transfer of the new generations from the non-capital islands to Tenerife and Gran Canaria is

ongoing and strong. This means that before we aim to influence the outcome of a farm succession towards diversification, it would be necessary to motivate successors to stay and take over their parents' farm and land in the first place.

In the case of the **Slow Succession, Slow Revolution** practice it was considered that although initiated by Slow Food, a strong and well known international movement, the narrative would have to be regionally reinterpreted and professionally implemented, in order to achieve a significant impact. Participants perceived the information about the practice activities as a “wake up call”, meaning that it reminded them that there is even more potential and more to do in their region than they have been currently focusing on. But the ideas and the set of next steps that they developed were different from the actions presented in the confrontation.

While the complexity of the practice “**Pays Coutançais**” was hard to comprehend by the confrontation participants in Romania, the complementary practice CSA Hof Pente initiative was very well received as an inspirational case and blueprint to follow. The case of Pays Coutançais was less accepted and considered too rooted in the local and historical specificity of the case region in France and not easy to replicate in the Romanian context.

The “**ELINA Project**” did not present specific limitations to the participants of the confrontation, but was much more seen as a collection of ideas to enhance the existing initiatives. The enhancements included: combining training with an individualised approach targeting individual farmer needs and focusing attention on improving the gender balance in farming at succession. Further to this, supporting actions on succession issues as a follow on to training and information programmes emerged as important. Overall, succession is a process that occurs over a long timeframe and actions need to tackle issues at different stages (e.g. from pre-succession and raising interest in the farming profession to the farm transfer stage) and of the different actors (successor, existing farmer) in the process.

4.3 Potential impact of wider application of the approaches




The practices were broadly and highly accepted in the different contexts where they were presented, but there were always barriers to their execution. The presence in the context of success factors and the possibility for removal of the identified barriers are therefore key to achieving the highest impact possible.

Achieving the highest impact implies therefore implementing a chain of actions in connection with the effort of transferring a given practice. This chain of action will aim to reduce the presence of barriers by ensuring the best possible match between practice and context. This chain of action would start by a facilitation process that is to be implemented in order to help the community to identify their collective needs and their strengths. With the knowledge of the collective needs and the available resources that function as success factors, the proper selection of a promising practice to address these needs should follow. The matching of a solution to a collectively identified need will increase the potential of success and therefore the impact, because the motivation and engagement of the community will be higher and stronger. The capacity to overcome difficulties and remove barriers would be much more potent.

The majority of the confrontations conducted confirms this fact, and also reinforces the need of bottom up and collective participation to adapt the practice to the local context and modulate it to the local available resources¹⁷. Nonetheless, while the process should be firmly rooted in a bottom-up approach - the search for development resources and mechanisms should focus on the local territorial level (Ray, 2006) - we are not affirming that the whole process should only be tackled on that form. The confrontations confirmed the assumption of the neo-endogenous development approach, which indicates that the starting point for a development process should be the local resources base, but the process should be conducted with the consideration that non-local forces could strongly influence the outcomes. In a positive manner, non-local forces such as regional, national and European networks, subsidies, public and private funds could play a role and would influence and enhance the outcome¹⁸. Therefore, regeneration and renewal would most probably be successful with the combination of a bottom-up with a top-down approach.

The resources required to handle the obstacles and limitations encountered in the researched contexts were varied. While some were related to the context and could be locally solved, others required actions at regional or national level. The potential impact of wider application will also depend on the motivation and the amount of resources available to resolve the issues and remove the barriers.

Some key actions identified during the confrontations that would potentialize the transferability of the practices was:

-  invest in learning and sharing hubs (peer-to-peer learning, knowledge centers, consultants network, resources databases);
-  change and adapt the role of rural development agents (e.g. LAG's) to fully explore the local creative and innovative potential, linking the pockets of activity to the pool of available supporting resources already existing in the numerous European and national projects;
-  incentivise municipalities to create a green belt, or dedicating unused and abandoned land for the creation of communal near-city farms, so called "territorial farms"¹⁹ and/or farms with a collective organisation structure.

¹⁷ The resources may include among others human capital, agricultural land, living infrastructure (housing, internet, public and private services such as child care, health providers, etc), political will and financial resources.

¹⁸ Gkartzios and Lowe, 2019

¹⁹ Territorialized in the sense of the construction of a close relationship between the agricultural activities and its territorial context delimited by a geographical space, a political administration, a social system and set of resources, supported by a set of economic, social and political interactions.

Appendix 1- Promising practices confronted and confrontation context

Practice name (short) and code	Original context	Confrontation context
Remote Work (IE_1C)	Ireland, pred. rural	Dutch rural municipalities, P10 Platform (The Netherlands, intermediate)
Remote Work (IE_1C)	Ireland, pred. rural	Municipality of Vesanto (part of North Savo) (Finland, pred. rural)
Cultural festivals (NL_4C)	The Netherlands, intermediate	Dolnoslaskie (Poland, pred. rural)
Castel del Giudice (IT_5C)	Italy, pred. rural	Malito, Cosenza Province (Italy, intermediate)
Newcomers artisans (HU_10C)	Hungary, pred. urban	Zabkowicki County (Poland, pred. urban)
Landwege (DE_8C)	Germany, intermediate	Fejér county/Central Hungary (Hungary, intermediate)
Landwege (DE_8C)	Germany, intermediate	German national context (Germany, intermediate)
Farma Martynika (PL_2A)	Poland, intermediate	Alunisu village, Sancraiu commune (Rumania, pred. urban)
Community owned farms (NL_BE3A)	The Netherlands, pred. urban	England national context (England, pred. urban)
Casa delle AgriCulture-Tullia e Gino (IT4_4°)	Italy, pred. Urban	Catalan Western Lands (Spain, intermediate)
Versailles Plain (FR_5A)	France, pred. urban	Toulouse (France, pred. urban)
Versailles Plain (FR_5A)	France, pred. urban	Clermont-Ferrand (France, intermediate)
Innovative farm collectives (FR_6A)	France, pred. rural	Zulte, East Flanders (Belgium, intermediate)
Innovative farm collectives (FR_6A)	France, pred. rural	Larzac - Occitanie (France, pred. rural)
Rural Professions Association (FI_8A)	Finland, pred. rural	Province of Central Finland (Finland, pred. rural)
Farm diversification (BE_3B)	Belgium, pred. rural	Canary Islands (Spain, pred. rural)
Slow Succession, Slow Revolution (ES5B)	Spain, intermediate	Uelzen (Germany, pred. rural)
Coutances (FR_6B)	France, pred. rural	Timis region (Rumania, pred. rural)
Coutances (FR_6B)	France, pred. rural	Niedersachsen (Germany, pred. rural)
ELINA Project (FI_8B)	Finland, pred. urban	West of Ireland (Ireland, pred. rural)

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