

A Strategic Community of Practice and Observatory for the Agrifood P4S

Guidelines for stakeholders' characterization and collection and the state of the art

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In one of the AGRIFOODSKILLS activities, a stakeholder characterization was conducted. A precise definition of the target groups for the analysis is an essential prerequisite for successfully reaching the group and ultimately achieving the project's goal.

Stakeholder characterization is a systematic process used to identify, analyse, and categorize stakeholders based on their roles, interests, and influence in a given sector or project. The following section outline an effective approach to stakeholder characterization.

By state of the art in this context means the update of curricula, best practices, running and past projects on the agrifood sector.

1. Stakeholders

1.1. Define the purpose of the stakeholder characterization

Clarify why you need to characterize stakeholders. Some objectives could include:

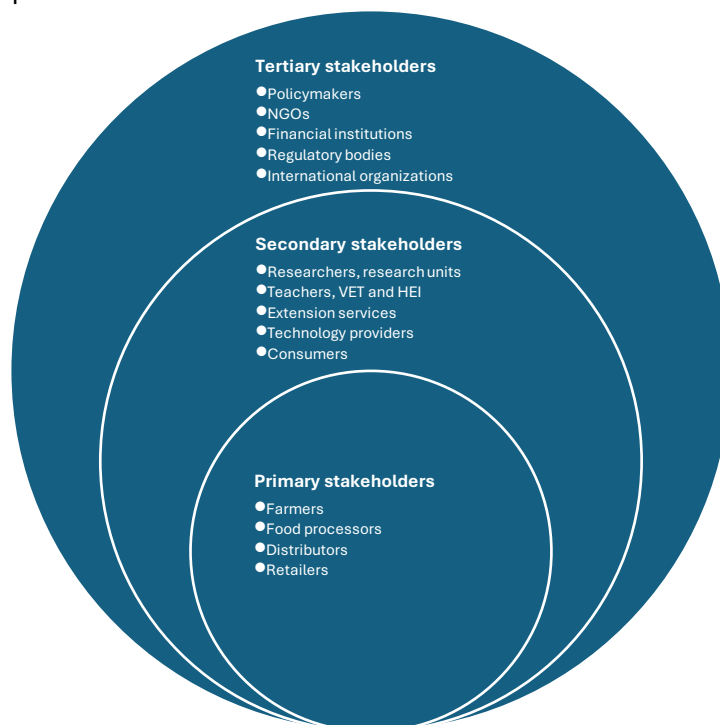
- Addressing skills gaps in agri-food supply chains.
- Improving workforce competencies for innovation and sustainability.
- Enhancing training programs for different stakeholder groups.

1.2. Identify type of stakeholders by skill relevance

List all **types** of individuals, groups, or institutions that affect or are affected by the agrifood system. These can be divided by level of influence (primary, secondary, tertiary). See the

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following example.



The primary stakeholders can also be designated as direct stakeholders, and the remaining indirect stakeholders.

In this project, there are enough experts to identify types of stakeholders. Nevertheless, additional sources of information can be reviewing industry reports and government documents and conducting stakeholder interviews or surveys.

The stakeholders' identification will be used in this project with two purposes: provide contacts for **dissemination** of the project activities and results and study the **skills gaps** in the agrifood sector.

For a finer list of stakeholders' type for skills gap identification, the ESCO database of occupations can be the main source to identify the occupations, mainly in the primary stakeholders but also part of secondary.

1.3. Stakeholders' data for dissemination and involvement in the project

1.3.1. Database of stakeholders for dissemination purposes

For dissemination purposes, the type of stakeholders will be used to classify the organizations – e.g., company or training provider – in the database. The database to be used was started in the FIELDS project (<https://www.erasmus-fields.eu/management/?q=organisation>) and is being further updated by the I-RESTART project and the AGRIFOODSKILLS project. The database contains the fields identified in the image below. This enables the project to send adequate information on the project according to the stakeholder type.

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Country: Stakeholder type: I-RESTART: Organisation Name:

Title	Name	Type	Description	I-RESTART	Address	Country	Website	Contact person
ITS Bio Campis	Istituto Tecnico Superiore Fondazione BioCampus	Trainers	Specialization school for New Technology for Made in Italy applied to Food...	yes	Via Mario Siciliano, 1/4 - 04100 Latina	Italy	Link	
ENEA	Italian National Agency for new technologies, energy and economic sustainable development - ENEA	Research institute/centre	Italian public body aiming at researching, technological innovation and...	yes	Via Anguillarese, 301	Italy	Link	
ITS TECH&FOOD	Fondazione ITS TECH&FOOD	VET providers	The ITS Tech&Food Foundation is a centre of excellence created through a...	yes	Borgo delle Orsoline, 2 - 43121 Parma	Italy	Link	

Further collection of stakeholders will be pursued under the Observatory.

The database should ensure data privacy (especially for individual stakeholders), respecting GDPR regulations. The control access levels (who can view, edit, or analyse data) must be clearly defined. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) in charge should be from the university where the database is installed and managed.

1.3.2. Stakeholder collection strategies

Define stakeholder collection strategies during the project time and for the observatory. Multiple approaches as the following can be used:

A. Direct data collection

- Surveys and questionnaires (e.g., Google Forms).
- Interviews and focus groups (when face-to-face or online contacts reveal new interested stakeholders).
- Workshops and training events (participants in Agrifoodskills events).

B. Existing data sources

- Government and industry reports (e.g., FDE reports).
- University and research institution records (e.g., ETER database).

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- Business directories & professional networks (e.g., LinkedIn, Chamber of Commerce).

1.3.3. Stakeholders reach strategies

Based on the characterization of stakeholders, **plan how to engage** each stakeholder group:

- Inform (newsletters, reports, public announcements).
- Consult (surveys, workshops, public forums).
- Involve (co-creation initiatives, working groups).
- Collaborate (multi-stakeholder platforms).

Example:

- Farmers may need training and technical assistance.
- Policymakers require policy briefs and data-driven insights.

Provide a table identifying:

- AFS partner name.
- Stakeholder groups the partner can reach for different project activities (e.g., focus groups, survey skill needs, training activities).
- Identify the most relevant channels the partner has to reach the different stakeholders (e.g., mail, newsletter, social media, surveys, etc.).

1.4. Stakeholders' data for skills gaps identification

For this purpose, refining the list of stakeholder types based on the ESCO occupations database is essential for a comprehensive skills gap identification in the agri-food sector.

First, **occupations** related to the following sectors should be extracted from the ESCO database (download the full database in Excel format): Food Industry and Processing, Animal Production, Plant Production, and Veterinary Activities.

A table containing **occupations**, **synonyms**, and **skills** for each sector should be prepared, either in a worksheet or a text document. This table can further support training design by allowing **additional columns** with relevant information, if useful for the specific activity. One such column could identify **missing skills** in the occupation, either due to a lack of updates in the ESCO database or emerging skills needed for the future.

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The engagement of these stakeholders is planned according to the guidelines outlined in Section 2.3.

2. Assessing and monitoring the State of the Art (SoA) and the Pact for Skills

To develop a comprehensive overview of existing curricula, best practices, and past and ongoing projects in agri-food skills, a structured data collection and analysis approach is essential. Below is a step-by-step methodology to gather, assess, and synthesize this information.

Aspects related to gender gap, accessibility of the materials, lower instruction level and language barriers will be assessed in this activity.

2.1. Define the scope and objectives of SoA

Clearly outline:

- The specific areas of agri-food skills to be investigated (Food Industry and Processing, Animal Production, Plant Production, and Veterinary Activities).
- The target regions (e.g., global, EU, specific countries).
- The types of sources (academic, VET, ministries).

2.2. Collect data on existing curricula

Curricula will be permanently collected to update the I-RESTART project database (<https://www.erasmus-i-restart.eu/database/>) and is being further updated by the I-RESTART project and the AGRIFOODSKILLS project. The database contains the fields identified in the image below.

Curricula/Courses database

Country: Stakeholder type: Keywords: I-RESTART:

Title	Organisation	Description	Country	Language	Keywords	Course type	I-RESTART	Professional Profile/Skills	Online	Type of training	Length	EQF	Credits	Certification	URL
Literacia digital - Iniciação (UFCD 10526)	ANQEP	Operate with the computer. Surf the internet. Manage an email inbox. Interact across platforms....	Portugal	Portuguese	Agri business, Agro-forestry, Digitalization, Food industry, Training	Training course		Management	yes	Continuous	25 hours	2			Link

A continuing identification of educational programs, vocational training courses, and university degrees focusing on agri-food skills must be pursued.

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Apart from voluntary delivery of data to this database, additional activities to enrich the database may be performed:

- a. Academic and vocational institutions
 - Search academic and vocational institutions websites for curricula.
 - Explore vocational training programs offered by government agencies or industry associations.
 - Review MOOCs & Online Learning Platforms (e.g., Coursera, edX, FutureLearn) for digital courses on agri-food skills.
 - Ask Pact4Skills and specially AGRIFOODSKILLS partners to supply information.
- b. Other sources
 - CORDIS database Erasmus+ and Horizon projects (focus on skill development initiatives).
 - FAO, UNIDO, and EU reports on agri-food education and capacity building.
 - National education ministries & agricultural training centers.

2.3. Collect running and past projects

a. Identify relevant projects

- Search databases for EU-funded, international, and national projects related to agri-food skills.
- Identify initiatives focused on upskilling farmers, food processors, and supply chain actors.
- Look into public-private partnerships and their role in workforce development.
- Use sources such as:
 - CORDIS (EU Research Projects Database).
 - Horizon Europe & Horizon 2020 Agri-Food Projects.
 - Erasmus+ Database for Education & Training Initiatives.
 - FAO and UNDP-funded skills development projects.
 - National and regional development programs (e.g., USAID, GIZ, African Union initiatives).

b. Key information to extract

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- Website of the project.
- Project objectives, methodologies, and outcomes.
- Funding sources and implementing partners.
- Lessons learned and policy recommendations.

2.4. Identify best practices in agrifood skills development

a. Research reports and case studies

- Look on projects, policy briefs, white papers, and case studies from FAO, OECD, EU, and World Bank.
- Analyse successful training programs from government agencies and NGOs.
- Investigate how private sector and cooperatives implement skills training.
- Search on:
 - FAO’s Capacity Development Portal.
 - OECD Agriculture and Skills Development Reports.
 - EU Skills Agenda for Sustainable Agriculture.
 - World Bank & African Development Bank projects on food security and workforce skills.

b. Key Information to Extract

- Innovative training methods (e.g., digital platforms, farmer field schools).
- Industry-academia collaboration models.
- Skill gaps addressed & effectiveness of interventions.

c. Organize and synthesize the Information

- Develop a comparative matrix of curricula, projects, and best practices (see example below).
- Identify skill gaps and emerging needs based on collected data.
- Publish a state-of-the-art report to inform policymakers and training institutions.

Category	Source	Region	Year	Key Focus	Skills Covered	Best Practices	Gaps Identified	Link
Curriculum	University of Wageningen	EU	2023	Sustainable Food Systems	Food Safety, Circular Economy	Hands-on Learning, Industry Partnerships	Lacks digital skills focus	[URL]
Best Practice	FAO Report on Smart Farming	Global	2022	Digital Agriculture	AI, IoT in farming	E-learning & Field Training	Farmers' low digital literacy	[URL]

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Project Horizon 2020 AgriSkills EU 202 1 Workforce Upskilling Precision Agriculture Blended Learning, Micro-credentials Limited farmer engagement [URL]

3.2. How to reach the target segment

To the concept of experts in the various fields, it is necessary to add the requirements to reach them and ensure that the selected subjects can validly participate in the discussion.

ESCO code	Segment the target.	How they will be reached	How they will be involved	How they will benefit
6122 Poultry Producers	Managers Technicians Operators	Mail/questionnaire c/o Partners networks Workers	Training pilots	Content of the course will allow them to gain competencies and
6123 Apiarists and Sericulturists				



3. Annex 2 – Stakeholders reach by partners' table

Available on I-RESTART [GDrive](#).

Partners	Target Groups	How to reach them?
Partner name	Target groups the partner can reach for different project activities, for example: focus groups (3.3), survey skill needs (3.3), training activities (WP4-5), stakeholders future engagement (6.3), roadmap formulation (7.4), pact for skills (7.5), dissemination activities (9.2), cooperation (9.3)...	Most relevant channels the partner has to reach the target groups: indicate different channels and tools according to each target group (mail, newsletter, social media, survey..)
ISEKI	Higher Education Institutions: Food industry sector	Personal email ISEKI members, ISEKI e-news, ISEKI newsletter, ISEKI website, Social Media, ISEKI International conference
ISEKI	Food Industry Companies	ISEKI e-news, ISEKI newsletter, ISEKI website, Social Media
		ISEKI-e-news, ISEKI newsletter, ISEKI website,