



**PATHWAYS IN SHORT FOOD
SUPPLY CHAINS ECOSYSTEM
DEVELOPMENT**

Desk research report



Rural Facilitator

Project no.: 2019-1-CZ01-KA202-061270



Erasmus+

PATHWAYS IN SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Desk research report

The purpose of Rural Facilitator Training in Agricultural Short Food Supply Chains project (funded by the European Commission, Erasmus+, KA2) is to provide a better understanding of the working SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN (SFSC) ecosystem in the partner EU countries - Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Poland, and Romania - with some outlook to the practices promoted at EU level.

The desk research was a first step towards developing a Competence Catalogue, a Business Roadmap and a Training Programme for Rural Facilitators, and it aims to highlight similarities and differences between SFSC policies and practices in partner countries, and it formulates conclusions and possible solutions that might be adopted in other member states of the EU too.

Partners defined a common structure to research, understand and compare SFSC ecosystems in each country. They collected qualitative and quantitative data from available recourses and answered a standard set of questions to make the data comparable across the countries.

Why SFSC?

EUROPEAN CULTURAL FOOD HERITAGE

DIVERSITY OF THE EUROPEAN CULTURE

Short food supply chain (SFSC) development is a valuable tool of European food cultural heritage maintenance. Short food chains contribute to the preservation of traditional food- and rural lifestyle-related knowledge and contribute to the diversity of the European culture. Short food chains offer opportunity to transfer traditional knowledge of food production in an innovative way. An easier access to market makes it possible to maintain small and family farming systems which have characterized Europe since the agricultural revolution until nowadays and propose an alternative way for food production as an alternative to the intensive, industrial agriculture. However, small farmers face with more and more difficulties when they try to access markets, process food or build their marketing activities. These activities are handled by different experts in industrial farms and large companies but small and family farms try to do it alone.

LIMITED NUMBER OF ECONOMIC OPERATORS, COMMITTED TO COOPERATION AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE SHORTEST TRAJECTORIES OF SERVICES, PRODUCTS, OR GOODS, LEADING FROM THE PRODUCER TO THE CONSUMER

INTERMEDIATES CAN BE RESTAURANTS, LOCAL SHOPS, RETAILERS, PROCESSORS.

SFSC definition of the European Commission

The European Commission proposed their new definition for Common Agricultural Policy for Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020. The definition which was set up for special subsidies says:

“A ‘short supply chain’ means a supply chain involving a limited number of economic operators, committed to co-operation, local economic development, and close geographical and social relations between producers, processors and consumers (1305/2013 EC). That means the short food supply chains involve very few intermediaries. In many cases produce only travels a short distance, so producer and consumer have direct contact.

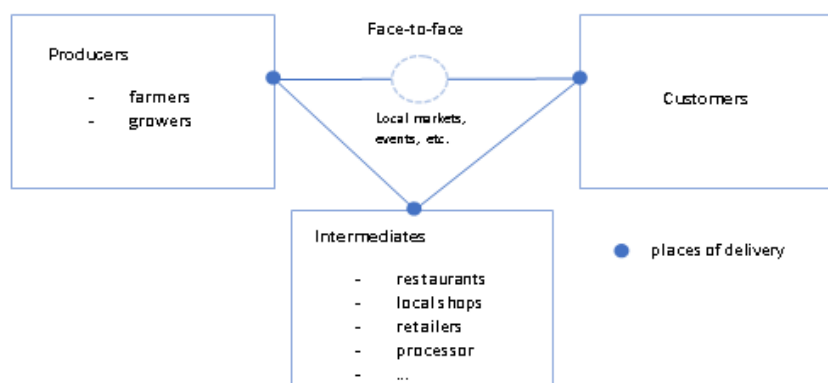
Such supply chains typically involve local producers working together to promote local food markets. These partnerships help boost the rural economy, creating new ways of selling local produce and attracting new types of customer. They also foster cooperation between local farms, the tourist industry and the food sector. Buying locally produced food also supports sustainable development by reducing: transport costs, CO2 emissions, wear and tear on rural roads, traffic congestion, and road accidents.”

Definition of SFSC in the partner countries

Czech Republic

Short food supply chains generally are defined as the shortest trajectories, either of services, products, or goods leading from the producer to the consumer, with as few intermediate links as possible.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture only that product delivery can be considered SFSC where there is only one intermediary between the farmer (who produced the basic raw product) and the seller (who sells the product to the end customer). Direct sale from producers (farmers, growers) to the end customers can be done through local markets, events or shopping on farm or online. The intermediates can be restaurants, local shops, retailers, processors.



Scheme 1: Scheme characterizing the short supply chain

**AS FEW
INTERMEDIARIES
AS POSSIBLE**

LOCAL MARKET

=

**A MARKETING RADIUS
< 75 KM FROM THE
PRODUCT'S ORIGIN**

Romania

The SFSC involves commercial relations between the supplier, a single trader and consumers on the agri-food product chain.

The following types of products are involved:

- fresh food,
- frozen food,
- processed food.

SFSC means selling from a farmer to a consumer by involving as few intermediaries as possible. In Romania SFSC's are defined based on two aspects on:

- the number of intermediaries and,
- the geographical distance between the point of production / processing and the point of sale.

Taking into account the national geographical specificities, the "local market" is defined as a marketing radius that does not exceed 75 km from the product's origin holding. The average distance between the main settlements and the possible expenses of transport, fuel and the road transport network, which could make a reasonable profit, would be taken into account, would contribute to reducing pollution and preserving the properties of the product.

Hungary

Based on EU regulation 1305/2013 mutually accepted definition of SFSC in Hungary is an alternative, locally committed food supply chain with maximum one intermediary between farmers/small scale food producers and consumers to improve local income and food quality.

Only the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (EAFRD European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) uses this legal definition. In case of commercial activity authorities apply food hygienic rules and definitions according to 852/2004 EC regulation.

SFSC is an umbrella concept of diverse solutions aiming to shorten food supply chain with the following:

- 1) through intermediary,
- 2) with home delivery,
- 3) at open farms,
- 4) at points of sales.

Community of trust is the common characteristic of this categories.

Therefore the SFSC concept is related to CSA (community supported agriculture) and local food movement concepts.

**COMMUNITY OF
TRUST**



**RECENT LEGAL
CHANGES TO
ENABLE FARMERS
TO SELL THEIR
OWN FOOD PRODUCTS**

**ALLOW CONSUMERS
DIRECT ACCESS
TO FOOD
PRODUCED BY FARMERS**

**DIRECT DELIVERIES
OF PRIMARY
PRODUCTS**

**DIRECT SALES
OF ANIMAL
PRODUCTS**

**MARGINAL, LOCAL
AND LIMITED
ACTIVITIES**



Poland

Recent legal changes (2016-2017) enabled farmers to legally sell their own food products, both unprocessed and processed, and hence to allow consumers direct access to food produced by farmers. The implementation of sales in form of Agricultural Retail Trade (RHD) combines the sale of raw materials and processed products from the farm. The form of conducting this activity falls under the definition of SFSC.

Various forms of production and sale of food for individual farmers are allowed in Poland:

- Direct deliveries of primary products of plant origin
- Direct sales of animal products - i.e. raw milk, raw cream, eggs, unprocessed bee products, unprocessed fishery products, etc. As part of this form of activity the sale is carried out to the final consumer or to establishments conducting retail trade directly supplying the final consumer (e.g. shops, canteens, canteens, agritourism farms or restaurants). Requirements hygiene, sanitary and veterinary are defined on veterinary requirements in the production of products of animal origin intended for direct sale,
- Retail - all types of food, both non-animal and animal origin, as well as composite food, i.e. containing foodstuffs of origin non-animal and animal. Within the retail trade, production, including food processing and sale, is only possible to final consumers, under certain hygienic and sanitary requirements,
- Marginal, local and limited activities - production and sale of worked or processed animal products such as: dairy products, fishery products, raw meat products, minced meat, meat products as well the possibility of cutting and selling fresh beef, pork, sheep, goat, horse, poultry, fresh game meat and farmed wild animals,
- Agricultural Retail consists in the production of food originating in whole or in part from its own cultivation, breeding of the food business operator and sale of such food.

The choice of form depends on the individual decision of the farmer, which should be tailored to his situation, in particular to the type of food marketed.

The chosen form of sale specifies legal requirements (hygiene, veterinary and sanitary requirements) that must be met individually by each farmer-producer placing food on the market, primarily in the field of food safety.

**ONE INTERMEDIARY
BETWEEN THE
PRODUCER AND THE
CONSUMER**

France

There is an official definition of SFSC, established by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2009. This is a marketing method which includes at most one intermediary between the producer and the consumer.

They may be local as well as regional, but according to the French authorities, due to the application of agro-environmental and climatic measures, support is given to SFSCs under a radius of 70 kilometers, as by the common agricultural policy.

The above presented definitions make reference to SFSC as a commercial relation between the producer and consumer with max. 1 (in Hungary and France) or as few as possible (in the Czech republic and Romania) intermediaries. In Poland there is no specification regarding the number of intermediaries, but sales of the products can be done directly or in retail.

**Definition for intermediaries/ SFSC animators
and training possibilities**

**EASIER ACCESS TO
MARKET**

**“RURAL BUSINESS
ANGELS”**

“RURAL ANIMATORS”

“RURAL FACILITATORS”

**FACILITATE THE ACCESS
TO MARKET OF SMALL
FARMERS**

Why do we need “rural animators/ facilitators”?

An easier access to market simplifies maintaining of small and family farming systems which:

- have characterised Europe since the agricultural revolution until nowadays and
- propose an alternative way for food production against the intensive, industrial agriculture.

However, small farmers face more and more difficulties when they try to access markets, make food processing or build their marketing activities. The solution for these small farmers could be the development of short food supply chains.

The main constraints of traditional food chain development are:

- the lack of knowledge of the market,
- lack of time for organisation and,
- lack of money for investment.

The answer might be the so-called “rural business angels” who can plug these gaps across the value chains, also called “rural animators” or “rural facilitators”.

SOLVE CONFLICTS

LOOK FOR SPECIALIZED SUPPORT

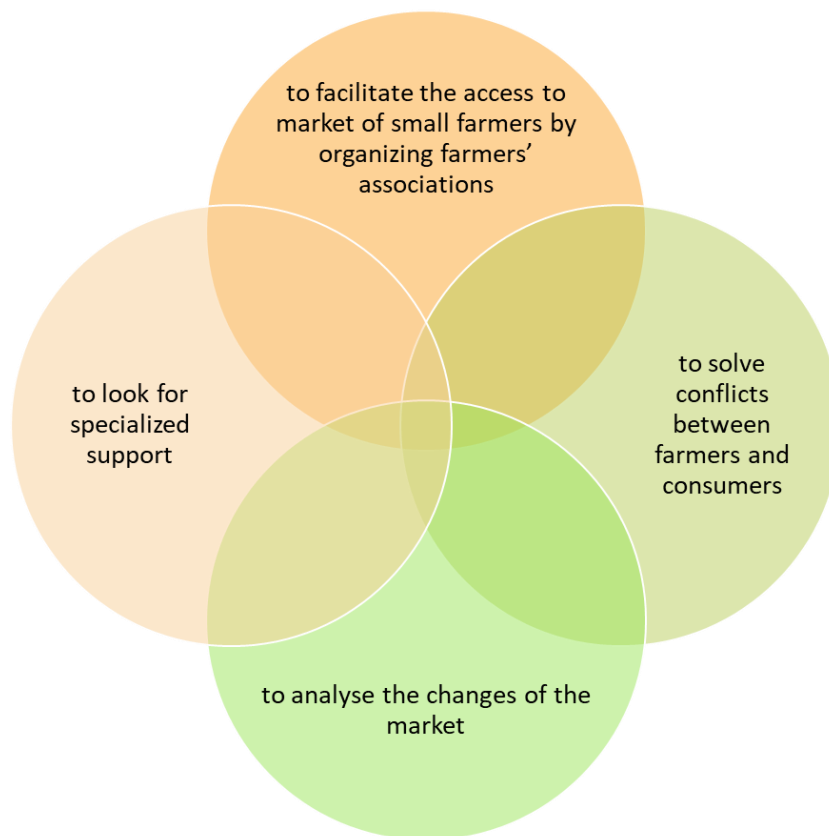
ANALYSE THE CHANGES OF THE MARKET

The Rural Facilitator project intends to collect those competences which are necessary for elaboration of a rural animation job profile, and which can help identify who will be the “rural facilitators” in short food supply chain

according to the countries’ specificities.

These specialized persons will be able:

- to facilitate the access to market of small farmers by organizing farmers’ associations,
- to solve conflicts between farmers and consumers,
- to look for specialized support,
- to analyse the changes of the market.



Scheme 2. Envisaged roles of a rural facilitator

Before defining these competences the *Rural Facilitator* project partnership made a research in their countries to find out:

- if there is a legal form of animator/rural facilitator in partner countries and
- if YES, what kind of education/vocational trainings are available for those people who want to work in SFSC animation/ service.

WHO CAN BE SFSC ANIMATORS/ INTERMEDIARIES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES?

CZ	RO	HU	PL	FR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Retailer, •Agricultural holding, •Food producer, •Associations of municipalities, •Municipalities, •NGOs that represents farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Food producer, farmer •Local development associations, •Organisers of farmers' markets and shops (including local government), •Retail shops, •NGOs that represents farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Legal entities, as restaurants, •Communal caterers, •Retail shops, •Social cooperatives, •Organisers of farmers' markets and shops (including local government), •Organizers of community supported agriculture forms (including farmers, local development associations, LEADER local action groups). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Retailer, •Agricultural holding, •Food producer, farmer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Organisations for the promotion and animation of short supply chains (CIVAM, ASARD), •Organizations connecting farmers and producers without selling the products themselves, •Retailers (GMS, shop sale, grocery store), •Catering providers (traditional catering, farm inn, public catering).

DEFINITIONS, SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND SERVICES, TRAINING PROVIDED TO POTENTIAL SFSC ANIMATORS

Czech Republic

Definition: There is no legal or scientific definition on national level for SFSC animator in the Czech Republic, this position doesn't exist yet.

Organisations supporting farmers' entry into SFSCs:

- the State Agricultural Intervention Fund,
- local action groups (using the LEADER method),
- the Ministry of the Environment through the Truly Healthy School programme (connecting students and school canteens with regional farmers),
- the Ministry of Agriculture,
- the Agrarian Chamber of the Czech Republic.

NO LEGAL OR SCIENTIFIC DEFINITION

**CZECH UNIVERSITY
OF LIFE SCIENCES
(CULS) PRAGUE**

**SCHOOLS AND
UNIVERSITIES**

NGOS

HNUTÍ DUHA

**AGRICULTURE
SUPPORTING
COMMUNITIES**

FAMILY FARMS

SMES

**SEMINARS
CONFERENCES
TRAINING
COURSES
MEETINGS
LECTURES**

- the Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS) Prague in partnership with the national network of local action groups.
- selected schools and universities and,
- NGOs - such as Hnutí duha (interactive directory of local farmers),
- partnerships between producer and consumer called Community supported agriculture (4 types: Community of Subscribers; Community of Farmsteads; Subscriber of Agriculture Supporting Community; Legal Arrangement),
- family farms - which cooperates together and selling the products together through local shops,
- SMEs - direct sale of their products or sale of products of different farmers to the end-customers.

Services provided to farmers who want to launch SFSCs:

- Lectures,
- Consultations,
- Expert advice,
- Administrative work on behalf of farmers,
- Networking, establishing partnerships,
- Events, trainings, seminars.

Education, vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service:

- Lectures organised by the State Agricultural Intervention Fund,
- Seminars organized by universities in cooperation with the national network of local action groups,
- Seminars, conferences, training materials provided by local action groups,
- Conferences, lectures, courses for farmers regarding SFSC offered by the Ministry of Agriculture,
- Meetings, lectures, seminars organised by the “Agriculture Supporting Communities),
- “Truly Healthy School” programme where regional farmers are introduced to schools as both producers of healthy food and providers of knowledge on curricular topics such as health, food, nature.

Romania

Definition: There is no official definition for SFSC animators. There is one, somewhat related occupation in Romanian (Occupations Code: Cod COR 342204), Facilitator of community development, Level of studies - 3 (middle or post-secondary studies), but agriculture is a peripheral topic in its occupational standards.

Organisations supporting farmers' entry into SFSCs:

- NGOs,
- Local action groups (within the National Rural Development Programme),
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development,
- Public bodies: county council, local municipalities, associations of municipalities,
- Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture.

Services provided to farmers who want to launch SFSCs:

- Participation on international festivals, fairs,
- Community building training,
- Study tours,
- Market for local farmers are organized on regular basis (monthly),
- Local branding: e.g. Sekler Product, Gobe Product, Transylvania Authentica,
- Local, regional event organisation: local festivals (Village in the city), village days organised beyond a local product (Cabbage, Onion, Plum festival, etc.).

Education, vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service:

- Vocational training for "Community developers" (agriculture is a peripheral topic in these trainings),
- Vocational training for "Agricultural Agents", employed by local councils to keep the registers of the lands used for agriculture (not directly connected to SFSCs, but developing some related competences such as "development of agriculture, households and good use of local resources"),
- Practical trainings and thematic lectures provided by NGOs (food safety, community building, marketing),

NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC BODIES

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR "COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS"

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR "AGRICULTURAL AGENTS"

Hungary

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Definition: There is no legal or scientific definition for SFSC animator/facilitator yet. The fact that only one intermediary is allowed between producer and consumer undermines the development of SFSC as this intermediary should be marketing, IT, logistics, tourism and community development expert *at once*.

LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENTS

Although there is a substantial need for this catalyzing role conducive to strong and sustainable growth of SFSC's. Responding to needs greater focus is being given to quasi "SFSC facilitation" in the rural development grant proposal to support SFSCs and farmer's market funded by EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development). It is required to assign a person from the consortium who as a quasi "SFSC facilitator" is obligated to participate on a specific preparatory training.

The SFSC concept is often related to the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) concept (farmers and consumers sharing responsibilities) and the - yet not clearly defined - Local Food Movements (resilient food networks connecting farmers and consumers, organized on regional basis).

Organisations supporting farmers' entry into SFSCs:

- Family farms, food producing SME's,
- Specific restaurants and some of the public catering companies (together with the connected municipalities),
- Umbrella organization: Kislépték Association,
- Local development associations: Leader associations, naturpark associations, local tourism associations, associations running consumer's communities.
- Social cooperatives,
- Public bodies: Agricultural Ministry, Chamber of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Institute, ÖMKI - Organic Agriculture Research Institute, Rural Development Network.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

STUDY TOURS

FARMERS' MARKET

MARKETING BASED ON TRADE MARK SYSTEMS

Services provided to farmers who want to launch SFSCs:

- trainings: organized on an incidental basis,
- community building events,
- study tours (exchange of information and best practices, extend networks),
- organizing farmers' market,
- marketing based on trade mark systems (common identity)

TENDER WRITING

with visual and content-related elements, social media-, local media appearance, promotion on events).

LEGAL EXTENSION

- common event organization: with the purpose of community building, information exchange and community marketing,

IT SOLUTIONS

- tender writing through specialized service providers,
- legal extension service,
- IT solutions (IT marketing and sales solutions),
- maintenance of a local value repository.

LOCAL VALUE REPOSITORY

Education, vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT-RELATED UNIVERSITY COURSES

- sustainable development-related university courses (deal with SFSCs only peripherally),
- rural development vocational training for rural development technician qualification (knowledge about alternative income opportunities in the countryside, running an own agricultural business, organizational work),
- practice-oriented adult trainings organized by Agricultural Chamber (small-scale food producing, SFSC preparation, farm house keeper training),
- non-formal, thematic training, info-days, study tours, publications (food processing, hygiene, trade mark and marketing, agro tourism, SFSC, etc.),
- preparatory training for SFSC facilitators in the rural development grant supported projects (business planning, sales channels, marketing & use of trademark, organization of horizontal relationship, conflict management).

PRACTICE-ORIENTED ADULT TRAININGS**NON-FORMAL, THEMATIC TRAINING, INFO-DAYS, STUDY TOURS, PUBLICATIONS****Poland**

Definition: According to law there is no restriction about the SFSC animator, those who would like to be SFSC animators have to accomplish several conditions:

- To have sufficient knowledge about law,
- To have relevant capacity to be an animator,
- To have relevant teaching skills to do that activity.

There is a training assured by the Polish advisory system (a network of 16 regional Agricultural Advisory Centres) for all staff working in this institution in the area of knowledge, skills and competences relevant to the topic they are dealing with.

Organisations supporting farmers' entry into SFSCs:

MANAGEMENT AND LOGISTICS MODELS

- Family farms,
- Umbrella organisations or sectorial federation,
- NGOs,
- Cooperatives.

Services provided to farmers who want to launch SFSCs:

GUIDELINES FOR HIGH-QUALITY LOCAL BRANDS

- training to producers (business skills and skills needed to cooperate with others, IT and use of technological,
- solutions in the production/development of products, logistics, health and hygiene),
- management and logistics models,
- guidelines for high-quality local brands,
- support to the communication activities of potential beneficiaries of SFSC systems,
- monitoring the results and operation of SFSC systems are monitored in order to assess the social, economic and environmental benefits of the functioning of the SFSC system,
- maintaining databases that enable networking between producers and other members of the SFSC system to build new partnership networks,
- consultancy (legal, accountancy, access to credit, access to subvention, tender writing, business management).

MONITORING THE RESULTS AND OPERATION

DATABASES

CONSULTANCY

TRAINING ABOUT FOOD SAFETY

Education, vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service:

UNIVERSITY LECTURES

- training about food safety by all Agricultural Advisory Centres and other public organisations,
- university lectures,
- training to producers in the following topics:
- general business skills, such as planning, financial management, marketing, risk management, as well as on the skills needed to cooperate with others,
- branding and labeling,
- negotiations and contracts,
- needs of SFSC systems in the field of IT,
- use of technological solutions in the production/development of products,
- logistics and,
- best practices in the field of health and hygiene.

France

Definition: There is not yet a legal or scientific definition for SFSC animator/animation/facilitation in France.

Organisations supporting farmers' entry into SFSCs:

- NGOs (local food networks, cooperative farming associations, Association of bookkeeping),
- Local networks of organic farmers,
- Chambers of Agriculture,
- Regional Natural Parcs,
- Regions,
- Cities,
- Retailers, deviverers.

ANIMATION OFFERED BY TERRITORIAL FOOD PROJECTS

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEREST GROUPS

Services provided to farmers who want to launch SFSCs:

COOPERATIVES OF SOCIAL AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

PLATFORMS

ORGANISATION, ACCOUNTING, LOGISTICS

RETAILER, DISTANCE SELLING

BASKETS

- animation offered by territorial food projects (consolidation of a territorial food system),
- toolbox (cards with practical tools) to facilitate the purchase of food products to public catering (Localim),
- economic and environmental interest groups - official recognition of the collective commitment of farmers by the state (IEMGs),
- cooperatives of social and inclusive economy - various stakeholders (authorities, farmers, individuals) join together in "colleges" around a common project (SCICs),
- collaboration between social and inclusive economy enterprises, local authorities, rsearch poles and training organistions (TPCEs),
- joint platforms and tools (Auvergne bio distribution, Agrilocal.fr),
- organisation, accounting, logistics,
- sales: retailer, distance selling, baskets.

Education, vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service:

- Trainings offered by RMT Network (Mixed Technological Local Food Network) , they check available trainings, capitalize data and results for trainers and propose new training modules,
- Trainings for particular projects or for wider audience (by AFOCG) - topics: costs and sale prices, organisation within the farm, viability, negotiation,
- Educational tools and training for farmers around the SFSC topic (GRAB, GAB),
- No specific training for "rural facilitators."

4. CONCLUSION

Based on EU regulation 1305/2013 mutually accepted definition of SFSC is: an alternative, locally committed food supply chain with one intermediary between farmers/small scale food producers and consumers to improve local income and food quality. Only the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (EAFRD European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) uses this legal definition. In case of commercial activity authorities apply food hygienic rules and definitions according to 852/2004 EC regulation.

According to the national definitions presented in this report definitions make reference to SFSC as a commercial relation between the PRODUCER and CONSUMER with max. one (in France and Hungary) or as few as possible (in the Czech Republic and Romania) intermediaries, in Poland the number of intermediaries is not specified.

Intermediaries can be retailers, local governments, NGOs representing local farmers, local farmer developments, organisers of farmers' markets and shops, farmers, food producers. In several cases they are able to facilitate the organisation of short food chains however their motivation is variable.

In none of the project partner countries (the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Poland and Romania) is there a legal or scientific definition for SFSC animator/facilitator yet. Although there is a substantial need for this catalyzing role conducive to strong and sustainable growth of SFSC's.

Facilitator/animator should be a person assigned who fulfils some basic requirements and accomplish several conditions, like to have sufficient knowledge about law, relevant capacity to be an animator and teaching skills to do that activity, or participates in a preparatory training to ensure these knowledges. This training will develop general business skills (planning, finance, marketing) as well as some soft skills like problem solving, leadership and interpersonal skills.

The desk study underpinned that those facilitators who help farmers to sell their product and create added value and motivate consumers to look for local products, should be multitasking individuals who gained wide range knowledge in the following fields:

- food production: crop and livestock production in small quantity,
- food processing,
- food hygiene,
- regulatory background,
- communication and marketing,
- psychology,
- risk management,
- economy,
- market organization.

This expectation raised the question how these high qualified persons are able to get by in rural areas where the main potential clients are the smallest farmers.

As revealed in the present research, currently the following types of organisations facilitate and enhance farmers' cooperation in SFSC:

FACILITATE AND ENHANCE

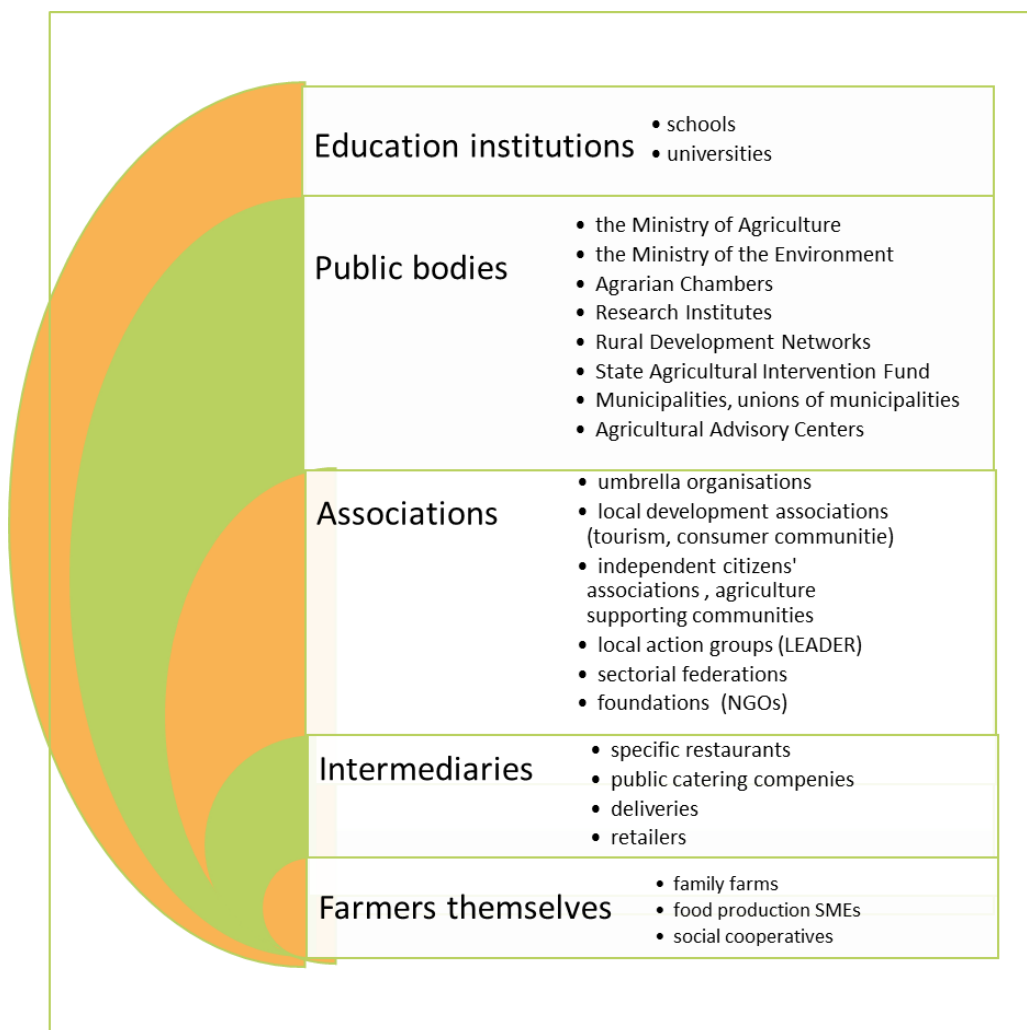
BOTH FOR-PROFIT AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

PRIVATE BODIES (both for-profit and non-profit organizations):

- ⇒ NGOs, umbrella organisations (like Kisleptek),
- ⇒ Networks,
- ⇒ Umbrella organisations or sectorial federation,
- ⇒ Social cooperatives,
- ⇒ Family farms, food producing SME's,
- ⇒ Specific restaurants,
- ⇒ Local development associations: LEADER associations, local action groups, naturpark associations, local tourism associations, associations of consumer communities.

PUBLIC BODIES:

- ⇒ Ministry of Agriculture,
- ⇒ Ministry of the Environment,
- ⇒ Chamber of Commerce/Agriculture,
- ⇒ Agricultural Research Institute (including organic agriculture),
- ⇒ Local governments (county councils, city councils),
- ⇒ VET schools and universities .



Scheme 3. What kind of organisation enhance farmers' cooperation?

SERVICES provided by these facilitators for farmers who want to launch SFSCs, includes:

DATABASES

- CONSULTANCY - paid or for free, depending on service provider:
 - advisory service in technical issues,
 - legal consultation,
 - accountancy consultation,
 - cooperation facilitation,
 - access to credit - banks,
 - access to subvention - EU funds,
 - tender writing.
- ADMINISTRATIVE WORK on behalf of farmers,
- ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS, databases that enable networking between producers and other members of the SFSC system to build new partnership networks,
- Organising SEMINARS, EVENTS,
- Participation on INTERNATIONAL festivals, fairs,
- STUDY TOUR organization, in order to exchange information, to learn about adaptable best practices and to extend connection,
- FARMERS' MARKET: markets for local farmers are organized on regular basis (monthly),
- MARKETING based on TRADE MARK systems. Their marketing activity contains: common identity with visual and content-related elements, social media-, local media appearance, promotion on events,
- COMMON EVENT ORGANIZATION: with the purpose of community building, information exchange and community marketing.

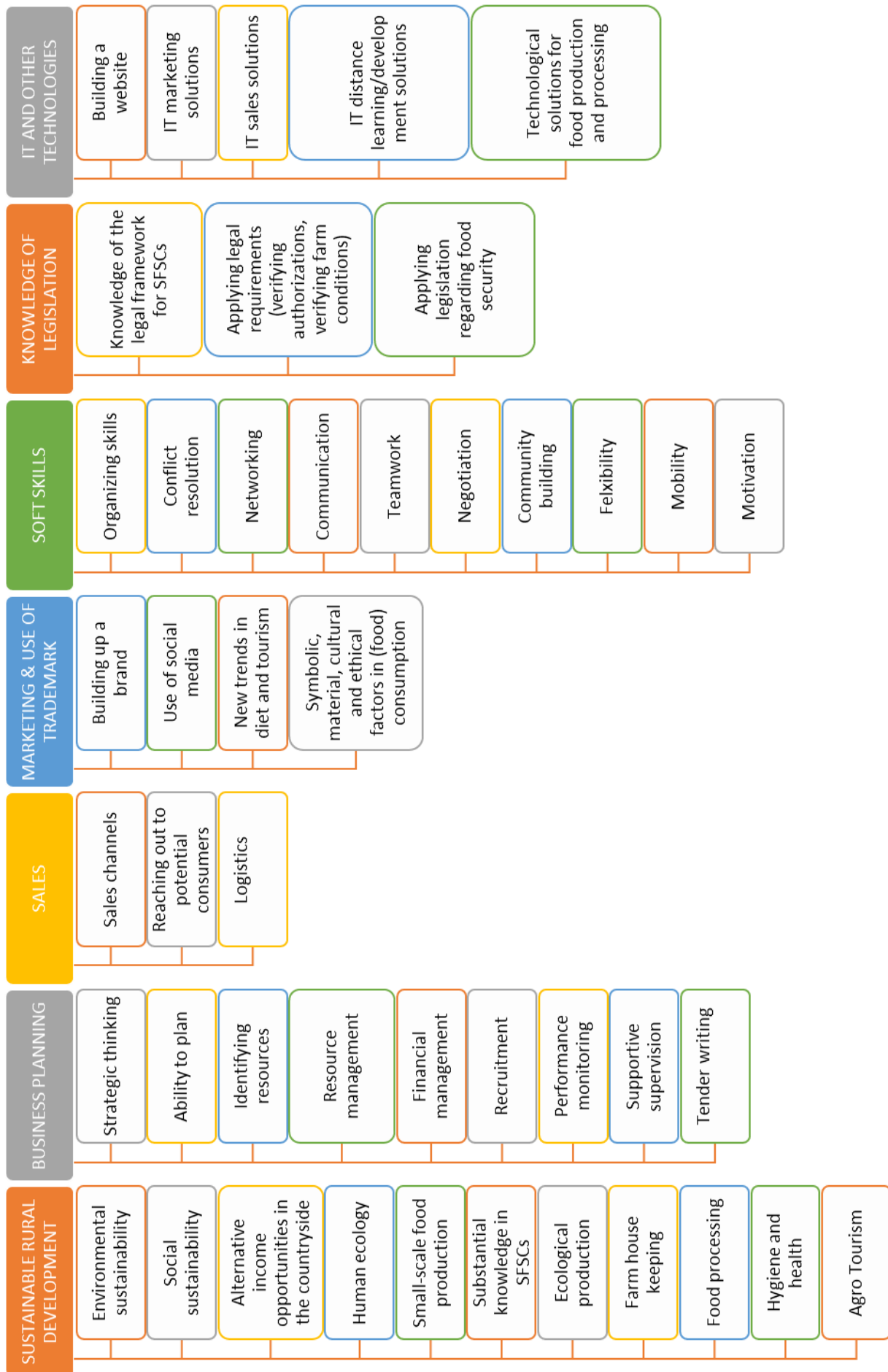
Scheme 4. Services provided to farmers to facilitate the launch of SFSCs



Most of the education and vocational training available for those people who want work in SFSC animation service, put lots of emphasis on information transfer, competence development is less focused in most training curricula. Universities, VET schools and AE institutions (NGOs) were mentioned as training providers of short, specialized trainings for SFSC animators. Some universities and VET schools use curriculum with strong agricultural focus, but these courses are not directly addressed to SFSC animators. AE institutions and NGOs provide tailor-made courses for different target groups, but these opportunities are occasional and highly dependent on grant possibilities.

The main training topics mentioned in the desk research reports were the following: hygiene, food safety, food processing, trade mark and marketing, local sales within short supply chains, introducing new projects and good practices of successful cooperation, key features of each farmer, advantages of cooperation, food system animator and community building.

Scheme 5. Knowledge and competence areas relevant for the human resource aspect of the SFSCs



**CONCLUSIONS:
TRAINING NEEDS**

This report has been developed for the purpose of the *Rural Facilitator Training in Agricultural Short Food Supply Chains* project (supported by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme, project no. 2019-1-CZ01-KA202-061270) in order to provide a better understanding of the existing Short Food Supply Chain (SFSC) ecosystem in the partner EU countries - the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Poland, and Romania - with some outlook to the practices promoted at EU level.

As a first step towards developing a Competence Catalogue, a Business Roadmap and a Training Programme for Rural Facilitators, the project partners conducted a desk research that helped us formulate conclusions and possible solutions that might be adopted in the project countries and beyond.

A broad spectrum of knowledge and competence areas relevant for the human resource aspect of the SFSCs as identified in the present research (see the table of the previous page). As for the type of training that should be provided for people who would like to become "rural facilitators", most partners agreed that an adult training course would be suitable, involving e-learning elements and having a strong focus on competence development, including soft and social skills development. Considering the complexity of the "rural facilitator" attributes, applicants at this adult education training programme should have a bachelor's level in a relevant field (urban planning, planning, geography, economic development, management, etc.) and some professional experience in project management, local government and agricultural networks' management. Basic skills in project management methods should also be considered among the "entry requirements", as well as some writing, analytical and synthesis skills, and good communication skills. It should be also considered that this complexity of knowledge would demand a "superhero", that is why each country or region must choose those training element which are crucial for their SFSC development. It means that the future learning material should provide a living repository of knowledge grouped in obligatory and optional chapters.

In the next research steps, the Rural Facilitator project partnership will analyse the findings of the report to identify the core competences. Based on the competence catalogue that the partnership will develop, the most relevant training topics will be identified and a training curriculum for "rural facilitators" will be set up.