

The NOVExport program creates a virtual platform with information on opportunities and technological data to support the internationalization of SMEs

- The GAIA Cluster has actively participated together with six European partners in this project that has offered free training and advice to dozens of SMEs to support their internationalization and competitiveness, especially in the agricultural, environmental and maritime markets of Latin America.
- As result of the project, an online virtual resource centre (VRC) has been launched; 6 local hubs have been established (Occitanie, Coimbra, Badajoz, Bilbao, Madrid and Basque Coast); and methodologies have been created for the identification and maturation of innovative products and services, as well as for the international development of SMEs.
- The Project has been financed by the Interreg Sudoe programme through ERDF funds.

October 26th, 2022.- With the participation in the Smart Agrifood Summit held in Malaga, the European project [NOVExport](#) has ended, designed to support the growth and increase the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in western Europe. The project has also sought to accompany its internationalization in the agricultural, environmental and maritime markets of Latin America, through the technological innovation of its products and services, using space technology, digital data and IoT (internet of things).

In the project, funded by the [Interreg Sudoe Programme](#) through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), seven partners from France, Spain and Portugal have worked together: [Aerospace Valley](#), [Université de Bordeaux](#), [Agence de développement économique en Occitanie](#) (AD'OCC), [Universidad Carlos III](#), [el Clúster de Industrias del Conocimiento y Tecnologías Aplicadas de Euskadi](#) (GAIA), [FUNDECYT-PCTEX](#) e [Instituto Pedro Nunes](#) (IPN).

As the partners recall, **less than 30% of European SMEs export their products and services** and, for many of them, access to a new market, especially outside Europe, "becomes a long and complicated process". This reality, together with the global expansion of data markets whose information represents a great opportunity as a business accelerator for SMEs, is at the origin of the NOVExport project that started in November 2019 and ended last September.

As **RESULTS of the project**, which has been intended to support SMEs in southwestern Europe in their internationalization thanks to the technological maturation of their products and services, the following stand out:

- **Creation and launching of 6 local hubs (Occitanie, Coimbra, Badajoz, Bilbao, Madrid and Basque Coast).** These are local networks of companies with a common interest in international markets. For its dynamization, more than 50 events with more than 500 attendees have been held with the participation of more than 150 SMEs.

These hubs are the physical spaces in which all the activities of the NOVExport project have been developed. While each has its own mode of operation, adapted to local ecosystems and practices, they are all linked in the virtual resource platform (VRC),

with a common database for the project accessible to all. In addition, these centers are spaces for exchange with local ecosystems: groups of partners, incubators, etc.

- **Creation of a Virtual Resource Platform** (<https://crv.novexport-sudoe.eu/>). This virtual resource center (VRC) is an open web platform that centralizes all information, events, courses, market research, technological data and any information that may be of interest to SMEs in any area of their activity or sector. Constantly updated it currently has more than fifty registered companies and more than 500 resources (news of interest, commercial reports, country sheets, trainings ...).
- **A methodology for identifying and maturing innovative products and services** has been created. Accessible in the VRC, this methodology is aimed at innovative SMEs that seek the technological maturation of their products and services thanks to the use of space and digital data, to support their internationalization. More than 40 SMEs have participated in the process. The created methodology helps, among other things: designing or updating new products or services; applying rapid prototyping strategies to refine and improve new products and services; or analysing the feasibility of a new product or innovation, as well as possible challenges.
- Creation of a **methodology for international development of SMEs** through coaching, technical training and B2B sessions. 3 target countries have been selected: Mexico, Brazil and Chile and more than 20 SMEs have been lent to support. Access to the methodology is also done through the VRC and its objective is to prepare SMEs to successfully face a B2B meeting with agents, organizations, administrations etc. of international markets that may be future customers.

Project closure

The participation of NOVExport in Smart Agrifood Summit (29 and 30 September, Malaga) had two scenarios. The participation of Hubs and the following companies in the stand: **Action Tracker, Activa Proyectos Tech, UTW, Greenfield, Polar Developments, Drone Hopper y Sanzar.**

Likewise, a side event was organized in parallel to the summit as a closing of the project. The event had a representation of the Interreg Sudoe program through Mr. Alexandre Le Gall (Project Officer) and, in addition, the strategies and experiences of internationalization in Latin America within the framework of the NOVExport project were addressed and the results of the project were presented.

In this event, there was also a round table in which 4 SMEs participating in NOVExport: Action Tracker, UTW, Polar Developments, and Greenfield, shared their experience in the markets in Latin America and how their participation in the project has been.