



## ACTIVITY REPORT – AREPO

January 2017 – September 2017

### MEMBER REGIONS

In 2016, AREPO received 26 membership fees. In 2017, we welcomed two new Regions as observers: Western Macedonia and Thessaly. Until September 1<sup>st</sup>, 19 Regions paid the membership fees for 2017.

### EUROPEAN POLICIES

#### COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

In February 2017, the EC launched a public **consultation on the future of the CAP post 2020**, with the aim to **publish a Communication on modernisation and simplification of the CAP before the end of 2017**.

AREPO contributed to the consultation with a position paper that calls for "[A new CAP for high quality food](#)". AREPO contribution highlights the impact of GIs in delivering important socio-economic and environmental public goods. Furthermore, it calls for a new CAP approach, capable to provide high quality food and to contribute to EU priorities in term of sustainable rural development.

In line with the results of the analysis on the RDP measure on quality schemes, the document identifies the difficulties and problems in the implementation and presents some guidelines for the simplification and modernisation of the current system.

Finally, AREPO presented the position paper to the rapporteur of the Committee of Regions on the future of CAP post 2020, Mr Guillaume Cros.

#### PROMOTION POLICY

On January 31<sup>st</sup> 2017, AREPO participated in the **Infoday on promotion** and prepared a **descriptive note concerning the promotion policy** ([click here to consult the presentations](#)). The document presents the main features of the new policy, the priorities of the annual work programme for 2017 and some practical information and relevant links.

The [annual work programme \(AWP\) for 2017](#) for EU agricultural products, with an **increased budget of €133 million**, again puts **emphasis on products under EU quality schemes**, from the outermost regions and from organic production.

**New CHAFEA platform on promotion:** CHAFEA launched a new platform entirely dedicated to promotion policy. This instrument gather together in one website all the statistics and market analysis, the call for project as well as a new official instrument for partner search.

**New elements of the 2018 AWP:** During the meeting of the civil dialogue group quality and promotion held on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017, the EC presented two new envelopes for the 2018 AWP, to promote: 1) **sheep/goat meat products**, to highlight the sustainable aspect of sheep/goat production; 2) **healthy eating and fruit and vegetables consumption** in the internal market. Nevertheless, **2018 AWP** is still under discussion and will be **adopted around October/November 2017**, while the **call for proposals will be published in January 2018**.

#### REVIEW OF ORGANIC REGULATION

After three years of negotiations, **on 28 June 2017** the Maltese presidency and the European Parliament reached a **preliminary agreement on the review of the existing EU rules on organic production** and labelling of organic products.



The new rules aim at harmonising and simplifying the production rules and a number of past exceptions and derogations will be phased out, subject to relevant Commission reports. The main points of the preliminary agreement establish as follows:

- **Scope: enlarged to cover a wider list of products** (e.g. salt, cork, beeswax, maté, vine leaves, palm hearts) and additional production rules (e.g. deer, rabbits and poultry);
- **Controls:** the new regulation introduces **checks on retailers** and a **risk-based approach** to controls;
- **Imports:** the '**compliance system**' will become the rule in the recognition of the private control bodies in third countries. Thus, these bodies will have to comply with EU production and control rules when deciding whether a product to be exported to the EU market is organic or not;
- **Group certification:** introduction of a new system of group certification that should make it easier for small farmers to switch to organic farming by reducing inspection and certification costs, as well as the related administrative burden;
- **Pesticides:** to take account of the different situations of different MS, the new regulation builds flexibility regarding measures to be taken in the presence of non-authorised substances. Those countries already having in place national rules establishing thresholds for non-authorised substances will be able to maintain them. Four years after the entry into force of the new rules, the EC should assess national rules and practices in the field and could also table a legislative proposal for further harmonization.

**Next steps:** the agreement still needs to be approved by the Council's Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA). After the formal endorsement by the Council, it will be submitted to the European Parliament for a vote at first reading and to the Council for final adoption. **The new regulation will apply from 1 July 2020.**

---

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

In occasion of the plenary meeting that was held in Brussels on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017, AREPO signed a **cooperation agreement with the SYAL**, a **Research Group** aiming to promote research on localised agrifood systems at the European level. In the cooperation agreement, SYAL undertakes to participate actively in AREPO scientific committee, to provide scientific support for AREPO activities and to invite AREPO to its own events.

Furthermore, In order to work more effectively on R&I, AREPO decided to set up a **scientific committee based on the SYAL coordination committee and composed of research centres/universities from AREPO regions. This body should work in constant interaction with AREPO member Regions.** On January 24<sup>th</sup>, AREPO organized the first working meeting with the SYAL coordination committee, the Master Food Identity and the regions corresponding to these institutions to create a first connection and interaction.

Moreover, AREPO in collaboration with ERIAFF network and the General Secretariat of the EIP AGRI [launched the survey](#) on the implementation of **operational groups**. Until July 31<sup>st</sup>, we were able to collect 21 contributions from AREPO and ERIAFF member Regions and we prepared a comparative analysis of the results.

Finally, AREPO has been invited to participate in the Agri Innovation Summit (AIS 2017) that will be held in Lisbon on October 11-12, 2017.

---

## TRADE AGREEMENTS

**Bilateral agreement EU-China:** on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017, the EU and China agreed to formally publish a list of 200 European and Chinese GIs -100 from each side- that will be considered for protection through a bilateral agreement to be concluded in 2017. Find here the [EC press release](#) and the [list of GIs](#). The list cannot be modified at the moment. Nevertheless, the EC started to consult the Member States concerning the definition of another list that should be presented to China after the entry into force of the bilateral agreement.



**Economic Partnership Agreement between EU and Japan:** on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2017, the EU and Japan have reached an agreement in principle on the main elements of an Economic Partnership Agreement. A list of more than 200 European GIs that should be protected in future under the agreement will be published by the EC this autumn. Find here the [EC press release](#) and the [website dedicated to the agreement](#).

## COOPERATION WITH EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS

### COMMISSION

Participation in **3 DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Groups**: "quality and promotion" (2 seats), "organic agriculture" (2 seats), and "rural development" (1 seat).

Moreover, we participate also in the **Civil Dialogue Group of DG Trade**, to monitor the evolution of the bilateral free trade agreements, with special attention on the protection of Geographical Indications.

On July 7<sup>th</sup> 2017, **AREPO has been invited to participate in the high level conference "CAP: Have your Say!"** organised by the European Commission. In that occasion, the EC presented the results of the public consultation on the future of CAP that will feed the EC Communication on the modernization and simplification of the CAP.

Finally, the head of unit in charge of geographical indications (DG AGRI B.3), Mr **Francis Fay**, and the deputy head of unit in charge of research and innovation (DG AGRI B.2), Mr **Alberto D'Avino**, participated in our plenary meeting, held on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament replies positively to our requests. Some of the most influent MEPs in the Commission on Agriculture and Rural Development have participated in our General Assemblies. In addition, AREPO is permanently invited to participate in the **Intergroup on wines, spirits and quality foodstuffs**, chaired by MEP Herbert Dorfmann.

## COOPERATION WITH PARTNER AND FRIEND ORGANIZATIONS

AREPO has worked with **IFOAM** about the revision of the organic farming regulation.

**Qualivita**: cooperation for the promotion of new Geographical Indications, publication of a trimestral report on AREPO website (ex. <http://www.arepoquality.eu/en/news/1423/19-oct>).

**European Countryside Movement (MER)**: collaboration and exchange of information on the ENRD's Steering Group and Intergroup on Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas ([RUMRA](#)).

**Euromontana**: exchange and collaboration concerning the optional quality term "mountain product".

**OriGIn**: collaboration on the development of sustainable strategies and tools for GIs. Furthermore, AREPO will participate in the General Assembly of OriGIn that will be held in Treviso (Veneto) on October 17-19, 2019.

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the majority of these organisations will meet in Bergamo (Lombardia), to develop a common position on the recognition of GIs that will be presented to the **G7 agriculture minister**.

### EVENTS

AREPO participated to the following **workshops and conferences** (February – September 2017):

- **XV ERIAFF technical meeting** (23/02/17, Brussels): AREPO presented the preliminary results of the survey on RDP measure 16.01 on operational groups.



- “The future of CAP post 2020” - [conference](#) and [stakeholder meeting](#) with the CoR rapporteur, **Guillaume Cros**, organised by the Committee of Regions (08/03/17, CdR, Brussels): AREPO contributed to the discussion on the future of CAP highlighting the positive impact of GIs in term of socio-economic and environmental challenges we have to face.
- [ORIGO 2017 – Global Forum on Geographical Indications](#) (11-13/04/17, Parma): Origo is the first European and international event for the promotion of quality agri-food products worldwide. It has been organised by the Italian Government and Emilia-Romagna Region, in partnership with the EC, the Parma Industrialists’ Association and Parma Exhibition Centre. The Secretary General participated in the **conference**. Furthermore, AREPO contributed to the organisation of the B2B space, giving the possibility to producers of our Member Regions to use our stand. Many Regions have also provided products for the tasting.
- **Geographical Indications Sustainability Manifest Inception Workshop organised by OriGIn** (04/05/17, Geneva): OriGIn has shared and discussed with the participants the progress made, working with FAO, on the development of sustainable strategies and tools to help GIs adapt to consumer demands and to enable producers to better promote the quality linked to origin products.
- [XV Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists](#) (EAAE) “**Towards sustainable agri-food systems**” organised by the University of Parma (29/08-01/09/17, Parma). AREPO contributed to the session on the evolution of GIs quality standards, with a presentation concerning “**The Role of Regions in the process of modification of GI product specifications**”.
- **Diploma Ceremony of the Master Food Identity** (14/09/17, Angers): AREPO participated to the conference with a presentation on the role of our regional network in protecting and promoting GIs.
- **Launch conference for the project Apulian Life Style** (14/09/17, Bari - Puglia).

## EUROPEAN PROJECTS

### **STRENGTH2FOOD** (HORIZON 2020 CALL “SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHAINS THROUGH PUBLIC POLICIES”)

[Strength2Food](#) is a 5-year EU-funded project that started in March 2016. It aims at providing the EU and its Member States with evidence-based recommendations on quality policy implementation. AREPO has been invited to participate in this project as an expert **member of the Stakeholder Advisory Board (SAB)**. [The first annual meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Board](#) was held on **April 19<sup>th</sup>** in Barcelona.

### **AGROSMARTcoop** (INTERREG SUDOE PROGRAMME)

AGROSMARTcoop « **Space for the integration, competitiveness and intelligent economic growth of agri-food cooperatives in the SUDOE rural areas** » is a European project cofinanced by the Interreg Sudoe programme 2014-2020 which aims to attenuate the disadvantages of rural areas belonging to the Sudoe and to promote their development through the support of their agri-food cooperatives.

For more information consult the project website: <http://www.agrosmartcoop.eu/>