



**Rural Facilitator**

**IO4/A1**

# **Guidelines and Pedagogical Methodology**

Rural Facilitator Training in Agricultural

Short Food Supply Chains

2019-1-CZ01-KA202-061270



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



**Erasmus+**

Activity leader: Trebag Ltd.

30 / 04 /2021

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## Introduction of the Project

The **main purpose** of 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) is 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.

The main result of the project is an **innovative training material** for short food supply chain animation which will be a newly formed bottom-up profession based on country specific needs.

As the SFSC has developed in different pathways, from 2020 a well-structured comparison is necessary to understand the main characteristics of the short chains.

The partnership is committed to explore the possible ways on how to generate the position of a so-called Rural facilitator and to develop the necessary learning materials and training tools to train individuals who intend to take this new profession in their career. **The target group** of the project is wide:

- Organizers / animators potentially involved: resuming intellectual women;
- Employees of LEADER organizations;
- already existing market organizers;
- rural development NGO;
- restaurant suppliers;
- rural tourism organizers/providers, producers and restarters in rural areas.

The **partnership** of the project consists of members who are all related actors of the agricultural sector but with various focuses and expertise. The consortium contains a university, a farmer representation body, National Union of Small Farmers and Service providers, a stakeholder for autonomous groups in agriculture and a regional development body, a training center.

This training material is aimed at developing a new training material and a corresponding curriculum. Based on findings in earlier phases of the project and in line with the modules of the Rural Facilitator Handbook this training material is developed to focus on transferring knowledge and developing special competences and skills of future rural facilitators. This provides an interactive content because so far SFSC' farmers were involved in training programs to have better understanding of cooperation, food safety and market issues but those people who try to support local farmers have a more complicated access to information and would need additional skills for bridging between the actors in a SFSC. The innovation of the training material is ensured by the new approach which focuses on the facilitators/helpers of the small farmers.

## Earlier Findings: Desk Research and Competence Catalog

The development of the training material was preceded by the compilation of a desk research and a competence catalog in earlier phases of the project.

Researches have highlighted the problem that small producers have difficulties separately, so they need to work together to gain market access. In these cooperations the role of the intermediate players is to have taken over some of these activities from producers. These are supply chain organizers who understand market and agricultural processes thus helping farmers to gain market access. In the first part of our project experts agreed that it is necessary to start a special SFSC organizer training and to develop special eligibility conditions, as well as the training of SFSC advisers, however, these development and support directions are still missing in practice.

Therefore, the partnership committed to explore the possible ways on how to generate the position of a so-called Rural facilitator, who can plug these gaps across the value chains, and to develop the necessary learning materials and training tools to train individuals who intend to take this new profession in their career.

The desk research points out how SFSC farmers cooperation can be managed, what are the main driving forces of the already functioning SFSC groups, who are the managers, advisors, facilitators of already existing SFSC groups and what are the most relevant competences which should be provided by market organizers/ facilitators.

## Who can be SFSC animator/intermediary in the examined countries?

The identification of the role of the rural facilitator was the primary goal for the project. The following table shows the possible SFSC animators by partnership countries.

CZ	RO	HU	PL	FR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retail shops</li> <li>● Food producer</li> <li>● Agricultural holding</li> <li>● Associations of municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retail shops</li> <li>● Farmers</li> <li>● Food producer</li> <li>● Local development associations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retail shops</li> <li>● Legal entities: as restaurants, communal caterers,</li> <li>● Social cooperatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retail shops</li> <li>● Farmer</li> <li>● Food producer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Retail shops</li> <li>● Caterers (traditional catering, farm inn, collective catering)</li> <li>● Organizations for the promotion and</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Municipalities</li> <li>● NGOs that represent farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organizers of farmers' markets and shops (public and private entities)</li> <li>● NGOs that represent farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organizers of farmers' markets and shops (including local government)</li> <li>● Organizers of community supported agriculture forms (including farmers, local development associations, LEADER local action groups)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agricultural holding</li> </ul>	<p>animation of short circuits (CIVAM, ASARD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organization who organize the link between the farmers and producers, <i>but</i> without selling directly the products themselves, e.g. producers' shop</li> </ul>
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Each country has different approach of the *transaction between the farmers and intermediaries*:

- ⇒ There is no official definition in Romania for the transaction, but in practice intermediaries buy and resell products from farmers.
- ⇒ In Hungary there are two types of intermediaries with commercial (profit oriented) and for rural development (not for profit oriented) intent.
- ⇒ In the Czech Republic the intermediary may be a retailer or even a processor if he/she purchases a product from a farmer and he takes the control of the product.
- ⇒ In France three types of intermediaries are mentioned: (1) animation (mostly associations who have links with farmers to develop new initiatives and propose new practices), (2) services of an organization: promotion and supervision of sales operations to promote producers' products and (3) retailers.
- ⇒ In Poland the supply of agricultural products is regulated by the law, there is an obligation to conclude written contracts applying to deliveries of specific groups of agricultural products from farmers in Poland, determined by three factors: product status, supplier status and status of the first buyer.

## Knowledge and Competences to Elaborate in the Training

One of the previous project outputs was a collection of competences which are necessary for elaboration of rural animation and training, which can clearly identify who will be rural facilitators in short food supply chain according to countries specialties. Based on this collection of competences the main knowledge and competences are listed underneath. The whole collection is available as Output 1 of this project.

As a conclusion of the research, we can affirm that one solution might be a sort of “rural business angels” who can plug the gaps across the value chains, namely the rural animators or rural facilitators. These specially trained persons will be able to:

- ☐ facilitate the access to market of small farmers because they will be able to organize farmers’ associations,
- ☐ to promote dialogue between farmers and consumers- maybe there are no conflicts)
- ☐ look for special supports,
- ☐ analyses the changes of markets
- ☐ identify territorial needs to develop the most suitable short food chains.

**The broad spectrum of knowledge and competence areas relevant** for the human resource aspect of the SFSCs as identified in the research done in earlier phases of the project:

☐ Knowledge concerning SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT (environmental sustainability, social sustainability, local development methods and opportunities, issues related to community development, job creation, diversification of local income opportunities in the countryside, human ecology, small-scale food production, substantial knowledge in SFSCs, ecological production, environmental aspects of transportation, farmhouse keeping, food processing, hygiene and health, agritourism).

☐ Very good KNOWLEDGE OF THE THREE SECTORS: public, private and civil society, including a good understanding of their expectations and potential contributions to the partnership, as well as of potential conflicts of interest and ways to deal with them, understanding the potential and dynamics of civic groups.

☐ Knowledge and competences regarding BUSINESS PLANNING (strategic thinking, ability to plan, identifying resources, resource management, financial management, recruitment, performance monitoring, supportive supervision, tender writing).

☐ Knowledge and competences regarding SALES, MARKETING and USE OF TRADEMARK (sales channels, reaching out to potential consumers, logistics, building up a brand, use of social media, new trends in diet and tourism, symbolic, material, cultural and ethical factors in food and other goods’ consumption).

☐ PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS, including resource management and evaluation, needed both to identify projects with a high potential to achieve strategic objectives, and to carry out the animator’s own activities (e.g. community meetings), which should be managed in a professional way.

☐ A wide range of SOCIAL COMPETENCES, SOFT SKILLS, including “facilitator” skills, motivating skills, skills to engage and mobilize potential partners, capability to reach out and involve also the

most disadvantaged groups, educator skills, ability to stimulate and managing active learning processes, “integrator” skills, developing community bonds and communication, conflict resolution, networking, communication, teamwork, negotiation.

☐ KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION (legal framework for SFSCs, applying legal requirements, verifying authorizations, verifying farm conditions, applying legislation regarding food security).

☐ Knowledge of IT AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES (building a website, IT marketing solutions, IT sales solutions, IT distance learning/development solutions, Technological solutions for food production and processing).

☐ PRACTICAL SKILLS related to such issues as organization of meetings, moderation of workshops/discussion, methods of ensuring public participation, basic knowledge of agriculture, etc.

## Modules of the Training

### Partners of the Project

The chapters of the Rural Facilitator Handbook were elaborated by the members of the partnership, and based on this, the chapters of this training material were also developed by these partners of the project:

**Association ARID** (Poland) [www.arid.org.pl](http://www.arid.org.pl)

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague** (Czech Republic) <https://www.czu.cz/en/>

**Kislépték Association** (Hungary) [www.kisleptek.hu](http://www.kisleptek.hu)

**Savoir-Faire & Co** (France) [www.lesavoirfaire.fr](http://www.lesavoirfaire.fr)

**Spektrum Educational Center Foundation** (Romania) [www.sec.ro](http://www.sec.ro)

**Trebag Intellectual Property- and Project Manager Ltd.** (Hungary) [www.trebag.hu](http://www.trebag.hu)

The main chapters of the training are:

<p><b>Innovative short food supply chains</b></p>	<p>This chapter introduces the short food supply chain through best practices, case studies in order to provide better understanding of innovative short value chains which become available in all the European Union member states. It also aims to present the differences between traditional direct selling and new alternative food chains. Finally, it gives a practical guide for setting and boosting up a new group of farmers and describes the main steps of organizing farmers’ markets.</p>
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<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	short food supply chain, alternative food system, direct sale, cooperation, innovative good practices, facilitator
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>	The main objectives of this chapter are to understand the different definitions of short and alternative food supply chains and to identify different types of short chains. The chapter describes the main steps of setting-up of SFSC groups which will provide an easy-to-use guideline for facilitators. Some tips and practical advice help the better understand the process of market organization and give a wider picture about the role of rural facilitators.
<b>Short food supply chain and ecological transition</b>	The rural facilitators will find information about the impacts of SFSC on ecological transition because future facilitators must know and use the most environmentally friendly practices in order to reduce CO2 emissions, other air pollutants' emissions, not reusable packaging, applications of harmful chemicals. Thanks to this chapter, they will have solutions to minimize these impacts in the projects they animate at local level. This subject is based on the French legislative and theoretic movement called ecological transition, which will be detailed in order to raise the focus on a more sustainable agri-food system.
<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	ecological transition, greening agriculture, agroecology, re-use packaging, local processing, pooling logistic, local economy
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>	The facilitators are aware of the "weak links" of short circuits from an agroecology point of view. They will gain knowledge on how to argue with their partners (intermediaries, farmers, consumers, local municipalities etc.) to convince them. They will get to know how to make the decisions (or stimulate dynamics), which will make it possible to improve the environmental assessment of the project(s).
<b>Business thinking for Rural Facilitators</b>	In this chapter, the rural facilitators can find theoretical background for an important question like how to fund a business idea, how to form this idea into a functional business and how to plan this business in detail. The main topics of the chapter are: introduction of the main business skills, strategic thinking and planning, Ikigai concept in business, Business model Canvas and Business Plan.
<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	business, strategy, strategic thinking, strategy analysis, ikigai concept business model canvas, business plan.
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>	Business oriented thinking is an important part of every successful project and one of the main leadership skills. It is also becoming a key factor for the survival of small-scale farming in this turbulent, increasingly complex global economy. Farmers and rural facilitators have to see their activities as a business and with the goal of earning profit. The main learning objectives of this chapter is to get to know an overview of the main business skills, to explore the ideas of strategic thinking and planning, to be introduced to the Ikigai concept in business, to learn how to use Business model canvas, and to explore the basics of the business plan.
<b>Marketing tips in short food supply chains</b>	What is marketing? Putting the right product in the right place, at the right price, at the right time. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the rural facilitator with adequate knowledge about the marketability of smallholder food products. It provides clues in interpreting market expectations, reaching customers, marketability



	of products, sales channels, and provides traceable practical ideas for the sales process.
<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	marketing, product, price, promotion, brand, food safety
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>	In a short supply chain, the producer must recognize the needs of customers, the market, know the legal regulations in the field of packaging, food safety, environmental protection, be able to innovate the product, be able to serve the customer directly and online. The rural facilitator can help him/her in this difficult process. Communication and marketing are crucial in direct sale, however, farmers often miss these competences or they miss time to do so, that is why SFSC animators can play an important role in organization of common or private communication. In this module we cover these topics: how to create the identity of a food business, how to reach out potential customers, how to treat customers, by presenting at least 2 best practices.
<b>Communication and conflict management for Rural Facilitators</b>	In this chapter, the rural facilitators get information on the elements of communication and conflict management techniques. The facilitator works mostly in groups with different people. To create working groups and working in teams is more than necessary, it is a must if we are looking for a successful democratic operation in a community. The facilitator plays a very important role in moderating and leading the organization of network building. He has got in his hands the survival of the chain.
<b>KEYWORDS:</b>	communication, active listening, effective communication, conflict resolution, conflict management
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES:</b>	The work of the SFSC animators communication is crucial, and the main goal is not to fail in communication. Useful tips are provided in this chapter on how a more effective communication could be achieved. The DISC behavior assessment tool with the 4 types is briefly presented in this chapter (the types: D-Dominance, I-Influence, S-Steadiness, and C-Conscientiousness). The conflict management part focuses on discovering 5 main conflict resolution strategies, and providing tips for more effective treatment of conflicts. Main topics are: communication, its elements and types; how to improve the communication process and effective communication; the role of active listening, and how to moderate a conflict.
<b>Leadership Skills</b>	This chapter enumerates those skills which one should have for a successful Rural Facilitator namely, time management, risk management, decision-making, and negotiations skills. These are individually and collectively helpful in building the SFSC, which is the ultimate goal in short food supply chain management. This chapter will explain why they are useful, and how these qualities may be used.
<b>Keywords:</b>	Time Management. Risk Management. Decision-making. Negotiation. Leadership
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	Rural facilitators assume the role of leaders for those whom they are assisting. It is therefore important that they develop certain skills which will empower them to be good leaders and affect greater changes. This chapter is explaining which skills Rural

	Facilitators should focus on, as well as how they can practically use them. The main topics: how to develop leadership skills that Rural Facilitators should have; to understand how these skills help Rural Facilitators assist their customers; how to understand the ultimate impact of effective Rural Facilitation.
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## EQF level of the Training

The training follows the European Qualifications Framework levels.

What is the EQF?

*“The EU developed the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a translation tool to make national qualifications easier to understand and more comparable. The EQF seeks to support cross-border mobility of learners and workers, promote lifelong learning and professional development across Europe. The EQF is an 8-level, learning outcomes-based framework for all types of qualifications that serves as a translation tool between different national qualifications frameworks. This framework helps improve transparency, comparability and portability of people’s qualifications and makes it possible to compare qualifications from different countries and institutions.*

*The EQF covers all types and all levels of qualifications and the use of learning outcomes makes it clear what a person knows, understands and is able to do. The level increases according to the level of proficiency, level 1 is the lowest and 8 the highest level. Most importantly the EQF is closely linked to national qualifications frameworks, this way it can provide a comprehensive map of all types and levels of qualifications in Europe, which are increasingly accessible through qualification databases.”<sup>1</sup>*

The level of the training is set to the EQF level 5:

### Level 5 - learning outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Comprehensive, specialized, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and

<sup>1</sup> quotation from <https://europa.eu/europass/en/european-qualifications-framework-efq> (accessed 24.04.2021)

awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge		develop performance of self and others
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## Pedagogical Background

To provide an overview of the pedagogical background for the training, in this chapter a brief introduction will be given on the main concept of constructivism and connectivism, on gamification (including the BLOOM taxonomy), on web2.0 tools, on modern teaching methods, on interactive methods and on project work methodology. The personality of the trainer is of high importance in all educational activities, therefore a section is devoted to the desired skills of the trainer.

During the training we try to showcase a wide range of pedagogical methods. These methods already go beyond the boundaries of a standard classroom, and we have tried to recommend a menu to SFSC multiplayer participants so that education can be tailored to the specific circumstances of the planned training. All above mentioned teaching methods are directing the trainers from frontal presenting to integrating the participants into the teaching-learning activity, because researches show that the more active the participants the more they will benefit from a training.

The training always shall be tailored to the needs of the participants and the given circumstances. Since the production of this Methodology is under the years of Covid pandemic, a section is devoted to numerous online possibilities.

## Constructivism

The theoretical framework of Constructivism holds that learning always builds upon knowledge that a student already knows. Because all learning is filtered through pre-existing schemata, constructivists suggest that learning is more effective when a student is actively engaged in the learning process rather than attempting to receive knowledge passively.

The most traditional way of transferring knowledge and skills is the directive or instructional model where the trainer/teacher gives a lecture or a presentation. This way the teacher/trainer is the source of information and the learner/trainee is the recipient. In many cases this is the less time-consuming way to present a topic and normally materials are put in a form which makes it easier to present. However, on the trainees' side, it is a passive type of learning. The learners' previous knowledge and their preconceptions are not included in the learning process and they are not encouraged to take an active part, by questioning and constructing the answers and exploring the core of the learning content through experiencing via their own reflections.

According to Audrey Gray<sup>2</sup>, the characteristics of a constructivist classroom are as follows:

- the learners are actively involved
- the environment is democratic
- the activities are interactive and student-centered
- the teacher facilitates a process of learning in which students are encouraged to be responsible and autonomous

In the activities we follow this idea of teaching to encourage future trainers to use this methodology rather than the directive, instructional one.

However, we need to be aware that the learners/trainees out of their previous educational background or because of cultural differences might not feel familiar to these methods and refuse or feel uneasy in a learning situation like this. It is always the trainers' decision to switch from one teaching method to another in order to better meet the needs of the participants of the training.

In accordance with the constructivism teaching theory we recommend the following teaching techniques to be applied in the training based on the theory of constructivism:

- **Case studies** (showing a real-world, happened case in details)
- **Comparisons** (examining the differences/similarities of two or more things)
- **Role plays** (a speaking activity when participants play to be somebody else or act as themselves in an imaginary situation)
- **Problem-solving** (learning by working on problems: observe, understand, analyze and find solutions, decide the solution)
- **Field trips** (a trip/excursion away from the usual learning environment with the aim to observe the targeted topic)
- **Films, videos and other visual and audiovisual tools**
- **Brainstorming** (a group activity that encourages participants to focus on a topic and add free flow ideas to it)
- **Group discussions** (the group receives a collection of information and their goal is to make a difficult disciplinary decision, after it they present the decision)
- **Pair work** (participants/learners work together in pairs on a certain topic with a specific aim)
- **Interviews** (participants are asked to gather questions and ask them)
- **Worksheet/surveys** (the knowledge of the participants is checked with a survey)

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<sup>2</sup><https://saskschoolboards.ca/wp-content/uploads/97-07.htm#What%20is%20Constructivism?>

(Accessed 24.14.2021.)

## Connectivism

Connectivism is a brand-new approach, which claims that learning *“is focused on connecting specialized information sets, and the connections that enable us to learn more are more important than our current state of knowing.”*<sup>3</sup>

Connectivism is called a learning theory for a digital age. It seeks to explain complex learning in a rapidly changing technological and networked world. Knowledge is born and gets obsolete so fast, that getting to know facts and information is overcome by adapting to the changing knowledge base and learning how and where to get updated information and knowledge. According to this model the main channel of knowledge and information change is networking. It is important to identify connections and patterns and make a link among various nodes of knowledge bases. *“the connections that enable us to learn more are more important than our current state of knowing.”*<sup>4</sup>

George Siemens, the main propagator and ideologist of connectivism lists the main features of Connectivism as of the following:<sup>5</sup>

Principles of connectivism:

- Learning and knowledge rests in a diversity of opinions.
- Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources.
- Learning may reside in non-human appliances.
- Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known
- Nurturing and maintaining connections is needed to facilitate continual learning.
- Ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill.
- Currency (accurate, up-to-date knowledge) is the intent of all connectivist learning activities.
- Decision-making is itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due to alterations in the information climate affecting the decision.

## Modern Teaching Methods

*“Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.”*

Albert Einstein

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<sup>3</sup> [http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Learning\\_theory](http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Learning_theory) (accessed 24.14.2021.)

<sup>4</sup> George Siemens Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age, [https://jotamac.typepad.com/jotamacs\\_weblog/files/Connectivism.pdf](https://jotamac.typepad.com/jotamacs_weblog/files/Connectivism.pdf) (accessed 24.14.2021.)

<sup>5</sup> based on George Siemens Connectivism: A Learning Theory for the Digital Age, [https://jotamac.typepad.com/jotamacs\\_weblog/files/Connectivism.pdf](https://jotamac.typepad.com/jotamacs_weblog/files/Connectivism.pdf) (accessed 24.14.2021.)

## What is modern teaching?

In a very simple summary, the modern teaching method focuses on teaching students to improve their intellect behavior through the use of various new and innovative ideas rather than making them recite the syllabus in order to pass the examination in the same old way.<sup>6</sup>

The new teaching method which we call the modern teaching method is more activity-based and targets the learner's mind and skills which involves them entirely into the process of learning. Through this way, learners actively participate to build their knowledge and sharpen their skills; this is also termed as a constructivist approach. On the other hand, the mentor or teacher only leads them and guides them to focus on the objectives of the subject, and as a positive side effect competition is reduced among the students and cooperation is promoted.

## Main Characteristics of Modern Teaching <sup>7</sup>

### **Learner-centered**

One of the key characteristics of modern teaching methods is that they are learner-centered, focusing on students. Because the teacher only serves as a guide and the entire learning process involves learners, they appear to be a dominant figure in classroom interactions.

### **Task-Based or Activity-based**

The modern teaching method is task-based or activity-based. This means that the teacher creates a variety of learning activities for the students to participate in during classroom interaction. The learners are guided to achieve the objectives of the teaching-learning process through participation in these interactive activities.

### **Resource-Based**

For successful classroom experiences, learners have access to a variety of instructional tools. This implies that the teacher should be very resourceful and provide the necessary teaching-learning materials from the learners' school environment or community.

### **Interactive by Nature**

One feature that distinguishes modern teaching methods is that they are highly interactive. The instructor instructs the students to work in small groups or individually to complete the learning

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<sup>6</sup> <https://eduvoice.in/modern-teaching-methods/> (accessed 24.14.2021.)

<sup>7</sup> <https://eduvoice.in/modern-teaching-methods/> (accessed 24.14.2021.)

activities and achieve the desired outcomes. It assists them in learning from one another. Students learn to collaborate and build a sense of teamwork.

### **Integrative in Nature**

One of the most important features of modern teaching approaches is that they are integrative. Teachers make it integrative by linking topics from one subject, such as drug use, protection, pollution, food delivery, and climate change, to other issues. A learner can acquire awareness of more topics when learning one by doing so.

### **Peer Collaboration**

Students are not only encouraged by modern teaching methods that allow them to present their ideas or initiative by noticing their reactions, examining their studies, and encouraging them to respond during interaction classes, but they are also selected based on their interests, desires, and feelings. Students learn to work cooperatively through instructional exercises, and they value the work of their peers.

## **Advantages of Modern Teaching <sup>8</sup>**

Along with the upgrades made to the student educational system, the face of teaching too is witnessing a transformation in this 21st century.

**Cognitive Thinking Skills** - The current methods are wired to develop the cognitive thinking skills of the students. Strong cognitive skills reflect in their decision making and problem analytical skills, contribute to their IQ growth and also play a useful role in improving their memory.

**Bringing Prefrontal Cortex into Life** - The prefrontal cortex of the brain plays an important role in speaking, behavior, and expressiveness, both of which are important functions of the brain. The prefrontal cortex is thought to have superior functions, and activating it would be the best-explored benefit of these modern teaching techniques.

**Exploring Things** - Exploration of things where the interest lies is an essential part of personal development. The method also encourages self-learning and ensures that it is guided appropriately. Exploring is one of the most productive activities a person can do, and having the best possible support from an effective educational system ensures that the process is both successful and dynamic. Modern teaching methods claim that giving them enough independence, versatility, and facilities to pursue their passions is important.

**Developing Unique Patterns of Learning** - The process of learning, or the most effective methods of learning, varies greatly between individuals, and this is where modern teaching methods can be used

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<sup>8</sup> <https://asaolusam.wordpress.com/2016/09/03/modern-teaching-method/>

to their full potential. Modern teaching strategies ensure that individual minds are properly catered with the best way and methods of knowledge by creating creative and tailor-made learning patterns.

**Application-based Skills** - Modern training approaches take a radically different approach, focusing more on the applicability of skills and individuals learning and gaining practical knowledge with them. In comparison to theoretical studies, application-based education is one of the most influential and efficient forms of education systems.

**Learning Relevantly to Increasing Needs** - One of the most important goals of education is to prepare people to deal with a changing world, and in order to do so, they must be effective. The modern educational system places a strong emphasis on this and trains students to be capable of dealing with the challenges of the continuously changing environment.

### **Advantages of Modern Teaching Methods**

- • Modern teaching methods, in contrast to conventional teaching methods, are more engaging and hold students together. It uses animations and videos to keep students interested.
- When it comes to giving orders, the visual medium outperforms all others. It aids in memorizing the definition more quickly and over a longer period of time than reading.
- Modern teaching methods require less time. Teachers spend less time covering the curriculum. It is not necessary to write on the blackboard.
- A representation of videos and animations used in current teaching methods is less explanatory than a blackboard interpretation of material.

## **Project-based Learning<sup>9</sup>**

The **project method** is a pedagogical-didactic method based on joint planning and implementation by teachers and students/participants, which organizes the learning process as a series of projects. In pedagogical terms, a project is a complex task that focuses on a problem, usually of a practical nature, related to everyday life, which teachers and students work on together, in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary and complex way, in order to create a product that serves the interests of the community. The work is both collective, since it is the result of the cooperation of a community, and individual, since each person contributes to the group's work on the basis of his or her own interests, skills and individual experience.

The method builds on learners' interests, needs and shared activities. One of its main characteristics is the high degree of freedom and autonomy of the participants. The project method is a departure

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<sup>9</sup> based on <https://fejlesztok.hu/modszerek/430-a-projektmodszer.html> (accessed 24.14.2021.)



from traditional timetables and subject frameworks. Knowledge is acquired in a creative way through different activities. Knowledge is not imparted by the teacher but is acquired by the students/participants through activities. Instead of teaching, transferring and accumulating knowledge, the focus is on learning, acquiring knowledge and developing skills. In the implementation of the project, the emphasis is on working together, helping each other, accepting each other, learning communication skills and techniques. If the implementation is successful, the didactic triple principle of the project can be applied: **experience - knowledge - understanding**.

### **Methodological Steps for Project-based Learning**

#### **Planning, topic selection**

1. Identification and understanding of the goal leading to the solution of the given (project) problem, (formulating further sub-objectives if needed),
2. Forming groups on an a guided way or on voluntary basis,
3. Giving instructions to the groups, (if the task is too complex: drawing up a solution plan, formulating the concrete tasks),
4. Group work starts,
5. Trainer is available for the whole period in any topic or question.

#### **Execution**

1. Inside the groups: organizing the allocation of tasks, (if data are needed: choosing the sources of necessary data, agreeing on the data providers inside the group),
2. Active implementation through pair or group work. Collaboration, development of the necessary tools, different working techniques, forms of community, communication and activities, integration of subject knowledge, (if needed: independent research),
3. Preparing the product of the group, finalizing the outcome that will be presented to all training participants, and agreeing on who will do the presentation.

#### **Review**

1. Presentation of the products/outcomes to all training participants,

2. Discussion or evaluation on the products/outcomes that the different groups presented,
3. Making the necessary corrections, e.g. if the outcome is a product, corrections may be needed,
4. (Optional evaluations: groups can have an inner discussion after the evaluation and it can be done on two (or both) levels: the group in total, and the self-evaluation of the participants.)

### **Publication and overview of the project (if relevant)**

1. Publicizing the results and/or the product of the project if this is a relevant step. In our training this may not be needed, the trainers shall decide if publication is needed. In other project based learning cases this may be a relevant part, for example if the outcome is a product or a piece of art, or a physical product then publication /exhibition /presentation /debate shall follow the process.
2. Discussing the issues raised (in the light of evaluation, criticism, feedback), possibly formulating a plan for new projects.

### **Advantages of the Project Method<sup>10</sup>**

- Students take the initiative and play an active role;
- They are driven by their own interests, so motivation is very strong;
- It develops communication and social skills, creativity, knowledge acquisition, problem-solving and analytical thinking, autonomy, cooperation, planning, adaptation, time management, information sharing;
- It ensures the indirect acquisition of knowledge, skills and habits;
- They can participate in solving a problem according to their own abilities;
- It provides concrete, usable, practical knowledge;
- A new kind of teacher-student relationship can be developed;
- It provides a joyful, stress-free collaboration;
- It promotes professional collaboration between teachers, thus improving staff cohesion;

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<sup>10</sup> based on Dorottya Juhász Gáspár (2010): A projektmódszer, <https://fejlesztok.hu/modszerek/430-a-projektmodszer.html> (accessed 24.14.2021.)

- The principle of peer learning is put into practice.

## **Gamification**

Gamification is another recently favored pedagogical concept. The basis is common with the other methods introduced above: to move away from frontal teaching and involve students/participants in the learning process and through their involvement they will learn more and have a better experience of the teaching activity.

Gamification typically involves applying game design thinking to non-game applications to make them more fun and engaging. Gamification can potentially be applied to any industry and almost anything to create fun and engaging experiences, converting users into players. In education, we can use game design principles to change non game-like classrooms into fun and engaging game-like environments, for the purpose of motivating and changing learner behaviors.

The notion of playfulness appeared in the public domain in the 2000s (and the definition itself) so one might think that we can talk about a very new phenomenon. This assumption would not be correct since at the beginning of the 20th century various experiments have begun on this subject.

Gamification is a highly marketable trend based on a strong psychological basis. It is easy to sell, it is spectacular, as the statistics of the game industry are very impressive with all sales, both revenue and players.

Some possible tools to be used when gamification is involved:

- giving points,
- defining levels,
- create challenges, quests or missions,
- giving rewards,
- have a leader board of the participants,
- give achievement badges, or feedback loops,
- use visible progress/status bar,
- create conditions and context,
- generate interactions,
- other game-like activities.

-Gamification encourages a wide range of activities/feelings:

● Fun	● Collaboration	● Competence
● Intense Focus	● Camaraderie (fellowship)	● Meaningful Choices
● Competitiveness	● Retention	● Productivity
● Joyful Optimism	● Creativity	● Exploration

In the following section a major methodology of gamification, the Boom Taxonomy is presented. Through understanding this method, the main idea of gamification is transformed to the reader.

### The Bloom-Taxonomy

Bloom-taxonomy is a hierarchy of different cognitive skills which are related to learning, in other words, they are learning achievements which can be reached in a precise order, because each level is based on the lower levels. It is a huge help both to teachers and to students in their teaching and learning processes. This method can help in various fields of education:

- planning lessons of any fields of education,
- creating assessments for students,
- design curriculum maps for courses,
- it supports project-based learning,
- it helps self-assessment for students.

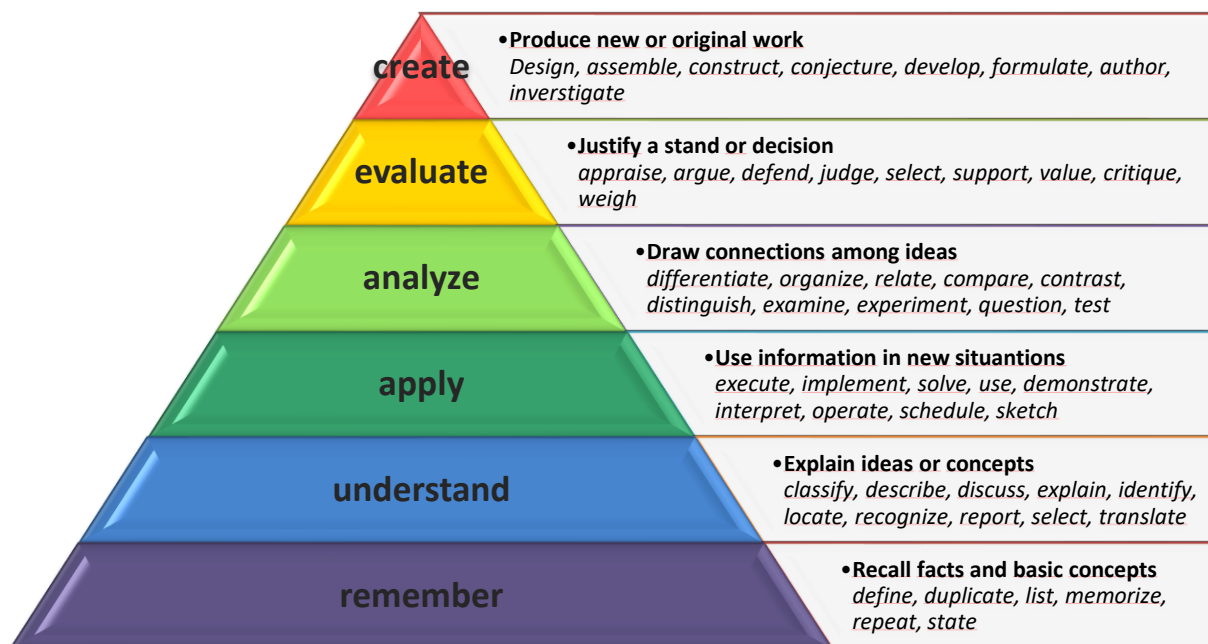


Figure 1: Bloom's Taxonomy (source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/vandycft/29428436431>)

#### From bottom up these are the levels of Bloom' Taxonomy:

**Remember** is the result of basic knowledge which is the first stage of learning. It will lead us to the abilities which are connected to higher cognitive skills. This is the process of recalling facts and basic concepts which were learned earlier.

If the students learned some basic concepts they can **understand** and explain other things and phenomena. They will be able to recognize similar things and therefore classify information. They have the ability to describe their knowledge to others.

If they have a solid understanding of different pieces of information, they can **apply** them in new situations. This is when we learn a mathematical formula then can solve a new exercise with it.

On top of that, students learn how to **analyze** information and situations. They learn how to examine a solution, and how to test a hypothesis based on their previous knowledge. They can distinguish between pieces of information, operational and inefficient results, and causal relationships.

After that, at the **evaluate** level they learn how to choose between options, develop a sense of judgement. They can forecast the outcome of their or others' actions based on their knowledge and the observations they made.

**Creation** is the top level of the taxonomy. Based on their knowledge and experience, students start to create new things with original designs or even experimental theories.

The logic behind Bloom's Taxonomy is that the students step up each level one after another, starting from the bottom, the basic knowledge to have a good foundation of higher understanding. This is because each level refers to the levels below it. It can help teachers to organize class curriculum and evaluation types during a class or even a semester. It can also help students realize what they know and understand and what fields or knowledge they are missing.

## Teaching and Exercise Activity Types

As a short introduction to this topic, just a few examples are listed here of the innovative teaching methods that are gaining more attention in the last decades:

- **Case studies** (showing a real-world, happened case in details)
- **Role plays** (a speaking activity when participants play to be somebody else or act as themselves in an imaginary situation)
- **Problem-solving** (learning by working on problems: observe, understand, analyze and find solutions, decide the solution)
- **Field trips** (a trip/excursion away from the usual learning environment with the aim to observe the targeted topic)
- **Presentations with films and examples** Films, videos and other visual and audiovisual tools

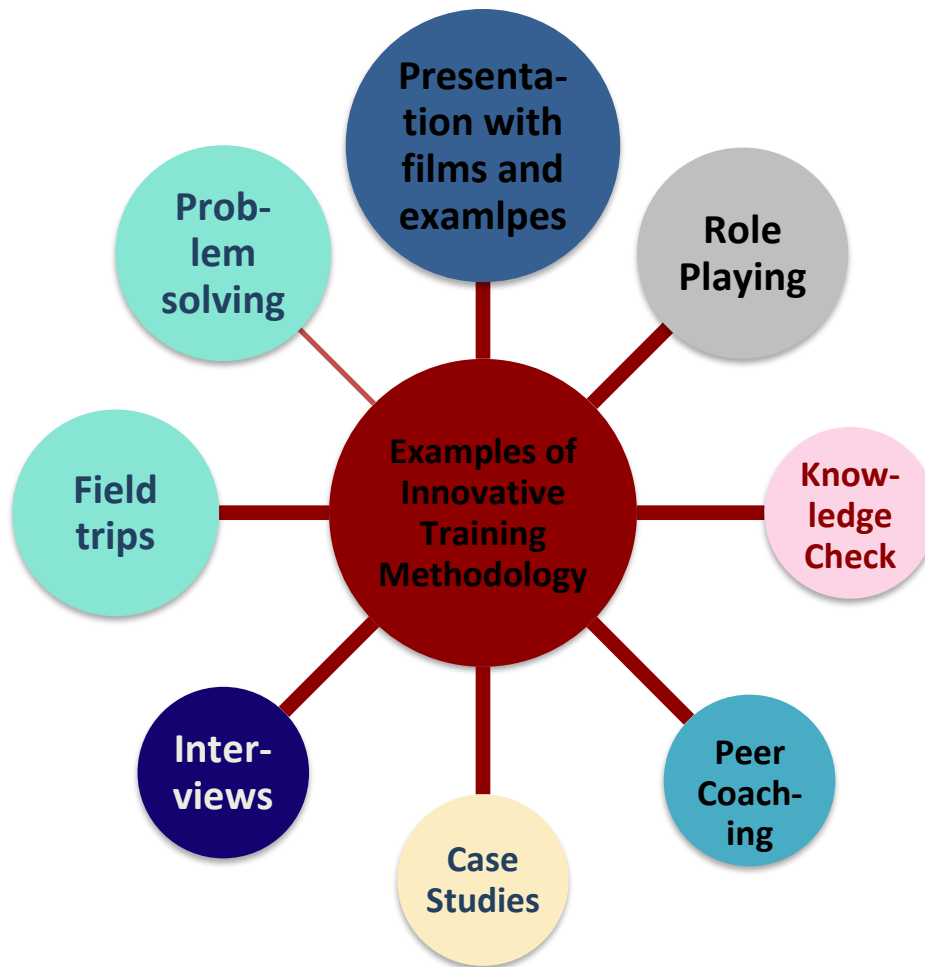


Figure 2: Examples of Innovative Training Methodology (own creation)

## Interactive Training Methods

Beside all above mentioned innovative methodologies, there is still a need for giving lectures to pass the knowledge to the participants. Breaking up these training sections is important in order to keep trainees attentive and involved. The following 12 activities are effective examples to make the training innovative.



Figure 3: Examples of Interactive Training Methods (own creation)

- **Small group discussions.** Divide the participants into small groups and assign them case studies or problems to solve. This is a good way for knowledgeable participants to share their experiences with others who are less experienced.
- **Case studies.** Case studies are an excellent way to introduce a problem-solving mindset into adult education. Participants can learn how to manage similar circumstances by discussing real-life scenarios. They can also see how different elements interact to generate challenges and solutions.
- **Quizzes.** Stop regularly during lengthy, complicated training to conduct brief quizzes on the knowledge provided up to that point. You may also start each session with a pre-quiz and inform attendees that there will be a follow-up quiz. In order to boost their pre-quiz scores on the final quiz, trainees can remain active. Offer prizes to the top scorers or the most improved participants to further inspire them.



- **Q & A sessions.** Small groups and informal question-and-answer sessions work well for updating skills rather than teaching new ones. Any changes in the current situation, for example, could be easily addressed by a brief clarification from the trainer, followed by a question-and-answer session and a period of discussion.
- **Role-playing.** By assuming roles and acting out situations that might occur in relevant situations, trainees learn how to manage various situations before they encounter them in practice. On top of that role-playing is an excellent training technique for many interpersonal skills.
- **Active summaries.** Make small groups and assign a leader to each. Request that they outline the main points of the presentation, and then have each team leader deliver these summaries to the class. Read aloud a prepared summary and compare it to the experiences of the participants.
- **Paraphrasing by participants** – this is a simplified version of the active summary: at certain points the trainer asks a participant to rephrase what just have been told. In complex issues it is important to get feedback if the information was transferred successfully to the trainees. Optionally and as a hint of gamification, rewards or points can be given to a successful paraphrase.
- **Question cards.** During the presentation, invite the audience to write questions about the subject. Gather them and have a quiz or review session.
- **Demonstrations.** Bring instruments, equipment, materials or tools that are relevant to the training subject and illustrate the steps or the processes being taught wherever possible.
- **Participant control.** Make a list of the topics that will be discussed. Request that participants go over it and choose topics for which they want to learn more. Invite a participant to state his or her preference. Cover the subject and move on to the next person.
- **Raising arguments:** the SFSC trainees presumably already have experience in the topic of the training, therefore they may have different views that of the trainers. Interesting discussions may arise if arguments are raised during the training and floor is given to a discussion between trainers and participants.
- **Feedback sections.** All teaching-training activities need feedback. Optionally this can be done at the end of the sections or the end of the day, or at latest at the end of the course. The feedback can have several forms: just asking the participants or making a round of them on

the spot, giving paper forms, using online questionnaires or other smartphone-based solutions.

### **Advantages**

- Interactive workshops make training more enjoyable and entertaining.
- These activities keep trainees interested in the training, making them more open to new information.
- They allow a good change of information between participants and trainers-trainees.
- Using these methods will provide trainers with in-session feedback on how well trainees are learning.

### **Disadvantages**

- Interactive sessions are time-consuming, because activities such as taking quizzes or breaking into small groups take time.
- Some methods of the above mentioned may be less structured, and trainers must ensure that all relevant information is covered beside the interactivity.

## **Characteristics of a Good Trainer**

### **. Role and Competences of a Successful Trainer**

The trainers play an important role in any training program, their personality and attitude are a major key in the success of the training. The trainers should be not only well informed in the field of Short Food Supply Chain and other closely tied questions, but they also have to take into consideration many complex factors at the same time during their work: they need to assess the specialties, needs and opportunities of the participants of the training, to identify the methods which facilitate to reach their goals on the most effective way, and to motivate people toward an effective participation and problem-solving. In addition, they have to use all of this in practice so their personality should remain

credible and honest, supportive and stimulating while they give opportunities to the participants to discover their own solutions. It is important that they work effectively with people who have different and diverse experiences, education, learning styles and strategies.

What kind of special skills do we need as trainers? Let's see a short summary:

### **Methodological Skills**

- the trainers are aware of the subject of SFSC training and are familiar with the training materials (presentations and exercises)
- If it is possible the trainer gets to know the participants before the training begins.
- Being able to orient the training, to identify what is the right order of the different chosen techniques, materials, exercises.
- The trainer should have clear and obvious objectives to use group-techniques and interactive methods.
- Being able to integrate people and ideas with common goals.
- The trainer should be able to lead the participants to the common solution. He should not present the theoretical background and his/her opinion ex cathedra, but act as a counselor: to support thinking and working together with the participants on the topics of the training.
- The participants should be prepared to be able to develop also themselves after the training, so they should be supported in planning their own development path.

### **Pedagogical Skills**

- Assessing the needs of participants, facilitate openness and define the necessary resources.
- Stimulate, motivate and facilitate the work in groups act as a pedagogical facilitator.
- Ask the appropriate questions that stimulate the thoughts, notes and critical skills of participants.

### **Personal Skills**

- Being an attentive observer and open to experiment and test.

- Creativity and flexibility, being able to promote interactivity with the tools provided in the training materials.
- Building the team spirit on the grounds of trust and mutual acceptance, promoting curiosity and interest for new knowledge.
- Understanding the logic of group dynamics, stimulating and moderating debates.
- Being able to establish and keep the commitment of the members of the group, encouraging them to participate in the activities,
- Having empathy for the feelings and problems of participants, and their expressions of these. Sometimes the trainer should give feedbacks, express his/her own feelings, experiences, concerning the participants' inner state.
- Being authentic, congruent, showing his/her own personality.
- A good trainer is also good in expressing and understanding body language, and has a basic knowledge of psychology.

### Qualities of a Great Trainer

All in all, the qualities of a 'Great Trainer' is summarized in the following figure. The 4 main personality traits are connected to the main tasks of the trainers:

Main tasks	Sub-tasks	Personality type	Personality Traits
Adapting Approaches	Giving Support – Adjusting to Change – Showing Resilience	Supported – Optimist	Agreeableness – Emotional Stability
Delivering Results	Processing Details – Structuring Tasks – Driving Success	Finisher – Striver	Conscientiousness
Influencing Participants	Providing Leadership – Communicating Information – Building Relationships	Assertor – Relator	Extraversion
Solving Problems	Evaluating Problems – Investigating Issues – Creating Innovation	Analyst – Innovator	Openness





Figure 5: Qualities of a Great Leader (own creation)

## Web2.0 tools

Web 2.0 applications are very diverse and various but at the same time content-independent. The instructor's task is to select the one that best suits the content of the curriculum and the participants' needs in the given learning environment.

Web 2.0 will not attract every trainer or teacher. Admittedly, the technologies themselves may be easier and more accessible. Web 2.0 tools are tools of technology that allow teachers and students alike to create, collaborate, edit and share content on-line that is user-generated.

As examples, these activities can be done online with a shared editing possibility: presentation, common development, slideshow, images, quiz and test generation, etc.

New tools are being developed all the time, so it is important to be informed about the newest trends in education.

Tools can be grouped for example:

- tools for communication
- tools for collaboration
- tools for creation and support of web based learning environment
- tools for student creativity

Best known tools are:

DropBox – document storage + sharing	<a href="https://www.dropbox.com/?landing=dbv2">https://www.dropbox.com/?landing=dbv2</a>
Google Drive - document storage + sharing	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive">https://drive.google.com/drive</a>
Skype – online meetings	<a href="https://www.skype.com">https://www.skype.com</a>
Prezi – online presentation with slides	<a href="https://prezi.com/">https://prezi.com/</a>
MS OneDrive – online file storage	<a href="https://www.microsoft.com/en/microsoft-365/onedrive/online-cloud-storage?rtc=1">https://www.microsoft.com/en/microsoft-365/onedrive/online-cloud-storage?rtc=1</a>
KAHOOT - online quiz collection via using mobile phone	<a href="https://kahoot.com/">https://kahoot.com/</a>
GoogleDocs – online common document writing, editing, an “online Google Word”	<a href="https://www.google.hu/intl/en/docs/about/">https://www.google.hu/intl/en/docs/about/</a>
GoogleSheet - – online common calculating sheets, an “online Google Excel”	<a href="https://www.google.hu/intl/en/sheets/about/">https://www.google.hu/intl/en/sheets/about/</a>
GoogleForms - online questionnaires, data sheets	<a href="https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/forms/about/">https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/forms/about/</a>
GooglePhotos – for sharing and storing photos	<a href="https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/photos/about/">https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/photos/about/</a>
GoogleSlides – the “PowerPoint” of Google online	<a href="https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/slides/about/">https://www.google.com/intl/en-GB/slides/about/</a>
Google Classroom – the teaching platform of google	<a href="https://edu.google.com/products/classroom/">https://edu.google.com/products/classroom/</a>

Canva.com – to create info sheets, infographics, and many others that need nice design	<a href="https://www.canva.com/en/?irgwc=1&amp;utm_medium=affiliate&amp;utm_source=InfluxOnline&amp;clickId=T08WXYWBUxyLUBHwUx0Mo3EtUkB0ZSVhgXZ4S40">https://www.canva.com/en/?irgwc=1&amp;utm_medium=affiliate&amp;utm_source=InfluxOnline&amp;clickId=T08WXYWBUxyLUBHwUx0Mo3EtUkB0ZSVhgXZ4S40</a>
Freedcamp – online and shared document storage and project management	<a href="https://freedcamp.com/">https://freedcamp.com/</a>

## COVID Situation – Online – Offline Methods

The Covid pandemic had a tremendous effect on the whole Earth in 2020-2021. As one of the major consequences a lot of activities were directed into the virtual world, most of the meetings and teaching activities become online based. In this section some of the main online meeting possibilities will be presented that were most common at the production date of this document, in spring 2021.

For more online tools please have a look at the “Web2 tool” section above of this document.

Online methods to be explained:

Zoom – online meeting platform	<a href="https://zoom.us/">https://zoom.us/</a>
Google meet – the Google online meeting platform	<a href="https://apps.google.com/intl/en-GB/meet/">https://apps.google.com/intl/en-GB/meet/</a> <a href="https://apps.google.com/meet/">https://apps.google.com/meet/</a>
YouTube streaming – live streaming of a presentation, conference	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/intl/en_us/howyoutubeworks/product-features/live/">https://www.youtube.com/intl/en_us/howyoutubeworks/product-features/live/</a>
Microsoft teams – teamwork support with several functions, e.g.	<a href="https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software">https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software</a> <a href="https://www.microsoft.com/hu-hu/microsoft-teams/free">https://www.microsoft.com/hu-hu/microsoft-teams/free</a>



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online meetings, presentations	
Slido – questions, answers and other functions running simultaneously with the online meeting	<a href="https://www.sli.do/">https://www.sli.do/</a>
GoToMeeting – online meetings, conferences	<a href="https://www.gotomeeting.com/">https://www.gotomeeting.com/</a>
Creative online presentation composition tool	<a href="https://ahaslides.com">https://ahaslides.com</a>
Interactive tool for online group work	<a href="https://miro.com/signup/">https://miro.com/signup/</a>