

The logo for LIAISON features the word "LIAISON" in a bold, green, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a network diagram consisting of several colored nodes (red, purple, orange, yellow, green, blue) connected by thin lines. The background of the entire slide is a light gray network of larger nodes connected by thin lines.

LIAISON

Optimising interactive innovation

Optimising interactive innovation

Insights from multi-actor co-creation activities from across Europe

Andrew Fieldsend and Susanne von Münchhausen



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- *LIAISON D3.1 compiled a database of around 300 candidate projects for 'light-touch' review.*

Key points from the shortlisting process:

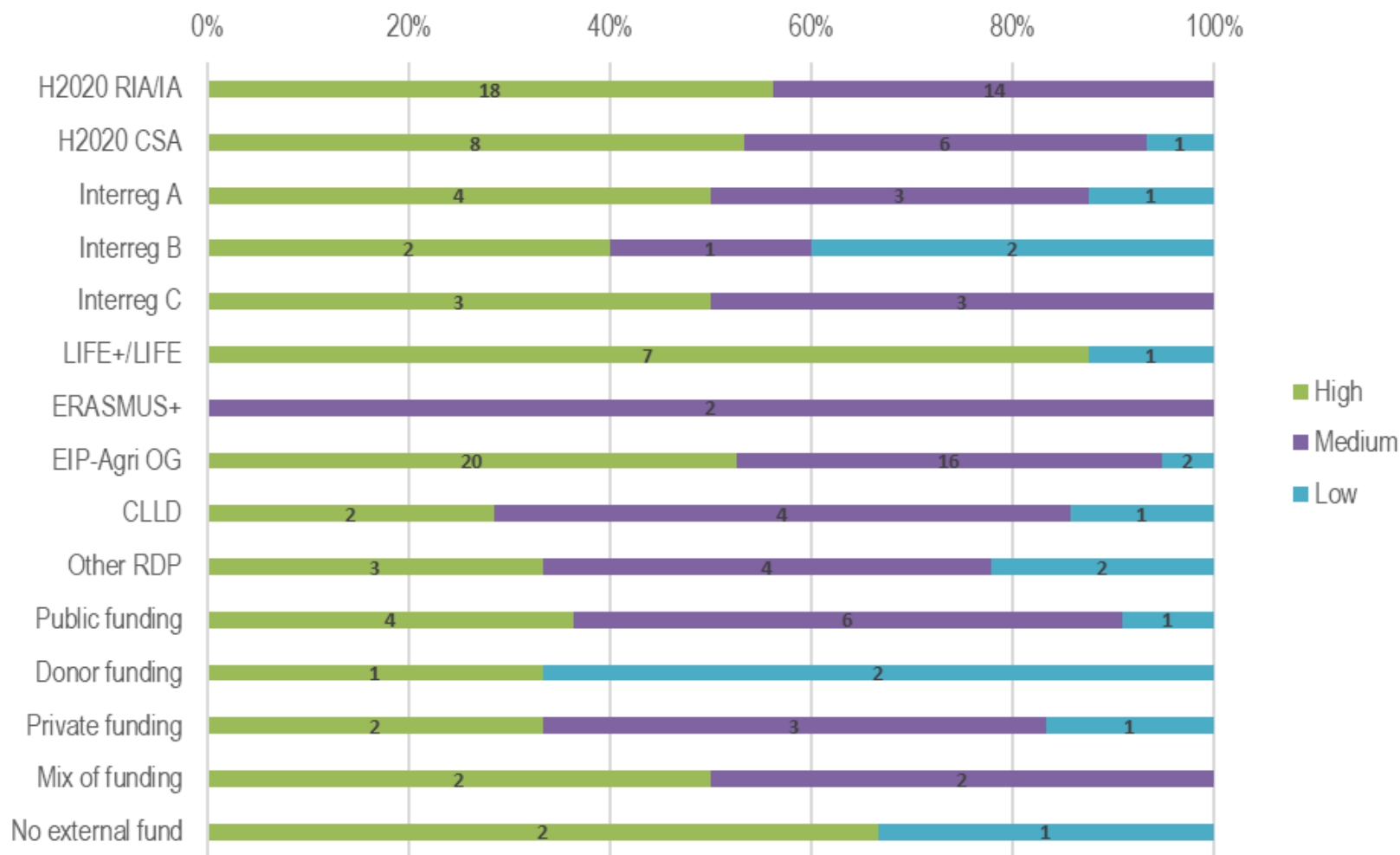
- The focus of the LIAISON research is the **nature of the innovation process** and not the innovations themselves;
- *Interactive innovation project approaches* include other approaches that **rely on knowledge exchange [to] get results implemented in practice**;
- *The multi-actor approach* involves partners with **complementary types of knowledge** – they might not have different 'labels';
- There was no *quota* of **failed projects**. We anticipated that *several types of failure* would become apparent during the 'light-touch' reviews;
- *Five key tests*: direct **relevance of the topic**; demonstration of a **multi-actor partnership**; significant **engagement of practitioners**; clear **intention to innovate**; quality of the **project description**.

Key findings from our research



- A **wide variety** of project types and also non-project approaches (activities) can support multi-actor co-creation of innovation in agriculture, forestry and the agri-food chain;
- These can operate on either a **formal or an informal** basis;
- Each appears to be suited to addressing a **wide variety** of ‘challenges’ e.g. climate change, food safety, socio-economic sustainability;
- There is substantial participation by a **broad range** of different actors (including farmers) in the reviewed projects and partnerships;
- But there is scope to **increase further** farmer participation;
- There were many examples of ‘**failures**’ but what constitutes ‘success’?;
- No notable **gender-related** issues were raised.

Level of co-creation in projects and partnerships (as assessed by the LIAISON interviewers)



Type of project and type of innovation supported

Table 1: Percentage of each type of project and non-project activity supporting a specific type of innovation

Funding source and type	M	N	O	P	S	T
H2020 Research and Innovation Actions and IAs	0.0	2.9	20.6	52.9	0.0	23.5
H2020 Coordination and Support Actions	0.0	6.3	37.5	37.5	0.0	18.8
Interreg	0.0	25.0	15.0	10.0	30.0	20.0
LIFE+ and LIFE	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	75.0	12.5
EIP-Agri Operational Groups	2.7	5.4	10.8	56.8	2.7	21.6
Other ESIF-funded and ERASMUS+	5.0	15.0	15.0	30.0	25.0	10.0
National and/or regional public	9.1	18.2	18.2	27.3	18.2	9.1
Other sources	0.0	6.3	6.3	50.0	31.3	6.3
Non-project activities	2.6	5.3	10.5	21.1	23.7	36.8

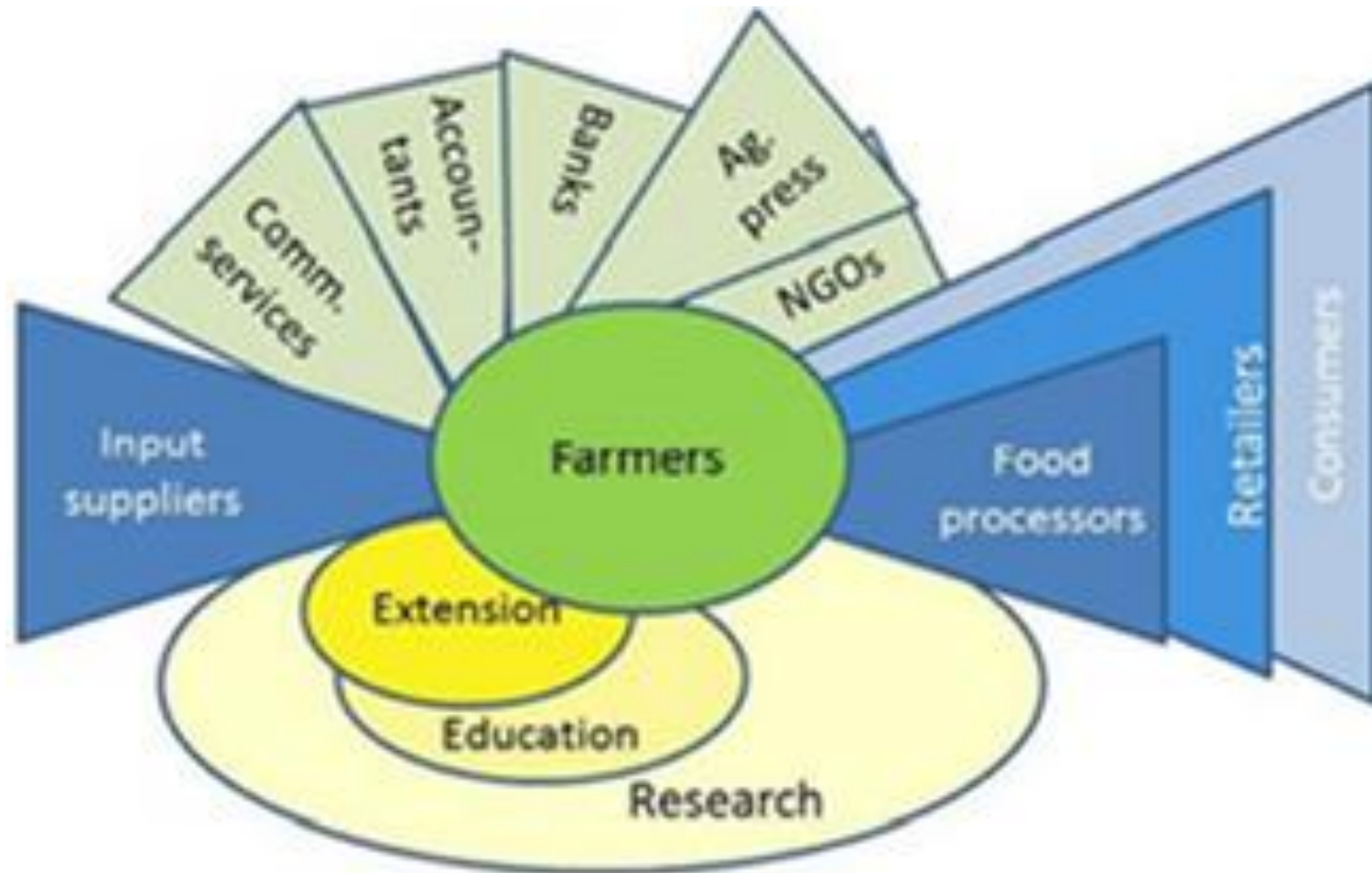
Key: M: marketing; N: organisational; O: other; P: process; S: social; T: product

Projects v. non-project activities



- Task 3.1 reviewed 162 *projects* and 38 *non-project activities*;
- A **project** is a single, non-divisible intervention with a fixed time schedule and dedicated budget (O'Neill, 2012);
- Projects were sometimes **perpetuated** in the form of *networks*, while networks sometimes decided to **implement projects**;
- Networks may fund their activities (including implementing projects) using funding from **various sources**;
- Leader LAGs v. activities funded by Leader;
- Many partners were sometimes **unsure** whether they were reviewing the partnerships/networks or the projects;
- Three projects and one non-project activity reviewed by LIAISON were only in the **planning stage**.

The Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System





- Lamprinopolou *et al.* (2014): *research, direct demand/enterprise, indirect demand* (e.g. public body), *intermediary* (e.g. advisor);
- **Farmer involvement** in consortia is weakest in H2020 RIAs, Interreg, LIFE+ and LIFE projects, and projects funded from other sources;
- In the reviewed projects, farmers work most closely with **researchers**;
- Involvement of **food supply chain actors** (B, M) is relatively low;
- “*Mainstream agriculture* has established innovation pathways” (LIAISON MS3);
- Motivating *private businesses* to take part [in projects] is a challenge;
- Involvement of **indirect demand actors** (G, N) low in e.g. OGs;
- **Intermediary actors** (A, E) strong in EIP-Agri, less strong elsewhere.

Actor participation in projects and partnerships

Table 1: Percentage of each type of project and non-project activity including a specific type of actor in the consortium (or equivalent)

Funding source and type	A	B	E	F	G	M	N	O	R	S	F/S
H2020 Res. and Inn. Actions and IAs	58.8	67.6	67.6	32.4	50.0	29.4	38.2	38.2	100	64.7	79.4
H2020 Coord. and Support Actions	56.3	56.3	62.5	25.0	37.5	31.3	50.0	37.5	87.5	68.8	87.5
Interreg	50.0	40.0	45.0	30.0	75.0	20.0	45.0	30.0	75.0	60.0	70.0
LIFE+ and LIFE	37.5	62.5	62.5	37.5	25.0	0.0	50.0	12.5	87.5	50.0	62.5
EIP-Agri Operational Groups	67.6	45.9	27.0	81.1	32.4	13.5	29.7	24.3	83.8	51.4	91.9
Other ESIF-funded and ERASMUS+	45.0	55.0	45.0	55.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	35.0	65.0	60.0	90.0
National and/or regional public	54.5	45.5	27.3	63.6	63.6	18.2	54.5	0.0	72.7	81.8	90.9
Other sources	37.5	31.3	31.3	68.8	37.5	12.5	18.8	25.0	50.0	25.0	75.0
Non-project activities	42.1	57.9	42.1	44.7	73.7	28.9	34.2	34.2	68.4	44.7	81.6

Key: A: advisor; B: business; E: education; F: individual farmer or forester; G: public body; M: processing or marketing SME; N: NGO; O: processing or marketing producer organisation; R: researcher; S: representative/supporting organisation



- “Where does the project end and the network start?” (LIAISON MS3);
- Many reviewed projects and non-project activities **do not include** farmers or their representatives in the consortium/partnership;
- Farmers may however be directly involved in the action in an **individual capacity** rather than as a consortium partner;
- Many activities include long-term participatory structures **beyond the core consortium** that include farmers and other AKIS actors and facilitate knowledge sharing (rather than knowledge transfer);
- Involvement of external stakeholders should be from the **beginning**;
- A **core group of partners** frequently had the most influence, but the influence of different partners **could vary** during the project.



- **Diversity** of partnership participants a critical success factor;
- **Existing networks** was a central factor for selecting project partners (**relevant skills** and **common interests** were also important factors);
- 153 interviewees said their projects had **connections** to other projects or initiatives;
- Many reviewed projects were **developed from earlier projects** (or had 'sister' projects);
- Almost 40 per cent of the OGs have **no links** to other projects;
- Fewer opportunities for project interlinking in **Eastern Europe**;
- But some consortia are/have been working together in **different types of projects** (e.g. Interreg and OGs);



- Innovation brokers, external sources of information, availability of funding (in place and addressing relevant topics), reporting procedures, monitoring and evaluation, issues beyond agriculture and forestry including IPR protection, transparency, absence of corruption, adequate communications (physical and electronic);
- Willingness to cooperate (with other types of actor), attitudes to sharing information, knowledge and resources within and beyond the consortium or partnership, motivation for participation (financial, ethical etc.), respect for others, trust, open-mindedness, flexibility, satisfaction from participation (social capital);
- “Cultural issues” [which can vary across Europe] (LIAISON MS3).

Regional differences in innovation across Europe





Thank you for your attention!

andrew.fieldsend@aki.naik.hu

susanne.vonmuenchhausen@hnee.de