



Education and Culture DG

**Practical Training Report -
short version**
July 2012, Dresden



Lifelong Learning Programme

Practical Training Report – short version

The Practical Training was carried out in the frame of Project 2011-1-BG1-LEO01-04758 “European Practice in Ecological Agriculture – a Resource for Sustainable Development” funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme. It took place in Dresden, Germany. It covered 4 weeks of intensive training, starting from 02.07.2012 and ending 27.07.2012.

The Beneficiary organization was Vocational high school of agriculture “Zemya”, town of Provadia, Bulgaria, and the Host organization was *EkoConnect – International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe e. V.*, Dresden, Germany. 20 Bulgarian students and 2 teachers from Vocational high school of agriculture “Zemya” participated.

The practical training consisted of field visits in organic farms doing organic plant and animal production and on-farm processing, organic processors, and organic retail companies. Furthermore, basics of organic plant and animal production, retail trade, processing and certification were presented to students in workshops. The student’s skills and knowledge were also deepened by group tasks and simulation games on organic topics.

The Practical Training was conducted in order to establish an international partnership and to contribute to the transfer of European best practices and experience in production of organic agricultural production. Thus, the project aimed at improving the quality of offered practical training in agriculture. Moreover, it was performed to create opportunities for young people in initial vocational training in agricultural specialization to improve their personal skills, their professional competencies, and to enrich their experience by getting known of European standards for organic agriculture. It was also important to promote the learning of foreign languages and to build capacities for working in a multicultural environment, which can be an advantage for young people when starting their career path.

The training has contributed to the transfer of European best practices in organic agricultural production by offering a broad variety of practical and theoretical



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knowledge in organic agriculture. Practical tasks about organic plant cultivation, animal keeping, handling agricultural machinery, and product processing were performed in the companies whenever possible. The whole chain from field to fork was pictured by these visits, and by the following discussions and group tasks. Furthermore, basics of organic plant and animal production, retail trade, processing, and certification - included the EC legislation background- were presented and the pupil's knowledge deepened by group tasks and simulation games. The group was also sensitized for the global food supply situation and introduced to fair trade schemes.

EkoConnect had a great chance to be able to train young people from the start, to transfer knowledge about organic farming, and to participate in a very interesting Leonardo project. New connections with the Bulgarian pupils, of whom some might take the path towards organic specialisation in the future, were made. What is important, the students have returned to their country with manifold specialist, technical, social and cultural experiences. They have seen good practices on how organic agriculture and collaboration between stakeholders can work, which will surely come in very useful for their professional future.