

AUSTRIA

Farm's performance, restructuring & modernisation

Location
National

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P2 – Competitiveness

Measure
M1 – Knowledge transfer &
information actions

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 245,313
EAFRD 121,258
National/Regional 124,055

Project duration
2015 – 2016

Project promoter
Austrian Chamber of
Agriculture

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<http://elearning.lfi.at>

An educational institution for farmers in Austria used RDP support to develop a training programme using digital, web-based technologies and applications.

Summary

The project initiator LFI is the main institution for educating farmers in Austria. The availability of new digital and web-based technologies allowed the LFI to adopt new approaches for knowledge transfer, including podcasts, social media and e-learning courses.



The use of the new technologies and applications helps farmers to easily access the knowledge they need for their business, whenever it suits them best. This project financed the development of the educational content, technical infrastructure, programming and delivery of the online training modules.

Results

The quality of services offered by the LFI has increased. Making standardised training accessible nationwide avoids unnecessary duplication and saves time and money both for the institute and the trainees.

Almost 10 000 users are already taking advantage of these new online tools.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Target groups should be clearly defined in order to determine if it is more efficient to use an online tool, or face-to-face training. It would be inefficient to create online tools for a small user group.

Context

Education needs to be constantly adapted to new realities and possibilities, but also to recipients' expectations. In addition, the "time" factor is very important as it often defines whether an individual will choose to join an educational programme, or not. Therefore, new strategies for knowledge transfer are required that will allow new technical possibilities to be integrated into the process of lifelong learning.

Farmers are getting more and more skilled in using computers and information technologies, which have become an integral part of their daily work. Two groups of users can be distinguished: "digital natives", or those who grew up with computers; and "digital immigrants" who did not grow up with information technologies, but have been working hard to develop their computer skills.

The Rural Training Institute of Austria (Ländlichen Fortbildungsinstitutes Österreich - LFI) offers both basic seminars and advanced programmes for the use of IT solutions in agriculture, including training for "digital immigrants".

Objectives

The project objectives include:

- strengthen the competences of farmers in new and web-based technologies and tools;
- promoting knowledge transfer between farmers on agri-environmental protection, direct marketing, research, etc.;
- Offering training of trainers; and
- creating possibilities for testing new technologies.

Activities

The project financed the development and implementation of online training modules for farmers. These covered a range of subjects (e.g. filling in online applications forms). Each online training module takes a minimum of four hours and can be begun, paused and stopped at any time by the learner. The modules also include simulations of real conditions. The modules developed included:

- *"expertise in plant protection"*. This module takes 5 hours in total. Certified users of plant protection projects must renew their certification every 5 years,

completing this module enables them to extend their certification. The module covers the following: legal issues, integrated plant protection, pathogens and diagnosis, general knowledge on plant protection products, equipment technology, and operator safety;

- *"environmentally friendly farming methods and promoting biodiversity"*. This module consists of two 2-hour online courses providing training on **agri-environmental measures**;
- mountain livestock management in alpine areas.
- direct marketing for farmers.
- Online training on hygiene and allergen information.

The project also provided training in converting offline tools into new, or updated operating systems. For example, converting Word and Excel from Office 2003 to Office 2013; Other topics included using social media to livestream events. It also trained trainers through seminars on the following: how to create online training courses with a focus on the tool *"Articulate"*; a webinar on *"Social Media for farmers and officials"*; and three webinars with the German blogger Bauer Willi (www.bauerwilli.com).



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Main results

Results for the LFI:

- the project has enabled the LFI's human resources to be used more efficiently and it has increased the quality of services. **The quality of services offered by the LFI has increased. Making standardised training accessible nationwide avoids unnecessary duplication and saves time and money;** and
- online tools can quickly adjust to new trends, innovations, or an identified information gap.

Results for users:

- using efficient and sustainable web-based information and communication technologies makes farmers more competitive;
- access to improved qualifications and competences in the use of new web-based technologies and utilities for farms. The qualification can be offered independently of time and place;
- the educational programme creates an active commitment to environmental protection;
- the approach helps to spread know-how and to create new networks; and
- almost 10 000 users are already using these new online tools.

Key lessons

This web based approach in education is still something new. E-learning is something for all citizens, but it has to be adapted to people's needs. It is necessary to identify a clearly defined target group and then decide whether it is more efficient to use an online tool, or use traditional face-to-face training. It would make no sense, to create such tools only for a small user group. For example: almost 50 000 farmers are participating in agri-environmental programmes. Some 10 000 of these already use the LFI online-training.

It is very important to design the content according to pre-defined requirements. It is important to make e-learning interactive: it would not be interesting to watching a recorded lesson performed by a trainer for two hours.



Biodiversitätsflächen im ÖPUL 2015 – Was soll ich anbauen?

Biodiversität

Was ist Biodiversität?

Der Begriff Biodiversität vereint die Wörter "Bios" (griech.: Leben) und "Diversitas" (lat.: Vielfalt) und bezeichnet demgemäß die gesamte Vielfalt des Lebens.

Unter Biodiversität versteht man die biologische Vielfalt, also die:

- Vielfalt von Ökosystemen (Wälder, Gletscher, Gewässer, landwirtschaftlicher Nutzflächen)
- Artenvielfalt (bei Pflanzen, Tieren, Mikroorganismen)
- Genetische Vielfalt (innerhalb der Arten; z.B. Pflanzensorten, Tierrassen)

Additional sources of information

n/a