

Innovation Policies for Inclusiveness – Policy Cases

EuroAgri Foodchain

Country: Participating EUREKA countries

1. Short Description

EuroAgri FoodChain projects form part of the EUREKA multilateral programme. Their aim is to **generate and support R&D in the agri and food sector** in all participating countries, through the use of a bottom-up, collaborative R&D support mechanism. The programme targets all relevant organisations (SMEs and large companies, universities and research institutions) in participating countries over the period 2014-2018.

This policy profile is part of a [policy toolkit on innovation policies for inclusiveness](#). It is relevant for industrial inclusiveness.

2. Policy Characteristics

Basic Information

Country and implementing institution(s):	Timeline:
EUREKA Secretariat The EuroAgri FoodChain network National funding bodies in participating countries: Austria, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland and Turkey	2014-2018
Target group	Size and budget:
Firms in the agri-food sector Research institutes, HEIs	Budget: EUR 5 billion (approx. USD 6.5 billion, PPP)
Type of policy instrument(s)	Inclusiveness focus
Financial support: grants/loans Non-financial support: counselling	Industrial inclusiveness

Policy objectives

The main goal of the programme is **to support international R&D cooperation for the benefit of the European agri-food industry**. EUREKA is a publicly funded, intergovernmental network (over 40 countries), which was founded in 1985. Its aim is to enhance European



competitiveness by fostering innovation-driven entrepreneurship between small and large industry, research institutes and universities. For this purpose, EUREKA provides a platform for all types of organisations (SMEs and large companies, universities, research institutes), whose aim is to develop an innovative novel product, process or service through international co-operation (in collaboration with an organisation from at least one other member country). The network provides funding through the national dedicated schemes of member countries (subject to national evaluation rules and funding processes) and provides counselling and quality evaluation at a central level.

EuroAgri Foodchain is one of EUREKA's umbrella platforms. It aims to **increase the productivity and competitiveness of the European agri and food industry** by providing support during technological development processes. The supported R&D projects can cover all areas of food-related technology, including food and feed, pharma, fine chemicals, bulk chemicals and energy applications. EuroAgri FoodChain is the first EUREKA platform to support a particular sector generally not considered to be highly innovative.

Rationale

International R&D cooperation in the agri-food industry is low.

Policy target recipient and selection mechanism

The programme is designed for all **businesses and institutions in the agri and food sector in member countries** (Austria, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland and Turkey) that intend to undertake a project aimed at developing an innovative new product, service or process.

Projects are funded mainly through EUREKA's dedicated funding scheme (in some cases, via the Eurostars programme). Some countries allow projects to be financed through other national funding mechanisms if the project is deemed ineligible under the EUREKA scheme. Organisations from non-participating countries can also join projects, either through funding from other available programmes or their own sources. The programme therefore lacks a standardised selection mechanism and funding rules, and is instead dependent on the rules laid down by member states. All project participants must apply to the national funding body, where the proposal is verified and evaluated according to relevant national eligibility and funding rules. If all participating organisations are eligible and secure their funding, the project is evaluated centrally by EuroAgri FoodChain experts. If deemed of high quality, the project is given the EUREKA label.

Policy instrument(s)

The types of support available are dependent upon member states, but include non-refundable grants, loans and in-kind contributions, however grants are prevalent. The EuroAgri FoodChain network and national project coordinators may offer assistance with compiling an application or implementation (e.g. with reporting issues).

Support provided by the EuroAgri FoodChain includes:



- introductions to potential partners;
- support with financing, including help to access funding for R&D projects and (in some cases) provision of direct funding via Eureka funding, the Eurostars programme or national programmes;
- promotion of products and technologies resulting from participants' projects through the EuroAgri FoodChain network, in order to raise awareness of innovative products and technologies;
- provision of advisory services on handling cross-border innovation projects;
- access to EuroAgri FoodChain information, which can be helpful in marketing new products and technologies.

Policy challenges

- **Insufficient and/or unavailable funding:** some participating may choose to focus on more innovation-intensive sectors within the framework of the general EUREKA programme.
- **De-synchronised funding process:** different funding opportunities and rules/deadlines in participating countries may result in a prolonged or acceptance process.
- **Implementation challenges:** international collaboration among organisations in different countries may result in difficulties due to language, professional, cultural or organisational barriers.

Actions undertaken to address challenges

Member states are exploring a more synchronised funding process and sustainable, long-term funding opportunities. Eurostars, the most synchronised component of EUREKA, was developed for this purpose, but supports mainly innovative SMEs in high-tech sectors.

Evaluation and outcomes of the scheme

National project coordinators in each member country evaluate all the projects: consortium leaders have to submit Project Progress Reports, as well as Final Impact Reports and Market Impact Reports, as pre-defined, following the end of the project. Furthermore, the EUREKA Secretariat has a dedicated team charged with developing a deeper comparative analysis of all evaluated projects. The most successful projects can be found on the public website, and all projects are available to national project coordinators.

Sources

Eureka (n.d.), Eureka website, Eureka, Brussels, www.eurekanetwork.org.

EuroAgri FoodChain (n.d.), EuroAgri FoodChain website, EuroAgri FoodChain, Lisbon, <http://www.euroagrifoodchain.eu/>.



NKFIH (n.d.), NKFIH website, National Research, Development and Innovation Office, Budapest, <http://nkfi.gov.hu/nemzetkozi-tevekenyseg/nemzetkozi-egyuttmukodes/eureka>.

Background

*This document is part of a repository of examples of **innovation policies that have for explicit aim to contribute to territorial, industrial and social inclusiveness**. The repository is part of an innovation policy toolkit developed for the **Innovation for Inclusive Growth** project and gathers national innovation policy programmes that:*

- A.** Explicitly target **lagging and less innovative regions** (outside of regions that are highly innovative) or by design are more likely to support these lagging / less innovative regions.*
- B.** Explicitly aim to include in innovation activities **individuals and groups that are not usually participating** in those activities and in support of broadening the group of innovators.*
- C.** Explicitly aim to foster innovation activities in non-innovative firms, in particular by targeting **non-innovative sectors and non-innovative Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)**.*

Policies are searchable by inclusiveness type, objective and implementation challenge on: <https://innovationpolicyplatform.org/inclusivetoolkit>