

Improving COmpetences and skills through Food sector InNOvation



WHAT WE DO

Ten competent partners will collaborate to improve entrepreneurial competences and skills in remote areas through food innovation potentials. Project is focused to solve challenges with a focus to rising competences in food sector with cross-sectoral cooperation between mechatronics (process technology), biotechnology (food safety) and design (packaging).



7
COUNTRIES

10
PROJECT
PARTNERS

10
REGIONS

2.2
MILLION EURO
PROJECT BUDGET

1.8
MILLION EURO
ERDF

TAKING
COOPERATION
FORWARD

WHO WE ARE

Partners from seven central European countries join their forces to improve entrepreneurial competences and skills in remote areas through food innovation potentials, led by the Pomurje Technology Park (Slovenia).

Slovenia

- Pomurje Technology Park
- Chamber of Agricultural and Food Enterprises

Austria

- Business Upper Austria

Hungary

- Campden BRI Hungary Ltd
- South Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency

Italy

- CNA National Confederation of Crafts and Small and Medium Sized businesses - Regional Association of Emilia Romagna
- Industry Association Service & Training of Treviso and Pordenone

Germany

- University of Hohenheim

Poland

- Polish Chamber of Food Industry and Packaging

Slovakia

- Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Who funds us

Our project is funded by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme that encourages cooperation on shared challenges in central Europe.

With 246 million Euro of funding from the European Regional Development Fund, the programme supports institutions to work together beyond borders to improve cities and regions in Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

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IMPROVING COMPETENCENS AND SKILLS THROUGH FOOD SECTOR INNOVATION

Food sector is identified as the most potential sector to achieve socio-economic multiplier effects in remote areas.

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FACTS AND FIGURES

 **10** Project partners

 **9** Outputs planned until June 2018

 **2.2** MILLION Investment value for involved regions in Euro



Outputs

Innovative solutions will be created during the project period:

1. A professional Food mentor program for food companies does not exist in Central Europe. With this particular mentor program, food production SMEs will benefit from integrated services of cross-sectoral experts, availability of a transnational pool of mobile experts coming from different EU regions. They will also benefit from a focus oriented program increasing competences and skills in cost efficiency, in quality assurance, in food safety risk management and in food design validation.
2. Crowd-design platforms exist, but food SMEs are still facing serious issues as regards their usability, due to food legislation restrictions. Thanks to the developed tool-kit, tailored to unlock specific problems, partners will be able to unlock limited platform usability for food related design possibilities.



STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

The Outputs of I-CON will be a Joint transnational food mentor scheme and a Food crowd-design platform usability action plan.

Analyses show that the food sector, together with other value-chain related sectors, represents one of the most important potential fields to leverage improvement of socio-economic situations in remote areas.

Within this framework, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia as “regional partners”, together with “knowledge partners” coming from Austria, Italy and Germany, will design and implement a sustainable transnational action plan that generates competitive advantages for SMEs and proactive hints for intermediaries and institutional representatives.

2 Project outputs



TRAININGS

A set of “training sessions for regional facilitators” will be organized by the “knowledge partners” to transfer knowledge and enable supportive services to be transferred after the project closure. In regional exchange workshops facilitators will stimulate mutual exchange and learning, where transnational cooperation will help to increase skills of employees and entrepreneurs to apply novel technologies, methods and innovative products and thus contributing to the respective RIS3.

1 Project outputs



TOOLS

Based on collected cases and existing tools, partners will elaborate 3 sector related SME assessment tool-kits, a Handbook Tool, a SME assessment tool-kit and a Transferability guidelines tool to overcome cross-sector support service bottlenecks, all with the option to be integrated in the mentor scheme. When all relevant data and tools will be ready, an online Atlas mapping tool will be available to users for all relevant information to leverage their joint cooperation possibilities.

4 Project outputs



PILOT ACTIONS

2 pilot actions will be implemented:

- a) The Transnational Food Mentor Scheme, where 50 SMEs will be audited in 5 pilot regions, 15 of them will be selected and provided assistance by a group of international experts, who will visit and address the identified problems of the selected SMEs.
- b) The Crowd-design/sourcing platforms will be tested and one selected for improvements that will fit the specific needs of Food processing SMEs related to design. Purpose of the platform is to be a hub where food producers (demand) and industrial designers (supply) meet and solve specific requirements of food producing SMEs.

2 Project outputs