

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025, ISSUE #1



## SOWING AGROECOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE VET SECTOR



## WELCOME TO SEEDS!

We are excited to introduce SEEDS – Sowing AgroEcological Education in the VET Sector, an EU-funded project under ERASMUS-EDU-2024-CB-VET (Project No: 101183285). SEEDS is dedicated to advancing Vocational Education and Training (VET) in sustainable agriculture, equipping learners with green skills, and strengthening food sovereignty through innovative, participatory learning.

The SEEDS partnership brings together seven organizations from Italy, Greece, France, Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia & Herzegovina, combining expertise in VET, sustainable agriculture, and rural development.

### Key Results

SEEDS will develop a participatory agroecology curriculum, providing practical and theoretical resources to enhance VET training in sustainable agriculture. Educators will benefit from capacity-building programs, while learners will engage in hands-on agroecological practices. The project will also establish an Agroecological Network, connecting stakeholders across the EU and Western Balkans to exchange knowledge and promote sustainable food systems.

### Why SEEDS Matters

As environmental challenges threaten food systems, VET institutions must adapt to ensure the next generation of professionals is prepared for a sustainable future. SEEDS encourages collaboration, innovation, and resilience, making VET a key driver in the EU's Green Transition.



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## AGROECOLOGY IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Agroecology is more than just a farming method – it's a holistic approach that integrates ecological principles, traditional knowledge, and modern science to create resilient and sustainable food systems. Unlike industrial agriculture, which often prioritizes high yields at the expense of biodiversity, agroecology emphasizes soil health, crop diversity, and ecosystem balance. By restoring natural cycles and reducing dependency on chemical inputs, this approach not only benefits the environment but also strengthens local food security and empowers farmers. As climate change and land degradation threaten global food production, investing in agroecology-based education is essential for training the next generation of sustainability-driven professionals.



## SEEDS KICK-OFF MEETING IN PALERMO, ITALY

The SEEDS project officially launched with its Kick-Off Meeting in Palermo, Italy, hosted by CESIE, the project coordinator. Partners from Italy, Greece, France, Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia & Herzegovina gathered to align on project goals, timelines, and key activities. The two-day event provided an opportunity for networking, strategic planning, and knowledge exchange, setting the foundation for the development of participatory agroecology curricula and capacity-building programs. The meeting also included discussions on stakeholder engagement, dissemination strategies, and sustainability measures, ensuring that SEEDS will have a lasting impact on VET institutions and the future of sustainable agriculture.

## SEED SOVEREIGNTY AND LOCAL VARIETIES

One of the key aspects of agroecology is seed sovereignty, which ensures farmers have control over seed selection, preservation, and exchange. Industrial agriculture has drastically reduced seed diversity, favoring a few high-yield commercial varieties over traditional, locally adapted seeds. This loss of biodiversity weakens crop resilience to pests, diseases, and climate change.

## THE ROLE OF POLLINATORS IN SUSTAINABLE FARMING

Pollinators like bees, butterflies, and birds play a vital role in ecosystem balance and food production, contributing to the reproduction of over 75% of global crops. However, habitat destruction, pesticide use, and climate change have led to drastic declines in pollinator populations, threatening agricultural yields and biodiversity.

