DIGITALISATION IN THE NORTH GREAT PLAIN REGION, HUNGARY

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The North Great Plain Region, where the Living Lab is located, is facing with significant economic and social disparities compared to the Western regions of Hungary. The research of this Living Lab revolves around two **focal question: 1) what factors influence the spread of precision technologies? and 2) What role does the spread of digitalisation have in the labour retention capacity of rural areas?**

These questions reflect the need of the Living Lab members and the stakeholders in the North Great Plain region in general. Precision technologies are still expensive, while most farmers do not feel the necessity of these tools and find them too complicated to use. A common reason is that the farm size is too small to take advantage of the precision tools. However, **climate contributions require a more efficient resource use and monitoring in agriculture in order to lower the environmental pressure, in which precision farming could play a significant role.**

Living Lab
North Great Plain Region, Hungary
Key Digital Technologies
precision technologies
Keywords
precision agriculture, agriculture workforce
More info: https://desira2020.eu/north-great-plain-region-hungary/

The spread of precision technologies could be greatly improved if farmers **familiarised themselves** with the possibilities provided by precision technologies and were able to **translate this knowledge** into practice. On the other hand, there must be a close relationship between farmers' low qualification levels and their lack of necessary knowledge and skills and the fact that they **fail to recognise the potential of technology**. One of the main problems is the **shift of age composition** of producers towards older age groups, which hinders the spread of digitalisation. At the same time, the spread of digitalisation is expected to **have a complex effect on the labour capacity of rural areas**, while farmers in the region are also **facing with the lack of workforce** with suitable digital skills. **An effective solution could be to integrate higher education, vocational training and the stakeholders of the value chain in order to increase the knowledge base.**