

RELIEF

euRoepan bio-Economy aLIancE in Farming

The Problem

A prerequisite for a sustainable bioeconomy is the availability of a well-trained workforce with the necessary knowledge and skills across bioeconomy sectors. However, currently numerous countries and regions across the EU **lack specialist education for bioeconomy experts**. In particular, the EU agricultural sector is characterized by relatively lower levels of education and training than other economic sectors, while specific training material in bioeconomy remains.

For the development of an effective and sustainable bio-economy strategy in farming and supporting a sustainable transition, **higher education and vocational training that integrates dedicated curricula and training is critical** and needs to support the workforce, enhance our knowledge about the impact and business models for the bio-economy, and raise the awareness and involvement of a wide range of actors.

RELIEF's Overall Objective

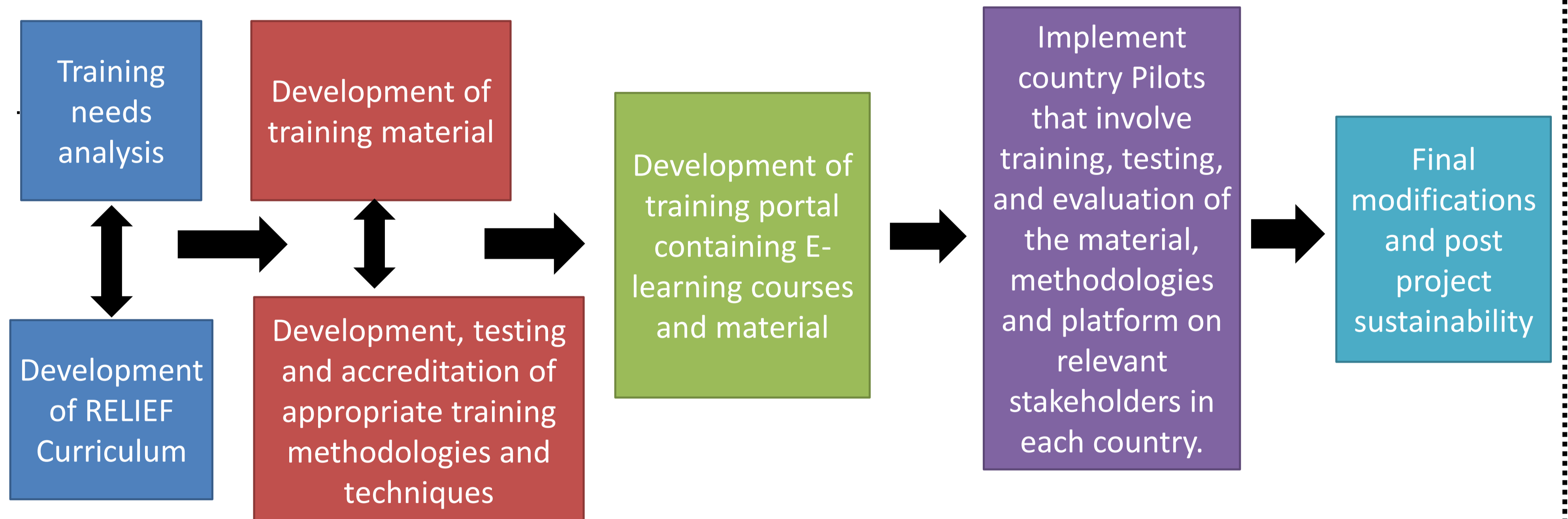
RELIEF aims to **develop and deliver an innovative approach for teaching bio-economy in farming**, by rethinking & improving our current Vocational Education & Training (VET) model as well as developing specific learning resources addressing Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) students and farming practitioners with the goal of **training and educating a new generation to possess the skills** (including technical, economic and regulatory knowledge) which are required by the **current and future European sustainable bioeconomy**. HEIs, VETs, farmer consultants, research institutes, and social partners from Italy, Greece, Sweden, Cyprus and Portugal will deliver a high-quality network within the EU to advance bio-economy in the farming agenda and achieve regional policies by bringing together key stakeholders for the exchange of know-how and expertise and for cultivating competences of the students', practitioners, agronomists' and farming sector's workforce in adopting bio economy innovative practices.

The Project

RELIEF brings together 12 partners in bio-economy markets that are more developed in Italy and Sweden and emerging markets in Greece, Portugal and Cyprus. RELIEF's implementation follows a phased approach commencing with a training needs analysis involving a range of relevant stakeholders which will support the development of two curricula in bio-economy, for HE students, farming practitioners and farmers exploring the key areas that are critical for the implementation of business models and strategies towards bio-economy in farming.

Based on these curricula, RELIEF will design and pilot learning units which will incorporate a mix of training methodologies. The content of the learning units and other educational material will be available to be delivered using practice based activities, such as through study visits and workshops, and a blended learning approach that combines face to face and e-learning, using a training portal which will provide access to the material and also facilitate future dissemination and exploitation by HEIs and VETs beyond the project partners and the lifetime of the project. This e-learning platform will offer learning resources in 5 languages for self-training and networking to support the long-term sustainability of farming enterprises.

It is envisioned that through this approach RELIEF will stimulate significant changes in the university curricula, course content, and VET training by integrating a learner centred approach based on problem-based, active and transformational learning.



Expected Outcomes and Impacts:

- Design and creation of a training approach needed to facilitate the transition of farming sector to a sustainable bioeconomy.
- Enhanced knowledge, skills and competencies of future (HE students) and current (agronomists, farmer consultants) in bioeconomy in order to effectively and efficiently support farmers.
- Development of an innovative and multidisciplinary approach for teaching the integration of bioeconomy principles and practices in farming.
- Increased cooperation and knowledge co-creation between higher education and vocational education and training institutes, research organizations, and the business farming sector on training and education for the bioeconomy.
- Empowerment of multiple stakeholders in agriculture, policy makers, regional governments across Europe to utilize high quality, state-of-the-art learning resources, available through an e-learning repository, for the knowledge in bioeconomy.

The Project Partners



Contact:

Dr Thanos Balafoutis
Senior Researcher

a.balafoutis@certh.gr |

+30 2311 257651 | +30 2311 257652



CERTH
CENTRE FOR
RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY
HELLAS



Institute for Bio-economy & Agri-technology

iBO | CERTH

6th km CharilaouThermi Rd.

57001 | Themi | Thessaloniki | Greece

www.ibo.certh.gr | www.certh.gr