

FoodChains 4EU Interreg Europe project

Summary of the results achieved by Emilia-Romagna Region

Focus on the policy changes in the region and in the partner regions, highlights on the ideas and good practices that inspired these changes

Emilia-Romagna Region, Dept. Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing, as partner in the Food Chains 4 Europe project, implemented its action plan in the 2nd phase of the project implementation in order to improve regional policies' implementation to stimulate the delivery of innovation supporting the sustainable food chains through a better integration between the most important EU funds: the European Regional Development Funds- ERDF and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development – EAFRD.

With the Interreg Europe programme, the Region had the best tool to test a stronger coordination between the two EU Funds and a better “orientation” of the EAFRD-RDP itself.

Starting with the idea that to really support innovation in Agri-food system both EAFRD and ERDF are useful and necessary as they are complementary, we found in the FoodChains 4 Europe partnership a real source of inspiration. Particularly, the experience during the peer review and the study visits allowed to complete our setting:

- The high effectiveness of Flevoland (NL) in optimize the potential of the different programs
- The interest of Maramures (RO) toward the importance of the quality products for the rural development
- The relationship modalities between scientific institutions and producers in Plovdiv/Sofia (BG)
- The importance diversification of the consumers' needs and citizens in urban areas as seen in Greater Manchester (UK)

Thanks to the Interreg experience we also understood that we must enhance some of the characteristics on which our agri-food strategy is based:

- The importance of innovation and the knowledge system
- The foundation of sustainable development
- The respect for consumers' health and safety
- The enhancement of territories and a local dimension consistent with the European Context

In practice, what has F4CH brought to Emilia Romagna Region?

We are very proud of the fact, thanks to the outcomes of the F4Chain project, we improved the text of a call for proposals that Emilia-Romagna Region was working on, concerning innovation in agri-food.

In particular the contribution of F4CH was to destine specific resources (1 million euro) only for projects related to the packaging and the use of new and sustainable materials in agri-food sector for the first time in Emilia-Romagna Region. The [call was approved by the Regional Council with resolution no. 153 of 10 February 2020](#), with a deadline on 18 September 2020.

We would like to underline that for the first time, in Emilia-Romagna Region - DG Agriculture, an European project has been mentioned in the text of a regional call and it has influenced the content of an official regional call for proposal.

Moreover, it has been increased the harmonization between the regional structural funds (ROP-ERDF and RDP-EAFRD) as in the preparation of the call, the EARDF MA has taken inspiration from the ERDF past calls to avoid funds overlapping and to grant the effectiveness of the interventions to promote innovation in the regional agri-food sector.

The exchange of good practices and methodologies among the two ERDF and EARDF's Managing Authorities will bring to develop – in the next programming period - coordinated calls as far packaging innovation in agro-food as suggested by our stakeholders during the 5 years of the project implementation.
