

# i2connect

INTERACTIVE INNOVATION



## **Task 1.4**

### **Identify topical knowledge in innovation networks, services and activities across Europe**

### **Deliverable 1.5b**

#### **Second overview of topical insights from innovation activities, services and networks**

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#### **Dissemination Level**

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

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**This version will be updated regularly to adapt it to the project progress.**

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## Summary

**Project number:** 863039

**Project:** i2connect – Connecting advisers to boost interactive innovation in agriculture and forestry

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**Start date of project:** 1/11/2019

**Coordinator:** APCA

**Project coordinator:** *Sylvain Sturel*

**Project manager:** *Carmen Avellaner de Santos*

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The views and opinions expressed in this report do not represent the official position of the European Commission and are entirely the responsibility of the authors.

## Executive summary

This document provides a selection of 10 additional topical insights of those partners in Task 1.4 in the i2connect project. Ten insights were selected from 37 topical insights submitted in D1.5a in June 2020. A further 10 are included in this report D1.5b from 56 collected to-date. These insights reflect the issues, topics, learnings and thoughts of people from the project consortium which are identified as being useful insights. These insights may be theoretical or practice based, they should indicate a connection between the ongoing science which supports interactive innovation theory and the day to day experience of actors who support innovation. The process of gathering, selecting and reporting topical insights will be repeated every 4 months up to the end of the project. All of the insights collected are visible to all consortium partners and may be added to by designated partners throughout the project. The process for the identification and collation of topical insights for Task 1.4 in the i2connect project will evolve throughout the project and this will be reflected in the deliverables 1.5a to 1.5n.

## 1.0 Background and Context of topical insights for interactive innovation

### 1.1 Introduction

Task 1.4 in the i2connect project aims to track and report the topical insights coming from the project partners' activities and interactions with other projects, outputs, events and networks relevant to effective support of interactive innovation. These reports will be produced in month 8, June 2020 and every four months thereafter up to and including month 60.

These topical insights are issues, observations, problems or solutions relevant to the support of interactive innovation by advisors who perform facilitation, knowledge brokering or other forms of support. These may be practical, theoretical or conceptual insights which have a currency which relates to the i2connect project and its ambition. These include new learnings from project activities and partners active in supporting innovation through their own organisations, activities, services, networks and other projects.

These insights are written in short summary narratives with links to audio, audio-visual or infographic details if needed. The insights were collected and stored in digital format using a shared template on the collaborative platform Meteodocs. Each partner in Task 1.4 added their own contributions regularly to the shared spreadsheet template and a summary of the main insight topics from all the partners' contributions and 10 selected insights will be included in these reports (D1.5a to D1.5n). These outputs may be elaborated subsequently in i2connect newsletters, practice abstracts and in social media channels. This selection of insights will be by agreement among the T1.4 partners.

## 1.2 Context of task 1.4

The aim of the i2connect project is to build the capacity and motivation of agricultural and forestry advisors in interactive innovation methods and improve their support roles in innovation networks. Advisors will be better enabled to effectively support interactive innovation processes and thus contribute to faster and more successful innovations in rural areas.

## 1.3 Objective of task 1.4

The objective is to record and report on cutting-edge knowledge and topical insights of functions, activities and the enabling environment of advisors working in innovation groups and networks as evidenced from H2020 projects and EIP-AGRI Operational Groups. The Task 1.4 challenge is to identify topical knowledge in innovative networks, services and activities across Europe (M5 – 60).

Task 1.4 actors are individuals from the partner teams of Teagasc, APCA, AUA, ILVO, EUFRAS, IALB, SEASN, UHOH, NAK, CREA, MAPA, ZLTO and WR.

# 2.0 Identifying topical insights

## 2.1 Topics and issues

The **first step** is to identify topical issues where there may be insights – these are topics that capture the attention of advisors, farmers and others including the public media. They are also topics which the provider feels are urgent and important with useful and interesting insights. These may be the consequence of an observation, discussion, reflection, report, interview or analysis of an interactive innovation project, process, activity, service or network. Topics may arise from academic literature, project deliverables and reports, EIP-AGRI reports, support literature and other interactive



innovation public sources, but relevant to ongoing work in the providers projects, regions and countries.

This was done by listing 4 to 5 topics by each of the 13 partners involved. These were from each partners' involvement in innovation practices, projects, activities and networks. Ideas for topics can be sourced from day to day interaction and conversations, EIP AGRI publications and other local publications and events.

## 2.2 What are insights?

The **second step** is to ask the question- what are they saying to each other or to us that is relevant and interesting to interactive innovation, advisors, the AKIS and the activities in i2connect?

Topical insight narratives summarise the details of current stories, observation, rumours, opinions, facts and counter facts that key actors are talking about. These insights must be relevant to the broad objectives of i2connect and attract the attention of the advisors and other interactive innovation actors.

## 2.3 Categorisation

The **third step** is to categorise the topical insights under headings so that they can be searched and grouped easily. This should be done by the contributor, of course some insights can be categorised under more than one heading.

The proposed headings are:

- Funding, business models
- Network management, facilitation, moderation
- Back office support, training, capacity building
- Competency assessment
- Other advisory roles and activities
- Impact assessment, evaluating success
- Other

### Funding and Business models

Regardless of the funding source (public or private) the value proposition of the interactive innovation project or network for all involved is important. Can it be justified in order to ensure the long-term value added of the initiative? These issues have been elaborated in D1.1. They contribute to the enabling environment which will be elaborated through the review of the country AKIS in T1.2.



## **Network management, facilitation, moderation**

What are the issues and experiences around innovation networks? Are there insights around the multi actor networks that can be shared and help to guide the i2connect project? Some of these will be apparent from partners own experiences and will be added to by WP2 and other i2connect activities and experiences as the project proceeds.

## **Back office support, training, capacity building**

How is this being done to good effect? Can we learn from the current Covid19 restrictions and be more efficient in how we support advisors and improve their capacity to support the different needs of interactive innovation activities, projects and networks? The ongoing work in WP3 and WP4 in addition to insights from other projects should provide a number of relevant experiences and insights.

## **Competency Assessment**

These competency frameworks are interesting and they are used more and more in staff recruitment and service procurement. Do these exist for high end advisory services such as interactive innovation support? Task 1.3 will provide some useful insights. Are these considered at undergraduate level? Are there metrics and benchmarks for advisors in innovation support roles? Insights in this regard would be useful particularly in WP3 and WP4.

## **Other Advisory roles and activities**

To what extent are advisory support services and interactive innovation activities, projects and network stand alone or added on to other roles which advisors perform across a range of one to one technical/financial support, group events, publications or education with a wider base of farmers clients? How does this help or hinder the interactive innovation support role? What do we see in the inventory of advisors in Task 1.2, D1.3 or in the selected practical cases Task 2.3, D2.2 or the harvested common best practices from field reviews in Task 2.6/D2.4?

## **Impact Assessment**

As advisors, how are the impacts of these interactive innovation activities, projects and networks recorded and evaluated? Are their lessons, qualitative and quantitative tools from the EU funded project LIAISON which can help in the impact assessment? WP2 is expected to learn from successful practical cases. Are there insights which can help to get better impact assessments to support the promotion of interactive innovation activities, projects and networks?

## Other

Everyone in the project should feel free to express their own issues, concerns, successes and failures in the form of insights. From these insights we all learn and understand better the complexity of the interactive innovation process. It is therefore particularly important that other insights coming from the day to day experience, thoughts and feelings of individuals are documented and shared with others.

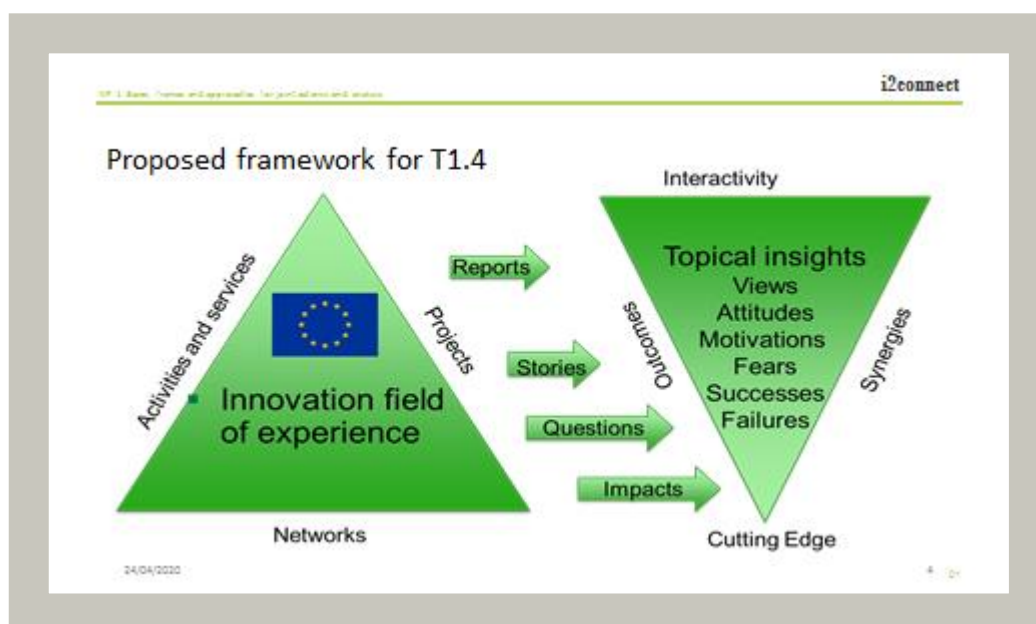


Figure 1. An infographic representation of Task 1.4

## 3.0 Collecting the topical insights

The following partners Teagasc, APCA, AUA, ILVO, EUFRAS, IALB, SEASN, UHOH, NAK, CREA, MAPA, ZLTO and WR will nominate an individual or individuals to gather topics and to articulate the insights within the framework provided. The framework will be maintained as a living document. These informed sources within the project partners and their networks will interact as necessary and will finalise their contributions 2 weeks before the deliverable is due.

From a logistical perspective these partners are mixed, some with advisory services while other have more academic and support expertise. The expectation is that each partner will identify a list of 5-6 topics each quarter and will provide their insights on at least 3 of these.

**Topics** - each topic should be defined in its title with 2-3 words.

**Topical Insights** -there should be a short narrative to describe the topical insight; this narrative should explain the context, source and specific knowledge, theory or practice. It may contain links to other print, video or audio materials.

**What will these Topical insights be used for?**

It is expected that these topical insights will contribute to the reflective capitalisation in task 1.5. They will also be relevant to WP2, 3 and 4 in terms of the continuous development and ongoing learning in the project. In addition there will be regular reporting of these topical insights through Task 5.4.

### 3.1 Identifying the topics

The topics identified by each partner are collated and stored in the shared worksheet. Partners will add and remove topics to this master worksheet on an ongoing basis throughout the lifetime of the i2connect project. For each topic identified, the partner organisation will provide more details on the insight in the worksheet for their organisation. A descriptive narrative, of approx. 100 words, and links to background information, stories, brochures and websites may be provided for each topic. In addition, the topic may be assigned to one more of the categories described in section 2 above. Each topic must have an insight which tells its story in narrative format.

Topical insights -- what do we want?

- If you were asked to share your new knowledge on interactive innovation projects/activities/networks with advisors, farmers or other actors,
  - What topics and insights would you use?
  - What source (H2020 project, OG, EIP event, activity) or examples would you use to support your insight?
  - Could you prioritise these topics and insights?
  - Can you from your own logic explain why you feel its important
  - Where does it fit into the i2connect project landscape

22/05/2020

### 3.2 Selecting and reporting on topical insights

The insight narratives provided by each partner are extracted from the shared spreadsheet and presented in this deliverable (D1.5a to D1.5n) as a table of the topical insight titles, with ten selected topical insights elaborated. Where insights are

deduplicated these may be combined, each of the 10 insights will be credited to the relevant partner(s). There will be no ranking of the 10 topics or insights in the deliverable.

Partners may classify the origin of the topical insights by referencing the background source. Some examples are listed below:

- Advisory activity
- Forestry activity
- Service provider
- Innovation Network/platform
- H2020 project
- Operational group
- Research activity
- Training/Education
- Community of practice

For the narrative we suggest the following parts in no particular order:

1. What is the insight
2. Why is it important
3. From what activity or where specifically did it come from (list above)
4. How is it relevant to i2connect (also in the categorisation tick box can be used to express this point)

The 13 partners should list new or rearranged topics and insights every 4 months, based on their own priorities. This will add new choices to selection system. For some topics there may be multiple insights, all of these should be reported in the deliverable. Some topics might remain priority topics for a number of reports, only new insights should be reported every 4 months. This will ensure that new topics and new insights will be featured in these reports.

## 4.0 Topical Insights D1.5b -Oct 2020

Ten insights were selected based on the belief that the perspectives of the actor contributors are valued and important. However, the following criteria were used to help to select insights for publication:

1. Relevance to Interactive innovation
2. Relevance to i2connect
3. Relevance to Advisory services in Agriculture and Forestry
4. Clarity
5. Novelty
6. Other criteria as amended throughout the project?

### 4.1 Topical insights identified in the Task 1.4

There were 56 topical insights from ten partners involved in this task (Table 1). It was agreed that all were relevant to interactive innovation and to the i2connect project. The selection was based on relevance and clarity of the insight taking into account the priority of the participating partners. Dr Lies Dubryne, ILVO assisted in the selection of the 10 new insights for this deliverable.

Table 2 shows the 10 selected insights for deliverable 1.5b in Oct 2020.

Table 1. Topical insights submitted by partners to date in Task 1.4

Partner	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Topic 8	Topic 9	Topic 10
Teagasc	Covid 19 networking	Business models	Impact Assessment/Trusted Peers		Face to face review meetings	Risk of snapshot reviews of cases	Participatory approaches			
APCA										
AUA	AKIS structure	HEIs	Brokerage/Facilitation		Advisory companies mgt	AKIS	Advisors' training			
ILVO	Training young advisors	Time as a crucial factor for network creation	Advisory services: training at actors other than farmers	The importance of digitalisation in advisory services	Defining an innovation advisor					
EUFRAS	EU-Regulation Draft Cap-Strategy Plans Art. 13e	4th SCAR-AKIS Report								
IALB	Learning co-creation	Resistance to change innovation support	methods to support interactivity							
SEASN	AKIS structure	Peer to peer	BIP projects	Knowledge transfer						
UHOH	Online interactive training	Tool for reflective practice	Role of advisors in micro AKIS	Advice on farm succession	Facilitating rural innovations by interaction	Advisory focus shifts from farm to family advice				
NAK	Hungarian e-learning training for agricultural advisors-NAK	NAK AKIS WS: knowledge flow	Skills training of agricultural advisors	Forestry consultancy centre of Hungary						
CREA	Recognition of the Pluralism of advisors	Public extension advisory services	Role of the CAP networks	Digital competencies of advisory services	Monitoring and Evaluation for advisory services					
MAPA										
ZLTO	Peer to Peer Exchange	Peer to Peer Exchange	Energy of farmer groups	Relationships in networks						
WR	Knowledge hubs	Project procedures	Knowledge sharing	Inclusive advice	Lack of practical field experience	Holistic advice	Networking of advisory services	Networking of advisory services	Advisory involvement in defining policies and programmes	Intermediary role

## 4.2 The 10 selected Insights for D1.5b - Oct 2020

**Table 2. Categorisation of selected Insights D1.5a**

Topics	Business models	Network Facilitation	Support	Quality Control	Other advisory roles	Impact	Other issues
Face to face review meetings						1	
Snapshot reviews of cases						1	
Brokerage/Facilitation		1	1	1		1	
Digitalisation in advisory services			1	1	1		
Learning co-creation			1	1			
Peer to peer	1	1	1			1	
Advice on farm succession					1		
Advisory focus shifts from farm to family advice					1		
Relationships in networks	1					1	
Networking of advisory services	1	1	1		1		1

### **Titles , source and narrative of the Deliverable 1.5b October 2020 Topical Insights .**

#### **Value of face to face review meetings**

Anita Naughton, Teagasc, Ireland

*LIAISON WP3 partners conducted a 'light touch review' of 200 multi-actor interactive innovation cases in agriculture, forestry and rural development ranging from H2020 projects, Operational Groups to 'under the radar' networks.*



*The cases varied in terms of geographical location, size, number of partners, type of funding and length of operation. Project leaders who participated in the review rated excursions and field days, together with face-to-face meetings of diverse actors to discuss issues, as the best methods of communication, idea generation and innovation (Fieldsend et al., p. 53, 2019).:*

*<https://liaison2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/LIAISON-Deliverable-3.2-Discussion-paper.pdf>.*

### **Risk of snapshot reviews of innovation cases**

Anita Naughton, Teagasc, Ireland

*Within the LIAISON WP3 light touch reviews of interactive innovation case studies, the reviews showed that a snapshot made of an interactive innovation activity at one point in time, could lead to a distorted picture of reality. The difficulty is in placing the reviewed projects within the Innovation Spiral in the correct time horizon and context. This makes the planned review of interactive innovation casework very complex as the object of study is highly dynamic and ever-changing: <https://liaison2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/LIAISON-Deliverable-3.2-Discussion-paper.pdf>*

### **Brokerage/Facilitation**

Alex Koutsouris, AUA, Greece

*Intermediation (facilitation and brokerage) has yet to be thoroughly described, operationally defined, or well-evaluated. There is a need for conceptual clarity (since the current abundance of terminology and the use of the same terms but with different meanings complicate the scene). Explicit attention has thus to be given to theoretical developments; without nuanced a understanding of the concepts, terminology, and controversies, study findings will be difficult to interpret and guidance to practice change may become untenable.*

### **The importance of digitalisation in advisory services**

Lies Dubruyne, ILVO, Belgium

*Building on insights from DESIRA and Fairshare, and put to the fore by the current COVID crisis, digitalisation is key for current and future advisory services.*

*However, at the same time many issues arise around this topic (required competencies both for farmers and advisors, access to the technologies, design and complexity of the systems, data privacy and ownership issues). Interactive innovation could be key in overcoming at least some of these issues (e.g. co-creative design of the tools, but also about the wider context, e.g. smart villages) Learning co-creation "What kind of competences are needed for successful innovation support?" When i2connect started in November 2019, we discussed with trainer colleagues at the Bavarian State Academy how the Co-Creation*

*approach fits into existing competence and learning models. We tried to integrate Co-Creation into the systematics of learning levels, assuming that an innovation process is also a learning process. We also allocated Knowledge Transfer and consulting in this learning systematics model. It would be nice to hear what others in the project think about these ideas. English Version of the article here in meteodocs T3.6 Folder model.*  
[https://meteodocs.llkc.lv/index.php/apps/files/?dir=/i2connect\\_H2020/WP3\\_Didactical%20strategies%20%26%20methods/T3.6/Documentation&fileid=15933#pdfviewer](https://meteodocs.llkc.lv/index.php/apps/files/?dir=/i2connect_H2020/WP3_Didactical%20strategies%20%26%20methods/T3.6/Documentation&fileid=15933#pdfviewer)

### **Peer to peer**

???? SEASN

*Peer-to-peer learning is another trend that's been gaining traction in the learning and development world. It can take many forms and it is an effective method of knowledge transfer. Project Wise farmer is an example of intergenerational peer-to peer learning, where younger farmers pass on digitalization knowledge to older farmers. In return, older farmers pass on their knowledge, gained through many years of experience to younger ones. Together they can effectively solve specific problems in agriculture, with the help of farm advisers, who provide professional support throughout the whole learning process. This is an interactive way of connecting farm generations in the digital age.*  
<https://www.wisefarmer.eu/>

### **Advice on farm succession**

Fanos Birke, UHOH, Germany

*In Germany, the demand for farm succession advice is increasing as younger farm successors or interested siblings are asking for it, or start-ups are interested in taking over existing farms. To respond to the demand, advisors and advisory organizations in Germany are developing advisory topics and formats in farm succession besides the 'classical' agriculture advice. Advisory organizations such as chambers or public organizations collaborate with associations and third sector organizations to provide farm succession advice and facilitate professional support using multiple methods. The insight here is the diversification of services in agriculture advisory organizations and the focus on broader topics of advice that address the legal, economic, social and personal conditions. More about farm succession advice in Germany*  
<https://www.bildungsserveragrar.de/zeitschrift-bub-agrar/online-beitraege/online-spezial-archiv/beratung-bei-der-hofuebergabe/>

### **Advisory focus shifts from farm to family advice**

Fanos Birke, UHOH, Germany

*The focus of agricultural family advisory service is on people in both their living and working environment. Through collaboration associations, church-based organizations, private sectors..., advisors work to strengthen the capacity and individual resourcefulness of their clients to improve their quality of life. Topics on family advisory include inheritance law, marriage contract, tax, and inter-personal difficulties such as fear, burnout and depression. Advisors who provide family advice are expected to know the context and the agriculture practice in the area and the subject matter. The insight from this topic is the increasing demand for new knowledge and skills for advisors to support in solving problems or addressing concerns of farm holdings in rural areas.*

*More on the topic:*

*[https://www.bildungsserveragrار.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Bilder/Literatur/BuBAagrار/Ausgaben/5003\\_2020\\_bub-agrar\\_x007.pdf](https://www.bildungsserveragrار.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Bilder/Literatur/BuBAagrار/Ausgaben/5003_2020_bub-agrar_x007.pdf)*

### **Relationships in networks**

Peter Paree, ZLTO, Netherlands

*Support with network, critical feedback and small incentives (ca 10k) throughout some years give a substantial effect on the long term. Advisors build long years relations with core group of farmers. Insight is that through this group many signals come to the organisation, so that the advisory organisation has a 'nose' for what is innovation at grassroot level (2 ways exchange). Example in NL: agri Innovation Brabant LIB Example NL: existing 25 years, recently being assessed by Prof. Katrien Termeer, WUR.*

### **Networking of advisory services**

Floor Geerling, WR, Netherlands

*The regional/national advisory services might be too small to attain all knowledge and skills needed and therefore more networking of advisory services is needed. Additionally, as the advisors become more involved in the development of the sector, they need to communicate farmers' needs back to the researchers to a higher degree and participate in research and innovation projects. However, to ensure this, financing and incentives are mostly missing. Also, incentives for researchers to present the results of their work in a comprehensive way are needed. Source:*

*[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/key\\_policies/documents/report-preparing-for-future-akis-in-europe\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/key_policies/documents/report-preparing-for-future-akis-in-europe_en.pdf)*

*/SCAR AKIS Policy brief on the Future of Advisory Services (2017).*