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Pathways for advocacy:

An identification of the main influencer networks relevant to agriculture R&D in France

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Disclaimer: The arguments expressed in this report are solely those of the authors, and do not reflect the opinion of any other party.

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1 Introduction

The Farm Journal Foundation has commissioned this policy brief in order to inform an advocacy strategy in France in support of research and development (R&D) in the agriculture sector.

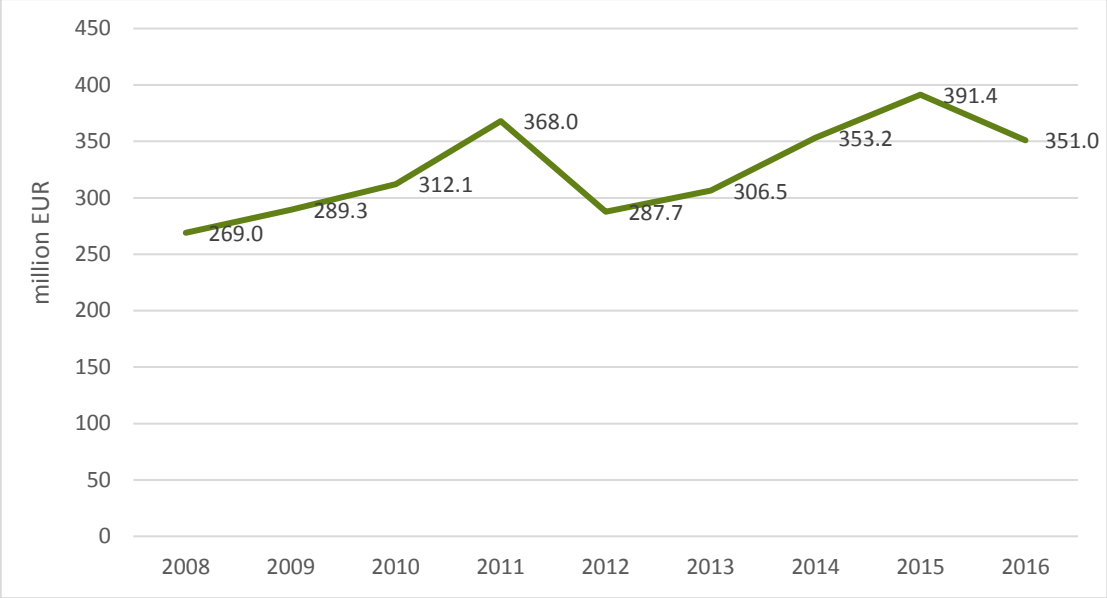
This policy brief provides an overview of the total funding of agriculture R&D in France with some concrete examples of projects funded as well as a description of the adoption and implementation of the national agriculture R&D budget. It gives some insights of the political priorities beyond 'Horizon 2020'.

It also includes a map of key influencer networks, hubs, interconnections and links to different agriculture R&D decision makers in France to inform a broader advocacy strategy.

2 Overview of funding and trends for agriculture R&D in France

Overall, French government spending on agriculture R&D increased substantially over the past eight years with an increase of 26% between the 3-year averages for 2008-10 and 2014-16. Expressed as a proportion of GDP, it went up from 0.01% in 2008-10 to 0.02% in 2014-16, bringing it in line with the average figure across the 28 EU Member States. Total spending on agriculture R&D was 351 million EUR in 2016 in France which corresponds to 11.2% of the total spent by all EU-28 Member States.

Figure 1 : French government spending on agriculture R&D



Source: Eurostat GBOARD indicator[1].

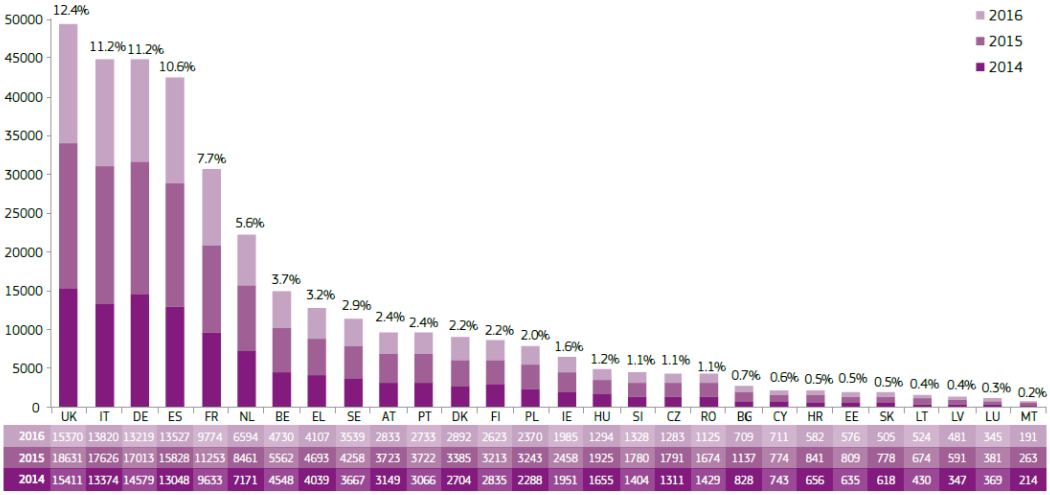
As actors from a member of the EU, French research and innovation actors are eligible for the Horizon 2020 (H2020) fund of the European Union, which covers a range of topics. Between 2014 and February 2018[2], France received a financial contribution of 3,063 million EUR from the EU H2020 budget, granted to 6,375 participants. Compared to other EU countries, this corresponds to the third largest share of H2020 funds (after Germany and the UK). The top 10 beneficiaries are national research centres and universities active in different disciplines. The National Agricultural Research Institute ('INRA') is the third of these top recipients.

France comes fifth in the total number of H2020 applications (see Figure 2). Since the start of H2020, six out of ten applications came from the UK, Germany, Italy, Spain and France all together.

[1] The GBAORD indicator measures "government support to research and development (R&D) activities, or, in other words, how much priority Governments place on the public funding of R&D" (Eurostat definition). GBOARD covers not only government-financed R&D performed in government establishments but also government-financed R&D in three other national sectors (business enterprise, private non-profit, higher education) as well as abroad (including international organisations).

[2] Latest eCORDA data available. See also: http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/pdf/country-profiles/fr_country_profile_and_featured_projects.pdf#zoom=125&pagemode=none

Figure 2: Number of Horizon 2020 applications per EU Member States 2014-2016, and share of overall Horizon 2020 applications



Source: Corda, calls in the first three years, Applications in eligible proposals, Cut-off date by 1/09/2017

The **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** is the key policy governing agriculture and rural development in the EU. Some measures and instruments can be used to support research and innovation. Each Member State has some discretion in the way it implements some aspects of the CAP - especially the 'second pillar' of the policy on rural development - and this may impact agriculture R&D spending.

Under the Rural Development Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013), the choices Member States make must be relevant to 6 Priorities. 'Research and innovation', however, is a cross-cutting priority and therefore it is expected to be delivered in support of other priority areas (for instance training to improve competitiveness)[3]. It is therefore difficult to establish precisely the share of the overall rural development expenditure going to research and innovation, but the budget allocated to Priority 2 can be used as a proxy indicator[4]. In France, a significant 3,109 billion EUR is planned to be spent on this priority in the current financial period of 2014-2020. This is about 10% of the overall spending on this priority of all EU Member States. Within the range of measures through which the Rural Development budget can be channelled, a total of 268 million EUR was allocated by the French government on the 'cooperation' measure (Measure 16) which notably funds the set-up of Operational Groups of the European Innovation Partnership for Agriculture (EIP-Agri – see Box 1).

Box 1: European Innovation Partnership for Agriculture ('EIP-Agri')

What is EIP-AGRI? The **European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI)** was established in 2012 and aims to foster a competitive and sustainable agriculture and forestry sector that "achieves more from less". It contributes to ensuring a steady supply of food, feed and biomaterials, and to the sustainable management of the essential natural resources on which farming and forestry depend, working in harmony with the environment. To achieve this aim, the EIP-AGRI brings together innovation actors (farmers, advisors, researchers, businesses, NGOs, etc.) and helps to build bridges between research and practice.

[3] Page 5 https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/2016/rural-development/fact-sheet.pdf

[4] The current EU Rural Development Policy for 2014 to 2020 has six priorities, of which the first two are relevant to R&D, as follows:

1. fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas
2. enhancing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture, and promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable forest management

EIP-AGRI adheres to the "interactive innovation model" by creating so-called **Operational Groups**, which brings together specific actors (e.g. farmers, advisors, researchers, businesses, etc.) to work together in multi-actor projects to find solutions for a specific issue or developing a concrete opportunity.

3 The process behind agriculture R&D expenditures' adoption and implementation in France

3.1 The adoption of the agriculture R&D budget in France - the procedure

France's overall annual budget (including expenditures on Agriculture R&D) is adopted every year through the 'Budget Law' ('Loi de Finances' in French).

The draft budget law must be submitted by the Government to the National Assembly (made of Parliamentarians) no later than the first Tuesday of October of the year before the year of the budget. It is immediately transmitted to the Finance Committee (see also the timetable below).

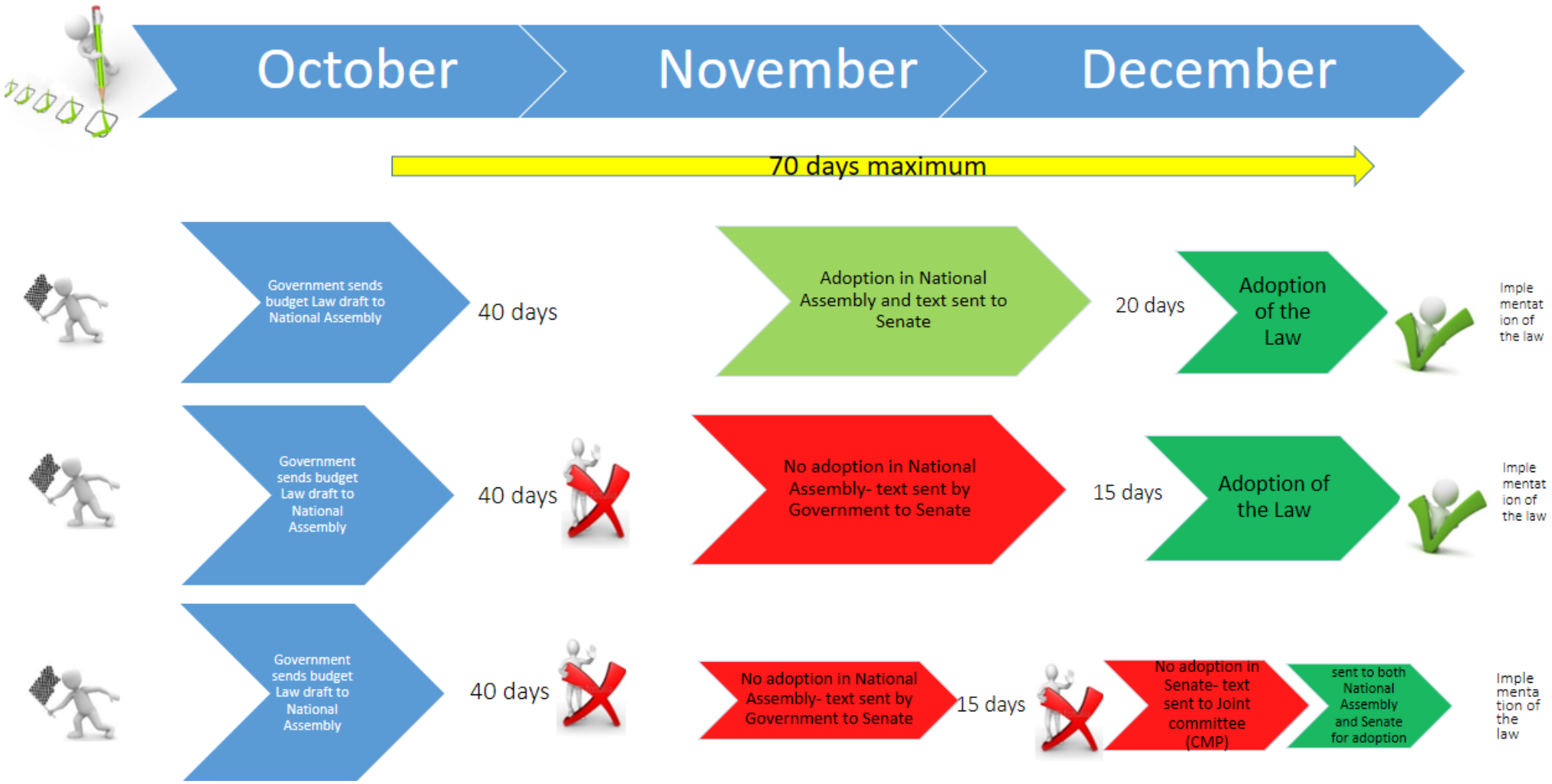
The National Assembly then has 40 days to adopt the text in first reading. The text as adopted by the National Assembly is then transmitted for first reading to the Senate. At the end of the 40 day period, if the text is not adopted by the National Assembly, the Government sends the initial text of the draft law directly to the Senate, in which case the Senate has 15 days to react and adopt the text. In case the National Assembly amends the text and adopts it, the Senate has 20 days to react and adopt it. If at the end of the 20 days the Senate has not adopted the text, the Government resends the text to the National Assembly (modified, if necessary, with the amendments voted by the Senate and accepted by the Government) for the Assembly to adopt it.

In the case of the Budget Law, there is no second reading and an **emergency procedure applies.** Thus, if the first reading fails, the Government convenes a Joint Committee (Commission mixte Paritaire 'CMP').

If the CMP agrees on a text, the Government can submit it for approval to both the National Assembly and the Senate respectively. They cannot amend the text; they can only adopt or reject it. If the CMP fails, the Government can ask the National Assembly to take a definitive position.

Whatever happens in first reading and in the CMP phase, the Parliament (both Chambers, the National Assembly and the Senate) must have adopted a text no later than **70 days** after the initial tabling of the proposals by the Government.

If the National Assembly does not adopt the text within the 70 day period, the Government implements the Law by ordinance.



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Note: This figure is a simplified version of the legislative process. Within the National Assembly, the responsible Committee is the Finance Committee

On 30 May 2018, the French National Assembly adopted a Government's legislative proposal on the Future of Food policy which also governs agriculture. This legislative proposal was drafted on the basis of the outcomes of several discussion rounds with stakeholders (so called 'Etats Generaux de l'Alimentation') that took place between 20 July and 21 December 2017.

The newly adopted Food policy in France is structured around three strategic axes:

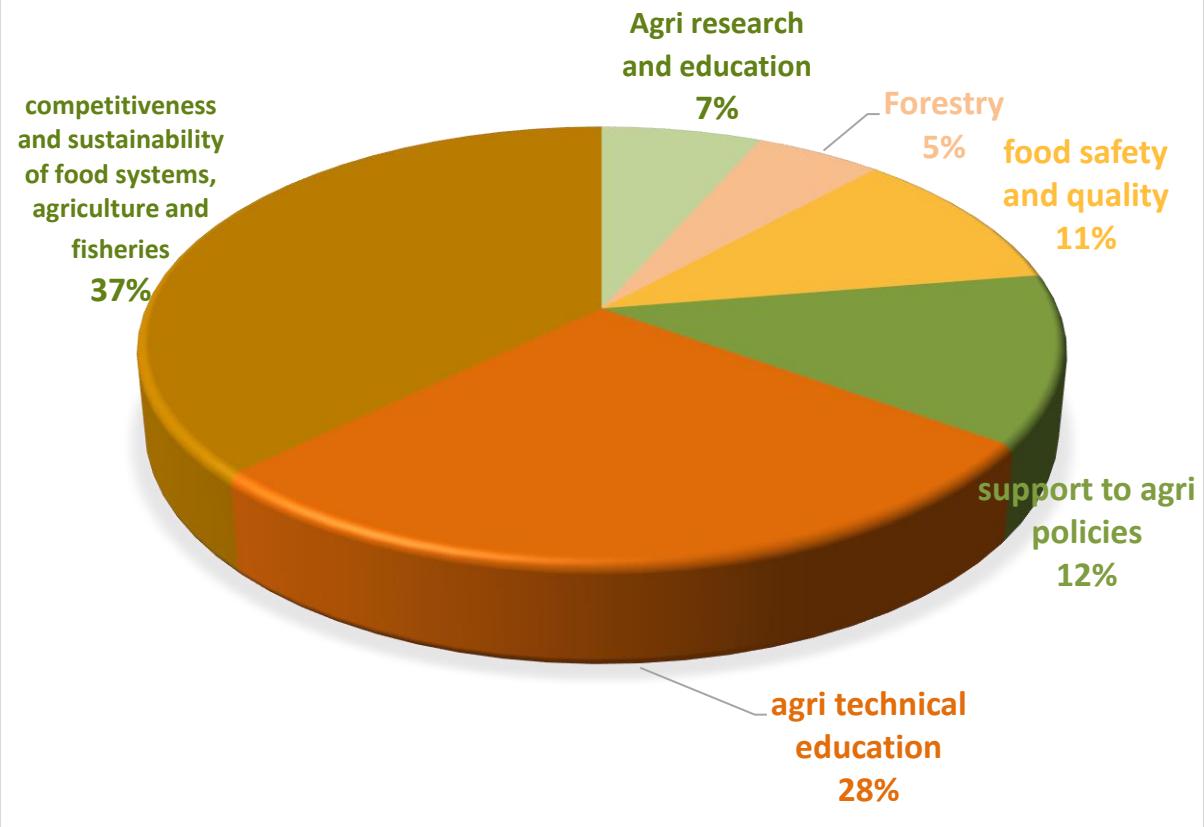
1. The protection of food sovereignty of France;
2. The promotion of healthy food choices that protects the environment;
3. The reduction of inequalities in access to sustainable and quality food.

However, the legislative text does not contain any strong references to research and development in relation to agriculture or food.

3.2 Size of the agriculture R&D budget in France

The agriculture and food budget for the year 2018, as included in the budget Law, totals around **5.23 billion EUR**. In constant prices, the budget increased by 400 million EUR (+1.6%) from 2017. Expenditure for research and education amount to 6.6% of the national agriculture 2018 budget (see Figure 3) and increased **by 2.9%** in comparison with the previous year.

Figure 3: French agriculture and food budget for 2018

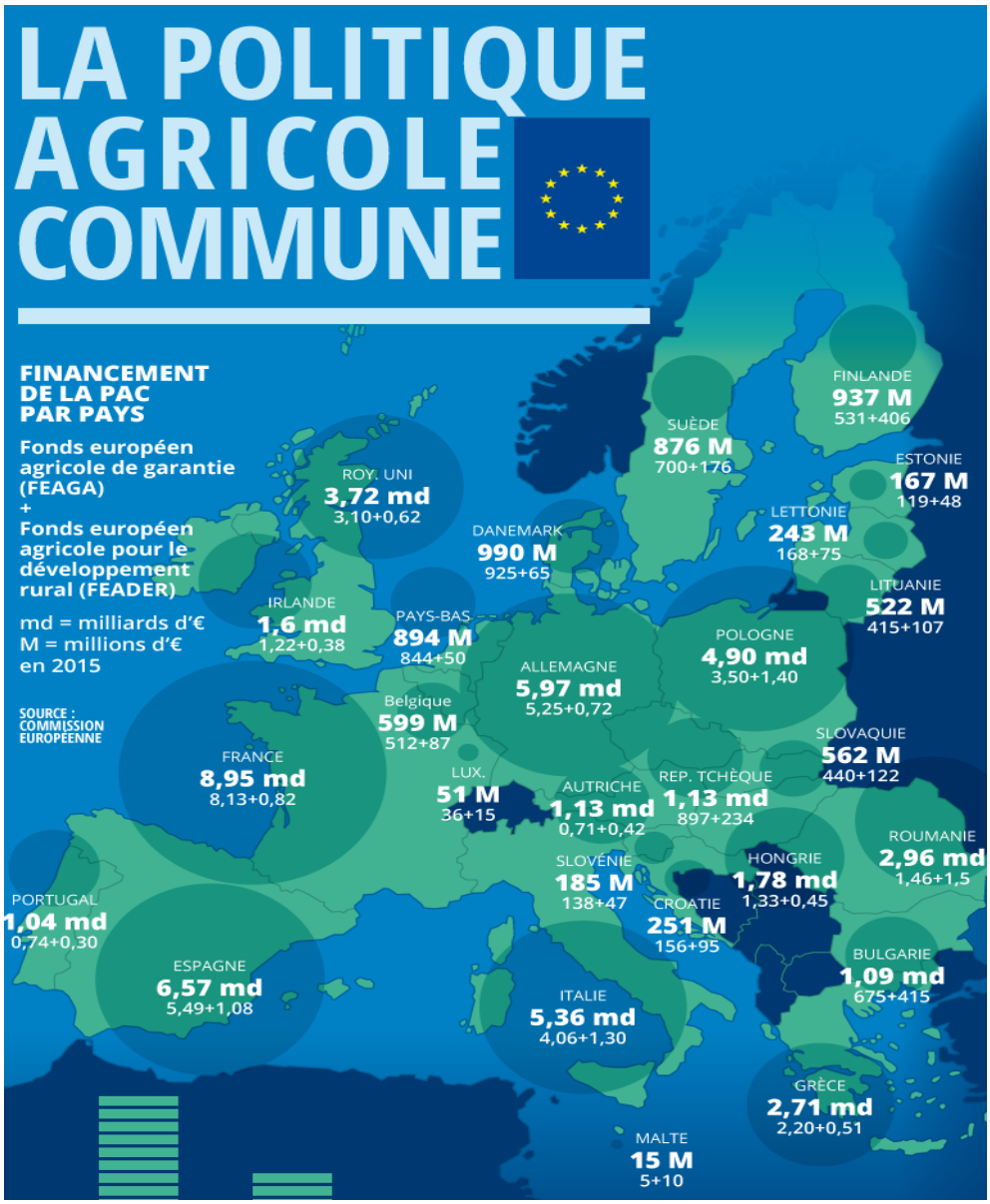


Source: http://agriculture.gouv.fr/le-budget-2018-du-ministere-de-lagriculture-et-de-lalimentation

If the dedicated budget for agriculture research and education represents 6.6% of the total budget (about 345 million EUR), the main focus of the 2018 budget is the transition towards sustainable farming as a whole with a strong priority given to investments (37.2% of the total budget) including investments for research and innovation.

The French national food and agriculture budget is complemented by the EU CAP funding. France is the largest recipient of CAP money in the European Union (see Figure 4), and in 2018 it will receive a total of **8.9 billion EUR from the European Union.** Part of it is used for R&D, notably through the European Innovation Partnership-AGRI (see section 2).

Figure 4: CAP funding within Member States



Source: http://infographies.agriculture.gouv.fr/post/149838523307

Note:

- *M: million*
- *Md*: billion

3.3 The implementation of the agriculture R&D budget in France

3.3.1 The key role of the National Research Agency (Agence Nationale pour la Recherche 'ANR')

The National Research Agency is a public administrative institution which operates under the supervision of the Minister responsible for research (Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation). It is administered by a Board of Directors and is led by its President and Chief Executive Officer. The CEO is assisted by one or more Deputy Chief Executive Officers and a Scientific Steering Committee.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officers are appointed by the President of the Agency for a renewable five-year term. Philippe Mauguin is the current CEO of the Agency[5].

The National Research Agency's mission is to implement funding for research projects in France. Based on a competitive selection method, which respects international standards, the agency strives to:

- Contribute to the development of science and technology
- Foster creativity, emergence and partnerships
- Focus research efforts on economic and societal priorities defined at the highest level of the state and in consultation with other research actors
- Encourage interactions between disciplines
- Intensify public-private links

3.3.2 The important role of the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA)

INRA is one of Europe's top agricultural research institutes. It plays a key role in informing public policy and in helping decide the directions research should take by predicting major trends.

It notably co-wrote a key report[6] on the future orientations for agriculture R&D in France towards 2025 together with three other Institutes/bodies: National Research Institute of Science and Technology for the Environment and Agriculture (IRSTEA), ACTA (a grouping of all agricultural technical institutes) and AgroParisTech, a university.

The report was commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Research. It contains a total of 3 priorities, 9 areas, 30 projects and hundreds of actions, which over the next ten years, will ensure that agriculture will be central to innovation.

The three priorities of the report are:

- Ensure that agriculture contributes to the mitigation of climate change;
- Permit the widespread development of new technologies;
- Federate all actors in research, experimentation and agricultural development in support of competitiveness.

[5] See organigram here: http://institut.inra.fr/Organisation/Organigramme
[6] https://inra-dam-front-resources-cdn.brainsonic.com/ressources/afile/358734-60be7-resource-report-ai2025-version-anglaise.pdf

The nine areas are: Agroecology, Bioeconomy, Digital agriculture, Genetics and biotechnologies, Agricultural economics, Open innovation, Robotics, Biocontrol and Training.

3.3.3 A snapshot of the different agriculture R&D programs/projects in France

The different platforms helping the implementation of R&D in agriculture programs in France are:

- **CASDAR** ('Compte d'affection Spécial au Développement Agricole et Rural'). The main orientations in CASDAR are defined under the National Programme of agriculture and rural Development (PNDAR).

The below calls for tender fall under the PNDAR[7]:

- Call for tender: *Technological research for the competitiveness and sustainability of the production and processing sectors*, Launched in 2014, still running;
- Call for tender: *Seeds and plant breeding*, Launched in 2011, still running;
- Call for tender: *Collective mobilisation for agro ecology*, Launched in 2013, still running;
- First pilot project for "*Agro-ecological transition of farms and technological workshops for agricultural education"*, from 2014 until 2016;

- **RMT** (réseaux mixtes technologiques): these networks are in place to facilitate the exchanges between research, training and development actors.

- **GIS** (groupement d'intérêt scientifique): these groups are cooperatives that help build research projects and multi-actor approaches.

It should be highlighted that the agricultural chambers play a key role in accompanying and implementing those programs, initiatives and platforms.

3.4 France's role and influence in the European budget for Agriculture R&D

As mentioned in the sections above, the national budget for agriculture is complemented by EU subsidies coming from the CAP. Besides the CAP, innovation projects in agriculture R&D can also be implemented by French Institutes and other actors directly through H2020[8] (see section 2).

France's role and influence in CAP:

France, as the largest recipient of CAP subsidies (see Figure 3), plays a key role in the CAP legislative process, and the CAP has to be adopted by both the Council of the European Union (made of EU Member States) and the Parliament (made of directly elected Members).

[7] This is not exhaustive and is used as an illustration here

[8] See Bas-Defossez F, Maréchal A & Allen B (2018) Pathways for advocacy: An identification of the main influencer networks relevant to EU agriculture R&D. Report by the Institute for European Environmental Policy

In both Institutions, France holds a substantial amount of power: in the Council, power is weighted according to the size of the population and France represents 13.09% of the total EU population (second after Germany). In the European Parliament, France is the country that has the second highest number of seats after Germany (74 in total - out of 751 MEPs in total).

France's role and influence in H2020:

As explained in section 2 of the report, French research institutes and also stakeholders can benefit directly from EU money through the research policy 'Horizon 2020'.

As in the case of the CAP, Horizon 2020 legislation has to be adopted by both the Council and the European Parliament. With a strong share of the EU population (therefore leverage in the Council), a large number of seats in the European Parliament, and as the home of Europe's top agricultural research institute (INRA)[9], France holds considerable influence in the H2020 process.

Box 2: technological innovation vs systemic change: the case of glyphosate in France

The case of glyphosate in Europe and in particular in France exacerbated that dilemma.

In October 2017, more than one million of European citizens called on the European Commission to propose a ban on glyphosate. This initiative fell under the so called 'European Citizens Initiative'.
More than 13% of the signatories were French and despite the reluctance from a majority of Member States to set an immediate ban, France was amongst the most progressive Member States pushing for it.

The EU decision has now been made and against citizens' claim, it has been agreed to renew glyphosate license in Europe for an extra 5 years. Despite that decision France wants glyphosate to be banned in three years' time nationally. This national position has created lots of debates in the country among the proponent of glyphosate and the opponents (majority of citizens).
The French President is himself convinced that glyphosate use can be replaced in 90% of the cases and his priority is that during the coming three years research focuses on mechanical and nature based alternative.

This citizens' defiance against glyphosate could to be understood as a broader defiance against high technological solution in farming. In France (and in parts of Europe) there is clearly a growing demand for systemic changes (short supply change..), reduction of chemical inputs and nature based solutions to the problems we are increasingly facing (disastrous climatic events..) and to the need to be in line with SDGs.

[9] In a joint report with Wageningen University, INRA called for the CAP budget devoted to research and innovation in agriculture to be at least doubled in the CAP post 2020 period

4 Power mapping of advocacy influencers in the French agriculture R&D sector

Figure 3: Main influencer bodies in French agriculture R&D and their relationship

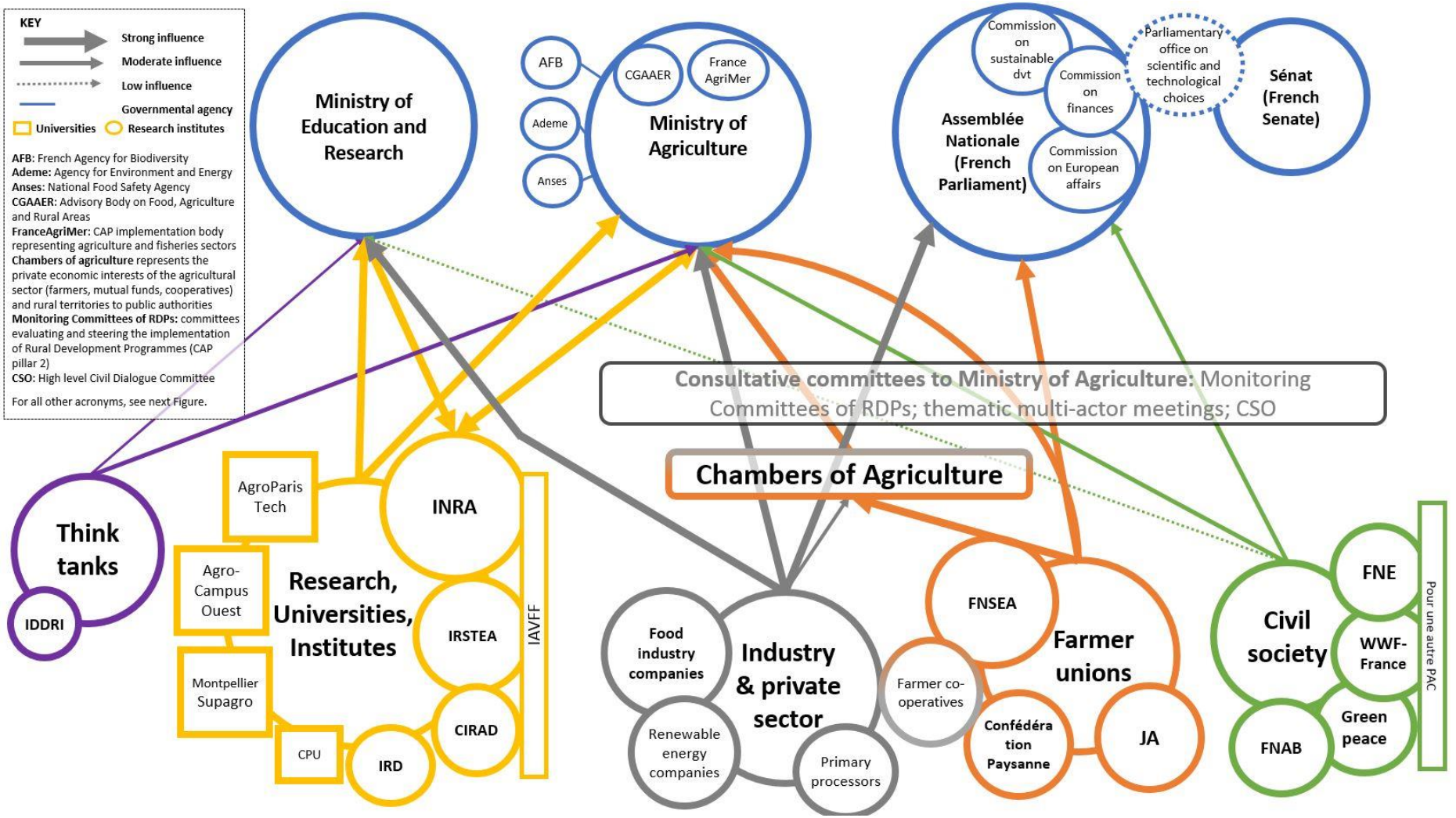


Figure 4: A snapshot of some influential individuals and organisations in EU agriculture R&D