

SMARTCHAIN: Smart Solutions in Short Food Supply Chains

Over the last years, the European conventional agri-food system has become more complex bringing several issues to light regarding transparency, environmental policy, worker's rights and food ethics. Today most of the population in the EU buys food from large supermarket chains. However, a range of alternatives have been developed to improve competitiveness including many different models of **short food supply chains (SFSCs)**, i.e. farmers' markets, farm shops, community supported agriculture, direct sales and delivery schemes, where farmers sell their produce directly to consumers or with a minimum of intermediaries, both in rural and urban areas. These family-oriented companies of small and medium sized (**SME**) producers are under threat from the aggressive sale tactics of the large-scale agri-food enterprises and the intensive competition from international markets. There is undoubtedly a need for innovative re-organizations of the current food supply chains, being **SFSCs** of considerable interest, responding to a number of needs and opportunities, both of farmers and consumers, and being able to act as a driver of change and a model to increase transparency, trust, equity and growth throughout the agri-food chain.

The **central objective** of SMARTCHAIN project is to foster and accelerate the shift towards **collaborative SFSCs** and, through specific actions and recommendations, to introduce **new robust business models** and **innovative practical solutions** that enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the European agri-food system.

SMARTCHAIN is a 3 years project with **43 partners from 9 European and 2 associated countries** including key stakeholders from the domain of SFSCs as actors in the project, in particular, **18 case studies** of widespread **SFSCs** in Europe with remarkable social, economic and ecological impacts on rural, peri-urban and urban communities. To strengthen co-creation and collaboration between partners and stakeholders, **9 SMARTCHAIN Innovation & collaboration Hubs** have been established in France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain and Switzerland.

As a starting point, the project has developed an operational framework for the **comparative analysis of 18 selected case studies (SFSCs)** from different perspectives: (1) technological and non-technological innovations, (2) social innovations, (3) consumers perceptions, (4) environmental & socio-economic impact, (5) business and (6) regional policy framework.

Main organizers



Co-organizers

