Entreprenuership for
Green Rural Destinations

E4GreenRD

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FOR

GREEN RURAL DESTINATIONS

IN-HOUSE FRAMEWORK DESIGN OF MODULES & OUTREACH

Work Package 3

2023-1-NO01-KA220-VET-000160680

KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training

April, 2024

This document has been developed as part of the Erasmus project *Entrepreneurship for Green Rural Destinations*. Whilst Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, in Ireland was the lead on this task, all six partner institutions collaborated on and contributed to the creation of this document.

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0. Introduction

The purpose of this task in Work Package 3 was to develop an *In-house framework design & outreach* to assist in the development of foundational educational and operational frameworks that support sustainable and inclusive rural entrepreneurship and extending outreach to target audiences and stakeholders while simultaneously identifying partner gaps, needs and misconceptions in Vocational Education and Training related to Green Rural Entrepreneurship.

1. Key objectives

1.1 In-house framework design

E4GreenRD focuses on developing internal structures and resources essential for rural enterprises, including business models, operational procedures, and financial management tools. It also aims to establish core processes such as mission and vision setting, team building, and streamlined operations, all tailored to suit the unique challenges of rural contexts where infrastructure and resources may be limited.

1.2. Outreach

E4GreenRD aims to enhance visibility and engagement by implementing external activities such as marketing, branding, networking, and community involvement. It also seeks to foster meaningful connections with customers, investors, and local communities through a combination of physical events and digital outreach channels.

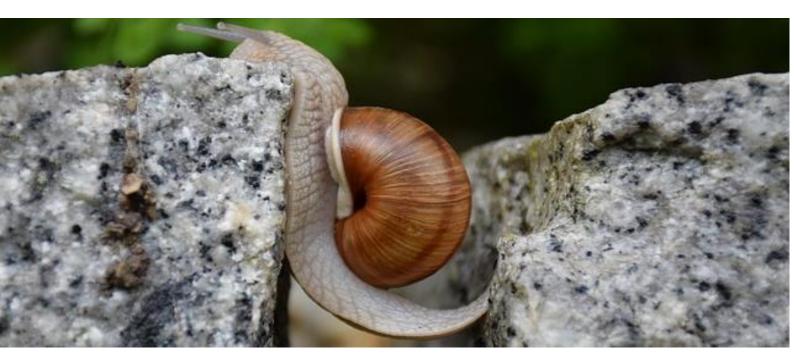### 1.3 Bridging Gaps in VET for *Green Rural Entrepreneurship*

E4GreenRD brings together a diverse consortium of partners from Norway, Portugal, Cyprus, Ireland, Turkey, and Finland—each representing different regional realities, yet sharing a common need to strengthen vocational education and training (VET) systems that are responsive to the demands of **green rural entrepreneurship**. While each country brings valuable strengths, the project begins by acknowledging the distinct yet overlapping **gaps, needs, and misconceptions** that hinder the development of inclusive, sustainable rural economies.

A key finding across all partner contexts is the **lack of context-specific VET content** that addresses the opportunities and challenges unique to rural regions. Current training programmes often rely on urban-centric models of entrepreneurship or generic business development frameworks, which fail to resonate with learners in rural settings. As a result, rural learners may lack the tools, confidence, and inspiration to launch ventures that are both environmentally sustainable and economically viable.

Another common gap is the **limited integration of sustainability, digital innovation, and inclusivity** into VET curricula. Although many partners are actively involved in promoting environmental or technological education, these elements are rarely embedded into entrepreneurial training in ways that are relevant to rural contexts—such as ecotourism, food sustainability, or digital tools for small-scale farming and local branding.

Equally pressing is the need to challenge **deep-rooted misconceptions**. In many of the participating countries, rural areas are still viewed as economically stagnant or less dynamic than urban centres. Entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is often framed as a fast-paced, tech-driven pursuit more suited to metropolitan areas. These narratives discourage learners, especially youth and underrepresented groups, from seeing themselves as future rural entrepreneurs.

Through collaborative research, stakeholder engagement, and cross-country dialogue, **E4GreenRD** will map these gaps and misconceptions, laying the groundwork for the development of **modular, flexible, and inclusive training content**. By tailoring VET offers to the real-life aspirations and conditions of rural communities, the project seeks to empower a new generation of green rural entrepreneurs—capable of driving local innovation, enhancing sustainability, and revitalizing rural regions across Europe.

2. Contribution to project goals

This work package makes a vital contribution to the overall goals of *E4GreenRD* by actively promoting rural entrepreneurship through the lens of sustainable tourism and forward-looking vocational education and training (VET) practices. By focusing on the specific needs and potentials of rural regions, it helps position these areas as viable, innovative spaces for economic growth and green development.

A key aspect of this contribution is the encouragement and support for the development of **new, context-specific curricula and training modules** tailored to entrepreneurship in green rural destinations. These modules are designed to be practical, inclusive, and adaptable, equipping learners with the tools they need to build sustainable enterprises that align with local cultural, environmental, and economic realities.

In doing so, the project also tackles several persistent challenges. It directly addresses **misconceptions about rural entrepreneurship**, which is often wrongly perceived as outdated or low-potential. It also responds to the **scarcity of localized resources and support structures**, filling a critical gap in rural VET by offering tailored, high-quality educational content that is both relevant and empowering for rural learners and communities.

3. Expected results

Six educational modules to guide educators and stakeholders in rural business development:

- Mental health & well-being tourism
- Inclusiveness & diversity
- Food tourism
- Marketing for green rural destinations
- Entrepreneurship
- IT skills

These modules feed into the *E4GreenRD Handbook*.

Outreach strategies ensure local stakeholder involvement and feedback, helping tailor content to real regional needs. Overall, WP3 serves as a foundational pillar in the project by blending structured educational design with active external engagement, creating both pedagogical value and real-world impact in rural areas.

4. Pedagogical framework

Table I below offers a **template** for consistent, high-quality module development which:

- **Supports the framework design** portion of WP3 by providing a modular, adaptable structure.

- **Addresses accessibility and inclusiveness –** key objectives of the project.

- **Enables outreach** by being adaptable to online formats, promoting scale and sustainability.

- **Promotes innovation in VET**, meeting Erasmus+ priorities.

In summary, this table can serve as a **blueprint** for building impactful, learner-centred, inclusive, and digitally enriched modules for green entrepreneurship education in rural destinations.

Thus, Table I outlines a pedagogical framework that is relevant to developing a learning module for the *E4GreenRD* project, particularly within Work Package 3. Check the table to see how each component aligns with the project's goals of promoting sustainable entrepreneurship in rural areas through innovative and inclusive VET practices.

5. Outreach

Essentially, outreach refers to **bridging the gap** between the internal work of module development and the external world where that work can make a difference. It's about **connecting, communicating, involving, and scaling** so that the project's innovative and inclusive entrepreneurship modules don't stay on the shelf, but **get used, evolve, and spark real change** in green rural development. This refers to the strategic efforts made to connect, engage, and involve external stakeholders in the project's goals, resources, and learning opportunities.

Table II offers a breakdown of what **outreach** might encompass in this setting.

6. Overall observations

Across all partner countries in *E4GreenRD*, several common gaps in vocational education and training (VET) related to green rural entrepreneurship have been identified. One significant gap is the absence of **context-specific entrepreneurship modules** that reflect the realities, resources, and potential of rural environments. Additionally, there is a **weak integration of sustainability, digitalization, and inclusivity** in VET programs aimed at rural learners, which limits their preparedness for emerging green economies. Another recurring issue is the **lack of visible success stories or role models** from rural entrepreneurial contexts within VET content, which can undermine learner confidence and ambition.

The partners also shared key needs. There is a strong demand for **flexible and modular learning formats**, including online and blended approaches, to increase accessibility for learners in geographically remote or underserved areas.

Equally important are **tools for practical application**, such as real-life case studies, interactive funding guides, and policy explainer resources, which help bridge the gap between theory and practice. A further need is to **raise awareness about how green innovation can be locally implemented**, helping learners connect broader sustainability goals to tangible community impact.

Persistent misconceptions continue to limit engagement. Rural areas are too often perceived as **outdated, economically stagnant, or lacking in opportunity**, reinforcing a bias that favours urban migration and centralization. Likewise, entrepreneurship is still widely viewed as an **urban, tech-driven, elite pursuit**, disconnected from the realities of small-scale, place-based, and socially inclusive business models. These misconceptions not only discourage participation but also mask the untapped potential of rural communities as engines of sustainable development and innovation.

In Table III, it is possible to see some of these outcomes in a simpler form.

TABLE I: Pedagogical framework

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
MODULE NAME	Naming modules clearly (e.g., *Entrepreneurship in Food Tourism* or *Inclusive Business Practices in Rural Areas*) supports **clarity, relevance, and learner motivation**. Helps structure the "Entrepreneurship for Green Rural Destinations Handbook" by theme/topic.
INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE	Reflective questions help **personalize the learning** and prompt learners to connect their **real-world context** (e.g., rural entrepreneurship challenges) to the course content. Supports **self-directed learning**, which is key in rural, often isolated settings.
LEARNING OUTCOMES	Clearly defined outcomes ensure the module aligns with **labour market needs** and entrepreneurial competencies. Makes the learning **measurable and goal-oriented**, helping both learners and trainers stay focused.
INTRODUCTION (ENGAGEMENT HOOK)	Using media (videos, social media links) **sparks curiosity and sets context**—critical for topics like sustainability or mental health in rural entrepreneurship. Encourages **digital engagement**, supporting the Erasmus+ priority on digital transformation.
CONCEPT CHECK	Gamified quizzes or reflections (e.g., Kahoots) assess **prior knowledge**, helping tailor learning paths. Introduces **interactivity and fun**, making learning more **inclusive and learner-centered**.
CONTENT DELIVERY	Mixed media and flexible formats (text, audio, video) address **diverse learning styles and accessibility needs**. Small concept checks promote **continuous engagement and comprehension**. Tools like Genially or immersive readers ensure **accessibility for learners with disabilities**, aligning with inclusion goals.
EXAMPLES	Real-life rural case studies and activities bring **relevance and realism** to learning. Helps demystify how others succeeded, enabling **peer learning** and **entrepreneurial modelling**. Current events and media promote **up-to-date and contextual awareness**.

APPLICATION	Encourages learners to **translate theory into practice**, such as drafting a green business model or mapping local funding supports. Promotes **active learning** and builds entrepreneurial capacity by showing how to navigate real-world challenges.
GLOSSARY	Defines technical terms related to **entrepreneurship, sustainability, rural development**, etc. Supports **language learners** and those unfamiliar with formal business vocabulary.
REFERENCES	Curated resources help learners **go further**, especially on complex topics like policies, grants, and regulations. Supports **lifelong learning and independent inquiry**.

TABLE II: Outreach

HEADING	DESCRIPTION
RAISING AWARENESS	**Target audiences**: Rural entrepreneurs, local community members, VET providers, educators, policymakers, NGOs, and the general public. **Goal**: Increase visibility of the project's objectives—such as promoting entrepreneurship, sustainability, inclusion, and rural innovation. **Tactics**: Social media campaigns, Info sessions/webinars, Project website and newsletters, Presentations at local events and conferences.
COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	**Why it matters**: For modules to be relevant and adopted, they must resonate with local needs and realities. **Activities could include**: • Co-creating content with local entrepreneurs or learners, • Conducting interviews or focus groups, • Forming advisory panels with local business leaders, educators, or municipal bodies, • Involving learners in piloting and evaluating content.
DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS	Outreach ensures that developed modules (e.g., on food tourism or inclusive business practices) reach those **who can use, teach, or benefit** from them. **Channels** might include: • Partner institutions' networks • National or EU-level VET forums • Local/regional education and development agencies • Open Educational Resources (OER) platforms
INCLUSIVENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY	Outreach is also about **reducing barriers to access**: • Promoting materials in multiple languages, • Ensuring digital formats are accessible to people with disabilities or limited connectivity, • Designing content for diverse learning needs and backgrounds, • Targeting underrepresented groups in rural entrepreneurship.
POLICY, INFLUENCE & SCALING	Outreach is crucial for **long-term sustainability**: • Sharing insights and outcomes with education ministries or employment agencies, • Informing regional development strategies, • Creating pathways for integration into formal VET curricula.

TABLE III: Partner gaps, needs and misconceptions in VET related to *Green Rural Entrepreneurship*

COUNTRY	GAP	INDENTIFIABLE NEED	STEREOTYPE	EXAMPLE
Fagskolen Rogaland, NORWAY	While Norway has a strong VET structure, rural entrepreneurship is often seen through the lens of traditional industries like agriculture or fisheries, **not as sites of innovation**.	VET curricula could better integrate **sustainability and digital business skills** for emerging rural industries such as eco-tourism and wellness tourism.	Rural Norway is perceived as self-sufficient but isolated, where opportunities are limited to heritage crafts or subsistence living.	A student from inland Rogaland may not see launching a digital farm-to-table service or a mental well-being retreat as a viable path without visible success models in the curriculum.
Escola Secundária Cacilhas-Tejo, PORTUGAL	Many VET learners lack practical, place-based entrepreneurial education specific to **rural economic revitalization**, especially in the Alentejo and interior regions.	Need for **modular, flexible learning pathways** that connect urban-trained learners with rural innovation needs (e.g., heritage tourism, regenerative agriculture).	Rural Portugal is often viewed as economically stagnant and left behind, causing young people to migrate to urban centers.	Tourism VET courses often focus on urban hospitality, with little emphasis on eco-tourism, agro-tourism, or community-led rural destinations.
Perifereiako Gymnasio Agias Varvaras, CYPRUS	VET in Cyprus tends to be **underdeveloped in contextualizing entrepreneurship** for rural settings, especially for youth from farming communities.	Greater inclusion of **climate adaptation, digital skills, and social entrepreneurship** in VET for rural learners.	Rural life is often seen as outdated and lacking opportunity, especially among students who commute to urban schools.	A student from Agia Varvara may see entrepreneurship as only viable in Nicosia, not understanding how digital tools could support a rural-based artisan or agribusiness.
Limerick and Clare ETB, IRELAND	Strong VET presence, but often **fragmented** in addressing the unique needs of isolated rural communities and **second-chance learners**.	Need for **integrated entrepreneurship modules** that reflect the realities of rural business startup processes,	Rural Ireland is often idealized for lifestyle but seen as economically fragile, suited only for farming or hospitality work.	Adult learners in County Clare may not be aware of grant schemes to start sustainable enterprises or lack digital literacy to apply for them.

		funding access, and regulatory frameworks.		
Cankaya Ilce Milli Egitim Mudurlugu, TURKEY	In Turkey, rural entrepreneurship in VET is **heavily focused on agriculture**, with little attention to **innovation, sustainability, or women's empowerment**.	Modules that emphasize **modern, inclusive rural entrepreneurship** (e.g., digital agribusiness, eco-retreats, rural services).	Rural Turkey is sometimes viewed as underdeveloped and conservative, not a place for entrepreneurial ambition—especially for young people and women.	A female VET student from outside Ankara may not consider starting an artisanal product brand from her village due to lack of visible role models or support structures.
Polygonal North oy, FINLAND	While Finland is strong in environmental education, VET lacks **interdisciplinary modules** that combine circular economy principles with rural entrepreneurship.	More dynamic integration of **tech innovation (e.g., green mobility, smart farms)** into VET programs targeted at rural settings.	Rural Finland is often associated with forestry or isolation, overlooking its **potential as a testing ground** for green innovation.	A young person from Raisio may not realize how their IT or design skills could be used to support rural micro-ventures, such as developing sustainable product lines or eco-packaging for local goods.

7. Conclusion

The "Entrepreneurship for Green Rural Destinations" project brings together a diverse consortium of partners united by a shared vision: to empower rural communities across Europe through innovative, sustainable, and inclusive vocational education and training. By combining state-of-the-art research, practical frameworks, digital tools, and real-world case studies, the project addresses critical skills gaps and equips both educators and learners with the resources needed to foster green entrepreneurship in rural areas. The collaborative approach and strong commitment to dissemination and sustainability ensure that the project's outcomes will have a lasting impact—supporting economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion well beyond the project's lifetime. As rural regions continue to face evolving challenges and opportunities, the knowledge, skills, and networks developed through this initiative will serve as a foundation for resilient and vibrant green destinations across Europe.

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