



# FoodLink

Network for food transition  
in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area  
Strategic Framework

JUNE 2022

**Title**

FoodLink - Network for the Food Transition in the Metropolitan Area of Lisbon. Strategic Framework.

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Commission for Coordination and Regional Development of Lisbon and Tagus Valley | Institute of Social Sciences - University of Lisbon | Lisbon Metropolitan Area

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# INTRODUCTION

Cities and their regions are increasingly engaged in finding quick and efficient responses to today's societal challenges in a multi-crisis context. As centres of demographic concentration, the food supply of cities is an environmental, economic, climatic and energy priority. For this reason, it is essential to rethink food systems, from the global to the local context, which means giving them a strategic, integrated, and collaborative dimension, considering their various components, from production to consumption. Food planning presents itself as an alternative for the territorialisation of a programme that is part of the framework of human, environmental and economic health of the planet and the regions, in line with the Farm to Fork strategy within the European Ecological Pact for the next decade.

Food is thus one of the most important challenges to global sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where the systemic risks and associated profound instability justify its prominence on the urban and socio-territorial political agenda.

As a response to this challenge, international agreements have emerged that call on national, regional, and local governments to establish commitments for the coming decades. In 2015, the Milan Urban Food Pact brought together over two hundred cities that adopted urban food planning strategies involving 450 million inhabitants (MUFPP, 2015) towards healthy, safe, sustainable, and fair food. In 2020, the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration, called on local governments to address the climate emergency through integrated food policies to counter biodiversity loss, hunger, persistent malnutrition and the growing public health crisis.

This presupposes that we can understand food beyond food, food beyond the agro-industrial production sector and extend the impact of food planning from the local level to broader scales, based on increasingly common city and citizen networks, both in Europe and globally, towards the food transition.

Therefore, ensuring responsible and sustainable food implies placing food as a central aspect of the territorial planning and development model.

To respond to these challenges, the Metropolitan Network of Agri-Food Parks (RMPA) has emerged in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (AML), on the initiative of a set of local, regional, and national actors who, between 2019 and 2021, set up as a Working Group that established the scope of action and a strategic vision for the next decade. This Working Group was coordinated by the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon (ICS-ULisboa), at the invitation of the Lisbon and Tagus Valley Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDRLVT), as coordinator of the Living-Lab of the H2020 ROBUST Project - Unlocking rural-urban synergies, in collaboration with the Instituto Superior Técnico.

In 2022, this Network expanded and widened its scope of action, giving rise to the FoodLink - Network for Food Transition in the LMA, which has

so far been joined by thirty entities, with different profiles and representing the various components of the metropolitan food system.

Since the regional strategic context is very favourable to the framework of the FoodLink Action Plan, prepared and approved by its partners for the biennium 2022 - 2023, this document aims to bring together and disseminate the strategic framework and the guiding principles for raising funds by the member entities until 2027.



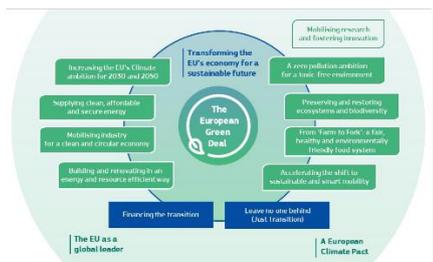
# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FoodLink, by supporting the operationalisation of sustainable, competitive, and resilient territorially based agri-food systems, in a close relationship with regional and local spatial planning, with a positive impact on the creation of urban-rural dynamics of proximity, integrating the planning and management of the food system in its different components, is perfectly aligned with the commitments defined by the various International, National and Regional Strategies for the 2030 horizon.



## WORLD AND EUROPEAN LEVEL

- Sustainable Development Goals - United Nations 2030 Agenda: SDG2, SDG3, SDG12, SDG14 and SDG15
- European Ecological Pact: Pillar 1, Pillar 4, Pillar 5, Pillar 6 and Pillar 9
- 'Farm to Fork' Strategy - a strategy aimed at the sustainability of the food chain, both in its production model and in its marketing and consumption model.
- Biodiversity Strategy 2030 - which aims to put Europe's biodiversity on the road to recovery by 2030, for the benefit of people, climate, and planet
- CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027



## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

- National Programme for Land Planning Policy (PNPOT)
- Innovation Agenda for Agriculture 2030 - Terra Futura
- Metropolitan Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change
- Lisbon Regional Strategy 2030
- Regional Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2030 (RIS3 2030)



# LISBON 2030 REGIONAL STRATEGY

The Lisbon Regional Strategy 2030 is based on a framework of basic values present in the Vision proposed for the Lisbon Region and which define the approach followed by the strategic development matrix, highlighting the Resilience dimension.

Faced with worsening global systemic risks, the metropolitan development process will seek to ensure ecological, social, and economic resilience, increasing the capacity of the various natural, social, economic and infrastructural systems to withstand shocks through the ability to enhance diversity, collective learning capacity, innovation and adaptation, inter-sectoral and inter-institutional cooperation and self-sufficiency, especially in terms of food.

The Lisbon 2030 Regional Strategy considers it essential to counter the process of urbanization expansion and territorial fragmentation by valuing rural and natural spaces and strengthening rural-urban relations, for which the valuation of the metropolitan food basin, boosting local and **proximity production and short food production and consumption chains**, is a priority.

The strategic matrix was structured based on five priority areas for metropolitan development, namely

- Four domains of thematic nature (innovation and competitiveness; environmental and food sustainability and mitigation of natural risks; social cohesion and demographic sustainability; mobility and sustainable connectivity);
- One domain of territorial scope (urban development and transformative change).

This range of areas and their respective sub-areas identify the set of sectoral and territorially based public policies that are essential to promote economic and social dynamics. The development process of the LMA should pay special attention to 11 sub-areas considered vital by regional actors, including the **food system and rural development**.

## Domains and Subdomains



# THE AGRO-FOOD SECTOR AS A STRATEGIC PILLAR FOR THE SMART SPECIALISATION OF THE LISBON METROPOLITAN AREA

The Lisbon Smart Specialization Strategy 2030 (RIS3 2030) defined Agri-Food as one of its domains.

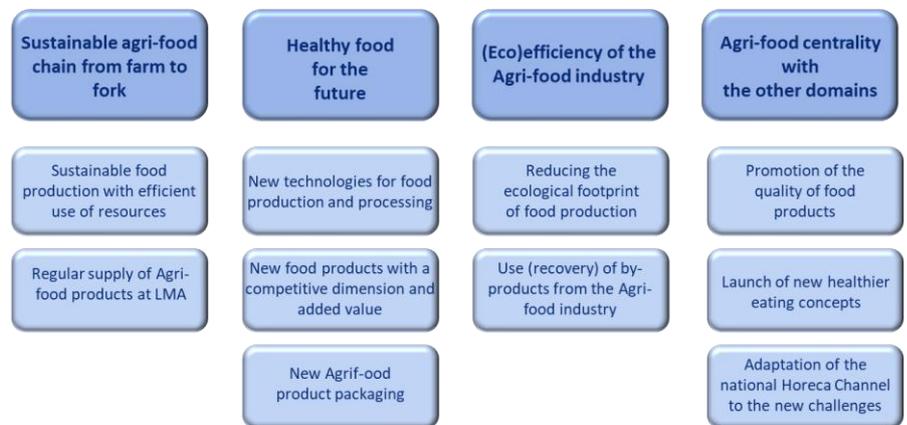
RIS3 2030 considers this domain as a fundamental element in supporting a life with quality, promoting greater sustainability, with a transparent communication strategy in all links of the chain, focusing on the consumer.

Considering the distinguishing capacities of LMA, this strategic decision will make it possible to support the production of safe and healthy food, informed consumer choice, nutritional solutions and innovations and more sustainable production methods.

Focusing on innovative approaches in which integrated and multi-sector collaboration presupposes the combined efforts of all relevant actors in the food chain, including the R&DT sector.

## RIS3 2030

### Strategic Axes and Priorities for Specialisation





In the second decade of the present century the Agricultural Area in the LMA increased by 3.59% (Agricultural Census, INE,2019), to occupy 90,733 hectares (81% of the total area of agricultural holdings).

The use of agricultural land changed, with a decrease of 1.2% in arable land, and 33% in kitchen gardens, offset by increases in the areas of permanent crops (+17%) and permanent pasture (+4%).

Of the main agricultural crops grown in Portugal, 9.2% originate in the LMA, which is particularly noted to produce potatoes and crops for the agri-food industry.

Considering the type of crops, the municipalities of Vila Franca de Xira, Sintra, Palmela, Mafra, Montijo and Alcochete stand out for their significant production of temporary crops, producing mainly cereals for grain, vegetables, and forage crops. Regarding permanent crops, the municipalities of Setúbal, Sesimbra, Palmela, Montijo and Mafra stand out, with most of the agricultural area dedicated to vines, nuts, and fresh fruit.

In 2019, only 1.1% of the agricultural area in the LMA was dedicated to organic farming (922ha), registering a decreasing trend compared to 2009, contrary to what occurs in the country, where the amount dedicated to organic farming doubled in that decade, mostly due to the organic certification of pastures.

12% of the total food produced in Portugal for national consumption comes from the LMA, which implies a very considerable diversity of public, private, individual, and collective, governmental, and non-governmental actors.

However, this territory is not yet planned from the perspective of a sustainable and resilient food system, which was the purpose of the creation of this Network for Food Transition in the LMA - FoodLink.



## **FOOD PLANNING AND SPATIAL PLANNING**

Food systems have been gaining prominence on the international political agenda and on the national agenda as a response to the global context of economic, climate, pandemic and, more recently, geostrategic crisis.

The PNPOT identified territorial challenges and established a set of guidelines, policy measures and guidelines for Land Management Plans aimed at development and territorial cohesion, pointing to natural capital as a differentiating and enhancing element of the territories, which should be more recognized, valued and taken advantage of in the wealth production chains and the promotion of well-being.

PNPOT also highlights the challenge of the efficiency of urban and regional metabolism and ecological connectivity, as a means of interconnection between urban and rural environments, which may support food production functions and the supply of recreational and leisure areas.

The issues inscribed in the PNPOT challenge territorial planning at local and regional level to build projects that enhance the use and increase of natural capital - soil, water, and biodiversity - promoting sustainable land use and occupation and mechanisms of governance and territorial management focused on the enhancement of natural resources.

In the PNPOT, rural-urban articulations also appear with a view to contributing to the strengthening of value chains, namely those associated with the urban food system and short agri-food circuits.

It also highlights the strengthening of sustainability and the attractiveness of natural resources and landscape quality, it is important to value, manage and monitor ecosystem services in predominantly and moderately urban areas (namely agriculture and forests), whether in terms of production, leisure, and culture, or even in terms of regulation, decarbonisation, and adaptation to climate change.

In turn, the regional scope constitutes a level of intermediation of visions and strategies between the national and local levels.

At this level, regional food planning is of crucial importance, not only to allow the specialization and coordination of network initiatives, but especially for its ability to boost synergies between urban and rural areas, being able to respond to the valuation of rural land and the consolidation of environmental protection structures and ecological connectivity, seeking to implement instruments that enable the valuation and remuneration of services provided by ecosystems.

The current Lisbon Metropolitan Area Regional Land Management Plan (PROT), approved in 2002, did not explicitly address these concerns. However, it was innovative in defining the Metropolitan Ecological Network, establishing principles and guidelines for ecological connectivity.

A future planning process at a regional scale should be an opportunity to reinforce and update the principles of ecological connectivity, guaranteeing instruments for its operationalization and integrating responses to current challenges, such as the planning of the food system, in the territorial model and innovative solutions that strengthen territorial cohesion and regional and national competitiveness.

This process should be oriented to ensure greater food security, economic and energy efficiency, environmental and landscape quality, adaptation to climate change, job creation, promoting urban-rural dynamics, circular economy, and local development, because of a regional strategic vision.

At the municipal level, whenever possible, sustainable production areas should be integrated into the Municipal Ecological Structure and can be configured as part of the green and blue infrastructure, through which urban and rural areas of a municipality may relate to recreational opportunities and the production of ecosystem services that ensure better health and well-being for the local population. Urban, peri-urban, or rural production spaces should be an integral part of green infrastructure.



# STRATEGIC APPROACH

## VISION

By 2030, about 15% of the metropolitan area's food supply could be secured locally based on:

- sustainable modes of production, where organic production, integrated production/protection and agroecology are included;
- innovative solutions, namely in the scope of water management for irrigation, reduction of phytopharmaceuticals, soil conservation and nutrient balance, and climate adaptation, energy efficiency and alternative energies;
- low carbon distribution networks and in proximity food circuits that comply with inclusion and food safety criteria.

The FoodLink products will be available and accessible for responsible food consumption for all citizens of the Lisbon metropolitan area and will be an asset for the promotion of responsible and ethical tourism. FoodLink offers opportunities for recreation and gastronomic and cultural tourism throughout its territory, constituting an innovative initiative that contributes to the socio-ecological and economic enhancement of the LMA and to the strengthening of urban-rural synergies.

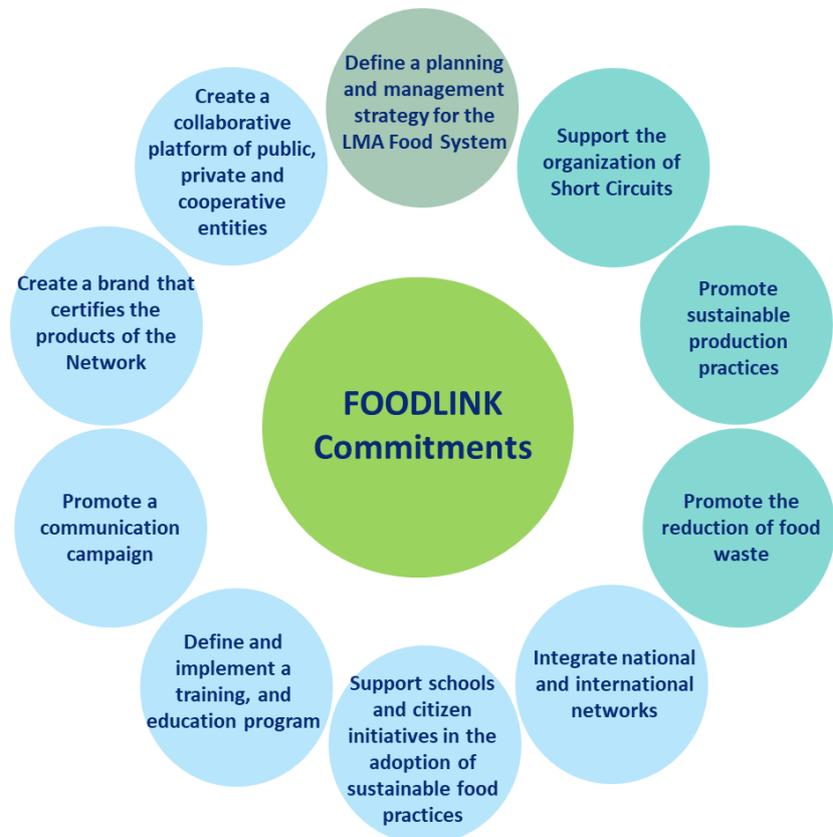
## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FoodLink, a collaborative platform of public and private entities, pursues three main principles:

- Sustainability regarding the soil, water, biodiversity, and energy nexus, aiming at a healthy, sustainable, inclusive, and responsible food of the metropolitan population.
- Promotion of a strategy oriented towards a circular, resilient and local economy, with attention to climate adaptation, job creation, promotion of health and well-being and respect for social equity.
- Safeguarding the Mediterranean diet, reinforcing cultural identity, while encouraging scientific and technological innovation in the various components of the food system, contributing to the training, capacity-building, and awareness-raising of active agents in the food system and committing to increasing food literacy and the transition to digitalization

# COMMITMENTS

FoodLink brings together a diverse set of territories, initiatives, and actors in the LMA, who are committed to collaborate towards the planning and management of their food system, namely:



# STRATEGIC AXES AND OBJECTIVES

Axis 1

Planning the Territory for Food Transition

Axis 2

Food Transition as a vector of Socio-Territorial Cohesion

Axis 3

Empowering and educating for Food Transition

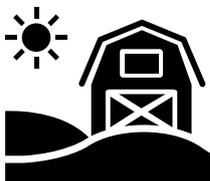
## Axis 1 - Planning the Territory for Food Transition



### OBJECTIVES

- Define a planning and management strategy for the metropolitan food system in a systemic and participatory way, aiming at safeguarding soils with strategic potential for agricultural production, integrating this issue in the territorial management instruments and in the various instruments of Public Policies.
- Promote territorial planning processes oriented to guarantee greater food security, economic and energy efficiency, environmental and landscape quality, biodiversity conservation, adaptation to climate change, job creation, promoting urban-rural dynamics, circular economy, and local development.
- Enhance the Metropolitan Ecological Structure according to a multifunctional and systemic approach, integrating, whenever possible, areas of sustainable production, connecting urban and rural areas, enhancing production opportunities and the wellbeing of the local population.
- Promote good management practices of the soil, water, biodiversity, and energy nexus and promote their dynamization / implementation.

## Axis 2 - Food Transition as a vector of Socio-Territorial Cohesion



### OBJECTIVES

- Support the organization of short circuits to guarantee local supply, strengthening the link between producers and consumers.
- Promote the reduction of food waste in the different links of the food chain (production, transformation, distribution, and consumption).
- Support the existence of local, formal, and informal markets, to create valorization mechanisms for the purchase of local products.
- Promote social agriculture for its contribution to cohesion and revitalization of community life.
- Promote sustainable production practices to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable food system, which values local cultivated varieties.

## Axis 3 - Empowering and educating for Food Transition



### OBJECTIVES

- Promote the operationalization of the strategy and dynamization of the FoodLink Network.
- Promote a communication campaign for responsible eating and promotion of the FoodLink brand.
- Promote the Mediterranean Diet.
- Promote the training, capacity building and education in food literacy of all the actors of the metropolitan food system.
- Promote the adoption of sustainable food practices.
- Integrate national and international networks that position the network in a wider context and enrich its experience and knowledge.

# PARTNERS

At the time of drafting this document, the entities that make up FoodLink are:

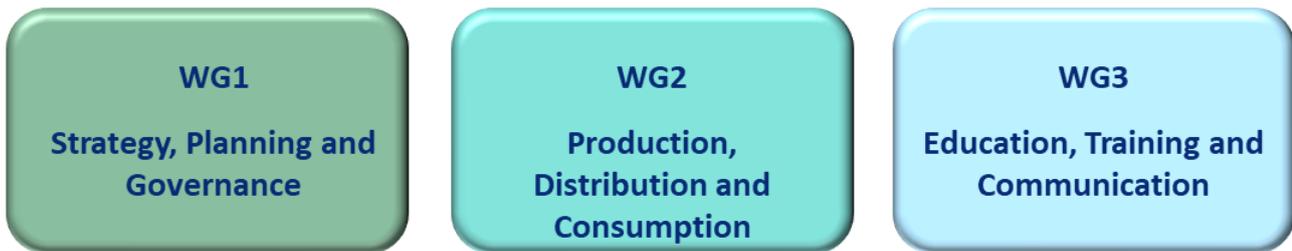
Partner groups		Partners
	Academia / Research	ICS - ULisboa, ISA, INIAV, Colégio F3
	Central and Regional Administration	CCDR-LVT, DGT, DGADR, DRAP-LVT, Sintra Prison Facility
	Local Government	LMA, Almada, Amadora, Cascais, Loures, Mafra, Palmela, Sesimbra, Setúbal, Sintra, Vila Franca de Xira, Olivais Parish Council, and Lisboa e-Nova
	Local Development Associations	A2S, ADREPES
	Business sector	Confagri, Portuguese Industrial Association, Upfarming
	Logistic	MARL
	Citizen organisations	Rizoma Cooperative, Oeiras Evoluir Association

FoodLink is open to integrate other actors of the metropolitan food system who share its principles and commitments.

# ACTION PLAN

## PRIORITY ACTIONS 2022 - 2023

To pursue the Objectives defined above, the agents that make up this network are organized into 3 Working Groups.



Within the framework of the work of these Groups, 11 priority actions were identified to be developed in the 2022 - 2023 biennium.

Priority Actions 2022 - 2023	WG 1 Strategy, Planning and Governance	WG 2 Production, Distribution and Consumption	WG 3 Education, Training and Communication
Chart of Principles and Commitment	X	X	X
Metropolitan food planning strategy	X	X	X
Regional/local governance model	X		
Pilot projects to operationalize locally and regionally-based food strategies	X	X	X
Mapping food system actors	X	X	
Pilot projects of public contracting between producers and consumers	X	X	
Training program			X
Education Program/articulation with teaching			X
Creation of the FoodLink brand			X
Communication strategy/platform creation			X
Identification of projects to be financed	X	X	X

