i2CONNECT
INTERACTIVE INNOVATION

Deliverable 3.3

Methods & tools for an "innovation friendly" management of advisory services

April 2021

Task 3.3
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Dissemination Level

PU	Public	x
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

Summary

Project number: 863039

Project title: Connecting advisers to boost interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry

Duration: 5 years

Start date of project: 01/11/2019

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Due date of deliverable: 30 April 2021

Actual submission date: 30 April 2021

Work package: WP 3

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Version: 30 April 2021

Content

List of figures

Introduction

The i2connect project aims to empower advisors and their organisations to support interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry. More specifically, task 3.3 concerns managers and aims to develop methods & tools for an "innovation friendly" management of advisory services.

This report is based on a survey carried out in August and September 2020. The survey was analysed to produce a mind map. This map will be used as a medium to facilitate discussions between managers during the "Excellence Classes" organised under task 4.5. The next step will be the construction of a complete toolbox in connection with task 3.2.

This deliverable presents what the members of this task have been doing and will do to achieve our main objective: identifying methods and tools for an "innovation friendly" management of advisory services.

1. Our vision

Managers play an important role in setting the conditions under which advisors operate and creating an enabling environment. They have their own views and considerations. The i2connect project wishes to make use of their experience, and enter into a dialogue with them. In this task, the aim is not to "tell" managers what to do, as this is not the spirit sought in i2connect, but rather to raise awareness of what they could do in the area of interactive innovation. This will be achieved by the managers' participation in 'excellence classes'.

It is likely that in many cases there is a need to improve the conditions for advisors regarding the area of interactive innovation. When we expect advisors to stimulate processes of co-creation with farmers and other actors, this requires space for "discovery journeys". In many situations, advisory management structures use targets and key performance indicators that do not focus on interactive innovation. The i2connect project aims to explore how managers experience this situation, and how they deal with it. As we expect advisors to stimulate co-creation, we wish to do the same in our dialogue with managers. Good solutions will be the result of interactions between managers in the excellence classes.

2. Developing a methodology to harvest diversity

The initial step in this task was to investigate managers' understanding of innovation, their role and what structures exist within their organisations that promote the interactive innovation process. To do so a survey addressed to managers of advisory services was proposed.

a. Collecting the diversity and use it to improve the practices

At the beginning of the reflection of this survey, we established that it was important to explore the diversity of European innovation management practices. Diversity can have several origins: the methods used, the institutional context, the density of the agricultural and para-agricultural ecosystem, etc.

The diversity in practices is the way the advisors and their managers create innovation process in order to change their own business ecosystem. The diversity is derived from the contexts of each of the European partners. The first Train The Trainer (TTT) session which was held in Landshut in September 2020 (WP3.6) showed us that advisory practices are based on a context but that each individual context provides an interesting insight for all other contexts. The practices of each can be improved by the practices of others. This knowledge of diversity was the basis from which the survey was created.

b. Collecting qualitative data

The initial idea was to work on qualitative data in order to collect, as much material as possible, and a diversity of situations. This exploration work could produce new insights. However, as the managers all have significant experience; we wanted to take advantage of their experiences by asking open questions. Each question becomes a space of expression for the managers interviewed. This methodology however, generally means that the answers are more complicated to analyse.

3. Survey development

To discover what the interactive innovation panorama in Europe is and to prepare adequate excellence classes, a qualitative survey was prepared during spring/summer 2020. The survey aimed to discover managers' views on interactive innovation, how organisations perceive and deal with interactive innovation, how managers train their advisors in innovation.

Managers were also asked about their level of English and their interest in participating in the said "excellence classes" in order to contact them again later about these excellence classes.

4. Dissemination of the survey

The survey was created using Google Forms and was disseminated at the end of July 2020 to all project partners for distribution to managers. Partners had one month and a half to disseminate the survey to managers in their own countries. Appendix 1 shows the detail of questions in the survey.

In order to facilitate its dissemination and increase the participation, the survey was translated as required into the national languages. Then the responses were translated into English to facilitate pooling at the time of the analysis. Figure 1 shows the survey introduction.

Figure 1: Screenshot of the survey introduction in Google Docs
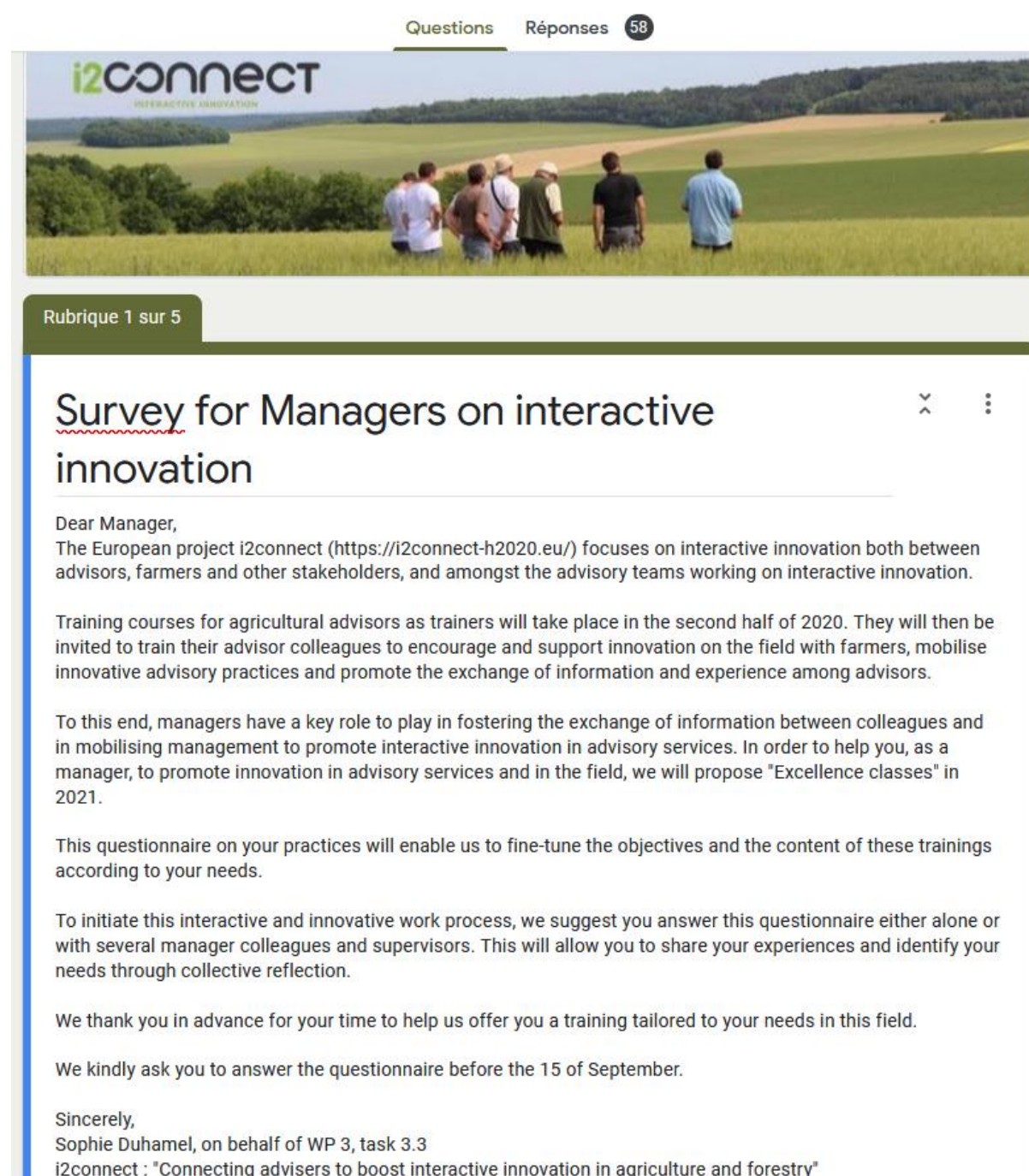
In total, 58 managers from 13 European countries filled in the survey on interactive innovation. Figure 2 shows the location of participants.

Figure 2: Location of respondents to the survey
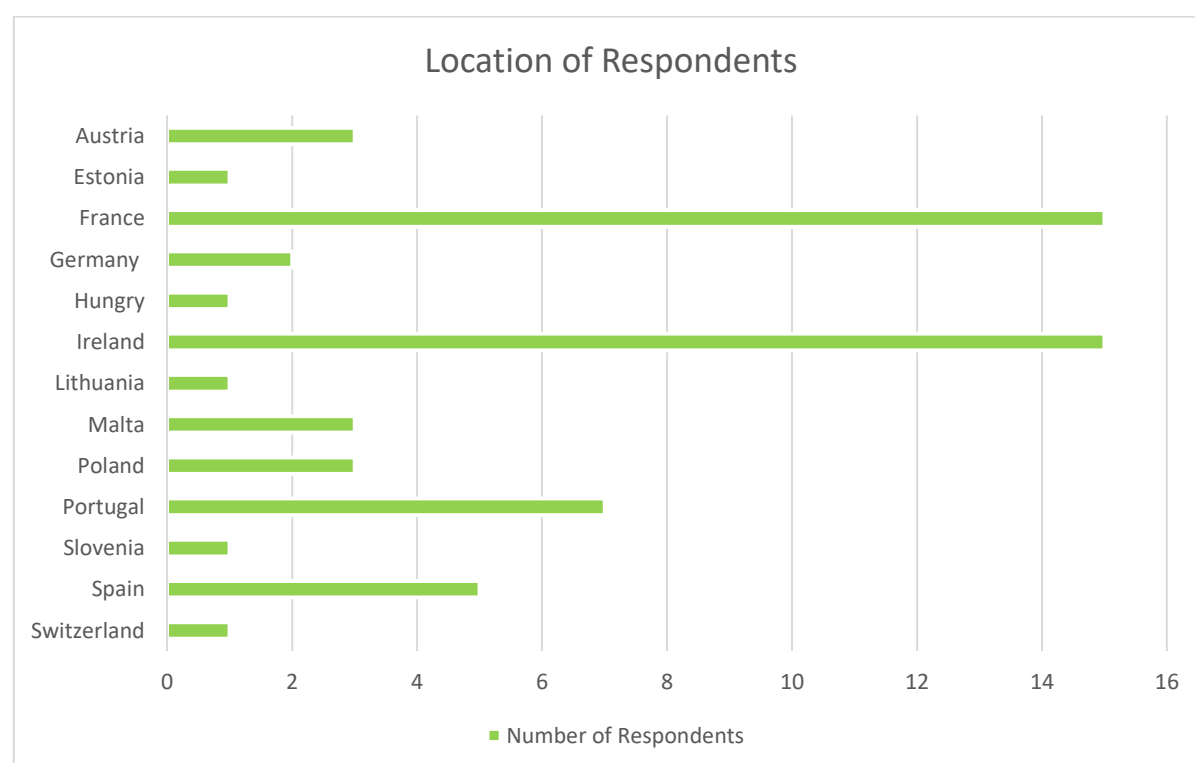
Our assumption is that the managers who responded are already attracted to innovation issues. Therefore, the result of 82% having already implemented an evaluation process in their department to facilitate feedback and exchanges does not give us a representative indication of all organisations. More specifically, 40% of managers point out that an interactive innovation process has not been implemented yet (Figure 3).

Figure 3: existence of a feedback process and an interactive innovation process within advisory organisations

13. Does your organization have an evaluation process in place where advisors can provide feedback on their work environment (e.g. by providing feedback to their manager) ?

58 réponses

14. If you have created an environment to promote interactive innovation when was it implemented?
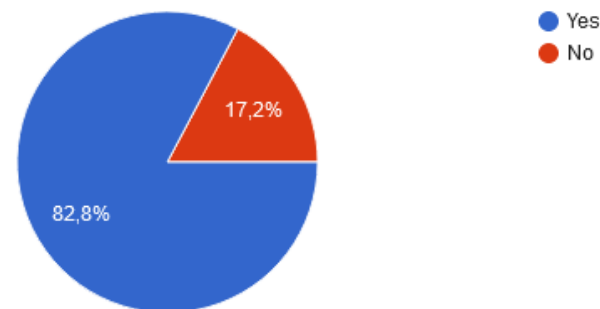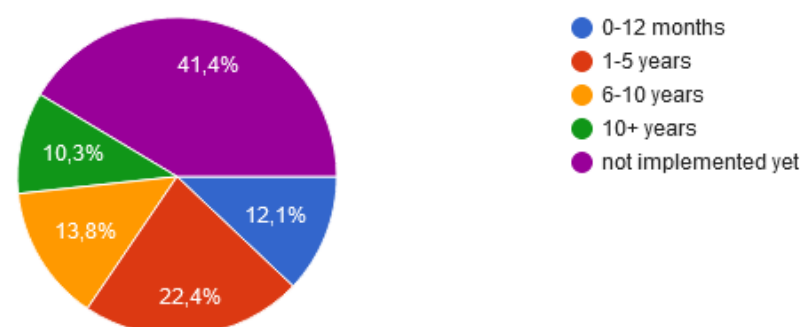
58 réponses

5. Survey analysis: from categorization to diversity

Since the survey included questions with open answers, the first step to analyse them was to categorise the different answers, organising them in "boxes". This methodology was first tested using a small set of data to ensure the selected "boxes" were useful to a broad spectre of answers. "Boxes" were adapted whenever they did not fit the required criteria.

This methodology follows three distinct stages:

- The first stage is the work of reading and classifying the data from the results of the survey.
- The second stage consists of an internal analysis of the categories and the creation of an internal meaning in each category creating subcategories.
- The third stage is the creation of links between each category to obtain a relevant description of variables correctly named (categories, sub categories, described as a box). This classification will provide a starting point for discussions during the Excellence classes.

In order to obtain clear categories, we proceeded in several iterations. A small group proposed a few categories, recurring themes in the survey. This first draft was then presented to the task 3.3 partners, who are experienced in the analysis of interviews. Some of the categories were then modified, associated, renamed or created.

In this way, we have created seven categories:

- Individual competences of the advisors
- Methodology
- Useful or added value of interactive innovation
- Interactive innovation network
- Advisor landscape
- New advisors training
- Barriers and brakes

Then each category was subdivided into further subcategories. These categories are illustrated by extracts from the survey. Then the extracts, the quotes were compared and put together. Groups of extracts create subcategories which help to illustrate and well define each category. This work gives density to the category and specifies its meaning. The "meaning" of each extract was discussed in the WP3 group to facilitate exchanges and cross-fertilization. These subcategories were identified in sub-groups and then confronted again with the group as a whole to construct the most objective approach to these sub-categories based on the survey quotes.

We have therefore decided to highlight the recurring occurrences by giving them occurrence rates. For example, in the *Individual Skills* of the advisors category, soft skills appeared in more than 75% of the responses, hence a preponderant place in the category representation.

Then, categories and subcategories were compared so they don't overlap. Finally, we started to create links between categories: thus each category is not included in other categories and interacts with all other categories.

Once this first stabilization of categories and subcategories was achieved, we then refined the meaning of the categories by short and synthetic definitions. The goal is that each reader of the results can quickly understand the meaning of these categories.

The question was then to find sources, scientific references, bibliography, or even the quotes of the survey to give a clear meaning to each category. The goal of this work was to provide a reading guide that accompanies the diagram of categories and subcategories. This work gave rise to an exchange in order to test the synthetic descriptions obtained by each of the groups.

6. Survey results

In the spirit of co-creation, we want to work with the managers and share with them their responses to the survey so they can analyse and reflect on them in the context of their own organisations before the excellence classes take place. Based on the survey results, a mind map was developed as a schematic representation showing information that managers shared in the survey. Topics are categorised as:

- The way managers think about interactive innovation.

- The space managers give to advisors to develop innovative projects.

- The way they guide advisors through interactive innovation.

- The limits they identified in the innovation process.

The mind map provides definitions and gives examples of themes and language used when speaking about interactive innovation.

Figure 4 shows the mind map. The first section contains an introduction and explanation of how the mind map can be used. The map itself presents the seven most important questions regarding interactive innovation and the most common responses to each question. Frequency of responses were ranked on a scale of <25%, 25-50%, 50-75% and >75%.

Figure 4: the mind map
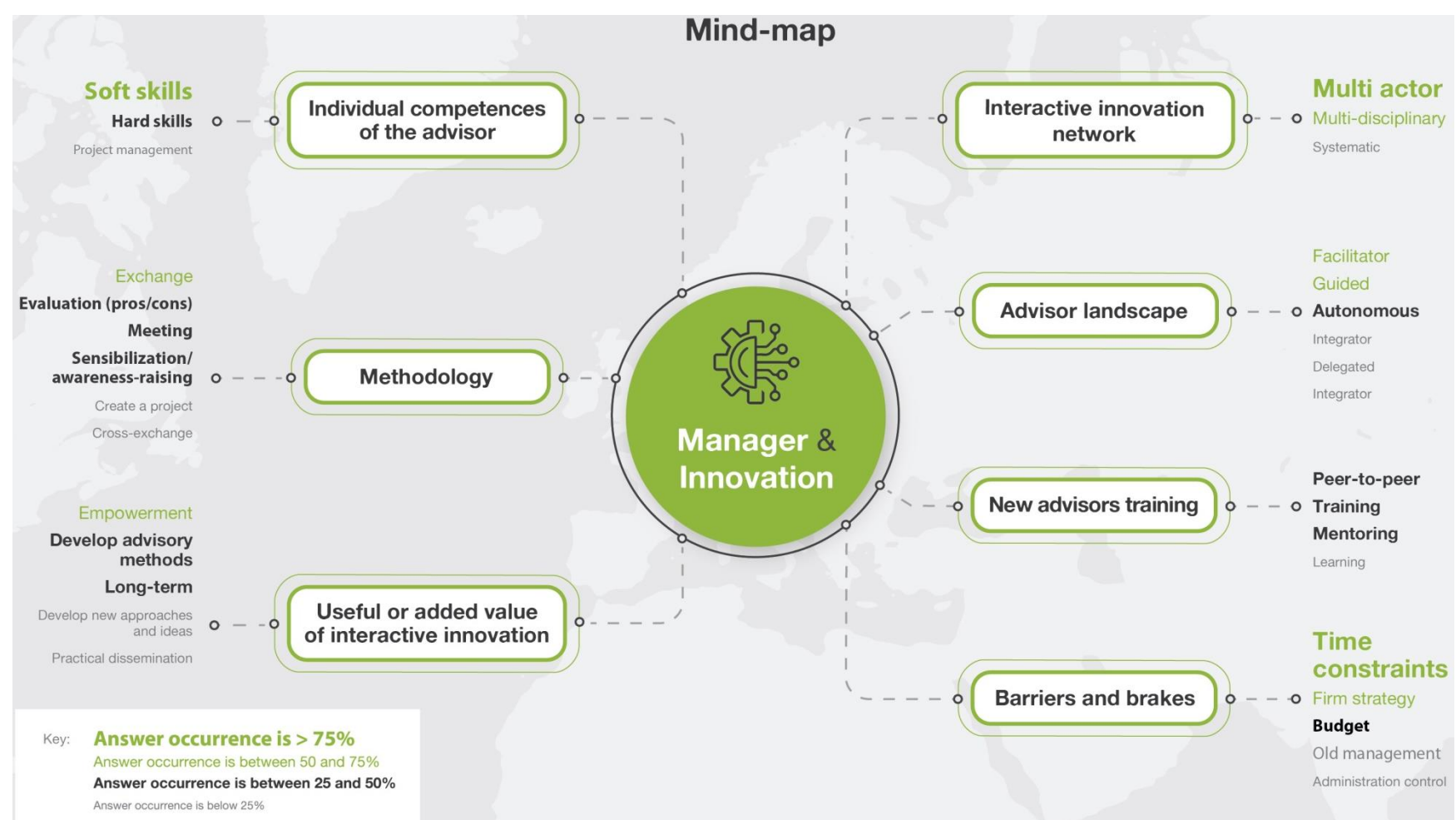
A description of each category and subcategory provides the reader a more comprehensive interpretation of the information presented. The categories descriptions are available below:

- **i2 network:** Connecting a diversity of professional actors in order to collaborate and/or cooperate and find innovative solutions and processes.
  - o **Systematic:** A management of the innovative process exists and the special needs of innovation correspond to ad hoc organisation ie. group meetings, management tools exist to make innovative process systematic when necessary. The organization knows how to act.
  - o **Multidisciplinary:** Different discipline are able to bring their tools, point of view and skills altogether on the same topic where innovative process is required: advisor' speciality is completed by a large diversity of specialities thanks to colleagues within the same organization. *Agricultural advisors collaborate with livestock advisors when common problems arise on a farm. Advisors specialized in technical-economic management collaborate with livestock advisers to evaluate investment plans in a farm.*
  - o **Multi-actor:** Create a network with a high level of partners, colleagues and also private and public partners/others organization, scientists, farmers, consumers, stakeholders. External links are important to build and mobilize a business ecosystem dedicated to innovative effort. *Collaboration with technicians from private companies that buy products from the farmer to implement production systems adapted to the farmer's possibilities.*
- **Individual competences:** Individual competences of the advisor: an individual competence is a set of knowledge, experiences, and mastery of practices (knowhow), attitudes and behaviours (interpersonal skills) - that can be effectively mobilized in each situation to achieve an objective.
  - o **Soft skills:** Personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people. *Special attention to listen to customers, patience, benevolence, clear and positive communication, ability to work as a team, curiosity, open mindedness.*
  - o **Project Management:** Set of design and execution activities to achieve tangible results in a specific project. *Identify a set of goals together with the other actors, support participants with suitable methods for the promotion and the development of the innovative project.*
  - o **Hard Skills** (Technical know-how): core technical competencies needed for the realization of the project. *Technical skills, core knowledge/expertise relating to the advisor's role.*
- **Advisor landscape:** The advisor's working environment.
  - o **Facilitated:** encouraging environment, an advisor is encouraged to be innovative, to take responsibilities.
  - o **Guided:** An advisor is encouraged to follow the recommended guidelines for actions of an advisor are offered within an institution.
  - o **Autonomous:** an advisor makes decisions and takes responsibility on his own and can identify needs of his clients.
  - o **Integrated:** there is a correlation between advisor's activities and the strategy of an institution. Innovative ideas are in coherence with the institution's strategy, its objectives, an advisor offering new ideas is supposed to adhere to a strategic plan of an institution.
  - o **Delegated:** tasks for an advisor are delegated by a manager and his activities are coordinated by a manager / senior specialist who has experience of managing the team.
- **Methodology:** Methodology can be translated as the way a manager reacts when an advisor proposes an innovative idea or project, and how he follows-up on this idea.
  - o **Exchange:** Where a group of people come up with ideas and suggestions to improve work practices and test these practices and refine for wider use. *Regular opportunities at group meetings to share/bounce ideas within group.*
  - o **Evaluation (pros/cons):** Share the idea with clients and colleagues to evaluate it and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of its application. *If it has a positive assessment, it begins to be applied to a small number of clients to follow up and make a final.*
  - o **Meeting:** Before an innovative idea is accepted, the manager (and possibly more members of the team) meets with the advisor that has made that suggestion, to evaluate the feasibility idea. *Share it with several clients and colleagues to evaluate it and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of its application.*
  - o **Sensibilisation/awareness-raising:** Establish a planned process that collects the needs of the clients captured by the advisors. The needs must be communicated internally, and efforts will be focus on giving them the appropriate response. *At the regional level, we regularly organise seminars for counsellors, which are an opportunity to disseminate innovations and in particular new counselling methods.*
  - o **Create a project:** with an appropriate consortium to solve the problem at hand with the innovative idea. *The objectives must be well framed and the question to be answered must be clearly defined.*
  - o **Cross-exchanges:** Link relevant people in the same subject, promote networking events. Ex: *The new wine advisers join a team that meets regularly during the winter and summer periods.*
- **Useful or added value of i2:** Explanation of the perception of interactive innovation useful or added value compared to traditional forms of work.
  - o **Empowerment:** Interactive innovation has the possibility to improve the organisation's methods and content of advice with minor risk of error, because it takes the environment into account. *Interactive innovation is more in line with the expectations of advisors today: exchanges, emergence of new ideas, collective intelligence.*
  - o **Develop advising methods:** Interactive innovation approaches can be embedded into advisory methods. *Each counsellor is in direct contact with different farmers who are themselves confronted with different problems and each tries to propose answers to the problems posed to him in his context with his knowledge and personality.*

- o **Develop new approaches and ideas:** Interactive innovation practices can create new approaches and ideas for farmer's everyday problems. *Where a group of people come up with ideas suggestions to improve work practices and pilot/test these practices and refine for wider use.*
- o **Practical dissemination:** Interactive innovation approaches and methods should be shared with the wider public. *Promote the exchange of best practices on a number of emerging issues.*

- **New advisors training:** Advisor's training methods.
  - o **Peer-to-peer:** learning from each other. *Be part of a team that can fail and make further steps to find a new solution with other experts and team members, be creative and communicative.*
  - o **Training:** teaching advisors' specific knowledge or skills to improve their performance. *Regular meetings of advisors with experts in experimentation in which there is transfer of practical information and training.*
  - o **Mentoring:** More experienced advisor provides support, guidance, knowledge, and skills to a less-experienced advisor. *Use older/experienced advisors/researchers to mentor new advisors.*
  - o **Learning:** Acquiring new knowledge and skills through courses, studies, seminars, conferences, etc. *Encourage new advisors to engage with Professional Learning platforms, consider study trips.*

- **Barriers and brakes:** Selected choices about barriers and brakes that handicaps innovative interaction process in the manager's organization.
  - o **Time constraints:** managers and advisors are working on "traditional" missions so they can't take time to develop interactive innovation process.
  - o **Firm strategy:** firm does not give priorities to innovative projects or process, and don't give space to workers to develop it because of the budget, because of politics or difficulties in organisation. *National programmes take centre importance. Not enough time given to how to be innovative in implanting these programmes at local level.*
  - o **Budget:** develop innovative process need working time and sometimes investment, but organisation doesn't use budget for these processes.
  - o **Old management:** some managers seem to think that their organisation doesn't evolve in an innovative way. So, firm's management doesn't give space to innovation and test, so managers keep working time to "routine work". *The organisations mind-set should be failures are part of innovation and must be allowed.*
  - o **Administration control:** some organisations are controlled by governmental administration which decides the priorities and missions to fulfil. So, space to innovation and freedom to act is limited

The results of the survey showed a wide variation between respondents (both across and within countries) on the level of understanding and implementing interactive innovation. In connection with our common vision, the objective of this work was not to obtain a result allowing the diffusion of a top-down message. In fact, the mind map that we obtained must be perceived as a starting point for discussion between managers.

During the Excellence Classes, the mind map will provide help and guidance to better discover, describe and compare the practices of interactive innovation: to show what already exists, what seems important, what seems to be missing, what obstacles may exist, how to overcome this and go further by building spaces for co-creation with managers in their teams. This diagram of what interactive innovation is for managers is incomplete and each excellence class will be an opportunity to complete them. Each of the participants will complete the categories and subcategories explicating their own experiences. In this way, excellence's classes' participants will improve the model. Imperfection is of remarkable use in generating a dynamic of construction of meaning in an ever-growing i2connect network. It is the spirit of i2connect.

What is Interactive Innovation for Managers? How do they use it? The analysis of the survey also brings its share of results. Here are some comments from members of Task 3.3 team:

"The survey shows that innovation is a relevant topic for managers. The description of innovation is made of a mix of empirical/professional analysis and also from readings and more theoretical learnings. Practices need ad hoc vocabulary."

"The survey found that managers are very open to the concept of interactive innovation and identify the advisor role as key to facilitating innovation. They recognise the added value that interactive innovation can bring to an advisory service. However, they recognised factors which limit opportunities for innovation e.g. time, budget, organisational structures, etc.

"The interest of managers in working collectively with the advisory teams: They see this as an added value that is not easy to achieve, especially when it comes to freeing up time/budget. They are waiting to go further in building this corporate culture."

"Results of the survey showed that managers had different perceptions of the concept of interactive innovation. Their perception was based on their own experience (their advisory experience, structure of their advisory organization, national policies, etc.)."

To promote this topic a teaser was developed by T3.3 team to inform managers about the excellence classes. The purpose of this teaser is to stimulate interest in the excellence classes - to remind managers about the project, to share the mind map with them and to invite them to join an excellence class. The results of the survey will also allow us to present to managers what they say about innovation and how they have put this concept into practice in their organisation. The aim is to provide them with an overview of what exists and stimulate interest in working towards a capacity-enabling environment.

7. Next steps

These initial results will be discussed with colleagues from other work packages and tasks in particular with:

- WP1, on advisors' skills, will help the task 3.3 team to go deeper in the definitions of categories and subcategories.
- Task3.6 on the training of trainers to ensure a link between what is already proposed in the training of advisors and what we will work on with managers
- WP4 to make the link with the organisation of the Excellence Classes that will be set up by the colleagues in task 4.5).

Work to clarify the results has already started thanks to the Creative Content Group (CCG) (Task3.1) meeting held in March 29, 2021 with colleagues from all i2connect work packages. It was the first opportunity to present to the other WPs the work already carried out. Three subgroups were used to dissect and analyse our work. Also during this CCG we launched calls for co-construction with the other WPs. The redefinition of each category can now be nourished by the work of WPs1 and 2 since the theoretical and empirical contributions are to be linked to our work. Then, WP4, when structuring the training sessions, naturally links to this analysis. In particular, we will organize an exchange with the task 4.5 about the training session and its content. Finally, this work also requires specific communication work that can be provided by WP5, the results brochure is already the fruit of our joint collaboration. The CCG made it possible to put our results at the centre of the cross-fertilization between the WPs in i2connect.

In addition, the results of the survey will be further developed to confirm our approach or reorient it and clarify the content of our training courses. To do this, we will continue our qualitative analyses and we will analyse in detail the results by contacting some respondents to clarify their answers.

Finally, the pedagogical structure of the excellences classes will be developed. The first Excellence Class is planned to be organized over three days in October 2021. We want to meet in person; therefore we may need to change dates to ensure an optimal development of the excellences classes. A workshop in which i2connect will be presented is also planned as part of the EUFRAS/IALB conference on 10th June 2021. This workshop will be used to promote the Excellence Classes for managers.

The project aims to create an "i2connect spirit" between advisory service managers. This means working with them in the long term and not only during the 3 days of an Excellence Class, accompanying them before the class to understand this concept and in the subsequent phase to set up interactive innovation processes with the advisory teams.

Appendix 1: Survey of advisory service manager on interactive innovation

1. Your name :

Country

1.1 Name of your organisation :

1.2 Your current position :

1.3 Your email address :

2. How many years of experience do you have in the field of advisory services?

3. How would you understand/define interactive innovation in your work environment? What does it mean to you?

4. In your opinion, how can interactive innovation be well managed in a friendly and sustainable way in advisory teams?

5. In your opinion does interactive innovation have an added value compared to traditional forms of work? If yes, please shortly explain your perception of this added value.

6. As a manager, how do you react when an advisor proposes an innovative idea or project? How do you follow-up on this idea?

7. What is the role of an advisor in an interactive innovation process?

8. List the skills that, in your opinion, advisors need in order to participate in an interactive innovation process?

9. How would you include innovation activities in the budget of your advisory services (e.g. brainstorming workshop, practice exchange workshop)? Please briefly explain in a few lines.

10. How do you encourage and provide the conditions for young or early career advisors to develop an innovative mind-set and the necessary skills and abilities to facilitate interactive innovation?

11. What could be the barriers to implementing interactive innovation in your organization?

13. Does your organization have an evaluation process in place where advisors can provide feedback on their work environment (e.g. by providing feedback to their manager)?

14. If you have created an environment to promote interactive innovation when was it implemented?

15. What are the tools and methods used to create this environment? Please give the name of the tools used:

16. Does your organization have staff responsible for creating an enabling environment / finding new methods and using them for advisory services?

17. Do the advisors cooperate with colleagues from different teams and/or with external partners? Give an example

18. Has your organisation capitalised on the tools and methods to support interactive innovation?

If yes, please give an example

19. Do you encourage your advisors to participate in "non-technological" training? (human skills / soft skills). If yes, give an example (title of training)

20. What are the limiting factors that currently prevent you or may have prevented you in the past from taking advantage of opportunities to integrate innovation in your advisory training programme? Max. 3 lines

21. Have you already participated in a training course on innovation?

If yes, can you tell us briefly about what you liked the most or whether you did not like this course?

22. What is your level of English? https://europa.eu/europass/en/common-european-framework-reference [Writing]

23. Are you interested to be trained to acquire new skills on interactive innovation and operational tools for innovation-friendly management?

Please feel free to leave us any comment or question. Thank you for your time! The Task 3.3 team

Appendix 2: Mind map flyer

Managers and Innovation

i2connect INTERACTIVE INNOVATION

Managers and innovation around Europe

In order to help managers promote innovation in their structure and in the field, the i2connect project will run "Excellence classes" in 2021. To initiate this interactive and innovative work process, we organized a survey in order to understand link between managing and promoting innovation. Almost 60 managers gave their experience and feedback about interaction innovation and management.

The idea of the survey is to identify how managers think about and work on interactive innovation. Managers have a key role to play in fostering the exchange of information between colleagues and in mobilising management to promote interactive innovation in advisory services.

How to use this mind map?

This mind map is a scheme of the information managers shared with us, in the survey.

We identified several topics around interactive innovation:

- The way managers think about interaction innovation
- The space managers give to advisor to develop innovative projects
- The way they guide advisor through interactive innovation
- The limits they identified in innovative process

Mind-map

Soft skills / Hard skills / Project management — **Individual competences of the advisor** — **Interactive innovation network** — Multi actor / Multi-disciplinary / Systematic

Exchange / Evaluation (pros/cons) / Meeting / Sensibilization/awareness-raising / Create a project / Cross-exchange — **Methodology** — **Advisor landscape** — Facilitator / Guided / Autonomous / Integrator / Delegated / Integrator

Manager & Innovation

Empowerment / Develop advisory methods / Long-term / Develop new approaches and ideas / Practical dissemination — **Useful or added value of interactive innovation** — **New advisors training** — Peer-to-peer / Training / Mentoring / Learning

Barriers and brakes — Time constraints / Firm strategy / Budget / Old management / Administration control

Key:
Answer occurrence is > 75%
Answer occurrence is between 50 and 75%
Answer occurrence is between 25 and 50%
Answer occurrence is below 25%

i2 network

Connecting a diversity of professional actors in order to collaborate and/or cooperate and find innovative solutions and processes.

- **Systematic:** A management of the innovative process exists and the special needs of innovation correspond to ad hoc organisation id. Group meetings, management tools exists to make innovative process systematic when necessary. The organization knows how to act.

- **Multidisciplinary:** Different discipline are able to bring their tools, point of view and skills altogether on the same topic where innovative process is required: advisor' speciality is completed by a large diversity of specialities thanks to colleagues within the same organization. Agricultural advisors collaborate with livestock advisors when common problems arise on a farm. Advisors specialized in technical-economic management collaborate with livestock advisers to evaluate investment plans in a farm.

- **Multi-actor:** Create a network with a high level of partners, colleagues and also private and public partners/others organization, scientists , farmers, consumers, stakeholders. External links are important to build and mobilize a business ecosystem dedicated to innovative effort. Collaboration with technicians from private companies that buy products from the farmer to implement production systems adapted to the farmer's possibilities

Individual competences

Individual competences of the advisor: an individual competence is a set of knowledge, experiences, and mastery of practices (know-how), attitudes and behaviours (interpersonal skills) - that can be effectively mobilized in each situation to achieve an objective.

- **Soft skills:** Personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people. Special attention to listen to customers, patience, benevolence, clear and positive communication, ability to work as a team, curiosity, open mindedness.

- **Project Management:** Set of design and execution activities to achieve tangible results in a specific project. Identify a set of goals together with the other actors, support participants with suitable methods for the promotion and the development of the innovative project of framed approach with major stages of the process.

- **Hard Skills** (Technical know-how): core technical competences

needed for the realization of the project. Technical skills, core knowledge/expertise relating to the advisor's role

Advisor landscape

The advisor's working environment.

- **Facilitated:** encouraging environment, an advisor is encouraged to be innovative, to take responsibilities.

- **Guided:** An advisor is encouraged to follow the recommended guidelines for actions of an advisor are offered within an institution.

- **Autonomous:** an advisor makes decisions and takes responsibility on his own and can identify needs of his clients.

- **Integrated:** there is a correlation between advisor's activities and the strategy of an institution. Innovative ideas are in coherence with institution's strategy, its objectives, an advisor offering new ideas is supposed to adhere to a strategic plan of an institution.

- **Delegated:** tasks for an advisor are delegated by a manager and his activities are coordinated by a manager / senior specialist who has experience of managing the team.

Methodology

Methodology can be translated as the way a manager reacts when an advisor proposes an innovative idea or project, and how he follows-up on this idea.

- **Exchange:** Where a group of people come up with ideas and suggestions to improve work practices and test these practices and refine for wider use. Regular opportunities at group meetings to share/bounce ideas within group.

- **Evaluation (pros/cons):** Share the idea with clients and colleagues to evaluate it and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of its application. (If it has a positive assessment, it begins to be applied to a small number of clients to follow up and make a final.

- **Meeting:** Before an innovative idea is accepted, the manager (and possibly more members of the team) meets with the advisor that has made that suggestion, to evaluate the feasibility idea. Share it with several clients and colleagues to evaluate it and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of its application.

- **Sensibilisation/awareness-raising:** Establish a planned process that collects the needs of the clients captured by the advisors. The needs must be communicated internally, and efforts will be focus on giving them the appropriate response. At the regional level, we regularly organise seminars for counsellors, which are an opportunity to disseminate innovations and in particular new counselling methods.

- **Create a project:** with an appropriate consortium to solve the problem at hand with the innovative idea. The objectives must be well framed and the question to be answered must be clearly defined.

- **Cross-exchanges:** Link relevant people in the same subject, promote networking events. Ex.: The new wine advisors join a team that meets regularly during the winter and summer periods.

Useful or added value of i2

Explanation of the perception of interactive innovation useful or added value compared to traditional forms of work.

- **Empowerment:** Interactive innovation has the possibility to improve the organisation's methods and content of advice with minor risk of error, because it takes the environment into account. Interactive innovation is more in line with the expectations of advisors today: exchanges, emergence of new ideas, collective intelligence.

- **Develop advising methods:** Interactive innovation approaches can be embedded into advisory methods. Each counsellor is in direct contact with different farmers who are themselves confronted with different problems and each tries to propose answers to the problems posed to him in his context with his knowledge and personality.

- **Develop new approaches and ideas:** Interactive innovation practices can create new approaches and ideas for farmer's everyday problems. Where a group of people come up with ideas suggestions to improve work practices and pilot/test these practices and refine for wider use.

- **Practical dissemination:** Interactive innovation approaches and methods should be shared with the wider public. Promote the exchange of best practices on a number of emerging issues.

New advisors training

Advisor's training methods.

- **Peer-to-peer:** learning from each other. Be part of a team, that can fail and make further steps to find a new solution with other experts and team members, be creative and communicative.

- **Training:** teaching advisors' specific knowledge or skills to improve their performance. Regular meetings of advisors with experts in experimentation in which there is transfer of practical information and training.

- **Mentoring:** More experienced advisor provides support, guidance, knowledge, and skills to a less-experienced advisor. Use older/experienced advisors/researchers to mentor new advisors.

- **Learning:** Acquiring new knowledge and skills through courses, studies, seminars, conferences, etc. Encourage new advisors to engage with Professional Learning platforms, consider study trips.

Barriers and brakes

Selected choices about barriers and brakes that handicaps innovative interaction process in the manager's organization.

- **Time constraints:** managers and advisors are working on "traditional" missions so they can't take time to develop interactive innovation process.

- **Firm strategy:** firm does not give priorities to innovative projects or process, and don't give space to workers to develop it because of the budget, because of politics or difficulties in organisation. National programmes take centre importance. Not enough time given to how to be innovative in implanting these programmes at local level

- **Budget:** develop innovative process need working time and sometimes investment, but organisation doesn't use budget for these processes.

- **Old management:** some managers seem to think that their organisation doesn't evolve in an innovative way. So, firm's management doesn't give space to innovation and test, so managers keep working time to "routine work". The organisations mindset should be failures are part of innovation and must be allowed

- **Administration control:** some organisations are controlled by governmental administration which decides the priorities and missions to fulfil. So, space to innovation and freedom to act is limited.

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