

## Progress on the digitalisation of agriculture, forestry and rural areas

**Consortium partners gathered for a virtual General Assembly over three days, 12-14 May 2020, to advance work on the Horizon 2020 project, DESIRA.**

Much of the work undertaken by partners has been advancing smoothly. Good progress was made in the development of the Conceptual Analytical Framework for the project, which helps to achieve a better understanding of the digitalisation of agriculture, forestry and rural areas. This framework defines the research basis for the concepts of *socio-cyber-physical systems* (SCPs), *game changers* and *socio-economic impact*. The meeting provided the space and time to develop a common understanding of the concepts, while allowing participants to give feedback on the work carried out.

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*“We start from the understanding that technology produces winners, losers and opponents. And in the light of it we should find criteria to assess the impact of technologies, not just the economic part of it but also considering the three dimensions of sustainability: economy, society and biosphere.”*

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**Gianluca Brunori**, Project Coordinator

Within the General Assembly, training was provided to participants, particularly Living Labs coordinators, on the methodological tools that will enable them to assess the current and past impact of digitalisation. The first results of the Pan-European assessment of digitalisation in Europe were also presented.

As part of the project, 20 Living Labs have been set up across European countries, to further explore and co-develop ideas, scenarios, and socio-technical solutions related to digitalisation in rural areas. Their work will be fundamental to a better understanding of the social and economic impact of digitalisation on the three main areas that the project is focusing on: agriculture, forestry and rural areas.

### Next steps

Further training on relevant topics and methodologies will be organised in the coming months to support the work of the Living Labs.

The first Rural Digitisation Forum is foreseen for 10 September 2020, on a virtual format, bringing together actors from across the EU to exchange about digitalisation in Europe.

### About the project:

DESIRA (Digitisation: Economic and Social Impacts on Rural Areas) is a four-year project funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and is coordinated by the University of Pisa, Italy. The project aims to improve the capacity of society and political bodies to respond to the challenges that digitisation generates for agriculture, forestry and rural areas.



