



**PROJECT H2020**

**LIVERUR**

**Living Lab Research Concept in Rural Areas**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**DELIVERABLE 2.2:**

**Report on benchmarking criteria  
creation**



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LIVERUR - 773757

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<b>WEBSITE</b>	<a href="http://www.liverur.eu">www.liverur.eu</a>

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# INTRODUCTION

## About the LIVERUR project

**LIVERUR** is an EU funded research and innovation project dedicated to improving 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 SMEs.

## About the WP2 “Conceptualisation of existing business model in 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. The WP2 aims at capitalizing and sharing know how on existing business models and value chains in rural areas.

# 1 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

## 1.1 Objectives of the study

The 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 the most relevant indicators of the proposed criteria (economic, environmental, social, innovation, technology, infrastructure), which are recommended to include in benchmarking in the study with the most potential weights.

The aim of this study is to identify relevant benchmarking criteria and suggest innovative comparison strategies for the development of a comprehensive approach to rural business models analysis. The Specific objective is to create a list of criteria which will be used for benchmarking, based on analysis of Business Models.

## 1.2 Methodology applied

In order to reach the objectives of the Task T2.2, the three-step 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, implemented in next WPs. This sub-task involved several partners (CESIE, CEA, TRA, CLEOPA).
- Collection of the feedback from the project partners regarding the proposed tool and criteria (ANNEX 1 of the Del.2.2 – Tool for collection of the information about the benchmarking criteria) partners involved CESIE, CEA, TRA, CLEOPA, ZSI, AWI, FRCT, EUROVERTICE, UCAM).
- After receiving a first review of the criteria, all the comments were summarised and the guidelines how to use the tool were prepared and circulated among the consortium members. The whole project consortium 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), increasing the external stakeholders’ participation and contribution.

The Section II. of the Del. 2.2 “Development of the benchmarking framework” presents deeper information about the indicators, which are represented by economic, environmental, social, innovation, technology, infrastructure criteria groups.

# 2 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 (reported in ANNEX 1 of the Del.2.2).

To receive valuable results from such analysis, specific 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.

## CONCLUSIONS

This Task 2.2 is based on the work implemented in the previous Task 2.1, which results are described in the Del. 2.1 - 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).