

THE ELIA NEWSLETTER · ISSUE 01

ELIA has *taken root*

Welcome to the first ELIA newsletter. Since May 2026, 21 partners from seven countries have been laying the groundwork for a Centre of Vocational Excellence for the olive sector. Here is what has happened in the first six months, and what comes next.

ELIA AT A GLANCE

ELIA (Excellence in Learning, Innovation, and Agriculture) is an Erasmus+ Centre of Vocational Excellence project running from 1 May 2026 to 30 April 2030. It is coordinated by the Chamber of Halkidiki (EPICHAL) in Greece and brings together universities, chambers of commerce, cooperatives, farmers' associations, VET centres and local authorities from Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Türkiye.

The olive sector is under pressure from climate change, water scarcity, an ageing workforce and slow uptake of digital tools. At the same time, vocational training is often too theoretical and too far from the work in the grove and the mill. ELIA's answer is training built together with the sector: modular courses, micro-credentials, work-based learning and mobility.



KICK-OFF · THESSALONIKI, 23–24 JUNE 2026

Around one table in Thessaloniki

After an online start in May, the consortium met in person for the first time in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 23 and 24 June 2026. Over two days the partners went through the work plan together and set the first tasks in motion, beginning with research into the skills the olive sector needs.

The partners then took the news home. The meeting was reported on partner websites, social media and in local press, in Greek, Turkish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Croatian and English.

[Discover the project ›](#)

WHAT ELIA SETS OUT TO DO

Five objectives, each with a target to be reached by 2030.

- 01 A Centre of Vocational Excellence across borders**
Linking VET providers, the olive industry, research bodies and policy makers. Target: 60+ stakeholders in seven countries.
- 02 A modular curriculum**
Green, digital and entrepreneurial skills for the olive sector. Target: 10 modular units and 4 micro-credentials, co-developed and piloted.
- 03 Micro-credentials that travel**
Stackable, EU-aligned credentials recognised across borders. Target: 4 developed, 2 recognised nationally.
- 04 Learning in real workplaces**
National and cross-border mobility and apprenticeships with producers and cooperatives. Target: 140 learners and trainers.
- 05 Policy that lasts**
Recommendations to national and EU authorities on recognising the new qualifications. Target: 5 policy briefs and reports.

SECTOR RESEARCH · WORK PACKAGE 2

First, listen to the sector

The first year of ELIA is about finding out what the sector really needs. Led by the Instituto Politécnico do Porto (IPP), the research covers the labour market, maps stakeholders in all seven countries and looks for good practice in precision agriculture and vocational training.

In July the partners began circulating a skills survey for olive growers, producers, cooperatives, VET providers and teachers. In Spain, UPV took it to the universities of Jaén and Córdoba and to more than 50 VET centres that teach olive oil production. In Cyprus, the invitation went out with the Limassol Chamber newsletter, which the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry also sent to its members. Chambers, cooperatives and municipalities in the other countries did the same.

The findings are now published in the ELIA Skills Gap Analysis, the base on which the curriculum will be built. You can read it in the Knowledge Hub, in seven languages.

ELIA ON THE ROAD

GRAZ, AUSTRIA · 7–9 SEPT

ELIA meets the European CoVE community

OECON Group and the Instituto Politécnico do Porto presented ELIA at the 5th Forum on Vocational Excellence, among other Centres of Vocational Excellence, VET providers, businesses and policy makers.

VIGO, SPAIN · 1–2 OCT

ELIA in front of an academic audience

The Instituto Politécnico do Porto presented ELIA at the XVIII International Tourism Congress at the University of Vigo, introducing the project's approach to skills and vocational excellence in the olive sector, its participatory method and its planned results.

- TÜRKİYE MAY–OCT** BOSEV introduced ELIA at the Mamak eTwinning Festival (around 120 participants), at a VET centre in Ankara, at seminars for teachers and at an information day with farmers in a rural area.
- IN PRINT** A two-page feature in Ekonomi ITSO Magazine (3,000 copies) and a technical article in CONFAGRI's Revista Espaço Rural (7,500 copies).
- IN THE NEWS** Around ten articles in Turkish local and business media after ITSO's announcement, press coverage in Cyprus through the Limassol Chamber, and ELIA stories in partner newsletters.

ELIA ONLINE

WEBSITE · KNOWLEDGE HUB

Everything ELIA publishes, in one place

elia-project.eu went live in June and since September it is also available in Greek, Spanish, Croatian, Italian, Portuguese and Turkish. At its centre is the Knowledge Hub, where every public report, training material and policy output of the project will be collected as it is completed.

D2.1 NOW AVAILABLE · 7 LANGUAGES Skills Gap Analysis Report

The first ELIA report: current and future skills needs in the olive sector, based on survey and interview data from businesses, trainers, learners and public actors.

[Read the report \(PDF\) ›](#)
[Explore the Knowledge Hub ›](#)

PARTNER FOCUS


COORDINATOR · GREECE

Chamber of Halkidiki (EPICHAL)

A public body set up in 1991 to support the economy of one of the best known olive regions in Greece, with around 12,000 registered businesses. In ELIA it holds the financial and administrative responsibility, chairs the Steering Committee and keeps seven countries working to the same plan.


PARTNER · GREECE

ELGO-DIMITRA

The Greek national agricultural organisation. It provides the scientific and technical support behind the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, runs rural vocational training and carries out quality assurance for agricultural products. In ELIA it makes sure that what is taught matches what the sector needs.

These are the first two of 21 profiles in our **Meet the Partners** series. A new partner appears every week on our **LinkedIn** and **Facebook** pages.

COMING UP

- From research to recommendations**
The sector research continues with a book of best practices, a policy alignment review and an assessment of stakeholder needs.
- Shaping the ELIA curriculum**
Ankara University and BOSEV lead the work on a modular, competency-based programme, designed with the people who will use it.
- The next issue**
Newsletter 02 arrives in April 2027, with news from the sector research and the first steps on the curriculum.

STAY CONNECTED

Follow ELIA as it grows

News, events and partner stories from across the consortium, on the project website and our social channels.

[Visit elia-project.eu ›](#)