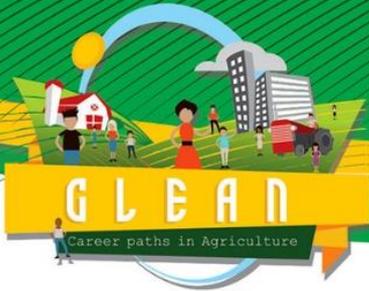




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NEETs and agriculture: a new approach for employability and entrepreneurship



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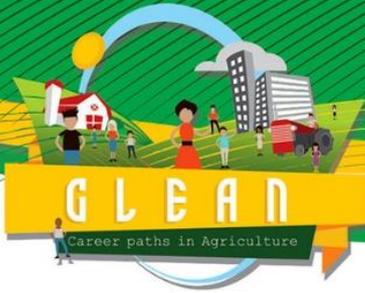


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Introduction

This document presents the results of the preparatory research activity of the GLEAN project. GLEAN is aimed at developing and testing a NEET Employability/Entrepreneurship Training Programme for youth in order to promote self-awareness and personal development in order to equip them to face transition to the world of work. The aim of the study was to investigate methods, formats and topics used by institutions, organisations, associations and other players in civil society to promote acquisition of self-awareness and personal development in NEETs.

The extent of the collection and review exercise was limited to contribute to the purpose of design: this document does not represent a full comparative analysis on how countries and societies deal with the issue. However, examples and descriptions were collected from 16 Countries of European Union and one outside the Union (but in Europe), offering therefore a meaningful overview about running practices to involve NEETs through agriculture.

Following this introduction, the Intellectual Output is set out as follows:

Section 1 provides a brief overview on the topic and on the concept of NEET and the situation in Europe about the topic, as well as a short focus on the countries of the consortium (where the programme will be tested), providing therefore the background on which GLEAN moves;

Section 2 describes the adopted methodology and related tools for practices collection;

Section 3 presents findings and examples of the review exercise;

Section 4 presents overall conclusions, and recommendations for the design of the GLEAN programme.

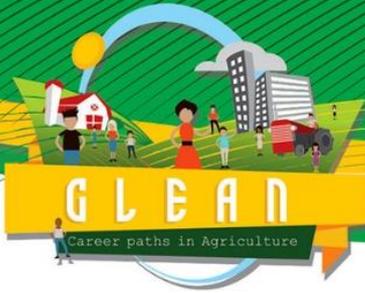
Annex 1 is a presentation of the GLEAN online database of practices.

1. Who are the NEETs?

1.1 The NEET concept and definition

An international standard for the definition of the word NEET does not exist yet. However, the indicator of NEETs, as a target group differentiated from “young unemployed” has been adopted by all international organisations. As example, the International Labour Organisation has adopted the following definition of the NEET rate:

“the percentage of the population of a given age group and sex who is not employed and not involved in further education or training, who meet the following two conditions: (i) they are not employed (i.e. they are unemployed or inactive), and (ii) they have not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey” (ILO, 2013).



The target group addressed includes young people aged 15-29 years old (ILO 2014). In other terms, the definition of NEETs includes:

- Unemployed persons (according to ILO definition) not in any education and training;
- Inactive persons (ILO definition) not in any education and training.

As well, the OECD defines NEET indicator as the percentage of youths (16-24 years old) not in education or employment:

“Youth inactivity presents the share of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), as a percentage of the same age group. Education includes part-time and full-time education, but excludes non-formal education and educational activities of very short duration. Employment is defined according to the ILO Guidelines and covers all those who have been in paid work for at least one hour in the reference week of the survey or were temporarily absent from such work.” (OECD 2015)

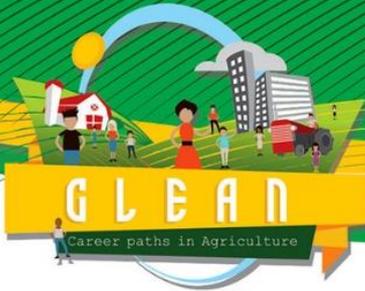
The acronym, meaning person who is “Not in Education, Employment, or Training” was first used in the United Kingdom in a 1999 report by the Social Exclusion Unit, overcoming the previous definition of “no status”. At present, the United Kingdom, which publishes figures on NEETs through the Department of Education, considers youth people aged 16-24, even if the methodology used in calculating the number of NEETs aged 16–18 is different from that used for those aged 16–24. The first relies on a range of sources, the second on the Labour Force Survey (UK Department of Education 2011). However, this is not a fixed age group: in example, Scotland limits the NEET classification to those aged 16–19.

The European Union monitors NEETs, through the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), and of course uses Eurostat data, by applying the following definition:

“NEETs are young people aged between 15 and 29 years who were not in employment, education or training” (Eurofund-EMCC, 2015; Eurofund, 2012¹)

Data about NEETs come from the Labour Force Survey, managed by Eurostat. As regards the breaking down of datasets, the main breakdown is usually made between two categories: 15-24 and 25-29. However, given the fact that after the age of 18 compulsory education ends in all European countries, additional breakdowns aimed at better understanding paths between education and training, and the labour market, are provided (15-19; 20-24; 25-29). The fixed age of 15 depends on the fact that in most European countries this is working age (16 for Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom). Further breakdown analysis are provided by gender.

¹ “In order to perform a pan-European investigation of the NEET phenomenon, the Eurostat definition of NEET was adapted: due to the strong impact of the recession on young people aged up to 29 years, the analysis also includes those aged 25–29 years, so that this report focuses on young people aged 15–29 years who are not in employment, education or training”. (Eurofund, 2012, page 57).



In Eurostat, the NEETs are considered a main category, in a classification that takes into account both formal and non-formal education and employment:

- Exclusively in education;
- Both in education and in employment;
- Exclusively in employment;
- Neither in employment nor in education or training.

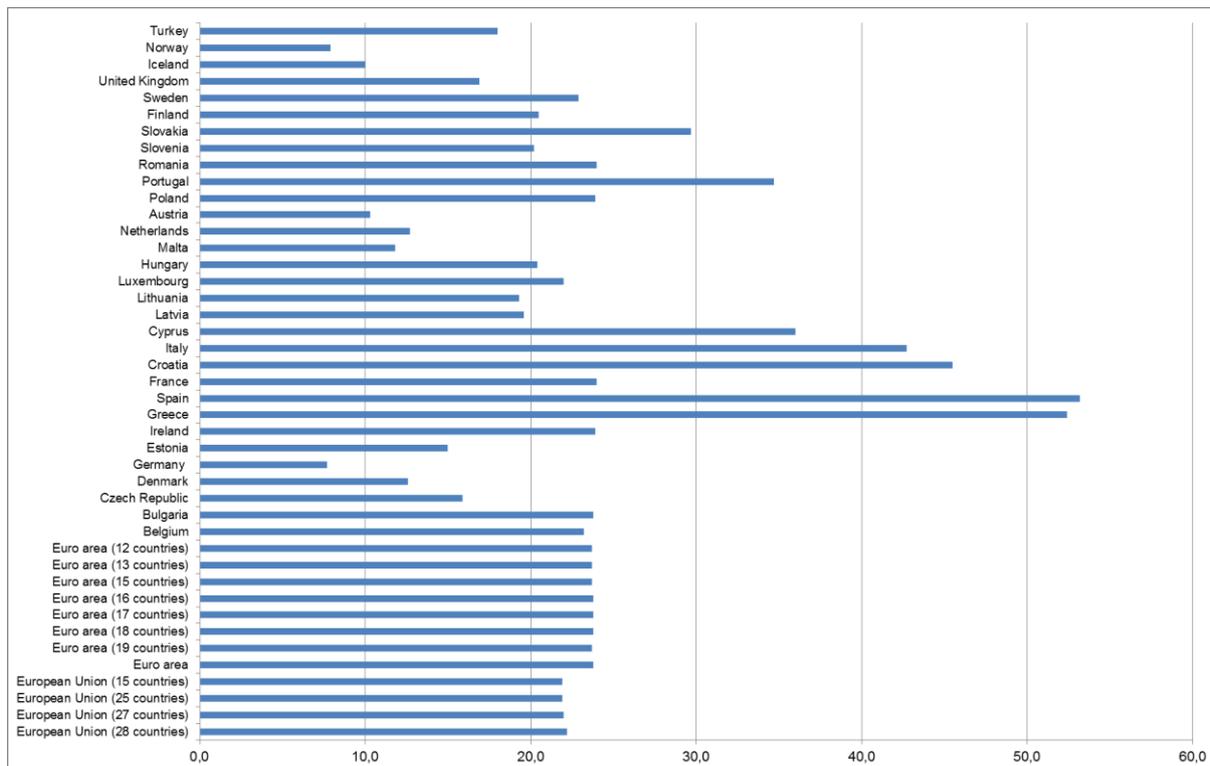
(Eurostat, 2015)

It should be stressed however that policies and initiatives addressed to young people are focused on the under 25 group. This is described in the following paragraph.

For the aim of this report, although considering national specificities in terms of target groups age, and according to Eurofound definition, we refer to NEETs as young people aged 15-29 years old who are not in education, employment or training.

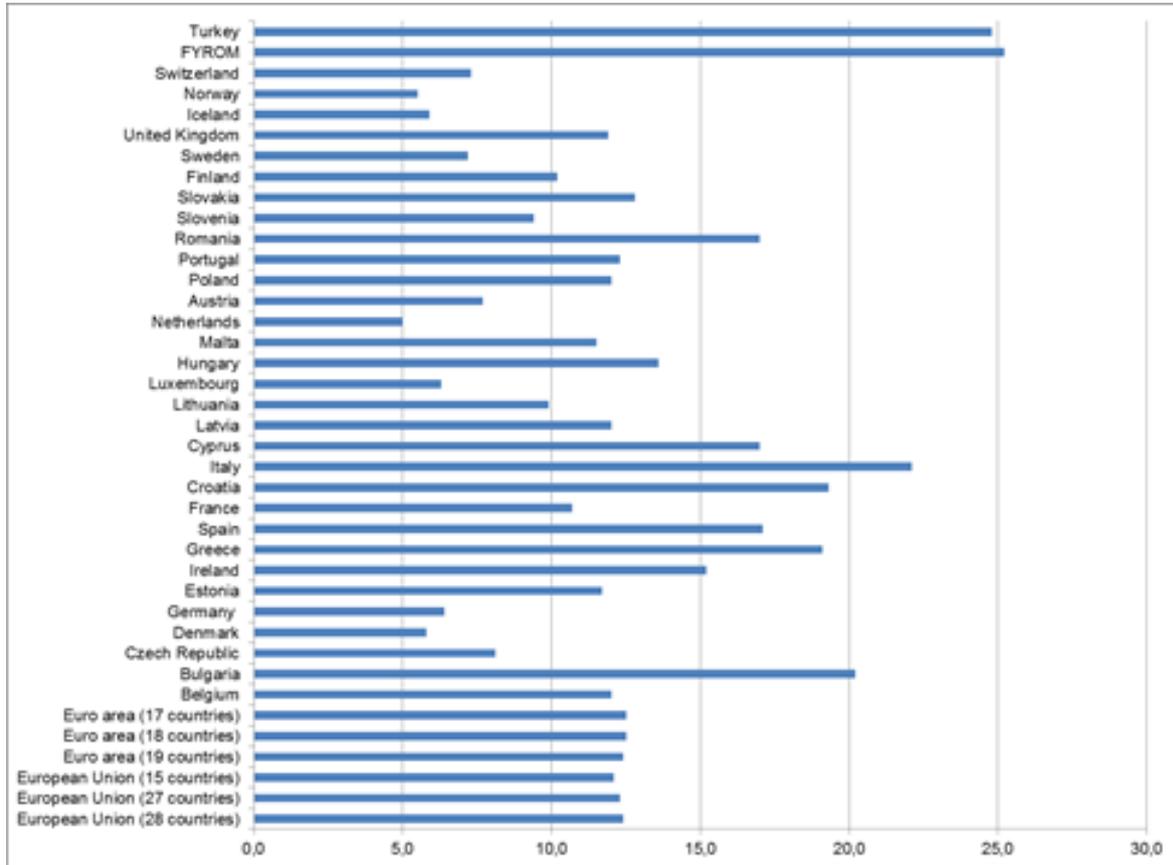
1.2 NEETs in Europe

In December 2014, around 5 million under 25 youths were employed in the EU-28 area, with an unemployment rate of 21,4% (23% in the Eurozone), with high differences between countries, that range from 7,7% (Germany) to 53,2% (Spain).

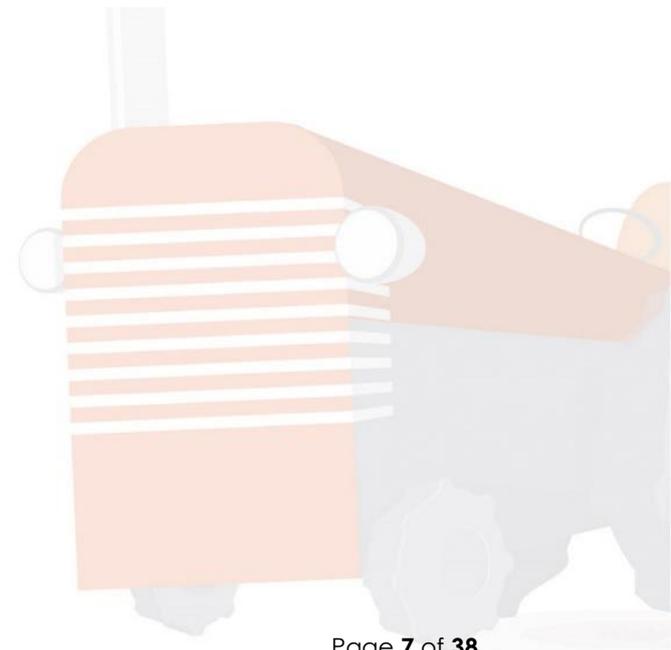


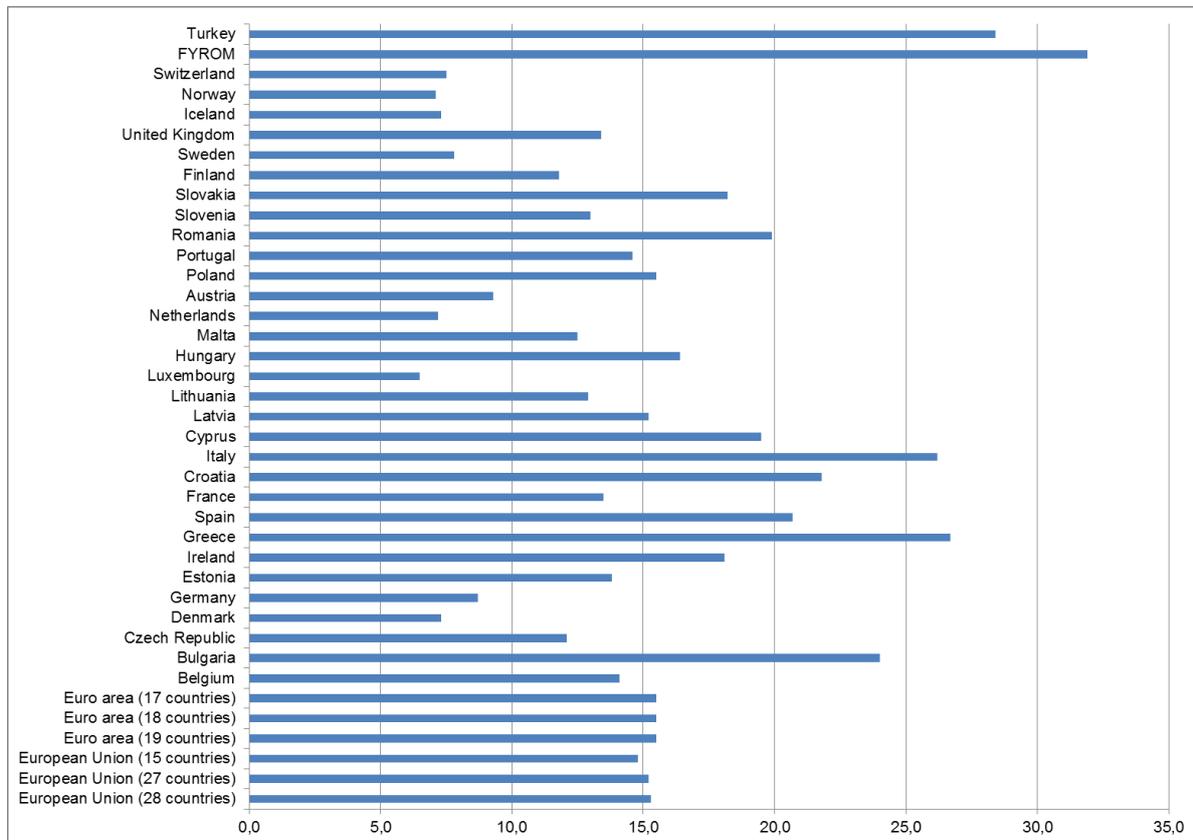
Unemployment rate less than 25 years old, 2014, Eurostat une_rt_a

Among them, 7.5 million young Europeans between 15 and 25 were NEET. Also in this case, the gap between countries is very high, as the following figure shown:



Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex and age (NEET rates) 2014, 15-25, Eurostat



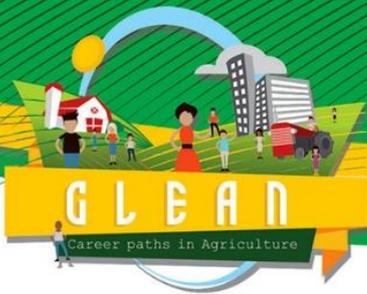


Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex and age (NEET rates), 2014, age 15-29, Eurostat

The term NEETS has been formally introduced in EU documents in 2008 (EU 2008): since then, the phenomenon has been widely studied, and the target group has been addressed specifically and/or within the initiatives and policies for young people.

According to literature, NEETs represent a heterogeneous population that includes vulnerable and non-vulnerable subgroups; the Eurofound 2012 report suggests a possible classification in five main sub-groups:

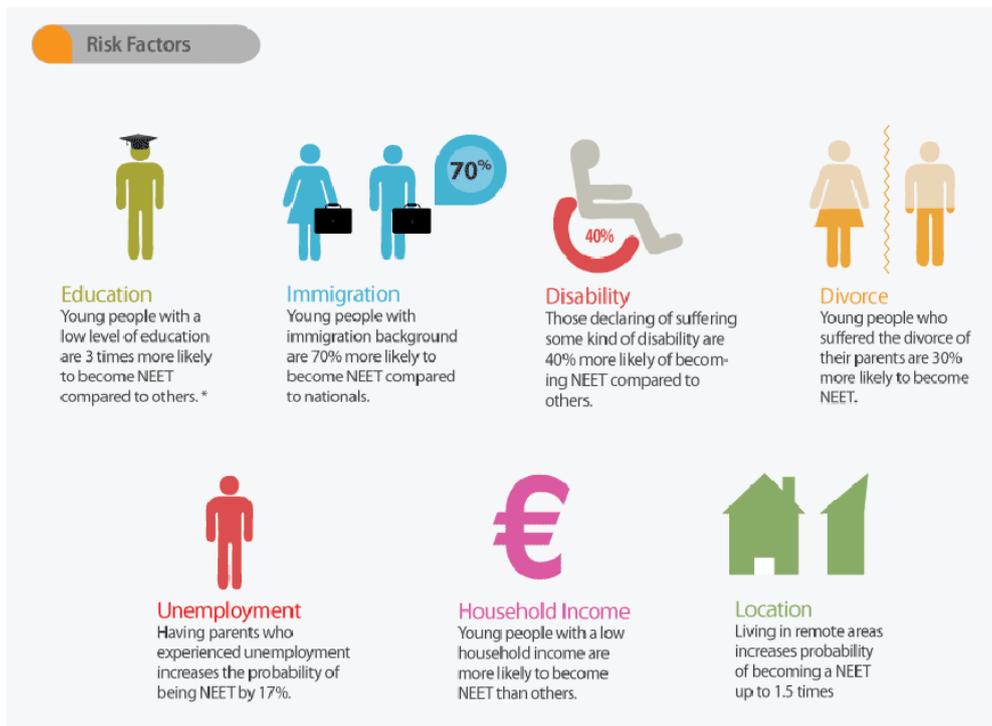
- "the **conventionally unemployed**, the largest subgroup, which can be further subdivided into long-term and short-term unemployed;
- the **unavailable**, which includes young carers, young people with family responsibilities and young people who are sick or disabled;
- the **disengaged**: those young people who are not seeking jobs or education and are not constrained from doing so by other obligations or incapacities, and takes in discouraged workers as well as other young people who are pursuing dangerous and asocial lifestyles;
- the **opportunity-seekers**: young people who are actively seeking work or training, but are holding out for opportunities that they see as befitting their skills and status;



- the **voluntary NEETs**: those young people who are travelling and those constructively engaged in other activities such as art, music and self-directed learning".

What they do have in common is the fact that they are not accumulating human capital through formal channels.

Risk factors to becoming NEETs include personal, economic and social factors, here summarised with the Eurofound infographic:



Eurofound Infographic on NEETs (2012)

In addition to this, it should be also mentioned the fact that there is a gender unbalance within the NEETs group, as rates are higher for woman than for men in almost all European countries, except Spain and Luxembourg:

YEAR 2014				
Age group	15-24		15-29	
	F%	M%	F%	M%
European Union (28 countries)	12,6	12,2	17,1	13,5



Belgium	11,5	12,6	14,2	13,9
Bulgaria	21,4	19,2	26,8	21,3
Czech Republic	9,9	6,5	17,4	7,0
Denmark	5,4	6,2	7,8	6,8
Germany	7,2	5,5	10,8	6,7
Estonia	11,6	11,8	16,4	11,2
Ireland	15,5	14,9	19,0	17,1
Greece	19,6	18,7	28,5	24,8
Spain	16,2	18,0	20,9	20,5
France	10,3	11,0	14,6	12,4
Croatia	16,7	21,9	21,2	22,4
Italy	21,4	22,7	27,7	24,8
Cyprus	15,3	19,0	18,5	20,5
Latvia	12,8	11,3	17,9	12,6
Lithuania	10,3	9,5	14,3	11,5
Luxembourg	4,6	7,8	5,6	7,4
Hungary	15,3	12,0	20,8	12,2
Malta	13,1	9,9	15,6	9,6
Netherlands	5,5	4,6	8,1	6,4
Austria	7,4	8,0	10,3	8,4
Poland	12,0	12,0	18,1	13,1
Portugal	12,3	12,3	15,3	14,0
Romania	18,8	15,3	23,5	16,5



Slovenia	9,2	9,7	14,8	11,2
Slovakia	12,8	12,8	21,7	14,9
Finland	8,5	11,9	11,7	11,8
Sweden	6,8	7,5	8,1	7,5
United Kingdom	13,1	10,7	16,4	10,5

Elaboration from Eurostat - Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex and age (NEET rates), 2014

NEET status may lead to a wide range of negative social conditions, such as disaffection, isolation, insecure and underpaid employment, crime, and mental and physical health problems for the individual (Sissons and Jones 2012; Eurofund 2012).

Clearly, a high NEET percentage is a problem also for societies and economies. Although of difficult estimation, economic impact of inactive young people on countries' economy is rather obvious (estimated costs of not integrating NEETs is at over €150 billion in 2011 figures, according to Eurostat 2011). In particular, with regard to social behaviour, literature suggests that there are in fact no remarkable differences between NEETs and young people, also considering what said above about the heterogeneity of this group: generally, they are disengaged, with low participation and trust in social and political debates. In any case, isolation and disengagement from the labour market and education system, unfortunately lead to withdrawing from political and social engagement in society (Eurofund 2012, Sissons and Jones 2012; Cusworth, L. and al 2009).

Given this background, the Europe 2020 strategy has dedicated two of its flagship initiatives to improve young employment, namely:

- Youth on the move, which promotes mobility as a means of learning and increasing employability; and in particular
- An agenda for new skills and jobs.

In addition, a set of measures were adopted, such as:

- The Youth employment package (2012), devoted in particular to facilitate school-to-work transition;
- The Youth Guarantee (2013), aimed at ensuring that all young people under 25 get a good quality employment offers continued education, or an apprenticeship or traineeship within four months;

The 'Youth employment initiative' (2013), which supports particularly young people not in education, employment or training in regions with a youth unemployment rate above 25%.



1.2.1 Focus on Greece

Greece, which in recent years have been hardly hit by current economic crisis, is particularly affected by youth unemployment, which in 2014 reached 52.4% (Eurostat figures, under 25 unemployment rate), with a NEET rate of 19,1% (15-24) and 29,7% (15-29) respectively.

According to recent studies, “most Greek NEETs are women, aged 20-24 and with previous professional experience. The majority of both the NEETs and their parents have a low to moderate educational level and a low family income. Furthermore, they are unmarried, with no children and they live with their family. They are pessimistic and disappointed by the Greek educational system, the state and the political personnel. NEETs blame them for their difficult living conditions. They firmly believe that there is no Greek welfare state and social equality. However, NEETs do not feel socially excluded because of their family and friends. Finally, many of them are thinking about emigrating or immigrating” (Drakaki and al. 2014). The same source, which reports the findings of the project “Absents’ Barometer: Detection, classification and empirically founded policy proposals to tackle the new form of social vulnerability: the NEETs”, points out that “only a small percentage of the NEET population are early school leavers”, which suggest that early school leaving does not constitute a significant determinant in becoming NEET.

According to literature (EU Parliament 2015; Drakaki and al 2014; Eurofound 2012; Karamanis 2014), weaknesses of the system to support youth employability, which have been already addressed before the crisis, are at least:

- A difficult transition from education to work, due to skills mismatches, low esteem of manual work, low quality of VET (Vocational Education and Training) and a low degree of cooperation among firms and the education system;
- A high share of informal employment, and
- A modest performance of the Greek Public Employment Service.

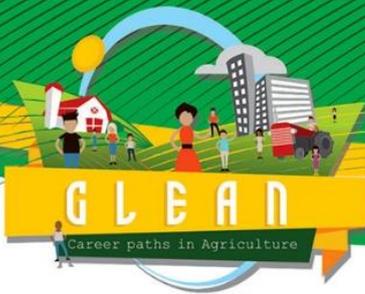
In January 2013, the Greek government adopted a national ‘youth action plan’, aimed at promoting youth employment, training and entrepreneurship, targeting around 350.000 young people in Greece (EU funds 517 billions), with the following axis of intervention:

“Axis 1: Creating jobs for the youth based upon formal qualifications, through subsidised employment

Axis 2: Strengthening of vocational education and training and of apprenticeship systems placing emphasis on the combination of training and work experience and on further investment in job placement and in traineeship scheme during and after education

Axis 3: Establishment of systematic school-to-work programs in order to support acquisition of first work experience (combined with mentoring, counselling, training and employment), adjusted to the special profile and needs of young unemployed

Axis 4: Enhancing of counselling and career guidance focusing on young unemployed. Boosting of school career guidance, career mentoring and counselling in entrepreneurship in tertiary education



Axis 5: Strengthening of youth entrepreneurship, focus on new/innovative products, services and sectors of entrepreneurs

Axis 6: Investing in measures aimed at mitigating school drop-out"

(Briefing from the European Parliament, June 2015)

The launch of a 'voucher for access to the labour market' is another scheme targeting around 45.000 young unemployed under the age of 29. It combines training with a five-month job placement in a business".

With a budget of approximately 171,5 million for the period 2014–2015 (EU and ESF funds, and national co-financing), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) provides funding to support measures as

- Direct support for high-quality traineeship and apprenticeships;
- Provision of first job experience (placement for at least six months)
- Start-up support for young entrepreneurs;
- Quality vocational education and training.

With regard to initiatives and projects in a smaller scale, practices in Greece are provided within the online database, and included in the analysis in Chapter 3.

1.2.2 Focus on Italy

Italy in 2014 reached 22,1% (15-24) and 26,2% (15-29) of NEETs, where the youth unemployment raised over 40%. Among young Italian NEETs (in Italian *né-né*, although the English word is more used) some 40% left school without obtaining secondary school diplomas, 49.87% stopped education after the diploma and 10.13% have a university degree. The drop-out rate is also a concern for Italy which is among the five EU countries with the highest school drop-out (17%, Eurydice 2014), and an 40% of those enrolled in university that fail to graduate in their chosen course (ANVUR, 2013).

A survey conducted among 2.350 participants in 2014, highlighted that NEETs consider themselves little or not happy at all, and the indicator of trust in people is also very low (one out of four NEETs, in a general critical situation where of Italian youth people with regard to this indicator – one out of three). The degree of trust in Italian formal institution is also very low, rating 2,0 (NEETs) and 2,8 (non-NEETs) in a scale 1-10 (1 the lowest). European institutions trust were little higher (3,1 and 4,1 respectively), and education system 4,0 and 4,8 (Rapporto Giovani 2014).

As regard to national initiatives addressed to NEETs, these are included in those supporting integration of young people into the labour market, such as the Legislative decree of 21 April 2000, n. 181 (actual version after amendments) already makes provisions for "the proposal to take part in initiatives concerning inclusion/training/professional requalification/any other measure favouring professional integration", targeting young people (up to 25 years old, or 29 years old if holding university qualifications) within four months from entering the status of unemployed. Young people participating Youth Guarantee was therefore already included within this frame.



Italy, having regard to the specificities of its own national context, has decided to address the target aged 15-29 years (while the Council Recommendation suggested 15-24). As regards resources, Italy counted on approximately 1.513 billion euro (YEI funds + ESF funds and national co-financing, estimated at 40%).

As regards specifically to NEETs, Italy referred to the closest definition provided by ISTAT Labour Source Survey (where ISTAT is the national institute of statistics), broken down in two categories, namely

1. Young who register themselves as “never employed” or “unemployed” and not in education or training pathway, either (a) without qualification or degree and (b) with qualification, high school or university degree;
2. Young not employed, who are early leavers from education or training and who do not register themselves as “unemployed” or “never employed”, but who are searching for a job (though not actively) or are available to work, either (a) without qualification or degree and (b) with qualification, high school or university degree.

The ISTAT annual report 2013 however reports that the NEET condition may correspond not to discouragement against a possible success of job searching, but to a state of inactivity freely chosen. The statistical approximation includes only those showing some interest for the labour market.

With regard to initiatives and projects in a smaller scale, practices in Italy are provided within the online database, and included in the analysis in Chapter 3.

1.2.3 Focus on Spain

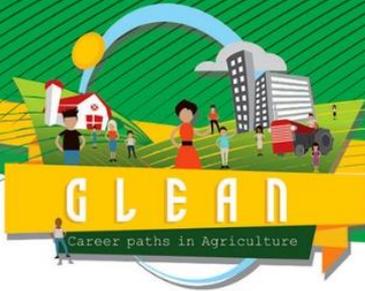
Spain deals with a high rates of youth unemployment, which reached the 53,2% in 2014. NEETs percentage in the same year ranged from 17,1% (15-24) and 20,9% (15-29).

The concept of NEET (known in Spain as *ni-ni*) covers:

- Young unemployed persons, in line with the ILO definition of unemployed, who neither study nor are undergoing any type of training;
- Young inactive persons, in line with the ILO definition, who neither study nor are undergoing any type of training.

The target group is heterogeneous as in other countries. According to the Spanish Guarantee Plan background analysis, characteristics of Spanish NEETs can be as follows:

- “Unemployment problem: 72% of NEETs are unemployed, that is, they are actively searching for jobs. In 2007, the proportion was below 50% (47%), which indicates that there is a direct link between the increase in unemployment and the number of NEETs during the crisis. In fact, the number of young people within this category who are still inactive dropped by 25% from 2007 to 2012. The main problem is, therefore, a lack of job opportunities.
- 58% have prior work experience.
- 16% are long-term unemployed.



- Almost 80% of unemployed NEETs state that they are registered with a public employment service. This figure has grown considerably since 2007 when it was just 57%. Data from the Labour Force Survey (EPA) also indicate that 25% of those who are not actively searching for employment are also registered.
- 74% are aged between 20 and 24. Their weight in the group as a whole has increased by more than 10 points with the crisis, which is the main reason for the growth in the group in general" (Gobierno de España, 2013)

In addition, 10% have higher-level studies and 25% have not completed their compulsory secondary education. As regards gender, it should be pointed out that Spain is the only European country which has more men than women in the group.

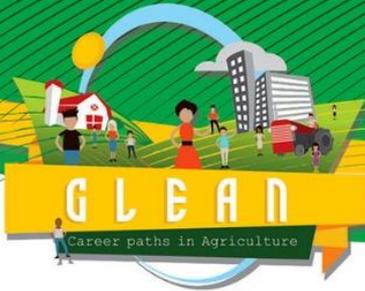
As regard national policies addressing youth unemployment (which includes NEETs), at least the following programmes should be mentioned:

Professional Guidance for Employment and Assistance for Self-Employment Actions (1998), that includes measures such as professional guidance for employment actions and assistance for self-employment actions (Eurofound 2012a), and it is aimed at supporting school-work transition;

- The Royal Decree 1/2011 on 'urgent measures to promote transition to stable employment and the professional re-qualification of the unemployed', which includes professional re-qualification programme for people whose unemployment benefit ceases, and inclusion of unemployed people in training programmes aimed at workers in employment;
- The Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment strategy 2013-2016, that covers 100 measures aiming to facilitate access to the labour market for young people through employment or self-employment.

Youth Guarantee in Spain is integrated with the Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment Strategy 2013-2016, and provides measures aimed:

- To improve **mediation**, through actions involving vocational guidance, labour information and assistance in job seeking; modernisation of Public Employment Services; single employment and self-employment portal; actions with placement agencies, mobility programmes; education-employment mediation programmes;
- To improve **employability**, through actions such as second chance programmes; training with an employment commitment; training, especially in languages and information and communications technology; traineeships; promotion of dual vocational training through contracts for training and apprenticeships; promotion of vocational training through schools; training leading to professional certificates (*Certificados de Profesionalidad*); evaluation and accreditation of vocational skills acquired during work experience and through informal training channels; workshop school programme (*Escuelas taller*); work and training centre programmes (*Casas de oficios*);



- To promote **hiring**, through social contributions (reductions and bonuses in social security contributions of up to 100%); employment aid for hiring young people for a period in excess of six months; other incentives for hiring;
- To promote **entrepreneurship**, through flat rate for self-employed workers; by making unemployment benefit compatible with the start of entrepreneurial activity; through capitalisation of unemployment benefit; second chance opportunities (if the project is not successful); promotion of an entrepreneurial culture; reference offices.

Please note that while the Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment Strategy addresses under 30 young people, measures of Youth Guarantee address under 25 only.

With regard to initiatives and projects in a smaller scale, practices in Spain are provided within the online database, and included in the analysis in Chapter 3.

1.3 NEETs and Agriculture

Literature on NEETs and on disadvantaged young people (such as immigrants, people with disadvantaged background, mental illnesses etc.) is quite huge, as well as practices and experiences. Less has been done for this target groups in agricultural field, as mostly of the NEETs action took/take place in urban settings, with the exception of social farming, that however acts more in health and social sectors.

So far, the identify patterns of intervention focused on disadvantaged young people, including NEETs, are:

- Paid internship and stages, fostering re-engagement of young people and promoting the re-enter to the labour market;
- Training courses, devoted to specific target groups, and alternative educational paths (such as the initiatives of Second Chance Education);
- Community-based project, especially including Arts (e.g. theatre, dance, etc.).

Some of the most effective projects have been carried out in the UK, thanks also to national policy measures aimed at tackling the NEET issue. Among these, have particular relevance for GLEAN:

- The urban agriculture and food projects: these projects stand between community based actions and training pathways, and although including agriculture somehow, are urban projects (London and Manchester have a quite detailed track of successful initiatives to this respect);
- The Big Lottery Fund, that has financed several projects addressing NEETs across the UK (Wales, Northern Ireland), and issued guidelines of intervention in working with NEETs.

These initiatives has been considered complementary to GLEAN, and taken in due consideration as for relevant literature and previous experiences can help in designing and developing an effective programme.

The present study confirm the already identified patterns of intervention.



2. Methodology

2.1 Research Approach

The GLEAN project is aimed at providing and testing a NEET Employability/Entrepreneurship Programme for youth in order to promote self-awareness and personal development in order to equip them to face transition to the world of work.

Research has been carried out in order to identify previous practices in the field that shown elements of success in equipping NEETs and disadvantaged people to approach or re-approach a job experience by means of work based learning.

Research questions to this aim were:

- (a) How do VET institutions and public social services provide/promote personal development and increased employability levels in NEETs and disadvantaged youth?
- (b) How can working based learning prepare NEETs and disadvantaged to face the world of work?

The aim of the collection and review work was directly linked to the a training programme based on learning on the job in agricultural field, addressed to disadvantaged young people, such as NEETs and long-term unemployed young people.

The work was planned as based on desk research only: the developed template for collection was addressed to gather data from sources such documents, archival records, and physical artifacts, mostly available within the Internet. As field research was not planned, for the purpose of GLEAN review, multiple sources of evidences should be used for each practice description, to ensure triangulation. In addition, it was recommended to apply investigators' triangulation (Patton, 1987) as possible, by involving different researchers in the templates development and deliver.

2.2 Practices collection

Practices were collected by using the following template, validated by all partners, where description on how to fill in it were also given:

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	REASON
Case study title	--	--
Leading institution name	--	--
Reference person	--	--
Website	--	--
Background	Brief overview of - institution	This is to identify the context on which the

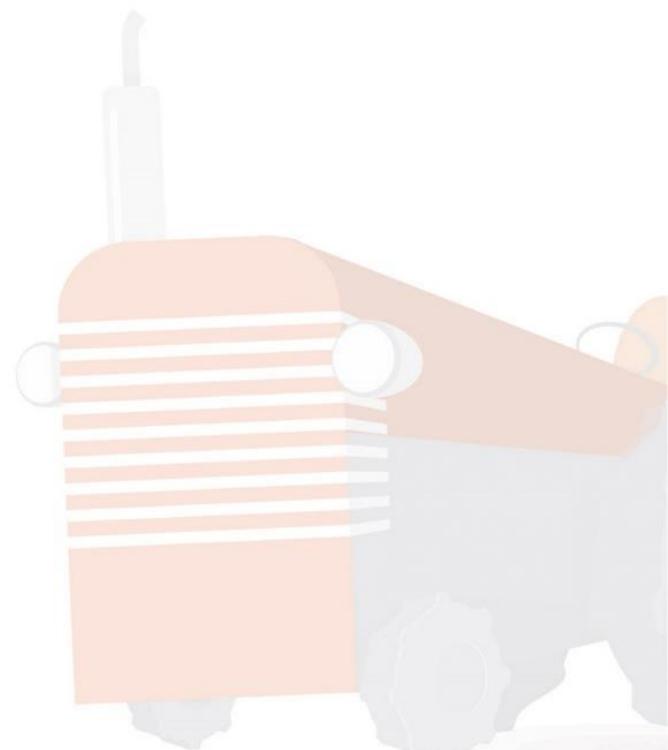


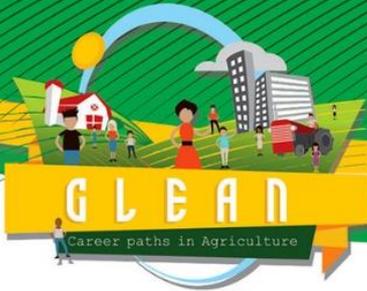
TITLE	DESCRIPTION	REASON
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - type of learners 	practice takes or has taken place.
Intended outcome(s)	Objective(s) behind the practice	Why this practice has been implemented? Are intended outcomes achieved?
Established practice	Description of practice as implemented, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - service/course description; - departments/units involved; - staff involved; - monitoring and evaluation processes; - etc. 	This is the description of the practice in relation with the context.
The personal development and employability/entrepreneurship advantage	Describe the benefits of the addition or amendment of elements personal development and proactivity for NEETs and disadvantaged people, as experienced by learners, teachers and/or the institution and/or the labour market	This is to underline the advantages of the use programmes, courses, other kind of services for personal development and employability purposes.
Key points	Briefly identify the most important points in the case study for other institutions – these may include risks as well as benefits	This is to point out the key points that can be relevant in relation to GLEAN
Conclusions and recommendations	A summary of how and why the practice outlined here has been effective	Lesson learnt



TITLE	DESCRIPTION	REASON
Additional information	Use this optional section to add any additional information or to list attached relevant documents	
Keywords/Tags	List of the most relevant keywords	This is to allow a online search

The published practice forms are anyway simpler as their purpose is to offer the website visitors a glance on the good practice and a link for deepening the analysis. The publishable template agreed among partners is therefore the following one:





European Practices on Promoting Employability & Entrepreneurship in Agriculture

Institution

Country

Institution at a glance

Practice at a glance

Strong points

Keywords

Website (practice)

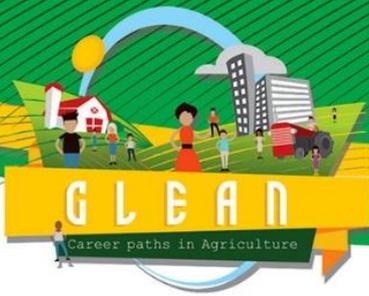


For the analysis purpose, the first template has been used among partners.

The collection exercise took place between November 2014 and January 2015. Filled templates were shared in an online space, accessible by each member of the GLEAN consortium.

3. Findings

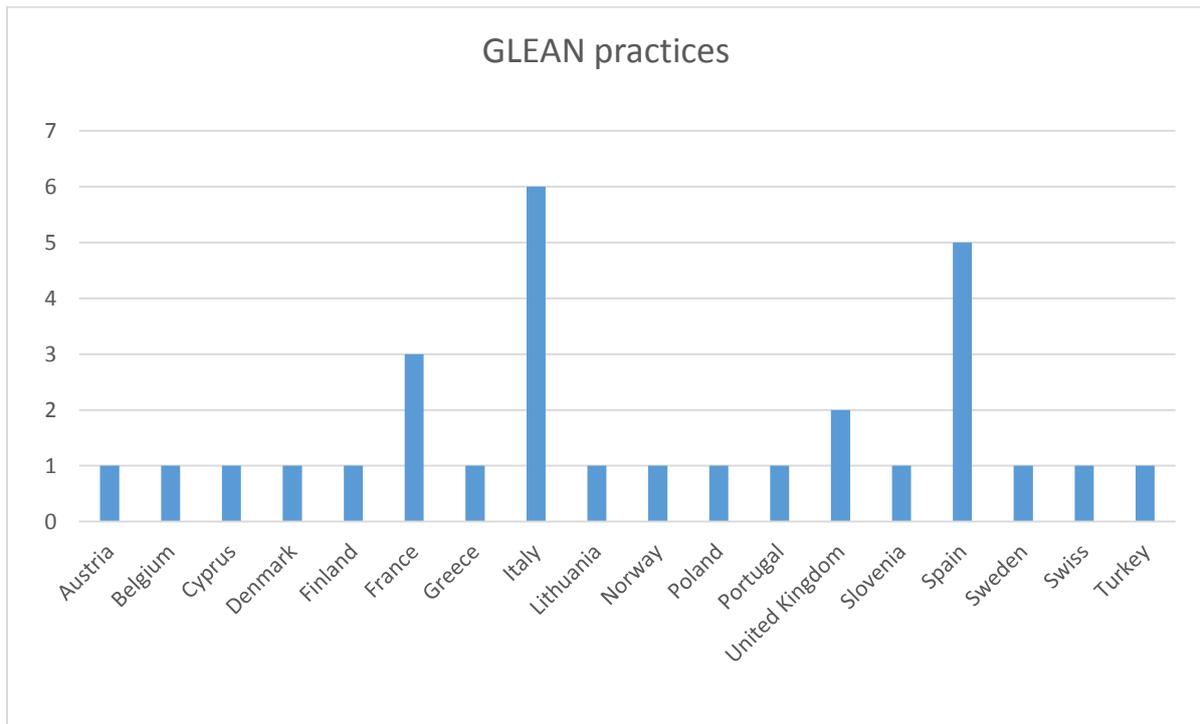
After the ending of the collection phase, a first analysis of practices was carried out in February 2015 and discussed among the GLEAN consortium members. The following paragraph



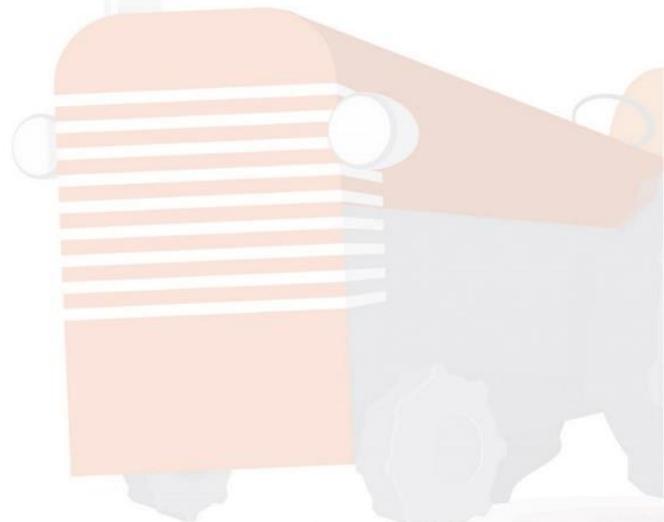
summarises the main findings for the purpose of the NEEP development, and includes the outcomes of the discussion.

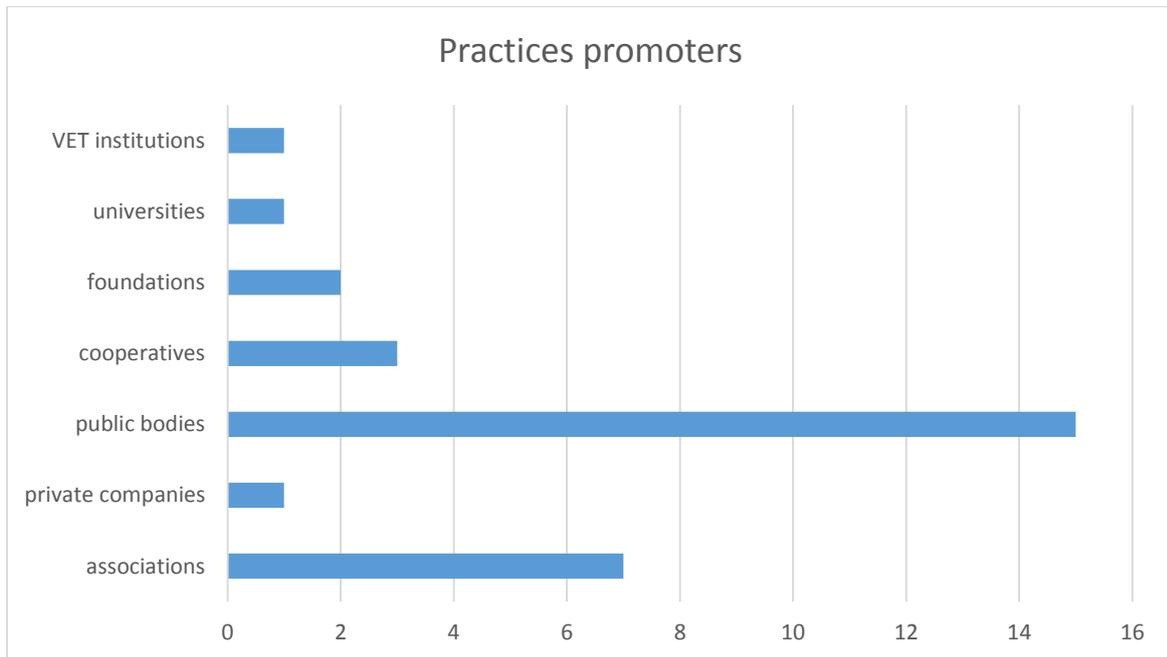
3.1 Description of the sample

During the collection period, 30 practices have been analysed and described. Geographical distribution, including examples from 16 European Union countries and Swiss, is highlighted below:



As regards the type of promoters, 15 practices were collected from public bodies, 12 from cooperatives, associations and foundations, 1 from private companies and 2 from educational institutions.





3.2 Practices analysis: common characteristics

Although different in methods of delivery and organisational settings, all analysed experiences share a high level of interest for:

- Soft skills: these are retrievable in all practices, and are delivered mostly through experiential and situational learning;
- Group training: also in this case, the use of workshops and seminars or working groups is widespread. In the meantime, group training is almost ever combined with a high level of customisation of the proposed training/working path;
- High level of interaction with the civil society players: this is definitely common to all practices, with different degrees of involvement and dialogue, as all the practices involve public bodies, companies, associations, and often families and educational institutions of the territory.

The use of ICT in the collected practices is not common, and many of the analysed practices are carried out in national language only.

3.3 Practices analysis: the research questions findings

As a general overview with regard to the first research question: *How do VET institutions and public social services provide/promote personal development and increased employability levels in NEETs and disadvantaged youth*, practices can be clustered in four main areas:

1. Training of the trainers dealing with NEETs and disadvantaged people
2. Work experiences
3. Social farming
4. Coaching for Transition paths



As a general overview with regard to the second research question: *How can working based learning prepare NEETs and disadvantaged to face the world of work*, practices approaches can be grouped in two main areas according to the main objectives pursued:

5. Development of soft skills and personal empowerment
6. Development of technical skills

3.3.1 Training of the trainers dealing with NEETs and disadvantaged people

Eight of the practices can be classified within this group, addressing trainers as direct beneficiaries, to provide a cascade effect on the target groups (NEETs and disadvantaged young people).

Provisions for trainers dealing with disadvantaged young people can be pedagogical approaches and resources, community building, training pathways etc.

As example, the Central Denmark EU Office built an online portal to gather professionals and practitioners dealing with young people in order to foster sharing and to offer resources:

SOS Network

Central Denmark EU Office, Denmark

The SOS Network portal is an online community for teachers, trainers, employers, counsellors, carers and students to meet and share knowledge on how to help students succeeding with education and access to the labour market.

With the SOS Network portal, participants can identify barriers to learning and employment, discover how some have succeeded in overcoming those barriers. Finally, users can find a number of methods and tools selected by the SOS Network to address those issues. The SOS Network portal also offers an opportunity to contribute with users' stories, resources, methods, tools and comments.

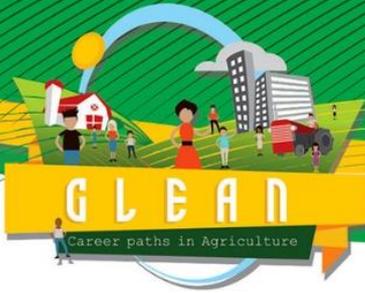
Other initiatives include the provision of training programmes:

CoPro Project

Pendik Local Education Authority, Turkey

The CoPro Integration project is based on four main actions. These are;

1. Development of new educational approach modules as pedagogic 'second chance' model,
2. Creation of training modules for social workers, trainers and supervisory staff,



3. Establishment of e-database through the collection of documents on EU education, training and employment strategies for vocational training policy makers,
4. Coaching and pilot training for fifty youth on European operational and multidisciplinary training program to promote young workers for social and labour market.

Or the provision of learning resources and curricula:

CHARISM

BFI Tirol Bildungs GmbH, Austria

The goal of CHARISM is to develop a common European model to support disadvantaged young people while seeking a job or an apprenticeship and provide help during the application process based on the methodological approach of Case Management.

CHARISM

- Integrates youth socially, educationally and vocationally with the method of Case Management.
- Strengthens the individual competences of unemployed youth so that they can find a fitting job as a first step towards a sustainable career.
- Offers a concept for a training on "Case Management for unemployed youth" for employment services and training providers.
- Develops the "CHARISM Passport", an instrument to make visible formal and informal competences of unemployed youth.

Some practices include all aspects of sharing, accessing resources and training pathways, such as in example

Y2W – Youth to Work

The ECAP Foundation, Switzerland

Y2W aimed to transfer and adapt an innovative support methodology developed in the UK, Career Circles (CC), to meet the needs of the target group of disadvantaged young NEETs. Pilot circles have been run in partner countries of CH,UK,AT,PT,EL to test the methodology, including Career Kits. An online community, Net:Work, has been created to continue the peer-support approach of CC using Web2.0 and social media to reduce isolation and build valuable social capital for the target group. VET trainers have access to innovative European approaches to training and lifelong learning



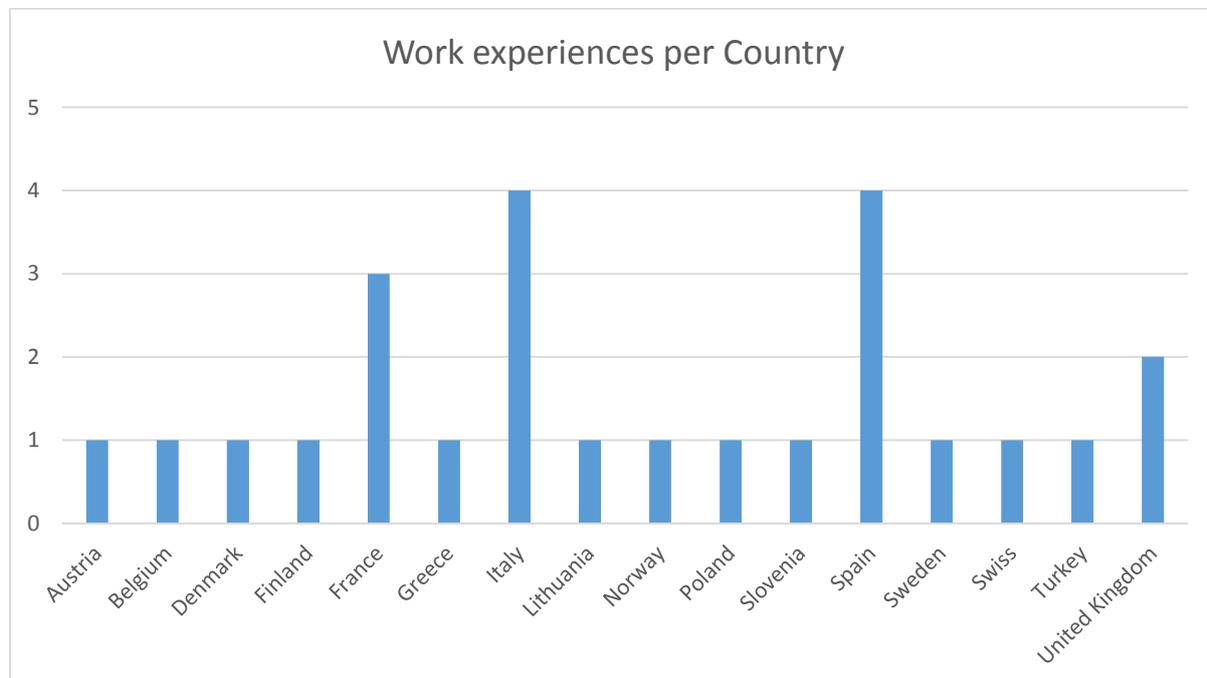
support for young disadvantaged NEETs, & the opportunity to share knowledge with peers across Europe through Y2W barcamp.

Analysed practices confirm that the issue should be tackled by pooling together resources and acting in a coordinated way within the community: this applies both at local level, with public and private players of the social and labour fields, and at European level, with common policies and approaches and particularly by activating community of professionals and practitioners, directly dealing with the target group. The phenomenon of NEETs is in fact rather new, and the need of sharing and learn from each other, could significantly improve the work of those involved in learning, training, and job insertion as regards disadvantaged young people.

3.3.2 Work experiences

The 80% (24) of collected practices is mainly based on an experiential approach. Due to the personal characteristics of the involved youngsters, and to the general lack of achievements in formal education among them, who are often school leavers, the preferred to foster re-integration of disadvantaged people and NEETs into society is the work experience.

Among these 24 practices, the national distribution is as follows:



However, within this general group, some practices are specifically devoted to work experiences provision, and are specifically addressed to this aim.



As example of initiatives using social work as mean to provide work experiences and related learning pathways to young people, the following is described:

Taller de Empleo Castro

Ayuntamiento de Castro Urdiales (Cantabria), Spain

The workers or unemployed aged twenty or more years, participate in the realization of works or services of public utility or social interest, through effective work and also receive vocational training linked to their job, with the aim of seeking their professional qualifications and promoting their employment.

The training programmes are blended, they combine actions of training and employment, seeking employment in areas of general and social interest, promoted by public or non-profit private entities and later facilitating integration into the labour market, both through employment and by creating business and social economy projects.

Social work and occupational training takes also advantage of the cooperation with private stakeholders (e.g. companies), to insert the unemployed people into the labour market at the end of the study-work experience:

Casa Oficios Adra

Ayuntamiento de Adra, Spain

The Houses of Trades are a program of public employment-training whose purpose is the insertion of young people under twenty five years in situation of unemployment, through their training with professional practice, in occupations related to recovery or promotion of artistic, historical, cultural or natural, as well as rehabilitation of urban environment, the environment and improvement of the conditions of life in cities.

The projects consist of two stages:

- During the first stage, the participants receive occupational training.

(Duration: 6 months)

- During the second stage of the project, they complement their training alternating it with work experiences, being hired by the promoter companies.

(Duration: 6 months)



All this kind of practices include some common characteristics, as follows:

- The work experience is embedded and/or followed in/by structured learning pathways;
- Empowerment of participants is always pursued;
- Most of these initiatives have as promoter public bodies, from labour or social services.

3.3.3 Social farming

Among collected practices, social farming initiatives represent the most common way to deal with users having severe mental or physical impairments or social disadvantaged (such as in example ex-offenders).

In all cases, beyond the promoters there are almost all the territorial stakeholders cooperating for the success of the initiative, as they declare it is impossible to achieve good results without involving families (wherever they have one), social actors, social services, public bodies and companies.

As example of severe disabilities are tackled by means of social farming, the Bellechambre represent a success story:

Bellechambre

Sésame Autisme, Franc

The national association Sésame Autisme, with its regional branch, initiated the project Bellechambre, by developing it and looking for support and funding. The objective was to create the conditions for offering to adults with severe disability, mostly those with autism, stable living conditions by means of residential capacity within a farm.

Strong connections have been established with:

- therapeutic networks (hospitals, doctors),
- service-users' and disability associations (especially Sesame Autism),
- other farms,
- agricultural actors.

Now Bellechambre is becoming a reference point for farmers. It organises on-site visits for other farmers and professional training. Potentially interested individual farmers follow carefully the care activities at Bellechambre.



According to their capabilities, service-users/residents work at different farm tasks (milking, cleaning the stable, feeding poultry, making cheese, selling at the marketplace...) and participate in many non-work activities, such as sport, art therapy and choir. Employees who are directly in contact with residents in their “life-groups” are doubly skilled, with social and technical competencies.

As well, ex-offenders, and other disadvantaged people, are addressed by social farming as a mean to favour their reintegration into the world of work:

Arete

AIAB, The Italian Association for Organic Agriculture, Italy

The project proposes to test the construction of a model of social enterprise in the development of organic farming, aimed at the preparatory work and the subsequent re-employment of disadvantaged people in charge to institutions and local health and social services, with particular reference to prisoners and ex-prisoners. The model of agricultural enterprise under study is Arete Torre Boldone (Bergamo Province), a cooperative that produces vegetables and organic fruit and simultaneously is involved in social support of disadvantaged people (ex-offenders and people with mental health problems) that introduces the various business activities, recovering them professionally and psychologically insertion or re-entry into the world of work.

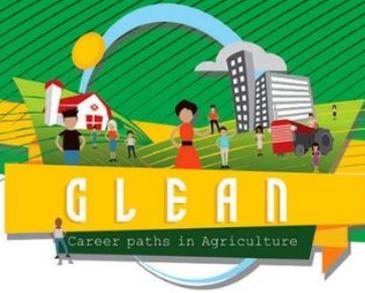
As to the main common aspects of the practice, we can stress that:

- Most of these initiatives also include residential structures for users;
- As the above illustrated example, also the other practices belonging to this group have the insertion or re-insertion of disadvantaged youth conceived as a part of a broader sense of social responsibility;
- This kind of solution is mostly related to highly disadvantaged users and less to NEETs with problems which can be solved in in a short or medium-term training path/working experience.

3.3.4 Coaching for Transition paths

A rather common approach using agriculture for reintegration into society and consequently leading to active citizenship is coaching, which concentrates on individual personal development.

Coaching can be provided by professionals or by peers, as highlighted in the following examples.



Professional coaching:

The participation effect

Youth Sociotherapeutic Centre Lodz, Poland

Young people aged 15 and older, who live in socio-therapeutic centres, often have no work and accommodation prospects once they leave the centre and start their adult lives. They seem to have challenges in three main areas: Self-perception, Interpersonal relations and skills, Professional activation and avoiding compulsory education. At a socio-therapeutic centre for young people in Lodz they are trying out something new (from 2010 to 2013). The idea is to help young people find jobs, include them in society, and give them the support they need along the way. Every person, aged 15 and older, is assigned a personal emancipation counsellor, who manages their support, and encourages and coordinates cooperation between institutions that provide support.

In addition, the counsellors' duties include:

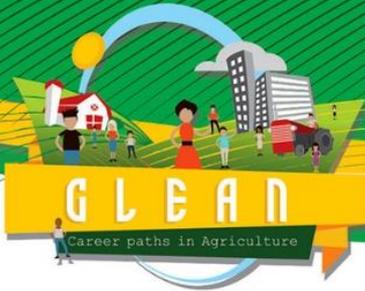
1. Preparing an individual diagnosis of needs
2. Analysing what kind of support is needed
3. Developing and implementing an individual development plan

An emancipation counsellor is thought of as a coordinator of activities provided by institutions and companies. Their aim is to facilitate the process of finding a job for people at risk of being socially excluded. The most motivated young people living in the socio-therapeutic centre are provided with the opportunity to work in a social enterprise.

All of these activities aim to re-build self-esteem, create strong and independent personalities, promote values of democracy and cooperation to young people who are living in the centre.

The project is on-going but we can already see that in this particular centre almost 100 percent of young people are continuing their education after leaving the facility. This model of cooperation between many different stakeholders works. And the key for success is participation.

Since the beginning, young people staying in the centre have been involved in almost every part of the project.



Peers' coaching:

Job College

Employment services, Sweden

Job College in Sweden supports young people to access the labour market, helping to prevent youth unemployment and support youth at risk. The initiative is run by a youth organisation which adopts an innovative approach and places a great emphasis on peer learning – meaning that participants are supported by a team of counsellors who are also young.

Young people are assigned to Job College, which is seen as a workplace, by the employment office or the social services. Participants work with companies where there is a human resource gap which would ideally provide an 'exit-job' when the Job College period is over.

The project also provides counselling. During sessions, run by counsellors under 30 years of age, participants learn to set objectives, and to map the route to reach their set objectives.

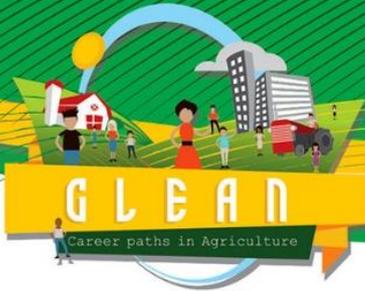
So far, Job College helped 1.800 people to complete the programme, with 75% of them reaching self-sufficiency.

As we can see from the above examples, coaching is addressed at empowering young people, in order to support them in reaching autonomy and personal-professional fulfilment. This aim is generally shared by all practices, but carried out by means of different approaches, that can include more targeted/individual support, or community support. A significant example of community support is provided by the Cooperativa Valle del Marro.

Cooperative Valle del Marro (Italy)

The Cooperative realizes, in collaboration with local institutions:

- permanent and temporary job placement of people with mental and physical handicap;
- internships and job placements in favor of smaller working age, cared for by the Social Services of Juvenile Justice;
- internships and job placements in favor of adults admitted to alternative measures to detention in collaboration with the community Ministerial Office.



The initiative was aimed at valuing confiscated lands owned by Mafia, and involve both local and national partners, both private and public, as highlighted in the picture on the right, that work together in a system-wide way. In facts, the initiative is not only related to the re-integration of disadvantaged users through farming, but also promotes cultural events, ethical and responsible tourism activities, projects realized in the schools for education to legality.



Again, it should be stressed that the active involvement of private and public stakeholders is a key element for the action success. NEETs in particular have somewhat lost their links with the community: re-build these links is the first step toward their integration to the labour market. The Cooperativa del Vallo practice represents a very good example of the relevance of parallel activities supporting the agricultural work toward the re-integration of disadvantaged young people to society.

3.3.5 Development of soft skills and personal empowerment

More than the half of practices include activities related to the acquisition of soft skills and personal empowerment. Both dimensions are clearly related to employability.

In past decades, the labour market has had significant and structural changes, which result in different skills needs: in particular, soft-skills and transversal competences have become central for employability, due to a number of economic factors, e.g. the changing nature of the labour sectors, where services employ more workers than metal, in example; the shift to a technology-based way of working, that require digital competences; the globalisation of the market, that requires high communication skills in more than one language; etc.

Similarly, the changing nature of the labour market require a higher awareness on possessed skills, and the capability of improving own competences (through lifelong learning) according to the needs of the market. In a word, the ability to manage transitions.

Not surprisingly, then, most of the identified practices include activities related to these two important dimensions – soft skills development, and personal empowerment – as these are fundamental to re-enter (or access) the labour market, and be able to manage transitions from a work to another, therefore “to remain” in the labour market.



Activities can be different, and include, often in combination:

- coaching, including tutoring and career development support;
- entrepreneurship education, a broader term which includes sense of initiative, sense of responsibility, idea generation, innovation, but also interpersonal skills (e.g. leadership) and strategic skills (e.g. goal-setting);
- counselling;
- work based learning;
- etc.

Several examples of work based learning have been provided in the sections below, some examples of activities focused on entrepreneurship education and coaching are provided:

- Entrepreneurship education is the basis for the development of the MAiE curriculum:

MAiE

AGROBIO – Associação Portuguesa de Agricultura Biológica, Portugal

The MAiE curriculum – a product of the MAiE project – is a framework syllabus for qualification as a social farmer. This training programme aims to facilitate an exchange at European level by enabling participants to complete individual modules in the different project partner countries. The training materials were developed after researching sources in different countries like Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Finland, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Germany carrying out a demand analysis and in close cooperation with groups of experts at an international level. This has resulted in a training package comprising 120 hours and available in 7 different languages (English, Bulgarian, Czech, Italian, Portuguese, Finnish and German). The syllabus meets the criteria of the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, ECVET. It provides a comprehensive material pool and the MAiE curriculum as a basis for developing the training module "Entrepreneurship in Social Farming" for educational institutions, teachers and stakeholders in Social Farming who are planning to introduce further training for qualification in Social Farming.

Training and inclusion, entrepreneurship in social farming are deeply analysed and a curriculum for entrepreneurship in this field is created. ECVET is followed.



- Focus on entrepreneurship education is also pursued in different ways, such as in example by providing training to young people to support them in establish social enterprises in the field of agriculture:

Giovane Terra

Frosinone Provincial Authority, Italy

The project "Giovane Terra - Young Earth" is a collaboration between the association A South Ecology and Cooperation, CESES - Training and Development; the National Coordination Communities host Lazio; the Social Cooperative Agriculture Capodarco , the Documentation Centre on environmental conflicts . It has allowed a group of 15 young people waiting for their first job and 15 disabled young of field test a model of social enterprise farming , fostering professional growth , the rediscovery of the employment opportunities related to land , recovery of public lands and the involvement of disadvantaged. The project objectives are :

- to increase the knowledge of 200 boys of agricultural institutes on the topics of social farming , new jobs linked to the land , and the critical environmental issues through the implementation of training modules in the institutions involved ;
- Provide 15 boys in the group operating the tools to undertake a project of social enterprise , through a specific training course and participation in the "school yard";
- Experience the social enterprise model through the design and implementation of a vegetable garden and social management of its logistics structure.

- The YuSS practice is a good example of coaching techniques for developing soft skills:

YuSS

ADESEMA, Spain

The specific objectives of the YuSS project were:

- 1) To analyse, compare and disseminate soft competences that are necessary in order to maintain one's job position and be successfully recruited.
- 2) To undertake a diagnosis to show which social and interpersonal qualifications are most needed in enterprises and in job position, to ensure a great adaptation and success in labour market for young people.
- 3) To transfer the training products from the project "Be Competent Be Sapiens": Bsapiens Coaching Programme and Market of Competences/Competences for Labour Market Programme".



4) To develop an interactive ICT platform containing all the relevant material and information on the transferred products.

5) To undertake the coaching programme at local level, through a pilot experience.

6) To develop new pedagogical competences and curriculum development skills to at least 60 VET teachers, tutors or trainers proceeding from educational, professional or human resources organizations.

The handbook "YuSS coaching programme manual" is available online.

3.3.6 Development of technical skills

We define technical skills those skills related to specific professional profiles – in this case hard skills in agriculture, such as in example spreading fertiliser or harvesting. It is rather obvious that learning by doing in agricultural field implies acquisition at different levels of hard skills necessary to carry out the work. The acquisition of hard skills is therefore to some extent present in most of the analysed practices, however specific training pathways to this aim are retrievable only in three of them, namely:

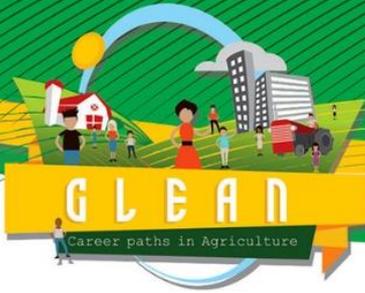
- The Casa Oficios Adara, already mentioned in paragraph 3.3.2, that is focused on hard skills for agriculture alongside soft-skills and transversal competences acquisition, by means of a training programme that includes work based learning;
- The Aretè initiative, already mentioned in paragraph 3.3.3, that provides technical skills for production of organic vegetables;
- The initiative Voucher for Young 18-24 from the Ministry of Labour of Greece, which among other topics, aims at developing skills in agriculture and food sectors, through a combined programme of training and internships, as here below described:

NEET Voucher

Ministry of Labour, Greece

The Action addressed to unemployed young 18-24 years-old graduates of compulsory, secondary, and post-secondary education in order to provide them vocational training with:

- 120 hours theoretical training,
- 380 hours internship in companies of private sector (approximately 6 months) in two-phases (180 hours for smooth integration into company's environment and 240 hours for developing skills related to position)



- Support and guidance of trainees from training provider before and during internship.

Upon completion of the program, the enterprises will undertake to hire a certain number of trained persons for a specified time period.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

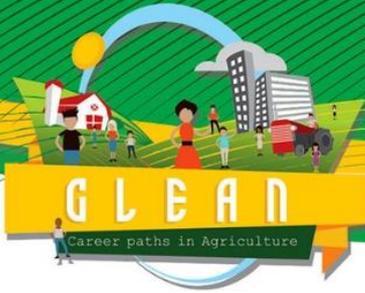
All collected practices are consistent with the GLEAN assumption, that a work experience in agriculture is highly positive for achieving results in re-integrating NEETs and or disadvantaged people in the active working life. The added value of combining different types of support (such as guidance, coaching, training for soft and hard skills) is also confirmed. The active involvement of stakeholders and of the community as a whole is crucial for the sustainability of the pathway undertaken toward the re-integration to the society and then the labour market.

On the basis of the research results, it is therefore suggested for the development of the NEEP programme:

- To include within the programme both soft skills, such as communication, decision making, sense of initiative etc., and hard skills according to the nature of agricultural production in the countries of the consortium;
- To keep constant during the learning path short theoretical interventions, for which active learning techniques should be preferred, and work-related learning;
- To favour meetings and exchanges with the community of the involved farms, both in terms of business and civil society (e.g. cultural events);
- To promote peer learning and sharing;

To intervene immediately in case of identification of learners at risk, as disengagement is higher within the NEETs target group, with appropriate approaches (e.g. guidance/counselling sessions).





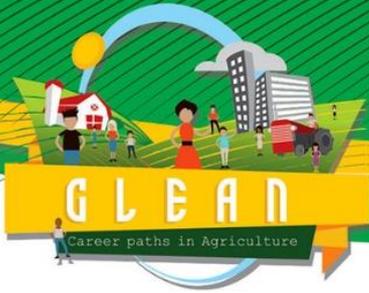
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Erasmus+

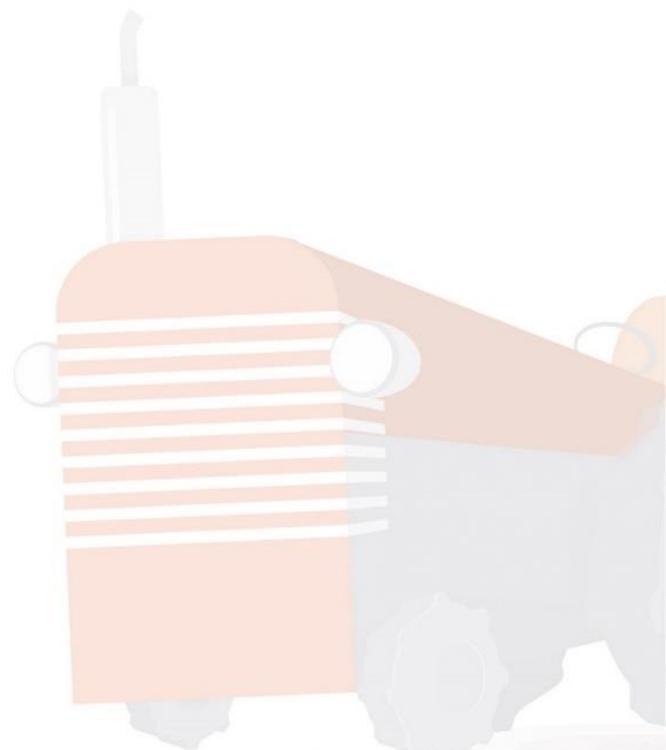
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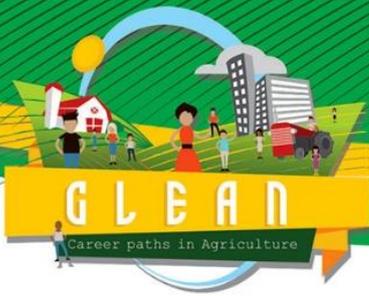


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ANNEX 1. The GLEAN online database of practices

All collected practices in the frame of the Intellectual Output 1 of the GLEAN project are published online:

<http://www.glean-project.eu/search.html>

A search engine is available by keywords:

- Target group addressed
 - NEETs
 - Other disadvantaged people (with physical or mental disabilities, immigrants etc.)
 - Long-term unemployed
 - Young graduates in agriculture
- Topics
 - Social farming
 - Work-based learning
 - Soft skills development
 - Entrepreneurship training
- Countries

The GLEAN consortium welcomes contributions, then description of further practices from all European Countries. For any contribution, please follow the template published in the above mentioned page.

