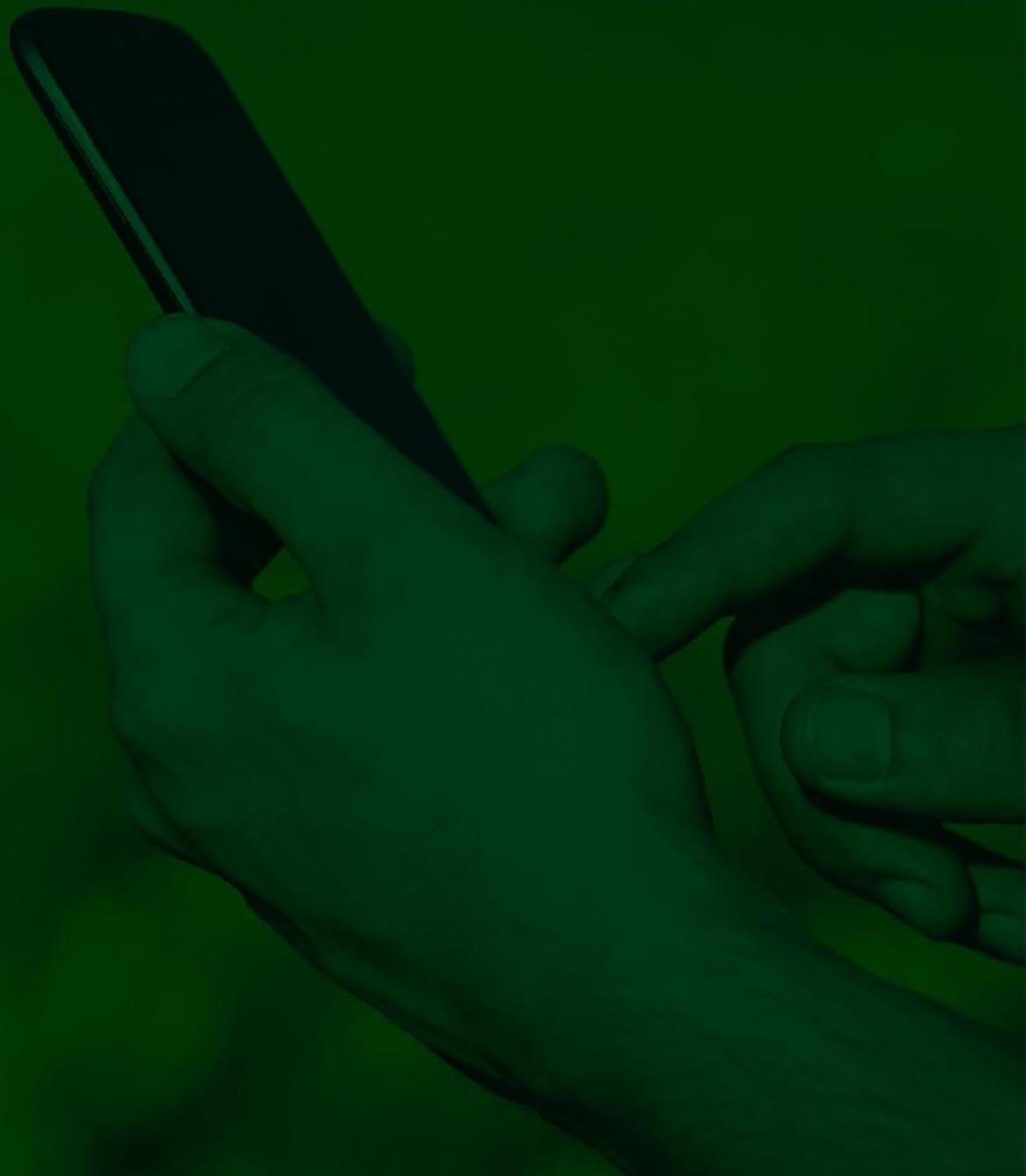




# FAIRshare

DIGITAL TOOLS FOR FARM ADVISORS



## Deliverable 3.4

### *DA solutions to common operational challenges faced by farmers*

**Authors: Rui Almeida (CONSULAI), Francisca Viveiros (CONSULAI)**

**Contributions from:** John Hyland (Teagasc), Tom Kelly (Teagasc), Lies Debruyne (ILVO), Evelien Lambrecht (INAGRO), Anita Naughton (Teagasc), Noéme Bernard Le Gall (ACTA), Peter Parea (ZLTO)

This report only reflects the views of the author(s).

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# Technical References

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## 1. Introduction

Deliverable 3.4. is a result of Task 3.4. “Co-design of communication interventions for different advisor/farmer contexts” from WP3 “The interface between DA and the advisory & farming communities”. This document aims to discover Digital Advisory solutions to common day to day challenges faced by advisors though Europe. For that, four workshops were organized in four different European regions (West Europe, Central Europe, South-East Europe and North-East Europe) attended by multiactor groups from each country in the Hub.

The distribution of the Hubs was as seen below:

- **West Europe Hub:** Portugal, Spain, France, Ireland and UK. Hub Leader: Teagasc.
- **Central Europe Hub:** Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands, Czech-Rep, Slovakia and Austria. Hub Leader: ZLTO.
- **South-East Europe Hub:** Croatia, Serbia, Greece, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Romania. Hub Leader: SEASN.
- **North-East Europe Hub:** Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Denmark, Poland, Estonia, Norway and Moldova. Hub Leader: LAAS.

All workshops were held online, due to the COVID-19 situation, using Zoom Platform and the collaborative tool Klaxoon. The latter allows each participant to write down sticky notes and to organize them and it was used for brainstorming and co-creation (screenshots of the final Klaxoon boards are available in the 5.2). All online platforms were managed by CONSULAI, the task leader.

The workshops were designed after an analysis of the main results of the surveys from task 3.2, and in accordance to the development of the Focus Groups from task 3.3. Several meetings were conducted between WP leader and task leaders to coordinate different tasks and take maximum advantage of the synergy

between them. In fact, Regional Hub Workshops are meant to dig deeper into these results, involving attendees from different background in different regions. So, the main objectives were defined:

1. Identify and elaborate common operational challenges faced by either farmer's and their advisers;
2. Discuss application of digital tools operating successfully;
3. Design strategy to increase uptake in the others.

## 2. Workshops

The workshops aimed to discover what challenges advisors encounter in their day to day work and what Digital Agriculture solutions do they need.

Participants were asked to fill in a Homework assignment (Homework template assignment is available in the Annex 5), to identify 5 day to day challenges as well as solutions for each of them. These inputs were later used to choose the Hub's top 5 problems and co-create the respective solutions. Participants were also sent a Consent form *a priori* (the template is available in Annex 5.3).

### 2.1. Participants

The workshops were attended by multiactor groups of 20 to 30 participants, including farmers, advisers and digital industry providers. Each Country Leader was in charge of forming their country multiactor group, which was overseen by Regional Hub Leaders, who were in charge of communication for each Hubs' participants. Some of the attendees were involved in other European projects with similar topics to FAIRshare (i2connect, SmartAgriHubs, Wisefarmer, SHIP Small Holder Innovation Platform, IoF2020: Internet of Food and Farm 2020, among others). The distribution of participants is shown below in Table 1.

Table 1 - Distribution of multi-actor groups

Farmers	Advisors	Agri-tech providers	Other	Total
---------	----------	---------------------	-------	-------

<b>Western EU</b>	5	9	8	-	<b>22</b>
<b>Central EU</b>	5	6	2	6	<b>19</b>
<b>North-East EU</b>	3	15	2	11	<b>31</b>
<b>South-East EU</b>	5	9	1	5	<b>20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>92</b>

## 2.2. Workshop Agenda

Before building the program of the workshops, Questionnaires applied to Farmers and Advisors in Task 3.2. over the summer. The questionnaires were meant understand farmers and advisors engagement with Digital Agriculture and other new technologies. The conclusions of the surveys were presented in Deliverable 3.2. The main results are below:

- Farm advisory services are personal;
- Farmers include advisors in their decision-making process;
- Farmers and advisors agree on the (perceived) benefits of digital advisory tools and services (DATS);
- However, there are several barriers which have yet to be overcome for the adoption of DATS;
- There is a wide variety of DATS in use however no dominant software solution is recognizable;
- Farmers get their DATS from advisors or other farmers;
- Advisors get DATS from their company or from the internet;
- Broadband internet and mobile devices are available on 50% of respondent farms;
- DATS (e.g. farm management software, IoT) not widely adopted among farmers;
- Data collection needs more efficiency and interoperability is lacking;
- Advisors and farmers desire in-person training on digital technologies.

These results will be compared with Workshops results, to understand if the problems identified and solutions created match the current advisory landscape.

The agenda was first developed for the GFRAS Annual Meeting in the beginning of October 2020. FAIRshare organized two similar workshops, where the workshop structure was tested. These workshops gathered 42 European participants, including Advisors, Farmers, Managers, Researchers, Scientists, Project Coordinators. Lessons learned from those workshops were applied in the Regional Hub Workshops (workshop format, outputs, comments, expectations).

After this, the agenda was adapted for the first Regional Hub Workshop and kept being fine-tuned throughout the different workshops. The final agenda was as follows:

John Hyland, the project manager, presented FAIRshare, the Digital Advisory Tools and Services (DATS) inventory and the session's dynamics. Participants each presented themselves as an ice-breaker dynamic.

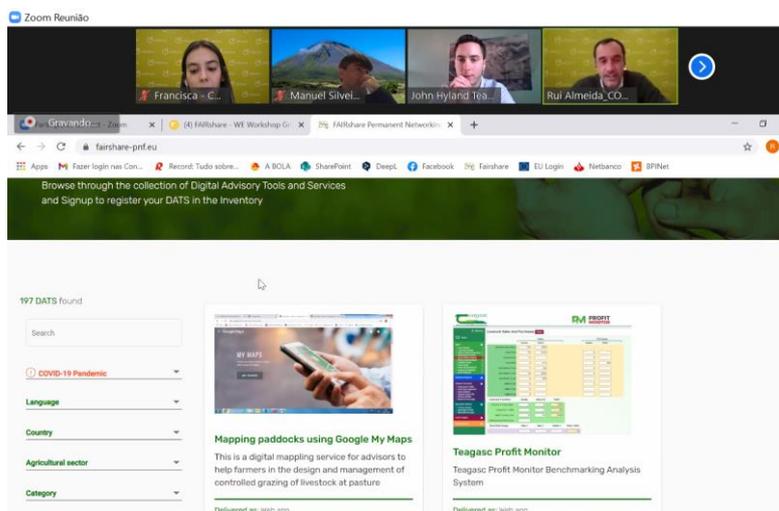


Figure 1 - Presentation of FAIRshare's DATS inventory - West Europe Workshop

The participants were divided into two groups to facilitate the discussion. The main working session was divided into 2 parts; first participants were asked to brainstorm about current day-to-day challenges, later they were asked to vote on

the most important challenge from the ones they had previously identified and the ones from the brainstorm.

The second working session focused on finding solutions to the five challenges previously identified. Afterwards, there was a plenary moment to present the group's conclusions from the working sessions.

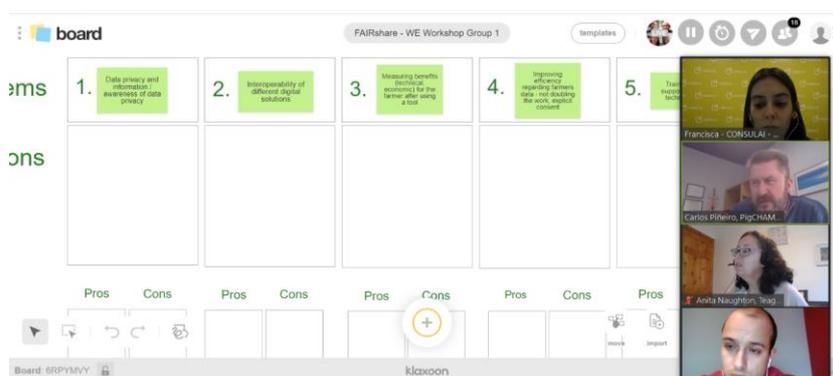


Figure 2 - Second working session from the West Europe Workshop

At the end of the workshop, there was a presentation of a successful DATS, available in FAIRshare's inventory, preferably from the region. The following DATS were presented: [PasturaBase Ireland](#), [Online Agricultural Show](#), [Agro BI](#), [Phytoview](#).

Finally, at the end of the session a final evaluation questionnaire was applied to ask participants for feedback.

### 2.2.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire asked the following questions:

- Was the discussion interesting?
- Did it match your expectations?
- Do you know FAIRshare better now?
- Are you willing to participate in any other FAIRshare activity?

The results can be seen below, in Table 2.

Table 2 - Results of the evaluation questionnaire

Questions	Yes	Maybe	No
Was the discussion interesting?	64	9	-
Did it match your expectations?	66	7	-
Do you FAIRshare better now?	73	-	-
Are you willing to participate in any other FAIRshare activity?	73	-	-

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. GFRAS Workshop

The GFRAS Workshops took place on October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and had a similar agenda to the Regional Hub Workshops. Both workshops identified a very large number of challenges, below are the most voted ones.

- a. Need for digital training for farmers;
- b. Need for translation of different tools;
- c. Difficulties in communication with farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- d. Distrust of farmers with new DATS;
- e. Agriculture has a bad image with the general public.

Some of the solutions developed in the workshops were:

**Solution a:** Young farmers can help train older farmers regarding new technologies;

**Solution b:** Use artificial intelligence to translate DATS and other materials automatically;

**Solution c:** Use new technologies to communicate with farmers: WhatsApp groups, Slack, use email, Video calls;

**Solution d:** Create a series of tutorials from farmers using DATS, and have a specific platform for farmers to provide “reviews” on the DATS they use;

**Solution e:** Develop a communication strategy with strong focus on social media

### 3.2. West Europe Workshop

The Workshop took place on December 4<sup>th</sup> and was attended by 22 participants. The participants from France (8), Ireland (5), Portugal (5), Spain (1) and UK (3), included 9 Advisors, 8 Agri-tech providers and 5 Farmers. The presentation of one of the DATS (The Greatest Online Agriculture Show) was made by Philippa Gray from i4Agri - Innovation for Agriculture.

In the first Working session, 35 challenges were identified, between the challenges brainstormed and the ones identified in the Homework assignment. The top five most voted challenges in the first group were:

- a. Data privacy and information / awareness of data privacy;
- b. Interoperability of different digital solutions;
- c. Measuring benefits (technical, economic) for the farmer after using a tool;
- d. Improving efficiency regarding farmers' data - not doubling the work, explicit consent;
- e. Training and support on new technologies.

The group co-created strategies to solve these problems, the different strategies can be seen below. One solution was created to solve both problems a and b.

**Strategy a. + b.** Build a trustful relationship with the farmer + Develop a document (or message on the DATS) clearly explaining (and allowing choice about) what data will be used and for what – allow for different levels of permissions;

**Strategy c.** Create a platform (that can also be presented in person) where people can share what the farmer can gain by using this tool in the future and allow for users to share their experiences (peer to peer learning);

**Strategy d.** Difficulty to reach interoperability of data because of different companies' competition - An "ISOBUS" for data would be a good solution;

**Strategy e.** Training will be much more digital in the future, meaning that software needs to be intuitive to make training easier. Training should be tailor made, even

though it will never be perfect, because advisors don't know everything, which is ok.

The challenges identified in the second group were as follows:

- a. Too many different tools. It's hard to have a global overview of all the DATS available on the market in order to compare them;
- b. Data needs to be integrated between different DATS so that we can generate co-relations;
- c. Explaining the real benefit of a tool to farmers;
- d. Data privacy and information / awareness of data privacy;
- e. Good DATS but in different languages.

Below are the strategies developed for each one of the above challenges:

**Strategy a.** Developing a good European DATS Inventory that compares different DATS, expressing the main issues: respect the needs, DATS sustainability, knowledge management, data connectivity (FAIRshare inventory can be the base);

**Strategy b.** Create protocols for data standardisation, using a universal development language for easier interoperability. DATS output should also be generated on a universal format (i.e. Excel, API functionalities);

**Strategy c.** Share success stories to show farmers how others have benefited from using DATS in a clear and user-friendly way;

**Strategy d.** Presenting information transparently and training farmers on GDPR;

**Strategy e.** Translation via google translate compatibility or other translation software.

### 3.3. Central Europe Workshop

The Workshop took place on December 7<sup>th</sup> and was attended by 19 participants.

The participants from Austria (3), Belgium (5), Germany (2), Italy (2) Netherlands (3) and Switzerland (3) included 6 Advisors, 2 Agri-tech providers, 5 Farmers and 7

Others (Researchers). The presentation of one of the DATS (AGRO BI) was made by the Iberia Cluster co-leader of the H2020 SmartAgriHubs project.

This Workshop took place 3 days after the Focus Group, where the top five challenges were identified. Therefore, there was only one Working session in this workshop. The top five most voted challenges in the Focus Group were:

- a. How can advisors help farmers produce in a sustainable way?
- b. How can advisors help farmers make choices for price certainty and economic results?
- c. How can advisors help farmers optimise time and work management?
- d. How can advisors help colleagues manage all their data?
- e. How can advisors help colleagues have an overview of useful technologies (toolbox)?

Both groups co-created strategies for this list of problems, the first group's strategies can be seen below:

**Strategy a.** Improve the whole cycle at the farm (animal health, soil, harvest, water, emission, ...). Benchmarking with colleagues, learn from good examples;

**Strategy b.** Create tools that help farmers make calculations, specific for each region, that allow farmers to sell directly to consumers, where farmers can forecast price development. Ensure these tools can be easily translated (using automatic translation software like Google translate or DeepL);

**Strategy c.** Reduce the workload, by using lean management and atomising administration;

**Strategy d.** Create transparent data sharing platforms, with clear dashboard. Data must be synchronised automatically from the farm to the platform;

**Strategy e.** Use FAIRshare's platform to train advisors (it must be user-friendly and frequently updated).

The strategies created in the second group were as follows:

**Strategy a.** Advisors should focus on prevention rather than treatment, have an Adaptive Farm Plan (for future agroforestry systems). Advisors must have deep knowledge about the tools they use and recommend;

**Strategy b.** Create Apps to track global commodity prices as well as producers' organisation's prices;

**Strategy c. + d.** Create a planning tool with a single login that allows for multi-platforms managed by independent organizations. It must allow for data secure communication of sensitive data;

**Strategy e.** Advisors should present to farmers a specific selection of DATS to present to farmers. Advisors should also present a clear picture of digital strategy/ digital readiness checks.

### 3.4. South-East Europe Workshop

The Workshop took place on December 9<sup>th</sup> and was attended by 31 participants. The participants from Bulgaria (3), Croatia (9), Greece (4), Hungary (2), Kosovo (3) North Macedonia (1), Romania (2), Serbia (3) and Slovenia (4) included 15 Advisors, 2 Agri-tech providers, 3 Farmers and 11 Others (Researchers & Policy Makers). The presentation of one of the DATS (Phytoview) was made by Darko Lugonja, SEASN/Moa, Croatia and Agroponuda by Sladjan Stankovic from IPN/ISAA Serbia.

In the first Working session 33 challenges were identified, between the challenges brainstormed and the ones identified in the Homework assignment. The top five most voted challenges in the first group were:

- a. Social, communication & soft skills challenges;
- b. A lot of unreliable information on the internet regarding agricultural production;
- c. Low level of education among farmers /advisors;
- d. e-market organisation support for agriculture producers in the time of pandemic;

- e. Cooperation research - advisor - farmer is crucial (AKIS systems).

The group co-created solutions for each one of these problems, the different strategies can be seen below:

**Strategy a.** Improving and adopting new communication tools and approaches. Develop a comprehensive, blended learning, training curriculum for farmers and advisors;

**Strategy b.** Train farmers on problem solving skills and boost farmer led research;

**Strategy c.** Direct communication between DATS/IT companies and farmers/advisors – workshops/field visits;

**Strategy d.** Aggregation of a huge number of small applications - few platforms;

**Strategy e.** Training the farmers for IT solutions available, knowledge transfer events, and equip them with the necessary digital/precision farming tools.

The challenges identified in the second group were as follows:

- a. Advisors are working mainly on administration not on consulting the farmers, sometimes farmers know more than advisors;
- b. Climate change and unstable weather - bad unreliable forecasts;
- c. Advisors need to follow new trends in agriculture;
- d. Increasing ecological demand and low prices for our products;
- e. Encourage young people to join farming, and to collaborate with each other.

Below are the strategies developed for each one of the above challenges:

**Strategy a.** Reduction of administrative work. Technical and soft skills training for advisors. Promote communication between different groups of farmers;

**Strategy b.** Advisors should encourage farmers to diversify their crops to protect themselves from weather risks, advisors should also encourage investments in crop and weather insurances. Quality digital tools for accurate weather

forecasting for the narrow area and fast notification of farmers (and advisers) about the danger are needed;

**Strategy c.** Continuous training, demo-visits, cross visits, knowledge transfers, workshops, brainstorming;

**Strategy d.** Agroecology needs to be further supported (financially, R&D and socially);

**Strategy e.** Training of advisers to be innovative in the way to encourage young people (e.g. students at biotechnical universities) to choose farming.

### 3.5. North-East Europe Workshop

The Workshop took place on December 11<sup>th</sup> and was attended by 20 participants. The participants from Estonia (3), Finland (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (7), Moldova (3) Norway (1) and Poland (4) included 9 Advisers, 1 Agri-tech providers, 5 Farmers and 5 Others (Researchers). The presentation of one of the DATS (IPM) was made by Rimtautas Petraitis from LAAS.

In the first Working session 46 challenges were identified, between the challenges brainstormed and the ones identified in the Homework assignment. The top five most voted challenges in the first group were:

- a. Big flow of information from huge number of information sources;
- b. Resistance to accept innovation from older farmers;
- c. Lack of training for advisers and farmers regarding innovative tools;
- d. Regulation are changing and advisers must be updated;
- e. Farmers not accepting the balance between cost and benefit.

The group co-created strategies for these problems, the different strategies can be seen below:

**Strategy a.** Create a massive inventory of digital tools for advisers and farmers (like the ones from EUREKA, FAIRshare, IOF...). Promote networking between farmers and advisers;

**Strategy b.** Farmers should share their good experiences in using DATS and other IT solutions, through the inventory or another platform. Young farmers/advisors should mentor older farmers/advisors regarding digital skills;

**Strategy c. + d.** Promote free education of farmers on using DATS and its advantages. Improve communication and dissemination methods and activities and with demo activities;

**Strategy e.** The DATS inventory should present recommendations based on farmer's feedback (real cases, measurements, cost effective analysis for each DAT);

The challenges identified in the second group were as follows:

- a. How to keep up with changing technologies;
- b. Training on new technologies;
- c. Big flow of information from huge number of information sources;
- d. Doubts about usefulness - because there are too many tools that don't connect;
- e. Cost rationalization and improvement of farm competitiveness.

Below are the strategies developed for each one of the above challenges:

**Strategy a.** Repositories like FAIRshare's with a rating option. Promote training and knowledge transfer;

**Strategy b.** Practical training on real cases with testimonials and tutorials from other farmers/advisors;

**Strategy c.** EUFRAS could work as an evaluator of different tools and present these tools in a simple way, allowing farmers to filter information;

**Strategy d.** There should be an agreement for standardisation of the programming of DATS. Each DATS should come with a handbook, explaining which DATS it's compatible with;

**Strategy e.** A standardised agreement like the FADN - Farm Accountant Data Network should be used. Specific DATS that record expenses and can benchmark farmers expenses should also be used.



## 4. Conclusions

After analysing the long list of common operational challenges faced by either farmers or their advisers, identified in the different Hubs and in the GFRAS workshop, it is clear that even in different regions, the main problems are similar. The same happens with the list of possible solutions to overcome these barriers.

The following problems stand out for being similar in different workshops:

- a. Problems related to data privacy;
- b. Availability of too many different DATS, making it difficult to know all DATS available;
- c. Lack of training for new technologies;
- d. Difficulties to optimise work management;
- e. Lack of price certainty;
- f. Difficulties to produce in a sustainable way.

After the co-creation activities of the workshops, the following strategies were developed for the aforementioned problems:

**Problem a:** Problems related to data privacy.

**Solution a:** Develop a protocol for each DATS, clearly explaining, and allowing different levels of permissions, what data will be used and for what. The protocol should also explain which DATS are compatible. Train farmers on this protocol as well as in GDPR.

DATS programming should be standardised to ensure interoperability, such as an “ISOBUS”. The output should also be generated on a universal format (i.e., Excel, API functionalities).

DATS should be user friendly, with clear displays, data from the farm should be automatically synchronised to the platform.

**Problem b:** Availability of too many different DATS, making it difficult to know all DATS available.

**Solution b:** Create a European DATS inventory platform where information about the DATS can be shared and allowing users to share their experiences and reviews.

**Problem c:** Lack of training for new technologies.

**Solution c:** Since farming will become more and more digital, continuous training (based on real cases, with testimonials) will be required throughout the farmers career, including demo-visits, cross visits, knowledge transfers, workshops, brainstorming, brainstorm with colleagues. Advisors have a decisive role in training farmers on problem solving skills and new communication tools and approaches as well as digital/precision farming tools. The training should be tailor made whenever possible. Young advisors should mentor older advisors regarding digital skills.

There should be communication between DATS/IT companies and farmers/advisors, promoting free training for farmers.

**Problem d:** Difficulties to optimise work management.

**Solution d:** Administrative work should be reduced, by using lean management and automating administration. Digital tools shall be a good solution to improve Workflow and work management. Identify and promote a wider dissemination of flagship farms between farmers and advisors.

**Problem e:** Lack of price certainty

**Solution e:** Create DATS to track global commodity prices as well as producers' organisation's prices, that allow farmers to sell directly to consumers. Specific DATS that record expenses and can benchmark farmers expenses should also be used. Translate these tools using automatic translation software like Google translate, DeepL or other translation software. Artificial Intelligence will also be a future solution for this barrier.

**Problem f:** Difficulties to produce in a sustainable way.

**Solution f:** Quality digital tools for accurate weather forecasting for the narrow area and fast notification of farmers about the danger are needed. Advisors should encourage farmers to diversify their crops to protect themselves from weather risks and to invest in crop and weather insurance. Agroecology needs to be further supported (financially, R&D and socially). Collect and provide access to digital Decision Support Tools (DSTs) that help farmers in developing initiatives that strengthen their position, helping consumers and producers in rural communities to reconnect.

Considering the results of the surveys, the challenges identified match the current advisory situation. The first three problems, specifically, have a direct correspondence with the conclusions reached after analyzing the questionnaires

This means that when the surveys say that *Data collection needs more efficiency and interoperability is lacking* in corresponds to Problem a, when they say that *There are several barriers which have yet to be overcome for the adoption of DATS, There is a wide variety of DATS in use however no dominant software solution is recognizable* and that *DATS (e.g. farm management software, IoT) not widely adopted among farmers*, that's a problem could be solved with Solution b. Also, both the surveys and the workshops conclude that there is the need for more training on new technologies for farmers and advisors.

Moreover, these workshops served as a dissemination tool from the project. Of 92 people involved in the workshops, 2/3 found the discussions interesting and all of them said they had learned more about the project, and that they would be interested in participating in more FAIRshare events.

Finally, now that the main EU problems were found, and that solutions were drafted, a communication and dissemination strategy, requiring all partner institutions collaboration, will be put in place to share these solutions with the project's target groups. CONSULAI will organize a Communication & Dissemination Workshop for all partners (each partner will have one attendee responsible for this action) to consolidate the communication and dissemination strategy, key messages, and communication channels.



## 5. Annex

### 5.1. Homework Assignment

**Please identify 5 common operational day to day challenges faced by farmers and their advisers**

1. Challenge 1
2. Challenge 2
3. Challenge 3
4. Challenge 4
5. Challenge 5

**Design strategies to address one of these challenges using DATS**

During the workshop these strategies will be shared



## 5.2. Klaxoon boards



Figure 3 - West Europe Workshop - 1st group Boards

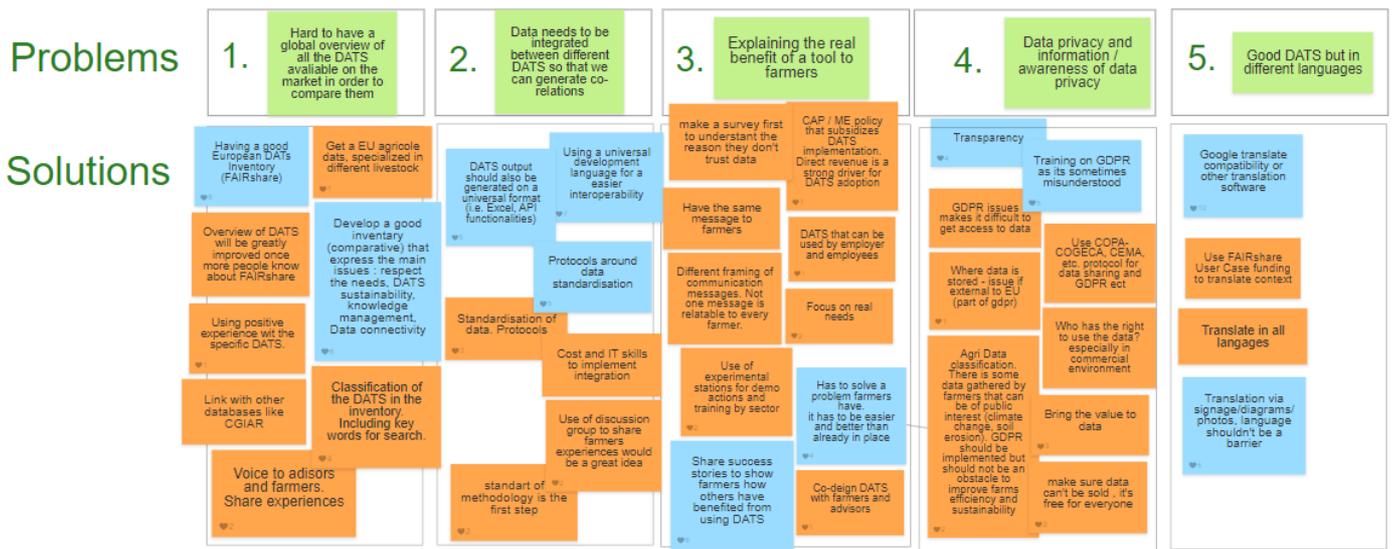


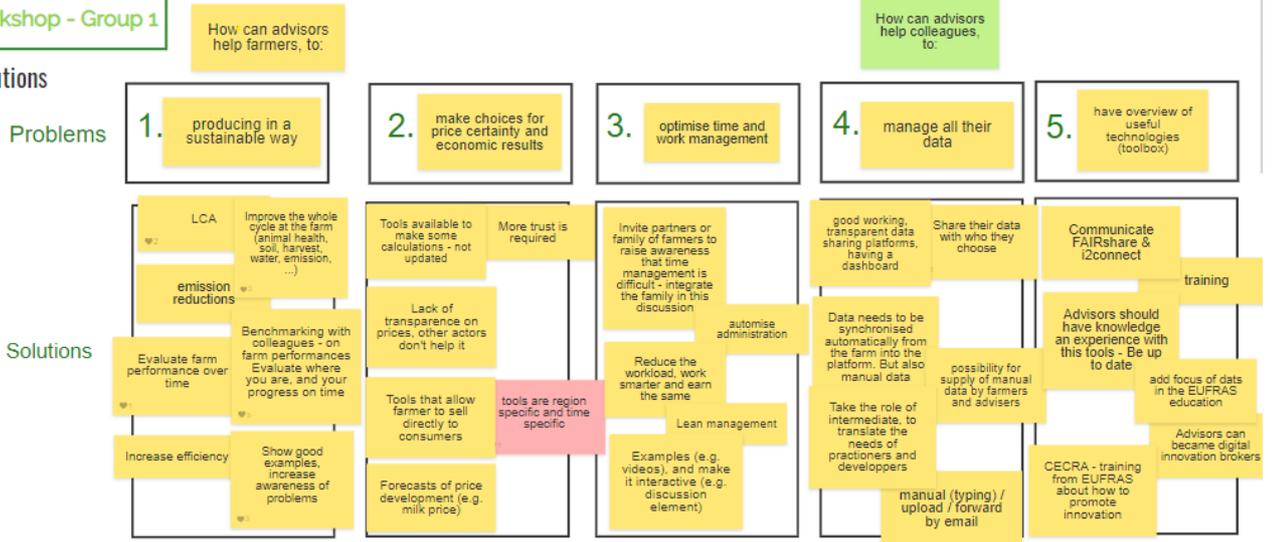
Figure 4 - West Europe Workshop - 2nd group Boards





Central Europe Workshop - Group 1

Exercise - Design solutions



Central Europe Workshop - Group 2

Exercise - Design solutions

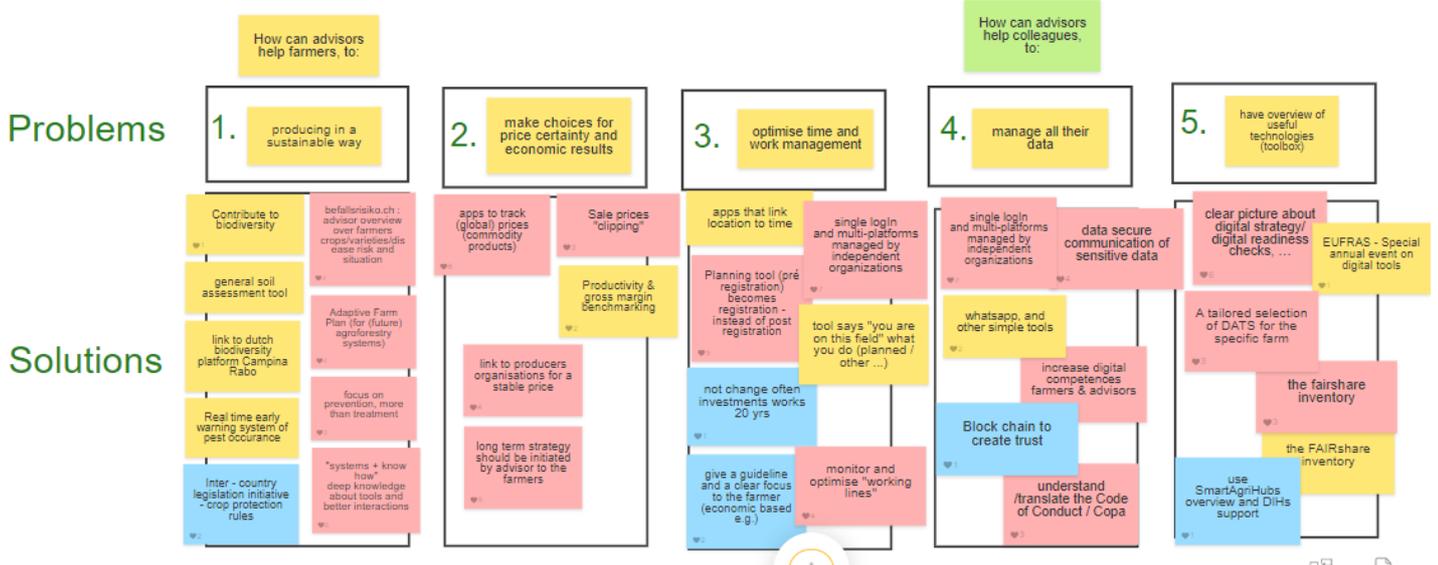


Figure 5 - Central Europe Workshop Boards



Figure 6 - South East Europe Workshop - 1st group Boards





### 2nd Exercise - Design solutions

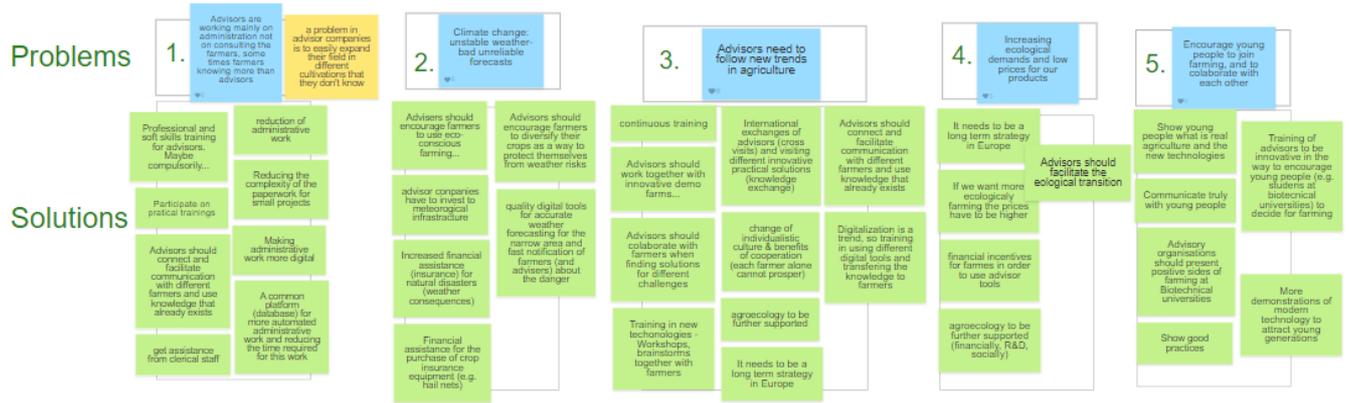


Figure 7 - South East Europe Workshop - 2nd group Boards



Figure 8 - North East Europe Workshop - 1st group Boards



Problems	1. How to keep up with changing technologies	2. Training on new technologies	3. Big flow of information from huge number of information sources	4. Doubts about usefulness - because there are too many tools that don't connect	5. Cost rationalization and improvement of farm competitiveness
Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repositories like FAIRshare's, EUREKA's and EURAKNO's are good. They should have a rating experience option</li> <li>Use social media, newsletters</li> <li>Training, knowledge transfer</li> <li>Joining thematic network groups</li> <li>Strong national AKIS system, where advisers, farmers, business and researchers are in close cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advisors interaction, online and physical. Storytelling</li> <li>comparison between similar solutions</li> <li>Training on real cases, practical training facilities try it yourself training</li> <li>Add testimonials, tutorials for farmers/advisors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EUFAS as an evaluator for different tools, filtering information</li> <li>Rural development networks - sharing of new information</li> <li>Simple and concentrated information for farmers</li> <li>Knowledge reservoirs with selected information by experts</li> <li>A guide that can filter information for farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governmental /EU agreement on the standardisation of the programming of DATS - "unified programming language"</li> <li>Interchangeability of core data</li> <li>Having a local expert that can help local adoption of DATS</li> <li>Also, have an entity to help developers make their DATS available in different regions</li> <li>Case studies of improvement when used</li> <li>DATS need to be transparent so that advisers/farmers can choose from them and use them alone</li> <li>Each DATS should explain what other DATS it is compatible with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular /series of webinars for advisers about all the DATS</li> <li>Use of digital tools</li> <li>Use of FADN - Farm Accountant Data Network (standardised)</li> <li>Have a good advisor, that invests in knowledge development</li> <li>Supporting programs for farms competitiveness</li> <li>We need data connection from different sources to allow for economical analysis</li> <li>Monitoring of the farm performance indicators while using DATS</li> <li>DATS for farm autonomic evaluation using accountancy for decision making</li> <li>Using specific DATS that record expenses and can benchmark farmers expenses</li> </ul>

Figure 9 - North East Europe Workshop - 2nd group Boards

### 5.3.Consent Form

## Participants Information Sheet

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest in the FAIRshare research project: **Farm Advisory Digital Innovation Tools Realised and Shared**

You are invited to participate in this Workshop and I am required to provide you with a participant information sheet and consent form to inform you about the Workshop, to convey that participation is voluntary, to explain the potential risks and benefits of participation, and to empower you to make an informed decision. You are welcome to ask me any questions you may have. If you agree to take part, you will be required to sign a consent form.

### PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The overarching aim of FAIRshare is to ensure that farm advisors and their organisations effectively use digital tools and services for supporting a more productive and sustainable agriculture.

FAIRshare will enable advisors and help to bridge the digital divide that exists between advisors in different contexts and between their farmers. The core concept of FAIRshare is to strengthen the digital capacity of the AKIS (specifically independent farm advisors) in Europe to support farmers in getting the most value for themselves, their families and customers from the digital age. It will do this by enabling a sharing of tools, knowledge and experience that exist currently within the farm advisory community. This will lead to greater productivity, profitability and sustainability compatible with the food security and environmental protection challenges facing society.

### WHAT YOU WILL DO

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you consent you will be asked to participate in an online Workshop.

I would like you to understand that you are central to this study and the completion of same; and you will be invited to feedback on our analysis.

### POTENTIAL BENEFITS

The findings of this Workshop will be presented internationally. It is the aim of this research to have an impact on advisor uptake of digital tools and services. The views of participants presented through my research will therefore gain exposure and may have an impact on policy-making.



### **POTENTIAL RISKS**

I do not foresee any negative effects arising from your participation in this Workshop. Please understand that you are free to withdraw from participation in advance or during the Workshop.

### **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

The data for this research will be kept confidential. The Workshop will be recorded to facilitate the writing of its report. Once the Workshop is completed, transcribed and analysed, the data will be anonymised. The only record of your participation in the Workshop will be stored in a secure location for the duration of the project, in case I need to contact you again. Anonymised versions of the Workshop data may be shared with and analysed by researcher collaborators. They will know the general location of the Workshop participant, but no identifying information will be shared. The results the project is likely to be published or presented at professional meetings, but the material used will always be anonymised.

### **YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR REQUEST MY WITHDRAWAL**

Participation in this Workshop is completely voluntary. You have the right to say no. You may change your mind at any time or withdraw. You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

If you have any questions about this Workshop, please contact [fviveiros@consulai.com](mailto:fviveiros@consulai.com).

### **SUMMARY**

Participation in this study is on the clear understanding that your participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. A consent form accompanies this participant information sheet. A copy of both will be provided to you. You are required to sign a copy of the consent form should you agree to participate in this study. Thank you for considering taking part in this study.

## Consent Form

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read the participation information for the above WS and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I am satisfied that I understand the information provided and I have had enough time to consider the information.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time.
4. In signing this consent form I agree to volunteer to participate in this Workshop being conducted for FAIRshare by its partners.
5. I agree:
- to the data being recorded for the purposes of data processing (if applicable)
- and,
- to the collected data being archived in a digital repository with my name and nationality
7. I understand that a recording of the Workshop is available to me on request.
8. I grant full authorization for the use of the above information on the full understanding that my anonymity and confidentiality is preserved in public use of these data.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

