



## AREPO SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

The [Association of European Regions for Products of Origin \(AREPO\)](#) is a network of Regions and producer associations that deals with products of origin and EU quality schemes. It represents 33 European regions and over 700 associations of producers for over 50% of European GIs.

**AREPO main mission is to promote and defend the mutual interests of regions and producers involved in the valorisation of products of origin at EU and global level.**

In order to achieve its goals concerning defense, development and promotion of GIs and other EU quality systems, AREPO, together with its Member Regions and its producers, bases its actions on political considerations supported by scientific and technical data.

For this reason, **in 2017 AREPO in collaboration with the European Research Group on Localised Agrifood Systems (ERG SYAL) started building its scientific network**, aiming at creating an internal exchange and platform for discussion between the research world and AREPO member Regions and producers.

## STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

**AREPO Scientific Council** is a collegial consultative body open to experts from all universities and research centres in AREPO member regions.

Inside the Council, the **Scientific Committee** acts as a coordinating or **steering** body composed of experts identified and invited by the AREPO secretariat. AREPO's secretariat also identifies a **coordinator** who leads the work of the scientific committee.

In order to strengthen the role of the Scientific Council and ensure its effectiveness, AREPO would like to expand the participation of experts and improve the geographical coverage. The ambition in the medium term would be to have at least one member from each of AREPO member regions, without excluding competent experts from other European regions.

**Attention:** Experts participate **on a voluntary basis on their own behalf**. They will not represent the position of their own organization of origin, which might later be associated as an AREPO Associate Member. If universities or other research centres should be interested at a later stage in formally recognize the collaboration of its expert with AREPO, a “Memorandum of Understanding”, with no financial implication for the interested organisations, could be adopted.

## SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

### SCOPE, CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

The **main scope** of the activities carried out by the Scientific Council will be focused on how Regions could use origin products and different valorisation initiatives through quality schemes as a tool to develop and reinforce localised agri-food systems, anchoring productive activities and supporting territorial development. AREPO endorses **localised agri-food systems (LAFS) approach** as a conceptual approach and working method within the Scientific Council.

**Concerning the field of expertise for the Scientific Council**, LAFS requires a **multidisciplinary approach** integrating experts from different disciplines, from natural and biotechnical sciences to social sciences.



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## AIMS

The activity of AREPO Scientific Council on Localized Agrifood Systems, origin products and EU quality systems aims at:

- developing common actions on education, socio-economic analysis, and exchange of good-practices concerning rural and territorial development;
- building common positions and actions with the support of scientific information produced by the experts participating in the Scientific Council;
- defining together questions and research needs concerning LAFS, origin products and EU quality systems;
- strengthening the European research and innovation policy in favor of LAFS, origin products and EU quality systems;
- Increasing support and funding at EU level on education and training programmes on GIs and EU quality systems.

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## PRIORITY THEMES

The main priority working themes for 2020 and beyond are the following:

1. As a consequence of **Covid-19 emergency**:
  - Analysis and sharing of good practices from our member Regions to support the agri-food sector during the health crisis;
  - Elaboration and sharing of public policy recommendations aimed at supporting short supply chains and the development of local/regional agri-food policies;
2. **Farm to fork strategy (F2F)**: a follow-up of this strategy is ever more relevant in the context of the Covid-19 crisis as it has emphasized the importance of local food supply;
3. **Revision of EU quality policy**;
4. Inventory and analysis work on the **formative offer** concerning GIs, in order to identify the needs that remain unanswered (e.g. training needs for professionals).

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## ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS

AREPO proposes the following set of activities to carry out the work of the Scientific Council:

- **Periodic meetings** by videoconference (at least one per year) to work on the identified themes;
- **At least one physical meeting per year** in occasion of AREPO General Assemblies in order to strengthen the link between the Scientific Council and AREPO regions and producers. These events will be structured around scientific presentations followed by feedback and recommendations from AREPO members;
- **Dissemination of research results to AREPO members**: publication of articles on the AREPO website + email to members (e.g. every 3 months) to send out the latest publications concerning GIs;
- **Consultation of the experts** within the Scientific Council **to develop AREPO position on the priority themes.**



## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The **Scientific Committee** acts as a coordinating and **steering** body inside the Scientific Council.

### MEMBERSHIP

It is composed by members of the Scientific Council identified and invited by the AREPO secretariat in accordance with AREPO Executive Board.

At present, the Scientific Committee is made up of experts from the following universities / research centres: CIRAD, ESA d'Angers / Master Food Identity, University of Parma, University of Florence.

### COORDINATION

AREPO's secretariat also identifies a coordinator who leads the work of the Scientific Committee.

### MEETINGS

In addition to the Scientific Council meetings, the Scientific Committee meets virtually each 3 months.

### AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

The Scientific Committee identifies the strategic guidelines and themes to be submitted to the Council.

Furthermore, the Committee prepares the Council meetings.

Finally, the Council promotes scientific debate on origin products and EU quality schemes in scientific congresses and venues, by stimulating exchanges and building connections between research and policy-making.