

WORK PROGRAMME 2020

During last AREPO General Assembly, held in Brussels on 18 October 2019, the President presented to the plenary the main activities that AREPO would have carried out all along 2020.

Following the exceptional circumstances due to COVID-19 emergency, the operativity of EU Institutions has been reduced, with the cancelling of every meeting and conference. Furthermore, AREPO offices in Brussels and Bordeaux had to comply with the measures taken respectively by the Belgian and French governments. As a result, a remote working period has started until further notice, including the annulment of any missions planned in our member Regions and reduced interactions with EU Institutions.

Although the unusual situation all Europe is facing, our commitment to our member Regions will remain untouched.

Hereby, we lay out AREPO work program for 2020, with little changes and adaptations for the coming months.

We just remind that AREPO's Bordeaux office is free of charge for AREPO, except the travel costs which will be near zero € during the next weeks. During the COVID period, the main lobbying activities will be concentrated on AREPO's Brussels office with the Secretary General supervision from Bordeaux.

1. EU POLICIES

- AREPO will continue monitoring and update its members on the negotiations on the revision of **Common Agricultural Policy**, in order to assure the right recognition and support for quality and origin products in the final text. Particular attention will be place on the amendments to Regulation 1151/12 on quality schemes;
- In line with European Commission priority of strengthening EU Geographical Indications, AREPO will keep monitoring progress concerning **evaluation of EU quality policy**, run by the European Commission through the public consultation closed on February 3rd, 2020. We remind you that AREPO replied to the consultation and joined a position paper with evidence-based policy recommendation;
- AREPO will keep setting forth its position on the **"Farm to Fork" strategy** and keep monitoring all related developments;
- As stated during October General Assembly, our positions and work will include as well the demands of ultra-peripheral regions, in order to give voice to the different needs of our Regions;
- We will keep monitoring and updating our members concerning the bilateral agreements between the EU and third countries;
- AREPO will continue strengthening its contacts and collaboration with the representatives of EU institutions in order to promote and support GIs.

2. STUDIES

AREPO has put in place a strategy for carrying out the studies proposed during the last General Assembly. We will work on the following topics:

- **Small PDOs/PGIs producers;**
- PDOs/PGIs used as **ingredients** in processed products;
- Dissemination of the study on the **role of Regions in the process of modification of GIs product specifications.**

3. INTERNSHIPS

AREPO will continue working on the setting up of a **network of GI producers that could host students for internships or research for their thesis.** This network is open to all AREPO's partner Universities and would be a great opportunity to carry out studies addressing the needs of AREPO regions and producers.

In 2020, our team will be joined by a new intern from University of Parma. Her internship programme will be focused on the **realization of the study on GIs as ingredients in processed products.**

AREPO will create a registration list of student internships from academic institutions of the member regions which is available and accessible through the website.

4. EUROPEAN PROJECTS

- As part of the Stakeholder Advisory Board of the **Strenght2food project**, we will collaborate in the organisation of a conference in Brussels, aiming at discussing and elaborating policy recommendations on quality policy. The conference will be organised in the second half of 2020, in the framework of our General Assembly, simultaneously with the conclusion of the Commission evaluation process on quality policy.
- **AGROSMARTglobal** (Interreg Sudoe Programme): started in October 2019, AREPO has found a real interest in this project for the activities dedicated to the **protection of Geographical Indications on the Internet**, which is a real challenge in the current context, as well as for the activities dedicated to the **promotion and marketing of GIs on the Internet in order to make existing information on GIs and their specific production characteristics accessible through effective communication tools for consumers.** AREPO will also have a key role in promoting, networking and disseminating results to strategic political representatives and has a **total budget of €118.360**, 75% of which is co-financed by the ERDF, to implement its activities.
- **MOVING:** The Horizon 2020 project MOVING - Valuing the Mountain through Interconnectivity and Green Growth (call RUR-01), after two selection phases, was finally approved in December 2019. It is now in the phase of **grant agreement preparation and it should start in September 2020.** Its overall objective is to build capacity and co-develop policy frameworks across Europe for the establishment of new or improved value chains that would contribute to the resilience and sustainability of mountain areas, by enhancing local assets and providing private and public goods. AREPO will contribute to this project by involving regional/local authorities and producer associations in the mountain areas of its member Regions, providing its expertise in policy evaluation and its experience in promoting and disseminating the project's results. AREPO has a **total budget of €85.600**, 100% financed by H2020 programme.

5. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

One of the priorities for 2020 is **relaunching the work of AREPO Scientific Committee** and strengthen our collaboration with our associate members.

6. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Due to exceptional circumstances related to the COVID-19 emergency, AREPO first annual General Assembly has been cancelled.

These months will be dedicated to the organisation of the second General Assembly that will be held in Brussels this autumn. In that occasion, we plan to organise a conference of the Strength2Food project, aiming at discussing and elaborating policy recommendations on quality policy.

We will also consider the possibility to organise events for the promotion of GIs, if the situation related to the COVID-19 emergency will allow it.

7. AREPO WEBSITE

AREPO website is currently under maintenance. It is keeping all its functionalities but changes are about to be performed, in order to update its content. Furthermore, we will work for creating the following sections:

- **Bibliography on studies on Geographical Indications** and related issues;
- **Map on training offers of Universities** of our member regions, providing courses entirely dedicated to geographical indications and quality schemes.

8. COMMUNICATION

AREPO social media will keep posting news on EU agricultural policy and all related issues. In particular, we will edit a series of articles dedicated to share the measures taken by EU and national governments, as well as by AREPO member Regions to face the negative effects of Covid-19 on agri-food and wine sectors. In this difficult and unprecedented moments, AREPO wants to support its members facilitating exchanges and cooperation in order to help farmers and GIs food and wine producers.

In line with our mission and with the aim of better promote our members, we intend to develop a communication strategy based on tweets and posts dedicated to our member regions. The main intention is to present our Regions through their PDO and PGIs.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

In order to better comply with Belgian labour law, AREPO will update the **Work Regulation** and the **Comprehensive Risk Prevention Plan**, mandatory documents for any association or company employing people in Belgium irrespective of whether they are based within Belgian territory. The former features mandatory and optional provisions concerning working conditions and environment, while the latter deals with risks prevention activities to be developed and implemented, in order to be able to prevent, and if necessary, manage risks at work.