

## **Territorial Innovation Systems and Strategies of Collective Efficiency: the Case of Tagus Valley Agro-food Complex.**

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### **Abstract**

The motivation of this research is to reflect on the territorial innovation systems and its strategic relevance in non-central regions. As such, we intend to identify which actions of collective efficiency will facilitate the consolidation of an innovation system in a non-central region by favouring international flows of knowledge. As specific goals, in the first place, we will evaluate and interpret the innovation performance in a set of combined clusters of agricultural activities and food industries, denominated as Tagus Valley Agro-Food Complex, taking into consideration specific corporate and territorial order factors framed in an analysis' model, generalizable to other regions, which may not necessarily be rural type. This model combines: *i*) exogenous factors to the agro-food cluster territorially differentiated (structural, specific to the region; institutional, specific or external to the region); *ii*) endogenous factors to the agro-food cluster.

Secondly, we seek to understand the behaviour of public entities in institutional support to the innovation process of agro-food cluster companies in the concerned region. We intend to analyse the intervention of public entities (central and local government, scientific and technological system and vocational training centres) in order to understand whether there is a *local institutional thickness* required to support innovation processes in companies engaged in agricultural activities, food and wine industries established in the region. In this sense, we sought to assess the presence degree of a set of intangible and intrinsic factors to the territory, crucial to learning and collective actions.

Besides allowing identifying an important set of deficits of institutional nature, inhibitors of innovation performance, the study allowed formulating various proposals for the purpose of territorial governance, highlighting the need to strengthen the transfer of knowledge to the micro and small companies engaged in agricultural activities.

### **Keywords:**

Governance, Institutional Thickness, Innovation Network/Systems, Territorialized Agro-food Complex, Collective Efficiency Strategies.