SMARTCHAIN

SMART SOLUTIONS IN SHORT FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS

D8.2 Project website is established

Work Package 8

UHOH

Document Identification

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Executive Summary

This document constitutes the deliverable "D8.2 Project website is established" in the context of Task 8.2 "Development of project identity for SMARTCHAIN and project website" (M1-M4) and has been compiled, reviewed and edited by partner UHOH.

The deliverable aimed to describe the structure and the most important functionalities, tools and features of the SMARTCHAIN website (www.smartchain-h2020.eu/) to ensure the highest extent of accessibility of all type of relevant stakeholders (e.g. farmers, short food supply chain entrepreneurs, food industry, consumers, associations, NGOs, policy makers and general public).

AGENSO (Agricultural and Environmental Solutions, www.agenso.gr/), as a subcontractor, has designed the project website under the guidance of UHOH and the help of COPA and EUFIC to communicate, inform, create dialogue and promote use of the project results among the target audiences.

The project website brings together the latest news, publications, events, links to external resources and social media (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn and Research Gate), as well as, the near future, an interactive blog, podcasts and a YouTube channel. The online platform will establish links to other relevant EU H2020 projects, the European Food Information Council (EUFIC) and Copa-Cogeca (COPA) resources and external resources on sustainable food supply chains.

The SMARTCHAIN website includes an additional internal platform (partner-restricted area, intranet) to share preliminary results and internal documents amongst project partners, the Advisory Board and the European Commission Officers. The project's website is administrated by University of Hohenheim (UHOH) with the support of EUFIC and COPA and updated with the help of all participating partners.

Also related to the corporate identity of SMARTCHAIN, this deliverable includes the first project leaflet with general information about the project (i.e., concept, structure, objectives, workflow, consortium, short food supply chain case studies, joint stakeholder platform, innovation hubs etc.). The leaflet was created by EUFIC in close collaboration with UHOH and COPA.

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1.   Introduction

SMARTCHAIN is an ambitious, 3 year project with 43 partners from 11 European countries including key stakeholders from the domain of short food supply chain as actors in the project. The project is using an interactive innovation model where all actors involved in the project i.e., practitioners directly involved in running short food supply chains, representatives of organisations concerned with supporting short food supply chains and a number of researchers with different expertise who specialise in short food supply chains are working together to make best use of scientific and practical knowledge for the co-creation and diffusion of novel solutions ready to solve practical problems.

In particular, 18 actual cases of widespread short food supply chains with remarkable social, economic and ecological impacts on rural, peri-urban and urban communities are evaluated in terms of innovation potential, consumer perspectives towards short food supply chains and overall sustainability (environmental, economic and social). SMARTCHAIN has selected an illustrative database of existing short food supply chains in Europe, whether this is amongst producers, or between producers and consumers, or between producers, consumers and local institutions.

The selected case studies of short food supply chains encompass agri-food products that are traditionally considered part of a balanced diet with strong links to EU markets in terms of production, consumption, distribution and their impacts on local communities. Various boundaries in the selected cases will be taken into account – from the supply of inputs and primary production to the delivery of products to consumers also considering sustainability in different contexts (environmental, social, economic).

The aim of WP8 is to maximise the impact of the project's results through effective knowledge exchange and communication with a wide range of relevant audiences. This WP developed a dissemination strategy to reach all stakeholders of the agri-food sector. Important stakeholders identified are farmers, consumers and general public, agri-food industry and research, which are equally represented in the consortium by COPA, EUFIC, FOOD DRINK EUROPE and UHOH. Each partner brings in his specific expertise in reaching the respective stakeholder group.

WP8 specific objectives are:

• Ensure that the information about the project's objectives, approaches and results is effectively disseminated to (1) general audience/consumers, (2) agri-food supply chain practitioners, (3) policy makers, and (4) researchers/scientists by finalising a Communication and Dissemination Plan;

• Ensure project participants are able to contribute effectively to achieving project objectives and maximise impact, e.g. through media trainings;

• Give the project a corporate identity through a common graphic and a dedicated project website;

• Provide impact at the end of the project through face-to-face interactions with key stakeholders, by organising a stakeholder conference mid-term and at the end of the project in Brussels;

• Promote the use of results from the project among specific target groups: general audience/consumers, agri-food supply chain practitioners, policy makers, and researchers/scientists;

• Ensure effective and regular two-way information exchange by engagement with relevant stakeholders.

As it has been previously explained, the aim, therefore of task 8.2 is the establishment of the project website and also the development of project identity for SMARTCHAIN. This report describes the structure and the most important functionalities, tools and features of the SMARTCHAIN website (www.smartchain-h2020.eu/) and SMARTCHAIN leaflet.

2.   Website development process

The SMARTCHAIN website has been designed by AGENSO – Agricultural and Environmental Solutions, (www.agenso.gr/), as a subcontractor, in close collaboration with the project coordinator (University of Hohenheim), communication leader (COPA-COGECA) and EUFIC using WordPress (https://wordpress.com/) and ownCloud (https://owncloud.org/).

Most of the features and sections have been developed to be open for all website visitors, however, an intranet section is only open for project partners (partner-restricted area).

3.   Website layout and content

This section describes all initially planned functionalities, tools and features of the website already implemented. Based on the outputs and insights gained by all WPs, the functionalities will be extended and further developed during the lifetime of the project. Additionally, new features (e.g. an interactive blog, podcasts, YouTube channel) will be also established in the near future. On the top right side of the website several links to **social media** (SMARTCHAIN Twitter https://twitter.com/SmartchainE, LinkedIn and ResearchGate), a **search option** and **project's email address** on the top left side can be found. The initial structure of the SMARTCHAIN website includes the following sections:

- Home
- Project
- Short Food Supply Chains
- Platform
- Partners' Area
- Contact
- News & Events

The **"Home" section** (**Figure 1**) presents a horizontal moving banner with the main topics and stakeholders of the project: short food supply chain, farmer, consumer, local fresh produce and sustainability (**Figure 2**).
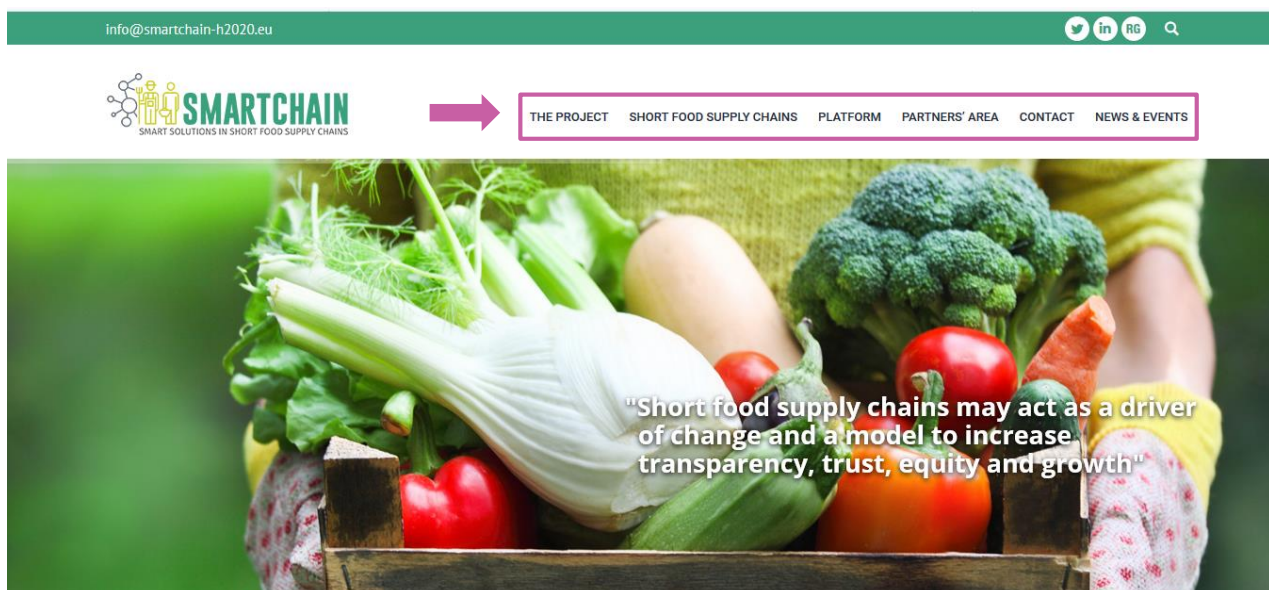

Figure 1. "Home" section

Figure 2. "Home" horizontal moving banner

Under the banner, a brief general information about the project is presented, including project´s ambition and the demand-driven approach followed by SMARTCHAIN involving 9 Innovation Hubs in France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Serbia, Spain and Switzerland (**Figure 3**).

The "Home" section also includes a **newsletter system** (Sign up to stay in touch!). Users can easily subscribe to SMARTCHAIN newsletter by email.
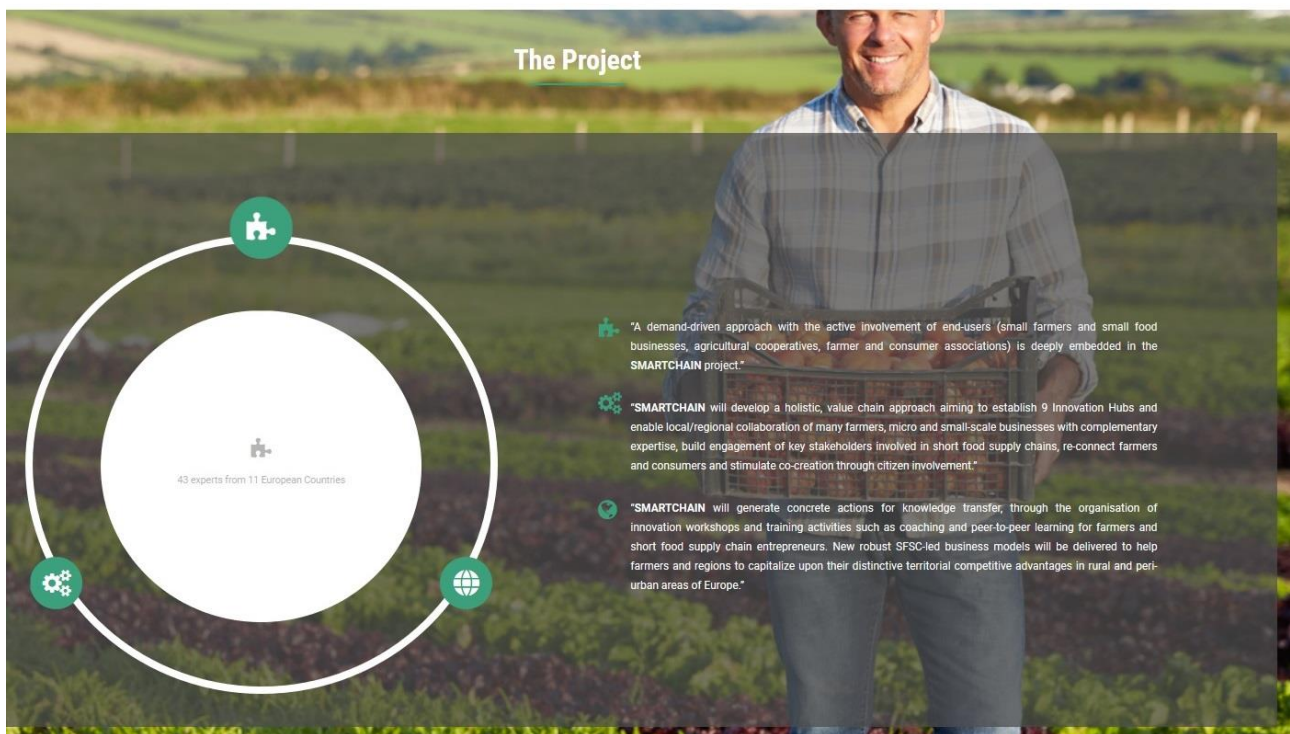
Figure 3. General information in the "Home" section

Scrolling down, two new features can be found:

- an **Interactive map** (**Figure 4**), where the 9 established SMARTCHAIN Innovation and Collaboration Hubs in France (HUB Manager: ACTIA), Germany (UHOH), Greece (UOC), Hungary (KIS), Italy (UNIBO), Netherlands (AMP), Serbia (UOB), Spain (AZTI) and Switzerland (WBF) are indicated. By clicking in each Hub, the detailed information about the Hub manager and the contact information is shown, as it can be seen in **Figure 4** with the example of the SMARTCHAIN Hub in the Netherlands.

- **SMARTCHAIN Consortium** (**Figure 5**): this last feature of the "Home" page presents the logos of all SMARTCHAIN partners. By clicking on any of the logos the website visitor will be forwarded to the corresponding partner´s website. This feature is shown not only on the bottom of the "Home" section, but also in other sections ("Project", "Short Food Supply Chains", "Contact", and "News & Events").

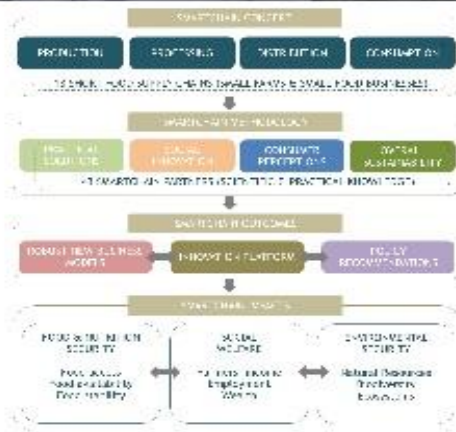**Figure 4.** Interactive map for the 9 Innovation Hubs

Figure 5. SMARTCHAIN Consortium

The **"Project" section** includes four different subsections:

1. **Concept** (**Figure 6**): This subsection presents an overview of SMARTCHAIN, giving detailed information regarding the overall **concept** of the project (also presented schematically), the **SMARTCHAIN methodology** and the **SMARTCHAIN virtual innovation platform**.

2. **Specific Objectives** (**Figure 7**): In this subsection SMARTCHAIN specific objectives (e.g. network, policy recommendations, and business models) are listed.

3. **Work Packages** (**Figure 8**): The different SMARTCHAIN Work Packages are shown in this subsection. By clicking in any WP, a brief summary and the WP leader are shown. Also a schematic representation of the SMARTCHAIN work flow with the interaction between the different WPs is presented.

4. **Partners**: An interactive map has been established to present SMARTCHAIN Consortium (**Figure 4**). This map indicates the countries involved in the project (9 European and 2 Associated countries). By clicking in any of these countries, the corresponding partners are shown. Each partner´s logo links to his own website. As example, in the figure below the SMARTCHAIN partners from the Netherlands are presented.

Figure 6. Concept subsection

"The central objective of SMARTCHAIN is to foster and accelerate the shift towards collaborative short food supply chains and, through specific actions and recommendations, to introduce new robust business models and innovative practical solutions that enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the European agri-food system."

Specific Objectives

Network

Strengthen partnership among stakeholders in and between short food supply chains by creating a network for cooperation, co-creation and innovation (WP1, WP6)

Solutions

Generate innovative and practical solutions to barriers that restrict the scaling up of short food supply chains (WP2)

Framework

Develop a conceptual framework for the measurement of social innovations adapted to different types of short food supply chains (WP3)

Recognition

Understand consumer perceptions to promote greater acceptance of short food supply chains (WP4)

Impacts

Assess the environmental, economic and social impacts of short food supply chains and their role in circular economy (WP5)

Platform

Develop, operate and maintain the interactive innovation platform which will offer a range of services to key stakeholders and end-users on short food supply chains (WP6)

Business models

Support the long-term viability and competitiveness of short food supply chain practitioners by proposing new business models and opportunities for agri-food supply chains (WP7)

Policy Recommendations

Provide policy recommendations based on existing policies and regulatory requirements influencing sustainable food production and consumption (WP7)

Dissemination

Disseminate the project findings at large following an extended exploitation and dissemination plan that will be active throughout the project and beyond as well as to ensure project's sustainability through its link with EU wide initiatives, especially the EIP-AGRI and its Operational Groups (WP8)

Figure 7. Specific objectives

Figure 8. Work packages

The **"Short Food Supply Chains" section** presents relevant information related to this type of food supply chains, including the official definition (**Figure 9**), the Multi-actor approach followed by SMARTCHAIN (**Figure 10**), the 18 selected case studies involved in the project (**Figure 11**), and the establishment of an International Community of short food supply chains with the aim of finding innovative and practical solutions for the current problems in the short food supply chains domain (**Figure 12**). This section also provides several links to further external information concerning these topics.

Definition

The EU's rural development regulation (1305/2013) defines a "short supply chain" as a supply chain involving a limited number of economic operators, committed to cooperation, local economic development, and close geographical and social relations between food producers, processors and consumers.

More information can be accessed at:

Short Food Supply Chains and Local Food Systems in the EU. A State of Play of their Socio-Economic Characteristics. [EU Science Hub]

Short food supply chains and local food systems in the EU [European Parliament Think Tank]

Such a food system is of considerable interest since it responds to a number of needs and opportunities, both of farmers and consumers. The development of (different types) short food supply chains (i.e., direct sales by individuals and/or collective direct sales, partnerships – community supported agriculture) is one of the approaches of the Common Agricultural Policy to improve competitiveness in Europe.

Figure 9. "Short Food Supply Chains": Definition

Multi-actor approach

Multi-actor projects are projects in which end users and multipliers of research results such as farmers and farmers' groups, advisers, enterprises and others, are closely cooperating throughout the whole research project period.

The EU has allocated around one billion euros to fund around 180 multi-actor projects of interest to agriculture, forestry and rural development in the seven years of Horizon 2020 (2014-2020). Over 100 of these projects have already started.

More information can be accessed here.

- Connect with focus group on Innovative Short Food Supply Chain management
  https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/focus-groups/innovative-short-food-supply-chain-management
- Connect with focus group on Reducing food loss on the farm
  https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/focus-groups/reducing-food-loss-farm
- Thematic network on short food supply chains
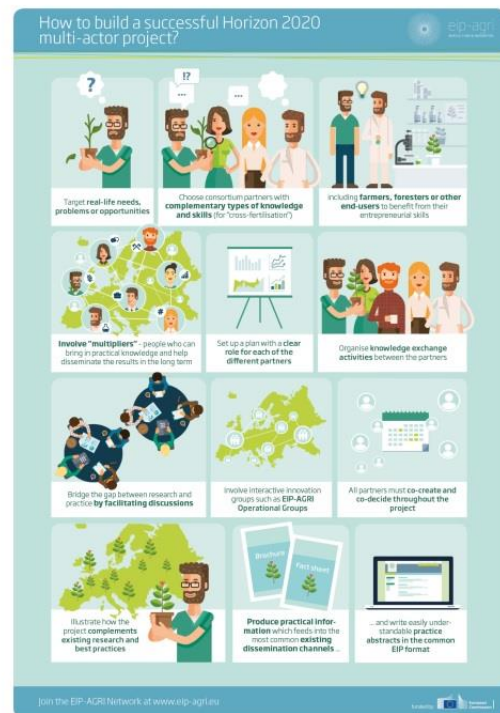 http://www.shortfoodchain.eu/

Figure 10. "Short Food Supply Chains": Multi-actor approach

Case studies

In SMARTCHAIN, 18 case studies of widespread short food supply chains with remarkable social, economic and ecological impacts on rural, peri-urban and urban communities will be evaluated in terms of innovation potential, consumer perspectives towards short food supply chains and overall sustainability (environmental, economic and social). SMARTCHAIN has selected an illustrative database of existing short food supply chains in Europe, whether this is amongst producers, or between producers and consumers, or between producers, consumers and local institutions. The aim is to reflect different types of short food supply chain models, to generate more precise, quantitative data regarding the impact of short food supply chains for a determined area and/or products as well as to capture the degree of geographical diversity across the EU. The case studies encompass agri-food products that are traditionally considered part of a balanced diet with strong links to EU markets in terms of production, consumption, distribution and their impacts on local communities. Various boundaries in the selected cases will be taken into account – from the supply of inputs and primary production to the delivery of products to consumers (e.g. natural resources, farming practices, food production and processing, safety and quality, distribution and storage, food integrity, food waste, market access and price, consumer preferences) also considering sustainability in different contexts (environmental, social, economic).

Figure 11. "Short Food Supply Chains": Case studies

Community

The SMARTCHAIN consortium strongly believes that many issues that block the transition of short food supply chains from a niche to a larger market share could be (at least partially) solved by building an international community of short food supply chains (e.g. to share concerns/experiences/best practices, to discuss, to collaborate together). The connection of the 18 selected case studies will only be the starting point for it.

SMARTCHAIN will work together using its networks to create this international community of short food supply chains that can grow and pollinate on local, regional, national and European level, creating cross sectoral connections between stakeholders and consumers. This community will represent a force of unprecedented size.
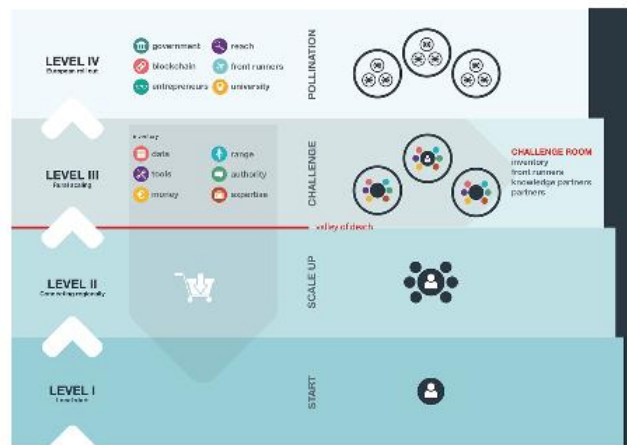
Solutions to Problems

The objectives and results of SMARTCHAIN will unlock the potential for competitiveness and sustainability by stimulating practical innovative solutions to problems in the short food supply chain domain. The innovation deficit in short food supply chains is not due to a lack of knowledge or ideas, but because we do not capitalise on them. SMARTCHAIN partners will identify the main needs or instruments required to implement collaborative short food supply chains, which can increase farm incomes, provide an exhaustive inventory of practical solutions, develop robust new business models and make policy recommendations. SMARTCHAIN will generate concrete actions for knowledge transfer, through the organisation of at least 18 innovation workshops and training activities for farmers and short food supply chain entrepreneurs.

Figure 12. "Short Food Supply Chains": Community & Solutions to Problems

The **"Platform" section** links directly to the **SMARTCHAIN Interactive Platform** (https://www.smartchain-platform.eu/, **Figure 13**). This virtual platform is still under construction and will be designed by IFA (WP6 leader) to favour the interaction and cooperation of all the stakeholders of the short supply chain (farmers, technology providers, SMEs, consultants, researchers, consumers, policy makers...) in the co-creation and innovation processes. The results obtained from WP 2-5 and WP 6 will feed an inventory of available innovations, solutions and recommendations relevant to the needs of the project allocated in the platform. The inventory will allow searches by available categories of solutions, and will provide information on the solutions, as well as on the economic & environmental benefits. Additionally, business & policy recommendations will be available. All project partners will help in translating the content of the platform to different languages and in providing content for the website when required. The platform will be installed in the IFA server, sustained over the project by IFA and will be one output of the project by being accessible over the project period ahead. More detailed information about the virtual platform can be found in D6.1: Design and building of SMARTCHAIN interactive platform.
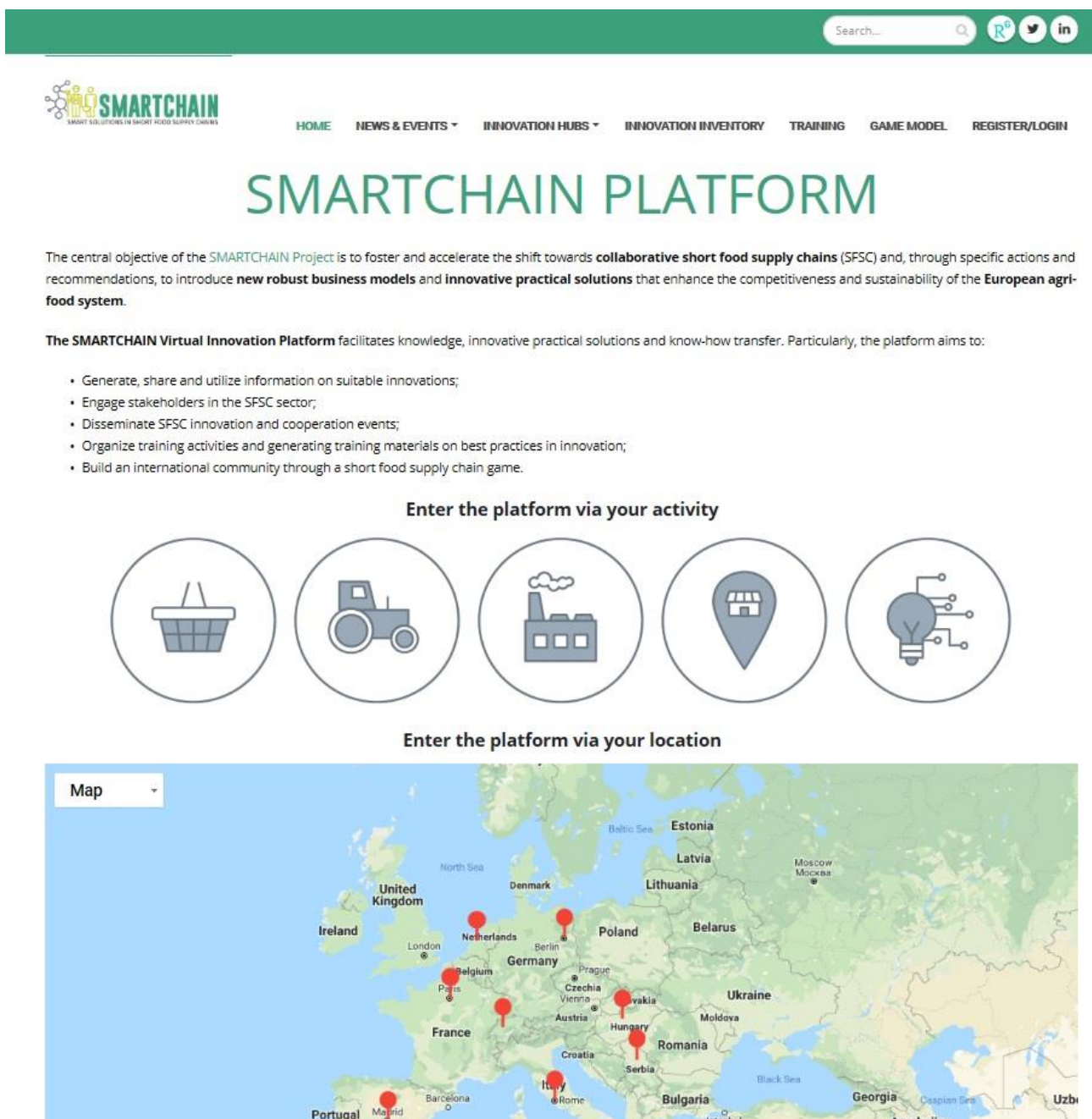

Figure 13. SMARTCHAIN Interactive Platform

As it was previously commented, SMARTCHAIN website includes an internal platform (partner-restricted area, intranet) to share preliminary results and internal documents amongst project partners, the Advisory Board and the European Commission Officers. To access this **"Partners´ Area" section** is necessary to have an authorized Username and a password. The internal structure of this area can be seen in **Figure 14**.

Figure 14. "Partners´Area"

SMARTCHAIN website also includes a **"Contact" section** to give our site visitors a way to get in touch with the Consortium. There are two communication options: (1) a contact form to send a message (**Figure 14**) and (2) through the contact information (e-mail address and phone number) of the SMARTCHAIN Project Coordination (UHOH) and the Dissemination Officer (COPA) (**Figure 15**).
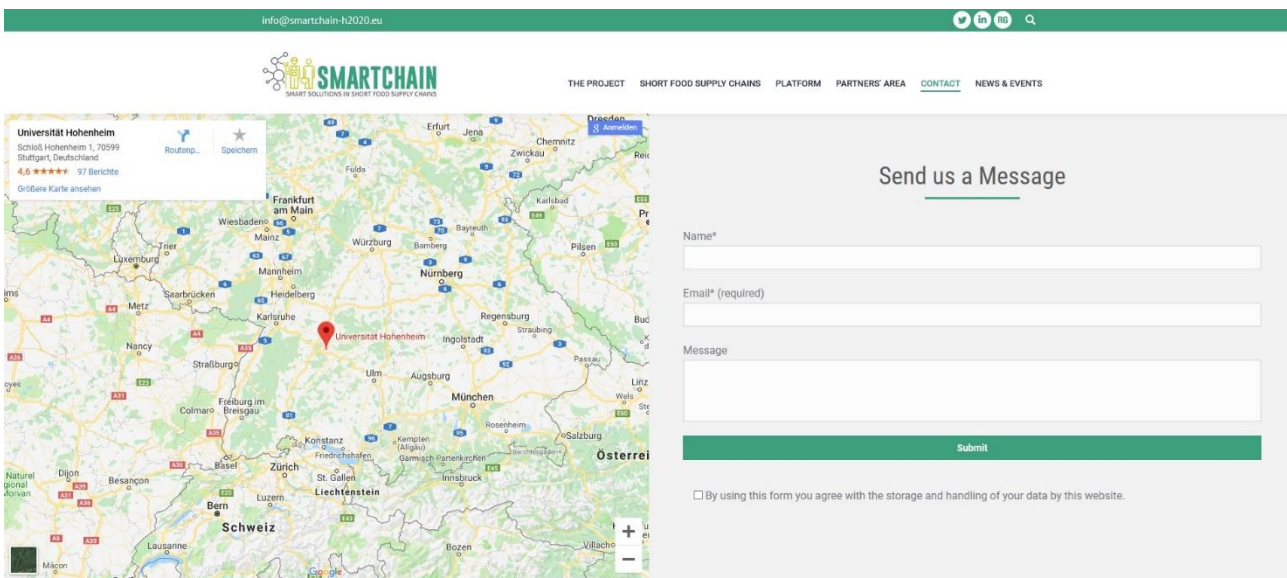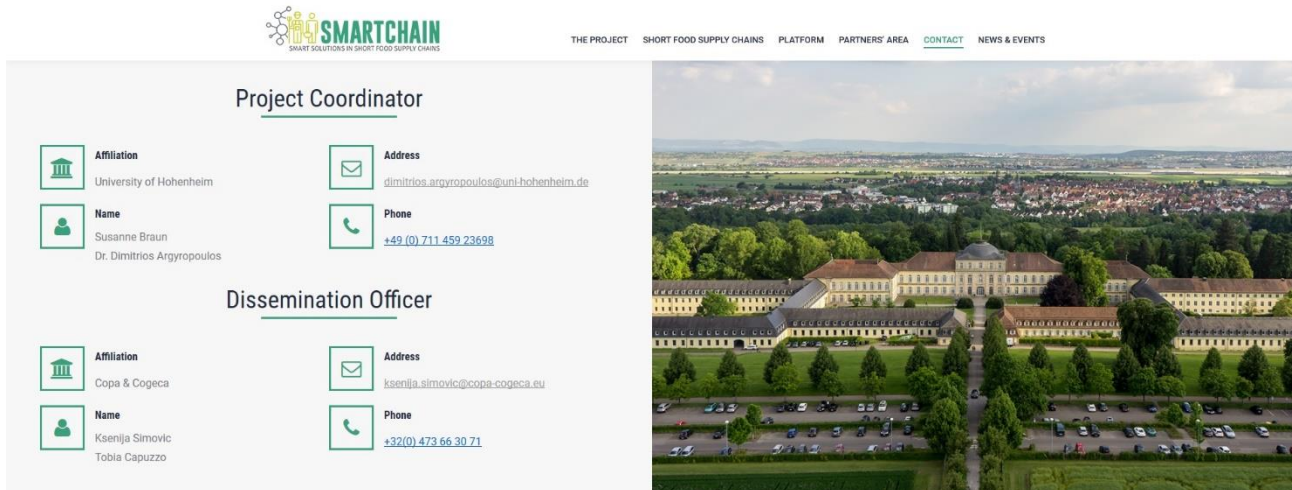
Figure 15. "Contact" section: contact form
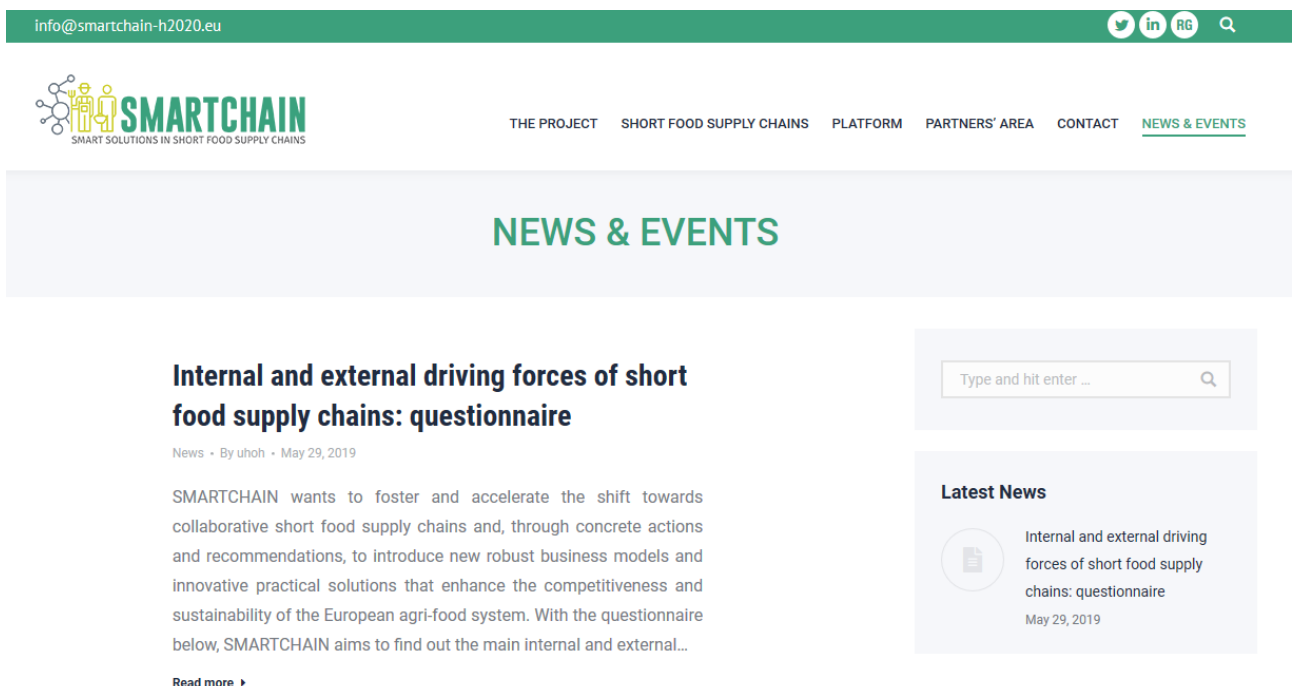
Figure 15. Project Coordinator and Dissemination Officer contact information

The final feature in the website is the **"News & Events" section** (**Figure 16**). This section will be updated regularly with news & information (SMARTCHAIN project, related projects/initiatives, EIP Agri, etc.), and events (workshops, conferences, meetings, etc.) relevant for the SMARTCHAIN target groups (e.g. farmer, short food supply chains practitioners, food industry, consumer, etc.).

Figure 16. "News & Events" section

4. SMARTCHAIN leaflet

As a communication material, and following SMARTCHAIN corporate identity, a leaflet with the general information regarding the project has been developed by partner EUFIC in close collaboration with COPA (WP 8 leader) and UHOH (Coordinator). The leaflet, as it can be seen in **Figure 17** and **18**, shows an overview of the project including the concept, main objectives, SMARTCHAIN Consortium (with all partners´ logos) and key facts. Also the SMARTCHAIN Community with its 18 short food supply chains and the 9 Innovation Hubs are presented. Finally, a brief description of the future SMARTCHAIN Joint Stakeholder Platform is included as well.

Figure 17. SMARTCHAIN leaflet cover

Partners

Short food supply chains, which involve very few intermediaries, represent and alternative to conventional longer food chains where small farmers or cooperatives often have little bargaining power and the people cannot trace the food to a known producer or local area. Advantages of short supply routes include reduction of carbon footprint, access to locally produced food of known origin, and sustain small farms and business.

Concept

SMARTCHAIN will stimulate demand-driven innovation in short food supply chains to improve competitiveness and foster rural development using a multi-actor approach. This method puts into practice the "interactive innovation model" where all actors involved in the project are working together to make best use of scientific and practical knowledge for the co-creation and diffusion of novel solutions ready to solve practical problems. SMARTCHAIN – Building more resilient and efficient short food chains in Europe

Community

The SMARTCHAIN consortium strongly believes that many issues blocking the transition of short food supply chains from a niche to a larger market share could be (at least partially) solved by building an international community of short food supply chains (e.g. to share concerns/ experiences/ best practices, to discuss, to collaborate together).

SMARTCHAIN will use its networks to create this international community of short food supply chains that can grow and pollinate on local, regional, national and European level, creating cross sectoral connections between stakeholders and consumers. This community will represent a force of unprecedented size.

farmer's market · collective farmers' shops · farm shops · community-supported agriculture · solidarity purchase groups

18 short food supply chains

The project will assess the barriers, bottlenecks, success factors, and potentials of innovations along short food supply chains in different countries of Europe. The selected case studies cover all types of short food supply chains i.e. whether this is amongst producers, or between producers and consumers, or between producers, consumers and local institutions and the most commonly consumed food in Europe, (e.g. fruit and vegetables, meat, dairy and bakery products) from both organic and conventional sectors.

Joint Stakeholder Platform (Virtual Innovation Platform)

SMARTCHAIN will create and implement a Joint Stakeholder Platform (Virtual Innovation Platform) that facilitates knowledge, innovative practical solutions and know-how transfer.

- Generate, share and utilize information on suitable innovations;
- Engage stakeholders in the short food supply chain sector;
- Disseminate events related to innovation and cooperation in the short food supply chain domain;
- Organize training activities and generating training materials on best practices in innovation;
- Build an international community of short food supply chains through a gamification study.

9 Innovation Hubs

To strengthen co-creation and collaboration between partners and ensure double-directional flow of information between research and practice within the SMARTCHAIN consortium, 9 Innovation and Collaboration Hubs will be established from the very beginning of the project. The hubs will lead to a permanent association of stakeholders at national level, working on the improvement of short food supply efficiency for the economic growth of the sector for the benefits of European farmers and citizens.

Figure 18. SMARTCHAIN leaflet backside