



Governance, Innovation and Sustainability
Performance of French Wine Cooperatives



Context

The 600 cooperatives and federations of wine cooperatives, which represent more than 40% of the wine production in France, and bring together 60% of winegrowers, are at the heart of sustainability issues.

They are facing the disrupting upstream to downstream effects of climate change, challenging cultivation practices and production methods: increased exposure to the risk of frost on the evolution of vine phenology, water shortages and periods of drought resulting in water stress, declining production, and problems of maturity.

Environmental standards have also become more stringent and consumers are increasingly sensitive to the sustainability of their food's production mode. Time is ripe for the reduction of pesticides, waste recycling and packaging, and agro-ecological practices.

The collective and democratic way of wine cooperative governance, their territorial anchoring, and their social dimension make them major players in sustainable development. They are innovating to adapt to the market and to climate and societal change, while, and this is their primary objective, remunerating at best their members (shareholders and suppliers).



Research question and scientific objective

Given these challenges and the crucial role of cooperatives in the wine sector, **the Innogouv project**, funded by the French National Research Agency, led by L'Institut Agro Montpellier and the UMR MoISA, aims to answer the following question:

How does the governance of wine cooperatives influence innovation and sustainability performance in these specific organisations?

This research programme runs from 2023 to early 2027 and pursues both scientific and operational objectives, closely linked to the concerns of professionals in the sector, in all French vineyards.

Our scientific objective is to **understand the extent to which cooperative governance contributes to the development** of technological (use of digital technology in vineyards and new grape varieties) and organisational innovations, and whether these can in turn influence the sustainability performance of wine cooperatives.



Why participate in the Innogouv project?

A participatory project for wine cooperatives and their members

- To analyse decision and management mechanisms for innovation and sustainability performance.
- To assist wine cooperative leaders and winegrower members to improve their competitiveness.
- To meet the challenge of sustainability through different forms of innovation.
- To share thoughts and experiences on sustainable practices.

A project with operational scope

- To analyse the steering and governance levers to cope with climate change, economic changes, and changing consumption patterns.
- To highlight best practices and success factors.
- To contribute to improving the economic performance of cooperatives and their members.



Project organization

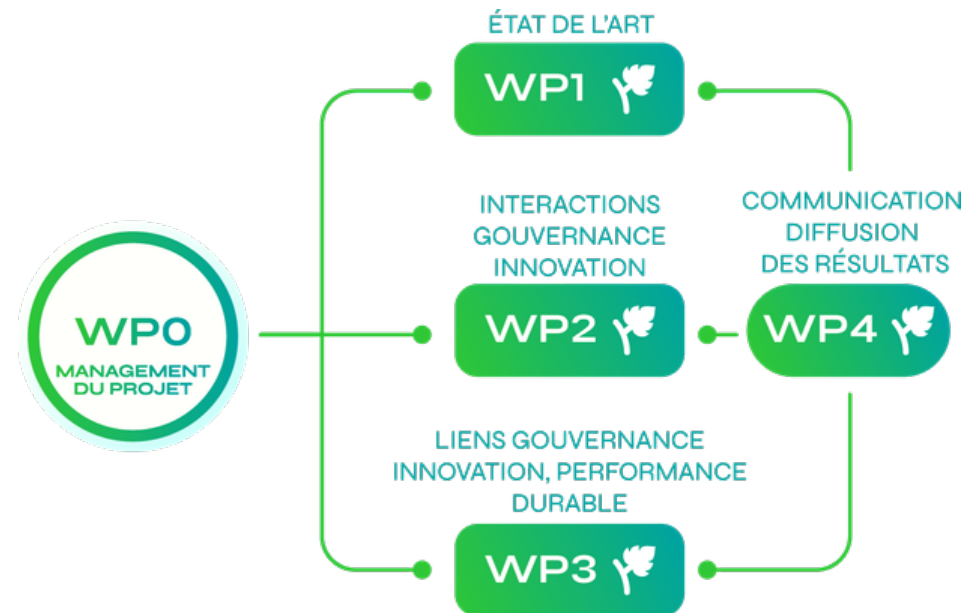
In partnership with LCA Vignerons Coopérateurs, the Wine Cooperative Institute (ICV), INRAE Transfer, the High Council for Agricultural Cooperation (HCCA) and the National Revision / Review Association (ANR), the Innogouv research project brings together more than **15 researchers from the human and social sciences** (economics, management, sociology), **as well as the hard sciences** (agronomy, genetics, environment), from **6 different laboratories**.

It is structured around 3 working axis or Work Packages (WP):

1) **WP1, led by Louis-Antoine SAÏSSET** (L'Institut Agro Montpellier) addresses the state of the art: it should allow exploring, from a theoretical and bibliographical point of view, **governance, innovation and sustainability performance**.

2) **WP2, led by Leila TEMRI** (L'Institut Agro Montpellier), focuses on **the analysis of interactions between governance and innovation** within wine cooperatives. It is based on qualitative interviews with 20 to 30 cooperatives, in 2023-2024

3) **WP3, led by Geoffroy ENJOLRAS** (Grenoble-Alpes University), studies the **complex links** between governance, innovation and sustainability performance. It is based both on interviews and case studies (including the analysis of the organisational life cycle of a cooperative), and a large survey scheduled for 2024 of 150-200 co-operatives.



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