

PRESS RELEASE

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Training of Trainers: Empowering VET professionals with green skills in the agri-food sector

Around 30 teachers and professionals from Vocational Education and Training (VET) institutions in Albania and Kosovo completed a specialised 14-hour Training of Trainers (ToT) programme focused on green skills in the agri-food sector. The ToT programme combined an introductory session with in-depth online modules and advanced assignments, culminating in official certification for all participants.

Participants were motivated to take part in the ToT mainly by the need to better connect green skills, sustainable business models, and agri-food policies with their teaching activities. The training was seen as a valuable opportunity to gain insight into real-life applications of green skills and to strengthen professional networks that support future collaboration and capacity building in the sector.

“My main motivation for joining this Training of Trainers programme stems from the professional need to link national and European agri-food policies with practical VET teaching, reflecting the green transition and sustainability objectives”- Poema Rogova, Participant in ToT, Kosovo.

Despite this strong motivation, participants identified several key obstacles to integrating green skills into VET education. These include a persistent mismatch between labour market demands and traditional VET curricula, which often fail to reflect sustainability, circular economy principles, digitalisation and resource management. Additional challenges include the lack of standardized teaching materials, limited access to practical real-life examples and the need for continuous professional development for trainers.

“The prevailing approach focuses on quick results and immediate profit. However, implementing green skills requires patience and, in many cases, a return to fundamental practices. People are often in a rush to move forward and equate development with speed, overlooking the value of past knowledge and long-term thinking”- PhD. Brikenë Dionizi, Participant in ToT, Albania.

To address these challenges, the ToT programme equipped participants with advanced knowledge on green skills in the agri-food sector, as well as a deeper understanding of how to include those skills in their teaching activities. The training also introduced participants to practical case studies from Albania and Kosovo, helping them translate policy frameworks into real-life applications.

“The programme helped me achieve my initial objectives by combining concrete case studies from Albania and Kosovo with a clearer understanding of EU agri-food policies and how green skills can be applied as practical, transferable competences in VET” - PhD. Brikenë Dionizi, Participant in ToT, Albania.

As a result, by the end of the training, participants felt better equipped to apply what they had learned in their professional practice, with enhanced confidence to introduce innovative teaching content.

“I feel more prepared to integrate green skills into my professional activities, especially through the practical examples shared during the training” - Poema Rogova, Participant in ToT, Kosovo.

Building on this experience, participants suggested several ways to further improve such ToT programs. Key recommendations included increasing practical components, such as field-based activities and pilot projects, and ensuring closer involvement of agri-food businesses and local institutions.

Through initiatives such as this ToT programme, VET professionals are empowered to act as key drivers of change, strengthening the integration of green skills into agri-food education. By investing in their capacities, the programme contributes to the development of a more sustainable agri-food sector.