

STRING Newsletter

December 2018

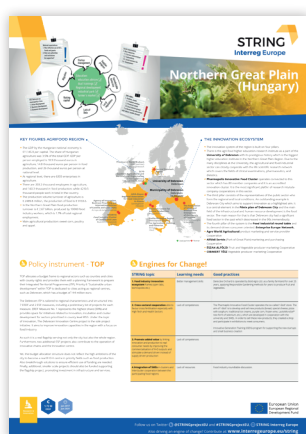
Top wise lessons: Engines 4 Change

High education levels and significant investments in R&D are important to create high level human capital in agriculture and in the food industry able to boost innovation and competitiveness on international markets. High labour productivity can only be reached when relevant resources are allocated to the creation of competent farmers and food industry managers.

Only practical experience certainly is not sufficient to sustain innovative development pathways and create the ability to operate on extremely difficult export markets. North-Brabant and Central Denmark are outstanding examples of highly competitive regions where the high-level innovation ecosystem explains their productive and export performances.

Alsace and Emilia-Romagna are following these two leading regions in a secondary position, which is largely explained by a lower level of education and minor investments in R&D. Castilla y León has moderate performances in productivity and exploitation of export potentials. Finally, among the two Eastern European regions the Northern Plain in Hungary shows decisively lower levels of economic development, but discrete levels of tertiary education. The Central Region of Romania lags behind because of low levels of investments in R&D, and low agricultural training level of farmers and tertiary education.

Engine for Change posters



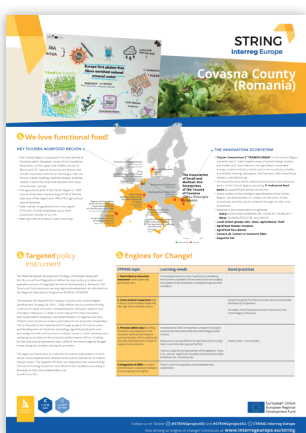
• Hungary



• France



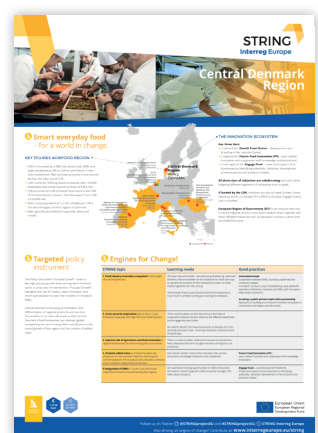
• Italy



• Romania



• Spain



• Denmark

STRING in action

STRING: accelerator for knowledge sharing

How can knowledge, ideas, best practices and better ways of working be diffused and implemented? And what constitutes the building blocks of a great solution? These two questions are the basic principles of whatever European project. So those two questions were the starting point of this year's Knowledge Exchange phase of project STRING (jan. – dec. 2018). One way of looking at the challenge is to turn to the massive academic works that have been done on dissemination, spreading and scaling-up over the last 20 or so years.

A traditional approach is to look at the challenge as a pure push-movement – i.e. management of a certain organization decides to introduce and implement a new and more efficient solution, policy or way of working to their organization. The question then is: "How can we ensure, that this happens most effectively?". Another major interpretation is diffusion, where a large number of institutions or individuals discover an innovative solution, and then pull it into their own context and start using it. The question here is: "What makes a solution so interesting, that it will diffuse all by itself?".

The interesting part is that each side comes to the same conclusions:

1. The 'better way' either needs translation or in the course of implementation will get translated
2. You need to find out, how to get this 'better way' to work within another local environment.

That's why STRING introduced the E4Change Good Practice approach (with help of the great team of Central Denmark Region). This approach relies on the WHO-initiative of "Nine steps for developing a scaling-up strategy". Each good practice should be C-O-R-R-E-C-T:

Credible – based on sound evidence

Observable – to ensure, that potential users can see the results in practice

Relevant – for addressing persistent or sharply felt problems

Relative advantage – over existing practices

Easy to install and understand – rather than complex and complicated

Compatible – with the potential users' established values, norms and facilities

Testable – so that potential users can see the intervention on a small scale prior to large-scale adoption

STRING has established, that spreading a good practice from project partner to another is a relational activity. In some cases it appears that a mutual learning experience may occur – or the actors may try to establish it. The adopters of a good practice learn from the pioneer, who in return may elaborate his or her own solution based on experience gained from the adopters.

Next important step in this approach is to detect the core of the good practice. In the knowledge exchange phase this part was expanded and became the central part of the dialogue during meet-ups. The basic idea of focusing on the core is, that instead of producing counterproductive, adaptive features – i.e. thinking about how the entire solution can be molded to different contexts - everybody should concentrate on what Stanford Peace Innovation Lab calls the 'non-negotiables': those elements in the solution that make the difference.

Conclusions, within our STRING working field all project partners hosted and organized a lot of knowledge exchange activities. Knowledge flowed everywhere. Of course not every stakeholder or interested professional could be present at each exchange activity. That's why we collected soundbites of relevant stakeholder at each activity trying to capture the real essence (core) of each regional good practice in agrifood innovation systems for further dialogue and co-creation online.

Join the flow online: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/stringprojecteu/>.



Thematic Expert Assembly (TEA) and Project Steering Committee meetings (PSC)

1. Debrecen (November 2017)
2. Noord Brabant (June 2018)
3. Alsace (December 2018)

Site Visits

1. Castilla y Leon (February 2018)
2. Noord Brabant (June 2018)

Staff Exchanges

1. Central Denmark Region (March 2018)
2. Alsace (September 2018)
3. Emilia Romagna (November 2018)

Besides regional there were at least 5 stakeholder meetings!

STRING appearing in Government Europa Quarterly

STRING details how the performance of regional development instruments and programmes depends on building strong Agrifood innovation systems for creating and co-operation.

[Read more...](#)



The masterminds behind STRING

All STRING-regions have been renowned for their food production traditions, and for their innovation potentials. They all are engaged in food innovation and production in different roles. The overall objective of the partners - independent from their development level and the strength of cohesion in their regional food sectors - is to improve the performance and implementation efficiency of development policies and programmes related to food R&D&I and clusterization to promote innovation value chains for the sector.

[Read more...](#)

Save the date in your agendas!

Join us at the Launching Event to learn about the future innovation strategies for food clusters. Policy makers, agro food companies, innovators and experts on this theme are invited to discuss about strategies on creating added value, cross-sectoral cooperation with the health sector and with the high tech sector. The partner regions of STRING will present their lessons learned and share their ambitions and ideas for the future.

21 May 2019

 **Brasov, Romania**
Final event STRING

22-24 May 2019

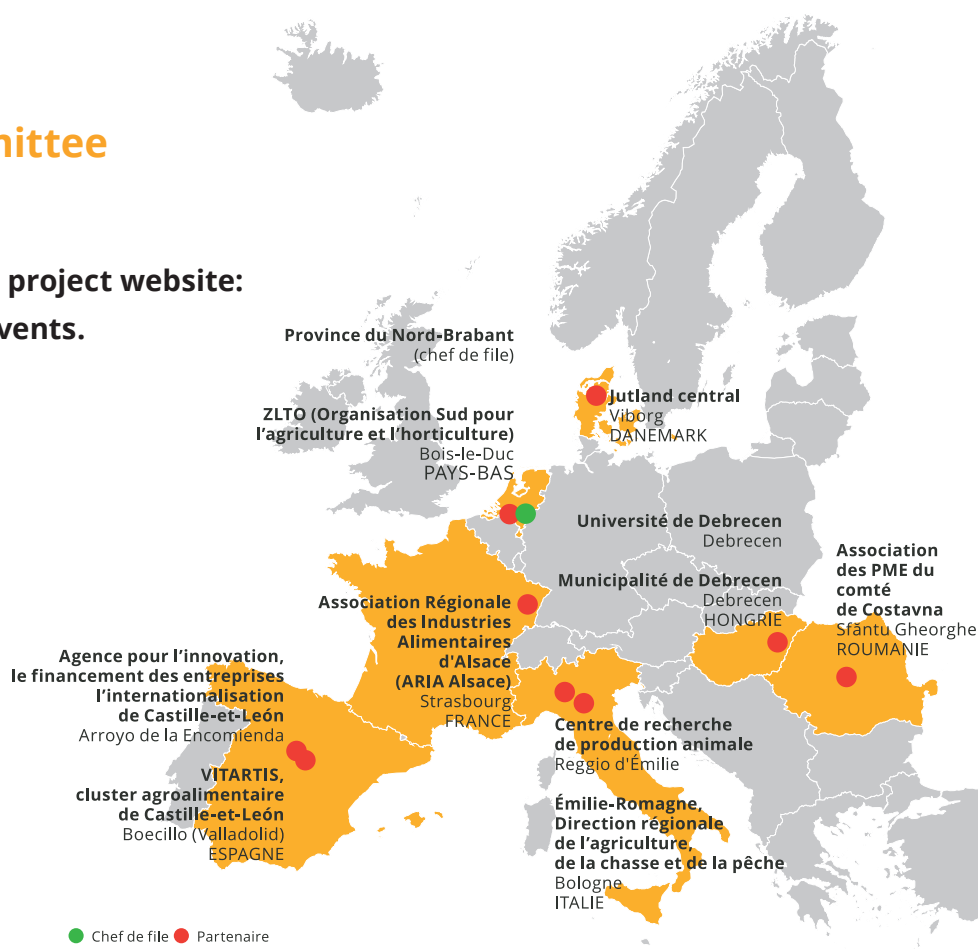
 **Covasna, Romania**
Project Steering Committee
STRING

All events also gets posted at our project website:
www.interregeurope.eu/string/events.

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