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State of knowledge and technology transfer training and activities in the European Food Field (Cristina L.M. Silva)

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The goal of this research was to elaborate a strategic document with guidelines to promote and enhance the current situation on knowledge and technology transfer in the field of European food studies among the ISEKI_Food members.

A questionnaire was carried out by 81 institutions, involving mainly Universities from 31 countries. An international workshop was also used to discuss the topics. The work was approached on: i) the training and education needs, and ii) the knowledge and technology transfer activities already going on.

The questionnaire results confirmed the lack of enough training and strategies for knowledge transfer in a significant part of the institutions. However, among those already quite active in the field, it was possible to identify activities and methodologies more adequate for introducing knowledge transfer in training activities. Entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity have to be formally integrated in students training, especially in European regions other than the North.

Each institution has different knowledge transfer training and strategies. However, some constraints are common, such as the lack of time and human resource support for academic staff. More and more the financing sources will promote research towards its implementation, and intellectual property and ethics are key issues. Therefore getting financing for research becomes more and more complex.

It was concluded that it is crucial for institutions to have a strategy for knowledge transfer. On a long term there will be return of investment. Institutions shall have offices with business orientation, and capable of a fast reaction to industry and innovation requests.