



FINAL CONCLUSIONS REPORT

THE PAYS DE LA LOIRE ACTION PLAN

Data closed as of January 31, 2022

REGIONS 4FOOD Project



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



INDEX

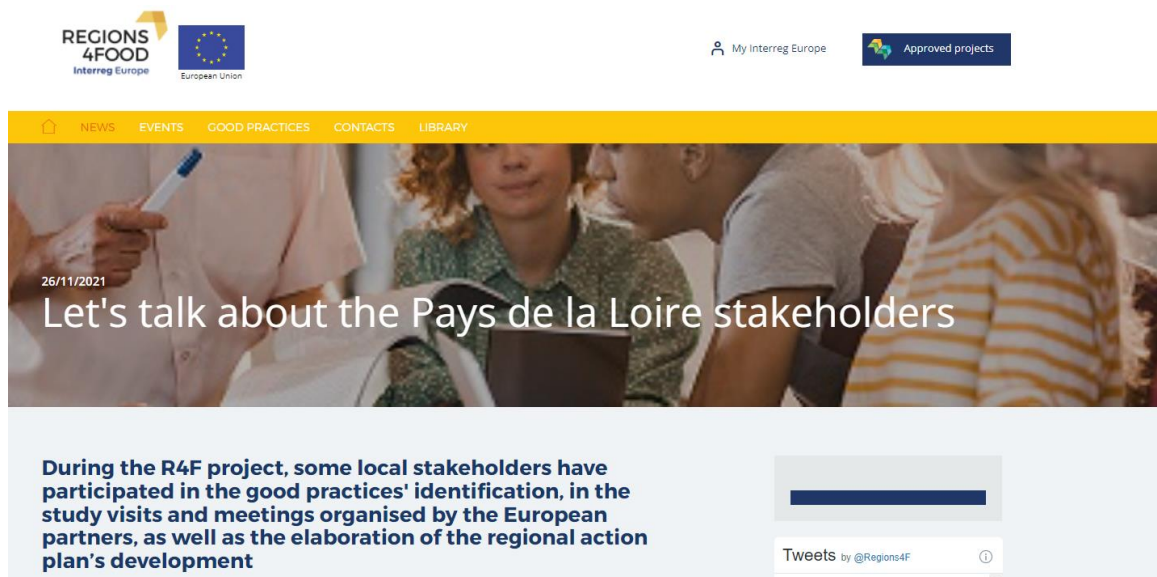
1/. Validation and launching of Action Plan	3
2/. Action Plan implementation	5
3/. Action Plan monitoring	6
4/. Action Plan communication and dissemination	8
5/. General conclusions on action plan implementation and policy impact	10

1/. Validation and launching of Action Plan

The objective of the Pays de la Loire Action Plan is to “push innovation through in order to improve the economic, environment and social competitiveness of the local actors and disseminate the results throughout the region to inspire emulation”. The specific objectives of Pays de la Loire Action Plan are:

- Gather regional actors from the agrifood value chain and connect the research community to the agriculture and food industry ones.
- Orient policy making and public strategies regarding the agrifood sector based on the needs and barriers observed on ground.
- Generate added value by the digital innovation and smart specialisation of the agrifood sector.
- Promote shared governance mechanism between the public and private sector.

Figure 1. Pays de la Loire Action Plan I



Source: Interreg Europe, Regions 4Food project website- <https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/regions4food/news/news-article/13474/let-s-talk-about-the-pays-de-la-loire-stakeholders/>

The Pays de la Loire Action Plan includes 2 Actions:

Table 1. Pays de la Loire Action Plan – Sub-Actions and Activities

Actions	Period	Sub-action
Action 1/ From the AgriFood Hub to an Agrifood and Digital Innovation Hub (DIH)	2021-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Activity No.1:</u> Define the sectors of the agrifood the Pays de la Loire Region wants to target and what digital tools should be promoted. This should be defined with the actors the most implicated currently in the Hub Agrifood, depending on their needs and the services already offered in the region. • <u>Activity No.2:</u> Communicate on this network and launch a call for interest among our stakeholders and the quadruple helix actors of the agrifood and digital sector. (Research, Universities, Businesses, Associations). • <u>Activity No.3:</u> Create a board supervising the animation and the follow-up of the Hub activities and then define the different missions within the Digital Innovation Hub and role of each actor. • <u>Activity No.4:</u> Elaborate of a roadmap with clear and shared objectives. • <u>Activity No.5:</u> Elaborate of a communication strategy. • <u>Activity No.6:</u> Evaluate the DIH performance at the end of the project and decide of the relevance of a legal form after 18 months.
Action 2/ Measuring the potential of interest for an Agri/digital Transversal Training	2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Activity No.1:</u> Creation of a comity of experts on all agrifood, ICT, Agtech and education sectors. • <u>Activity No.2:</u> Create a roadmap that should organize the following sub-actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benchmark all existing AgTech educational program in France. - Identify all opportunities to cross education actors of the Agtech - Conduct a study on the needs and opportunities of the potential of such educational program. - Establish a report on the most appropriate form this program should take if set up (including funding, as EAFRD, ERASMUS...) with different scenarios.

Source: Data extracted from Interreg Europe, Regions 4Food project website, Pays de la Loire Action Plan - https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/tx_tevprojects/library/file_1638276170.pdf

2/. Action Plan implementation

In the aftermath of three evaluations the 2 Actions of PP2 Action Plan sum up a total of 8 sub-actions that demonstrated a good progress in terms of implementation. The follow up process was carried out according to three timeframes :

- 1st follow up with data closed by April 30th 2022;
- 2nd follow up with data closed by October 30th 2022;
- 3rd follow up with data closed by January 31st 2022 ;

So far, the **Action 1 has been positively progressing**, notably with the continuation of the work and reflections related to Agrifood-tech Hub.

In terms of output regarding this Action, it is worth noting that the **working plan was defined** and the **board which monitors the achievement of its policy on digitalisation of Agrifood in Pays de la Loire was completed and will be filled in progressively with updates in the aftermath of the REGIONS 4 FOOD Project.**

Regarding the **AgrifoodTech Hub** concluded in June 2022 to the need of sharing contacts and events and TCA will finalise this work from February 2023.

Related to the internet page dedicated to the regional strategy, in June 2022, the Hub confirmed the need of a web page and in the meantime, it could use the existing site of Food Technocampus.

Next, the status of implementation of Action 1 is portrayed in the below table:

Table 2. Pays de la Loire Action Plan – Status of implementation of the specific activities

Output / Target	Status of Implementation (In progress/ finished)
1 working plan with a clear objective	FINISHED
1 board which monitors the achievement of its policy on digitalisation of Agrifood in Pays de la Loire	FINISHED
1 Internet page dedicated to the regional strategy (also used as a source of information on upcoming / ongoing European projects)	IN PROGRESS

Source: Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

The purpose of Action 2 is to develop the framework conditions to implement an agri/digital transversal training.

Even through the action 2 was more difficult to implement because the Regional Council does not have total control over the definition of university and vocational training, it however showcases good progress with prospects to be finalised.

In the framework of the second Action, PP2 partner showcase a finalised sub action in terms of **working group creation**, associating the stakeholders (High schools) and it is going to consolidate the needs and opportunities

in early 2023. Likewise, earlier, the task regarding the **benchmark of all existing AgTech educational program in France** was as well successfully completed.

Next, the status of implementation of Action 1 is portrayed in the below table:

Table 3. Pays de la Loire Action Plan – Status of implementation of the specific activities

Output / Target	Status of Implementation (In progress/ finished)
Creation of a working group	FINISHED
1 benchmark	FINISHED
1 SWOT analysis with a focus on the needs and opportunities	IN PROGRESS
1 feasibility study	IN PROGRESS

Source: Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

Concerning the **SWOT analysis with a focus on the needs and opportunities**, the work hand in hand with the colleagues of the Direction of Higher Education and Research, and with local stakeholders involved in agricultural training. (ESA, ESEO ...) is being developing.

To sum up, **the implementation of the Action 2 is progressing** but is behind schedule due to numerous sick leaves in the PP2 team in December 2022 and January 2023. **The working group may meet again in February and move forward on the SWOT analysis and the feasibility study's inputs.**

3/. Action Plan monitoring

In terms of monitoring system, the Pays de la Loire region establishes two mechanisms: a joint monitoring (common to the seven action plans designed by the Lead Partner to monitor, analyze and report the implementation of actions) and an additional self-monitoring mechanism defined by each partner according to their needs and internal structure.

In the case of Pays de la Loire, the self-monitoring mechanism together with the joint monitoring mechanism delve further into the result indicators exposed during the drafting and development of the Action Plan.

So far, **for the Action 1**, the result indicators portray the following situation:

Table 4. Pays de la Loire Action Plan – Result indicators of Action 1

Result indicators	Target	Achieved at Half-year follow-up	Status by January 2023
Number of stakeholders joining this Hub	30	17 (a list of +100 contacts)	Due to numerous sick leaves in the team, there was no Hub's meeting organized since October 13 th 2022 when the Hub was enlarging with new participants in the framework of Agreen Startup. However, the core team is constant with around 15 persons. A new meeting is foreseen before June, still in collaboration with the regional chamber of agriculture and the Food Technocampus. IN PROGRESS
Number of collaborative projects and events between	8	4	PP2 participated again to the Nantes Digital Week with AgrifarmLab project (20/09/22). PP2 participated in SmartAgriHubs event (20/10/2022) PP2 attended the SIMA (International Fair, solutions and technologies for a competitive and sustainable agriculture (07/11/22)



Result indicators	Target	Achieved at Half-year follow-up	Status by January 2023
digital and agrifood sectors			PP2 attended the PS3 Traceability and Big Data meeting with regional stakeholders (28/11/22). IN PROGRESS
Number of success stories in providing solutions to the technological challenges	2	1	An important output is the success of DIVA, selected as E-DIH in June 2022. Though it is not only focused on agrifood, it's the first economic sector on which DIVA will work on with concrete use cases. In addition, AgrifarmLab launches its own service offer and supports by now 2 new startups. IN PROGRESS

Source: Own creation. Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

Overall, the result indicators for Action 1 are very positive and show that good progress has been done within the region during the whole period of the Action Plan implementation. Firstly, because the Hub is enlarging with new participants and second is because, in order to advance in collaborative projects and events between digital and agrifood sectors, PP2 participated in several events to achieve this purpose. In any case, still work has to be done in this sense.

Regarding the number of collaborative projects and events between digital and agrifood sectors, it is worth noting that **DIVA has been selected as E-DIH in June 2022 and AgrifarmLab launches its own service offer and supports by now 2 new startups.**

For the Action 2, Pays de la Loire Regional Council showcase that target was achieved. In this context, the benchmark has set the working basis for the identification of existing cross-courses and initiatives. Also, the target related to the number of scenarios foreseen by the group in charge of this question within the EIDH was as well completed. In this context, there are two working areas identified to put in place a relevant training offer. The discussions held during the final event in Malaga as part of the roundtable dedicated to training issues, have also helped PP2 to better shape the process.

Table 5. Pays de la Loire Action Plan – Result indicators of Action 2

Result indicators	Target	Achieved at Half-year follow-up	Status by January 2023
Number of answers to the benchmark	Mostly farmers, Agrifood industries, 60	IN PROGRESS	FINISHED
Number of scenarios foreseen by the group in charge of this question within the EIDH	All members of the Hub (businesses, startups, universities, competitive centers, funders...), 2	2	FINISHED

Source: Own creation. Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

4/. Action Plan communication and dissemination

Along with the Action Plan Implementation, **PP2 was active in terms of communicating and disseminating** both project results and outputs of the Action Plan implementations. PP2 used Regional Council and Regions4 Food Project Websites in order to post the project news and achieve more audience among all types of stakeholders and civil society. Likewise, social networks were employed to disseminate the participation in events.

By timeframes, below are listed the communications carried out by the PP2 in the **timeframe 1st of June 2021 – 30th of April 2022:**

- Webinar on “Agtech in Pays de la Loire” (26/11/2021);
- Brochure on Strategic Recommendations (June 2021);
- Facebook post: official launching of the Hub Agri Food Tech – FOOD’ Loire ((1) (1)YouTube video: presentation of the Project (June 2021);

Additionally, the Pays de la Loire Regional Council has conducted **2 interviews with local partners and several press releases on its own dedicated website for the project.**

Ranging from 30th of April of 2022 until October 30th of 2022, PP2 carried out the following communication and dissemination activities:

Table 6. Communication activities (30th of April of 2022 - October 30th of 2022)

COMMUNICATION	WEBSITE
Interview of a regional stakeholder : Viviane KERLIDOU from the FOOD Technocampus.	One post on the Regional Council’s website: https://www.paysdelaloire.fr/mon-conseil-regional/les-missions-regionales/europe/solliciter-les-programmes-sectoriels-et-interreg/interreg-regions4food One post on the Food Technocampus website: http://technocampus-alimentation.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=317&catid=24&Itemid=381
Strategic recommendations published in French on the Regional Council’s website	https://www.paysdelaloire.fr/mon-conseil-regional/les-missions-regionales/europe/solliciter-les-programmes-sectoriels-et-interreg/programme-interreg-regions4food
Communication on the regional participation in a webinar as part of the European regions week, about food systems durability – a video has been produced with the participation of the Food Technocampus, mentioning the Regions4Food good practice.	https://www.paysdelaloire.fr/mon-conseil-regional/toute-lactu-de-ma-region/les-actualites/la-region-pays-de-la-loire-participe-la-semaine-europeenne-des-regions-et-des-villes-du-10-au-13 The video will be posted on the Regional Council’s website after the 13/10 https://youtu.be/ZOJwpUKuhXE

Source: Own creation. Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

Ranging from November 1st of 2022 until January 31st of 2023, PP2 carried out the following communication and dissemination activities:

Table 7. Communication activities (November 1st of 2022 - January 31st of 2023)

COMMUNICATION	WEBSITE
Communication on the regional participation in the final dissemination event of Regions4Food project in Malaga (28-30/11/22)	https://www.paysdelaloire.fr/mon-conseil-regional/toute-lactu-de-ma-region/les-actualites/evenement-de-cloture-du-projet-interreg-europe-regions4food
The stakeholders who have also taken part to this event, have communicated on their websites and social networks (Linkedin)	https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7003369093193998337/?commentUrn=urn%3Ali%3Acomment%3A(activity%3A7003369093193998337%2C7003382284166811648)&dashCommentUrn=urn%3Ali%3Afsd_comment%3A(7003382284166811648%2Curn%3Ali%3Aactivity%3A7003369093193998337)
Project regional stakeholder's profile : Simon Boisserpe, EDIH DIVA project officer, who participated in the final event on Malaga (to be done in January-February 2023).	Region's website: https://www.paysdelaloire.fr/mon-conseil-regional/les-missions-regionales/europe/solliciter-les-programmes-sectoriels-et-interreg/interreg-regions4food#10200-4 And ATLANPOLE's website (to be done)
Press release dedicated to the project's closure, to communicate on the actions and results achieved in Pays de la Loire (to be done in February-March 2023)	Social networks + probably Ouest France tbc (regional area's newspaper)

Source: Own creation. Data extracted from the REGIONS 4FOOD Members Common Monitoring System.

5/. General conclusions on action plan implementation and policy impact

This section is
developed by PP2

The Pays de la Loire action plan is made of two actions portraying sustainability in their deployment.

Firstly, the **Agrifood-tech Hub gathers around 15 regional stakeholders and will continue meeting each semester in the coming years**, in order to keep working together on the shared roadmap: facilitating the AG-tech sector in the Pays de la Loire region, encouraging meetings between stakeholders in this ecosystem, sharing best practices and news about each other's projects, fostering the emergence of new projects.

In this sense, **PP2 concluded that they have met their objective by gathering regional actors from the agrifood value chain and connecting better the agri-food and digital sectors.** The **Regional Chamber of Agriculture and the Food Technocampus have joined the Regional Council in piloting the Hub**, in order to have a better connection with the actors on the ground. **This cooperation helped the region to better orient policy making and strategies based on the needs and barriers observed on the ground.**

Regarding the **Action 2, it was more difficult to implement because the Regional Council does not have total control over the definition of university and vocational training.** A specific work hand in hand with the colleagues of the Direction of Higher Education and Research, and with local stakeholders involved in agricultural training. (ESA, ESEO ...) has being developed.

There are **two working areas identified to put in place a relevant training offer**: The first one with ONIRIS for agrifood industries professionals, and the second one with ESA for farmers and SME's professionals. The **working group will keep on discussing in the coming months about the needs and opportunities of the potential of educational program dedicated to ag-tech.** As a result, **PP2 concluded that they have partially met the objective by better connecting the research community to the agriculture and food industry ones.**

To conclude, **R4F project has had great benefits and impacts on the Pays de la Loire regional area**, for this reason **PP2 states that they are concretely able to enhance the ERDF regional programme 21-27 thanks to the project's inputs**: 14 projects have been funded by the ERDF (2014-2020) dealing with innovation in the agrifood sector. There were notably supported by PP2 two ERDF projects as part of R4F timeline, that have benefited of a specific follow-up:

- Sustainable approach to agro-resource processing (December 2018);
- Plant engineering department dedicated to horticulture and seeds (April 2020).

Moreover, thanks to the project's inputs, PP2 has pushed to include this specific topic in the new ERDF (2021-2027) since the beginning of the operational programme's writing in 2019: a dedicated measure on digitization of economic sectors and particularly on agrifood sector was included. The Regional OP has been officially approved in October 2022.



Finally, it is also worth noting the Storytelling derived from the Action Plan.

On the one hand, Pays de la Loire is especially proud of the interest generated within the Stakeholders on the AgTech topic, since they are very participative and collaborative, thus increasing the audience of the project.

On the other hand, it should be underlined that **the French national government has launched the “French AgriTech” Dynamic, which legitimates the Pays de la Loire Regional Council’s action and the certainty of granting funds for the project, which is overseen as a great output for the future of the region.**