



**Multi-actor collaboration dynamics and capacity building network inside and between AKIS to foster the upscaling of SFSCs across Europe**

**Deliverable D.2.2**

**Title: Analysis of the key success factors and barriers to the delivery of SFSC advice in AKIS**

**Responsible partner: UGent**



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## History of changes

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Table 1: History of changes

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
AND	Andalucía
AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems
CAN	Canary Islands
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CAT	Catalonia
D2.2	Deliverable 2.2
EU	European Union
INTIA	Navarro Institute of Agri-Food Technologies and Infrastructures Public Limited Company
LL	Living Lab
MAW	Multiactor Workshop
MS	Member States
NAV	Navarra
SFSC	Short Food Supply Chain
SO	Specific Objective
T1.1, T1.2, T2.2	Task 1.1, Task 1.2, Task 2.2
UCD	University College Dublin
UGhent	University of Ghent
WP	Work Package

## 1. Executive Summary

The multi-actor workshops held across Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain, and Ireland provided valuable insights into the delivery of Short Food Supply Chain (SFSC) advice within Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS). Through collaborative discussions involving stakeholders from various sectors, including farmers, policymakers, researchers, and community representatives, several common themes emerged, highlighting both opportunities and challenges in advancing SFSC initiatives.

### Key Success Factors:

**Collaboration and Networking:** Positive stories shared during the workshops underscored the importance of grassroots initiatives, community engagement, and collaborative efforts in advancing SFSC initiatives.

**Awareness and Recognition:** Increased awareness and recognition of SFSCs within AKIS can enhance institutional support and foster an enabling environment for the growth of SFSC initiatives.

**Capacity Building:** Education, training, and knowledge exchange programs can bridge existing knowledge gaps, empower stakeholders, and facilitate the adoption of SFSC practices.

**Policy Reforms:** Realigning policy priorities to include SFSCs and local food systems can create incentives and provide the necessary regulatory framework to support their development.

**Financial Support:** Adequate funding mechanisms and financial incentives are crucial for the sustainability and viability of SFSC initiatives, addressing challenges related to access to capital and resources.

### Barriers:

**Policy Focus:** Existing agricultural policies primarily prioritize export-oriented production, neglecting the specific needs and challenges faced by SFSCs and local food systems.

**Institutional Recognition:** SFSC initiatives often lack institutional recognition and support within AKIS, hindering their growth and sustainability.

**Financial Constraints:** Limited government support, funding schemes, and challenges in accessing capital and resources pose significant barriers to the viability of SFSC initiatives.

**Knowledge Gaps:** Knowledge deficits and missing interactions within the SFSC ecosystem underscore the need for formal SFSC advisors, capacity-building programs, and knowledge-sharing platforms.

**Access to Land:** Limited access to land, especially for small-scale farmers, impedes the development and expansion of SFSC initiatives, highlighting the need for land tenure reforms and support mechanisms.

In conclusion, addressing the identified key success factors and barriers requires a comprehensive approach involving policy reforms, institutional support, financial incentives, capacity building, and enhanced collaboration among stakeholders within AKIS. By leveraging collaborative networks, fostering awareness, advocating for policy reforms, and investing in capacity-building initiatives, countries can create an enabling environment conducive to the growth and sustainability of SFSC initiatives, contributing to more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems.

## 2. Introduction

In the EU4Advice project, Work Package (WP) 2, titled 'Integration of SFSC (Short Food Supply Chains) advisors in national AKIS (Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems) and creation of an EU Network of SFSC advisors,' collaborates with WP1 (Conceptual and strategic foundations: identification of stakeholders and needs) to achieve Specific Objective 1 (SO1), aiming to identify and characterize SFSC advisors across Europe.

Within Task 2.2 (T2.2), 'Analysis of the key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS,' the project contributes to achieving SO2 by identifying and analysing the critical factors influencing the successful delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS. By comprehending these factors, the project aims to develop strategies to overcome barriers and enhance the connections among SFSC advisors across Europe.

In essence, T2.2 plays a pivotal role in grasping the current challenges and opportunities within AKIS concerning the delivery of SFSC advice. This endeavour directly aligns to connect SFSC advisors across Europe to facilitate innovation and effectively implement SFSC models.

### 2.1 Aim of Task 2.2: Analysis of the key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS

The purpose of T2.2 is to identify facilitating and hindering factors, tools, and measures impacting integration and governance within AKIS. It will also identify best practices and examine strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and missing interactions, indicators for knowledge flow performance. These analyses will be informed by inputs gathered during the first multi-actor workshops (MAW) in each Living Lab (LL) of the EU4Advice project, in Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain and Ireland.

The parallel nature of T2.2 with T1.1 and T1.2 highlights how the outcomes of the preceding tasks inform its objectives. T1.1 and T1.2 are integral components of the project's initial phase. T1.1, titled "Mapping of SFSC advisors and their presence in their respective national AKIS in the 27 member states," focuses on identifying SFSC advisors across public and private sectors within each member state (MS) and evaluating their integration within the AKIS at different levels. Leveraging existing databases like the i2connect project's advisory service database and the IFA Food Expert database, this task aims to pinpoint advisors operating in primary agricultural production and related sectors. T1.2, "Identification of the AKIS coordination bodies in each MS," complements T1.1 by identifying key actors and coordination bodies within AKIS, responsible for executing Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) strategic plans. This involves characterizing governance models at national, regional, and local levels in collaboration with our sister project CoreNet.

For common understanding, a first coordination meeting (December 7<sup>th</sup> 2023) on Deliverable 2.2 (D2.2) and T2.2 issues between partners involved in the task was guided and performed by the task leader Sarah Nolan from University College Dublin (UCD). In a second meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024 partners in the task discussed the final steps for T2.2 by discussing the results gathered in the performed LL 1<sup>st</sup> MAW. During the meeting partners reviewed the guidelines for the 1<sup>st</sup> MAW and the template for reporting T2.2 results to each LL leader provided by the task leader (UCD) to be used as the basis for the discussion. Each LL provided insight into their findings and had a deep discussion, including an invitation to the new Irish LL leaders to better understand the work that had been carried on.

The integration of the results of T2.2 (LL T2.2 reports) in D2.2 will be used in the project, to develop the LLs, and to inform and support the performance of WP3 & WP4.

### 2.2 Related Specific Objectives

EU4Advice Task 2.2, which involves the analysis of key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS, is closely aligned with several specific objectives (SOs) outlined in the EU4Advice project proposal. Specifically, T2.2 directly supports SO3 by contributing to a deeper understanding of the

main issues and challenges within European AKIS, particularly regarding the integration of SFSC advisors. By identifying facilitating and hindering factors, T2.2 helps elucidate the landscape of AKIS integration and advisory power across member states, thus informing efforts to improve the structure and effectiveness of AKIS. Additionally, T2.2 intersects with SO4 by providing insights into the integration of SFSC advisors and contents into national AKIS. Understanding the barriers and opportunities for SFSC integration gleaned from T2.2's analysis enables the development of strategies to enhance SFSC-specific support services and materials, as outlined in SO4. Moreover, T2.2 indirectly supports SO1 by contributing to the refinement of the definition and profile of SFSC advisors to align with CAP requirements and address contemporary challenges faced by farmers and food producers. By identifying best practices and areas for improvement in SFSC advice delivery, T2.2 ultimately aids in fostering connections between SFSC advisors from different member states, thus advancing the objectives of SO2. Overall, T2.2 plays a pivotal role in enhancing the understanding and integration of SFSC advisors within AKIS, aligning closely with the overarching goals of the EU4Advice project.

T2.2 plays a crucial role in the overall success of the EU4Advice project. By analyzing the key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS, T2.2 provides valuable insights that can inform decision-making and strategy development. Here are some key reasons why T2.2 is important within the EU4Advice project:

1. **Identifying Barriers:** T2.2 helps in identifying the obstacles that SFSC advisors may face when delivering advice within AKIS. Understanding these barriers is essential for devising effective solutions to overcome them.
2. **Informing Strategy:** The analysis conducted in T2.2 provides valuable data that can inform the development of strategies aimed at improving the integration of SFSC advisors within AKIS. This includes identifying areas where additional support or resources may be needed.
3. **Enhancing Effectiveness:** By identifying key success factors, T2.2 helps in understanding what contributes to the effective delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS. This information can be used to enhance the effectiveness of SFSC advisory services and improve outcomes for farmers and food producers.
4. **Facilitating Collaboration:** T2.2 fosters collaboration between stakeholders involved in SFSC advisory services and AKIS by bringing attention to common challenges and opportunities. This collaboration can lead to the sharing of best practices and the development of innovative solutions.

Overall, T2.2 plays a critical role in achieving the objectives of the EU4Advice project by providing valuable insights that can inform decision-making and improve the integration of SFSC advisors within AKIS.

### 3. Methodology and tools

Based on the related specific objectives, UCD developed a methodology to support the integration of T2.2 into each of the LL's first Multi-actor Workshop (MAW). This methodology draws from practical insights gained through the analysis of current AKIS regional/national governance models. By identifying strengths, weaknesses, knowledge gaps, and missing interactions among actors, this approach facilitates open discussions on the future of SFSCs within AKIS. These discussions consider various factors such as policy recommendations, research needs, and practical actions. The first MAW will serve as a platform for LLs to gather input for analyzing strengths and weaknesses, identifying gaps, and missing interactions, and assessing indicators for knowledge flow performance. Specifically, the first MAW will involve mapping SFSC governance success factors and barriers.

#### 3.1. Background

The LLs within EU4Advice, in Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain and Ireland, collaborate to enhance Europe's SFSC advisory system. By addressing the specific challenges encountered at regional, local, and national



levels, these LLs tailor their efforts to the contextual needs of their respective regions. Each LL operates independently, driven by its own objectives and stakeholder engagements, thereby enriching the project with diverse perspectives and approaches.

### 3.2. AKIS governance models (workshops)

In the Grant Agreement, the 1<sup>st</sup> MAW is described as involving the analysis of the current AKIS regional/national governance models, identifying strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors (T2.2), to analyse the key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS. In Annex 1, you can review the orientation methodology prepared and shared by UCD (task leader) to help the LL leaders in the performance of their 1<sup>st</sup> MAW.

The orientation document (Annex 1) outlines the plan for integrating T2.2 into the LL's 1st MAW within the EU4Advice project. The document details the agenda of the 1st MAW, which includes several key components:

- Explaining AKIS to participants and discussing its actors and successful strategies.
- Analyzing diverse regional and national governance models within AKIS and their impact on SFSC advice delivery.
- Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in supporting SFSC development and adoption.
- Mapping out the flow of SFSC information and knowledge among AKIS stakeholders, identifying gaps and missing interactions.
- Brainstorming and proposing potential reforms or adjustments to existing governance models, with an emphasis on collaboration, innovation, and knowledge dissemination for SFSCs.
- Facilitating open discussions on the future of SFSCs within AKIS, considering policy recommendations, research needs, and practical actions.

Annex 2 includes the T2.2 report template from the 1<sup>st</sup> MAW methodology prepared and shared by the task leader (UCD) during the first coordination meeting and subsequent exchange of emails. The "EU4Advice: T2.2 Report from 1st MAW" document provides a structured template for reporting on the analysis of current AKIS regional/national governance models and identifying strengths, weaknesses, knowledge gaps, and missing interactions among actors. The report template consists of the following sections:

- **Title Page:** Includes the title of the report, workshop name and date, and the name and affiliation of the author.
- **Executive Summary:** Briefly summarizes the purpose, key discussions, findings of the workshop, and major recommendations or insights.
- **Introduction:** Provides background information on the workshop, including the profile and number of participants and its objectives.
- **Workshop Objectives:** Outlines the objectives of the workshop, including presenting results from previous tasks, analyzing AKIS governance models, and elaborating on the roadmap towards integrating SFSC advisors into national AKIS.
- **Methodology:** Describes how the workshop was conducted, including the format, facilitators, participants, and tools or materials used.
- **Current State of AKIS Governance Models:** Provides an overview of the current regional and national AKIS governance models, including key components such as stakeholder engagement, decision-making structures, policy framework, knowledge generation, extension services, capacity building, financial mechanisms, technology transfer, monitoring and evaluation, data and information systems, innovation platforms, adaptability and flexibility, communication and information sharing, and social and gender inclusivity.
- **Assessment of Strengths and Weaknesses:** Assesses the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in supporting the development and adoption of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs), including examples of strengths and weaknesses such as research and extension services,

collaboration and networking, policy support, training and capacity building, fragmentation and lack of coordination, limited farmer engagement, insufficient tailoring of information, slow adaptation to technological changes, and inadequate financial support.

- **Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions:** Describes gaps and missing interactions in information/knowledge exchange, research dissemination, and stakeholder collaboration identified during interactive sessions, and proposes improvements for SFSC information exchange within AKIS.
- **Building a Roadmap (Optional):** Summarizes the main points and plans resulting from brainstorming and proposed potential reforms or adjustments to existing governance models, and discusses the future of SFSCs within AKIS.
- **Next Steps:** Outlines proposed next steps or actions based on the workshop's outcomes and identifies responsible parties for implementing recommendations.

Overall, the report template guides participants in documenting and sharing their insights and recommendations for improving the integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS, based on the findings from the 1st MAW.

## 4. Results of the Living Lab's first Multiactor Workshop

A comprehensive report from each MAW can be found in Annex 3-7.

### 4.1. 1<sup>st</sup> MAW details

#### Hungary

As a prelude to the first MAW, two workshops (Report in Annex 3) were held in Hungary as staging events for SFSC advisory services and AKIS integration. The work was conducted in two workshops aimed at establishing an SFSC-specific Living Lab within the EU4Advice project. Organized by the Kislépték Association in cooperation with Campden Bri Hungary Kft. and with the support of the National Chamber of Agriculture, the workshops aimed to gather stakeholders and advocates from various sectors to lay the foundation for the SFSC advisory system and network. Representatives from governmental, civil, and private sectors, as well as professional consultants, participated in the workshops. The events were held at different locations to cover the entire territory of the country and ensure a network free from geographical constraints. The workshops included professional presentations on domestic specialist consulting systems, the SFSC situation, and plans. Group work sessions were conducted to explore the current status of domestic SFSC consultancy, and identify gaps, opportunities, and supporting or hindering factors. The methodology involved participants discussing knowledge gaps, proposed solutions, and factors influencing the development of SFSC-specific consulting in different phases of the food chain.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 the 1<sup>st</sup> MAW was held in the Hungarian LL (Full report in Annex 4). A diverse range of stakeholders attended the workshop, including representatives from national active tourism organizations like the Active and Ecotourism Development Center, academic institutions such as the University of Sopron, and local initiatives like the open farm initiative in Zala county and Pannon Local Product. Additionally, the workshop saw participation from the farmers' association in Vas County, the Institute of Agricultural Economics, the Kislépték Association, and the international partner, the AMS Institute. These diverse participants brought a wealth of expertise and perspectives to the discussions, enriching the collaborative efforts towards establishing an SFSC LL in Hungary.

#### The Netherlands

The workshop (Full report in Annex 5) focused on assessing the current context of the Dutch AKIS in relation to SFSC. This report outlines the key discussions, strengths, weaknesses, and proposed roadmap for enhancing stakeholder collaboration and knowledge flow within the Dutch AKIS.

### *Spain*

The workshop was conducted online on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 from 11:00 to 13:20 using Zoom and Mural tools. A total of 22 participants attended, and their profiles are outlined below. The workshop settled two main objectives, to analyze the current AKIS regional/national governance models, and identify strengths, weaknesses, knowledge gaps, and missing interactions between actors (T2.2). The goal was to elucidate the concept of AKIS, its constituent actors, and the key strategies employed. Subsequently, examples of AKIS existing in Spain around SFSC were presented to enhance understanding.

Presenters addressed specific questions related to the organization of advisory systems, successful practices, and challenges faced in each region. Following this, participants engaged in group discussions to:

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of current governance models.
- Explore gaps and missing interactions between stakeholders.
- Envision an improved or ideal version of governance, mapping an ideal information and knowledge flow about BCC.

Due to the complexity of the task and the low implementation of these experiences, the information collected in the collaborative work tool (Mural) was limited.

### *Ireland*

On March 22nd, 2024, the EU4Advice Irish LL conducted an MAW with 31 participants during the Feeding Ourselves Gathering 2024, hosted by the LL leader Cultivate (full report in Annex 7). This gathering, spanning four days, aimed to advance a regenerative and resilient food system in Ireland, envisioning a future where farmers earn fair wages and everyone has access to healthy, locally sourced food. The MAW focused on mapping Ireland's local food ecosystem, identifying SFSC stakeholders and their needs, visualizing information flow, and exploring strategies for support through the EU4Advice project. Throughout the event, participants from diverse sectors, including farmers, researchers, retailers, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations, engaged in discussions facilitated by experts from Cultivate, UCD, Amped, and the Province of Flevoland, with support from CORENET/Teagasc, to analyze SFSC stakeholders' advice needs and AKIS governance models.

## 4.2. Outcomes of the workshops

### *Hungary*

The first domestic meetings of the SFSC advisory network workshops yielded significant insights into various aspects of establishing the SFSC-specific LL. Here's a summary of the key outcomes:

#### **Raw Material Production:**

**Lack of Knowledge:** Participants highlighted gaps in understanding legislation, practical knowledge, and agroecological relationships relevant to SFSC.

**Possible Solutions:** Proposed solutions included creating a network of specialists, offering SFSC-specific consulting, and facilitating peer-to-peer knowledge transfer.

**Supporting and Hindering Factors:** Factors such as lack of economic perspective, labour shortage, and cultural issues were identified as hindering factors, while active community building and ecosystem services were seen as supporting factors.

#### **Processing:**

**Lack of Knowledge:** Identified gaps included understanding legislation, raw material knowledge, processing methods, and investment opportunities.

**Possible Solutions:** Proposed solutions involved creating SFSC-specific teaching materials, providing vocational training, and institutionalizing communication between stakeholders.

**Supporting and Hindering Factors:** Supporting factors included existing cooperation initiatives and openness while hindering factors included complexity of questions and lack of consistent SFSC methodology.

**Logistics and Distribution:**

**Lack of Knowledge:** Participants cited insufficient knowledge about legal background, logistics, quality assurance, and consumer awareness.

**Possible Solutions:** Proposed solutions included legal interpretation, regular training sessions, and the establishment of regional SFSC forums.

**Supporting and Hindering Factors:** Supporting factors included complex and diverse topics while hindering factors included lack of education and bureaucratic hurdles.

**Sales and Marketing:**

**Lack of Knowledge:** Identified gaps included IT skills, marketing practices, and consumer awareness.

**Possible Solutions:** Proposed solutions included education in marketing practices, specialization of SFSC consultants, and promotion of trust-building measures.

**Supporting and Hindering Factors:** Supporting factors included cooperation initiatives and openness while hindering factors included administrative complexities and lack of coordination.

**Social Farms:**

**Lack of Knowledge:** Participants highlighted gaps in practical knowledge and awareness of diversification opportunities.

**Possible Solutions:** Proposed solutions included mentorship programs, provision of pilot trials, and vocational training initiatives.

**Supporting and Hindering Factors:** Supporting factors included existing cooperation initiatives and opportunities for flexibility while hindering factors included administrative complexities and lack of consistent methodology.

The workshops laid the groundwork for subsequent work, fostering collaboration among key stakeholders and identifying critical questions and needs in the Hungarian LL. Moving forward, the establishment of the LL will be instrumental in addressing these challenges and implementing plans on a national scale.

Various stakeholders from academia, government, research institutes, producers, and SMEs participated in the workshop, building upon the groundwork set by previous national workshops within the EU4Advice project. The workshop format incorporated professional presentations, group exercises to pinpoint knowledge gaps and propose solutions, and the formation of a specialist consultant network. Stakeholders were identified within the AKIS, underlining the importance of aligning with AKIS principles and fostering collaboration with relevant organizations. Furthermore, a diverse range of potential activities for the LL was compiled to guide future endeavours, with facilitators employing flipcharts and dashboards to gather participant input.

**Outcomes:** Key outcomes of the MAW included a shared understanding of SFSC knowledge gaps, identification of AKIS stakeholders, and a repertoire of potential LL activities. Participants underscored the significance of networking and collaboration across different AKIS levels.

The MAW commenced with presentations on LLs and AKIS to provide context, followed by collaborative mapping exercises to identify SFSC knowledge gaps across different tiers and actors. Notable gaps included logistical challenges for suppliers, marketing complexities for producers, and technological barriers for processors, with solutions emphasizing a holistic approach.

**Current State of AKIS Governance Models:** The current state of AKIS governance models in Hungary was examined, emphasizing ongoing discussions on SFSC-related knowledge transfer and efforts to integrate SFSC advisory into the AKIS framework. Identified entities included government ministries, research institutions, advisory bodies, and professional chambers, with challenges including limited farmer engagement and the need for tailored information.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of AKIS Governance Models:** A nuanced analysis revealed both strengths and weaknesses inherent within AKIS governance models. Noteworthy strengths include a well-established system for extension services and collaborative endeavours among stakeholders. Conversely, weaknesses

such as limited criteria for SFSC advisors and challenges in farmer engagement were identified, highlighting areas necessitating further refinement.

**Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions:** While progress was made in identifying SFSC knowledge gaps, ongoing initiatives are essential to deepen understanding and facilitate integration within AKIS, recognizing SFSCs' pivotal role in agriculture. Initiatives aimed at addressing these gaps are underway, emphasizing the pivotal role of SFSCs in the broader agricultural landscape. The workshop identified knowledge gaps within the SFSC ecosystem and highlighted the need for responsible stakeholders to address these gaps.

**Building a Roadmap:** Participants crafted a comprehensive roadmap outlining strategic actions for the successful establishment and integration of the LL within the national AKIS framework, focusing on collaborative workshops, mapping activities, resource identification, venue development, and mentorship programs to enhance knowledge dissemination and capacity building within SFSCs. Emphasis was placed on collaborative workshops, robust mapping activities, resource identification, venue development, and the implementation of mentorship programs to bolster knowledge dissemination and capacity building within SFSCs.

Figure 1 below illustrates in detail the outcomes from the first year of the Hungarian LL, which aims to address knowledge gaps, foster collaboration, and support the development of SFSCs within the AKIS framework.

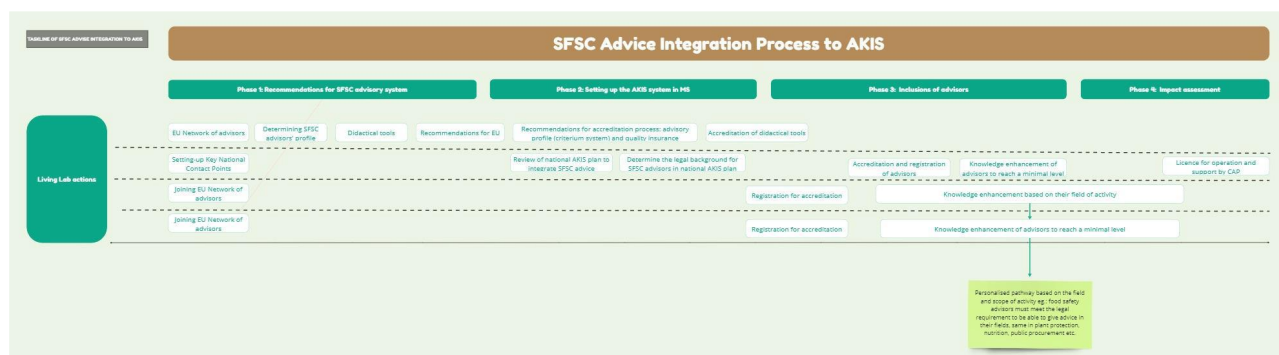


Figure 1: Knowledge and competence needs and gaps, “The recommendations for national AKIS integration”

### The Netherlands

#### Dutch AKIS and SFSC Context:

The Dutch AKIS comprises diverse actors across five sectors: governments, education/research, farmer organizations, advisory services, and the private sector. SFSC initiatives in the Netherlands are categorized into conventional and unconventional models. While conventional models operate within existing system parameters, unconventional initiatives challenge the status quo by emphasizing additional values like community building and social justice. However, both types face challenges such as high logistic costs and limited alignment with the convenience economy, resulting in heavy reliance on subsidies.

#### Challenges and Disconnect:

The dichotomy between conventional and unconventional SFSC models poses challenges for AKIS support. The current top-down approach overlooks bottom-up solutions and community-based initiatives, limiting SFSC integration into the Dutch agricultural sector. There is a disconnect between AKIS support mechanisms and the needs of SFSC initiatives, hindering effective collaboration and innovation.

#### Roadmap for SFSC Governance System Enhancement:

To address these SFSC challenges and foster better stakeholder collaboration, knowledge flow, and innovation within the Dutch AKIS, a roadmap was proposed during the workshop:

1. Establishing a common narrative: Aligning stakeholders' understanding of SFSC's importance.

2. Phasing out or redirecting existing powerful entities: Rethinking dominant players in the agri-food sector.
3. Creating extensive, cross-sector experimental space: Facilitating collaboration between SFSC initiatives, farmers, citizens, and governments.
4. Interventions for better consumer information: Educating consumers about SFSC benefits.
5. Leading EU policy: Advocating for SFSC-friendly policies at the European level.
6. Assisting farmers with risk-sharing concepts: Supporting farmers in transitioning to SFSC models.
7. Multiple value creation and payment for ecosystem services: Recognizing the holistic benefits of SFSCs beyond economic value.
8. Implementing new subsidy structures: Reforming subsidies to promote SFSC viability.

To conclude, the 1st MAW provided valuable insights into enhancing SFSC integration within the Dutch AKIS. The proposed roadmap outlines strategic actions for fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and innovation. Further collaborative efforts will be undertaken to develop a detailed action plan for the Dutch LL, promoting sustainable SFSC development in the Netherlands.

### *Spain*

During the first MAW of the Spanish LL, the status of the operation and governance of different AKIS working within SFSCs in various Spanish regions was explored. It examined the context, activities, actors involved, successful practices, challenges, and outcomes in Andalucía (AND), Catalonia (CAT), Canary Islands (CAN), and Navarra (NAV). This MAW highlights the diverse approaches and outcomes of AKIS operation and governance of SFSCs across different regions. The main outcomes of AKIS Operation and Governance in SFSC per region include:

#### **Andalucía (AND)**

##### **Context:**

- Andalusia has achieved 25% of the Utilized Agricultural Area certified as organic, yet faces challenges in short marketing channels.
- Low income on many organic farms, necessitating income diversification and professionalization.

##### **Agricultural and Fisheries Management Agency of Andalusia's work:**

- Promotes organic production through programs like Ecoalimentación and Andaluerto.
- Supports short marketing channels with guides and COVID-19 initiatives.
- Implements the Biodistritos project to create Bio-districts.

##### **Flows and Linkages between AKIS actors:**

- Weak production-direct sales and research linkages, aiming for stronger bilateral flows.
- Weak research and production linkages necessitate stronger bilateral relationships.

##### **Outcomes:**

- Successful practices include diagnostic studies and promoting sector organization.
- Challenges include maintaining public policies and creating dialogue structures.

#### **Catalonia (CAT)**

##### **Context:**

- Advisory mechanisms by Generalitat de Catalunya and municipalities support agroecological projects.

##### **Consulting and Project Services:**

- Integrated approach supports agroecological transition with tailored projects like Arrelat't and Suport Pagés.

##### **Outcomes:**

- Successful practices include on-demand services and dissemination of innovations.
- Challenges include scaling apprenticeships and coordination.

## Canary Islands (CAN)

### Context:

- The “Eco-comedores de Canarias” program promotes organic production and healthy food in schools and health facilities.

### Operation:

- The program focuses on local organic food promotion and technical support.

### Results:

- Impacts include working with 96 schools and establishing a network of 111 organic producers.

### Outcomes:

- Successful practices include solid structures and constant interaction.
- Challenges include lack of communication and financing.

## Navarra (NAV)

### Context:

- Navarro Institute of Agri-Food Technologies and Infrastructures (INTIA) promotes and supports organic agriculture, aided by supportive legislation and public procurement.

### Actors:

- Various actors in research, consulting, and education support SFSC.

### Activities and Successful Practices:

- Advisory services, infrastructure development, and awareness-raising initiatives.

### Outcomes:

- Successful practices include logistic centres and producer associations.
- Challenges include clear collaboration lines and political commitment.

The importance of this workshop lies in its analysis of how SFSCs operate within AKIS in different regions. Understanding the current status of these systems, including their strengths, weaknesses, and operational methods, is crucial for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders involved in agriculture and food systems.

## Knowledge gaps and missing interactions

The workshop provided insights into the knowledge gaps and missing interactions within SFSCs operating in AKIS across different regions. The following strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and good practices were highlighted:

### Exchange of Information and/or Knowledge:

- **AND:** Stakeholder awareness and motivation are present, but there's a need for stable coordination among those willing to dynamize SFSCs. Small productive units lack organization and visibility.
- **CAT:** Super personalized advice and financing from local administrations are strengths, but there are difficulties in protocolizing learning and coordinating different knowledge areas.
- **CAN:** There's a structured approach with technical tables and communication strategies, but greater coordination is needed among different agencies.
- **NAV:** Specific strengths and weaknesses are not explicitly mentioned.

### Dissemination of Research and/or Innovations:

- **CAT:** There's a need for analyzing available resources, improving advisory objectives, and compiling existing data and studies for better use.
- **CAN:** Effective tools and better coordination among agencies are needed for disseminating research and innovations.

### Stakeholder Collaboration:

- **AND:** Lack of momentum from the bottom up and a need to connect scattered local entities are challenges.
- **CAT:** The sector faces crises, lacks impact data on SFSCs, and needs highly personalized advice.

- **CAN:** Coordination issues within different administrations and entities, along with lack of commitment and knowledge, are challenges.
- **NAV:** Weaknesses include a lack of generational replacement in production, while challenges include mapping AKIS agents and improving information flows.

**Good Practices:**

- **CAN:** Effective communication through guides, technical sheets, and training materials.
- **NAV:** A favourable framework for promoting short marketing channels is acknowledged.

Overall, this analysis highlights the need for improved coordination, personalized advice, data collection and analysis, and stakeholder commitment to address the identified weaknesses and challenges within AKIS operating in SFSCs. Implementing good practices, such as effective communication strategies and utilizing available resources, can contribute to overcoming these obstacles and fostering more resilient and sustainable food systems in each region.

To conclude on the operational status of the AKIS in relation to SFSCs across different regions, the following conclusions can be drawn:

**1. Identified Weaknesses:**

- There are common weaknesses across regions, including a lack of coordination among stakeholders, insufficient data on the impact of SFSCs, and challenges in providing highly personalized advice tailored to the needs of producers.
- Structural issues, such as a lack of generational replacement in production and loss of farms, pose significant challenges in maintaining and developing SFSCs.
- Coordination issues within and between different administrations, agencies, and entities working on SFSCs hinder effective collaboration and resource utilization.

**2. Challenges Faced:**

- The challenges extend beyond operational issues to systemic issues, such as inadequate policies and frameworks to support SFSCs, and difficulties in mapping AKIS agents and improving information flows.
- Economic weaknesses within the sector, coupled with uncertainties related to crises and changes, further exacerbate the challenges faced by SFSCs.

**3. Good Practices:**

- Despite the challenges, some regions have implemented effective communication strategies, such as providing easily accessible guides, technical sheets, and training materials, to disseminate information and support SFSCs.
- Recognition of favourable frameworks for promoting short marketing channels underscores the importance of policy support and infrastructure development in facilitating SFSCs.

**4. Areas for Improvement:**

- Improving coordination mechanisms, both vertically (between different levels of administration) and horizontally (among stakeholders within regions), is crucial for addressing the identified weaknesses and challenges.
- Enhancing data collection and analysis capabilities to better understand the impact of SFSCs and inform decision-making processes is essential for evidence-based policy development and resource allocation.
- Investing in capacity building and knowledge exchange initiatives to empower stakeholders with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the complexities of SFSCs and adapt to changing circumstances.

In conclusion, while significant challenges and weaknesses are facing SFSCs operating in AKIS, there are also opportunities for improvement through targeted interventions, policy support, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders. By addressing the identified weaknesses, leveraging good practices, and embracing innovation, regions can work towards building more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive food systems that benefit producers, consumers, and the environment.



## *Ireland*

The results of the MAW conducted during the Feeding Ourselves Gathering in Ireland on March 22nd, 2024, provide significant insights into the SFSC ecosystem of the country. Hosted by Cultivate for the Feeding Ourselves Community of Practice, the workshop aimed to map Irish SFSC actors, understand knowledge flows and discuss support strategies.

Through mapping exercises, participants identified stakeholders, their connections, strengths, challenges, and needs, offering a comprehensive view of the SFSC landscape. The mapping exercise, facilitated by Cultivate, illustrated the complex web of relationships among various stakeholders, laying the groundwork for further analysis and action.

Key insights emerged regarding the needs of SFSC stakeholders, with farmers expressing a desire for recognition, support, and connection amidst feelings of isolation and governmental neglect. Additionally, the current state of Ireland's AKIS was critiqued for its focus on export-oriented policies, overlooking SFSCs and local food systems. Stakeholders highlighted institutional gaps, inadequate financial support, lack of education, and limited access to land as major challenges. Despite these weaknesses, grassroots initiatives and community efforts showcased collaboration and networking successes, underscoring the resilience and potential of local food movements.

### **The current state of Ireland's AKIS Governance Models**

Although Ireland's AKIS is seen as advanced in comparison to other EU countries, it does not include or support SFSCs or local food systems. Stakeholders highlighted that Ireland's agri-food policy is primarily export and commodity-focused, with most support directed towards food businesses with export potential or the ability to supply supermarket multiples. The Irish agri-food system is increasingly specialised for dairy and beef production, such as through the abolishment of the milk quota in 2015 and accompanied incentivization for farmers to produce dairy. It was also noted that in Irish food policy development, citizens aren't seen as having a stake in the food system and are not included or represented in food policy discussions. It was highlighted that the current agricultural regulations in place are not fit for purpose, as they are not inclusive to all farm sizes.

### **Ireland's AKIS and SFSCs**

When assessing Ireland's current AKIS governance models and if they effectively support the development and adoption of SFSCs, SFSC stakeholders feel the Irish AKIS does not support SFSCs whatsoever. The following sections outline strengths and weaknesses, in which weaknesses are much more prevalent based on our stakeholders' input.

### **Strengths**

#### *Collaboration and Networking*

During the MAW and Gathering, positive stories were shared around the development of SFSC initiatives, such as the conversion of an old factory into a food hub and the development of a community-owned greengrocer. However, these stories did not equate their success to AKIS support, and instead on the willingness of volunteers, community members and grassroots initiatives to collectively address the challenges of SFSCs. Farmers and SFSC stakeholders feel isolated working on their farms and facing challenges alone, so they are very willing to come together and build communities and movements.

### **Weaknesses**

#### *Lack of institutional recognition for SFSCs*

A primary discussion point was that there is no institutional framework to support local food production, or farms and food businesses that want to primarily supply their own local population. Farmers and small stakeholders expressed that they feel left out of the AKIS and that they are struggling to maintain their SFSC with such little recognition and support.

### *Inadequate Financial Support*

One online farmers market owner expressed how they feel unseen by the government and that they face many challenges with little support. They started their market in 2020 with much interest due to the Covid pandemic, but since then every year the amount has dropped. A huge challenge they face is with labour costs since they run at such a tight cost margin with their products. Another food hub representative added that although they are trying to foster more people to supply for local consumption, government agencies have ignored them. It was noted that farmers are willing to sell locally but they have to do so much, so if there are cooperatives, food hubs or direct selling groups it would be beneficial and encourage more to supply SFSCs.

### *Lack of SFSC education and training*

It was noted several times that Ireland's AKIS lacks education and training around SFSCs and the importance of local food, and if this was provided, it could increase the value of local food thus more producers would have the demand to support them. A farmer noted that with Ireland's fragile agri-system, more education and knowledge need to be brought to people around food sovereignty and away from current agri-food industry-driven education and research. Additionally, many individuals in the MAW joined the SFSC movement alternatively and not through the mainstream knowledge system. This highlights the need to recognize informal SFSC advisors.

### *Access to Land*

It was discussed how access to land is a growing problem in Ireland, especially for small-scale farmers. Ireland has one of the lowest turnovers of agricultural land in Europe.

Looking ahead, the Living Lab aims to expand stakeholder mapping efforts, create a directory for easier connection, conduct needs assessments, and facilitate knowledge sharing to support SFSC stakeholders effectively. Through these initiatives, the LL seeks to foster a robust network of support and enhance the resilience of Ireland's SFSC ecosystem, contributing to a more sustainable and equitable food system.

## 5. Discussion

An initial analysis of the key success factors for the delivery of SFSC advice in AKIS based on the **strengths and weaknesses, gaps, and missing interactions** identified in the MAWs of each country, could be summarised as follows below:

### **Hungary:**

Strengths: Collaboration and networking among stakeholders, positive stories of SFSC initiatives.

Weaknesses: Lack of institutional recognition for SFSCs, inadequate financial support, lack of SFSC education and training, knowledge gaps and missing interactions.

### Key Success Factors:

Building strong collaborative networks among stakeholders to share knowledge and resources.

Advocating for institutional recognition and support for SFSCs within the agricultural policy framework.

Increasing financial support and incentives for SFSC initiatives, including funding for labour costs.

Implementing comprehensive education and training programs on SFSCs and the importance of local food.

Addressing knowledge gaps and facilitating interactions between stakeholders through centralized networks or directories.

### **The Netherlands:**

Strengths: Collaboration and networking, positive stories of SFSC initiatives.

Weaknesses: Lack of institutional recognition, inadequate financial support, lack of SFSC education and training, knowledge gaps and missing interactions.

### Key Success Factors:

Leveraging existing collaborative networks and initiatives to strengthen SFSC delivery.

Advocating for policy changes to recognize and support SFSCs within the agricultural policy framework.

Increasing financial support and incentives for SFSC initiatives, with a focus on addressing labour costs and infrastructure development.

Prioritizing education and training programs to raise awareness and build capacity in SFSC practices.

Establishing centralized platforms or directories to facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among stakeholders.

#### **Spain:**

Strengths: Collaboration and networking, positive stories of SFSC initiatives.

Weaknesses: Lack of institutional recognition, inadequate financial support, lack of SFSC education and training, knowledge gaps and missing interactions.

#### Key Success Factors:

Strengthening collaborative networks and partnerships among stakeholders to enhance knowledge exchange and resource sharing.

Advocating for policy reforms to integrate SFSCs into the agricultural policy agenda and secure financial support.

Investing in education and training programs to build capacity and awareness of SFSC practices among stakeholders.

Addressing knowledge gaps and promoting interactions through centralized platforms or directories.

Encouraging bottom-up initiatives and community-led approaches to SFSC development.

#### **Ireland:**

Strengths: Collaboration and networking, positive stories of SFSC initiatives.

Weaknesses: Lack of institutional recognition, inadequate financial support, lack of SFSC education and training, knowledge gaps and missing interactions.

#### Key Success Factors:

Strengthening collaborative networks and partnerships among stakeholders to foster knowledge sharing and mutual support.

Advocating for policy changes to institutionalize support for SFSCs within the agricultural policy framework.

Increasing financial support and incentives for SFSC initiatives, including addressing labour costs and infrastructure development.

Prioritizing education and training programs to enhance understanding and adoption of SFSC practices.

Establishing centralized platforms or directories to facilitate communication and collaboration among SFSC stakeholders.

Overall, the key success factors for the delivery of SFSC advice in AKIS include building collaborative networks, advocating for policy reforms, increasing financial support, prioritizing education and training, and addressing knowledge gaps through centralized platforms or directories.

On the other hand, an analysis of the **barriers to the delivery of SFSC advice in AKIS** for each country, based on the report of each MAW could be summarised as:

#### **Hungary:**

**Lack of Institutional Support:** There's a notable absence of institutional frameworks to support local food production, leaving small stakeholders feeling excluded from AKIS.

**Financial Constraints:** Limited government support and challenges with funding schemes hinder the sustainability of SFSC initiatives, such as online farmers' markets.

**Knowledge Gaps:** The lack of education and training around SFSCs within AKIS contributes to a reduced understanding of the importance of local food and hampers the development of these initiatives.

#### **The Netherlands:**

**Policy Focus on Export and Commodity Production:** Similar to Hungary, the AKIS governance model in the Netherlands is primarily geared towards supporting export-focused agri-food businesses, neglecting the needs of SFSCs and local food systems.

**Limited Recognition and Support:** SFSC stakeholders feel overlooked by AKIS, lacking institutional recognition and support for their endeavors.

**Inadequate Financial Support:** Like in Hungary, financial constraints, including limited government support and funding schemes, pose significant barriers to the sustainability of SFSC initiatives.

#### **Spain:**

**Policy Priorities:** The focus on conventional agriculture and export-oriented production within the AKIS governance model sidelines SFSCs and local food systems.

**Access to Land:** Similar to the challenges faced in Ireland, limited access to land, especially for small-scale farmers, impedes the growth of SFSC initiatives.

**Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions:** The lack of formal SFSC advisors within AKIS and limited awareness of relevant stakeholders contribute to knowledge gaps and hinder effective collaboration within the SFSC ecosystem.

#### **Ireland:**

**Export-Focused Agri-Food Policy:** Like Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain, the AKIS in Ireland prioritizes export and commodity production, neglecting the needs of SFSCs and local food systems.

**Lack of Institutional Recognition:** SFSC initiatives lack institutional recognition and support within AKIS, leading to challenges in sustaining these initiatives.

**Financial Constraints:** Limited government support and funding schemes, coupled with challenges in accessing premises and labor costs, present significant barriers to the viability of SFSC initiatives.

**Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions:** Similar to Spain, Ireland faces knowledge gaps and missing interactions within the SFSC ecosystem, highlighting the need for formal SFSC advisors and a centralized network of stakeholders.

Overall, across all countries, common barriers include a policy focus on export-oriented agriculture, limited institutional recognition and support for SFSCs, financial constraints, knowledge gaps, and missing interactions within the SFSC ecosystem. Addressing these barriers requires a holistic approach involving policy reforms, increased institutional support, financial incentives, capacity building, and enhanced collaboration among stakeholders within AKIS.

Based on the analysis of the key success factors and barriers to the delivery of SFSC advice in AKIS from the four MAWs conducted in Hungary, the Netherlands, Spain, and Ireland can be **generally concluded that**; Across these countries, several common themes emerged, highlighting both opportunities and challenges in fostering SFSC initiatives.

#### **Key Success Factors:**

**Collaboration and Networking:** Positive stories shared during the MAWs underscored the importance of grassroots initiatives, community engagement, and collaborative efforts in advancing SFSC initiatives.

**Awareness and Recognition:** Increased awareness and recognition of SFSCs within AKIS can enhance institutional support and foster an enabling environment for the growth of SFSC initiatives.

**Capacity Building:** Education, training, and knowledge exchange programs can bridge existing knowledge gaps, empower stakeholders, and facilitate the adoption of SFSC practices.

**Policy Reforms:** Realigning policy priorities to include SFSCs and local food systems can create incentives and provide the necessary regulatory framework to support their development.

**Financial Support:** Adequate funding mechanisms and financial incentives are crucial for the sustainability and viability of SFSC initiatives, addressing challenges related to access to capital and resources.

#### **Barriers:**

**Policy Focus:** Existing agricultural policies primarily prioritize export-oriented production, neglecting the specific needs and challenges faced by SFSCs and local food systems.

**Institutional Recognition:** SFSC initiatives often lack institutional recognition and support within AKIS, hindering their growth and sustainability.

**Financial Constraints:** Limited government support, funding schemes, and challenges in accessing capital and resources pose significant barriers to the viability of SFSC initiatives.

**Knowledge Gaps:** Knowledge deficits and missing interactions within the SFSC ecosystem underscore the need for formal SFSC advisors, capacity-building programs, and knowledge-sharing platforms.

**Access to Land:** Limited access to land, especially for small-scale farmers, impedes the development and expansion of SFSC initiatives, highlighting the need for land tenure reforms and support mechanisms.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, addressing the identified key success factors and barriers requires a comprehensive approach involving policy reforms, institutional support, financial incentives, capacity building, and enhanced collaboration among stakeholders within AKIS. By leveraging collaborative networks, fostering awareness, advocating for policy reforms, and investing in capacity-building initiatives, countries can create an enabling environment in this AKIS conducive to the growth and sustainability of SFSC initiatives, contributing to more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems.

## 7. Annexes

### Annex 1: Guidelines for 1<sup>st</sup> MAW

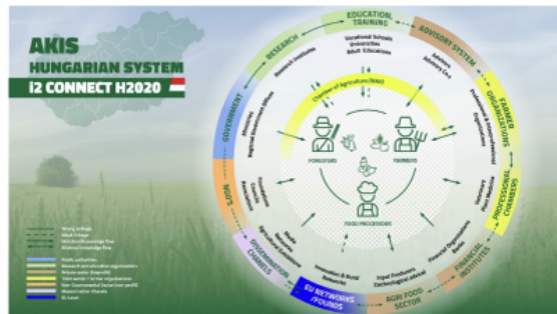
#### EU4Advice: Plan for T2.2 integration into Living Lab 1st Multiactor Workshop

Description of 1st MAW in Grant Agreement: *Analyse the current AKIS regional/national governance models, identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors (T2.2)*

Goal: **Analyse the key success factors and barriers hindering the delivery of SFSC advice within AKIS**

#### 1. Analyse the current AKIS regional and national governance models

- a. Explain to participants what AKIS is
  - i. *Actors include: Policymakers, farmers, researchers, advisors, associations and media*
  - ii. *Successful AKIS strategies include four main groups of actions:*
    1. *Enhancing knowledge flows and strengthening links between research and practice;*
    2. *Strengthening all farm advisory services and fostering their interconnection within the AKIS;*
    3. *Enhancing cross-thematic and cross-border interactive innovation;*
    4. *Supporting the digital transition in agriculture.*
- b. **Option 1:** Ask participants to think about and share the diverse regional and national governance models in the country that influence agricultural practices, knowledge dissemination, and innovation within the context of short food supply chains.
  - i. *Policy makers, researchers, advisors, associations, organizations, media...*
- c. Or **Option 2:** Presentation of various regional and national governance models within the AKIS context- and ask participants to examine how these models impact the delivery of SFSC advice (example of Hungarian AKIS below)



i.

#### 2. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in effectively supporting the development and adoption of SFSCs.

- a. Group discussions on the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in supporting SFSCs.
  - i. *Based on the needs assessment..*
    1. *Strength/Successful practice: Think of need(s) that the AKIS (actors) helped you overcome - how?*
    2. *Weakness/Challenges faced: Think of need(s) that could be overcome by AKIS support - how?*

#### 3. Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions

- a. Interactive sessions to map out the flow of SFSC information and knowledge among different AKIS stakeholders
  - i. *Based on participants experiences- does not have to be a full overview of all knowledge flows, rather to show how/where these SFSC actors get advice from the AKIS*
- b. Identification of gaps and missing interactions in information/knowledge exchange, research dissemination, and stakeholder collaboration.
  - i. *What activities occur for SFSC information exchange within the AKIS?*
  - ii. *How could SFSC information exchange be improved?*
  - iii. *What gaps are prevalent? (Eq. Research being conducted but not being transferred to farmers...)*

#### 4. (Optional) Building a roadmap

- a. *Brainstorm and propose potential reforms or adjustments to existing governance models- Emphasis on fostering collaboration, innovation, and knowledge dissemination for SFSCs.*
- b. *Open discussion on the future of SFSCs within AKIS, considering policy recommendations, research needs, and practical actions.*

## Annex 2: Template for reporting 1<sup>st</sup> MAW

### EU4Advice: T2.2 report from 1st MAW

**Aim of T2.2 in 1st MAW:** Analyse the current AKIS regional/national governance models, and identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors.

**Structure of template:** This template is designed to help you address the key questions of T2.2 based on the findings from the first MAW. The template is based on the [T2.2 guidelines for the 1st MAW](#) and includes questions and examples to help you structure the MAW results. As the LLs are all in various stages of development, these T2.2 questions on the AKIS may not have been a direct focus of your MAW. However, please use your knowledge, experience and results of other works or projects to complete this template and provide insight on the AKIS & SFSC interactions in your country. Contact Sarah if you have any questions!

#### 1. Title Page:

- Title of the Report/
- Workshop Name and Date
- Your Name and Affiliation

#### 2. Executive Summary:

- Briefly summarize the purpose, key discussions, and findings of the workshop.
- Include any major recommendations or insights that emerged.

#### 3. Introduction:

- Provide background information on the workshop, the profile and number of participants, its objectives etc.

#### 4. Workshop Objectives:

- The objective of this workshop was to:
  - Present the results of T1.1, 1.2 and 2.1; map and assess needs in terms of advice (T1.3, T3.1)
  - Analyse the current AKIS regional/national governance models, and identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors (T2.2)
  - Elaborate the roadmap towards the integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS (T2.3)
- Add any additional objectives of your 1st MAW

#### 5. Methodology:

- Briefly describe how the workshop was conducted.
- Include information on the format, facilitators, participants, and any tools or materials used.

#### 6. Current State of AKIS Governance Models:

- Provide an overview of the current regional and national AKIS governance models.

- Include key components of AKIS governance models, in which some ideas and key questions are listed below. Not all questions have to be answered of course, but it may be a helpful guideline to write your findings and to give a comprehensive overview.
  - Level of stakeholder engagement:
    - Is there inclusive participation of diverse stakeholders, including farmers, researchers, policymakers, industry representatives, and extension services?
    - Are there mechanisms for effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders?
  - Decision-making structures:
    - Are there clearly defined decision-making processes and structures within the AKIS governance model?
    - Are mechanisms in place for prioritizing and allocating resources for research, extension, and innovation activities?
  - Policy framework:
    - Are there supportive policy frameworks that encourage innovation and knowledge exchange?
    - Is there alignment with national and regional agricultural policies and strategies?
  - Knowledge generation:
    - What sort of research and development activities occur to generate relevant and timely knowledge?
    - Is there collaboration between research institutions and other stakeholders to address practical challenges in agriculture?
  - Extension services:
    - Are there well-organized and accessible extension services to disseminate knowledge and innovations to farmers?
    - Is there a use of modern communication technologies to enhance the reach and effectiveness of extension services?
  - Capacity building:
    - Are there training programs and capacity-building initiatives for (all) stakeholders within the AKIS, including farmers, researchers, and extension workers?
    - Is there a presence of continuous learning opportunities to keep stakeholders informed about new developments?
  - Financial mechanisms:
    - Are there adequate funding mechanisms to support research, extension, and innovation activities?
    - Are financial governance structures transparent to ensure accountability and effective resource allocation?
  - Technology transfer:
    - What sort of mechanisms occur for transferring technologies from research institutions to end-users, such as farmers and agribusinesses?
    - Are there adoption pathways that consider the local context and needs of farmers?
  - Monitoring and evaluation:
    - Are there systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance and impact of AKIS activities?
    - Are there regular assessments to identify areas for improvement and optimization?
  - Data and information systems:
    - Are there (robust) data and information systems to facilitate the collection, storage, and dissemination of agricultural knowledge?
    - Are digital technologies used to enhance the efficiency of data management?
  - Innovation platforms:
    - Has there been a creation of platforms that bring together different stakeholders to facilitate dialogue, collaboration, and co-creation of innovations?
    - Do these platforms allow for the exchange of knowledge and experiences among stakeholders?
  - Adaptability and flexibility:
    - Does the AKIS have the capacity to adapt to changing agricultural contexts, emerging challenges, and technological advancements?
    - Is there flexibility to incorporate new stakeholders and address evolving needs?
  - Communication and information sharing:
    - Are there effective communication channels to ensure timely and accurate information exchange?
    - Is there a utilization of various communication tools, including traditional and digital media?
  - Social and gender inclusivity:
    - Is there a consideration of social and gender dimensions in AKIS governance models to ensure inclusivity and equity?
    - Are there strategies to address specific needs and constraints faced by different demographic groups?
- 7. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in effectively supporting the development and adoption of SFSCs
  - Provide an overview of the strengths and weaknesses. Some key strengths and weaknesses, plus examples, are listed below. Again, they do not all need to be included, but may help you define your findings.
  - Strengths:
    - Research and Extension Services:
      - Strength: AKIS often includes well-established research and extension services that can provide valuable information and guidance to farmers interested in SFSCs
      - Example: Agricultural research institutions can conduct studies on the viability and benefits of SFSCs, and extension services can disseminate this knowledge to farmers.
    - Collaboration and Networking:

- *Strength: Many AKIS models facilitate collaboration and networking among various stakeholders, including farmers, researchers, policymakers, and consumers.*
  - *Example: Collaboration can lead to the exchange of best practices, knowledge sharing, and the creation of supportive networks that enhance the development of SFSCs.*
  - *Policy Support:*
    - *Strength: AKIS governance models can influence agricultural policies that encourage the development and adoption of SFSCs.*
    - *Example: Policies promoting local food procurement in public institutions or providing incentives for farmers engaging in local markets can stimulate the growth of SFSCs.*
  - *Training and Capacity Building:*
    - *Strength: AKIS often includes programs for training and capacity building, which can empower farmers to adopt new practices related to SFSCs*
    - *Example: Workshops, training sessions, and educational programs can equip farmers with the necessary skills and knowledge to efficiently participate in and benefit from SFSCs.*
  - Weaknesses:
    - *Fragmentation and Lack of Coordination:*
      - *Weakness: AKIS governance models may suffer from fragmentation and a lack of coordination among different components of the system.*
      - *Example: Poor coordination between research institutions, extension services, and policymakers may result in a disjointed approach to supporting SFSCs.*
    - *Limited Farmer Engagement:*
      - *Weakness: In some cases, AKIS models may struggle to actively engage and involve farmers in the decision-making process.*
      - *Example: Lack of farmer involvement in shaping research priorities or policy development related to SFSCs can lead to solutions that do not meet on-the-ground needs.*
    - *Insufficient Tailoring of Information:*
      - *Weakness: Information provided by AKIS may not always be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of farmers involved in SFSCs.*
      - *Example: Research findings or extension services may not address the unique challenges faced by small-scale farmers participating in local markets.*
    - *Slow Adaptation to Technological Changes:*
      - *Weakness: AKIS governance models may struggle to keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies that could enhance the efficiency of SFSCs.*
      - *Example: Slow adoption of digital tools and precision agriculture techniques might hinder the optimization of production and distribution processes in local food systems.*
    - *Inadequate Financial Support:*
      - *Weakness: Limited financial support for farmers interested in transitioning to or expanding SFSC practices.*
- *Example: Lack of funding or financial incentives for farmers to invest in infrastructure, marketing, and other aspects critical for the success of SFSCs.*

#### 8. Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions

- *Based on interactive sessions to map out the flow of SFSC information and knowledge among different AKIS stakeholders, describe how and where these SFSC actors get advice from the AKIS*
- *What gaps and missing interactions in information/knowledge exchange, research dissemination, and stakeholder collaboration were identified?*
  - = *What activities occur for SFSC information exchange within the AKIS?*
  - = *How could SFSC information exchange be improved?*
  - = *What gaps are prevalent? (Eg. Research being conducted but not being transferred to farmers...)*

#### 9. (Optional) Building a roadmap

- *If building a roadmap was included in your MAW, please provide an overview of the main points and plans.*
  - = *What resulted from the brainstorming and proposed potential reforms or adjustments to existing governance models, with emphasis on fostering collaboration, innovation, and knowledge dissemination for SFSCs?*
  - = *What was discussed during the open discussion on the future of SFSCs within AKIS, considering policy recommendations, research needs, and practical actions?*

#### 10. Next Steps:

- *Outline any proposed next steps or actions to be taken based on the workshop's outcomes.*
- *Identify responsible parties for implementing recommendations.*



## Annex 3: Summary of the first meetings of Hungarian LL SFSC advisory network

DUNAHARASZTI	Number of participants: 34 people		Processing small-scale food processing, hygiene, technology, innovation
14.02.2023			
		<p>ones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>REL training—it is necessary to design and create a module system, the consultant must understand the whole picture and the connections, be able to give guidelines, recommend an expert</li> <li>A REL consultant can start from a variety of bases: basic knowledge + training</li> </ul> <p>REL SPECIFIC CONSULTING SOLUTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>horizontal solution</li> <li>Facilitation of peer-to-peer knowledge transfer</li> <li>a specification would be needed within REL: production, law, marketing, etc.</li> <li>REL's consulting specialty is required in solution methodology and organizational development</li> <li>multi-level service in accordance with local conditions, the demand is not the same even in Hungary</li> <li>a funded mentoring program is required, where the REL consultant or organizer supports the starting/transitioning producer, craftsman</li> <li>it should not be individual REL counseling, but network-like</li> <li>Questions for REL Consultant connections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network organizer?</li> <li>REL organizer?</li> <li>mentor?</li> <li>ideas e.g. what do they grow?</li> <li>agroecology?</li> <li>market-based development and, in addition, solidarity-based mentoring</li> <li>local/field knowledge must be channeled into the REL training</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>SUPPORTING AND HINDING FACTORS OF IMPLEMENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hindering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lack of economic perspective</li> <li>labor shortage</li> <li>a question of payment and price</li> <li>corporate, multi-site resistance</li> <li>too many needs, expectations and actors who cannot be handled uniformly</li> <li>cultural problems</li> <li>lack of confidence</li> <li>too low-priced food - not from REL</li> </ul> </li> <li>Supporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the support of the process by "forces", e.g. climate forcing</li> <li>active community building</li> <li>ecosystem services</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Questions that arise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the module system of REL training, does REL organize a consulting market or does it answer all the questions of the participants?</li> </ul>	<p>LACK OF KNOWLEDGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>who can the producer turn to?</li> <li>producers are still less open to technological innovations</li> <li>application of hygiene requirements</li> <li>adequate knowledge of raw materials</li> <li>knowledge of processing methods</li> <li>investment opportunities</li> <li>knowledge of the actors and stakeholders of the sector</li> </ul> <p>POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"open plant" - to visit and learn good practices</li> <li>creating a trust-based network</li> <li>creating a knowledge base for producers that REL consultants can distribute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>infographics</li> <li>short films</li> <li>study tours</li> <li>flowcharts</li> </ul> </li> <li>Creation of REL specific teaching materials and training materials</li> </ul> <p>REL SPECIFIC CONSULTING SOLUTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>creation of regional advisory "places".</li> <li>in addition to vocational training and university-level training, creating courses and trainings</li> <li>adding specialist advice to the main curriculum in the current training system</li> <li>making a collection of international good practices freely available</li> <li>Creation of a REL consulting system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bsc, Msc training</li> <li>other specific trainings</li> </ul> </li> <li>institutionalizing communication between legislators, decision-makers and stakeholders</li> <li>training of authorities and legislators</li> <li>Creation of a REL model economy network</li> <li>Developing a REL approach for all actors in the food chain</li> </ul> <p>SUPPORTING AND HINDING FACTORS OF IMPLEMENTATION</p> <p>Supporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>international good practices</li> <li>demand from producers</li> <li>cross visits in the EU</li> </ul> <p>Hindering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>long and opaque legislation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Results</b></p> <p><b>Raw material production (agroecology, sustainability, etc.)</b></p>			
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>operating in REL requires complex knowledge</li> <li>legislation does not provide adequate guidelines: there is a lack of legal fixation: what is local, what is short, but according to many, this means flexibility</li> <li>practical knowledge: how it works in other economies</li> <li>knowledge of experimental methods is of great help to producers and consultants</li> <li>the definition of REL's advisory task is based on whether raw material production is part of REL - market coordination starts with the raw material;</li> <li>another important criterion is whether the volume affects whether it is REL teaching</li> <li>the consultant can help with the transfer of economic and planning knowledge</li> <li>knowledge of agroecological relationships can also be part of REL consulting</li> </ul>			
POSSIBLE SOLUTION			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>it is not effective to formulate too many conditions in legislation, therefore it is important that not all concepts are regulated, e.g.: REL concept</li> <li>What can a REL consultant specialize in? - it is necessary to create a knowledge network so that consultants with different specifications can give answers to the little</li> </ul>			

- lack of strategy
- lack of information and trust
- lack of knowledge of IT tools
- lack of small facilities
  - lack of knowledge about possible technologies

### Logistics and distribution - online platforms, market, shopping and basket communities, transport, packaging, etc.

#### Lack of knowledge

- legal background, what is allowed and what is not
- coordination knowledge support
- culture of volunteering
- logistics, quality assurance, commission transfer
- lack of consumer awareness about quality food
- commission risk, damaged and returned goods, pass-through invoicing, clarification of responsibility
- volunteer vs. market orientation, business plan, financial awareness and sustainability
- logistics planning, avoiding empty flights
- lack of financial knowledge (profit rate, cost, pricing, cost calculation, wages)
- HR knowledge
- online platform management, product description, photography, up-to-date information
- involvement of retirement communities
- financing problems in the operation of REL
- food preparation skills

#### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- search for fixed delivery locations (e.g. market)
- REL subsidies, salary or management support
- food hubs, REL Oszkár, supporting authority
- young people don't go to the market - a basket community could be a solution, or even connecting a producer's market and a handover day
- integration into existing infrastructure, cooperation with civil organizations
- flexible support options (graded)
- delivery location, a busy place is required, delivery at a fixed time
- strengthening of marketing knowledge
- combining mobile shop and deposit
- comparability of platforms (individual, basket communities, etc.)
- creating a repository of good practices
- escrow system, stable headquarters, site - promoting the escrow system until another solution is found
- REL consulting contract samples about working REL, from a consultant
- basket communities could be institutionalized if they could apply for wages and equipment for several years

- social marketing of local product
- delivery, delivery, defining intervals in the basket community
- Spreading the good example of Nyíregyházi kosáronline
- an online platform requires a specialist
- detecting problems and developing a system of rules
- flexible infrastructure, guides, flowcharts, best practices, feasibility plan
- service fee, joint marketing (national)
- Modification of REL support call rules (refrigerated car, salary)
- knowledge to use the online platform (also for producers)

#### REL SPECIFIC CONSULTING SOLUTIONS

- knowledge of nutrition, nutritional biology
- basic IT (image uploading), transfer of samples, marketing, subsidies
- bridge man (legal opportunities, relationship capital, up-to-date knowledge, good practice for adaptation, mentor)
- stable expertise (hygiene, technology, logistics, guidelines, marketing, quality assurance)
- REL specific mentoring, business plan, development concept, adaptation to trends
- building a community of souls
- business start-up and development skills
- consulting in missing competencies (finance, law, marketing)
- to start attitude formation
- it is necessary to decide in which direction the network development should go (producer, consumer, community)

#### Supporting and hindering factors

- Supporting:
  - we know the target group, we know the needs
  - a list of existing REL groups+basket communities is available
  - interweaving of contact networks, informal networks
- Hindering:
  - administration, paperwork, eligibility, community, knowledge
  - inflexible support, rigid legal frameworks, administrative plans
  - geographical distribution, the capital is the largest receiving market
  - impracticality of grants and appeals
  - lack of overlapping, tiered support structures
  - lack of human resource capacity
  - difficulties in establishing transfer points (high rent), storage

#### Questions that arise:

- if it doesn't go away by itself, is it sustainable?
- REL organizer or REL consultant, two in one or should they be separated?
- is the knowledge base managed, with controlled content, good practices
- REL group is not a consortium
- difficulties of sharing economy (community infrastructure).

- who pays the consultant?

### Sales and marketing

#### Markings, sales channels, marketing channels, payment, experience-based, practical programs, etc.

#### Lack of knowledge

- lack of IT skills (e.g. graphics for creating an image, IT, websites)
- Specific case at Délvidék: lack of basic education (there are not enough people with adequate basic education to be able to start vocational training in higher education) - lack of services
- lack of information
- in the field of trademarks
- producer-consumer do not know how to find each other
- lack of time
- lack of innovative inclination ("it will be fine anyway")
- pre-packaged products can be sold more expensively, and a higher unit price can be generated more easily (e.g. a piece of cheese pre-packaged in a (decorative) box vs. cheese/sausage packed in a bag and sealed locally)
- lack of graphics/logo/image: only brings the product to the market (no other added value)

#### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- training would be needed in the field of marketing (marketing practices that can be implemented on a small scale)
- common points of sale
- online interfaces, modern communication lines
- reach the average consumer - the right communication to get you there
- consumer awareness, shaping consumers' attitudes
- building trust, use of trademarks
- brand-trust-tourism connection (community advertising, local tasting, inviting people to the location, petting the animal, tasting the product) - personal experience (e.g. inclusion in the Kajla program, inclusion of tourist destinations, tourist routes)
- involving the young age group
- establishing minimum requirements, to which the expert must adhere, as well as a basic demand on the part of the farmer
- recommending each other and not competing
- encouragement (e.g. the mayor should be enthusiastic and support them)

#### SOLUTION POSSIBILITIES OF REL-SPECIFIC EXPERT CONSULTING

<b>MISKOLC, Szimbiózis Alapítvány, Baráthegyi Major</b>	<b>Number of participants: 31 people</b>
<b>Date: 27.02.2023</b>	
	
<b>MAIN RESULTS</b>	
<b>SOCIAL FARMS</b> social farms, social cooperatives, collaborations, social innovation	
<b>LACK OF KNOWLEDGE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is a need for practical knowledge - there should be "case models"</li> <li>• knowledge about the production of non-food products, e.g.: agricultural cosmetics</li> <li>• Social innovation requires a special kind of worldview</li> <li>• hand-held publications, manuals, and word-of-mouth publications are missing</li> </ul>	
<b>SOLUTION POSSIBILITIES OF REL-SPECIFIC EXPERT CONSULTING</b>	

- definition of a minimum standard (Minimum Quality Assurance System) - everyone must adhere to this standard, enforcement
- project management consulting, mentoring in marketing, hygiene, etc. in every area
- education of the REL consultant (internal training) - e.g. fill out the spraying diary (sure, guarantee, takes the burden off the farmers' shoulders)
- independent image
- specialization of REL consultants (legal, economics, marketing (including image design), hygiene, taxation, etc.)
- the REL consultant also knows who to turn to, networking, if e.g. someone is a marketing consultant, they must have basic knowledge of REL
- curriculum development

#### Supporting and hindering factors

- the system is in pieces, there is no one in charge
- KAP - the organization of the REL should be included as an assumed task
- new REL announcement - strengthening willingness to cooperate
- the creation of program offices would help: program office manager, e.g. can have a say in the speed of resource distribution
- inadequate communication: there should be an interface for fast communication
- you have to lobby against the big chains
- often the clerk cannot answer the questions asked, he does not reach the right person with the question
- no coordination
- it would attract additional political sectors if it were in charge: job creation, national policy, rural development, other political sectors

- A network of networks for advisors - a network of mentors: you need to know where to go to ask
- Study tours, demonstration plant
- Provision of pilot trials and test environments
- Transforming tenders into reality – this requires policy coordination
- agricultural chamber consultant + university training + social farm practice
- Awareness of diversification
- Knowledge of the regulatory environment
- Business skills - creating a business plan for this special field
- A list of experts should be available at the clerk, veterinarian, and village farmer, as well as the creation of information points that can help you find the right place and person
- starting a vocational training program, e.g. program in kindergartens, local production
- Calling attention to the role of the family, to the inherited value of knowledge
- 

#### SUPPORTING AND HINDERING FACTORS

- There is no demand for sales growth in the tendering round, but the tenders expect it
- The application conditions are not realistic
- The authority's unified position "it can be done this way"
- Institutionalized connection "back and forth"

#### QUESTIONS THAT ARISE

- Green care - social farm - who pays? municipality? = rural development tool

### Feldolgozás

small-scale food processing, hygiene, technology, innovation

#### LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

- Lack of practice regarding the details of legislation and their interpretation
- he does not know, as this detail is not included in the (small producer) regulation
- the small producer regulation is difficult to interpret
- he does not know to whom the small producer can sell and to whom he cannot
- Hungarian and EU nomenclature and definitions do not match
- the lack of technological knowledge related to food processing during the various steps of REL,
- lack of knowledge of packaging materials, special technologies and innovations applicable to micro and small-scale food processing
- Lack of adequate information about the business environment in which to operate, including political, economic/financial, technological social aspects

#### SOLUTION POSSIBILITIES OF REL-SPECIFIC EXPERT CONSULTING

- Preparation of a short, simple information material to inform authorities and legislators about the basic principles and conditions of REL's operation, in which it should be emphasized that they mostly have limited resources, serve few consumers and, as a consequence, food safety risks are also limited. It is precisely here that the application of the EU flexibility rules is necessary in determining the appropriate solutions to meet the goals prescribed in the hygiene requirements of the legislation.
- the combined application of less detailed legislation describing the goals and principles to be achieved and good practice guidelines developed with the participation of users, covering specific details and including recommendations on implementation details, which provides more opportunities for flexibility.
- help with how to comply with special legislation
- help for consultants to get specialized knowledge
- the appointment of consultants with a deeper understanding of each field and their coordination at the national and regional level
- a "checklist" compiled by an expert (passes, fails) to check compliance with hygiene requirements
- graphic, illustrated posters
- Guidance on the method of accessing information and the available sources of information for consultants and small producers
- instructions for micro/small food processors on how to set up their own workshop, plant,
- type plans, flowcharts for the design of food processors
- the steps to extend the current activity with a new activity, a new product, who to contact
- regular, annually repeated knowledge reinforcement and education for small producers

#### SUPPORTING AND HINDERING FACTORS

- SUPPORTING
  - there are cooperation initiatives on the topic of REL - specific organizations, e.g. Small scale, NAK, etc.
  - complex, diverse, diverse topics, each small case, which promotes flexibility, (this is also a disadvantage)
  - results of previous and currently running REL EU projects (SKIN, SmartChain, EU4Advice).
  - openness
  - there is an opportunity to think according to the national situation (freedom), there is no limited REL definition
  - NAK's close relationship with Copa-Cogeca
  - Some good practice guidelines have already been developed
- HINDERING
  - the complexity and diversity of questions and problems
  - the difference is the need for a wide range of specialist knowledge (not only in the agricultural and food industry) and the currently prescribed system of

requirements for specialist consultancy (accepting only agricultural and food industry qualifications) (agricultural qualification + 5 years of professional experience)

- the lack of a consistent REL methodology that can be used in Hungary
- struggle due to differences in interpretation, struggle with the authorities
- product path collaborations are not working properly
- the place and role of REL training is not properly positioned in the domestic training system, the REL organizer is not recognized as a profession
- lack of a stable, reliable financial background

### Logisztika, disztribúció, marketing, értékesítés

#### LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

- statutory interpretation
- REL organizations ... application, conditions
- REL project management, mentor
- communication - as information delivery
- platform with many problems not to pull it apart
- would be a dedicated topic manager - even now there are 2 consulting networks, you have to choose from
- be a lobby for government relations
- lack of willingness to cooperate
- lack of bottom-up construction
- lack of education - consumers are not yet aware

#### SOLUTION POSSIBILITIES OF REL-SPECIFIC EXPERT CONSULTING

- Organization of trainings, regularly hold training sessions with the REL consultant
- different fields of expertise, they should be divided between them
- legal interpretation, clearer wording, newsletter, FAQ, common platform
- sample documents e.g. REL contract, business plan
- "from idea to implementation" plan + assistance, transfer of information
- collection of special rules in one place, "check list" of the necessary documents
- official affairs; Starting a REL group, introducing a common learning process
- organization of regional REL forums
- to help tourism, service providers and producers should be placed on the hiking trails - agrotourism publications
- assistance in product development
- promotion of small-scale specific quality assurance
- facilitating market analysis (supply and demand)
- coordination of producers' activities, separation of seasonality

- public catering matrix (Public catering REL)
- multi-level financing system
- if used by the REL team, it is cheaper

#### SUPPORTING AND DISADVANTAGING FACTORS

- REL training and further training must be established
- Collection of data from REL actors, specifics
- bottom-up organization with model projects and its marketing
- education about consumption, REL
- starting from the local community - community building
- presentation of good practices
- encouraging production – showing producers how they can sell afterwards

consultant, and set the frameworks along which the individual consultants operate and network; we need to build the framework of a system with national coverage.

The creation of Living Labs will help us answer the questions that arise and implement the plans with the participation of already known stakeholders and the involvement of others.

#### PARTICIPANTS

## Conclusion

The two meetings were extremely important for laying the foundation for the subsequent work, as we managed to seat the actors who play a decisive role in the processes related to short food supply chains to a table, so they have an insight into the necessity, current situation, and needs of consulting activities. The participants and organizations came from almost the entire area of the country, which significantly promotes networking at the national level.

Based on what was said during the professional discussions, it can be said that there is work to be done in relation to REL and related consultancy, and we have found the most important questions to which we need to find a consensus-based answer as soon as possible in order to create a well-functioning system.

#### HOT POINTS FOR TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION:

- WHERE DOES THE CHAIN STARTS? SHOULD PRODUCTION BE INVOLVED OR NOT?
- SHALL WE DISTINGUISH THE SIZE AND THE VALUE OF THE FARMERS?
- THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPE OF CERTIFICATION FOR SFSC MANAGERS/ADVISORS/BUSINESS ANGELS/ETC. - WE SHOULD KNOW WHO MIGHT BE AND WHO ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE DUE TO THE CERTIFICATIONS AND GAINED KNOWLEDGE
- UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SHOULD BE INVOLVED AND INTRODUCED TO SFSC SYSTEMS

We must be able to separate the organizing and consulting activities of REL, but we must also define the points of connection; we must identify the specialist areas covered by the



## Annex 4: Hungarian MAW report

### EU4Advice: T2.2 report from 1st MAW in Hungary

30 August 2023

Szombathely

Hungary

Kislépték Association (KIS)

Katalin Kujáni

Viktória Nagy

Deborah Lettnerné Borbély

**Aim of T2.2 in 1st MAW:** Analyse the current AKIS regional/national governance models, identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors.

#### **Participants**

##### Stakeholders:

Matoltsy Zsolt - national active tourism organization (Active and Ecotourism Development Center)

Szöke Tünde Mónika - University of Sopron

Szabó Tibor - open farm initiative in Zala county

Bazsóné Bertalan Laura – University of Sopron

Horváth Tamás - representative of the farmers association in Vas county

Magócs Krisztina - Institute of Agricultural Economics

Boglár Iza – Pannon Local Product

##### Kislépték Association:

Katalin Kujáni

Ágnes Fricz

Ágnes Major

Viktória Nagy

Deborah Lettnerné Borbély

##### International partner:

Evi Vet – AMS Institute

##### Pannon Local product:

István Kovács

Renáta Inzsöl

#### **1. Workshop Objectives:**

- The objective of this workshop was to:
  - Present the results of T1.1, 1.2 and 2.1; map and assess needs in terms of advice (T1.3, T3.1)
  - Analyse the current AKIS regional/national governance models, identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors (T2.2)
  - Elaborate the roadmap towards the integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS (T2.3)
- **Additional objectives of our 1st MAW:** Establish the Living Lab in Hungary in the framework of the EU4ADVICE project. Involve those stakeholders at regional level who are part of short food supply chains and has insight on the knowledge transfer needs and gaps.

#### **2. Methodology:**

- This workshop was focusing on establishing the Hungarian Living Lab with local, regional and national stakeholders of the SFSC ecosystem in Hungary.
- The multiactor workshop followed two previous national workshops focusing on the AKIS and the SFSC advisory system with the participation of local, regional and national stakeholders from academia, government, research institutes, producers, SMEs, etc for setting-up the scene for the aims of the EU4ADVICE project in the upcoming years. Two occasions, at two different locations, were necessary because our goal is to cover the entire territory of the country in order to build a network that is not hindered by geographical distance or the central role of the capital by the end of the project. These two workshops were conducted at the beginning of 2023. (See the report of these two events at the Appendix)

Our goal was to bring together the stakeholders and advocates of the domestic short food supply chain sector, sit them down at a table and start a discourse that lays the foundation for the construction of the SFSC advisory system and network, and further supports its operation.

Among the domestic actors, representatives of the governmental, civil and private sectors also appeared, and in practice those engaged in professional consulting were also involved.

Two occasions, at two different locations, were necessary because our goal is to cover the entire territory of the country in order to build a network that is not hindered by geographical distance or the central role of the capital by the end of the project.

The program proceeded similarly in both cases. After the professional presentations, which were about the domestic specialist consulting system, the situation of SFSC and the future plans of the Kislépték Association, the creation of a network of specialist consultants, we explored the current situation of domestic REL consultancy, the gaps, opportunities, supporting and hindering factors through group work.

##### Methodology:

The two occasions differ minimally in terms of the implementation of group work. After the presentations, the participants sat down at 4 tables, marking 4 different topics. The tables represented individual phases of the food chain: raw material production, food processing, marketing communication, logistics and distribution for the first time. And the second time, social economy, food processing, logistics, marketing and distribution. At each table, the participants were asked the same question:

1.: What is the lack of knowledge in the given sector? 2.: What solution do we see for it? 3.: What solutions can we propose in the field of SFSC--specific consulting? 4.: what supporting and hindering factors are there in the development of these systems?

- Briefly describe how the workshop was conducted
- Include information on the format, facilitators, participants, and any tools or materials used.

At the two events 64 people were involved from different organizations, authorities, local initiatives related to SFSC advisory in Hungary. Both of the workshops were focusing on the knowledge gaps, the institutional needs, challenges of the SFSC advisory in the country.

Outcomes of the MAW:

- common understanding on the knowledge gaps in the SFSCs that should be addressed by the Living Lab
- Identified stakeholders in the AKIS
- recognition of the implementation of AKIS and building the synergies with the implementing organizations
- collected possible activities to be conducted in the framework of the Living Lab

The day started with a presentation about the general purpose of living labs and how they function, touching on the basic mechanism of such types of negotiation. The presentation also covered some examples, to make sure that all participants have an idea about what was expected of the day.

Secondly, we laid down the basic definition of AKIS to place the Living Lab's topic into context, and made clear the question waiting to be answered at the end of the day: "How do we create an advisory network to help local producers?" in the AKIS.

The primary barrier to tackle is to find an aim, a specific subject or field in which the advisory network would be able to help. Finding the specific fields in which the network should be able to provide helps requires mapping out of what different actors of the SFSC lack knowledge of.

We created a dashboard on which every participant of the Living Lab could place as many post-its as they wanted. The dashboards two axes represented level on which the problem occurs/should be solved (local, regional, national), and at which actor (supplier, producer, processor, SFSC organizer, consumer) the missing information causes problems. This created a matrix making it clear, where the most important points are that need focus.

Mentioned topics of which actors would need more information, by actors, are:

- For the suppliers, the most important is, how can supply be organized in an efficient way, both logistically and also profiting from economies of scale. Networking in this field is inevitable.
- On the producers' side, there are plenty of gaps, but generally speaking, the biggest issues are marketing/business skills, labeling, legal knowledge and profession-specific technical knowledge.
- Processors have logistical problems, hard to attain technology and difficulties finding sales points.
- SFSC Organizers have a very complex role, and as such, the trouble they face is also widespread. From a lack of overall knowledge - including food hygiene, commerce, logistics -, to networking, lack of data on producers etc.

Lastly, consumers don't know about the existence or benefits of doing their weekly shopping with small scale producers' products. Tourism doesn't provide them of information about agrotouristical activities in the area, while the municipalities don't always inform locals about local farmers' markets.

Looking at the data collected, the Living Lab's next task was to identify possible solutions for the different needs of different actors of the SFSC, mainly focusing on information, data and knowledge.

The conversation was very successful, all of the participants had ideas and everyone was able to cooperate. Finding the middle ground was all of the participants' goal. The ideas were all added to a flipchart page divided into 3 sections.

The first section determined the basics of the system to be created. These principles included the need for academics to participate, the need for a back office (a pool of experts), a similar setup to TDMs (Touristic Destination Management) and a holistic approach, built up as a network.

### 3. Current State of AKIS Governance Models:

As it has been already mentioned within the project the AKISs in general haven't been clearly established or started operating in practice in the countries as it is quite new, and the details are not yet clear. What we discussed with the participants is that here

and now not the AKIS itself has to be discussed but the SFSC related knowledge transfer, which at a later stage can be integrated into the AKIS when all the actors, stakeholders, functions are clearly defined. Luckily a representative of the responsible implementation body in Hungary (AKI – Agricultural Research Institute) is part of the Living Lab and expressed their interest in the common work on the integration process.

At this stage we can not provide a comprehensive overview of the current models, but in the upcoming one year the picture will be clearer, within the project and at national level we will have more knowledge on the AKIS implementation and operation.

It can be also highlighted that since the end of 2023 more initiatives reached us such as workshops, online events, discussions with relevant stakeholders about the AKIS in Hungary and in general which means that the process has started and with collaboration we can be part of the setting-up period of the AKIS models in Hungary, and clearly highlight the importance of SFSCs.

In the upcoming days, weeks there will be a webinar on the AKIS for the project partners in order to have a clearer understanding of the definition, the practical details and process of the SFSC advisory system's integration into it.

The main AKIS entities identified previously:

#### Governmental level:

Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Innovation and Technology (ITM) and the Ministry of Human Resources (EMMI), National Office for Research, Development and Innovation (NKFIH), National Research Infrastructure Committee (NKIB), National Agricultural Advisory Committee (NATaB)

Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture (NAK): NAK plays an important role in knowledge transfer by, inter alia, organizing the training and examination of advisors, carrying out coordination tasks related to advisory activities, and establishing, keeping and publishing a list of advisors and advisory organizations, keeping contact with agricultural and rural development advisory organizations of the EU Member States  
**National Authority/Paying Agency** - Hungarian State Treasury, Agriculture and Rural Development Department

**Hungarian Chamber of Professionals and Doctors of Plant Protection (MNMNK):** training of advisors, registration, coordination, knowledge-transfer

**Hungarian Veterinary Chamber (MÁOK):** training of advisors, registration, coordination, knowledge-transfer

The central actors of the Hungarian AKIS are farmers, foresters and food producers. Their work is supported by the institutional system around them, such as the government sector, research and development, education, the advisory system (National Advisory Centre), various farmers' organizations, professional chambers, furthermore, financial institutions, through EU networks, as well as media and information channels, and NGOs. Horizontally, the Hungarian Chamber of Agriculture plays a key role in the transfer of information and knowledge and the flow of knowledge between different organizations, in order to help the work of farmers.

As far as the relationships between AKIS actors are concerned, they can be incidental or regular, direct or indirect. By organizing various forums (thematic working groups (e.g. NAK KAP AKIS sub-working group), consultations, events, conferences, briefings, etc.), NAK helps the establishment of relations, knowledge transfer and information flow between the various actors. A system of relations independent of NAK is also established and operating between the individual actors.

#### 4. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of current AKIS governance models in effectively supporting the development and adoption of SFSCs

As at the previous point was mentioned that the governance models are not yet established it is not possible to assess the strengths and weaknesses of it, but at a later stage it can be done. But we have some insights on the listed aspects below.

##### - Strengths:

- Research and Extension Services:
  - Strength: in Hungary there is a well-established system for extension services with a good coordination body which supports the idea of establishing SFSC related services. Already 78 official SFSC advisors have been registered into the AKIS system.
- Collaboration and Networking:
  - Strength: For now we see that the interested stakeholders try to bond to each other and organize common brainstorming, networking events in order to have a pool of experts and

stakeholders in the country with whom the whole process of AKIS implementation can be done together and different aspects can be brought to the surface in a safe environment.

- In our Living Lab all the levels of the AKIS are reflected and the involved stakeholders are interested in a well-functioning and practical AKIS in the country with putting special focus on SFSCs
- Policy Support:
  - Strength: AKIS governance models can influence agricultural policies that encourage the development and adoption of SFSCs.
  - AKIS system may provide better collaboration between different stakeholders due to the policy support for networking.
- Weaknesses:
  - Official SFSC advisors:
    - The general criteria level is high but there is no specific criteria for SFSC related knowledge.
  - Non-official SFSC advisors:
    - currently the non-official SFSC advisors can not be included in the national advisory service coordinated by the National Chamber of Agriculture.
  - Limited Farmer Engagement:
    - Weakness: Farmers, producer are not familiar with the AKIS thus it is hard to engage them.
    - Farmers are not willing to pay for SFSC related knowledge as they do not have information on innovation advice.
    - Farmers in overall are willing to provide information, interviews for researchers, but usually they do not have access for the research results.
  - Insufficient Tailoring of Information:
    - Weakness: Information provided by AKIS may not always be tailored to the specific needs and contexts of farmers involved in SFSCs.

- Research findings or extension services may not address the unique challenges faced by small-scale farmers participating in local markets.
- Inadequate Financial Support:
  - Weakness: Limited financial support for farmers interested in transitioning to or expanding SFSC practices.
  - Lack of funding or financial incentives for farmers to invest in infrastructure, marketing, and other aspects critical for the success of SFSCs. There is direct support for SFSC groups but the smallest farmers, producers are not eligible for these.

#### 5. Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions

The knowledge gaps were already investigated at the first two rounds of workshops, as well as at the MAW itself. But as AKIS is not yet a fully functioning and well-understood definition in most of the countries, like in Hungary, the questions were more focusing on the knowledge gaps in the SFSC ecosystem itself, and identifying the possible responsible stakeholders who can fill the gaps.

#### 6. Building a roadmap

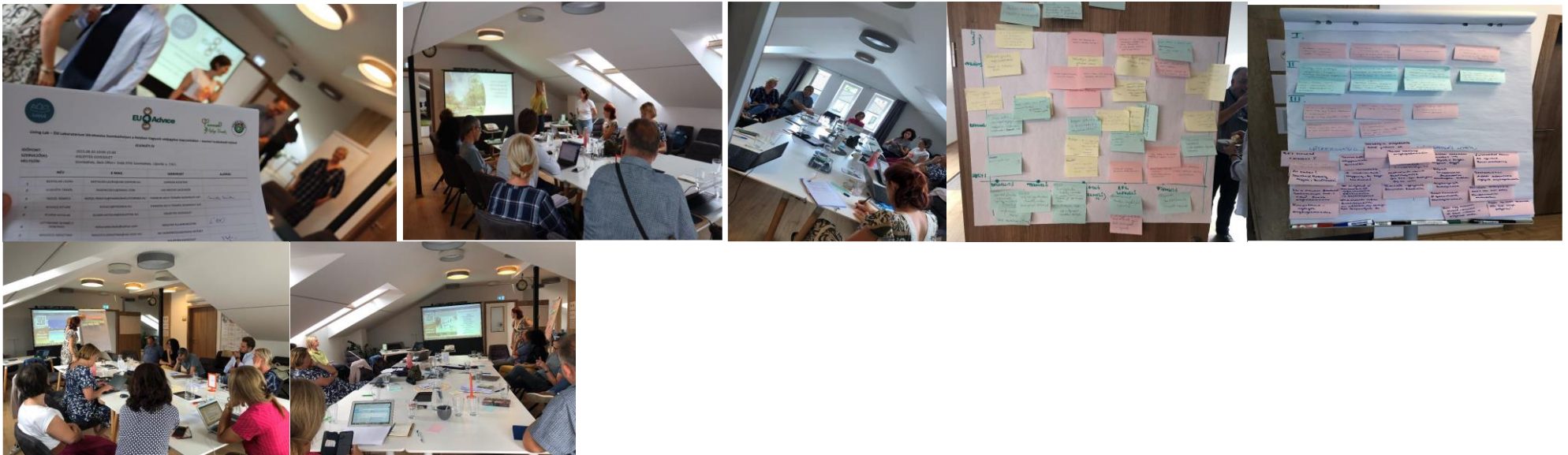
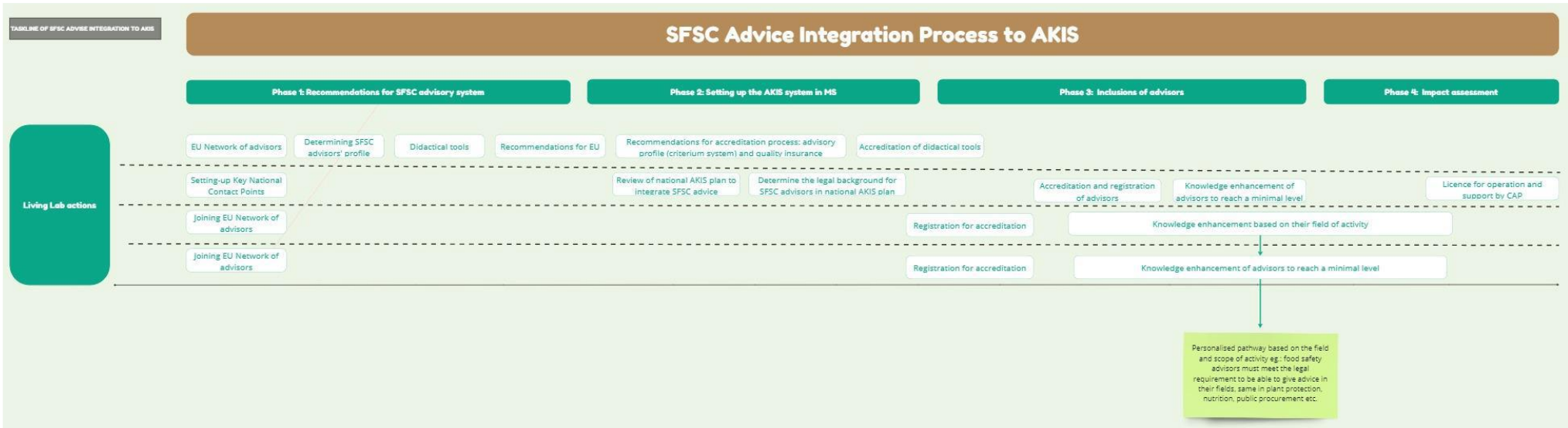
Our final step was to build a roadmap together with the participants for the upcoming years, but not in details, only focusing on the most important actions before the real establishment of the Living Lab and after it.

##### Agreed upcoming actions:

1. Workshop II. with the same national and regional AKIS stakeholders who have been already involved for WS I.
2. Map those actors who could be SFSC advisors and mentors in our pilot activity
3. Map the inner resources
4. Find those SFSC places, venues, "hotspots" which could be developed in the pilot
5. Set up a business model for the mentoring network
6. Training of mentors and advisors
7. First year of Monitoring on mentorship to test the knowledge and competence needs and gaps
8. Recommendations for national AKIS integration

On the figure below illustrates the 7th and 8th steps in details:





## Annex 5: Dutch MAW report

### EU4Advice: Plan for T2.2 integration into Living Lab 1st Multiactor Workshop

#### Dutch AKIS and SFSC: current context, strengths and weaknesses

As identified in the i2connect report, the Dutch AKIS is made out of many diverse actors that collaborate and exchange knowledge with each other. These are split into 5 sectors, namely governments, education and research, farmer organisations, advisory services, and the private sector (agribusinesses and banks).

Short Food Supply Chain initiatives can be categorized into conventional and unconventional models. Conventional initiatives focus on providing local food within existing system parameters, such as small farmers' shops and box-delivery services. In contrast, unconventional initiatives not only promote local food consumption but also emphasize additional values like community building, land preservation, and social justice. These extra services are usually not monetized as their impact is not easily measurable. They are said 'unconventional' in the sense that their activities question the current food system and put light on its different flaws. These can also take the form of small farmers' stores or box-delivery services, as well as community gardens, farmers-citizens collectives, etc.

These two types of SFSC models receive varying levels of support from Dutch AKIS. The current agricultural system hinders SFSC, necessitating heavy reliance on subsidies and alternative funding due to high logistic costs, low product variability, and a lack of alignment with the convenience economy. This therefore leads SFSC initiatives to be heavily reliant on subsidies and other temporary types of funding. Conventional SFSCs are more likely to access these fundings as they are more able to navigate the subsidy landscape: they better tick the boxes of the organisations giving the subsidies. The effectiveness of this backing remains however questionable in terms of its long-term effect, leading both conventional and unconventional SFSC models to remain scarce.

This dichotomy results in a disconnect, limiting AKIS's ability to effectively support SFSCs. The current top-down approach from Dutch AKIS overlooks the potential of bottom-up solutions and community-based initiatives, crucial for systematically integrating the SFSC movement into the Dutch agricultural sector. AKIS organisation should shift its role to supporting community solutions rather than imposing its own, fostering a more inclusive and impactful approach.

#### Roadmap towards a better governance system for better stakeholder collaboration, better knowledge flow, and enhanced innovations

For the current system to transition towards one where SFSC can thrive, many steps and actions need to be taken. In the Dutch Living Lab, the key word is collaboration. Between farmers and SFSC initiatives, collaboration can enhance a better distribution of resources, knowledge and opportunities. Between farmers and citizens, collaboration can foster the reconnection of these two actors and push for a better valuation of the farmers' work. Between SFSC initiatives and local and regional governments, a better nuanced, case-based and systemic approach is needed to co-create solutions to allow SFSC to thrive.

Another key focus is the accessibility of local food for all. Fresh, seasonal, local and healthy food should not become a luxury product available only for the families with the biggest wallets. Here as well, efforts need to be made by all actors to ensure a broad accessibility of local food.

During the first multi-actor workshop, several action points were drafted by the participants regarding steps to be made for better embedding SFSC within the Dutch AKIS.

The following roadmap was drafted:

1. Establishing a common narrative
2. Phasing out or redirecting existing powerful entities in the agri-food sector
3. Creating extensive, cross-sector experimental space facilitated by governments
4. Put together interventions such as better informing consumers
5. Leading European Union policy
6. Assisting farmers with risk-sharing concepts
7. Multiple value creation, payment for ecosystem services
8. Implementing new subsidy structures (phasing out destructive subsidies)

From these steps, a more detailed and collaborative action plan will be drafted for the Dutch Living Lab.

## Annex 6: Spanish MAW report

### Governance of four regional and local AKIS around Short Food Supply Channels in Spain: Results of the EU4Advice multi-stakeholder workshop.

Online, 30/01/2024

Jorge Molero Cortés and Marta Ibáñez Verdú

fundación entretant

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#### 1 Introduction

The workshop was held online on 30/01/2024 between 11:00 and 13:20 and used the Zoom and Mural tools. In total, 22 people attended with the profiles presented below. The number of attendees was slightly lower than the average for other meetings.

Role	Man	Woman	Total
Administration	2	4	6
Advisor	2	4	6
Farmer		1	1
Politician		1	1
Technician	2	3	5
Technician/Advisor	1	2	3
<b>Total sum</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>

#### 2 Workshop objectives

- Analyse current AKIS regional/national governance models, and identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions between actors (T2.2).
- Elaborate the roadmap towards the integration of the JAC advisors in the national AKIS (T2.3): *This task could not be completed due to lack of time.*

#### 3 Methodology

Marta Ibáñez and Olga Rada made a brief welcome and presentation to the attendees. Afterwards, Jorge Molero Cortés, [Fundación Entretantos](#), gave a presentation on **Introduction to AKIS and SFSC** ([Video, presentation](#)). The objective of the presentation was to explain what an AKIS is, and which actors are usually part of it, as well as the main actions included in some successful AKIS strategies.

Subsequently, **four examples of AKIS that exist in Spain around SFSC** were presented in order to get to know them better.

- AKIS and SFSC: Andalusia.** Juan Manuel Arcos Martín, [AGAPA](#), Junta de Andalucía ([Video, presentation](#))
- AKIS and SFSC: Catalonia.** Rosa Binimelis Adell, [Arran de Terra](#) ([Video, presentation](#))
- AKIS and SFSC: Canary Islands.** Margarita Hernández García, [JCCA](#), Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food Sovereignty ([Video, presentation](#))
- AKIS and SFSC: Navarra/Nafarroa** Paola Eguinoa Ancho, [INTIA](#), ([Video, presentation](#))

The presenters were asked to respond to the following questions:

- How is the advisory (governance) system organized?
  - Actors involved and their role in the advisory system
  - Relationships of these actors with the productive sector.
- Successful practices/Strengths around:
  - Exchange of information and/or knowledge.

- o Dissemination of research and/or innovations
- o Collaboration among stakeholders
- Challenges faced/Weaknesses around:
  - o Exchange of information and/or knowledge
  - o Dissemination of research and/or innovations
  - o Collaboration among stakeholders

Subsequently, a discussion was held in four groups in order to

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of current governance models.
- Thinking about the gaps and missing interactions between stakeholders
- Think about what an improved or ideal version could look like. Draw an ideal information and knowledge flow about BCC.

To develop the dynamics, the following basic table was proposed, which was then transferred to the collaborative mural tool for group work.

	Strengths	Weaknesses/ Gaps
<b>Exchange of information and/or knowledge</b>	Information/knowledge exchanges to be promoted?	Information/knowledge exchanges that would be missing? How can we improve JAC information sharing?
<b>Dissemination of research and/or innovations</b>	Identification of well-functioning BBPPs in this regard	How could knowledge transfer be improved?
<b>Stakeholder collaboration</b>	Which ones should be promoted?	What collaborations would be missing?

The difficulty of the task, as well as other factors such as the low implementation of these experiences, meant that [the information collected in the collaborative work tool \(Mural\)](#) was scarce.

To enter the mural, click on "View as a visitor" (indicated by a red arrow in the image on the right).



#### 4 Current status of the operation and governance of different AKIS working in SFCS

##### 4.1 Andalucía

AGAPA is a public agency that provides technical support to the Department of Agriculture. In Andalucía, the competences in Environment and Agriculture are separated. Within this structure, Juan Manuel works as a technical advisor in organic production within the AGAPA department and his focus is limited to Andalucía.

##### 4.1.1 Context

- Andalucía has reached the target of 25% of the Utilized Agricultural Area (UAA) certified as organic, with about 1.3 M ha certified hectares. However, there are still significant challenges, especially concerning short marketing channels as much of the Andalusian organic production is destined for the foreign market, suggesting an underdeveloped potential in short channels and domestic consumption.
- One of the weaknesses identified is the low level of income on many organic farms, with about 56% of them generating less than 25,000 euros in standard gross production. This suggests a need for income diversification and greater professionalization in the sector, especially for family and multi-purpose farms.
- The multiple activities or lack of remuneration in these productions means that the annual work units (AWU) in most of these farms do not reach the minimum to be able to receive aid for modernization or incorporation of young people. However, these farms could benefit from short marketing channels, allowing them to diversify their production and increase their income.

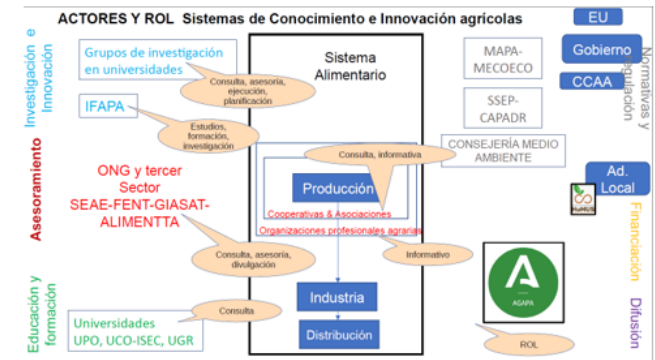
##### 4.1.2 AGAPA's work

- Promotion and support of organic production.
  - o Ecoalimentación Program, which promotes the consumption of organic products in the educational and social spheres.
  - o Andaluerto Project, which seeks to promote organic agriculture through educational and social gardens.
- Short marketing channels
  - o Preparation of a guide of selling of organic products in Andalucía and creation of maps to identify these points of sale.
  - o Work carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic to disseminate and support projects and networks working in this field.
- Biodistricts project to create and consolidate Bio-districts in Andalucía, which focus on the promotion of local consumption and short marketing channels, and are expected to help strengthen governance and collaboration between different actors in the agri-food sector.

##### 4.1.3 AKIS Actors

- Research
  - o At the Andalusian level, the research institute is the IFAPA (the Andalusian Institute of Agricultural and Fisheries Information), with which AGAPA has a regular relationship.

- o Bilateral relations with research teams from the universities in which they have been working on agroecology in Andalucía, Pablo de Olavide University and ISEC of the University of Córdoba. There is a weak relationship and a certain flow of information. They are collaborating in specific projects, with research and transfer groups. There are also personal relationships because they are people who are working in organic agriculture and the transformation of the agri-food system.
- o NGOs and third sector: There is an informal exchange of information.
- Production
  - o Normally, our information flow is being unidirectional and the type of linkage is usually weak because we have not been able to implement public policies specific to the short channel within AGAPA.
  - o Need for vertical scaling of agroecology to other levels within the Administration. This is a glass ceiling that is also difficult to overcome,
  - o It has never been possible to establish projects that serve in long-term continuity, specifically in short channels.



## 4.1.4 Flows and linkage

AREA	Actors	Linkage (Strong-Weak)	Flow
PRODUCTION	DIRECT SALES	Weak	Unilateral
PRODUCTION	ASSOCIATIONS-NETWORKS A.-RAA	Weak	Unilateral
RESEARCH	IFAPA	Weak	Bilateral
RESEARCH	GRUP. INVEST. UNIVER.	Weak	Bilateral
CONSULTING	NGOs AND THIRD SECTOR	Weak	Unilateral-Bilateral
CONSULTING	SEAE-FENT-GIASAT- ALIMENTTA	Weak	Unilateral-Bilateral
EDUCATION-TRAINING	UPO-UCO(ISEC)-UGR	Weak/Medium	Bilateral

AGAPA is willing to make stronger links and ensure that relations and flows are not only unilateral, but can be bilateral, but also stronger.

## 4.1.5 Successful practices/Strengths vs Challenges/ Weaknesses contexts

	Successful practices/Strengths	Challenges / Weaknesses
<b>Exchange of information and/or knowledge</b>	SP: Diagnostic study and proposals F: Previous experience and knowledge of the sector	W: One-time actions C: Organization of the sector itself C: Maintain public policies to support SFSCs in the long term.
<b>Dissemination of research and/or innovations</b>	SP: Maintaining contact for specific projects at SFSC F: Interpersonal relations	W: There is no permanent dialogue structure C: Create open structures (living labs) and permanent structures.
<b>Collaboration among stakeholders</b>	SP: The projects are based on the needs of the sector S: We know networks in SFSC, and they know us.	W: Inexperience of Governance Practices C: Increased governance, the challenges of real participation

Where SP: Successful Practices; S: Strengths; W: Weakness; C: Challenges

## 4.2 Catalonia

Rosa, representative of the Arran de Terra cooperative provides an overview of the consulting projects in which the cooperative is involved, within the framework of the agroecological transition.

## 4.2.1 Context

- The Generalitat de Catalunya has its own advisory mechanisms, through the ADVs or through a system of technical conferences based on requests from associations, for example, farmers' associations.
- Different municipalities are carrying out advisory projects for the "pagesia". These projects focus on improving the economic, ecological and social viability of agroecological projects in difficult contexts, such as areas with urbanization pressure or lack of agricultural relief.

## 4.2.2 Consulting and project services

- The advisory services are provided within an integrated approach that includes agroecological agricultural production, social and solidarity economy, and feminist economies. Participants in these projects can be professionals in the agricultural sector, as well as actors in food processing, such as shared bakeries or restaurants.
- Two specific projects are described: Arrelat't (Collserola) and Suport Pagés. In Arrelat't, the technical team of the project collaborates with different municipalities and farmers to provide personalized advice. In Suport Pagés, municipal technicians were trained to provide direct advice to farmers.
- Operation
  - In both cases, an initial interview is conducted and a work plan is developed before referring to experts in different areas according to the farmer's specific needs.
  - They have a pool of experts in different fields with whom they work on a frequent basis and who do this consulting work at a lower price than they would normally do.
  - The project has a funding fund that allows paying for these hours of expert advice, being a free service that is being financed either by the municipalities in one case or by the Consorci de Collserola in another.
  - Within the wide range of advisors, depending on the case, one advisor or another is chosen.
  - Finally, once the advising has been carried out, there is an evaluation and closure of this accompaniment.
  - Types of advising: They are very diverse and are very adaptable to each case, receiving a wide variety of requests.
    - Creation and consolidation of projects, feasibility plans, accounting issues, communication, marketing, etc.
    - Production and planning. In territories where ADVs work with this service and do very well, a referral is made to these entities.
    - Taxation, administrative procedures, public aid.
    - Access to land, we are connected to land banks, then we also do like this bypass or training aspects.
    - Training

## 4.2.3 Successful practices/Strengths vs Challenges/ Weaknesses contexts

	Successful practices/Strengths	Challenges / Weaknesses
<b>Exchange of information and/or knowledge</b>	On-demand service, but with clear objectives in the context of agroecological transition. Knowledge (and technology) applied to the needs of farmers (and other agents of the food system). A tool that is embedded in a broader environment/ecosystem.	There is an important coordination work. Within this work, it is also important to systematize learning.
<b>Dissemination of research and/or innovations</b>	Interest in applying the changes. Appropriateness to each case.	Since this is an "on-demand" service, there must be a prior interest in the subject matter. How to scale apprenticeships?
<b>Collaboration among stakeholders</b>	We look for the most appropriate person(s) for each case/problem but in a coordinated and personalized way. One person cannot provide a solution to the diversity and complexity of problems. There is a process of opening, settlement, evaluation and closure of each case.	Coordination work is also important for coordination between actors (in more complex cases).

## 4.3 Canary Islands

## 4.3.1 Context

- The "Eco-comedores de Canarias" program, an initiative of the Government of the Canary Islands through the Canary Islands Institute of Agrifood Quality, seeks to promote and enhance the development of organic agricultural production in the region. This involves providing the necessary advice for farmers to make the transition to an agroecological model while improving the quality of food in school canteens and health infrastructure.
- The program originated from a participatory diagnostic process in 2010, which led to the drafting of an action plan for the development of organic production in the Canary Islands. A pilot project for school canteens was implemented to put these initiatives into practice. Since then, the program has evolved, incorporating other elements of promotion and promotion of organic agriculture until 2023.

## 4.3.2 Operation

- The program's methodology focuses on several axes, with local, fresh and seasonal organic food as a central element. The consumption of local and organic products is promoted through the Ecolocal brand, developed in 2020-2021. The administration acts as a facilitator of the processes, creating technical advisory groups and coordinating awareness and production tables to provide support to farmers in terms of economic management, production quality and crop planning.
- An operational structure is established to address the needs of the different groups involved, including technicians, farmers, kitchen teams and educators. We work in collaboration with farmers to establish fair prices and facilitate the weekly management of the supply and demand of products through technical logistics tables.

- The technical committee on food offers advice for the incorporation of organic products in school menus, as well as training for kitchen teams and educators. School consumption is evaluated and indicators are established to measure the impact of the introduction of organic products in the menus.
- The technical committee for awareness-raising is responsible for disseminating the knowledge associated with the program and executing awareness campaigns through the web page and social networks. Educational materials are developed for different age groups and interaction between the different groups involved is promoted.
- The technical coordination committee leads the coordination among all the working groups and proposes new actions to advance the program's objectives. It works in collaboration with entities and organizations to strengthen the program's structure and overcome challenges such as the lack of commitment and collaboration among the parties involved.

4.3.3 Results

- In terms of impact, the Eco-comedores de Canarias program has managed to work with 96 schools, as well as with social and health infrastructure, restaurants and small food processing industries.
- A network of 111 organic producers and 11 distribution companies associated with the program has been established.

4.3.4 Successful Practices/Strengths vs. Challenges/Weaknesses Contexts

	Successful practices/Strengths	Challenges / Weaknesses
<b>Exchange of information and /or knowledge</b>	The structure that has been created is solid and provides a basis for further progress. There is a constant interaction between the people who are part of each group with the technical committees that provide this support and between the different groups through the meetings that are organized. Team coordination sessions, Sessions/workshops with the various stakeholders, and Annual meetings.	Lack of communication with society/communication campaigns
<b>Dissemination of research and /or innovations</b>	Open layout	Lack of clear commitments between each of the parties involved. Financing
<b>Collaboration among stakeholders</b>	Open layout	Personal will Need to establish clear lines of collaboration and commitment among all parties involved. Political address Collaboration agreements

4.4 Navarra

4.4.1 Context

- The Instituto Navarro de Transferencia e Investigación Agroalimentaria (INTIA) was created in 2011 after the merger of several entities dedicated to agricultural and agri-food management, has among its objectives to promote and support organic agriculture in the region, as well as to facilitate the marketing of agri-food products both in short circuits and in large distribution channels.
- Navarra has significant potential in the field of short marketing circuits, highlighting its pioneering role in drafting a law on direct sales in 2010, which was revised and updated in the Foral Law 5 of 2023 on SFSC. This law seeks to promote the identification and participation of actors in these circuits, including producers, intermediaries and consumers.
- At the initiative of the government of Navarra in 2019, public procurement of food was promoted, which led INTIA and other actors to work on structuring the sector to be able to participate in public tenders.

4.4.2 Actors.

- Research and innovation: incipient groups in the university that are beginning to show interest in what these small circuits are doing.
- Consulting
  - Public
    - INTIA
    - regulatory boards
  - Private or semi-private
    - Unions
    - Cooperatives
    - External consulting firms and freelancers
- Education and training
  - Public University of Navarra
  - Vocational training centres, not only agricultural but also cooking degrees to introduce future chefs to local produce and to introduce them to the producers.
  - Non-regulated by INTIA: From rules and regulations controlled by the Department of Rural Health and Environment, Navarre Institute of Public Health.
  - Regulatory councils of the different quality figures and organic production and certification bodies.

4.4.3 Activities and Successful Practices

- Advisory
  - SFSC, in response to the need detected among the region's producers.
  - Obtaining sanitary registration, transformation and distribution processes, processing of subsidies, creation of associations and individual product brands.
  - Post-harvest, cleaning and sorting, shelling, pre-prepared convenience food and packaging, logistics, transport and digitalization.
  - Public procurement. A practical guide and proposals were made for the improvement of kitchens in county schools and catering menus, tender documents for education canteens for county canteens, and those that depend on the Department of Education because there are children transported.
  - Associations have been helped to create associations by providing knowledge and advice on legal forms and marketing.
- Infrastructure: there is a logistic centre in Noain, where there are many initiatives with which we have helped in terms of storage rooms, warehouses, etc.
  - Awareness-raising: Giving voice to all these initiatives and the reason for these initiatives to increase their number.
  - Assistance
  - Sensitization of communities
  - During COVID-19 an app from the field to the table was created to make these producers who were selling directly visible and put them in contact with consumers.
- Projects: INTIA participates in national and European projects that contribute to knowledge and innovation in the agri-food field, such as SM Organics and Cocoreado.
- In terms of resources and financing
  - Measure 16 of the previous Rural Development Program (RDP)
  - Calls for national and European projects.

Successful practices in Navarra in the field of short marketing circuits

- EKOALDE as a logistics centre for the supply of ecological products to the issue of canteen schools in public procurement issues.
- HAZIALDEKO, which is a group of producers for the separation, peeling, etc., of cereals and almonds.
- APPINA, which is the association of organic potato producers, mainly seed potatoes.
- Landare, which is a well-known success story, well, I think at the national level as a consumer group, which also promoted, consumer group of organic products that also encouraged many producers to have an outlet for their products and increase production.



## 5 Knowledge gaps and missing interactions

### 5.1 Results of the Work Dynamics

The results of the use of the mural tool were as follows (where CCAA, Autonomous Community; AND, Andalusia; CAT, Catalonia; CAN, Canary Islands; NAV, Navarre)

	CCAA	Strengths	Weaknesses/ Gaps
Exchange of information and/or knowledge	AND	There is already stakeholder awareness and recognition, and there are many people in many public and private spheres who are aware and motivated.	There is a need to connect and coordinate stably the people willing to take on the dynamization of the SFSCs. The small productive units are not organized and are not visible to the administration itself.
	CAT	Super personalized advice Point of entry by municipal technicians, by proximity, advised by the technical team Adapting to the specific realities of each zone Financing from local administrations is very focused on each project. It is important to comply with the economic viability plans of the farms.	Difficult to protocolize learning. You need a lot of different knowledge. For one person. Have a network of experts Sharing knowledge with different groups of people on each topic Funding to finance this advisory service is complementary to that provided by the Administration.
	CAN	Structure of technical tables for the identification of critical points and proposal of appropriate works Communication to target groups: for example... guides with information on pricing and other information Part of the above: example of small training and informative videos/pills <a href="http://ecocomedoresdecanaarias.com">ecocomedoresdecanaarias.com</a> Example of training information to critical points in the chain, in this case to cooks who provide service to schools.	Adequate and active information exchange networks between different key stakeholders Coordinated and organized information (tools, platforms...)
	NAV		
Dissemination of research and/or innovations	AND		
	CAT	Part of common marketing for many projects. Collective training may be available	Analyse available resources and put them to use. The advisory objectives of the existing agents do not meet the objectives required by the sector (productive, local). Grouping consulting needs by stakeholders (territorial or thematic). Accept all agents who are advising and provide them with resources. Transfer the data already available and the studies that already exist for the territories or sectors (organic farmers markets vs. stores, school meal prices, etc.) Unfounded hoaxes.

			Compile all this information (data, studies), available to all consultants.
	CAN		Greater coordination is needed between different agencies working on this issue. Better connection between key players Effective tools to enable such dissemination
	NAV		
Stakeholder collaboration	AND		There is a lack of momentum from the bottom up, from the territory upwards, to articulate and "get noticed". There is a need to connect the small, which is scattered and therefore not visible.
	CAT	Local agents	Total crisis of the sector, due to loss of production personnel, adapting aid as specifically as possible to their needs (taking great care of them). Much economic weakness in the sector
	CAN		
	NAV		

Once the dynamic was over, the different groups shared with everyone the main conclusions that complement the table above.

#### 5.2 Andalucía

##### Weaknesses

- Regional administrations do not encourage or support the small or medium farm model
- More support is given at the regional level by the social agents and by the need to feed ourselves with proximity but working hard and organizing our productions well.

##### Challenges

- The need to seek the link, the union between these more local entities that promote short marketing channels and the Administration, in this case, the regional one. There is a lack of communication, of being able to transmit this need and then to see it reflected in these policies more in line with the farms we are referring to.
- Rural development groups tend to be very active, helping, promoting, and this type of short channel.
- It is not always easy for the administration to find these channels, these meeting points with more local productions.

It is emphasized that something positive has been missing, because no strengths have been identified.

#### 5.3 Catalonia

##### Weaknesses

- There is a lack of data on the impact of the SFSCs. For example, how do eco-kitchens influence local commerce, how is menu pricing being worked out and what is the price that should be set as a minimum for all this data?

- There is no space for sharing information on the impact of BCCs.
- There are resources available for advising that are still active but are invisible in the administrations or at the local level (only a few municipalities have maintained them).
- The sector is very precarious, small, and has little capacity to respond economically to changes and crises.
- The dismantling of the agricultural extension and support structure.

##### Challenges

- The advisory objectives of the existing agents do not meet the needs of the production, so it is necessary to provide highly personalized advice.
- Offer advice from territorial structures or specific projects.
- Much of the necessary information can be structured by type of project or territory. For example Advice linked to markets, advice linked to central collection centres, operations for the... For public procurement, agrarian test spaces for incorporation, it is easier to structure an advisory service with the resources available.
- It is difficult for a single agent to have knowledge of all of this and that is why it is also good to specialize the advice and employ experts in this area.
- The schematization of knowledge can help to become experts in certain topics.

#### 5.4 Canary Islands

##### Weaknesses

- But the issue of structures that you mentioned has also arisen here. You have to identify what is important.
- Also the coordination within the different points, different administrations or entities working on the issue.
- The organizations that work on the specific topic. There are people doing the same or related things, similar, but they are not coordinated.
- Lack of commitment that sometimes appears, or the lack of knowledge that leads to fears and lack of commitment in some of the things that are proposed. And that is an important issue to work on with each of the groups.

##### Good practices

- In communication, in the case of the Canary Islands, it is a good practice since many guides are used with specific information, technical sheets, small videos and training stones that are easily accessible to everyone.
- Advice aimed at critical points in the chain, as in the case of canteens, can be given to cooks and kitchens, who are the ones who can have the strength to make this reach more places.

#### 5.5 Navarra

- Weaknesses: The production part does not follow as we have a big problem of lack of generational replacement, loss of farms, family farms, or whatever we call it.
- Challenges: It is necessary to better map the agents that made up the AKIS and to determine the functions of each agent and improve information flows among all of them.
- BBPP: Navarra has a favourable framework for the promotion of short marketing channels.

## Annex 7: Irish MAW report



**Irish Living Lab 1st Multiactor Workshop:  
Mapping Ireland's Local Food Ecosystem**

**T2.2 Report**

Friday, March 22nd 2024  
Cloughjordan Ecovillage, Co. Tipperary, Ireland  
As a part of the Feeding Ourselves Gathering 2024  
Participants: 31

Authors: Sarah Nolan (UCD) and Davie Philip (Cultivate)

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## Introduction

On Friday, March 22nd 2024, the first multi-actor workshop (MAW) of the EU4Advice Irish Living Lab was held with 31 participants. The workshop was held during the Feeding Ourselves Gathering 2024, which was hosted by Cultivate for the Feeding Ourselves Community of Practice (CoP) which is a peer-learning and capacity network for agroecological farmers, land workers, and local food advocates on the island of Ireland. This CoP is the stakeholder group and focus for the EU4Advice Irish Living Lab. The Feeding Ourselves Gathering was a 4-day annual event hosted by Cultivate for agroecological farmers, land workers, community food and environmental advocates, along with organisations and individuals involved in food cooperatives and community food initiatives across Ireland to come together. The gathering aims to progress a regenerative and more resilient way to restore ecosystems and feed ourselves. At its core, this gathering helps to imagine and establish a future where farmers and land workers earn a fair living and everyone enjoys access to healthy, nutritious, and locally sourced food, aiming to build a solidarity economy and food sovereignty vision to transform Irish communities. More information and the agenda for this gathering can be found in Annex 1. This report includes results gathered during the MAW and throughout the 4 days of the Feeding Ourselves Gathering.



Figure 1: Description of the MAW in the Feeding Ourselves agenda

## Workshop objectives

The MAW was titled 'Mapping Ireland's Local Food Ecosystem: Understanding the stakeholders, knowledge flows and support strategies to collectively build thriving local food ecosystems'. As shown in Figure 1, the workshop aimed to identify and map Irish SFSC actors and their connections, which centred around 3 main objectives:

1. Identify Irish stakeholders involved in Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC), both individuals and organisations, while understanding their unique needs for advice and collaboration.
2. Visualise the flow of information and knowledge exchange among various stakeholders within the SFSC network, identifying the role of advisors and gaps and opportunities for improvement.
3. Explore potential focal points for the Irish Living Lab and discuss strategies for support through the EU4Advice project - contributing to a roadmap towards the integration of SFSC advisors into national AKIS (T2.3)

These MAW objectives were enhanced by activities and discussions throughout the Feeding Ourselves 4-day Gathering which helped to identify and analyse:

1. SFSC stakeholders' needs in terms of advice (T3.1)
2. The current AKIS regional/national governance models, identify strengths and weaknesses, knowledge gaps and missing interactions among actors (T2.2)



## Workshop methodology

The workshop was conducted in person during the Feeding Ourselves Gathering in CloughJordan Ecovillage with 31 participants, representing farmers, landworkers, cooperatives, SFSC retailers, researchers, local food advocates, municipalities, community gardeners and environmental NGOs. The workshop was hosted by Davie Philip and Oliver Moore from Cultivate, Sarah Nolan from UCD, Maarten Klop from Amped and Stephanie Jonsson from the Province of Flevoland, with support from Eva Jennings from CORENET/Teagasc. The workshop was guided by the following agenda:

### Draft Agenda: Total time 1.5hrs

2min	Open and welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of hosts</li> <li>Objective of MAW</li> </ul>
5min	Introduce Irish Living Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irish LL: Role of Cultivate and UCD</li> </ul>
15min	Inspiration Dutch Living Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amsterdam MA case study</li> <li>Step by step of inspire → execute</li> <li>Show levels/mycelium graph</li> <li>How did they do it?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GAIN transition model</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
35min	Activation Irish SFSC Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping Ireland's SFSC ecosystem               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is there already?                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone put a dot for themselves</li> <li>Other relevant stakeholders who help/influence them</li> </ul> </li> <li>What are your strengths, challenges, and needs?                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge</li> <li>Struggles</li> <li>Experts</li> <li>Experiences etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>What connections? Draw lines for:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support</li> <li>Knowledge-flows</li> <li>Shared struggles</li> <li>Previous co-working etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Also map what is not there - what is missing - what are the needs                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of trained advisors</li> <li>Lack of training</li> <li>Lack of diverse advising for different steps of the chain etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Mapping what should be there in terms of advice</li> </ul> </li> <li>Highlight advisors and AKIS               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use post-its to highlight "advisors" - formal and informal</li> <li>Emphasise the importance of advice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10min	Co-creation Paradise island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have a connected network with resources - - which challenges do we need to solve together?</li> <li>What would an ideal SFSC ecosystem look like?</li> <li>Create some shared vision - where do we want to go as a group?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine islands of individuals for a common theme</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
15min	Execution EU4Advice Irish Living Lab Cultivate / Feeding Ourselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LL gives legitimacy to get more support from organisations, government etc. &amp; gives space for collaboration               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can we collectively create conditions for solutions to emerge</li> </ul> </li> <li>What can other LLs do to support?</li> <li>What do our stakeholders need from us? How can we support you?</li> <li>Ideas for next steps:</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeding Ourselves Community of Practice (&amp; newsletter)</li> <li>Webinars - information sharing/addressing challenges</li> <li>Events</li> <li>Networking etc.</li> </ul>
5min	MAW close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking to sign up for the EU4Advice advisory network</li> <li>Thanking participants</li> </ul>

## Results

### Mapping Ireland's SFSC Ecosystem



Figure 2: Output of MAW - Co-created map of Ireland's SFSC Ecosystem

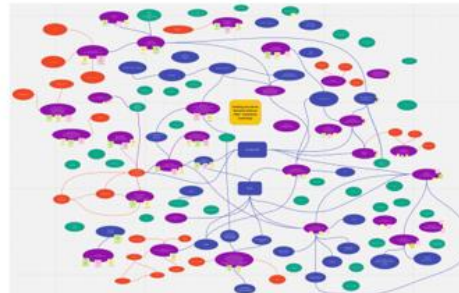


Figure 3: Digitised output of MAW

During the MAW we asked participants the questions outlined in the agenda above to map the SFSC ecosystem of Ireland. The MAW mapping output is shown in Figure 2, which has been digitised by the team at Cultivate in Figure 3. This mapping exercise was very valuable for both EU4Advice and our participants to understand who are the SFSC stakeholders in Ireland, what are their strengths, challenges and needs and how are they connected. This allows us to see who could be identified as an SFSC advisor,

as some stakeholders had many connections as they have provided guidance and knowledge to many others. Additionally, it allowed us to understand the strengths, challenges and needs of our Living Lab members, with a diversity of traits that we hope to bring together and connect.

The MAW uncovered some key insights about our Living Lab stakeholders' needs. Firstly, farmers want to know the relevant organisations and individuals working on SFSCs who could help them. Fundamentally they are seeking advice as they feel isolated and are not getting support from the government. Stakeholders agree that there is both a lack of recognition of SFSC informal advisors and a lack of a centralised SFSC advisory network. Through the mapping exercise, stakeholders could see those who they share traits with, and those who they would like to be connected. This map serves as a first step of the Irish Living Lab, which will focus on building this network of SFSC stakeholders in Ireland and try to help them connect and support each other, which they are eager and willing to do. Our stakeholders expressed how this national network would be very valuable for them, as well as the wider EU network of SFSC advisors being created by EU4Advice and CORENET. Images from the MAW are shown in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4: Images of the MAW and mapping exercise

### The current state of Ireland's AKIS Governance Models

Although Ireland's AKIS is seen as advanced in comparison to other EU countries, it does not include or support SFSCs or local food systems. Our stakeholders highlighted that Ireland's agri-food policy is primarily export and commodity-focused, with most support directed towards food businesses with export potential or the ability to supply supermarket multiples. The Irish agri-food system is increasingly specialised for dairy and beef production, such as through the abolishment of the milk quota in 2015 and accompanying incentivization for farmers to produce dairy.

The two most relevant stakeholders in Ireland's AKIS are the Irish government's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) as the leading decision-making body within the AKIS. Teagasc, Ireland's Agriculture and Food Development Authority is the national body providing research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities.

#### Level of stakeholder engagement

It was discussed and criticised that the agri-food export industry leads the policy process in Ireland, in which sometimes more than half of policy committee members represent the industry. A farmer noted how there is a "hunger" among the agricultural community for representation in decision-making, and noted how agricultural expansion in Ireland was led by policies such as the milk quota removal in 2015, which farmers are still paying debts on. It was also noted that in Irish food policy development, citizens aren't seen as having a stake in the food system and are not included or represented in food policy discussions.

#### Policy framework

It was highlighted that the current agricultural regulations in place are not fit for purpose, as they are not inclusive to all farm sizes. Bigger farmers can engage with red tape better than smaller farmers, and there is a need to think about how regulations impact all types of farmers. Regarding ecosystem services policies, one researcher noted that in their work on speaking with farmers, the need to recognise and reward ecosystem services came up repeatedly.

Regarding organic agricultural policies, there has been an increase in recent years in incentives and funding for organic farmers, influencing more farmers to transition to organic. However, most of them are beef or sheep, with very little dairy and tillage. Additionally, although there is more money for organics, there is a lack of training and education and therefore farmers don't know or understand organic farming. Organic processing facilities are also scarce across the country. It was mentioned that there is a new policy on green public procurement, stating that there must be 10% certified organic produce used. However, this was criticised as the policy does not include local food or specify where this 10% organic should come from, meaning it can be imported.

#### Decision-making structures

One stakeholder who was involved in the consultancy for Ireland's CAP policy development noted how the system is very bureaucratic which makes it difficult to make change. Departments and organisations face resourcing issues which impede their ability to contribute to CAP policy change.

#### Extension services

It was suggested as a step going forward to focus extension services on re-localizing and community-based support and to diversify and represent good stories and best practices.

#### Ireland's AKIS and SFSCs

Currently, the SFSC landscape includes three or four food cooperatives operating in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. Additionally, the Open Food Network (OFN) platform, which facilitates SFSCs, has been established in Ireland; however, its utilisation remains minimal. There are also a few food hubs in operation, alongside several agencies with a vested interest in supporting local food economies. There are many farmers' markets and farm shops across the country working independently.

When assessing Ireland's current AKIS governance models and whether they effectively support the development and adoption of SFSCs, SFSC stakeholders feel the Irish AKIS does not support SFSCs whatsoever. The following sections outline strengths and weaknesses, in which weaknesses are much more prevalent based on our stakeholder's input.

#### Strengths

##### Collaboration and Networking

During the MAW and Gathering, positive stories were shared around the development of SFSC initiatives, such as the conversion of an old factory into a food hub and the development of a community-owned greengrocer. However these stories did not equate their success to AKIS support, and instead on the willingness of volunteers, community members and grassroots initiatives to collectively address the challenges of SFSCs. Farmers and SFSC stakeholders feel isolated working on their farms and facing challenges alone, so they are very willing to come together and build communities and movements. It was noted that policies and politics haven't changed anything, so citizens have been forced to mobilise and make changes without the AKIS.

#### Weaknesses

##### Lack of institutional recognition for SFSCs

A primary discussion point was that there is no institutional framework to support local food production, or farms and food businesses that want to primarily supply their own local population. Farmers and small stakeholders expressed that they feel left out of the AKIS and that they are struggling to maintain their SFSC with such little recognition and support. Farmers noted how they feel EU and Irish policy has not protected or looked after them. The development of agri-policy to make as much food for little money means farm livelihoods are under threat and there is no future, farmers are in debt and controlled by price models which don't reflect the inputs. One noted that since Ireland joined the EU there has been no local food policy development. The network has fed into and supports the [Talamh Beo Local Food Policy Framework](#) which highlights the need for institutional recognition for local food producers, and includes a section on SFSC.

##### Inadequate Financial Support

One online farmers market owner expressed how they feel unseen by DAFM, and that they face many challenges with little support. They started their market in 2020 with much interest due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but since then every year the amount has dropped. A huge challenge they face is with labour costs since they run at such a tight cost margin with their products. Although local agencies give them support, they are very limited in the work and time it takes to apply for funding, and no funding scheme is available to help with labour costs. Additionally, they cannot afford premises which makes their work much harder. They feel that lack of government support and media of cheap-food messaging are huge challenges, which many agreed on.

Another food hub representative added that although they are trying to foster more people to supply for local consumption, DAFM and other agencies have ignored them. Their food hub currently has complicated logistics to get food out, so they are trying to build and improve logistics by collaborating with other stakeholders. It was noted that farmers are willing to sell locally but they have to do so much, so if there are cooperatives, food hubs or direct selling groups it would be beneficial and encourage more to supply SFSCs.

##### Lack of SFSC education and training

It was discussed several times that Ireland's AKIS lacks education and training around SFSCs and the importance of local food, and if this was provided, it could increase the value of local food thus more producers would have the demand to support them. During a discussion on community-led and cooperative approaches to SFSC, it was questioned if or how this knowledge is being transferred to agricultural colleges, and it was noted that it is not. A farmer noted that with Ireland's fragile agri-system, more education and knowledge need to be brought to people around food sovereignty and away from current agri-food industry-driven education and research. Additionally, many individuals in the Feeding Ourselves CoP joined the SFSC movement alternatively and not through the mainstream knowledge system. This highlights the need to recognise informal SFSC advisors.

##### Access to Land

It was discussed how access to land is a growing problem in Ireland, especially for small-scale farmers. Ireland has one of the lowest turnovers of agricultural land in Europe. It was noted how many people who worked in finance and saved money could afford land but not anyone else.

##### Knowledge Gaps and Missing Interactions

Due to the weaknesses prevalent in the Irish AKIS in supporting SFSCs, there are many knowledge gaps and missing interactions between the AKIS and SFSC stakeholders. As expressed, stakeholders feel they are not included, supported or encouraged through the AKIS and rely on informal, grassroots initiatives to support them. Fundamentally, it was agreed that there are arguably no explicit formal SFSC advisors within the AKIS or Teagasc, Ireland's leading body providing agricultural advice. Stakeholders expressed that they are seeking advice, and even noted that by advisors coming to their land to give praise and support it makes a huge difference and makes the farmer feel more proud of their hard work, which is often not recognized.

Within the informal SFSC ecosystem of Ireland, there are missing gaps between stakeholders as they are not aware of one another. Through our mapping exercise, many stakeholders became aware of the individuals and organisations whom they hope to be connected to in future. Many stakeholders become connected through word-of-mouth or personal relationships, which means that not all relevant individuals are put in contact with one another. They expressed that there is a lack of a centralised network, database or directory of relevant SFSC stakeholders in Ireland, which we hope to create through the Living Lab.

#### Building a Roadmap and Next Steps

The next steps for our living lab involve further expanding our efforts to map stakeholders involved in the SFSC ecosystem in Ireland. We will build on the map created during the MAW by making it available to all stakeholders in the Feeding Ourselves CoP, who can continue to add people, organisations, connections, strengths, challenges and needs. This map will be then used to create a SFSC stakeholder directory which will make it easier for individuals to identify and connect with one another. This mapping process will also enable us to identify and engage with a wider range of stakeholders, including mainstream farmers, policymakers, and other relevant actors. Additionally, we will conduct a more comprehensive needs assessment to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and priorities within the SFSC landscape in Ireland.

The ultimate goal of our living lab is to help SFSC stakeholders connect and support one another, as this is something which they clearly need. Upon better understanding our stakeholders and their needs, we can create a directory of relevant SFSC stakeholder across Ireland and organise events or webinars around topics which they seek. We want to make connecting and knowledge sharing between SFSC stakeholders and advisors as easy and accessible as possible. The advisors will also be given access to EU4Advice training, support and the EU SFSC advisory network.

Annex 1: Feeding Ourselves Gathering 2024 schedule

# FEEDING OURSELVES GATHERING 2024

UNPACKING PROTEST | AGROECOLOGY | LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

Where are we at, where do we want to go, and how do we get there?

Since 2011, agroecological farmers, land workers, community food and environmental advocates, along with organisations and individuals involved in food cooperatives and community food initiatives have convened annually in Cloughjordan to progress a regenerative and more resilient way to restore ecosystems and food systems.

This year's gathering will continue but also exploring different aspects of how farming and food, and how it can be – for our farms, our land and our inclusive communities.

At its core, this gathering will help us to imagine and establish a future where farmers and land workers earn a fair living and everyone enjoys access to healthy, nutritious, and locally sourced food – in a socially, economically and food-securely vision to transition our communities.

## FEEDING OURSELVES GATHERING

Partners and Collaborators: Cultiva, Telamh Bee, Feasta, CODECS, EU4Advice, and others.

FOOD HUB – COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CENTRE Cloughjordan Ecovillage | County Tipperary | ES3 VP8

Thursday 21st March Page 1 – Policy & Politics

Friday 22nd March Page 5 – FOOD HUBS Climate Action and Local Food

Saturday 23rd March Page 4 – Capacity & Movement Building

Sunday 24th March Page 7 – Farm Social

## Policy and Politics

Thursday 21st March 2024 – 10.00-17.30

Thursday's session will gather farmers, land users, local communities, researchers, journalists, environmental advocates, and policymakers to unpack the issues around global trade and food system power – seeking understanding, synergies and strategies forward.

10.30 Sign in  
10.35 Opening  
10.40 Addressing Protest and Land Policy Changes  
10.45 Opening Address by Minister of State Pádraic Rabbit  
11.00 Break  
11.15 Ireland: The National Context  
11.30 Lunch  
12.45 Capturing Insights & Introduction to the Breakfasts  
13.00 Lunch  
14.00 Policy Breakfasts  
14.15 Learning from Europe  
14.30 Bringing it all Together  
17.30 Close

## Friday 22nd March 2024

14.00 – 15.30 Mapping Ireland's Local Food Ecosystem. Understanding the stakeholders, knowledge flows, and support strategies to collectively build thriving local food systems

14.00 – 15.30 Digital Solutions for Sustainable Food Systems. Identifying stakeholders, exploring barriers and strategies for enhancing adoption of digital tools among farmers and community-led food initiatives.

## FOOD HUBS

Climate Action and Local Food

Short Food Supply Chains, Digitalisation & Stronger Local Food Economies

Friday 22nd March 2024 – 10.00-17.00

Saturday 23rd March 2024 – 10.00-17.00

The second day of Feeding Ourselves 2024 is focused on Food Hubs and Local Food Economies.

18.00 Opening  
18.10 Voices from the Field  
18.15 Agrifood in Ireland: limits, progress and what's next?  
18.20 Building bridges  
18.25 Dining deeper into policy  
18.30 Lunch  
18.35 Short film screening: Where's Eaters Grow?  
18.40 Capacity Breakout Sessions  
18.45 Feedback from the Breakfasts  
18.50 Campaign and Movement Building  
18.55 Bringing it all Together  
19.00 Close

## Eats and Beats

Saturday 23rd March 2024 – 19:00 till late

After work, now it's play - and eat together! Join us for a scrumptious chow down with community farm veg, and a chance to dance the night away to tropical, reggae house, party and ambient sounds. With DJ Orla Moore and Sonairte and chef David O'Keefe.

Sunday 24th March 2024

## Farm Social

The final day of the 2024 Feeding Ourselves gathering includes a deep listening session with local conventional farmers, with a focus on young farmers and a Cloughjordan Community Farm talk and walk starting at the Food Hub.

11.00 Deep listening session: Environmentalists and farmers including young farmers

14:00 Farm Talk & Walk

## FEEDING OURSELVES GATHERING

UNPACKING PROTEST | AGROECOLOGY | LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

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Thursday 21st to Sunday 24th March 2024

Partners and Collaborators: Cultiva, Telamh Bee, Feasta, CODECS, EU4Advice, and others.

## FEEDING OURSELVES GATHERING

UNPACKING PROTEST | AGROECOLOGY | LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

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