

PRESS RELEASE

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First meeting of the year for DESIRA project brought together the Steering Committee to overview current status of the project and agreed upon the organisation of the first EU Rural Digitisation Forum.

During the gathering, project partners discussed the progress and milestones of the project and decided upon the planned activities for the current year. One of the most innovative features of the project is the organisation and set-up of the EU Rural Digitisation Forum ([RDF](#)).

The forum is an open EU-wide community of stakeholders with a common interest to work, learn and share knowledge about the digitalisation of agriculture, forestry and rural areas. The first meeting of the forum is foreseen for September 2020.

“It is important to understand that DESIRA’s approach is to consider technological transformation as the means to an end, rather than an end in itself. We start from the problems and identify what technology can help solve it within a specific socio-economic and environmental context. We are doing a research in support of policies.” – **Gianluca Brunori**, Project Coordinator.

Partners further discussed the alignment of the three key concepts: *responsibility in research & innovation (RRI)*, *game changers* and *socio-cyber-physical systems*. When it comes to digital game changers, the project is looking to create a taxonomy and inventory of 300 examples for the future of digitalisation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas.

Moreover, interaction with local actors will be ensured via work within 20 [Living Labs](#) that have been set-up across Europe.

Next steps

First [newsletter](#) of the project will be published and made available online at the end of January 2020.

The first General Assembly is foreseen for 13-14 May 2020 in Aberdeen, Scotland (UK), together with a new meeting of the Steering Committee preceding the assembly.

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 University of Pisa in 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.

The project is looking to build a knowledge and methodological base that makes it easier to assess the past, current and future socio-economic impacts of ICT-related innovation. It brings together a variety of partners from 25 organisations such as research institutes, NGOs and SMEs.

Note to the editors:

- For more information on the project and partners, please visit: <http://desira2020.eu/>
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