



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Living Lab research concept in rural Areas – “LIVERUR”

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DELIVERABLE D2.2: *Report on benchmarking criteria creation*

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I. INTRODUCTION

About the LIVERUR project

LIVERUR is a EU funded research and innovation project dedicated to improve existing business structures in rural areas by helping farmers and small and medium agricultural enterprises implement a circular economy approach in 13 selected pilot zones all over Europe, as well as selected countries in Africa and Asia. LIVERUR will achieve this objective by expanding an innovative and dedicated business model called [Living Labs](#) among those rural regions. Living Labs are ecosystems which operate in a territorial context, integrating research and innovation processes within a public-private partnership and in a co-creation process with all relevant actors in the territories.

LIVERUR identified and compared the differences between the new approach of Living Lab and more entrepreneurial traditional approaches (mass production, development of prices, optimizing cost structures with companies, rationalization) in order to implement a circular economy within each territory driven by waste reduction, new business creation and overall expansion of business opportunities for SMAEs.

About WP2 “Conceptualisation of existing business model en EU countries and regions”

The first step of LIVERUR Project was to identify and understand the unique characteristics of each region, in order to move beyond a ‘one size fits all’ model of growth and empower rural regions to capitalize on their distinctive territorial capital and turn diversity and demographic change into strengths.

WP2 aims at capitalizing and sharing know how on existing business models and value chains in rural areas.

II. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

II.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

II.1.1 INTRODUCTION

D2.2 “Report on benchmarking criteria creation” provides information about the LIVERUR benchmarking criteria, for comparison of existing value – chain approaches, collected during the first months of the project.

It gives information about the criteria chosen, with the technical and piloting partners of the project in cooperation with the territorial stakeholders, for the benchmarking study. Based on the cooperation between different stakeholders, the consortium identified most relevant indicators of the proposed criteria (economic, environmental, social, innovation, technology, infrastructure) (see Part: Conclusions), which are recommended to include in benchmarking study with the most potential weights.



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II.1.2 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The aim is to identify relevant benchmarking criteria and suggest innovative comparison strategies”, for the development of a **comprehensive approach to rural business models analysis**

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II.1.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Create the list of criteria which will be used for benchmarking, based on analysis of Business Models

II.2 METHODOLOGY APPLIED

In order to reach the objectives of the Task T2.2, the three steps approach was implemented:

- Revision of literature, projects and initiatives aiming at identifying relevant criteria for the evaluation of the rural business models and development of the tool for data collection from the internal and external stakeholders, will be implemented in next WPs . This sub-task involved several partners (CESIE, CEA, TRA, CLEOPA).
- Collection of the feedbacks from the partners regarding the proposed tool and criteria (see ANNEX 1) (partners involved CESIE, CEA, TRA, CLEOPA, ZSI, AWI, FRCT, EUROVERTICE, UCAM).
- After receiving a first, review of the criteria, all the comments were summarised, guidelines how to use the tool were prepared and disseminated between the consortium members. The entire was asked to use the tool for data collections.

The technical partners contributed providing their expertise in order to give the proper weight to every component of the analysis.

Piloting partners were asked to contact their stakeholders, which are implementing the analysed business models in T2.1. and to collect information about criteria importance to their business models, in this way, proposing a weigh for each of the indicator.

Additional information: all the results presented are the first steps, which will be deepen in the later stage of the project (specifically WP4), trough much more external stakeholders’ participation and contribution.

to receive more detailed data from the external stakeholders more time and explanation of the WP2 for them is necessary. This is the main factor, which influenced preparation of the first version of the deliverable.

Summary of the collected results is presented in the part II.2 of this report.



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III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Selection of indicators

As a result of this research, partners agreed on several groups of the criteria, which have a direct correlation with the LIVERUR project' objectives and which should be included into the benchmarking framework.

These groups are: Economic criteria, Environmental criteria, Social (community and territory) criteria, Innovation criteria, Technology criteria, Infrastructure criteria. All the groups of criteria were divided into smaller sub-groups (categories) and indicators, which were described in a quantitative way (see ANNEX 1).

To receive valuable results from such analysis, specific general criteria (Von Schirnding Y., 2002) for the indicators was adapted to guarantee the comparison of received data on Pan-European scale : generally relevant, scientifically sound, applicable to users

Identification of the weights of criteria

In the preparation of the first draft of the document six partners contributed with the data collected from the stakeholders (Austria, Spain, Greece, Czech, Latvia). The advantage of such data collection is that, from the first months of the project, the consortium involved different local actors (SMEs, Rural living labs) in research phase, as so their contribution to the gained results is very valuable.

IV. CONCLUSION

The T2.2 is continues process of the implemented T2.1, results of which are described in the D2.1 - Report of existing business model in EU countries and regions. The mentioned deliverable presents research outputs about: understanding of business models on rural areas in EU and partner countries, typology of them, existing challenges and trends, and findings which were elaborated based on the survey with more than 200 rural cases. Meantime, T2.2 collects feedback from the technical and piloting partners about criteria, which make impact on rural business models. Such data will be used for creation of the report on the benchmarking study (T2.4).