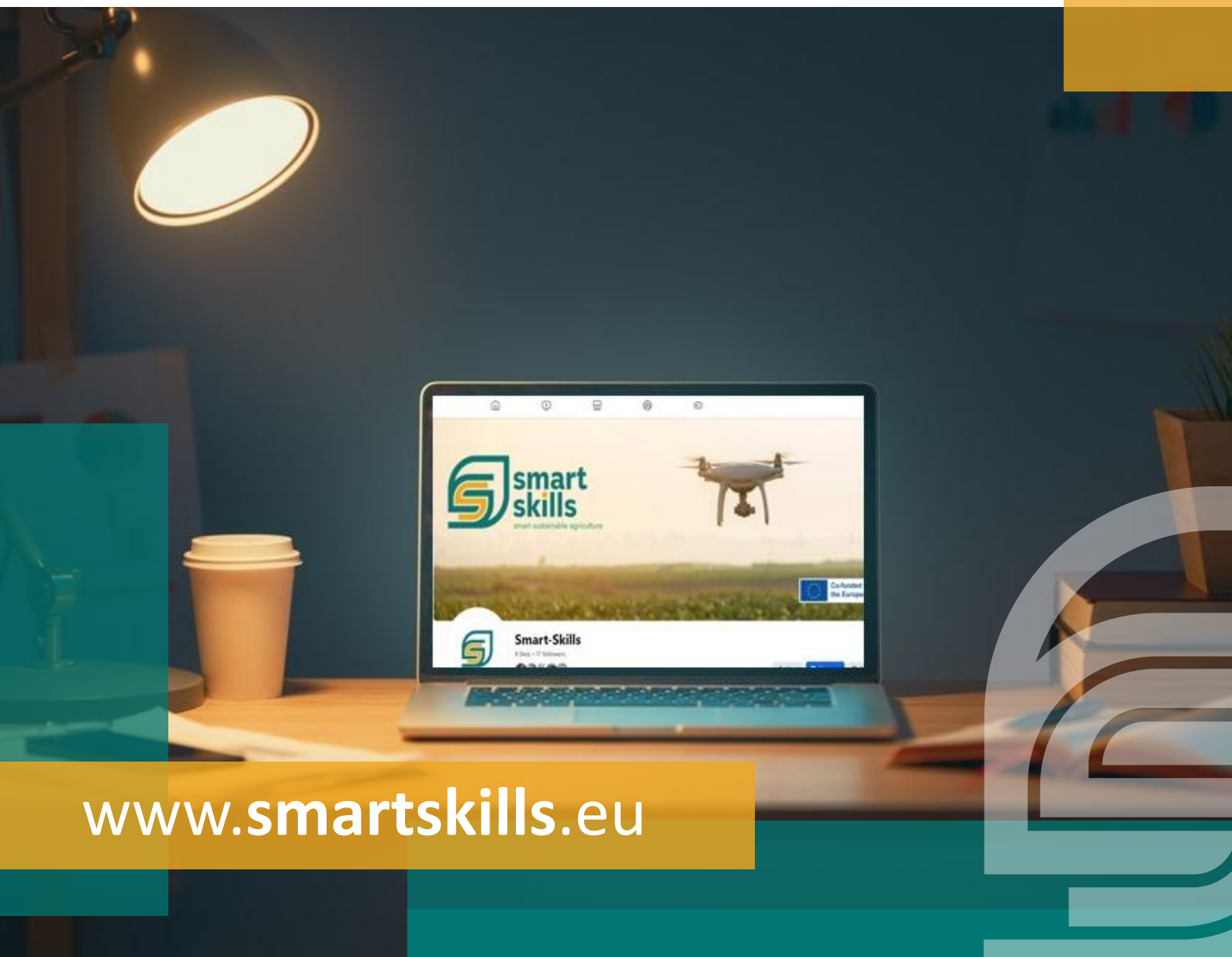




www.smartskills.eu

Newsletter 1



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. 2023-2-PL01-KA220-VET-000178755

contents

- 01** Introduction to the Smart Skills project
- 02** Our Team
- 03** Meeting in Krakow
- 04** Meeting in Prague
- 05** Good Practice Compendium
- 06** What's next?



Co-funded by
the European Union



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. 2023-2-PL01-KA220-VET-000178755

This license enables reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator. The license allows for commercial use. CC BY includes the following elements:
BY: credit must be given to the creator.

1. | Introduction to the Smart Skills Project

This project aims to **strengthen digital literacy** & the exchange of **innovative practices** across the EU's Agro-sector. The initiative aligns with the pressing goals of **combating climate change, meeting SDGs & promoting rural sustainability**.

Within our European partnership we will address cultural & vocational barriers to digital adoption in agriculture. Evaluate and share best practices in digital technologies in the Agro-sector and share our results openly across Europe as a way to spread the word and create increased impact.

The SMART SKILLS project will actively contribute to **sustainable rural development, fight against climate change, and address the unique challenges of the European agricultural labour market**.

It aims to ensure that farmers and rural workers have access to the appropriate

technology and skills, fulfilling both immediate labour market needs and longer-term sustainability goals. The SMART SKILLS project is motivated by the need to improve the competitiveness and sustainability of small and family farms in rural areas. A key issue is the low adoption of innovative technologies and modern practices, resulting in limited competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

The project's impact has the potential to positively impact rural areas in all partner regions (Poland, Czech Republic, Italy, Ireland, Slovakia and Denmark) and across diverse agricultural landscapes in the EU.



1. The Smart Skills Project Resources

Work Package 2 - SMART Kit of digital skills and knowledge.

A toolkit encapsulating digital skills and knowledge Good Practices for sustainable agriculture, complemented by Open Educational Resources (OER).

Our toolkit is not just a set of guidelines; it's a hands-on manual packed with real-world applications, simulations, and OERs. This ensures farmers not only understand but can directly implement smart farming technologies.

Work Package 3 - A SMART SKILLS Digital Learning Platform

Designed for a microlearning training system. In today's fast-paced world, flexibility in learning is key. Our Digital Learning Platform will be designed to fit into the lives of busy farmers, offering microlearning modules that can be accessed at their convenience. This results in not just learning but effective implementation.

Work Package 4 - A SMART SKILLS 'Train the Trainer' programme .

This programme will be aimed at national rural developers, facilitated by trained regional agricultural instructors. The Train-the-Trainer programme does more than just teach; it ensures that knowledge spreads like wildfire. By focusing on rural developers as a dissemination point, we create a network of highly skilled individuals who can adapt the curriculum to local needs, causing a ripple effect that extends far beyond the immediate trainees.



2. Our Team

Our Smart Skills project brings together a diverse consortium of dedicated partners across Europe, each contributing unique expertise to strengthen digital skills and sustainable practices in agriculture. Here's an introduction to our partners, their areas of expertise, and their roles in the project.



Instytut Hodowli i Aklimatyzacji Roślin (IHAR, Poland)

The lead coordinator for Smart Skills, IHAR's Experimental Department at Grodkowice specialises in plant breeding and the implementation of innovative agricultural practices. With a focus on developing training for farmers, educators, and students, IHAR's hands-on approach to plant production and agronomic methods is a core asset to our project. IHAR oversees **project management and reporting** and ensures that Smart Skills stays aligned with its goals in sustainable agriculture.

Team Lead: Dr. Agnieszka Rachwalska, a seasoned trainer and expert in biological and agricultural sciences

Momentum Marketing Services (Ireland)

Momentum brings its expertise in developing progressive learning programmes, particularly in sustainability and digital skills for adults and further education. Known for its strong marketing and dissemination capabilities, Momentum is instrumental in creating and managing the **Smart Skills brand and communications strategy**. Their role extends to sharing project results with a wider audience to ensure impactful dissemination.

Key Contributor: Paula Whyte, Agri-Food Sector Lead.



ARID Association (Poland)

Founded to support rural development and lifelong learning, ARID promotes innovation and digital transformation in agriculture. They bring rich experience from past projects in sustainable agriculture and precision farming. Within Smart Skills, ARID contributes to **Work Package 4**, developing the train the trainer programme, and supporting overall content development and translation for accessibility.

Notable Team Members: Maciej Dymacz, Chairman, and Natalia Kobiernik, Project Manager, both experienced in rural innovation and digital skills training.

2. Our Team - continued



New Edu (Slovakia)

New Edu combines research with hands-on training in the agriculture and food sectors, working closely with academic institutions and local governments to strengthen rural communities. For Smart Skills, New Edu leads **content development for learning modules** on topics such as digital farming and automated control systems. Their efforts include designing a comprehensive template to standardise the module structure.

Lead Experts: Zuzana Palkova and Marieta Okenková, with extensive experience in agricultural policy and rural development.

Meridaunia Local Action Group (Italy)

Meridaunia, a consortium representing 30 municipalities in the Monti Dauni area, is committed to local development and sustainable practices. With experience in community-driven projects, Meridaunia supports **content creation and visual resources for learning modules**, helping rural farmers and communities embrace digital tools and sustainable farming methods.

Key Members: Daniele Borrelli, Director, and Angela Maria Loporchio, Project Manager, both leaders in European funding and sustainable rural initiatives.



Czech University of Life Sciences (CZU, Czechia)

With a strong foundation in precision agriculture and digital technologies, CZU's Faculty of Economics and Management provides key insights and tools for Smart Skills. CZU contributes to **Work Package 2** by sharing best practices and developing a literature review to guide module topics and will guide us in creating a microlearning programme.

Featured Researchers: Pavel Šimek and Eva Kanska, experts in data analysis, ICT, and precision farming.

European E-learning Institute (EUEI, Denmark)

EUEI leads in digital education, specialising in interactive and inclusive e-learning experiences. Their expertise supports the **development of the digital learning platform** for Smart Skills, including hosting the final Good Practice Guide and ensuring accessibility across all resources. EUEI is also managing the **project's social media presence and website** to increase visibility.

Core Team: Canice Hamill, Instructional Designer, and Kathryn O'Brien, will focus on inclusive and innovative e-learning solutions.



3. Transnational Partner Meeting in Krakow

The Smart Skills project team held its first in-person Transnational Partner meeting (TPM) in Krakow in June 2024. This meeting was hosted in a hybrid format by the project leader IHAR ZD Grodkowice (Poland), with support from local partner ARID.

Attending partners included Momentum Marketing Services (Ireland), European E-Learning Institute (Denmark), Association ARID (Poland), New Edu (Slovakia), GAL Meridaunia (Italy), and Czech University of Life Sciences (Czech Republic, attending online). These meetings are vital for fostering strong relationships within the project consortium, ensuring effective collaboration and shared understanding of goals.

The team discussed key steps for developing a Good Practice Guide on SMART/Agro-tech and innovation in rural farms, including Europe-wide research, sustainable technology implementation, and strategies for quality assurance and dissemination. Each partner presented their vision and plans for ensuring high-quality outcomes.

The meeting concluded with a tour of Krakow's medieval city center and a team dinner to strengthen collaboration.



4. Transnational Partner Meeting in Prague

On Monday December 16th, 2024, the project team convened at the Czech University of Life Sciences (CZU) in Prague for our second in-person partner meeting, set against the stunning backdrop of this historic city.

It was a day filled with inspiration, collaboration, and actionable strategies aimed at empowering rural farmers to tackle some of the most pressing challenges of our time.

During our meeting at CZU, we discussed the following milestones and next steps:

- **Finalisation and Publication of the Good Practice Guide:** A valuable resource designed to showcase innovative and successful practices in digital skills application within agriculture.
- **Comprehensive Literature Review Report:** We're proud to announce the completion of our extensive literature review, which will inform the development of future training materials.
- **Development of Educational Modules:** Progressing towards creating engaging, practical, and accessible learning resources tailored to the needs of farmers and agricultural professionals.
- **Reporting and Dissemination Strategies:** Strategising how to best share our findings, tools, and successes with a broader audience to maximize impact.

The collaborative energy among the partners today reinforced our shared commitment to transforming digital skills development in agriculture. Together, we are building a brighter, more connected future for learners, professionals, and communities alike.



5. Smart Skills Good Practice Guide

Discover the Smart Skills Good Practice Guide: 30 Inspirational Case Studies in Sustainable Agriculture

We are excited to announce the publication of the **Smart Skills Good Practice Guide**, a key outcome of the first research phase of the Smart Skills Erasmus+ project. This comprehensive guide showcases **30 innovative case studies** from across Europe, offering a powerful resource for educators, farmers, and stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

The guide is a result of extensive research carried out by our pan-European consortium, exploring how cutting-edge technologies and smart skills can be applied to optimise and sustain agricultural practices. By highlighting successful examples, the guide serves as both a practical tool and a source of inspiration for implementing sustainable agricultural solutions.

Who is it for?

VET Educators

A resource to integrate smart skills into courses, enriching existing programmes and enhancing skills development for learners.

Farmers

Practical examples of how innovative approaches can tackle sustainability challenges and improve agricultural efficiency.

Stakeholders and Policy Makers

A reference for fostering sustainable agriculture at local, regional, and national levels.

This guide is more than just a resource—it is a call to action for these groups across Europe to embrace innovation and create sustainable solutions for the future.



[Good Practice Compendium | Smart Skills Project](#)



What's Next?

The work continues...

The Smart Skills consortium are moving forward with the development of educational modules for our Open Education Resources (OERs) that are designed to equip farmers and educators with the tools and knowledge they need to implement smart sustainable agriculture practices.

Next Steps:

1. Developing 6 online training courses, each with 5 modules on climate-smart farming techniques
2. Engaging with stakeholders for knowledge sharing and collaboration
3. Expanding our impact across Europe and beyond!

Stay tuned for updates on how you can get involved and start learning about sustainable agricultural practices that benefit both the planet and its people.

***“Agriculture is the most
healthful, most useful
and most noble
employment of man”***

- George Washinton



www.smartskillsproject.eu

Follow our journey

