



Inclusive REskilling and upSkilling Toward competitive Agrifood and veterinary sector: European agenda Strategy

SUMMARY

- **LVA and ISEKI welcomed the I restart project partners to Vienna for the first project meeting on 15 and 16 September**
 - **Organised national focus groups to identify skill needs in animal production, food industry and veterinarian sector**
 - **Exploring the synergies of policies and education for the Agri-Food and Veterinary sectors**
 - **Shape the future of the European training landscape with I-RESTART's survey**
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LVA and ISEKI welcomed the I restart project partners to Vienna for the first project meeting on 15 and 16 September

One year after the Kick off meeting that took place at the University of Turin, in September 2022, the first project meeting took place in Vienna, exclusively in person. In this meeting, the execution of the tasks, as well as the planning of the activities to be carried out, was discussed between the partners. The state of play of the project's was presented by the leader of each task and there was a debate on the implementation of what remains to be done. The excellent organisation of LVA and ISEKI was decisive for the success of the meeting.

The I-RESTART project consortium had 29 partners from 11 countries and aim reskilling and upskilling the workforce in the agri-food and veterinary sectors, retrain the employees leaving the heavy industry to hire them in the agri-food sector, and engage some students that want to enter the agri-food labour market, to improve their digital skills and facilitate the transition to the Green Deal initiative.



I-RESTART organised national focus groups to identify skill needs in the animal production, food industry and veterinary sectors

Luis Mayor, Ana Ramalho, Valentina Mayer ([ISEKI-Food Association](#))



One of the main activities of I-RESTART is to identify skill needs in the animal production, food industry and veterinary workforce. This information will be used later in the project to develop curricula and training activities in the form of micro-credentials.

Focus groups conduction

Focus groups were organised in the project partner countries: Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain. In these discussion groups, different actors in the agrifood chain (farmers, cooperatives, food companies, veterinarians, education providers, professional associations...) met to discuss about the current and future skill and training needs in the aforementioned sectors, on the following topics:

- skill needs on sustainability/bioeconomy, digitalisation, entrepreneurship/innovation, soft skills, one health, sector-specific emerging trends.
- main challenges to train the staff.
- preferred training methods.

Three focus groups were organised per country, one for each sector of activity, totalling 219 participants. The events were run in the period April-July 2023, most of them online but some in face-to-face format.

Skill needs: most requested skills by sector

- Digitalisation: *data management (collection, handling and analysis)* was the most requested skill for the three sectors.
- Sustainability: *livestock waste management and valorisation (animal production), sustainable use of resources- energy, water, raw materials (food industry), awareness of the sustainability and bioeconomy concepts (veterinary activities).*
- Entrepreneurship-innovation & soft skills: *Innovation Management- product, process, business model and organizational innovation (animal production), team work, negotiation and conflict management (food industry), entrepreneurial thinking and acting (veterinary activities)*
- One health: *animal handling, welfare and related regulations (animal production), basic knowledge on food, nutrition and health (food industry), common and emerging animal diseases- prevention, treatment and impact on humans (veterinary activities)*
- Sector-specific emerging trends: *emerging technologies for farming the future (animal production), new ingredients sources, novel foods and nutraceuticals (food industry), legislation and policies, legal language and preparation of related reports (veterinary activities)*

Training: most pointed out challenges and preferred training methods

- Challenges to train the staff: *availability of time (animal production and veterinary activities) and lack of qualified/motivated trainers (food industry).*
- Preferred training methods/approaches: *practical, target-oriented training (the three sectors).*

Stay tuned for the next issues of the newsletter, where the results of the focus groups will be described in more detail.

Exploring the synergies of policies and education for the Agri-Food and Veterinary sectors

Lina Landinez, Dayana Sánchez ([ACEEU](#))

Policies play a vital role in shaping the workforce in the Agri-Food and Veterinary sectors. In the I-RESTART European focus groups, held online on May 2023, we explored the insights from 16 experts from institutions such as European Commission DG Agri and DG Grow, Nestle, ISEKI, COPA-COCEGA, FVE, FNOVI, among others. We revealed a relationship between adaptable policies and skill development.

Findings in the Agri-Food Sector

- *Agile solutions and tailored policies:* adapting to changing workforce needs in farming systems.
- *Climate resilience:* promote resource conservation, including water resource management.

- *Attracting young talent using* policies and funding mechanisms to make agriculture an appealing career choice for the younger generation.
- *Preventing monopolies* for fostering a healthy job market and a broader range of opportunities.
- *Flexible learning platforms and collaborative training*: include micro-credentials, industrial best practices and AI for personalised learning. Include industry representatives, educators, and experts.
- *Integration of* entrepreneurial education, environmental sustainability, and digitalisation skills
- *Efficient immigration systems* aligned with short courses and transversal skills.

Findings in the Veterinary Sector

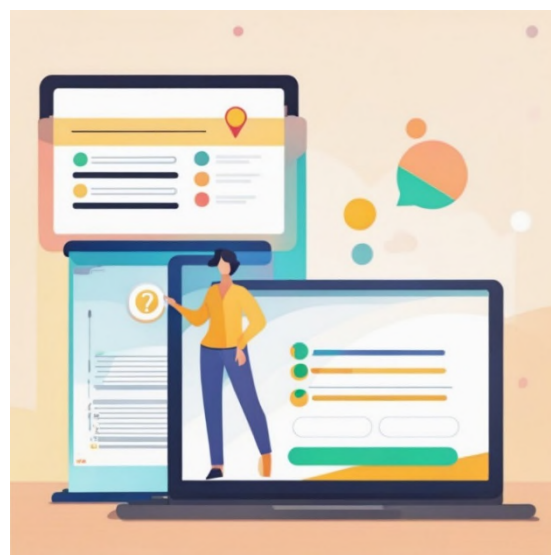
- *Mutual recognition system to foster mobility*: international standards (iVET), continued veterinary education (e.g. VetCEE) and quality assurance needs harmonisation, especially at EQF 7-8 and non-clinical professional competencies. More effort is required to address the recognition of future-proofing in these alliances and extend collaborations beyond production animals.
- *Skills and competency framework*: a job-task analysis to create accessible learning pathways. Micro-learning micro-credentials and generative and predictive AI are needed.
- Central authorities to recognise undergraduate and post-graduate education, solving inconsistencies in terminology and content.
- *Environmental sustainability*: promoting the value of veterinary specialists, together with the impact of digital technologies. "One Health", innovation, entrepreneurship, and research literacy are key drivers.

The insights from both sectors underscore the need for policies that adapt to the evolving job markets and foster skill development. Collaborative, holistic, and forward-looking strategies are essential to address skills gaps and prepare the workforce for the unexpected. The collaborative approach between sectors and the focus on innovation and entrepreneurship are key drivers of workforce development in response to current trends. Actors understand that policies are not static constructs but living entities that must evolve to meet the challenges of the future, demonstrating the need for strategies that respond to the overall situation and look ahead.

Shape the future of the European training landscape with I-RESTART's survey

by Stefan Ferlin, Katharina Stollewerk ([LVA](#))

After I-RESTART's successful exploratory research phase, determining skills needs through focus groups, a quantitative approach was chosen to further deepen the understanding about perceived necessary education actions. In the I-RESTART survey, participants are asked to choose the most important skills among the focus group outputs.



Hereby, a clear focus will be determined for the subsequent creation of trainings. The questionnaire is divided into three categories, depending on the participant’s job role. One can choose to answer for the food industry-, animal production- or veterinary sector. The survey can also be completed more than once, should one feel like they belong to two sectors or more!

Support us to define skill needs in your sector and participate in our questionnaire, available in multiple languages! (Scan the QR code, or click on the language)



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