

project newsletter

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AMI@Netfood, an European Strategic Vision

AMI@Netfood is a Specific Support Action under the Information Society priority of the European Commission Sixth Framework Programme.

The objective of AMI@Netfood project is to support implementation of the Information Society Technologies (IST) Research Priority and Framework Programme, providing a long-term vision on future trends concerning Scientific and Technology Research oriented to the development and application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to the European agrifood industry and rural development domain.

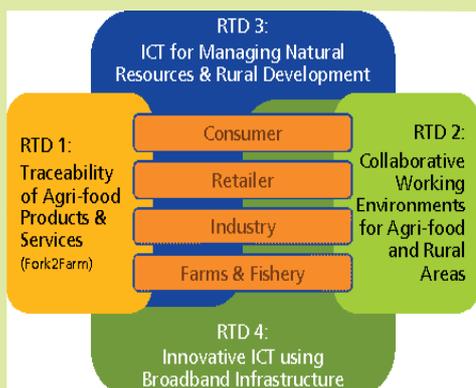
EU organisations proactive participation in AMI@Netfood SRA validation

During the second stage of the project, AMI@Netfood partners have developed different validation activities in all fourteen EU participating countries. Validation tasks have been primarily implemented by means of validation workshops involving 10 to 15 organisations belonging to different domains. In addition to workshops, AMI@netfood partners have also developed a number of discussions with consultative groups/experts, seminars and face-to-face interviews involving relevant stakeholders. In total nearly 300 experts have proactively participated in validation actions.

Involving a wide variety of EU stakeholders has been considered as a key priority when setting up validation activities. In total AMI@netfood has accounted for more than 25 validation activities in which Policy Makers, Universities, RTD organisations and Industry have proactively provided their views on the SRA and have contributed to improve the final result.

The objective of this exercise has been twofold, first to achieve maximum consensus on project results presented in the Strategic Research Agenda and secondly to gain commitment to participate in proposals for potential joint activities to partly implement some of the SRA activities.

Dissemination activities have been supported by direct on-the field contact with local, regional or national agrifood and rural development stakeholders. The support received from regional/ national policy makers, has been of major importance to obtain consensus about the identified challenges, RTD programmes and objectives as presented in the draft AMI@Netfood Strategic Research Agenda.



To contribute to the dissemination of results and to catch the attention and promote participation of target audiences in validation workshops, validation material has been widely distributed. To complement validation process, AMI@Netfood project has designed a web based validation questionnaire in ten different languages which has collected 168 full questionnaires.



Castilla-La Mancha Regional Vice-Minister of Research, Universities and Innovation and Vice-Rector of Research of the University of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain).

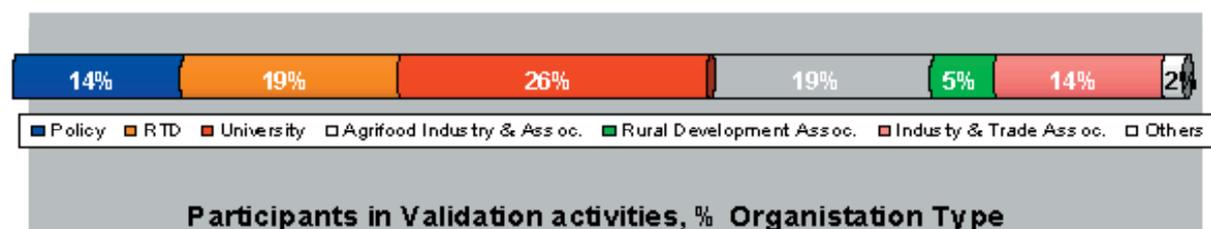
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AMI@Netfood validation activities involve a wide variety of public&private stakeholders

The participants of the validation activities belong to various organisation, originating from producer to Policy Makers, from rural associations to universities and ICT research organisations. This diversity was considered essential in order to obtain a wide range of opinions and suggestions to improve project Strategic Research Agenda.

Validation activities participants are distributed as follows:



Below is the Validation Workshop Poster used during the validation activity performed in Poland.



AMI@Netfood achieves a wide involvement in the validation activities

Contributions received from all participants have been extremely useful to define a common target and to pave the way to implementation of related policies. Considering the active involvement of public organisations responsible for the design of RTD policies at regional and national level, SRA results will provide a common European approach which contributes to a real convergence of policies in the area. The map below shows the countries involved in the validation activities.



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SRA Validation Process Results

AMI@Netfood Consortium is presently finalising the Strategic Research Agenda related to Information & Communication Technologies, applicable to Agrifood industry and Rural development domain. This SRA will be a contribution to support the setting-up of future policy measures related to RTD in Information and Communication Technologies in the next few years.

During the validation exercise, AMI@netfood partners have collected results that support a final consensus into two different areas: the first six challenges preliminary identified (see columns in figure below) and the four RTD areas (see rows in figure below)

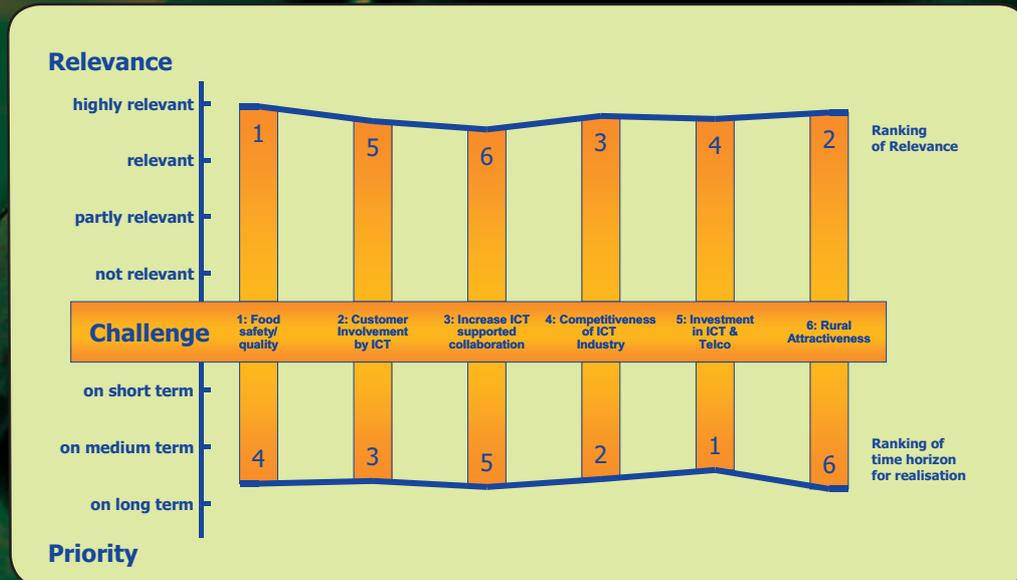
SRA		Challenge 1	Challenge 2	Challenge 3	Challenge 4	Challenge 5	Challenge 6
Agrifood and rural domain							
RTD 1: ICT applications for the complete traceability of agri-food products and services throughout a networked value chain		Support European Agrifood industry wide leader in the supply of safe food products and promote public health and quality of life of consumers	Increase the level of involvement of consumers in the agrifood value chain by means of the wide adoption of relevant IS Technologies and applications	Increase the areas in which European citizens find collaborative working environments assisted by ICTs, extend collaborative ICTs to agrifood industry and rural domain and increase skills of rural inhabitants to benefit of new technologies	Expand opportunities to increase competitiveness for European ICT industry by means of the development of applications and tools to support the European agrifood and rural sector	Contribute to trigger the investment in ICT and telecommunications infrastructure by means of creating new business models in rural areas	Making Rural Europe a more attractive place for growth and creating more and better jobs
RTD 2: Collaborative environments in agrifood and rural areas							
RTD 3: ICT as key enabler to support innovation and development in rural areas creating value for citizens and businesses							
RTD 4: Innovative ICT applications in rural areas using broadband infrastructure							
Horizontal Activities							

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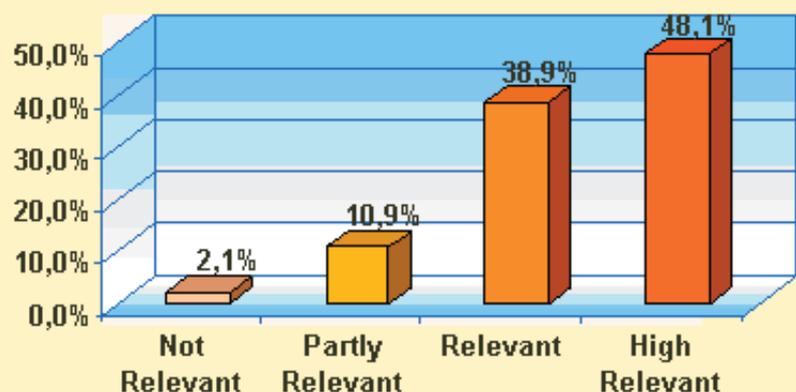


The first statistical results presented in figure below, show results of validation actions referring to the challenges identified in AMI@Netfood SRA in terms of its relevance and its expected time horizon for realisation.



It can be stated that all Challenges under discussion in validation workshops are considered as relevant or highly relevant, while the challenges "food safety/quality" and Rural Attractiveness are rated as most relevant. In addition to ratings, several valuable comments have been provided to improve and refine the formulation of some of the proposed challenges. This input is reflected in the final version of the SRA.

Relevance (%) AMI@Netfood RTD



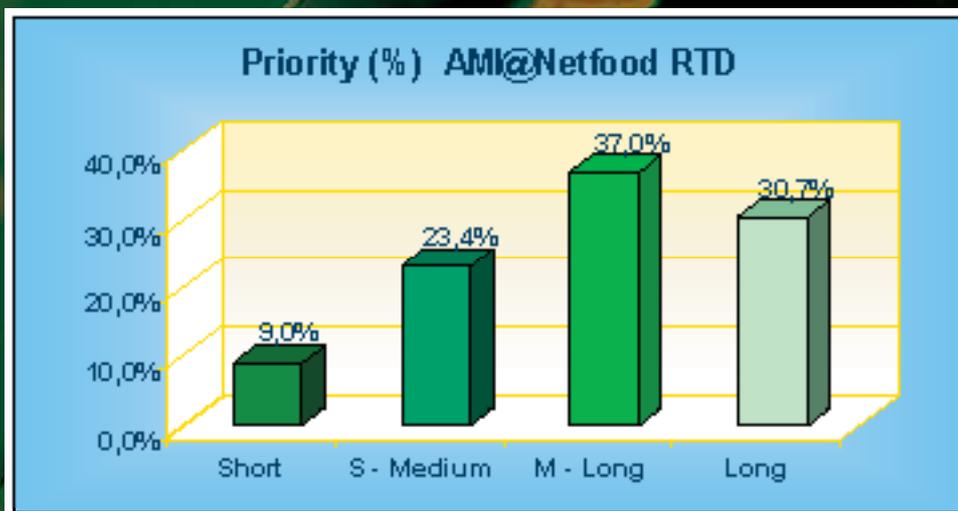
In relation with the Research and Development Technology Programmes addressed by AMI@Netfood Strategic Research Agenda, it has to be emphasized that a wide majority of opinions expressed (87%) have rated RTD domains proposed in AMI@netfood SRA as High in relevance.

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60% of the participants in validation activities consider the proposed RTD activities should be developed in a Medium term. However, taking into consideration the very nature of the research topics identified, 31% state that technologies still need to be further developed so that topics under discussion have to be addressed in a long term.



Proposal for joint activities

The SRA establishes the major challenges, related to the implementation of ICT technologies in agrifood industry sector and rural development domain. The agenda includes four Research and Technology Development objectives which are considered as essential to achieve the challenges.

During the validation activities, the audience also provided their views with respect to five potential joint activities identified by the AMI@Netfood project before. Those stakeholders who were interested in participating in potential joint activities have expressed their interest in one or several pilots.

More than 50 organisations throughout Europe have shown interest in taking part in future activities which would be developed after AMI@Netfood ends. The five pilot activities proposed will be used as test – bed experiences to fulfil some of the needs described in the SRA and to promote the cooperation and knowledge transfer among European regions which similar requirements.

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Proposal for joint activities

Pilot project to develop traceability solutions for the agri-food meat processing industrial sector.

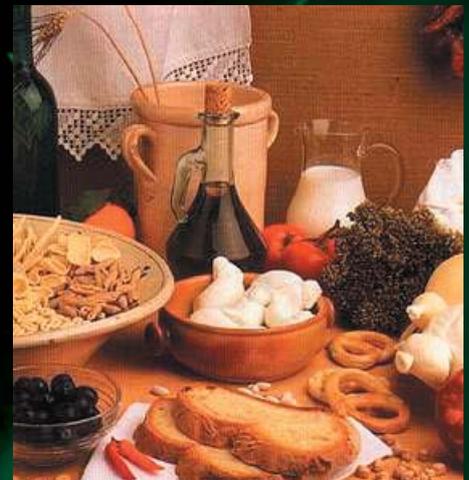
The joint activity proposed involves achieving the real time traceability of products and food throughout the agri-food supply network. This will enable real time updating including information from the original sources of the product (e.g. farming) to the end customer (e.g. services). The traceability of both quality and food quality metrics will be realised by

real time technology such as radio frequency tags etc.

By this, traceability and food safety system will be able to:

- Obtain the exact location of a batch of products
- Obtain food content and ingredients right back to the live stock
- Facilitate the cooperation and reporting throughout the entire food supply network.

Facilitate accurate traceability of health and safety issues and more effectively manage the safety of food and food services for the end customer.



Pilot Experiment Training activities to increase rural business competitiveness using broadband infrastructure.

The pilot experiment proposed consist in the development of training activities oriented to rural inhabitants whose main economic activity is focused on agriculture businesses.

The training activity will be specifically oriented to the promotion of new business models making use of broadband infrastructure. This ac-

tivity could include training tasks related to eCommerce or eTurism which allow rural areas to diversify its economy and to offer new business opportunities.

Moreover, the use of the broadband infrastructure not only will allow rural inhabitants to receive specific eContents but also, it will facilitate the creation of a rural network which could be used as a collaborative knowledge sharing space. The rural network will offer a "meeting point" for those areas, which presents similar needs and requirements.

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Pilot Experiment to implement eHealth card in rural areas for improving rural inhabitants' quality of life.

eHealth or ICTs for Health describes the application of ICTs across the full range of functions that affect the health sector. eHealth is a eEurope 2005 policy priority, setting targets for both the European Commission and Member States to meet in areas such as:

- Building on the European health insurance card to promote a European electronic health card, that could feature such added functionalities as medical emergency data and secure access to personal health information;

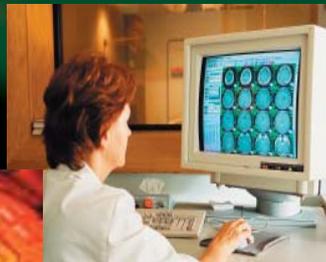
- Developing Health Information Networks to speed the flow of health information through the healthcare system

- Putting health services online such as information on healthy living and illness prevention, electronic health records, teleconsultation and e-reimbursement. The joint activity proposed is related with more than one of the areas mentioned above.

The pilot experiment will consist in the implementation of an eHealth card in different rural areas across Europe supported by the implementation of a Rural Health Information Network.

By this, rural health care system will be able:

- To obtain patient documentation in electronic system,
- To provide adequate diagnostics due to the availability of information provided by a rural eHealth network,
- To facilitate the cooperation between eHealth systems in rural areas which present similar requirements and necessities.



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Pilot experiment to implement a technical infrastructure to support decision making in natural disasters.

The objective of this pilot cross regional joint activity is to implement IST solutions in different forest locations across Europe to support data collection processes which might contribute to protection of forest biodiversity.

The active cooperation between different EU regions with similar interests and the implementation of new Information and Communication Technologies in forest habitats is essential to achieve successful results in the research of Environment Evolution, and as a consequence Environment Protection, which can be transferred to other EU regions.

The proposed joint pilot experiments will consist in the application and deployment of specific ICT tools which are already available in other sectors.

As a result, ICT will contribute to provide measures and tools that might also contribute to avoid and manage natural disasters (as fires, floods, etc.) and their consequences (lost of biodiversity, erosion, desertification, etc.).

The pilot experiment will be focused on two specific issues:

- Information Data Management which would be useful in order to prevent natural disasters supported by an adequate infrastructure.

- Communication between agents involved in the reaction to natural disasters happened mainly in isolated areas.

AMI@Netfood project proposes two "action activities" in the scope of this pilot experiment.

Each activity will be performed in three rural isolated areas which presents similar needs and requirements.

The activities will consist in the implementation of specific procedures in two typical natural disasters which happened across Europe: forest fire and floods.



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Pilot project to develop Collaborative Working Environments solutions for the agri-food industry.

The joint activity proposed involves achieving the new services to support collaborative work among teams in agri-food industry (including mobile teams) as well as between teams in agri-food industry and consumers, suppliers and RTD communities. This will bring benefits regarding

- Productivity, effectiveness of collaborative work (e.g. effective solving of problems in maintenance services in agrifood industry)

- Creativity and innovation (e.g. collection of ideas from consumers and suppliers, collaboration among RTD and industry etc.)

- Migration from (often) pure material driven processes to more information driven processes.

The RTD activities should address: Services and technology (mobile and wearable computing, wireless transmission and mobile access technology etc.) supporting collaboration among different teams in agri-food industry and services and technology for collaboration among organised teams in agri-food industry and open communi-

ties (i.e. the pro-active, cultural aware services allowing access to virtualized resources and knowledge to support creativity by involving teams within geographically distributed EE and wider communities in generation of new ideas on agri-food products and processes and solving complex problems). Security and IPR (protection of knowledge) aspects of new collaboration environments in industry (systems for access and security), taking into account e.g. access capabilities in industrial companies etc.



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European Technology Platform ,Food for Life

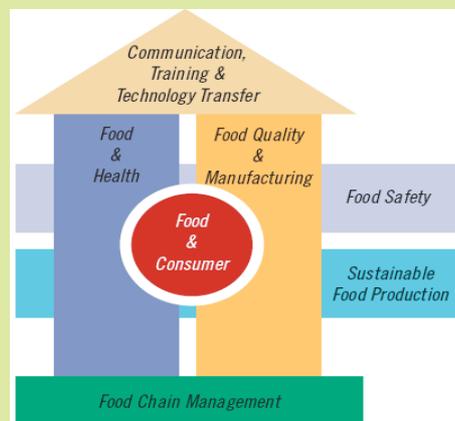
The ETP evolved out of a number of group initiatives that dealt with the food sector and the increasing interdependencies between enterprises at all stages of the global food network (reaching from supply industry and agriculture to processing, trade, and retail) in fulfilling consumers' needs for the availability of quality food that is affordable, safe, healthy, and produced in accordance with interests in animal welfare, environmental protection, cultural backgrounds, etc.

These dynamically evolving interdependencies are a challenge to the competitiveness of the food sector and require the sector to improve and utilize its change and innovation potential and to transform it into competitive and innovative sector developments. The broad-based goal of the ETP 'Food4Life' is to support the sector in meeting this strategic challenge through appropriate research initiatives.

It builds on various work groups which are sym-bolized in the figure. The basis is food chain management as the 'facilitator' for other develop-ments to best work in the complex natural, legal, economic, cultural etc. environments of the food sector.

Food chain management and some of the work group members have a direct link with AMI deve-lopments in two of the identified critical success factors for sector develop-ments that need research support, vertical and horizontal integration.

Vertical integration involves the design and implementation of sector-wide in-formation and communication infrastruc-tures (involving concepts and agreements on content, standards as well as on tech-nical and institutional organization, etc.) that support food safety and food quality through efficient systems for tracking, trac-ing and the 'trustworthy' communication of information for quality assurance. The complexity and magnitude of this chal-lenge is widely underestimated, but it is understood, that its realization will have a



major effect on the development and long-term competitiveness of the food sector. Horizontal integration involves the design of e-community systems that provide enterprises with information and e-services for improvements in communication, planning, production, marketing, and trade (virtual enterprises). This challenge is especially relevant for SMEs and their ability to remain part of the global food networks in the future.

Further information:

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C@R: A collaborative platform for working and living in rural areas

C@R aims to boost the introduction of Collaborative Working Environments (CWE) as key enablers catalyzing rural development.

The main vision of the Collaborative Working Environments Unit of the EC, DG INFSO (defined through multiple and diversified works, such as the Rural@Work family of AMI communities) on the e-Rural is: "to develop Information Society in rural areas, to foster European development and integration, to increase competitiveness of European companies, to stem rural depopulation and to diversify income and employment opportunities in rural areas".

"Rural" in Europe counts for 80% of European area and 22% of European inhabitants. Rural development is not only about a competitive European agriculture, but each day it is

focusing more on meeting the expectations of citizens in rural areas, aiming to a deeper integration into today's society and promoting eco

nomie development. The C@R main challenges are:

- To provide a collaborative platform for rural communities, defined in cooperation with other Collaborative Working Environment communities.

- To demonstrate the use of the same platform integrating various tools for various rural user communities

- To promote the user centric Open Collaborative Architecture (OCA) in the industrial, new business opportunity and emerging rural sectors, demonstrating its affordability and usability.

- To develop common methodology for Rural Living Lab developments and assessing benefits of results.

- To play a role with Policy Makers addressing which EU policies are needed for Innovation and Rural Development in 2010

To achieve this priority objective C@R will advance on the specification, development, test and validation of a powerful and flexible worker-centric collaborative platform that will significantly enhance the capabilities of rural inhabitants both @work and @life, thus leading to a better quality of life and a revalorisation of rural settings.



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From the technical technical standpoint, C@R will organise the work in three layers: Collaborative Core Services - CCS (layer 1), Software Collaborative Tools - SCT (layer 2) and Rural Living Labs - RLL (layer 3).

Layer 1 will encapsulate all core services and resources (networks, sensors, devices, software modules, localization sources, etc) in reusable software components.

A key piece of C@R framework is the upper-layer service architecture, or C@RA, which combines in a synergic manner the layer 1 components according to orchestration high level capabilities resulting in a set of high level software tools, at layer 2.

C@RA will be highly customizable in the sense of providing mechanisms to incorporate any proprietary or open solutions, and any standard. This approach will permit C@R to substantially contribute to the definition of a user-centric Open Collaborative Architecture (OCA).

C@R layer 3 will articulate Rural Living Labs as innovative research instruments involving rural users. The RLL user-oriented methodology will guarantee to meet the highly specific rural users' expectations and will provide mechanisms to gather technical requirements for the C@RA. Several innovative scenarios with an expected high impact on rural development have been selected to enable a later validation of the C@RA.

C@R will deepen on the evaluation of collaborative technologies in the rural economic and social backbones proposing a structured methodology to assess the impact of the technologies developed on the indicators of rural developments and supporting policy responses at national, European, and global levels.

C@R is structured in inter-related blocks of activities, the first three corresponding to the construction of the 3 architecture layers, plus Block 4, called "Systemic and Sustainable Use of Results in C@R" that is focused on policies and strategic plans development for dissemination and exploitation of C@R results. This block will also boost C@R potential impact on regional, national and EU policies for rural sustainable development. Finally, Block 5 corresponds to the overall project management activities.

Collaboration@Rural

C@R: A collaborative platform for working and living in rural areas

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Duration: Sept 2006 - Sept 2009

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Strategic Objective:
2.5.9 Collaborative Working
Environments

Project Identifier:
FP6-2005-IST-5-034921

Conclusion: The leading principle of C@R is the inclusion in the wide sense: to enable people in remote and rural Europe to fully participate in the knowledge society as citizens and as professionals.

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Future Activities in the framework of AMI@Netfood

- Istanbul 16th November 2006, AMI@Netfood results Dissemination Workshop & Presentation of the Information Society Research in the 7th Framework Programme, by Mr. Oluf Nielsen, European Commission.
- December, edition of Winter AMI@Netfood Newsletter.
- Further: Collaboration activities with other EU initiatives:
 - Cordis
 - Cistrana
 - Food4Life
 - BrainBridges
 - C@R

Related links

For more information:

www.cordis.lu

www.cistrana.org

www.ami-netfood.com

www.aforo.net

www.a-bard.org

www.brainbridges.info

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