



Social organic farmer (SOF) profile description

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Table of contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Current Italian qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming.....	5
3. Current Hungarian qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming.....	8
4. Current Greek qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming.....	11
5. The ideal social organic farmer profile.....	13
6. Annex	17



1. Introduction

The ideal social organic farmer profile description aims at identifying the future farmer's skills, knowledge and attitude that he/she can acquire with the help of the recommended SO farmer training. The designation of farmers' knowledge, attitude and skills (competences) as key focus areas are determined to relate expected learning outcomes and desired improvement areas in adult vocational training courses in Europe. Expected learning outcomes are compiled based on existing educational programs and project partners' professional experiences, while suggested improvement areas are based on interviews with experts and validation stakeholder meetings.



Source: Pixabay

Relevant professions and their vocational education and training pathways - as the term "social farming" suggests - are the professions from the agricultural sector (farmer, forester, gardener, etc.) from the social and educational sector (social worker, social pedagogue, educator, teacher, special educational teacher) and also from the healthcare sector (healthcare assistant, psychologists, therapists). Basically, the farmer runs the farm and provides a location and structure for meaningful work for clients accompanied by social helper. The social service workers and healthcare assistants are in direct contact with the supported person (social farm service user/participant) and often support them during the work even physically. In order to establish the win-win cooperation (organic farmer - social helper - social service user/participant), basic qualification is needed from all sides, i.e. in all three areas. The person who wants to participate in the Social Organic farming training must meet the set basic entry requirements, which can be different in all countries.

As a final step, the SOF job profile was sent to experts for validation. Accordingly, six experts were asked to supplement the description of the SOF job profile with their comments and suggestions. These proposals are listed in the Annex.



2. Current Italian qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming

Relevant professional qualification for a farmer in Italy

A professional farmer is a person who:

- possesses the adequate occupational skill and competence as defined in Article 5 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999;

devotes, directly or as a partner in a company, at least fifty per cent of his total working time to agricultural activities (farming, forestry, stockbreeding and related activities, cf. Article 2135 of the Italian Civil Code);

- derives at least fifty per cent of its total income from the same activities.

Each Italian region has enacted legislation independently, but in a similar way, to define the requirements for adequate vocational skills and competences. The case of Emilia-Romagna is reported as an example.

The requirements for adequate vocational skills and competences are considered to be recognised in one of the following cases:

a) possession of one of the following agricultural qualifications:

- university degree (Bachelor's or Master's degree or PhD in agriculture or forestry science or veterinary medicine)
- High School Degree in agricultural
- four-year agricultural vocational diploma
- three-year vocational diploma/certificate in agriculture;

b) a minimum of one year experience in direct management of an agricultural holding or as an agricultural employee with farm management responsibilities, supported by appropriate professional training.

In case of partial or total lack of training, this competence must be acquired by attending at least a 100 hours course;

c) a minimum of two years of work experience in the agricultural sector, supported by appropriate vocational training. In case of partial or total absence of training, this competence must be acquired by attending at least a 100-hours course.

The priority subjects of the 100-hours course must be in the framework of:

1. rules and regulations of the Common Agricultural Policy and Common Market Organisations, concerning farming (compulsory topic);
2. regulations concerning environmental protection in agriculture, with particular attention to those of the Region (compulsory topic);
3. safety at work (compulsory topic);
4. accounting and business management;
5. technical updating in the farm main production sector;
6. IT applied to business management;
7. technical training in production sectors not yet present on the farm but to be introduced
8. tax regulations.

To be an organic farmer, there is no specific compulsory professional qualification. First of all, the person must have a qualification as a Professional Farmer, then organic status of the farm is linked to the certification of production by an organic control body. This certification comes after a period of farm conversion in which all technical regulations relating to organic production are followed.



In order to improve or maintain technical skills, Professional Farmer, organic or not, can attend a wide range of training courses, both compulsory and optional, both paid and funded by the RDP.

Relevant professional qualification for a social worker in Italy

Social workers intervene in situations of hardship and marginalisation through prevention, support and rehabilitation. They deal with individuals and families belonging to vulnerable population groups, defining the type of need and directing the people involved towards the appropriate structures, also taking care of coordinating support interventions.

Main activities, in which they are involved:

- to offer social welfare advice for the weaker and non-self-sufficient, such as the elderly, the mentally ill, the handicapped, etc.
- to design and implement solutions to foster the social integration of people in need;
- to identify situations of need and marginalisation on the recommendation of other social workers (teachers, doctors, police, magistrates);
- to make contact with the person in difficulty, analyses the problem, identifies the tools available on the territory most suitable for solving the case;
- to monitor the progress of the process and intervenes to modify it if necessary;
- to notify the judicial authorities of cases falling within their competence: abuse, abandonment, custody of prisoners to social services;
- to intervene in cases of adoption, family fostering, collaborating with the courts and juvenile judges in all cases provided for by law;
- to ensure the coverage of administrative-organisational tasks, to improve the effectiveness of interventions, through the coordination of welfare services in the area.

To become a social worker, a Bachelor's or Master's degree in social work is required, then to practise the profession it is necessary to pass a State Examination and enrol in the Register of Social Workers.

Some subjects of social working university course are:

sociology, anthropology of migration, public law, methods and techniques of social service, elements of economics and statistics, social research, psychology, foreign languages, organisational models and planning of social services, sustainability, innovation, climate change, sociology of the environment, social security, housing deprivation, web society and globalisation.

In Italy, social agriculture engaged in services open to the community has led to a need for professional figures with competencies somewhere between agricultural and social skills that are lacking in university education.

Therefore, specific courses for educators and social animators in non-formal contexts were developed in local areas. These professional figures are characterised by knowledge and skills related to the animal and plant world, as well as knowledge and skills related to welfare (co-therapists, animal-assisted interventions - such as onotherapist and hippotherapist - horticultural therapists, etc.). From this point of view there is great interest in training opportunities and new channels for young people to enter the agricultural sector.



Relevant professional qualification for a social farmer operator in Italy

The provision of services and benefits by social farming operators is monitored by the Italian regions through the creation of special registers. Enrolment in these registers is only possible if applicants possess certain subjective and objective requirements. With regard to the former, in the documents relating to the recognition of social farm status, farmers are the first entities that can apply for registration.

Some Italian regions (Friuli-Venezia Giulia) also recognise this qualification for educational farms that extend their services to the weaker segments of the population, or for agritourism enterprises enrolled in the relative register if they are social farms providing social services (Lombardy).

In order to be registered as a social farmer operator, the farmer or family helper or a partner (in the case of partnerships) or an employee or a partner (in the case of capital companies or cooperatives) must have attended a specific training course.

In Emilia-Romagna, the training course is authorised by the regional administration on the basis of an application submitted by the accredited professional training bodies (e.g. AGRIFORM) that will carry it out.

The main areas of the training course's subjects are as follows:

national and regional legislation about social farming, general framework of the social farming sector, national and regional legislation related to social services, planning elements (characteristics of the social function to be fulfilled for the development of the corporate project social agriculture; multifunctionality and functional integration with agricultural activity; collaborations with the health and social services and with the competent public bodies for the territory; partnership agreements with third sector entities and possible company collaborations).

The course lasts a minimum of 80 hours, about half of which is practical, with case studies, guided tours and design workshops.

At the end of the course, an examination is held and a certificate of attendance is issued. The final assessment consists of a practical case project and an interview. The examination is conducted by three experts/teachers of the course.

The relevance of the topic of social agriculture can be seen in the educational offerings of some universities (e.g. ALMA MATER STUDIORUM University of Bologna - University of Rome Tor Vergata).

They offer a 400-hour postgraduate Masters in Social Farming aimed at social workers (educators, planners, service and facility managers, etc.), agricultural entrepreneurs and all professionals working in social enterprises and multifunctional farms.



3. Current Hungarian qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming

Relevant professional qualification for a farmer in Hungary

The Hungarian Land-transfer Act (CXXII. of 2013) and its amendments introducing stricter rules, ensure that land belongs to those who cultivate it. According to the Minister of Agriculture the sale of 200 thousand hectares of state land over the last few years served the interests of farmers farming the land.

The Land-transfer Act stipulates that Hungarian and EU/EEA citizens qualifying as farmers may acquire agricultural land. A natural person with Hungarian and EU citizenship who has a specific agricultural or forestry qualification can be considered a farmer. Persons without agricultural qualifications must certify that they have been continuously carrying out agricultural activities in Hungary for at least three years. A beginner farmer needs to be registered at the Hungarian Paying Agency (Hungarian State Treasury).

The Government Decree related to Land-transfer Act specifies the qualifications in Agriculture and Forestry:

- qualification obtained within the framework of a vocational education program at vocational training institutions or vocational secondary schools (e.g. winemaker, horse breeder, etc.)
- qualification obtained within a training listed on the Licensed National Register of Qualification (e.g. plant breeder and plant protection technician, animal breeder and veterinary technician, etc.) - even that register and the system are recently renewed. In Hungary, the minimum compulsory educational qualification for land purchase, inheritance and young farmer program applications is completion of the 'Aranykalász' farmer course
- BSc or MSc Degree obtained at higher education institutions related to agricultural production (e.g. agricultural engineer, horticultural engineer etc.)
- qualification obtained within the framework of vocational training in higher education (e.g. agriculture and food engineering higher level vocational training, Agricultural engineer higher level vocational training, etc.)

Areas of agricultural engineering education

Botany, zoology, chemistry, soil science, sustainable agriculture, water management; Agro-chemistry and plant nutrition, animal physiology and hygiene, ecology, genetics, knowledge and usage of agricultural machinery, microbiology, plant physiology; agricultural biotechnology, animal nutrition, data analysis and quantitative ecology, fruit and viticulture cultivation, general animal husbandry, geographical information systems, soil management and land use; agricultural and environmental policy, agricultural economics, animal husbandry, animal nutrition, crop production, agricultural marketing, basics of forestry, integrated plant protection, practice, thesis work.

Relevant professional qualification for a social worker in Hungary

Legal conditions that determine the framework of the social work in Hungary:

Law 3/1993 about social administration and provisions.



SzCsM (Ministry of Social and Family Affairs) ministerial decree No. 1/2000. (I.7.) and its amendment, No. 4/2020 (II.6.), regulates the professional work carried out and the operational conditions of social institutions, which are involved with giving personal care.

NM (Ministry of Social Welfare) ministerial decree No. 15/1998. (IV.30.) and its amendment, ministerial decree No. 2/2018 (I.18.) regulates the professional work and operational conditions of institutions that are involved with personal care giving, children's welfare services and child protection.

25/2003. (V. 13.) ESzCsM (Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs) decree on the qualification requirements for persons performing professional guardianship.

ESzCsM decree No. 81/2004. (IX. 18.) on the training and examination requirements of social service providers.

The legal prerequisite for entering the profession is the existence of a specified qualification, which in some cases can also be linked to other conditions (e.g. social examinations). The statutory data of the personal care provider (social worker) must be recorded in the Register of Operations. The Register of Operations aims at further vocational training organization, the fulfilment of the training requirements as well as the examination of the personal care provider.

The qualifications required for the social work activities have been defined in detail. The education levels needed for the practice vary according to activities. Some of these are tied to secondary or upper-level qualifications. Studies providing social worker qualification:

- qualification obtained within the framework the Social Work bachelor degree-BA programme (Field of education: social studies, time frame: 7 semesters) The training complies with the Hungarian and international professional requirements for social training and fits in with the similar qualifications of the European Union. Bachelor graduates are prepared to continue their studies in Master's degree.
- qualification obtained within the framework of the Social Work Master degree MA programme (Field of education: social studies, time frame: 4 semesters)
- qualification obtained within the framework of the Social Work and Social Economics Master degree – MA programme (Field of education: social studies, time frame: 4 semesters)

The aim of the social work and Social Economics master programme is to train specialists, who are able to manage, operate and develop institutions and services in the social economy with acquired social and economic knowledge; who are capable of working in international cooperation by knowing the international professional and ethical principles; who carry out tasks in the field of social services with adequate organizational skills, that help the social integration of disadvantaged social groups by strengthening local economies.

Those experts, who carry out the social assistance and care for the disabled, elderly, children and/or the people in need in everyday practice, must have at least a qualification obtained within the training formerly listed on the National Register of Qualification in the field of social work (providing vocational or sub-specialty qualification) like Activity organiser; Mental-hygiene assistant; Rehabilitation educator; Addictions worker; Social work assistant; Social care provider and nurse; Specialized social worker. Although the National Register of Qualification no longer exists, the qualification acquired in this system is still valid.



Subject of social working education:

Theory and practice of social work; Sociology sciences; State and jurisprudence; Economics, Social policies; Humanities (psychology, education); Medicine (health science), Special knowledge in social work and in clinical social work; Preparation of thesis.

Practical courses:

Small classroom personality and skill development; Research practices and related seminars; Short-duration internship; Contiguous internship (in a state, local, non-profit or ecclesiastical institution, at least 300 hours with directly contacting clients.) Coherent, at least one half-year practice; Small group processing seminars related to field practices and related professional practice.



4. Current Greek qualification requirements relevant to social organic farming

Relevant professional qualification for a farmer in Greece

According to the Greek National Legislation, it is noted that a farmer who wishes to be classified as a professional must cumulatively meet the requirements of paragraph 1 of Article 65 of Law 4389/2016. Specifically:

- 1) A professional farmer is an adult natural person who has the right to be registered in the Register of Farmers and Rural Farms, provided that they cumulatively meet the following conditions:
 - a) They are the owner of an agricultural holding.
 - b) They engage professionally in agricultural activity on their holding for at least 30% of their total annual working time.
 - c) They earn at least 50% of their total annual income from their employment in agricultural activity.
 - d) They and their agricultural holding, where required, are insured in accordance with the current legislation.
 - e) They keep accounting books in accordance with the current legislation. To qualify as a professional fisherman.
- 2) They are the holder of an individual professional fishing licence and are the owner, co-owner, lessee, or participant in the operation of a professional fishing vessel, except for vessels engaged in offshore fishing, or they are employed in aquaculture as the owner or lessee of an aquaculture facility. The aforementioned natural person engages in one or more of the above-mentioned activities for at least 30% of their total annual working time and earns at least 50% of their total annual income from this employment.

Relevant professional qualification for a social worker in Greece

The professional rights of social workers are regulated by Presidential Decree 50/1989, Article 1. According to this decree, graduates of social work departments can use their scientific knowledge to work both on the "prevention and treatment of social problems" and towards modifying and improving the welfare level and social functioning of the beneficiaries within the community. The main tasks of a social worker include drafting and editing social and psychosocial studies for the beneficiaries, formulating diagnosis and action plans. The fields of practice in social work include the following:

- social welfare
- health
- mental health
- social insurance
- vocational guidance and employment
- education (which is of particular interest)
- prevention and suppression of deviance
- social organisation and development
- social services in the armed forces

According to the Presidential Decree 23/1992 the professional licence to practise as a social worker, the following requirements are necessary:

1. The following are required for practising the profession and using the title of social worker: a) A degree from a state-recognized school of social work in tertiary education or an



equivalent school abroad. b) A licence granted according to the provisions of the Decree 23/1992.

2. For the equivalence of foreign degrees in social work, the following are determined:
a) For holders of foreign university degrees in the field of social work without direct equivalence, the Institute of Technological Education (ITE) provides the relevant decision.

3. Candidates for the social worker professional licence, as referred to in point 1 of this article, are required to: a) Be Greek citizens, with the exception of foreign nationals who are citizens of the Member States of the European Communities, in accordance with the provisions of Presidential Decree 37/88. b) Not convicted of criminal or misdemeanour offences mentioned in Article 2 of the Presidential Decree 23/1992, or deprived of their political rights due to a conviction.

4. The professional licence of a social worker is granted by a decision of the Minister of Health, Welfare, and Social Insurance or the authorised body, in accordance with Article 29, paragraph 1 of Law 1558/85, and is published in the Official Government Gazette.



5. The ideal social organic farmer profile

The ideal social organic farmer profile can be described by their gained knowledge, skills and attitude in the identified focus areas within 5 subject topics (Farming, Social work, Farm economics, Social farming, Personal competences) developed during the SO Farmer training.

These competences are the following:



Source: Pixabay

KNOWLEDGE

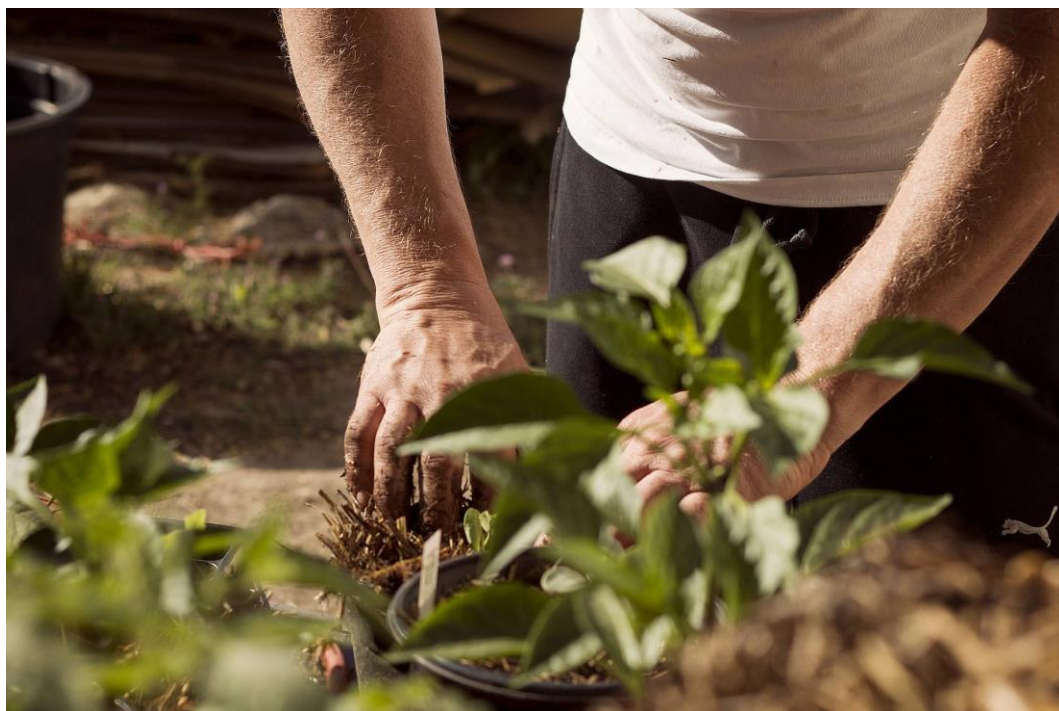
Learners participating in the social organic farmer' training will gain understanding of the following concepts and acquire knowledge related to the following areas:

TOPICS	
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic concept and terms - Organic farming - Soil and plant science (including relevant technology) - Animal husbandry (including relevant technology) - EU agricultural policy (including system of funding)



Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic concept and terms - Clients (different kinds of clients; disease patterns, needs, requirements) - Legal basis - Social policy - Pedagogy, didactics and methods - <i>Therapeutic methods in social farms (recommended by experts)</i>
Farm Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing (theories) - Business start-up (concepts, business plan, regulations) - Financial calculation (general knowledge and skills needed in farming)
Social Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic concept and terms (principles, background, diversity of Social Farming (in Europe)) - Care and therapeutic activities on a SF (theory) - Management methods (organisational structures and processes, time management) (theory) - <i>Farm activities planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Educational planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Integration planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Farm actors' needs analysis (recommended by experts)</i>
Personal Competences	

**italics indicate those subject areas that experts recommended based on interviews*



Source: Pixabay



SKILLS

Learners who participate in the training will develop skills in the relevant areas as follows:

TOPICS	
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Network building and social capital-related to farming (recommended by experts)</i>
Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication (theories) - Internal communication (with clients, colleagues) - External communication (with customers, neighbours, business partners) - People skills (conflict resolution, negotiation, work instruction) - <i>Stress management (recommended by experts)</i>
Farm Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing methods in practice
Social Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Networks (local or national networks related to Social Farming) - Care and therapeutic activities on a SF (practice) - National regulations on SF (health care, safety, qualification standards) - Financial system, funding opportunities - Management methods (practice) - <i>Farm activities planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Educational planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Integration planning (recommended by experts)</i> - <i>Farm actors' needs analysis (recommended by experts)</i>
Personal Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of human nature - Empathy - Life experience - Creativity

**italics indicate those subject areas that experts recommended based on interviews*

ATTITUDE

Learners who participate in the training will expectedly adopt new personal approaches related to the following concepts in each area:

TOPICS	
Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philosophy of organic farming - Commitment for sustainability
Social Work	
Farm Economics	



Social Farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Philosophy of social farming
Personal Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Openness - Patience - Willingness to personal self-development - Willingness to professional self-development - <i>Self-reflection and motivation (recommended by experts)</i>

**italics indicate those subject areas that experts recommended based on interviews*



Source: Diversity Foundation



6. Annex

Suggestions/comments to the methodology formulated in the "Job Profile" document:

- The social agricultural services that accompany and support health and rehabilitation must be carried out by social farmers, in close cooperation and with the participation of health and social specialists through collaborations or agreements concluded with the social farm.
- Regarding the profile of the farmers, the most important is the attitude of the farmer/farm owner who is allowing the social farming practices to happen in their farm. There should be a person that has experience in the field of social work and can work with the clients. This social worker should be willing to learn the basics of farming, to be able to plan the activities and infrastructure of the SOF. This would be the most ideal for farms that are already providing the space for SOF programs. The case of a farm exclusively established with SOF purposes will definitely have a different approach and the farmer should have the profile mentioned in the document.



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