

Report on the specific knowledge needs in the organic conversion

Deliverable 2.5

Authors:

Ewa Rembiałkowska, AFOA

Mary Ryan, TEAGASC

Kevin Kilcline, TEAGASC

Date: 30.10.2025

Reporting Period: RP1

D 2.5. Defining specific knowledge needs 2 / 20

Report on the specific knowledge needs in the organic conversion

Project Name	Organic Farming Innovations Network Europe (Oh-FINE)
Work package	WP 2. Project set up, needs assessment and baseline establishment to inform subsequent Work Packages
Work package leader	TEAGASC
Deliverable leader	AFOA
Authors	1. Ewa Rembiałkowska – AFOA 2. Mary Ryan – TEAGASC 3. Kevin Kilcline - TEAGASC
Planned delivery date	31.10.2025
Actual delivery date	31.10.2025

Type of deliverable

R	Document, report (excluding periodic and final reports)	X
DEM	Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs	
DEC	Websites, patents filing, press & media actions, videos, etc.	
DATA	Data sets, microdata, etc.	
OTHER	Software, technical diagram, algorithms, models, etc.	

Dissemination level

PU	Public, fully open, e.g. web (Deliverables flagged as public will be automatically published in CORDIS project's page))	X
SEN	Sensitive, limited under the conditions of the Grant Agreement	

Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Purpose of the document.....	5
2.1. Task 2.5 Methodology.....	6
3. Presentation of Results of collaborative information gathering across T2.2 and 2.5.....	9
3.1. Results of surveys on the needs of farmers covered by the project in terms of the knowledge necessary to switch to organic farming.	10
3.1.1. Farmer Technology Needs (Q1)	10
3.1.2. Media Channel Preferences (Q3)	13
3.2. AKIS engagement and in-depth discussions.....	14
3.2.1. AKIS engagement.....	14
3.2.2. In-depth discussions with AKIS stakeholders:.....	18
4. Findings and Conclusions.....	19
4.1. Findings	19
4.2. Conclusions	20

List of Tables

Table 1. Top-ranked needs of knowledge among the surveyed farmers

Table 2. Preferred Media Channels – All Farms

Table 3. Specific farming practices as desirable innovations for the farmers

List of Figures

Figure 1. Ranked Technological Needs – All Farms

Figure 2. Technological Needs by Farm Status

Figure 3. Technological Needs by Region



**Funded by
the European Union**

Project funded by



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Confederación suiza
Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
**State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI**

OH-FINE has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement N°. 101183127. Its work is supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) grant N°. 2400503.

Executive Summary

Task 2.5 aimed to identify the needs of farmers covered by the project in terms of the knowledge necessary for the transition to organic farming and to learn the opinions of AKIS entities on the needs for innovation and the barriers and motivations for the development of organic farmers. In terms of knowledge needs, farmers undergoing conversion primarily need knowledge about EU policy/subsidies, compliance with organic standards, labour-saving tools, livestock nutrition and animal health. This is due to the fact that most of the farmers surveyed are involved in animal production. In terms of innovation, the knowledge that farmers would like to obtain from advisors or their peers relates to pasture management, animal nutrition, organic livestock fattening, direct sales, organic weed control, crop rotation and soil management/improvement. In-depth discussions with AKIS stakeholders revealed significant differences between the countries surveyed in terms of organic farming development. In Poland, Bulgaria and Lithuania, the organic food market is underdeveloped, as is the availability of specialised methods and machinery, individual advisory services and agricultural infrastructure. In Spain and Ireland, the problems described are less significant. In further project activities and subsequent recommendations, the final conclusions should be differentiated according to the degree of development of organic production and the organic food market in each country. Two items should be added to the AKIS entities: organic organisations, such as hunting, cycling, or tourist clubs (generally related to outdoor recreation), and government water management authorities. The driving force behind the development of organic farming and the organic food market is consumer awareness among citizens, which is why broad education in this area is necessary, including its mandatory inclusion in the curricula of kindergartens, schools and all other educational institutions.

1. Introduction

OH-FINE has a duration of 48 months, starting from the 1st of November 2024, and is funded by the European Union in the framework of Horizon Europe, the European Union's Research and Innovation Programme 2021-2027, and by SERI, the Swiss Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation. The project is coordinated by the Institute of Natural Resources and Agrobiology of Salamanca (IRNASA), a unit of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC).

Work package 2 "Project set up, needs assessment and baseline establishment to inform subsequent Work Packages" focuses on creating a knowledge-sharing network, selecting committed producers and evaluating AKIS relationships. Its objective is to identify issues related to transition and barriers to transitioning to ecological farming, assess factors affecting producers' competitiveness, and identify key knowledge gaps for effective project implementation.

In task T.2.1, producers were selected for 100 case studies of farms in Ireland, Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Spain. In each country, five organic farms that had been converted several years earlier, ten farms in the process of conversion to organic farming and five conventional farms located near the other farms and showing an interest in organic farming were selected. To establish a robust knowledge exchange network, a binding agreement was developed and signed with the farmers, outlining the benefits for them and their associated obligations within the network. Task T.2.2. developed the regional specificity and criteria for selecting farmers participating in the project. Research methodologies were also established to assess the knowledge and opinions of farmers and stakeholders (producers, scientists, advisors, organic certification bodies, distributors, traders, processors, end consumers). Task T 2.3 analysed the questionnaire developed in task 2.2 based on the AKIS analysis to understand how farmers interact, learn and adopt new methods in a broader systemic context, including the potential transition to organic production. In task T.2.4, a survey was developed and conducted to analyse the economic competitiveness of organic agribusiness in the case studies. This research provides information on the functioning of the farms covered by the project and will give producers and actors involved in the value chain the opportunity to express their main concerns regarding the transition to more sustainable and profitable organic production using political, economic, social, technical, legal and environmental analysis (PESTLE) and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analyses. This analysis will allow the remaining activities within the work package to be strategically focused on maximising the competitiveness of the participants' agricultural activities. Finally, the objective of T.2.5. is to identify the specific knowledge needs of farmers, which will be discussed later in this document.

2. Purpose of the document.

The purpose of this document is to present the preliminary results of research on the needs of farmers participating in the project in terms of the knowledge required to

transition to organic farming. Tasks 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 identified the stakeholders involved in knowledge exchange and creative collaboration in the subsequent phases of the project. In task 2.5, these stakeholders (including AKIS members and producers) were brought together in national discussion groups to identify knowledge gaps in organic production. The conclusions from these groups form the basis for knowledge development and knowledge sharing in subsequent work packages. AFOA conducted discussion groups and summarised the conclusions. Each partner organised a discussion group at its regional knowledge centre to identify farmers' knowledge needs, along with the views of other AKIS members on this transition process.

2.1. Task 2.5 Methodology

Refining the scope of individual tasks:

As the WP2 task leaders began to work together and discuss their approaches to the Tasks in WP2, it became apparent that the requirements for T2.2 and 2.5 were very similar, with significant overlap and potential duplication of effort without substantial gain (as can be seen in the descriptions of the tasks below).:

T 2.2: Data collection instruments (surveys, semi-structured interview formats and social network mapping exercises) will be developed to establish a baseline of the organic Agricultural Knowledge Innovation System (AKIS) and the level of farmer knowledge across case-study farmers in each of five regions, considering potential particularities of the different regions and the type of stakeholders to be surveyed/interviewed.

T 2.3:-Using semi-structured interviews/social network analysis (SNA) techniques to determine the comparative environments for innovation and sustainable transformation of production across participant countries/regions

T 2.5 will convene these stakeholders, including AKIS actors and producers, in focus groups across each country to pinpoint knowledge gaps in organic conversion. Insights from these groups will inform knowledge creation and sharing in subsequent work packages.

On the basis of the similar objectives across T2.2, T2.3 and 2.5, the project team decided that instead of working in isolation using different methodologies, by working collaboratively and by holding similar discussions with advisers, farmers and AKIS actors, they could generate linked outputs across all three tasks. These linked outputs

would potentially provide a more cohesive picture of not only the knowledge needs of farmers and the most popular learning channels, but also farmers' engagements with AKIS stakeholders.

Refining the Scope of Farmer Knowledge Needs

One of the hypotheses within the OH-FINE methodology is that there may be differences in the knowledge needs of the three organic conversion cohorts (in-conversion), post-conversion and conventional farmers. While the focus of the knowledge needs survey in WP2 was originally on in-conversion farmers, once the project team started to discuss this with advisers and farmers, it quickly became clear that the opinions of the post-conversion and conventional cohorts also needed to be included, in order to capture a wider range of needs.

Refining the scope of the AKIS analysis

On foot of multiple AFOA discussions with farmers, advisers and other stakeholders within the organic AKIS, it also became clear that as these stakeholders variously play a role in the provision of knowledge and other supports to farmers, they should be part of the defining of the knowledge needs process (T2.2 and T2.5). In addition, farmers and other AKIS stakeholders should both be involved in the AKIS identification and mapping process (T2.3 and T2.5). This refinement of the methodology thereby collaboratively generates outputs for all three tasks.

Collaborative Knowledge Needs and AKIS Data Collection Process

The 2.2, 2.3 and 2.5 task leads combined the project requirements for a survey, stakeholder workshops and focus groups across the three tasks to design a collaborative and novel approach, with the objective of involving farmer and non-farmer stakeholders in assessing the knowledge needs and how these are or could be delivered across the 'Innovation System' that provides supports for organic farmers.

An Innovation System typically includes four main 'actor' groups:

Policy (e.g. government incentives) and Regulation actors (e.g. Organic Certification bodies, Water Quality regulation agencies)

Knowledge Intermediaries (e.g. private and public sector advisers and consultants)

Research (both private and public institutions, Universities and other academic institutions)

Market actors (e.g. processors, retailers, marketing agencies).

The process began with individual stakeholder consultations with:

- Farmers: in-conversion, post-conversion and conventional
- Advisers
- Researchers
- Policy makers
- Market/enterprise actors

In relation to the high level knowledge needs categories of each of the 3 farmer cohorts across the case study regions, AND in relation to developing a comprehensive list of the AKIS stakeholder actor groups that should be included in further discussions.

Further discussions with advisers and farmers provided:

- A comprehensive list of individual measures under each of the high-level knowledge needs topics that broadly reflected differing contexts across the case study regions.
- The list of AKIS actors was refined to include sufficient actor types to adequately reflect the different farmer contexts.
- A question was then included in the knowledge needs survey which asked farmers to provide the frequency of their engagement with the range of identified AKIS actors across the 5 case study regions/countries
- In addition to the knowledge needs, discussions with farmers and advisers provided a list of potential dissemination media used by farmers and advisers across the case study countries .
- A final behavioural component was added to the knowledge needs survey to enable the researchers to glean some behavioural insights on the factors that are likely to lead to the adoption of different types of practices outlined in the knowledge needs question .

Finally, to gain insight into the specific needs of farmers in terms of advice, innovation, and barriers to the development of the farms under study, farmers were asked to answer some open-ended feedback questions .

Through further discussion, the structure of the Knowledge Needs survey was finalised as:

Q1. Knowledge Needs:

D 2.5. Defining specific knowledge needs 9 / 20

Develop a long list of potential knowledge needs topics through iterative meetings with advisers

Ensure that all topics are covered for each country and that the needs of all three in-conversion cohorts were addressed (in-conversion, post conversion and conventional)

Refine the list to remove duplication and organise the knowledge topics under broad themes to allow farmers to state preferences.

Q2. Learning Channels

Collect a list of all the potential learning channels used by farmers across the partner regions to assess farmers' preferences by region and by conversion cohort.

Q3. Engagement with AKIS stakeholders

Compiles a list of all the relevant stakeholders across partner regions to allow for an assessment of the level of engagement of farmers by region and organic conversion cohort

Q4. Behavioural drivers of farmers' preferences

Develops a list of statements to elicit farmers' behavioural drivers

Q5. Open-ended questions

Allows for the collection of more-nuanced qualitative information on farmers' needs and opinions.

AFOA Discussions with AKIS stakeholders:

Separately, AFOA conducted in-depth qualitative discussions with the AKIS actors which enabled the provision of insights into the main problems affecting the farmers involved in the OH-FINE project.

3. Presentation of Results of collaborative information gathering across T2.2 and 2.5

The results of the research are presented in the following dimensions:

- 3.1. Knowledge
 - Technical Needs
 - Learning Channels
- 3.2. AKIS
 - AKIS Engagement
 - AFOA In-depth discussions.

3.1. Results of surveys on the needs of farmers covered by the project in terms of the knowledge necessary to switch to organic farming.

Background

The survey was conducted across the 100 (total) case study farms in five EU partner regions Spain, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria (20 farms per region).

Question 1 of the survey asked respondents to rank the importance of 20 distinct technological needs on a scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). Responses were analysed across all farms, by region and by conversion status (in-conversion, post-conversion, conventional).

Question 3 of the survey asked farmers to indicate the information sources they currently use on their farm in order to understand their preferred channels and provide the project with insights to help better communicate with them and other farmers through the most appropriate channels. Farmers could select multiple channels, allowing a clear picture of learning preferences and information dissemination paths.

3.1.1. Farmer Technology Needs (Q1)

Overall Trends Across All Farms

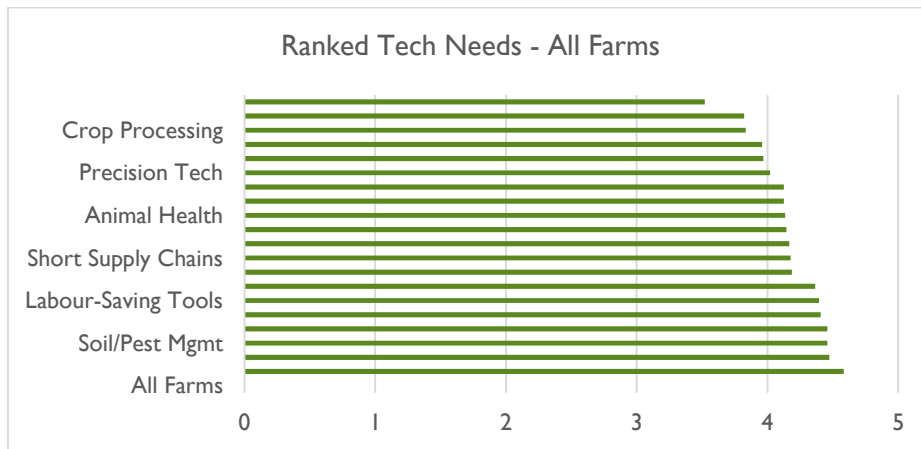
The top-ranked needs across all surveyed farms were relatively consistent, with a clear prioritisation of compliance, sustainability, and agronomic support:

Table 1. Top-ranked needs of knowledge among the surveyed farmers

Top 5 Needs (All Farms)	Avg. Score
EU Policy/Subsidies	4.60
Environmental Sustainability	4.46
Market Information	4.46
Soil/Pest Management	4.45
Organic Compliance	4.42

- Crop-livestock integration, pasture establishment, and low-till methods were clustered in the middle tier of priorities, suggesting they are important but not top-of-mind. This also reflects the case study farm profiles and systems operated by farmers contributing to the project
- Short supply chains and farm diversification score modestly overall, but may become more relevant depending on future value chain development of the case study farms.

Figure 1. Ranked Tech Needs – All Farms



Insights by Conversion Status

- In-Conversion Farms expressed high need for information on organic compliance supports (4.51), and EU policy/subsidies (4.72) highlighting the intensity of the transition phase. They also expressed highest need for information on labor-saving tools (4.49)
- Post-Conversion Organic Farms while ranking compliance and policy support information highly also ranked market access, crop diversity, highly pointing to greater concerns with economic viability beyond just compliance.
- Conventional Farms showed high interest in soil and pest management (4.72), market information, and low-till practices, signalling readiness to adopt sustainable technologies under supportive frameworks. This probably reflects the profile of the conventional farmers contributing to the OH-FINE project many of whom are relatively open to the idea of organic conversion or in the process actively exploring their options of converting their farms.

D 2.5. Defining specific knowledge needs 12 / 20

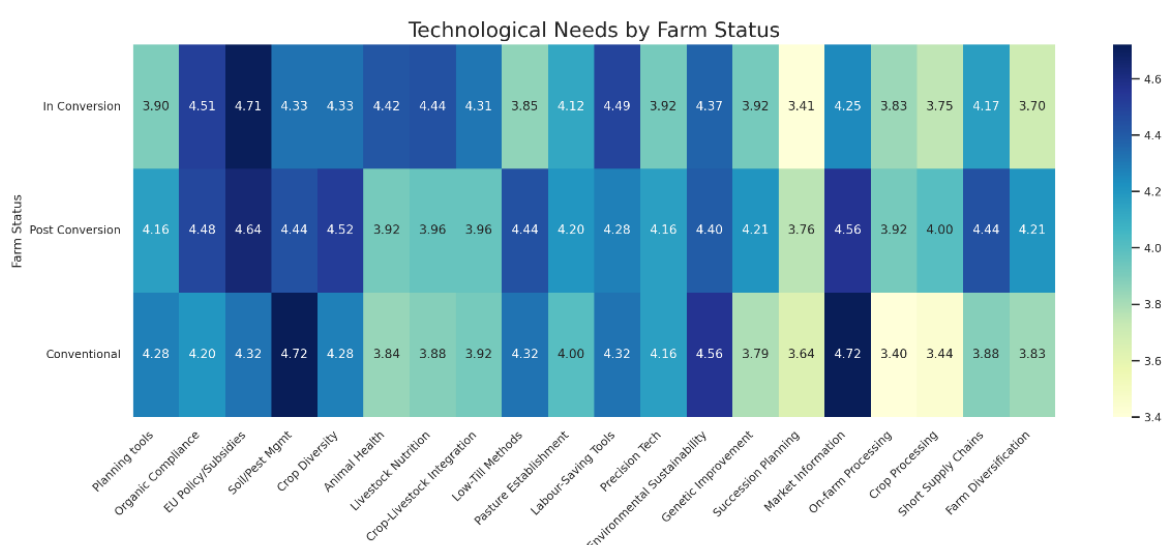


Figure 2. Technological Needs by Farm Status.

Insights by Region

- Ireland prioritised policy, planning tools, and soil management.
- Lithuania and Poland placed more emphasis on environmental sustainability and precision farming.
- Spain showed relatively lower scores across digital needs, favouring practical agronomic support.
- All countries ranked succession planning, on-farm processing, and diversification lower, suggesting these are seen as longer-term or less critical.

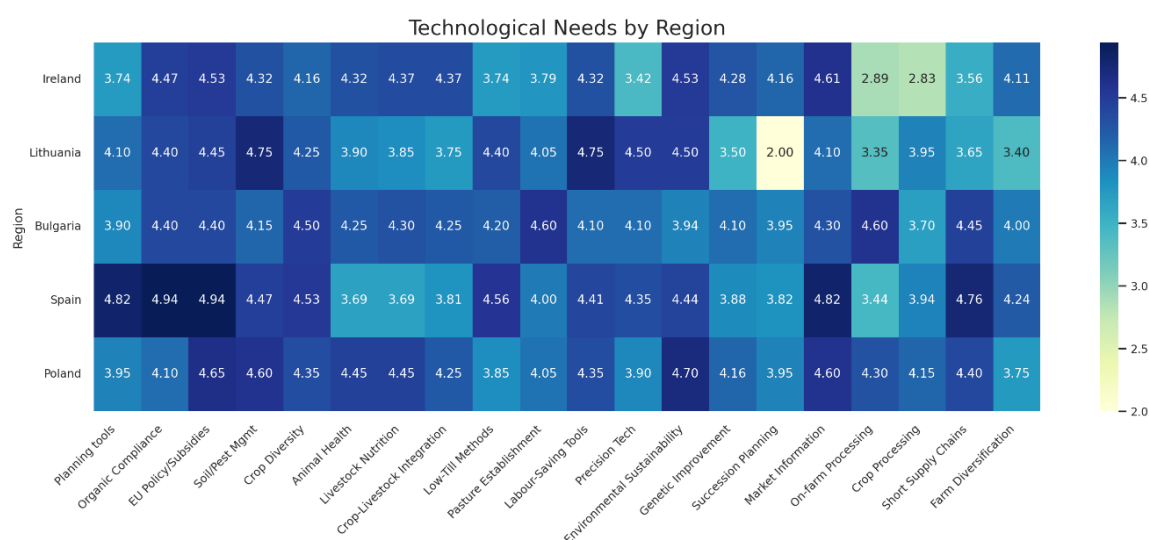


Figure 3. Technological Needs by Region

Technology-Specific Findings

- Labour-saving technologies (e.g., mechanical weeders, mulchers) consistently scored

highly and especially for in-conversion farmers.

- Precision technologies (e.g., GPS, robotics) were ranked lower, possibly due to perceived cost, relevance, or limited awareness.
- On-farm value-adding activities and succession planning were less prioritised across all groups, indicating limited immediate demand.

3.1.2. Media Channel Preferences (Q3)

Overall Usage Patterns (All Farms)

Traditional media channels and In-person formats (e.g., walks, discussion groups, demos) remain core to knowledge exchange across all countries.:

- Legacy Media (TV, radio, newspapers) – 78%
- Farm Walks/Open Days – 71%
- Farming Press & Magazines – 69%

Interactive formats also provided popular:

- Farm Demonstration Trials – 63%
- Discussion Groups – 58%
- Live Webinars, Facebook, and YouTube – all at 51%

On the other hand Digital/mobile tools appear relatively underutilised:

- WhatsApp – 36%
- Instagram – 26%
- Farm Apps – 20%
- TikTok – 19%
- X (Twitter) – only 6%
- LinkedIn – just 1%

Table 2. Preferred Media Channels – All Farms

Channel	% Use
Legacy Media (TV, radio, newspapers)	78%
Farm Walks / Open Days	71%
Farming Press & Magazines	69%
Farm Demonstration Trials	63%
Discussion Groups	58%
Live Webinars	51%
Facebook	51%

D 2.5. Defining specific knowledge needs | 4 / 20

YouTube	51%
WhatsApp	36%
Instagram	26%
Farm Apps	20%
TikTok	19%
Twitter (X)	6%
LinkedIn	1%

Country-Level

Variation

- Ireland farmers show a balanced mix of traditional and digital tools. High uptake of WhatsApp (89%), webinars (74%), and farm apps (58%) reflect strong mobile engagement.
- Lithuania is the most digitally active, with high usage across all digital channels, including Facebook (100%), YouTube (95%), and Instagram (85%).
- Poland and Spain reflect more traditional in person communication preferences, favouring farm walks, farming press, and demonstrations. Digital tool use is significantly lower.

Strategic Implications for Knowledge Transfer (KT)

Across all groups, in-person and peer-to-peer formats (e.g., farm walks, demos, discussion groups) remain central to farmer learning. Communication strategies within the OH-FINE project should retain a strong physical presence and in person communication (demonstration events, open days), especially in Spain, Poland, and also with conventional farms. In digital-first regions like Lithuania where there is a greater use of farm apps, YouTube, and live webinars there is greater scope to use digital tools to support scalable engagement.

3.2. AKIS engagement and in-depth discussions

3.2.1. AKIS engagement

In addition to the knowledge needs, discussions with farmers and advisers provided a list of potential dissemination media used by farmers and advisers across the case study countries.

A final behavioural component was added to the knowledge needs survey to enable the researchers to gain some behavioural insights into the factors that are likely to lead to the adoption of different types of practices outlined in the knowledge needs question. Finally, to gain insight into the specific needs of farmers in terms of advice, innovation, and barriers to the development of the farms under study, farmers were asked to provide open-ended feedback.

Preliminary results of the open-ended feedback questions

What is the biggest technical or knowledge-related problem that you face?

- All three cohorts (conventional, in-conversion and post-conversion) identified a **lack of tailored information / advice** on organic farming techniques and technologies. Available information on organic practices does not always apply to specific farm characteristics (local conditions, language, farming system, farm size etc.)
- Conventional farmers are concerned about **profitability** if/when they introduce organic farming practices. This concern arose less frequently among in-conversion and post-conventional farmers.
- Conventional farmers would like to have **better access to peers** who are implementing innovative, organic practices. Conventional and in-conversion farmers would also like **better access to specialists and advisors** who specialise in organic production
- In-conversion and post-conversion farmers identified challenges in **organic farm management** (i.e. managing farms without the use of synthetic fertilizers, managing animal health, and weed control). Some farmers in these groups felt they lacked **knowledge of organic production**.
- In-conversion and post-conversion farmers feel that **organic regulation / compliance is complex, fast-changing and time-consuming**

What kind of training or advisory support would most help you to improve your farm?

Answers included a mixture of *format* of training & support and *content* of training & support

Format:

- The most suggested format was on-farm demonstrations: live training (in 'real' conditions) and visits to innovative / sustainable farms
- Other formats included: short courses, webinars & seminars, workshops, personal consulting and discussion groups

Content:

- Conventional farmers highlighted a variety of advisory support, including crop diversification / drought-resistant crops (Bulgaria) and **economic strategies & long-term farm planning**
- In-conversion farmers expressed a strong interest in training related to **soil health and management**, including compost/manure management. Additionally, in-conversion farmers want training on **animal breeding, husbandry and nutrition** as well as **integrated organic systems management** (linking livestock and crop practices)
- Post-conversion farmers also highlighted a variety of training topics including information on **subsidies, regulations and legislation; innovative farming techniques** and **weed control**

Are there specific farming practices or areas where you would like to see more innovation or learn from peer examples?

Table 3. Specific farming practices as desirable innovations for the farmers

Conventional farmers	In-conversion farmers	Post-conversion farmers
No-till / reduced tillage Animal feeding Animal husbandry On-farm (organic) processing Direct sales Cover cropping Farm development / budgeting (Organic) weed control Soil management/ improvement Marketing channels / sales	Pasture management Animal feeding Organic livestock fattening Direct sales Organic weed control Crop rotation Soil management/ improvement	No-till / reduced till Pasture / grazing / feeding Direct sales Organic weed control Soil management/ improvement Technology & digital tools

Are there specific barriers that limit the development of your farm enterprise?

- All three cohorts highlight **marketing challenges**. Firstly, all three cohorts identify that markets for their products can be volatile or prices are lower than expected. For in-conversion and post-conversion farmers, **markets are underdeveloped** (not enough demand for organic products or limited consumer knowledge about organic products). In-conversion and post-conversion farmers struggle to find suitable buyers or engage in direct sales. Additionally, in-conversion and post-conversion identify **gaps in organic supply chains** (no organic grain millers or livestock processors), which leads to organic leakage and missed opportunities for premiums
- Conventional farmers and in-conversion farmers experience a **lack of available labour**.
- Conventional and in-conversion farmers find **technological investment** in their farms challenging. Modern technology is capital-intensive, and some farmers highlight their financial constraints or inability to access **financial support**
- The **availability of (affordable) land** to expand farming enterprises is a barrier for conventional and in-conversion farmers

- Post-conversion farmers highlight the **complexity of regulation** or excessive bureaucracy as a barrier which limits their development. Compliance is time-consuming.

3.2.2. In-depth discussions with AKIS stakeholders:

Separately, AFOA conducted in-depth qualitative discussions with the AKIS actors which enabled the provision of insights into the main problems affecting the farmers involved in the OH-FINE project.

Preliminary results of the in-depth discussions

In-depth discussions with AKIS actors revealed the following general problems:

- There are significant differences between the countries surveyed in terms of organic farming development. In Poland, Bulgaria and Lithuania, the organic food market is underdeveloped, which also applies to the availability of specialised methods, machinery, individual advisory service and agricultural infrastructure. In Spain and Ireland, the problems described are less significant
- In further project activities and subsequent recommendations, the final conclusions should be differentiated according to the degree of development of organic production and the organic food market in a given country
- In the countries with a lower level of organic sector development, it is necessary to increase the access of farmers to the preferred knowledge channels, especially to the individual and qualified advisory service
- In all countries, diversification of farm activity and development of short supply channels seem to be basic for the better economic efficiency of the organic farms
- Two items should be added to the AKIS actors: environmental organisations, such as hunting, cycling or tourism clubs (generally related to outdoor recreation), and government water management bodies
- The motor for the development of organic farming and the organic food market is consumer awareness among citizens, which is why broad education in this area is necessary, including mandatory inclusion in kindergartens, schools and all other educational institutions.

4. Findings and Conclusions

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. The most ranked knowledge needs for all analysed farms in 5 countries were: EU policy/subsidies, environmental sustainability, market information, soil/pest management, organic compliance

4.1.2. The most desired technological knowledge needs for all farms were soil/pest management, labour-saving tools, short supply chains, and animal health

4.1.3. In-conversion farms expressed a high need for information on organic compliance supports and EU policy/subsidies, highlighting the intensity of the transition phase. They also expressed the highest need for information on labour-saving tools

4.1.4. Farmers indicated that the most commonly used media channels are: legacy media (TV, radio, newspapers), farm walks / open days, farming press and magazines, and farm demonstration trials.

4.1.5. Poland and Spain reflect more traditional in-person communication preferences, favouring farm walks, farming press, and demonstrations. Digital tool use is significantly lower.

4.1.6. The open-ended feedback questions revealed that in-conversion and post-conversion farmers identified challenges in organic farm management; they also feel that organic regulation/compliance is complex, fast-changing and time-consuming

4.1.7. In-conversion farmers expressed a strong interest in training related to soil health and management, including compost/manure management, also animal breeding, husbandry and nutrition as well as integrated management (linking livestock and crop practices)

4.1.8. Conventional farmers are concerned about profitability if/when they introduce organic farming practices, they would like to have better access to peers who are implementing innovative, organic practices.

4.1.9. The most suggested format of training for all farmers was on-farm demonstrations: live training and visits to innovative/sustainable farms

4.1.10. For in-conversion farmers, the most desirable topics for innovation training are: pasture management; animal feeding, organic livestock fattening, direct sales, organic weed control, crop rotation and soil management/improvement.

4.2. Conclusions

4.2.1. There are some differences between the countries and between the in-conversions, post-conversion and conventional farmers surveyed in terms of knowledge needs

4.2.2. In further project activities, the above-mentioned differences should be taken into account while planning the advisory help and training for the farmers.

4.2.3. Given the preferences expressed by farmers, training for them should be based on demonstrations on farms – live training and visits to innovative/sustainable farms.

4.2.4. There is a clear need for individualised and highly qualified advice, especially for farmers undergoing conversion, but also for other groups of farmers.

4.2.5. Advisers involved in the project should be informed about the results of the studies presented and cooperate with the researchers implementing the project in order to identify the most important thematic needs of farmers and develop the best advisory strategy for them.