



NETWORKS AND BIOCULTURAL HERITAGE: DYNAMIZING TERRITORIES SUS-TER PROJECT

Executive summary



Co-financiado por el
programa Erasmus+
de la Unión Europea



Networking Knowledge, Skills
and Competencies for an Inclusive
and Sustainable Territorial Valorization
of Cultural Heritage, Origin products
and Biodiversity

Coordinador



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SUS-TER. A brief history of a collective process

In this executive summary we present the rationale and justifications which were the foundation to design the SUS-TER project, as well as its objective, main activities, the network of partners and associated entities, on which we relied since the beginning of the project.

The local biocultural heritage: blocking factors and opportunities for an inclusive, sustainable development

In the rural areas of Europe and Latin America there is an immensely rich biocultural heritage, composed by plenty of material and immaterial resources: nature, agro-biodiversity, landscapes, local agricultural systems, origin products, cultures, traditions and “know-how”. However, this heritage is often underused, or it is exploited from a short-term and unfair perspective. Also, there are internal and external difficulties at the time of valorizing the territorial heritage in rural areas with the purpose of achieving an economic and social benefit, in addition to the resilience of the local populations. Different kinds of problems stand out, for instance, the limitations in resource activation and environmental sustainability.

The biocultural rural resources can become catalysts of economic, social and territorial development processes based on a quality, multifunctional agriculture, on the diversification of economic activities and on the creation of an image that from a long-term perspective accomplishes to position a specific, differential advantage in each territory.

Local actors, especially the small-scale producers, play a key role in the conservation and mobilization of these resources. Unfortunately, on many occasions, these actors do not receive benefits from the positive impacts of the valorization of this biocultural heritage in terms of income, work conditions and quality of life.

The activation of a virtuous circle of inclusive, sustainable development based on these local, specific resources requires the appropriate competencies on diverse territorial levels, such as firms and farms, public spheres, development agencies and civil society; in addition to the systematic interaction between them and the contributions made by research and education fields.

The educational needs related to the enhancement of the biocultural heritage are based on different elements, among them we have: the characterization of actors and resources to identify the potential of the territory; the creation of a trust environment, credibility and respect between the actors that enables a valorization strategy with a participatory approach; the management of innovative projects that encourage and strengthen the positioning and the inclusion of the biocultural, territorial heritage in differentiated markets; the implementation of local governance systems that contribute to conflict management and the encouragement of soft skills such as leadership, empathy and teamwork.





SUS-TER's objective


In this context, the SUS-TER project “Networking Knowledge, Skills and Competencies for an Inclusive and Sustainable Territorial Valorization of Cultural Heritage, Origin products and Biodiversity” aimed to contribute to the inclusive, sustainable territorial valorization of local resources, mainly by strengthening the human capital, which is a key element on the activation and functioning of the virtuous circle of the biocultural heritage dynamization.

SUS-TER had the purpose of developing the knowledge, skills and competencies needed in order to boost and operate this inclusive, sustainable territorial valorization of the cultural heritage, origin products and biodiversity of rural areas.

SUS-TER was not only aimed at students, but also at territorial actors and strategic institutions coming from different fields: communities, cooperatives and other farmers indigenous and afro-descendants’ organizations; groups of women and young people; development agencies and public administrations. The project took into account the need to modernize the university curricula, keeping in mind the priorities identified on a regional level. Specifically, SUS-TER pursued the development of a new interdisciplinary profile, the one of the “Territorial Enhancer”, capable of drafting, preparing, encouraging and coordinating:

-  New local forms of interaction and dialogue between resources, society and local economy by applying a territorial development approach based on inclusion and sustainability, able to overcome merely formal participation processes.

-  Local governance systems of the rural biocultural territories by mobilizing knowledge and the implementation of good practices oriented towards promoting interactions and dialogues; and also, to build networks and alliances with external actors in order to support public policies based on inclusion and sustainability.

-  New strategies for territorial competitiveness (territorial marketing plans) based on networks and the enhancement of economic circuits that enable the participation of local companies in competitive, inclusive and sustainable markets.

For all the reasons exposed we designed and realized an innovative course to train Territorial Enhancers

Todo lo que debes saber para participar

(Haz click en las postales para avanzar)

¿Qué es el proyecto SUS-TER?	¿Quién es un/a Dinamizador/a territorial?	¿Qué ofrece el curso?	
Módulos y contenidos	Metodología: Una combinación entre lo virtual y lo presencial	¿Qué es un Laboratorio Territorial?	
Duración y carga horaria	¿Quiénes integran el equipo docente?	¿Qué acreditación entrega el Curso?	
¿Quiénes pueden participar?	¿Cómo postularse?		Otra información útil
	Estudiante de maestría	Actor estratégico territorial o institucional	

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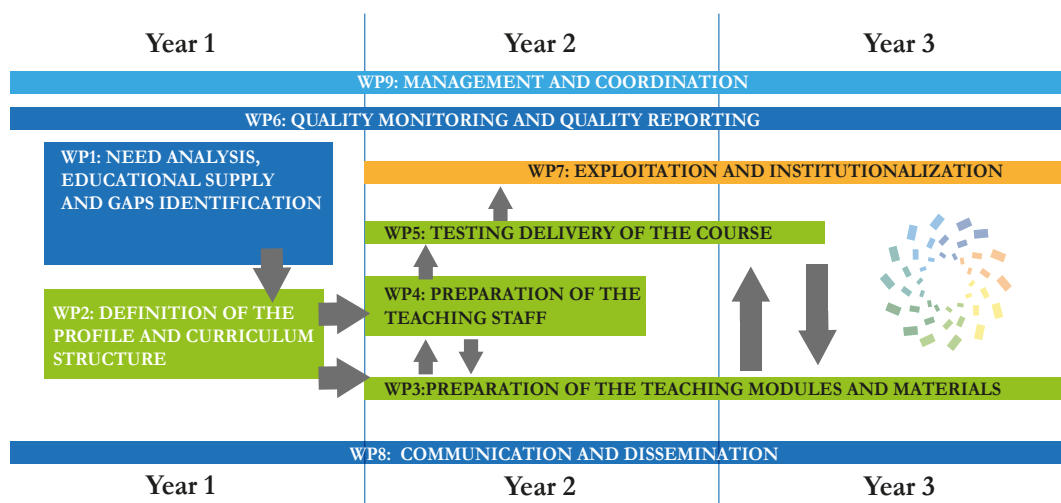
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Activities of the project

The activities of the project were organized in nine work packages related to each other. The project started with an analysis of the needs and current educational offer, and the subsequent identification of the gaps that needed to be filled in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant for the activation of inclusive, sustainable processes oriented towards the territorial valorization of the cultural heritage, origin products and biodiversity of the countries involved in the project. Then, we proceeded to the Territorial Enhancer's profile definition and the development of the curriculum structure, which was the foundation to design the innovative course. The teaching modules and the teaching materials were organized, and the teachers received specific training.

The SUS-TER course was tested twice, in Spanish and on an international level, including two territorial laboratories that played a key role in the methodology. These laboratories enabled the construction of a shared learning space that, through local experiences, promoted dialogue between the students, professors, actors and teachers embedded in the territories. The two pilot courses allowed us to validate the structure, the contents and the teaching materials. Therefore, during the past year, the partners of the project started the institutionalization process related to the training contents of the SUS-TER course within the framework of their own educational programs. The SUS-TER course is a heritage for all those who operate in the rural and territorial development based on biocultural resources. The activities of communication and dissemination carried out during the whole project enabled the access to the SUS-TER results for all the institutions and entities interested in it, even beyond the current partnership.

In addition, they were also useful to mobilize the local actors and their organizations, including young people, by stimulating new respect processes and building an identity and heritage of their own. Therefore, we enhanced a form of communication that is connected to the social appropriation of the processes.



Connect-Learn-Inspire: SUS-TER network

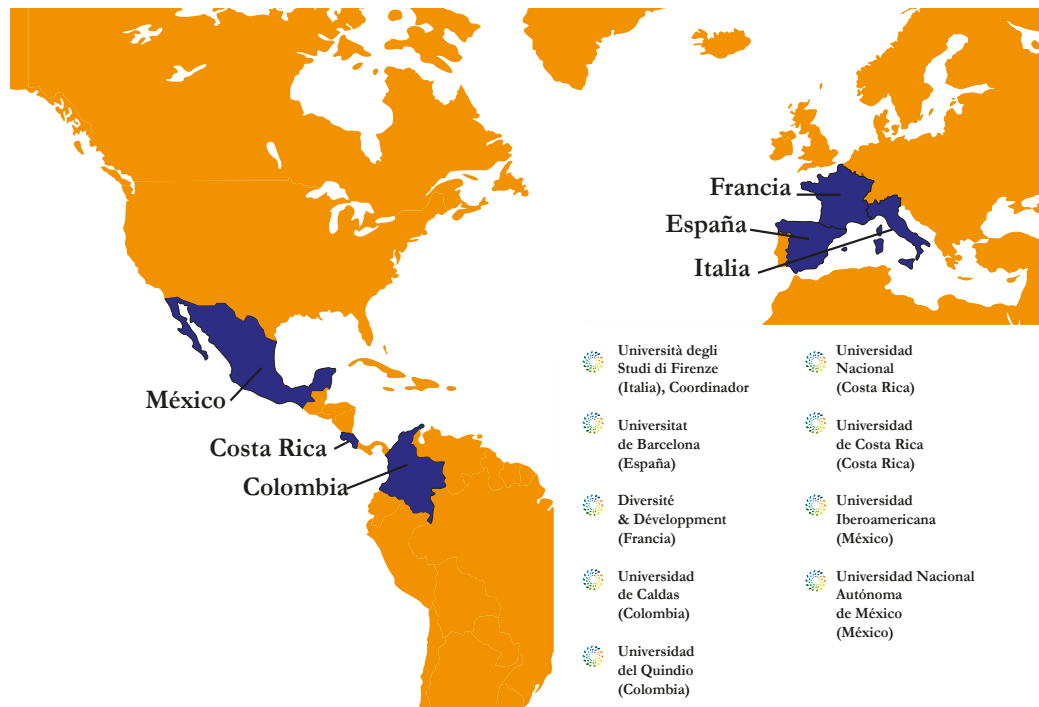
Our goal was to connect countries, territories and institutions with several actors: learn in a shared, respectful and interactive way through knowledge and different kinds of practices; in addition, to inspire, especially the new generations of young people; but also, to motivate reflection and determine real changes in adults and consolidated organizations.

All of the above could have not been possible if we had taken a fragmented approach, in other words, if we had considered only one institution or only one project. On the contrary, since the beginning, we based the SUS-TER project on a large learning community and a horizontal collaboration between Europe and Latin America, which had the following characteristics:

- The Università degli Studi di Firenze (UNIFI) was in charge of the coordination of the project.

- The co-financing was granted by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union, specifically, the “Capacity Building in higher education” action.

- The consortium was made of eight universities and one non-governmental organization, three Latin American countries and three European countries too.



We relied on a large network of national and international partner entities, which have contributed with specific activities of the project in terms of the educational needs' analysis and the support of dissemination and sustainability, also being direct and indirect beneficiaries.

FAO: Food and agriculture organization

UNIDO: United Nations Industrial development organization

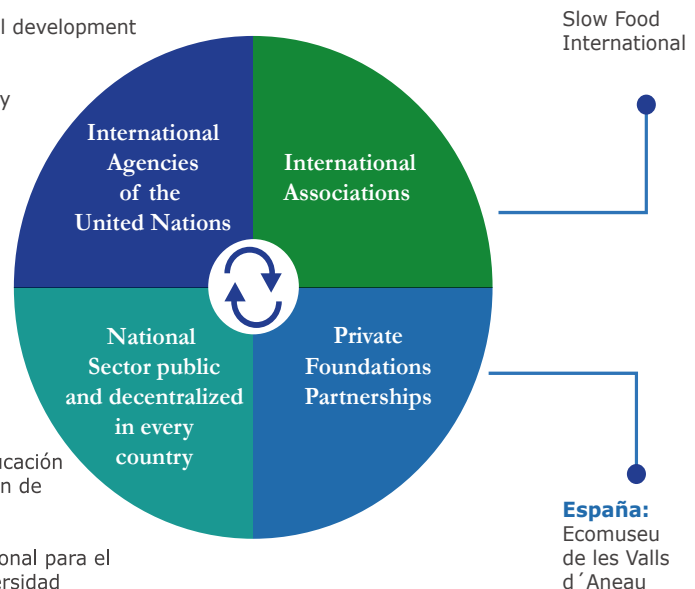
WIPO: World Intellectual property organization

Costa Rica: INDER Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Rural

Colombia: MEN Ministerio de Educación Nacional y Secretaría de Educación de la Gobernación de Caldas

México: CONABIO Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad
SECTUR Secretaría de Turismo
INAES Instituto Nacional de Economía Social

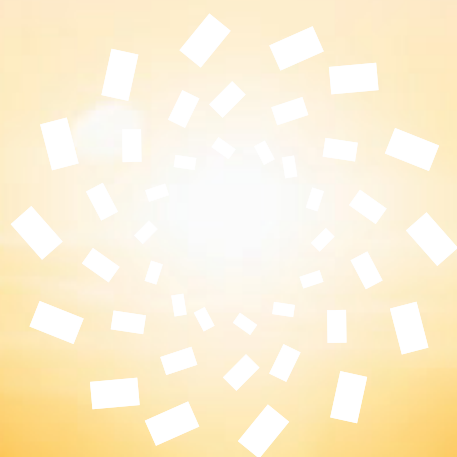
Italia: Regione Toscana



DISSEMINATION TOOLS: SHARING THE SUS-TER COURSE AS A COMMON GOOD

- ▶ Networks and biocultural heritage:
dynamizing territories The SUS-TER
project
- ▶ Territorial Enhancers
- ▶ Get to know our Territorial Enhancer
course: meta-MOOC presentation of the
Territorial Enhancer Course
- ▶ What is a LABTER?
- ✦ Profile and structure of the Territorial En-
hancer course
- ✦ Course presentation flyer
- ✦ Announcements (mini-site) of the two edi-
tions of the Territorial Enhancer course

From SUS-TER we work to contribute to the changes we want to see in the world, a society animated by social justice, solidarity and sustainability. We have planted some seeds that we hope will continue to flourish.





Redes de conocimientos, habilidades y competencias para una valorización territorial inclusiva y sostenible del patrimonio cultural, los productos de origen y la biodiversidad.

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