

REVAB PROJECT SUMMARY REPORT

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1.Background

Aim of REVAB-project

In the last years rural areas are facing hard challenges:

The economic crisis that EU is facing in the last years has had negative effects on the employment rate in the member countries. More specifically the unemployment rate in the EU passed from 6,4% in 2007 to 11,2% in January 2015 (Eurostat, March 2015). In addition to this the unemployment rate in predominantly rural regions of the EU is even higher: 11% compared to 8,5% in predominantly urban region in 2011 (EC, 2012).

The share of population participating to lifelong learning courses in rural areas of the EU-27, reached 6.6%, which was lower than in intermediate urbanised (8.4%) and densely-populated areas (11.1%) (EC, December 2013).

There is an enormous consumption of agricultural land for settlement, traffic and industry. According to the Corine Land Cover data, between 2000 and 2006 the surface reduction of arable land, permanent crops, pastures and mosaics has been more than 500.000 ha in Europe. This is leading to the loss of centres of rural living because there are no further concepts for the use of existing agricultural buildings.

The potential for reuse of existing agricultural buildings is huge, but there is a lack of possibilities to get to real experiences in this field from entrepreneur to entrepreneur.

The aims of the REVAB project are:

- To foster the entrepreneurial approach towards the use of existing agricultural buildings in different regions of Europe.
- To stimulate rural entrepreneurs, rural land and real estate owners and young farmers to think about possibilities of (re-) use and valorisation of existing agricultural real estate and farmsteads while respecting economic, ecologic and social effects.
- To avoid further consumption of agricultural land through settlement and industrial real estate.
- <u>These aims will be reached with the development of a training system based on case</u> <u>studies and Open Educational Resources (OER).</u>



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With this project we also aim at reaching the following innovative results and impacts:

- **REVAB** products will represent the first comprehensive, flexible and fully open-source training system for the reuse and valorisation of agricultural buildings;
- Since one of the main training tools of the system will be case studies, trainees will have the opportunity of <u>learning through successful experiences</u> and, for the first time, an <u>entrepreneurial exchange</u> about the topic will be enabled on regional, on national as well as on European level;
- The users of the **REVAB** training system will have the possibility of knowing what other European "colleagues" are successfully doing in the field, select the aspects that fit his/her entrepreneurial, cultural and social context and finally implement the valorisation/reuse of agricultural buildings. This will motivate them and make them aware that "it could work!";
- The **REVAB** training system will include all the aspects of sustainability (social, environmental and cultural) in addition to pure economics;
- The use of ICT and e-learning OER for training in this kind of field: according to our research and the needs analysis performed amongst the ELO members the REVAB training system will be the first one to provide comprehensive training for the reuse and valorisation of agricultural buildings based on ICT and e-learning OER. REVAB primary target group (rural entrepreneurs, rural land and real estate owners and young farmers), whose access to VET is not always easy, may represent a group at risk of exclusion and, to make the access to training easier, training materials need to be flexible, available through ICT and free of charges. The REVAB training system meets all these requirements.



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National/Summary-Report as basis for the Training system

to know where to set the focus within training and within the case studies

It is the aim of this project to focus on the current and future needs of the farmers concerning reuse and valorisation of agricultural used buildings:

- To keep rural society vivid and to maintain and improve incomes, not only for farmer but for the rural society as a whole.
- To create new job opportunities and to promote entrepreneurial spirit.
- To avoid further consumption of agricultural land.
- To connect valorisation and reuse of agricultural buildings to agriculture

To assure helpful and practicable training units and also case studies, it is very important to have detailed information about the situation in the respective countries. Furthermore, this helps to create units on European level that can be implemented all over the EU by the partners.

For these purposes two tools were created to gather information from different sources:

- A Questionnaire to be filled out by the partners about the situation and the structure of the rural areas for general information about the situation in the respective country. See Results under point 2. The used questionnaire can be found in the appendix.
- A Questionnaire which was filled out by experts and stakeholders to gather specific information. See results under point 3. The used questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

Partners

The following countries were included and are represented by these partners:

- Italy: CIA: Confederazione italiana agricoltori; www.ciatoscana.org
- Bulgaria: Agritour; no homepage
- Spain:
 - ASAJA Granada: Asociación agraria jóvenes agricultores; www.asaja.com.es
 - OnP: On Projects Advising SL; www.onprojects.es
- Germany: Hof und Leben GmbH; www.hofundleben.de
- Poland (instead of Rumania): ELO: European Landowners' Organization; www.elo.org in collaboration with Związek Pracodawców-Dzierżawców i Właścicieli Rolnych; National data of countries involved











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2. National data of countries involved

Representatives of the five involved countries were asked to answer some general questions to get an overview about the countries in which the outcomes will be implemented. The following points sum up the most relevant points. For detailed information please have a look at the table in the appendix. All data is provided by the partners.

- With about 110.994 km² Bulgaria is the smallest of the countries. All other countries are between this size and Spain with 504.645 km².
- Bulgaria, with 7,2 million inhabitants has the smallest population of all countries. Germany sets the upper limit with almost 82 million inhabitants.
- Concerning the amount of **people living in rural areas** Italy, Spain and Germany show almost the same amount with about 30%. Poland with 60% and Bulgaria with 73% double this amount.
- In four of the five countries, there is no or light **migration to urban areas**. The strongest migration is in Germany where many people seem to move to the cities or at least near big cities.
- The **average age** of all five countries is at 43 years with the oldest people in Germany (46,3) and the youngest people in Poland (39).
- In all five countries a clear tendency for aging can be seen.
- The mean **unemployment rate** is 11,4 % with most countries at about 10% and a higher rate in Spain (21%) compensated by Germany where there are only 4,7% without job.
- In Poland 45% of the people in rural areas are without job, whereas in all other considered countries the unemployment rate in rural areas seems to be only a bit worse than in urban areas.
- The just mentioned fact is also reflected by the fact that the **unemployment** rate of all countries is **decreasing** instead of Poland where the rate is increasing.
- With a **yearly income** of a bit more than 5.000€ the Bulgarians have the lowest income per year, followed by the polish people who have about twice this amount of income. Germany leads the field with about 35.000€ income per year.
- Interestingly in Italy the **agricultural income** is higher than the mean income in the other countries it is vice versa
- In all five countries there are differences between rural and urban regions. This can be seen for example in differences concerning unemployment rate or income.
- Sorted in ascending order, the **cost of living** by index: Bulgaria (43,57), Poland (45,1), Spain (65,7), Germany (76,27), Italy (82,72).
- These costs of living are stable in Italy and Spain. In the left three countries they are increasing.











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- The main branches of agriculture are almost the same in all regarded countries. Mainly crops and fruits are grown. Followed by wine and olives, depending on climate. Animal breeding and livestock as well as horticulture also play a major role in some regions. Most of them are family-run small and medium businesses with growing share in regional livestock and in the branch of tourism.
- The working population is in all countries about half as much as the total population.
- Having a view on the average amount of **people working in the agricultural sector** one can see that the average (850.000) fits to three of the countries. Only Italy with 170.000 and Poland with 1.937.000 agricultural workers differ from this amount.
- Regarding the number of agricultural businesses one can see a clear tendency: Without Spain, everywhere else the number of agricultural businesses is decreasing.
- The decreasing number of agricultural businesses could be triggered by the increasing prices for agricultural used land which are from 840€ / ha in Bulgaria up to 400.000 € / ha in Italy depending also on type and use of the area.
- In three of the five countries the **average prices for housing** are stable (Italy, Bulgaria, Spain). In Germany and Poland the prices are increasing.



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3.Results of Interviews with Experts/ Stakeholders

Several experts and stakeholders in every country of the partners were interviewed to get a clear view on the situation in all of the five countries. The questionnaire also notes the potentials and risks, as well as the informational needs on different topics. The following points will show the differences between the averages of every country and compare these facts.

Important remarks:

- The experts and stakeholders that were interviewed at least in Germany mentioned that there are very differing situations from region to region, even from village to village. Therefor it was difficult for them to describe an average situation in the whole country.
- For better understanding the scales of the graphics have been inverted (in comparison with the questionnaires)



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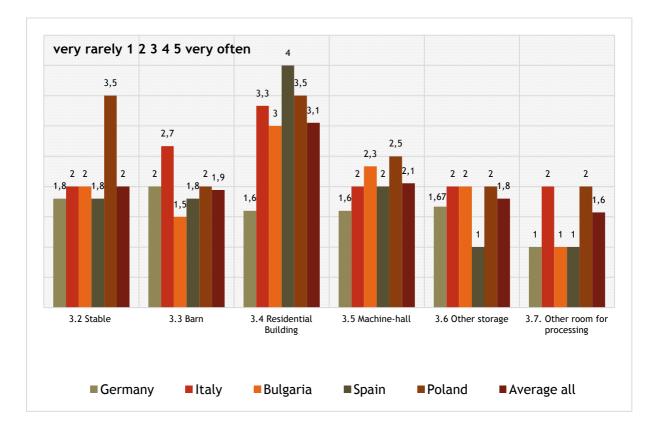


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3.1 How often are several specific buildings reused?



Regarding the data of all five countries, several tendencies can be seen: <u>Residential</u> <u>Buildings are reused often</u> - the smallest amount of reused residential buildings is in Germany whereas in Spain very often buildings of this kind are reused. **Stables** and **barns**, together with **machine-halls** and **storage** or **processing rooms** are sometimes or rarely reused in all countries - with the exception of Poland. Depending on the region it is conceivable to reuse old **mills**.

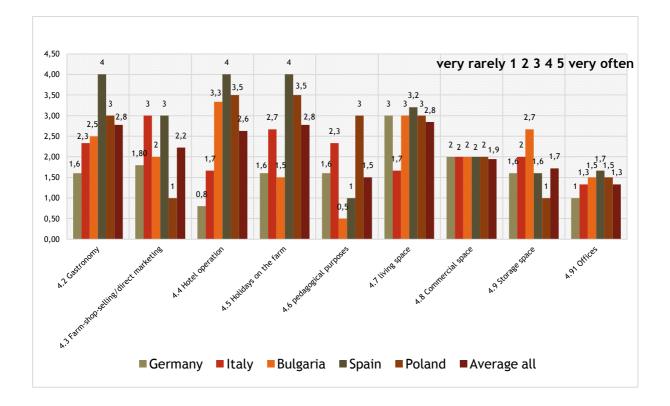


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4.1 For which purposes are the buildings reused?



It can be said, that **Gastronomy** and Agri-Tourism-concepts such as **Vacation on the farm** as well as **living space** in Spain (and Poland) are very known reuse-purposes. In Germany, Italy and Bulgaria these points are less important. <u>Living space is before Gastronomy and Holidays</u> on the farm the most important reason for reuse of agricultural buildings. Pedagogical purposes, commercial space, storage space and offices are rarely or only sometimes a purpose for reuse. Additional Ideas are a house for recreation, local festivities or a community centre.

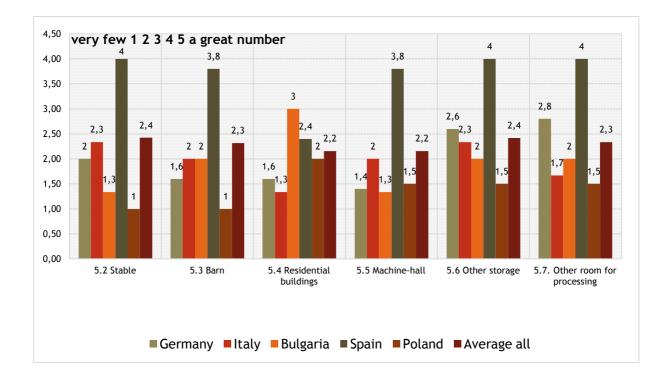


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5.1 How many more empty buildings are there in your area?



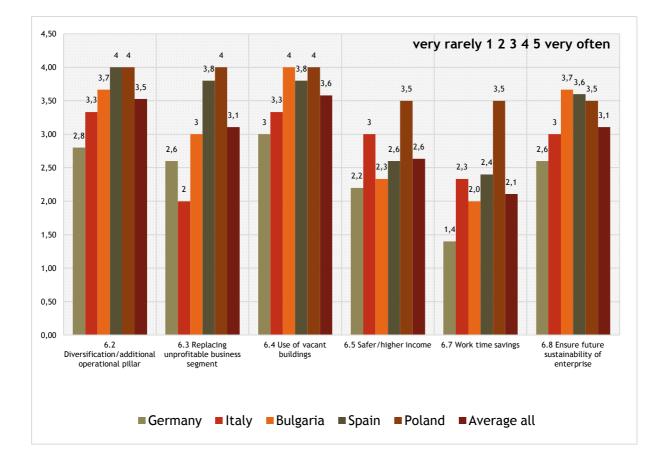
<u>The most unused buildings are in Spain</u>. Especially **Stables**, **Barns**, **Machine halls** and **other storage** are available, what leads to a high potential of reuse. In all other countries there are only some or even very few buildings which could be reused. Bulgaria, Italy and Germany are near the average in all types of different buildings.



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6.1 What are the potential aims of reuse from the perspective of re-users?



Despite the Polish data, work time savings are barely a reason for reuse. In contrast to this, diversification, replacing unprofitable business segments and <u>use of vacant buildings are the</u> <u>most cited reasons</u>. Safer or higher income seems to be a reason which is only in some cases important. The sustainability and future of the enterprise are more important reasons: In every country this aim is often or very often a reason for reuse.

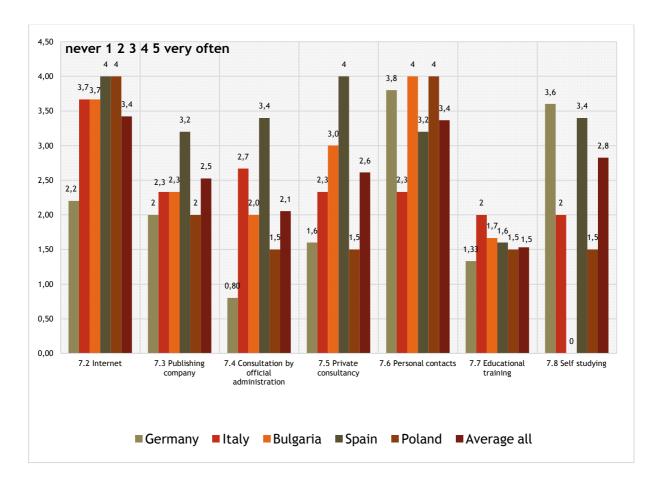


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7.1 How often do you use the following sources to get to the latest information from the field of reuse of buildings?



Common for all countries is that the <u>internet</u> is the most important source for information about reuse - with the exception that German, Polish and Bulgarian people prefer **personal contacts** which is also a source for all other countries. **Publications** and **Consultancies** are less common but also used from time to time. **Educational Training** is the least used source but nevertheless with an average of 1,5. In Bulgaria and Poland, **self-study** is not very common and never or only sometimes used - but in the other countries it is an often used tool.

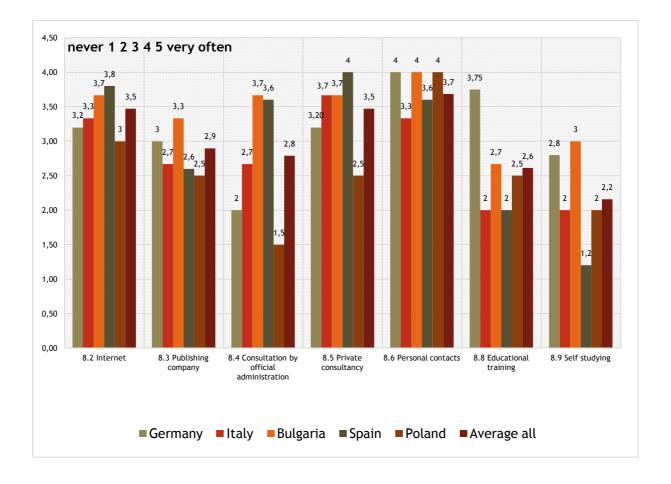


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8.1 How important are the following sources for the farmers/owners?



As seen in 7.1, <u>personal contacts are very important</u> and in this graph the most important source of information for farmers and landowners. Internet and private consultancies have the same average value of 3,5 and are used very often. Official Consultancies and Publishing Companies are often used - except in Poland. Educational training and self-studying are used sometimes with an average of 2,6 and 2,2.

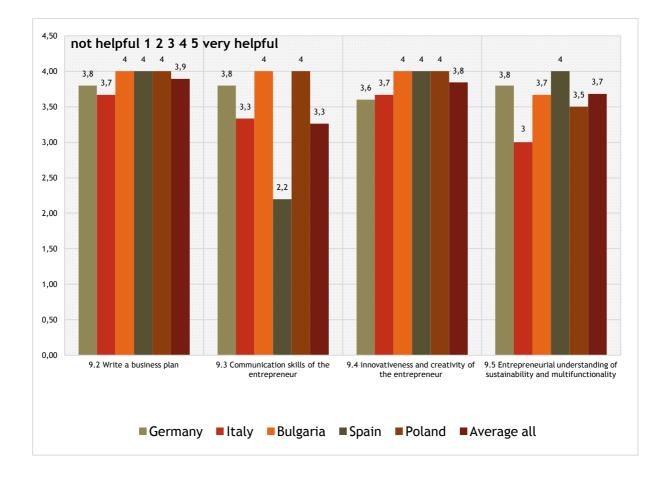


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9.1 Skills / knowledge needed to implement reuse projects successfully



Apparently <u>all mentioned skills are very helpful</u> or at least helpful with a highest average of 3,9. In Spain the communication skills are rated as sometimes helpful. In Italy entrepreneurial understanding of sustainability and multifunctionality are not rated as high as in the four other countries.

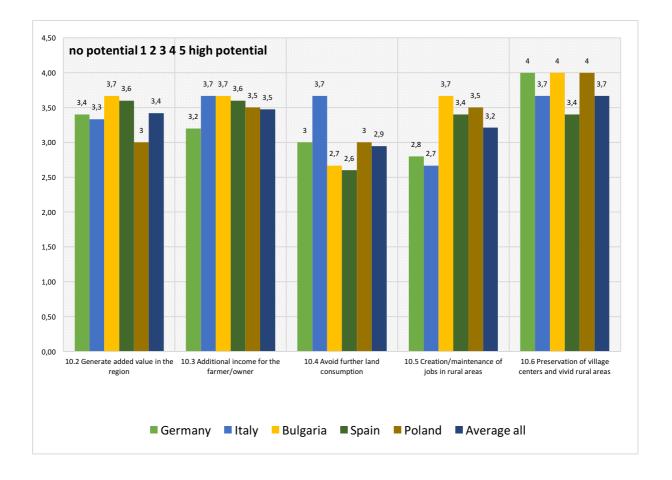


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10.1 Do you see any potential for reuse in the following areas?



All average values are between 2,9 and 3,7 which means that <u>all areas comprise high potential</u>. Especially **preservation of village centres and vivid rural areas**, additional income and **generation of added value** have potential for those interviewed. The **avoidance of land consumption** is compared with the other areas rated with less potential but nevertheless with an average of 2,9 an important part - followed by the **creation and maintenance of jobs in rural areas**.

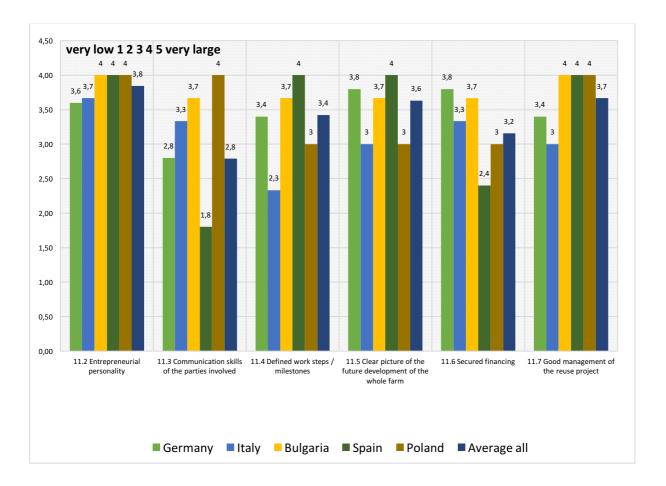


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11.1 How do you evaluate the influence of the following factors on the successful maintenance of a reuse project?



To maintain a successful project the <u>entrepreneurial personality</u> and a <u>good management of</u> <u>the reuse project</u> are the most important and rated with an average of 3,8 and 3,7 which means a very large influence. For Spain **Communication skills** and <u>secured financing</u> are parts with only partial influence - less than the average of 2,8 and 3,7. In Italy, <u>defined work steps</u> and <u>milestones</u> are only sometimes an influence on successful projects.



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4. Conclusions & Recommendations

Similarities of all countries:

- In all countries a clear tendency of aging can be seen;
- The unemployment rate (average over 5 countries) is at 11% in urban areas and at 21% but slowly decreasing in rural areas;
- Concerning unemployment and income there are differences between rural and urban regions;
- In all countries mainly crops and fruits are grown;
- Most of the companies are family-run small and medium businesses;
- The number of agricultural businesses is decreasing (with the exception of Spain);
- The prices for arable land are increasing.

Differences of the countries:

- There is a big margin of income within the five countries; from 5.000 €/a (Bulgaria) up to 35.000€/a (Germany). Additionally there are differences between rural/urban regions mainly to the detriment of the rural areas;
- A light migration from rural to urban areas can be noticed with a stronger tendency in Germany;
- There is a wide range in rural area populations as a total of national population; 30% (Germany)-70% (Bulgaria);
- Cost of living by index: Bulgaria (57,1), Poland (59,2), Spain (86,1), Germany (100), Italy (108,5);
- Costs of living are stable in Italy and Spain. They are increasing in Bulgaria, Poland and Germany;
- Compared with the average, there are more people working in the agricultural sector in Poland and less in Italy;
- The average prices for housing are stable. In Germany and Poland the prices are increasing.



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Conclusion/Training needs

Since one third of the population (higher in some countries) live in rural areas, and accounting for a slight movement towards urban areas, and coupled with a higher unemployment rate and lower income in rural areas, there is a risk of vibrant rural areas dying out. To reduce or even stop these tendencies, incentives and encouragement are needed, especially in order to keep young people in rural areas. Such new generations are needed to keep rural areas alive, create and leave investment, provide secure jobs and to ensure the sustainability of rural life.

To reach this goal, the following points should be considered:

- Provide information, training and useful material to foster **not just the reuse of residential buildings**;
- **Demonstrate the different possibilities** of reuse and valorization together with practical existing and working examples;
- There are several buildings of different kinds that can be reused in every country so there is potential for reuse and investments to avoid waste of land;
- There are **several reasons for reuse** like safer and higher income, the replacement of unprofitable business segments and others which should be demonstrated to **motivate people**;
- There are already **well known sources for information**. But there is potential for several more and maybe more helpful sources which are not known by everyone;
- The awareness of important skills is already there, but there are fields in which the entrepreneur can improve;
- The entrepreneurial view on the farm is already there **the view on the context** and the responsibility of the farm can and should be improved.
- Most important for successful projects are entrepreneurial personality and a good management of the reuse project as well as some more **factors**. These **should be worked out and presented** in a way that helps the participants to improve.

Some more Ideas to specify these facts:

- Clear ideas to conceptualize precise plans which consider all important factors. From person to surrounding to the community;
- Implement future tendencies like aging in the plans;
- Good financial planning and funding;
- How to deal with the new situation;
- Enable creativity and innovative spirit;
- Clear view and consideration of law and restrictions;
- Effort and use should fit together;
- Solutions for problems like unforeseen costs, illness etc.;
- Sustainable management;
- Analyzation of the situation and the potential of the project;











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Appendix

Data of the national reports

5.

Question	(Tuscany) Italy	Bulgaria	Spain	Germany	Poland	Average/Tendency
1.1 Surface of the country in km ²	22993,51 (301338)	110.994	504.645	357.375,00	312.685	270598
1.2 Population	36702202 (60800000)	7 202 198	46.439.864	81.900.000	38.478.600	60392866,67
1.3 People living in urban areas in %	36 %	73%	30 %	25 %	60,5 %	44,9 %
2.1 Migration from rural to urban areas?	no	yes, (1 2 3 4 5)	yes, (1 2 3 4 5)	yes, (1 2 3 4 5)	no	no or light migration to urban areas
3.1 Average age	45,5	43,2	41,2	46,3	39	43,04
3.2 Tendency for aging	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
4.1 Unemployment rate	10,4 %	9,4 %	21,40 %	4,70 %	9,80 %	11,14 %
4.2 unemployment rate in rural areas	-	11,40%	21,00%	7,00%	45,00%	21,1 %
4.3 Tendency of unemployment	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	decreasing	increasing	
5.1 Average income in €/ person/ Year	17.804 €	5 078 €	24100 €	35.000 €	10000 €	18396,4€
5.2Average Agricultural income in €/ Year per farm	22000 € per farm	4 220 €	22.170.5 mio.€ in Spain	2500 €/month	2352 €	









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5.3 Difference between urban/rural regions	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
6.1 Cost of Living Index 2015	82,72	43,57	65,7	76,27	45,1	62,67
6.2 Tendency cost of living	stable	increasing	stable	increasing	increasing	
7.1 Main branch of agriculture	crops, wine, olive, nursery	Croplands	-	Croplands, Fruits, Wine, livestock, horticulture	animal husbandry 13,8% croplands: 55,5%; others (mixed farming): 30,7%	
7.2 Main branch in own words	peculiar, small and medium size business, run by holder+family (96%), regional cattle+sheep or vegetables, tobacco, growing tourism	cereals, other crops, viticulture, horticulture and gardening, regional livestock is developing.	Cereals, Fruit trees, Olive trees, Vineyards	small structured: fruits, vegetables, Wine; big structured: Croplands, Livestock		
8.1 Working population overall	34048000,00	2.981.400	18.048.722	43.270.000	16.000.000	24.074.850
8.2. Working people in agriculture	506.240	656.200	639.800	635.000	1.937.000	933.610
8.3 Number of agricultural enterprises	decreasing	decreasing	Increasing	decreasing	decreasing	



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9.1 Prices for agricultural used land in €/ha	1000 €/ha (low intensity) - 400.0000 €/ha (high quality)	ca 840-1408 €/ha	Approx. from 3.000 € to 30.000 €	8000-15.000 €/ha	7000 €	840-30000 €
9.2 Tendency for prices for agricultural used land	stable	Increasing	Increasing	increasing	increasing	
10.1 Average prices for housing (purchase) in €/m2	1.000 - 3.500 €/Square meter	448 €	175.000 €	765 €/month	910-1900 €/m²	
10.2 Tendency for average prices for housing	stable	stable	stable	increasing	increasing	



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Questionnaire for rural situation of national partners:

SITUATION AND STRUCTURE OF **RURAL AREAS** TO BE GATHERED BY THE PARTNERS

Dear Madam / Sir!

Thank you for your help to get more information about the situation in the different countries of the partners. Please answer the questions with as much information you can get. We would also highly appreciate your estimation about future developments and tendencies. Feel free to add some more information in the free space!

The REVAB team

1. Country
Surface of the country in km ² :
Population:
Share of people living in rural areas:

2. Is there migration from rural to urban areas?	weak			strong ───►		
	1	2	3	4	5	
Yes 🗖						
No 🗖						



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3. Average age

Average Age:

or Tendency for rejuvenation Tendency for aging **D**

4. Unemployment rate

unemployment rate:

unemployment rate in rural areas:

Increasing
stable
decreasing

5. Yearly income

Average income:

Agricultural income:

Is there a difference between urban/rural regions? yes □ no □

6. Cost of Living

Cost of living index (2010-2015):

Increasing
stable
decreasing

7. What is the main branch of agriculture? Are there regional differences? (e.g. grain, livestock...)

animal husbandry
croplands
others:













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Please describe with your own words more in detail:

8. Working population Working people overall: Working people in agriculture: Number of agricultural enterprises: Increasing □ stable □ decreasing □

9. Prices for agricultural used land

Average Price:

Increasing
stable
decreasing

10. Prices for housing	
Average Price:	
Increasing stable decreasing	



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Questionnaire for experts and stakeholder:

QUESTIONNAIRE EXPERTS & STAKEHOLDER

Dear Madam / Sir!

This survey stands at the beginning of an EU-wide project titled "REVAB REuse and Valorisation of Agricultural Buildings" through training based on real experiences", which is financed by the ERASMUS+ -program.

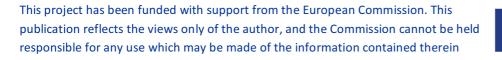
Your specifications are very valuable for the target-oriented development of the trainings and hopefully the future results will cover a useful topic for your own business.

We will not be tracking any identifying information. Your responses are completely anonymous.

Many thanks for your kind cooperation,

The REVAB team

1. General Information:		
• Name :		
• Gender: m □ f □		
Organisation/Institution:		
Position:		
D'European Landowners' Organization	ASAJA	AGRICOLTORI ITALIANI DIAMO VALORE ALLA TERRA



TOSCANA



2. Please describe your link to the reuse of agricultural buildings:
□ Expert:
□ Stakeholder:

3. How often in your opinion are the following buildings reused?	very	often	ery rarely →		
	1	2	3	4	5
Stable					
Barn					
Residential buildings					
Machine-hall					
Other storage:					
Other room for processing :					
Others:					
Others:					













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4. For which purposes are the buildings reused?		often		very r	arely	ls there to inc knowle this f	rease dge in
		2	3	4	5	no	yes
Gastronomy							
Farm-shop-selling/direct marketing							
Hotel operation							
Holidays on the farm							
pedagogical purposes							
living space							
Commercial space							
Storage space							
Offices							
Other purpose:							
Other purpose:							



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AGRICOLTORI ITALIANI DIAMO VALORE ALLA TERRA

TOSCANA





5. How many more empty buildings there are in your area?		A great number of… ◀		very few	
	1	2	3	4	5
Stable					
Barn					
Residential buildings					
Machine-hall					
Other storage:					
Other room for processing :					
Others:					
Others:					

6. How do you asses potential aims of reuse from the perspective of reusers?	very impo	rtant	ve ur		y mportant ───►						
	1	2	3	4	5						
Diversification/additional operational pillar											
Replacing unprofitable business segment											
Use of vacant buildings											













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Safer/higher income			
Work time savings			
Ensure future sustainability of enterprise			
Other reason:			

7. How often do you use the following sources to get to the latest information from the field of reuse of buildings?	very	often		r	never
	1	2	3	4	5
Internet					
Publishing company					
Consultation by official administration					
Private consultancy					
Personal contacts					
Educational training					
Self studying					
Other sources:					



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8. How important are the following sources for the farmers/owners?	very impo	rtant	u	very unimportant				
	1	2	3	4	5			
Internet								
Publishing company								
Consultation by official administration								
Private consultancy								
Personal contacts								
Educational training								
Self studying								
Other sources:								

9. How helpful do you evaluate skills / knowledge in the following fields in order to implement reuse projects successfully?	very	helpfu	I	not he	elpful	Are t training in th area	needs ese
	1	2	3	4	5	no	yes
Write a business plan							
communication skills of the entrepreneur							
innovativeness and creativity of the entrepreneur							













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Entrepreneurial understanding of sustainability and multifunctionality				
Others:				
Others:				

10. Do you see any potential for reuse in the following areas?	high ◀─ 1	poten ⁻ 2	tial n	o pote	ential → 5
Generate added value in the region					
Additional income for the farmer/owner					
Avoid further land consumption					
Creation/maintenance of jobs in rural areas					
Preservation of village centres and vivid rural areas					
Other:					
Other:					



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11. How do you evaluate the influence of the following factors on the successful maintenance of a reuse project?	very	large		ver	y low	Are t training in th area	needs ese
	1	2	3	4	5	no	yes
Entrepreneurial personality							
Communication skills of the parties involved							
Defined work steps / milestones							
Clear picture of the future development of the whole farm							
Secured financing							
Good management of the reuse project							
Own nomination:							
Own nomination:							

12. In your opinion, because of what reasons and how do reuse-projects fail, if they fail?

13. When would you call reuse projects to be unsuccessful?













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