

SHORT SUPPLY CHAIN KNOWLEDGE
AND INNOVATION NETWORK

Consumers and Society

Innovation Workshop

In this report on Consumers and Society

The ICW (14th of March 2019) took place at ACTIA premises in Paris and consisted in:

- Special visits to Good Practice examples
- Thematic discussions, presentations and perspectives.

The objective of this workshop was to discuss about "Consumers and Society" in short food supply chain, exploring some innovative cases in urban areas and the way in which consumers are involved. At the event participated 30 people, involving SKIN partners and invited stakeholders. ACTIA received support from the RMT Alimentation local group, which is part of the French regional node, for the presentations and the revision of the field visits. The day started with field visits, the participants were split up in 3 groups and visited 3 different case studies.





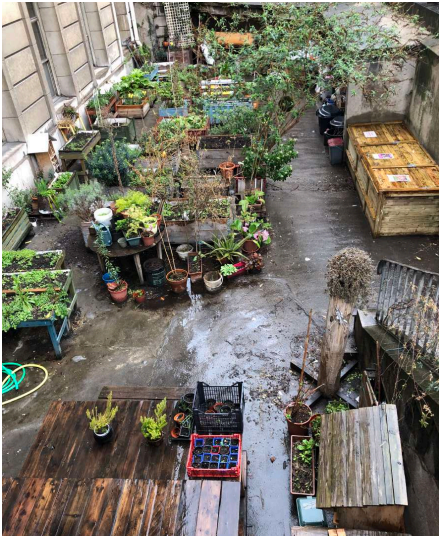
This associative food shop is located in a popular neighbourhood of Paris, gathers **450 members** and has no salaried worker. It has been created in 2013 from an AMAP, from reflections about the way to change scale.

Based on direct relations with small-scale farmers, mostly in organic farming, and on horizontal governance, it's selling fresh products, groceries, cosmetic and cleaning products, with 10% margin, and is open two evenings and two mornings per week.

The visit represented an opportunity to explore and discuss a new model of short food supply chain quite similar than the first one "La Louve" also located in Paris but at a bigger scale (7000 members). This cooperative supermarket has been inspired by Park Slope food coop in New York.

La Coop à Paris (Paris - France)

<https://les400coop.fr/>



Community Garden

Located in a popular neighbourhood of Paris, this community and solidarity garden is animated by municipal agents, and is one of the cases of 'bottom-of-buildings' garden, favouring its accessibility by low-budget consumers.

Also welcoming an AMAP once a week, the garden raises the question of social mixing in short food supply chains, which remains a challenge. The visit was an opportunity to discuss both with municipal agents, the national association "Si T'es Jardin" favouring the development of community gardens in cities, and consumers.

Si T'es Jardin
(Paris – France)

<http://www.afaup.org/si-tes-jardin/>



Purchasing Group

Inspired by the values of AMAPs and functioning with standards of Italians' Solidarity Purchasing Groups, Corto Paris was founded in 2013 to favour consumers' organisation for local purchasing groups of quality products coming from Italy. The association, handled and managed by consumers, is conceived as a cluster both for committed food producers and for consumers willing to create a local purchasing group. Each local group of consumers related to Corto is in charge of order and delivery processing. The visit will deal with problematics of change of scale for short food supply chains as well as of solidarity between different territories. As Corto's will is to provide with one model of purchasing groups to spread, it questions as well the possibility of replication of consumers' involvement in various local contexts and the ability of spreading logics to maintain high quality standards regarding short food supply chains.

CORTO Paris
(Paris – France)

<https://www.corto-paris.org/>



Discussions, presentations and perspectives

These visits were then summarized by participants who attended them. The feedback of the visits was very positive and the summary reports done by participants pointed out the originality and innovation characteristic of the 3 case studies.

La Coop à Paris

- All the cooperative members share the supermarket (joint property) and take decisions all together (1 person = 1 vote)
- Every cooperative member dedicate 3 hours every 4 weeks for the management (various tasks) of the supermarket
- Volunteerism allows low margins and reasonable prices for consumers

Si T'es Jardin

- Innovative contribution for a healthier diet and a closest proximity for citizens with Nature
- The number of these "urban gardens" is increasing a lot
- By the location at the foot of the building, the gardens are visible contributing to their easier appropriation by citizens

CORTO Paris

- Original and innovative concept mixing the concept of AMAP with the concept of supporting peasant agriculture within solidarity purchasing groups in Italy (Sicily)
- Based on the respect of human relationships in the distribution points the concept is keeping a reasonable size avoiding to create a monopoly of SFSCs
- An innovative concept for groups willing to organize joint purchasing in SFSCs with the spirit of promotion of economy and solidarity.

This feedback has been followed by the presentations given by:

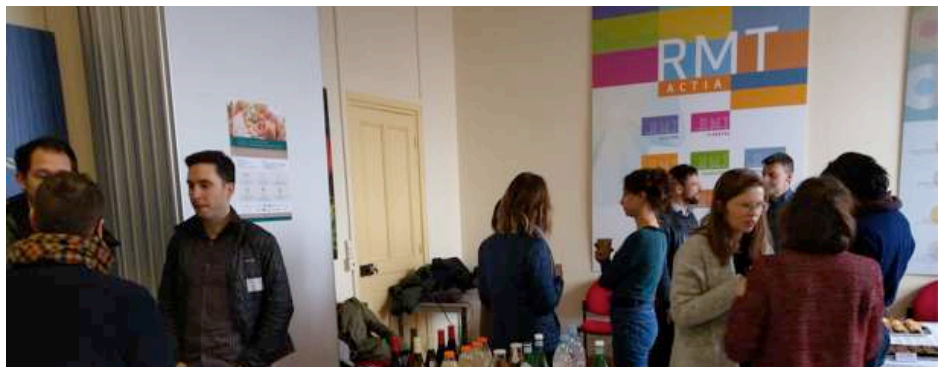
- **Yuna Chiffolleau**, INRA on the topic **“Consumers’ involvement: a new step in the development of short food supply chains”** and “Exploring presumption: Reconfiguring labor through rural-urban food networks”.
- **Anaïs Echchatbi**, INRA on the topic **“Integrating consumers’ commitment into new economic models for local food”**. The presentations’ aim was to open minds and stimulate further discussions.

Lunch Break and Networking

The food offered by ACTIA during the lunch break was prepared by a social enterprise, *Les Cuistots migrants*” (<https://www.lescuistotsmigrateurs.com>), an example of social and professional integration of refugees based in Paris. In the current context of “migration crisis”, this initiative of Migratory Cooks, offers to refugees the chance to provide and share their skills, traditions and know-how that only need to be valued. Indeed the cooks are therefore hired on permanent or fixed-term contracts, in this way they restore their trust and dignity and allow them to make new life projects.

Afterwards, the participants were split in groups to focus on different topics and then the outcomes.

The findings can be found in the following position paper were shared in open discussion.



Brainstorming on "Consumers and Society in SFSCs"

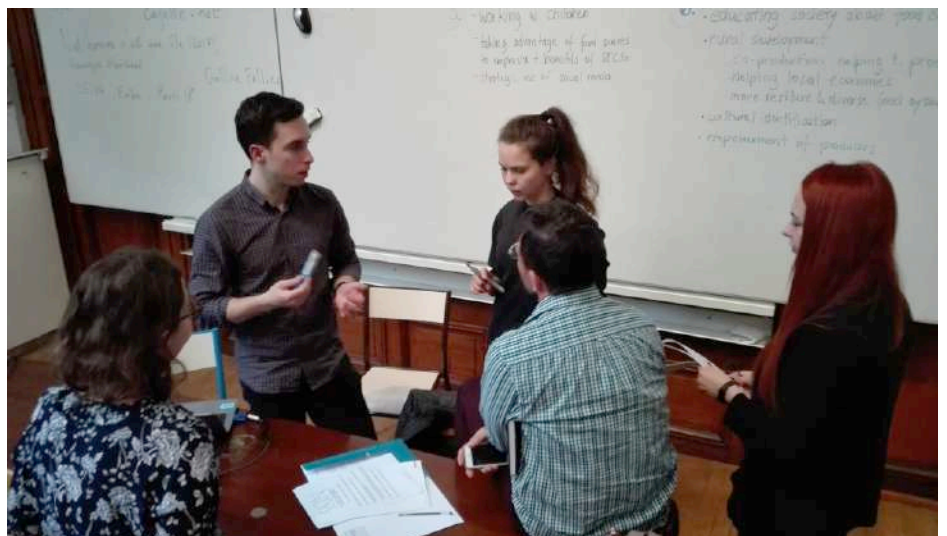
Introduction

The point of view of consumer can vary and differ from one Country to another Country. In the context of this workshop, it was important to point out these variations between Countries (cultural heritage, habits...) and to see how these differences are influencing trends and behaviors as well as policies, initiatives and case studies existing at National level.

Total, 6 Countries have contributed to this brainstorming study: Austria, Denmark, France, Hungary, Ukraine and Spain.

Contributors: Antoine Kieffer and Christophe Cotillon (ACTIA, France), Yuna Chiffolleau (INRA, France), Nadiya Boyko, Iryna Mironyuk, Tayissiya Simochko (UzhNU, Ukraine), Gusztáv Nemes (Hungarian Academy of Science, Hungary), Susana Rivera (Cooperativas Agro-alimentarias de España, Spain), Christian Jochum (Agrarprojectverein, Austria), Gustaf Bock (L&F, Denmark), and all the participants of the workshop.

Here is the position from different countries of the members of the Working Group on "Consumers and Society" and other participants in the workshop.



How can SFSCs adapt to new society and consumer trends?

In **Ukraine** new trends of consuming fresh and local from small producers has shifted previous mainstream from buying in big supermarkets. Thus, new strategies of engagement consumers (mostly with the using ICT tools) are rising. Moreover, that social 'dividing' on two camps rise open question for future business: dual collaboration (supermarkets realize products from the local farmers) can be stopped, in case in society will choose to have products only from the local suppliers. In that case, supermarkets that sale 'not farming products' can be eliminated. But, the question about infrastructure (logistic) will be crucial.

- Mainstream in getting up-to-date products and competitive between the companies. In the recent decades the brand was meaning the quality. Later on, the products from famous trends became as 'over payment for brand', as for the product. Lately, a lot of companies has appeared that propose almost the same product, but under/without brand for lowest rate. And society starts to look more on quality of the products rather on the brand. Hence now the question how to engage and keep consumers is still open (with the respect on visualization, telling stories, face-to-face interaction).
- People start to take into account the linkage between food and health. And the last is mean that the food 'grew' or prepared by own mean that it is more health. Hence the shifting from grocery shopping in the supermarkets is shifting to local stores/visiting farms/online consumption (also from local producers). In **Spain**, Short food supply chain, in addition to producers being able to find in them an alternative to the model defined by large retailers, offers consumers the opportunity to opt for consumption according to their values and interests (proximity, rural development, seasonal products, contact with the place of production, etc.). For **Austria**, SFSC's are a simple answer in a world of an abundant offer of food from everywhere and all the year round where more and more consumers are overburdened to do the right choice. SFSC's seem to offer short, transparent and simple answers in a confusing world of information, facts & figures, faked and manipulated news.
- If SFSC's really shall meet these expectations, there origin has to be easily traceable, the story behind simply understandable, and the purchase conveniently to do. This means investments in ICT based tools for the traceability, quality assurance schemes to guarantee the provenance, emotionally enforced formats to experience the manufacturing of food from SFSC and convenient alternatives to get access to SFSC's by combining and cooperating with existing distribution channels.

Finally, in **France**, short food chains are doing quite well these days, but practitioners have to keep in mind that this evolution and development has been possible mainly thanks to a switch/change in terms of mentality of a part of French consumers. And this change has been triggered by many factors such as lack of trust towards traditional production, processing and long chains after sanitary scandals and the will to give a meaning to their consumption. So while it is important to make use of the new tools that exist thanks to the evolution of technology (internet, apps, etc...), it is always crucial to remember that what consumers are looking for is trust, quality and authenticity.

A national survey conducted with INRA in 2013 also detailed that i) **90% of short chains' customers associate short food chains with local food**, ii) **50% of these customers think that short chains procure organic food**. These results stress specific representations of French consumers regarding these chains, and the risk is to deceive them or even to break their trust if the short chains do not fit these representations. More largely, listening to consumers, including non-customers, and understanding exactly what is missing for them to get (more) access to SFSCs is vital. Working without consumers when developing novel ideas can only lead to failure.

- It remains also important to understand that there are several different categories of consumers who do not have the same expectations in terms of short food chains, that claims to maintain the diversity of these chains (more than 20 different types in France) on one hand, to listen to each and every one of them to choose a target on the other hand.



How can SFSCs be resilient and adapt to the evolution of the population?

In **Ukraine**, there is a change in the society from mass consumption to personalized choice. The TV, mostly is replaced by laptops/smartphones and etc., that, obviously, are more individual. Moreover, people are choosing what to look, what is interesting and what to buy, accordingly. Even there are advertisements in the Internet, consumer can 'close it'. Also, with using 'searching line, consumers can find directly what they need. With the time the choice will be more personalized, if to consider created companies with that aim (for example Yusp machine learning company for empowered costumers in the personalization of the choice).

The fast digitation, AI, robotics etc can replace human, and, accordingly will change the society at all – occupations, particularly. It is can raise the question about consumers possibilities to "buy" something/ reconnect society/ eliminate trust etc.

Food waste and bio-circular economy – raising question in the society about waste is unconsciously lead to develop innovation in bio-circular domain.

(a) Ageing society is a very crucial point due to its increasing. Due to the fact that people in the 'age' are having not the same income, they are not so familiar with the appearing ways of realization of the goods – put them all into vulnerable position of consuming products, particularly from local producers; (b) consideration of social media as a way to promote business, understand consumers and empower them, building trust etc. But here is a question – how to control the info that we get from social media (even consumers feedbacks not always can be 'true' due to compensation). In **France**, five main tendencies can be stressed concerning the evolution of population: the budget dedicated to food resists, the young generations are more sensitive to agroecological issues while the whole population is more and more concerned by health, informed about food diseases, and reassured by knowing the origin of the food; eating-out is important and still increasing; supermarkets are declining while e-commerce is developing. It is an opportunity for SFSCs' actors to propose and revendicate agroecological and healthy value-added raw products and minimal processed products issued from a well-known origin, to build partnerships with restaurants and to develop the use of e-commerce. In **Spain**, the population is aging continuously, leading to a stagnation of consumption volumes so we will have to bet on increasing the value of products. This "negative" circumstance can become positive for local products, as consumers will start to look for products with more added value (sustainable, local, premium varieties, etc.).

Finally, for **Austria** the evolution of the Austrian society shows two diametrical trends:

- On the one hand a growing share of elderly people in a more traditional living setting concerning purchasing, preparing and consuming food. This more homogeneous group is living by trend in more rural areas and will grow further in the up-coming years as the baby boomers (born between 1955 and 1968) are going on pension. They are well educated, wealthy, physically fit and still able to adapt to some (not all) societal trends.
- On the other hand there is a multi-faceted group of younger people, more urban, often with a migration background and with a heterogeneous background of interests, financial power, professional and personal mobility. They are internet nerds, following many trends and fashions but not really steady and reliable. Some small groups are fleeing into old-fashioned habits like knitting, cooking like grandma, making preserves or keeping their own laying hens.
- The challenge will be to meet the needs of the various target groups which means that there is no answer one-fits-for-all.





How can small SFSCs communicate efficiently towards consumers?

In **Ukraine** they are using social media for all stages of products realization and consumers engagement. It is a positive point, because the companies are always in the process of upgrading innovative engagement strategies, knows new demands from consumers and adjust their strategies to needs of the end-users. Consumers, in that case are engage the rest of society in the process. Moreover, consumers feel their importance/a part of the team in the creation something new – their voices are important and hearing. Additionally in that point consumers are also empowered – they can generate ideas; disseminate products (in fact it is free for company marketing).

- **Case study:** Gastro tours to the farms (food, as well drinks). It is not only promote local producers, but development tourism and preserve cultural heritage. For example: http://deinde.com.ua/tours/gastro_zakarpattya/ - within one day, the group are visiting primary producers and secondary manufactures, as well as a castles on territory of the region.

- **Case study:** Creating Show rooms, for example - <https://tuca.com.ua/degustaciya-smak-ukrainskych-karpat/> which includes a tasting room and a shop for products of the NGO 'Carpathian Taste' producers. It includes 21 food producers from four regions of Ukraine - Lviv, Zakarpattia, Chernivtsi and Ivano-Frankivsk. The producers work in the sphere of small and medium-sized businesses and produce food in small quantities, but in a wide range (over 350 certificated products) and traditional Ukrainian technologies. The main objective is to increase the competitiveness of the agrarian sector and its key players in the region in order to stimulate their economic and social development. In addition, this activity improves the positive image of the region. Products of the members are verified according to European standards.

In **Spain**, the **Case study "Agrotiendas"** (agri-businesses) are small stores belonging to cooperatives that offer their own products to the local consumers. Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Catalonia, in order to boost this way of offering cooperative local products to the consumers, is promoting this project called "Agrotiendas". A wide range of activities are proposed: for example, making a portal web for product exchange among cooperatives with the purpose of increasing the catalogue of offered products in their stores; a resources bank for training activities (such as those related to managing the web) and joint differentiation actions. The intention is also taking advantages of the synergies between the Agrotiendas and the local tourism activities, looking for mutual benefits promoting both the cultural richness of the territory and the local products.

For **Austria**, the challenge in general is to **reach the target** groups technically, which is really a challenge in view of the overflow of marketing strategies, advertisement budgets and ICT techniques. Secondly: **the messages have to be reliable and trustworthy**. The strength of SFSC's is the personal contact b2c which in no way can be replaced by technical means.

Of course, communication cannot always and exclusively be personal, but there must always be formats where consumers and producers can meet. To be efficient the wine sector is a good model: Many winemakers invite their clients once a year to an open door day where the customers can taste the new wines, exchange experience with other experts and make a selection. The rest of the year they order by e-mail, online shop or subscription.

Finally for **France**, communication has to be adapted to the needs and will of the practitioner. If the objective is to be successful and strive at a local level, then there is no need to reach for a bigger scale. Contact local actors, local media, make people talk, be present at food markets. The goal is to look for all means to become visible and relevant at a local level, without worrying further.

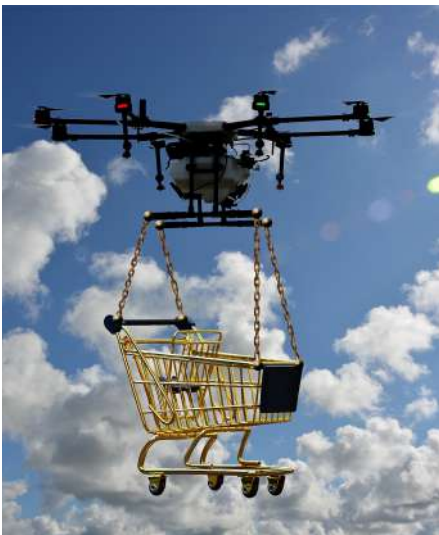
However, if the objective is to be part of something bigger and that will impact consumers at a national level or if the practitioner works in a region where production and consumers are quite far from each other, then one of the solutions is to regroup with other similar structures and mutualize logistics and communication. This is the choice that many French producers have made, also because it lifts a huge weight of their shoulders, and because in some regions like Ile de France, producers work quite far outside of the big cities and it is not possible to rely only on locals to survive.

In each case, SFSCs' actors can take the opportunity of the growing interest of local authorities for local food chains to ask for promotion through public media and structures (tourism offices, local newspaper...).

How can SFSCs use modern or original logistic tools to reach the consumers where they are?

In the case of **Austria**, there is still an ongoing discussion about the role of ICT when bringing together suppliers and buyers. There are unsolved issues of affordable logistics and the way, how local food is coming to the end-user.

The more food consumption turns to out of home the more SFSCs have to match with different logistical requirements and an additional layer between the product and the consumer. To increase the market potential for local food it is crucial to raise the awareness from the consumer side which means that he/she spends time on this issue. As time is limited it is a competition on the share of time people invest in purchasing, preparing and eating food. How can this share of the time budget be increased?



For **Ukraine**, e-commerce is a fast growing and promising sphere, but for it is not directly related to the food products selling. For instance, experts from one of the biggest network Novus said that it is even not reasonable to create online shop in their website, but they prefer using the platform zakaz.ua, which unite few more supermarkets. From that point it is seems, that e-commerce in SFSCs is in more worth position, because here should be taken into account more specific factors, such as:

1. Local food differs from products in the supermarket by packaging and 'days for consumption';
2. Period of delivery with consideration all infrastructure issues;
3. Lacking of human resources that can be engaged in the maintenance e-commerce.

Hence, the using modern logistic tools, especially for primary producers, in direction order-delivering is quite challenging for Ukrainian segment. Nevertheless, if we speak about products like jam, honey, wine it is more perspective to use modern logistic tools. But we should highlight other tendency. Mainstream of social medias, and using them not only as personal pages / communication, but as business promoter is perspective for SFSCs in our region (as well as others). Free of charge popularization / advertisement of own business give the first step for local producers for growing. Direct connect between consumers and producers can set own rules for further collaboration. For example, the encouraged consumer is ready to go directly to the place of products producing. It is have added benefit: local producers do not spend time/finance resources for supplying products/ special packaging and the possibility that the consumer will buy more products is growing, because he/she sees the entire range of products with his/her own eyes. For SFSCs in Ukraine co-called offline tools for reaching consumer, as **festivals, showrooms, tasting tours** are popular and also have huge impact. For example, festivals is the real place where consumer meet quite wide range of local producers; new type of consumers described above are making conscious choice (it is also can be considered as a transformation from LFSCs to SFSCs); community building in the pairs consumer-producers, producers-producers, consumer-consumer.

On **France** side, SFSCs are used to be criticized in relation with their poor optimization of logistics. Nevertheless, producers and intermediaries have made great efforts to improve the transportation of products, and we can observe many innovations in this domain. The most promising ones rely on mutualisation (between producers but also between consumers, ones taking in charge the delivery for others), and reverse logistics (return to farms, after the delivery of the products). If ICT are useful, they cannot solve all the problems, and are all the more useful than they support mutualisation innovations. However, the regulations are not systematically in favor of small-scale logistics and may be adapted. Moreover, there is an opportunity for SFSCs to more use existing logistics structures, as public wholesale markets for instance, interested by local chains, rather than creatina new and less efficient structures.

For **Spain** the context is the following:

- When local producers consider supplying consumers in cities, they still sometimes find it difficult to overcome physical communications, the logistics are still complex and a challenge to face. It is necessary to design marketing formulas that are compatible with the pace of life in the city, which sometimes makes it difficult for potential demand to be translated into real purchases.
- Producers are helped by new technologies, but e-commerce still has a very slow penetration for fresh produce in Spain. Consumers in cities have a wide range of convenience stores at their doorstep that also offer local products. The large retailers are launching campaigns promoting their approach to local producers and have placed zones in their stores with local products. This, not being the most ideal framework, somehow benefits the consumption of local products.
- **Case study:** This is a business model created by the **Cooperatives of the Balearic Islands**, which consists of the creation of a network of “franchisable” shops, both inside and outside the islands, in which you can find all the cooperative agri-food products of these islands, with an image and design appropriate to the identity of the Balearic Islands.

So far 14 cooperatives from Mallorca, Menorca, Ibiza and Formentera have been integrated in the ‘Farmers & Co’ project, but they are developing expansion actions so that other cooperatives from other Spanish territories can join. Farmers & Co has 6,000 members and 600 producers to position more than 500 local products outside the Islands under one umbrella. For this reason, the triangles in the logo represent each of the four islands with the slogan ‘Productes del camp queuneixen’. To date, ‘Farmers’ already has 16 stores – in Mallorca, Menorca and Madrid – and for next year they are planning to open another 10, one of them in Lisbon. The strategy focuses on the quality of the product, the tasting to make it known and the promotion of “experiential tourism” to bring the consumer “everything behind it”. <https://www.farmersandco.es/>

- **Case study:** AGROBOCA is an independent online platform that puts fruit and vegetable producers in direct contact with buyers, individuals and professionals. The savings of intermediation can thus be invested in a sustainable agriculture capable of recovering all the original freshness and flavour, so forgotten, in fruits and vegetables. Agroboca provides producers with tools to create an ecommerce quickly, free of charge and without prior knowledge. By putting sellers and buyers in direct contact, the brokerage margin can be reduced and invested in more quality for the consumer and a more reasonable price for all parties. The platform expands its offer with the sale of organic products, fruit and vegetables, and other categories.

How can society be educated to better understand SFSCs and choose them rather than classic supply chains?

One practical experience from **Austria**: The earlier it is possible to bring young people in contact with the practical side of aspects where their food is coming from (like farm visits, farm holidays) the more sustainable is the influence of such confrontation with the source of food. So, schools play an important role in transmitting messages.

In **Ukraine**, in order to reach the majority of the audience, information must be launched through Internet channels. For example, small producers, in addition to displaying their own products, could periodically publish brief information about the importance of SFSC. This would allow the discussion to begin among the broad circles of the audience. Joint meetings of small producers, not only within the festivals, but in the form of round tables, could start practical discourse. Further publications on such kind of meetings will be rising in the local media. An invitation to such a meeting of academics, business representatives and authorities would give weight to the topic and develop realistic tools for solving problems. Moreover, after such meeting, can be published brief and attractive brochures to be disseminated in schools, universities, medical centres (could be with different emphasis: SFSC link with health, SFSC is tasty, SFSC is economic, environmental and sustainable etc).

An important part of SFSC promotion is a **personal visit to the farms and manufactories**. This can be done through individual trips, group tours. In collaboration with the city authorities, it is possible to initiate excursions for children in a definite tour of places where producers are located.





For **Spain**, Public policies must play a decisive role in promoting marketing through short food supply chains. They are becoming more and important:

- Policies aimed at promoting consumption and **raising consumer awareness**. To make known the existing offer of high-quality products, also informing about the economic, social and environmental values that go hand in hand in favor of sustainable consumption.
- Policies that promote marketing through these channels, so that producers can be strengthened in logistics, facilitating the collection and distribution of local products.
- **Public procurement policies**, with a more direct impact on society. They can play an important role since, in addition to encouraging the consumption of this type of product in public buildings such as hospitals, it will also be encouraged in schools, which will allow products coming from these forms of marketing and their link with local reality to be known from childhood.
- **Case study: Valencian Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives** has been set collaboration agreements with catering schools since 2013 to carry out promotional actions on local products and to include these in the students' curriculum. In the frame of these agreements, the students (future cooks, businessmen or workers with decision level in tourism and / or catering companies) have the opportunity of visiting cooperatives in which the local products have been presented by the technicians of the cooperatives and tasted. Besides, Valencian Federation of Cooperatives has prepared educational material on several local products (olive oil, rice, fruit and vegetables). In this way, a very narrow contact between cooperative local producer and future cooks is produced boosting the knowledge of the local products to be included in local recipes. Another interesting key point is that catering schools usually have restaurant open to the public in which local cooperative products are used in their recipes.

In **France**, there are several ways of educating the population towards SFSCs at different stages of the life. It is important to educate children, as usually they bring what they learn at school home and educate their parents. So sensitizing children with specific fun and didactic activities in relationship with SFSCs. As the new Agricultural Law (2018) ask for at least 50% of "sustainable products" (organic, with a quality sign and/or local products) in public canteens in 2022, encourage canteens to use local food, and explain it to kids.

It is important to teach the students specializing in fields in relation with SFSCs, all the specificities, practices and business models that are specific to those supply chains. Nowadays SFSCs are barely mentioned in agronomical superior education: training sessions have to be developed for people wanting to become farmer, artisans, social workers, as well as officer in local authorities. The experimentation of cross training programs between these cursus appeared to be very efficient.

Adults can be educated through **governmental advertisement on tv and apps** in the internet.

Consumers need to get more **robust data** about the contribution of SFSCs vs. long chains to sustainable food systems and living territories, in order to make enlightened choices; That calls to develop research on this subject, as well as a better diffusion of the results.



How can consumers take the power and participate in the creation of SFSCs suiting their needs as well as producer's needs (CSAs, consumer owned supermarkets)?

In France, there are several ways for consumers to take the power and participate in SFSCs. Here are a few French examples and case studies:

La **"Coop à Paris"**: this associative food shop is located in a popular neighborhood of Paris, gathers 450 members and has no salaried worker. It has been created in 2013 from an AMAP, from reflections about the way to change scale. Based on direct relations with small-scale farmers, mostly in organic farming, both local and extra-local (ex. Italian products), and on horizontal governance, it's selling fresh products, groceries, cosmetic and cleaning products, with 10% margin, and is open two evenings and two mornings per week. They assume a human-sized model of short food supply chains, different from La Louve, bigger cooperative supermarket inspired by Park Slope food coop in New York. They advise 10 groups in order to develop the same model in the region of Paris, and pre-figure a network of small-scale consumer cooperatives.

"Community garden": located in a popular neighborhood of Paris, this community and solidarity garden is animated by municipal agents, and is one of the cases of 'bottom-of-buildings' garden, favoring its accessibility by low-budget consumers. Also welcoming an AMAP once a week, the garden raises the question of social mixing in short food supply chains, which remains a challenge. They are advised by the national association "Si T'es Jardin", favoring the development of community gardens in cities.



Students' AMAP: this student association for the preservation of peasant agriculture was founded by a group of higher education students willing to combine their student life with a concern for food, social solidarity and governance. The AMAP provides with more than 200 vegetables basket each semester and is built on long-term relationships with a local farm distributing two students' AMAP within Paris. The association relies entirely on self-governance. The functioning of the deliveries is based on students' participation, through both volunteering of the beneficiaries of the AMAP and the implication of members of the association. This example provides with insights on deep implication of consumers in SFSCs, and helps to understand advantages and brakes of consumers' involvement.

Purchasing group: Inspired by the values of AMAPs and functioning with standards of Italians' Solidarity Purchasing Groups, the case of Corto Paris was founded in 2013 to favor consumers' organization for local purchasing groups of quality products coming from Italy. The association, handled and managed by consumers, is conceived as a cluster both for committed food producers and for consumers willing to create a local purchasing group. Each local group of consumers related to Corto is in charge of order and delivery processing. This case highlights the most used trajectory of change of scale for short food supply chains in France (spreading of human-sized structures vs. size increasing) and proves that SFSCs are not 'defensive localism' but also promotes solidarity between different territories. As Corto's will is to provide with one model of purchasing groups to spread, it questions as well the possibility of replication of consumers' involvement in various local contexts and the ability of spreading logics to maintain high quality standards regarding short food supply chains.

For **Ukraine**, we can take the example of the **Case study: Green tourism** – <http://green.vsitury.com.ua/> – living in the private local places is not only to empower consumers, but also make them more conscious and responsible.

How can SFSCs take some of the burden from small producers?

In **Hungary** the biggest obstacle in the way of the growth of the small production/SFCS sector is the lack of supply of good quality local products. Producers are few and they mostly sell their products through direct selling instead of SFSCs or any kind of intermediary, since they normally go for the highest possible price they can get for their product. Normally they have little or no marketing problems (especially regarding fresh products) however, they cannot grow for the following reasons:

- They are already overworked, they do too many different things at the same time (agricultural production, processing, design, marketing, logistics, learning, book keeping, catering, etc.).
- They normally do not have help/workers/replacement due to labor shortage, lack of skills, of laborers, etc.

The questions are on what ways could SFSCs take some of the burden (different activities in marketing, logistics, design, skills development, etc.) off the producers, making worthwhile to accept a lower price for their product? What kind of problems can emerge (e.g. losing part of the control on sales, weakening producer-consumer relations, etc.) and: How can they be solved?



In **France**, association between producers, to deal with a collective shop, to exchange products to get a larger range, or to process raw material in a collective structure, proved to be an efficient way to decrease the workload as well as the stress due to the multiple tasks required by a SFSC. Of course, producers should be able to collaborate and deal with eventual conflicts. Organisms of agricultural or rural development are thus often useful in the life of these groups, even if their task remains little considered.

Another way to alleviate the burden is to **collaborate with an intermediary**, who take in charge some tasks, for instance logistics. However, the risk is to weaken the link producer-consumer, and to get an unfair distribution of the value (too high margin regarding the service). Producers and consumers have thus to be cautious but examples show that win-win partnerships are possible (see, for instance, Kelbongoo).

Consumers, as well as local authorities, may also take a role: in AMAP and purchasing groups, some consumers take a key role in distribution and communication; in consumer shops or supermarkets, they go further. However, they have to be trained as distribution is a complex job and may present sanitary risks. On their side, some local authorities help the distribution, at least to food catering or through public wholesale markets.



How can SFSCs have a social impact?

In **Spain**, short food supply chain can offer attractive alternatives for entrepreneurship and for the fixation of population, avoiding or reducing the depopulation of rural areas. They can also be favorable for the involvement of young people and women in this field. The link with the local can strengthen the sense of community of the people, not only through the production of farmers but also by bringing consumers to these areas. They make possible a direct encounter between producers and consumers. In **France**, one of the problems with Supermarkets is that they have completely broken social links between consumers and producers. SFSCs are the best opportunity to rebuilt that link and bring some life and social interaction, especially for the elderly. People who get their food from producers can exchange, talk and interact with the farmers as well as with other consumers.

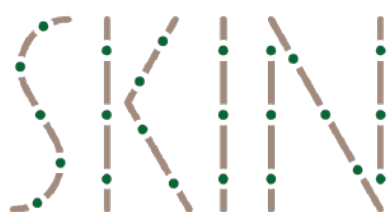
And in some villages that do not have an open-air market, it can really bring life and joy for lonely people (this is one of the feedbacks from "La Ruche Qui DitOui", French structure involved in SFSCs logistics, and prompts the emergence of mobile businesses in rural areas). There are also concrete cases, like "Jardins de Cocagne" in France, where people who are in a difficult social situation can benefit from SFSCs. In "Jardins de Cocagne", people who are trying to be reinserted in the society after a difficult stage in their life, get trainings and produce vegetables for customers every week. They are also paid of course. AMAP (CSAs) are the prime example of social support for producers. Consumers make the choice to pay the producers in advance, whatever their yield, and thus bring them financial stability.

More largely, a synthesis of social impacts of SFSCs has been made by the members of the RMT Alimentation locale (National thematic network on Local food) in 2018. Beyond making producer and consumer closer, favoring social links and solidarity, as well as pride and dignity, SFSCs have been redeveloping technical exchanges between farmers, which encourage ecological and economic performances. Nevertheless, the stress due to multiple tasks or consumers' pressure has also to be considered as a potential negative social impact. On the other hand, INRA's works, especially, highlighted the role of SFSCs in learning processes as well as in the implementation of food democracy, which both favor the transition of behaviors (agricultural practices, food behaviors) towards more sustainability.



Conclusions

Several types of SFSCs involving consumers can be identified in Europe, for example CSAs (Community-Supported Agriculture), on-farm sales, off-farm schemes (farmers markets, delivery schemes), collective sales in particular towards public institutions, being mostly local / proximity sales and in some cases distance sales. Such type of food chain has specific social impacts, economic impacts at regional and farm level as well as environmental impacts translating themselves into a clear interest of consumers. SFSCs are present throughout EU, although there are some differences in the different MS in terms of dominating types of SFSCs. **Social values** (quality products to consumers and direct contact with the producer) are the values usually highlighted by SFSCs before environmental or economic values. Case studies pointed out in consulted MS are addressing to all categories of consumers including low income populations even if sometimes social mixing can meet difficulties. **The main challenge of SFSCs is insuring good revenue to farmers and producers while offering good quality products to all categories of consumers.** Some good case studies are responding well to this challenge in some MS. SFSCs are adapting to the evolution of population and use different adapted and efficient ways of communication depending on the Country and the targeted group of consumers.



SHORT SUPPLY CHAIN KNOWLEDGE
AND INNOVATION NETWORK

Consumer and Society

Innovation Workshop



The SKIN Workshop about "Consumer and Society" was organised by ACTIA, with the strong collaboration of Agrar.Projekt.Verein, SPANISH CO-OPS and all project partners

