

Objectives of the project

Inno- Food SEE directly addresses the objectives of the SEE Programme; more specifically 'Priority Axis 1- Facilitation of innovation and entrepreneurship' and 'Aol 1.3- Enhance the framework conditions and pave the way to innovation'. Inno- Food SEE objectives are twofold:

a) to set up the appropriate mechanisms that will facilitate the exchange and coordination of research, technology and innovation approaches and policies for the Food Sector and
b) to increase the public awareness on the importance of technological progress and innovation, mainly those related to the so called -omits technologies, in the Food Sector in the wider South- East Europe area. Inno- Food SEE will achieve its twofold objectives by:

- Assessing the needs of the participating countries for the establishment of the appropriate mechanisms that will boost innovation in the food sector thus contributing to entrepreneurship and competitiveness;
- Developing a network of stakeholders/ decision takers that will become involved in the project phases and assist in the formulation of policies and mechanisms for food innovation; - Strengthening the capacity for innovation of the participating entities;
- Developing Operation Plans for Food Innovation and contributing to the development of a transnational food innovation system in the SEE area;
- Enabling the development of an innovative friendly environment that allows the food industry and researchers to easily become engaged in innovative activities;
- Promoting the profile of the SEE countries as a place for innovation and growth, emulating the successful examples of Food Valley in the Netherlands;
- Contributing to a broader understanding of the potential that food innovation proposes to the society and diminishing fears for new food products and technologies
- Introducing food innovation and entrepreneurship themes in the respective university curricula
- Rendering young people more familiar with science and entrepreneurial spirit and furtherin

Expected outcomes

Inno- Food SEE will have the following main expected outcomes:

Analysis and benchmarking of the existing policies and initiatives for food innovation

- A SWOT analysis for food innovation for the participating regions
- Operational Plans for Food RTD and innovation
- A Study on potential investments for food innovation
- A monitoring mechanism for food innovation
- A database with the profiles of approximately 250 RTD entities and the technological needs of 400 food SMEs that will serve as a tool for enhancing their research cooperation
- Suggestions for the update of the existing academic curricula to meet the current trends in food innovation
- An ICT tool- kit that will target students and scientists of food related sciences
- A Memorandum of Understanding and a network of stakeholders and decision makers for the development of a transnational food innovation system
- Networking and matchmaking of industry and RTD entities with a view to transnational cooperation in food innovation
- Trained entities in food innovation and RTD financing
- Research personnel from the ERDF and IPA research partners trained on-the-job in food innovation topics.

Inno- Food SEE aims to become a catalyst for innovation in the participating countries and to

create a success story that other productive and RTD sectors will follow; the methodology and results will also be designed so that their use at a European level is possible.

Inno- Food SEE will develop Operational Plans for Food RTD and innovation and prepare for specific investments.

The project places significant focus to the dissemination and exploitation of the project results in order to ensure that the project results benefit as many Food SMEs, RTD entities, regional and local authorities as possible at a national and European level.

It also targets the general public, the food consumer, as well as the young students and researchers.

All project deliverables will be made publicly available via ICT tools and other means

Target groups/ stakeholders involvement

Inno- Food SEE will target among others the following target groups and stakeholders:

a) European Commission (e.g. DG Research, DG Agriculture, DG Enterprise): The project will produce policy recommendations addressing EU policies and strategies food RTD, innovation and entrepreneurship and food production.

b) National and Regional Authorities (competent Ministries, regional development organizations, research entities, universities, SMEs, etc.). Policy recommendations and/or action plans will be produced addressing their duties, while dedicated staff will be invited to follow project events.

c) European Organizations (e.g. European Technology Platform "Food for Life", the Food Cluster Initiative that encompasses 30 regions from ~20 EU countries, other regional research driven clusters, etc.) who may act, among others, as advisory/consulting mechanisms. The project aims to reach the interests of these entities via its communication activities, policy recommendations and the invitation for participation in workshops, training seminars and final conference.

d) The entire food related scientific community (e.g. Universities, Research Institutions)

e) Food SMEs will join the workshops and the final conference

f) The project focuses directly to the consumer, so all SEE and EU consumer associations may be direct beneficiaries from the project results.

g) Students and scientists (with a special focus to women) will be targeted in the frame of the awareness aspect of the project.