

## ACTIVITY REPORT October 2021 – October 2022

### 1. MEMBERS

In 2022, AREPO received 26 membership fees. 4 contributions are still pending and the regions concerned have indicated that it is due to delay in the administrative process.

AREPO currently represents 33 Regions from 8 different Member States.

The French region Grand-Est joined AREPO as observer in October 2022.

In March 2022, AREPO welcomed the FEVAO - Fédération des Viandes AOP de France as associate member.

### 2. AREPO INTERNAL MEETINGS

#### 2.1 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

The first meeting of the new AREPO Executive Board was held on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The members of the Board discussed the organisation of the spring and autumn General Assembly, as well as AREPO's actions and planned activities for 2022.

The second meeting of the AREPO Executive Board was held on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022, to discuss and approve the agenda of the General Assembly in Würzburg, as well as the last updates on AREPO's policy priorities.

### 3. EUROPEAN POLICIES

#### 3.1 EU QUALITY POLICY

Following the process of evaluation of EU Quality ([click here to consult the feedback presented by AREPO to the roadmap](#); [click here to read the position paper submitted on the occasion of the public consultation](#)), its revision began with the **Roadmap for the revision of the EU GIs system** ([click here to read AREPO position](#)), followed by the opening of a **Public consultation on the Revision of EU geographical indications scheme**, in January 2021. AREPO replied to the public consultation and submitted a [position paper](#) addressing the proposals and objectives of the consultation.

Monitoring the progress of the work of the European Commission (EC), in February 2022, AREPO, together with AREV, EFOR and origIn EU, presented an [open letter to the EU Institutions](#), expressing concern about the EC's intention to transfer competences over the management of product specifications (registration of new GIs and modifications of product specifications) to the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).

Furthermore, with the aim to understand and discuss the competences that EUIPO has developed on GIs as well as its relation with DG Agri of the European Commission, **AREPO set up a technical group which met EUIPO on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2022 during a Zoom webinar** ([click here to read the report of the meeting](#)).

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, AREPO President, **Ms Begoña García Bernal**, had a meeting with EUIPO Executive Director, **Mr Christian Archambeau**, to discuss the concerns raised by AREPO on the involvement of EUIPO in the management of the EU GI system.

On the same day, the EC published the [proposal for a regulation on the revision of the EU GI system](#). AREPO shared an analysis with its members in order to begin the internal discussion on the topic. [Click here to read the analysis](#).

The GI revision was also the main topic discussed during the thematic part of the AREPO General Assembly held on 28 April 2022 in Brussels. The afternoon session was dedicated to a debate on the revision that saw, besides **Ms Begoña García Bernal**, President of AREPO and **Mr Nicola Bertinelli**, Vice-President of AREPO, the participation of **Mr Joao Onofre**, Head of Unit F3 on Geographical Indications of the DG Agri of the European

Commission; **Mr Arūnas Želvys**, Liaison Officer at EUIPO Brussels Liaison Office; **Ms Karine Gloanec Maurin** (FR/PES), Rapporteur on the opinion of the European Committee of the Regions; **Irène Tolleret MEP** (Renew Europe), Shadow Rapporteur on the European Parliament report on the revision of EU GIs system and Co-chair of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Wines, Spirits, Quality Products (through a video message); as well as the Regional Ministers attending the GA.

During summer, AREPO set up a **technical working group**, made up of experts from its member regions and members of its Scientific Committee, to start discussing the main elements of the EC proposal for a regulation, as well as **drafting some amendments' proposals** to contribute to the next steps of the legislative process. The amendments' proposals have been shared with the rest of the AREPO members and open for feedback and further inputs in order to reach a consolidated version. This finalised document will be shared with MEPs of the Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) Committee and discussed during bilateral meetings with them. Furthermore, AREPO will also meet some members of the EP Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI), involved as associated committee in the procedure on the topics related to intellectual property rights.

Furthermore, on April 19<sup>th</sup> the Secretary General, Laurent Gomez, represented AREPO during a technical group on the revision of EU GIs organised by the EESC - European Economic and Social Committee, together with other GIs' stakeholders and the DG Agri of the European Commission. On 17 June 2022, AREPO Policy Officer, Giulia Scaglioni, was also invited as speaker at the Thematic Study Group on Sustainable Food Systems of the European Economic and Social Committee to present GIs contribution to sustainability.

Additionally, in April 2022, AREPO was appointed by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) as expert to support the CoR rapporteur, **Ms Karine Gloanec Maurin** (President of the Communauté de communes des Collines du Perche, First Deputy Mayor of Couëtron au Perche and Regional Councillor for Europe and International Economic Development - Centre-Val de Loire Region), in the drafting of the CoR opinion on the regulation on the revision of the EU GI system. **The [opinion](#) was adopted unanimously by the NAT Committee of the CoR on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**

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### 3.3 FARM 2 FORK STRATEGY

#### 3.3.1 FRONT-OF-PACK NUTRITION LABELLING (FOPNL)

On **27 October 2021**, AREPO organised the online public conference "*EU Geographical Indications and Nutrition Labelling: Can a score provide meaningful information to consumers?*".

This multi-stakeholder event gathered more than 160 participants from all over Europe, aiming to enrich the debate at EU level concerning nutrition labelling. Particularly, it has been the occasion to present to the European Institutions and relevant EU stakeholders the concerns and the perspective of EU Regions and producer associations dealing with quality products. Furthermore, it intended to consider possible ways forward to enhance the value of geographical indications in EU dietary patterns, without forgetting their primary role as tools for rural development. [Click here to read the report of the virtual conference.](#)

AREPO contributed as well to the public consultation on Food labelling - revision of rules on information provided to consumers, responding to the online questionnaire and submitting a position paper ([click here to read the position paper](#)). The European Commission was supposed to prepare an **impact assessment** and **to adopt its proposal by the end of 2022. However, a proposal is likely to be expected at the beginning of 2023.**

In December 2021, AREPO participated in an **online focus group** organised by [ICF consulting](#), under contract to DG SANTE, to carry out an external evaluation study on the revision of rules on information provided to consumers. The aim of this group was to seek feedback and opinion on the lists of objectives and criteria set for this assessment. This was followed in March 2022 by the **participation in a targeted survey and an interview on FOPNL led by ICF.**

Furthermore, on 18 March 2022, the Secretary General delivered a presentation on FOPNL during the meeting of the Board of Directors of Fedelis (Federation of Label Rouge, GIs and TSGs), associate member of AREPO.

To conclude, AREPO is supporting its Italian member regions in the organisation of an event focused on the Nutri-score, that should take place on November 30<sup>th</sup> at the European Parliament.

### 3.3.2 SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM FRAMEWORK

From 28 April 2022 to 21 July 2022, the EC opened a [public consultation on the creation of a Sustainable Food System Framework](#). This initiative aims to make the EU food system sustainable and to integrate sustainability into all food-related policies.

It will lay down general principles and objectives, together with the requirements and responsibilities of all actors in the EU food system. More specifically, it will lay down rules on: sustainability labelling of food products; minimum criteria for sustainable public procurement of food; governance and monitoring.

[Click here to read AREPO's contribution to the public consultation.](#)

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### 3.4 PROMOTION POLICY

AREPO regularly participates in the Civil Dialogue Group of DG AGRI on promotion, as well as in **the Infoday on the promotion programme** ([click here to see the presentations of the 2022 virtual event](#)), in order to update its members. Moreover, every year AREPO updates and shares with members the [descriptive note on promotion policy](#).

AREPO also continues monitoring the process of revision of EU Promotion Policy ([Click here to consult the position submitted to the related public consultation](#)). The legislative proposal was expected to be published in June 2022; however, it should be published by the end of the year, due to a lack of agreement inside the Commission concerning the list of products to be excluded from promotion (notably red meat and wine).

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### 3.5 ORGANIC FARMING

AREPO monitored the developments related to organic farming. After being postponed, the new organic regulation entered into force on 1 January 2022.

AREPO policy officers have been chosen by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) as experts to support the CoR rapporteur, Mr Uroš Brežan, Mayor of Tolmin (currently Minister for environment and space of the Republic of Slovenia), in the drafting of its [opinion on the EU action plan for organic farming](#), which was adopted by the Plenary session of the CoR on 2 December 2021.

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### 3.6 NON-AGRICULTURAL GIS

For several years AREPO has been following the developments at EU level in the field of non-agricultural GIs, calling for their recognition and laying stress on the importance for all GIs to be protected. In this framework, AREPO has been collaborating with the **French Association of Industrial and Artisanal Geographical Indications (AFIGIA)**, by supporting the setting of a lobbying strategy at EU level to put forward the demands of the sector in front of EU Institutions. This cooperation was further consolidated through a partnership agreement, [making AFIGIA one of AREPO associated members](#). Furthermore, Ms Audrey Aubard, Secretary General of AFIGIA, intervened in AREPO spring General Assembly in Brussels, providing for an update on the state of play of an EU-wide protection system for industrial and craft GIs (ICGI).

AREPO contributed to the Roadmap and the Public Consultation opened by EC on the topic (Click here to read [AREPO contribution to the Roadmap](#) and [AREPO contribution to the Public Consultation](#)). AREPO also presented its position during the [Stakeholders consultation on Protecting Industrial and Craft Geographical Indications in the EU](#), organised by the ECON Commission of the Committee of the Regions in the light of the drafting of the related CoR opinion.

On 12 November 2021, AREPO held a meeting with DG Grow in order to discuss its position and answer to further questions concerning the system to be put into place.

Following the publication of the [legislative proposal](#) on 13 April 2022, AREPO services shared an [analysis](#) with the AREPO members.

#### 4. GIs AND PUBLIC FOOD PROCUREMENT

AREPO started monitoring the topic of public food procurement within the context of the Strength2food project. On this basis and following a proposal of the Region of Catalunya, AREPO has started working on public food procurement, focusing on the use of local products and PDOs and PGIs in public menus.

The preliminary work on this topic consisted of a collect of information, through literature and the definition of a general bibliography and also through existing legislation. After the sharing of the report drafted, ([click here to consult it](#)) AREPO regions have been invited to express their interest in order to set up a working group on the topic. However, very few regions replied positively so far, putting this area of activity on hold until we will reach a larger and most diversified group in terms of geographical area.

This working group should firstly work on understanding if specific laws covering this subject are in place in some regions. Secondly, it should explore how to promote this initiative and encourage especially public administrations to include PDO and PGI products in the menus they propose, with the ultimate aim of facilitating the consumption and improving consumers recognition.

Drawing on the conclusion of the AREPO report, within the context of the GI revision AREPO is proposing an amendment aiming to add a new whereas encouraging to include geographical indications in the mandatory minimum criteria for sustainable food procurement.

#### 5. STUDIES

##### 5.1 STUDY ON PROBLEMS AND NEEDS OF SMALL GIS – MATTEO PONZA, STAGIAIRE AREPO

Matteo Ponza, stagiaire at AREPO from May 2021 to May 2022, carried out a **study on the problems and needs of small and medium GIs**, focusing especially on sustainability issues. The study was published in May 2022, [click here to download the full version](#). Executive summaries are available in [EL](#); [EN](#); [ES](#); [FR](#); [IT](#).

The research helped developing at a first stage a database including all GIs represented in AREPO and has set the criteria to define small and medium GIs. Then, a survey was submitted to AREPO Regions in order to collect information for the study. This step was followed by the identification of specific case studies and interviews with producers. The ultimate aim of the study was to elaborate recommendations to deal with sustainability issues for small and medium-sized GIs and to prevent them from disappearing.

#### 6. SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

The Scientific Council has welcomed new academics and researchers from research centres and universities situated in some of our member regions in Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, as well as experts in the field of Geographical Indications and Intellectual property coming from non-member regions or countries not represented within AREPO (Austria, England).

Increasing the occasions of exchange between the Scientific Council and the rest of AREPO members has been set as a priority. The presence of scientists to feed the political and technical reflections of AREPO's members is an incredible added value for AREPO as it allows to bring objective elements to AREPO's positions or to orientate its work.

A meeting of the Scientific Council was held online on 29 April 2022 to discuss the main points of the proposal for a regulation on the new EU GI system. [Click here to read the report](#).

Members of the steering body of the Scientific Council, the AREPO Scientific Committee, contributed to the meetings of the working group on the GI revision. Click here to read the detailed [description of the structure of AREPO Scientific Council](#).

## 7. COOPERATION WITH EU INSTITUTIONS

### 7.1 EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Participation in **3 Civil Dialogue Groups of DG AGRI**: "Quality and Promotion" (2 seats), "Organic Farming" (2 seats) and "Rural Development" (1 seat). This is one of AREPO's strengths and shows the recognition of its legitimacy by the EC.

Participation in the **Civil Society Dialogue of DG TRADE** to monitor the evolution of bilateral free trade agreements, with particular attention to the protection of GIs.

AREPO has been regularly invited to high-level conferences of DG AGRI. Furthermore, AREPO is in contact with DG SANTE in charge of the topics concerning Farm to Fork, especially nutrition labelling. Ms Sabine Pelsser, Head of Unit E.1, Food information and composition, DG Sante, participated in our public conference *"EU Geographical Indications and Nutrition Labelling: Can a score provide meaningful information to consumers?"*.

### 7.2 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament reacts positively to our demands.

AREPO has established solid relations with several MEPs of the AGRI Committee sensitive to the topic of quality (Clara Aguilera, Eric Andrieu, Isabel Carvalhais, Paolo De Castro, Jérémy Decerle, Herbert Dorfmann, Martin Häusling, Irène Tolleret).

Proof of this solid relationship is the objectives achieved in the complex process of CAP reform, where many of our proposals for amendments have been tabled by MEPs and contributed to the formulation of the final text ([consult here AREPO analysis of the final text](#)).

More recently, AREPO has developed further relations with MEPs that are working on the legislative proposal on GIs in order to identify areas of common work and table AREPO amendments' proposals.

**MEP Paolo De Castro** (S&D) participated in the meeting of the AREPO Board of Producers held in Brussels on 27 April 2022 ([click here to read the report](#)) to discuss its intentions concerning his work as Rapporteur for the EP on the GI revision, as well as MEP **Irène Tolleret** (Renew Europe) sent a video-message on the GI revision for our April General Assembly.

Furthermore, AREPO is a member of the **Intergroup on wines, alcoholic beverages and quality food**, chaired by MEP **Irène Tolleret** (Renew Europe). In the meeting of the intergroup held on 10 November 2021, preparing the debate before the publication of the legislative proposal on GIs, AREPO President, Ms Garcia Bernal was invited as speaker to present AREPO position on the revision. [Click here to read the press release](#).

Last, since February 2020, the **'Linking the Levels' Unit (LINK) at the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS) of the European Parliament**, recognised AREPO as a well-established European Association and showed interest in cooperating with us. This unit, recently created for bringing together the local, regional, national and European levels of decision-making in Europe, aims to contribute to better EU law making.

### 7.3 EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

**AREPO is often involved in contributing to the work of the NAT Commission of the Committee of the Regions, providing its expertise on several topics.**

Specifically, AREPO Policy officers worked as experts to support the CoR rapporteur, **Mr Uroš Brežan** (currently Minister for environment and space of the Republic of Slovenia), in the drafting of its opinion on the EU action plan for organic farming. The opinion was adopted by the 147<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Committee of the Regions in December 2021.

Furthermore, following the publication of the EC proposal for a regulation on GI revision, AREPO Policy Officers have been appointed as expert, supporting the CoR rapporteur for the opinion on the revision of the EU GI system, **Ms Karine Gloanec-Maurin**. Particularly, AREPO supported the rapporteur during meeting with other institutional actors and stakeholders, and elaborated the draft opinion working out amendment proposals and policy recommendation on the text of the European Commission, based on AREPO internal work and the interaction with other GI stakeholder at EU level. **The [opinion](#) was welcomed by the NAT Committee of the CoR, which adopted it unanimously on October 5th, 2022.**

To further support the work of the CoR Rapporteur, AREPO assisted her during meetings with stakeholders and EU institutions (including EUIPO). **On 11 October Ms Gloanec-Maurin met with EP rapporteur MEP Paolo De Castro, who welcomed the CoR opinion emphasising the perfect convergence of their positions.**

#### 7.4 EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

AREPO is often invited to contribute with its expertise to the work of some groups of the European Economic and Social Committee.

#### 7.5 EUIPO

Despite defending its position on the management of the EU GI system, AREPO has remained open to meet and cooperate with EUIPO.

With the aim to understand and discuss the competences that EUIPO has developed on GIs as well as its relation with DG AGRI of the European Commission, **AREPO set up a technical group which met EUIPO on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2022 during a Zoom webinar ([click here to read the report of the meeting](#)).**

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, AREPO President, **Ms Begoña García Bernal, had a meeting with EUIPO Executive Director, Mr Christian Archambeau**, to discuss the concerns raised by AREPO on the involvement of EUIPO in the management of the EU GI system.

On 31 May 2022, AREPO was invited as speaker in the webinar [The Use of Geographical Indications when GI-Protected Products are Ingredients](#), organised in the framework of the [carlPI project](#), funded under the 11th European Development Fund and implemented by EUIPO. Click here to [download the presentation](#). Click here to watch the [recording of the webinar](#).

Finally, over the summer, AREPO was invited to participate in the stakeholder public consultation concerning the update of the 2023 Guidelines on Trade Mark Practice and Guidelines on Designs Practice.

## 8. COOPERATION WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

**AREFLH:** cooperation on promotion policy and on the Farm 2 Fork strategy.

**Agriregions:** support to the maintenance of the role of Regions as managing authorities in CAP Strategic Plans and cooperation on the Farm 2 Fork strategy.

**Qualivita:** cooperation for the promotion of new Geographical Indications.

**oriGIn:** collaboration on the development of sustainable strategies and tools for GIs. Collaboration in order to defend together geographical indications at EU level, adopting a common position and lobbying strategy concerning the CAP and cooperating on the GI review. In addition, collaboration on the proposals for the Annual Work Programme and the public consultation on Promotion Policy.

**AREV:** collaboration on the GI review.

**EFOW:** collaboration on sustainability and the GI review.

**Copa-Cogeca:** collaboration on the GI review.

**European Countryside Movement (MER):** collaboration and exchange of information on the ENRD's Steering Group and Intergroup on Rural, Mountainous and Remote Areas ([RUMRA](#)). In the context of the health crisis, joint communication ["Building on the resilience of rural territories for the post-Covid-19 period"](#).

**Euromontana:** exchange and collaboration concerning the optional quality term "mountain product". Collaboration on the response to the EC public consultation on Promotion policy. Collaboration in the framework of some EU projects.

**Eurofoiegras:** cooperation and support in the consultation on marketing standards.

**AFIGIA:** cooperation in the field of non-agricultural GIs and support in the setting of a lobbying strategy at EU level in order to put forward the demands of this sector in front of EU Institutions.

**IFOAM:** cooperation in the field of organic farming.

## 9. AREPO EVENTS

- Online public conference **"EU Geographical Indications and Nutrition Labelling: Can a score provide meaningful information to consumers?"**, 27 October 2021: this multi-stakeholder event gathered more than 160 participants from all over Europe, aiming to enrich the debate at EU level concerning nutrition labelling. Particularly, it has been the occasion to present to the European Institutions and relevant EU stakeholders the concerns and the perspective of EU Regions and producer associations dealing with quality products. Furthermore, it intended to consider possible ways forward to enhance the value of geographical indications in EU dietary patterns, without forgetting their primary role as tools for rural development. [Click here to read the report of the virtual conference.](#)
- **Thematic session on the revision of the EU GI system**, 28 April 2022: during its **General Assembly in Brussels**, AREPO organised a thematic session on the revision of the EU GI system to start the debate around the proposal published by the European Commission. The session saw as speakers: Mr Joao Onofre, Head of Unit F.3 on Geographical Indications, DG Agri, European Commission; Mr Arūnas Želvys, Liaison Officer at EUIPO Brussels Liaison Office; Ms Begoña García Bernal, President of AREPO and Regional Minister for Agriculture, Rural Development, Population and Territory of the Extremadura region; Mr Nicola Bertinelli, Vice-President of AREPO and President of Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano Reggiano; Ms Karine Gloanec Maurin (FR/PES), Co-president of the rurality commission within the Association of French Mayors and President of the Communauté de communes des collines du Perche ; a Video message from MEP Irène Tolleret (Renew Europe), Shadow Rapporteur on the European Parliament report on the revision of EU GIs system and Co-chair of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Wines, Spirits, Quality Products. Furthermore, several Regional Minister attending the General Assembly participated in the debate.
- **FAO&Cirad Conference "Worldwide perspectives on Geographical Indications"**, 5-8 July, Montpellier: AREPO coordinated a session on the governance of GIs and the role of regional and local public actors, aiming to discuss the role of local and regional public actors along the process of protection and valorisation of GIs, exchanging good practices and experiences from all over the world. Many AREPO regions participated as speakers in the panel. [Click here to read the contribution submitted to the conference.](#)
- **Online presentation of the FAO guide "Evaluating geographical indications – Guide to tailor evaluations for the development and improvement of geographical indications"**, 27 September 2022. [Click here to read more.](#)

## 10. OTHER WEBINARS AND CONFERENCES

- **Nutriscore: a high-level dialogue between science, citizens, and operators** (23 November 2021, online): a high-level discussion with researchers, nutritionists, MEPs, and stakeholders to understand how this Front-of-pack label works, what are its benefits and its flaws so to set the basis for the EU debate on nutrition & education.

- [oriGIn 2021 Online conference](#) (24 November 2021, online): Parallel sessions on Sustainability; GIs groups strategies and tools to fight misleading practices; International Cooperation on GIs; Trade Agreements.
- [Online Info Day on the Calls for Proposals 2022](#) (1-2 February 2022, online): two days dedicated to the publication of the 2022 Calls for proposals for grants for information provision and promotion measures concerning agricultural products.
- [Conference on the launch of the EU Geographical Indication protection system for craft and industrial products](#) (2 March 2022, online): organised by Renew Europe to discuss the future proposal for an EU-wide system on GIs for craft and industrial products.
- [L'Europe en fait-elle assez pour une alimentation de qualité ?](#) (17 March 2022, online) : it was organised by La Maison de l'Europe - EUROPE DIRECT Limousin. Joao ONOFRE, Head of the Geographical Indications Unit at the European Commission's DG AGRI, provided an update on current policies and answered participants' questions.
- [Healthy Food Trends: Sustainability, Culture and Consumer Preferences](#) (5 April 2022, online): Hosted by NUI Galway, the one-hour webinar featured insights on the influence of sustainability, culture and consumer preferences and how they may guide SME's approach to future product development.
- ["La Riforma del Sistema delle Indicazioni Geografiche"](#), (20 April 2022): organised by Origin Italia, in collaboration with Afidop, Federdop and with the support of Fondazione Qualivita, to start discussing the EC legislative proposal on the revision of the EU GI system.
- [Menja't l'origen. Fòrum d'indicacions geogràfiques](#), (31 may 2022): an event to raise awareness on the importance of quality and origin products for EU agriculture and to stimulate the discussion on the needs of the sector. It was organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Government of Catalonia, in collaboration with AREPO. AREPO Secretary General, Laurent Gomez, was invited as speaker in the round table "Originalitat".
- [The Use of Geographical Indications when GI-Protected Products are Ingredients](#), 31 May 2022: AREPO was invited as speaker in this webinar, organised in the framework of the carIPI project, funded under the 11th European Development Fund and implemented by EUIPO. [Click here to download the presentation](#). Click here to watch the [recording of the webinar](#).
- [European Rural Network Assembly](#) (5 October 2022)
- [Launch of the new EU CAP Network](#) (6 october 2022)
- [BuyFood Toscana](#), (21 october 2022)

## 11. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Since November 2019, AREPO team has been working on setting a new communication strategy in order to find multiple tools to communicate with and reach its members as well as to better promote the activities carried out. This strategy included the **revision of the website and a better engagement on social media**.

**AREPO WEBSITE:** A new website was published **online in April 2022**. A more catchy and dynamic graphic design for a more user-friendly site where members could stay up to date and find all the news concerning AREPO activities and the EU policies followed, as well as being able to share it on social networks. We also created a section dedicated to a series of tools for GIs where you will find:

- **AREPO publications and studies;**
- **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;
- Existing databases related to GIs and EU quality schemes.



**AREPO SOCIAL MEDIA:** AREPO social media give priorities to news on GIs and EU quality policy, as well as on EU agricultural policy and all related issues. These channels are also used to promote our activities among our members and towards outsiders. In general, good engagement rate on social media. Interactions with EU Institutions accounts on social media, especially with DG AGRI and some of its representatives on Twitter. However, it should be recalled that AREPO's actions generally target a very specific audience, which is not the general public.

- [Facebook](#): 677 Likes; 725 Followers.
- [Twitter](#): 270 Followers.
- [LinkedIn](#): 501 Followers.

**AREPO IN THE PRESS:** [Euronews](#), the multilingual pan-European television channel for international news contacted AREPO for interviewing the President, Ms Begoña García Bernal, on the danger of climate change for some denominations of origin. [Click here to watch the interview](#) (currently available only in Spanish).

## 12. EUROPEAN PROJECTS

### ONGOING

#### 12.1 AGROSMARTglobal (PRIORITY AXIS 2 OF THE INTERREG SUDOE PROGRAMME 2014-2020)



The [AGROSMARTglobal project "Space for the competitiveness, promotion and intelligent international expansion of agri-food cooperatives in the Sudoe rural areas"](#) is a 3.5-year project (October 2019 - March 2023) involving 10 partners from France, Spain and Portugal and coordinated by the Union of agri-food cooperatives of Galicia (AGACA), Spain. The project is co-financed by the [Interreg Sudoe Programme 2014-2020](#) under Priority Axis 2: Promoting the competitiveness and internationalisation of the SMEs of Southwest Europe (Sudoe).

The overall objective of AGROSMARTglobal is to contribute to **alleviate the difficulties faced by rural areas in Southwest Europe** and to promote their economic development by finding efficient transnational solutions to improve the competitiveness and the internationalisation of their agri-food cooperatives.

To achieve this objective, the AGROSMARTglobal project has chosen to consolidate the [space for promotion, inter-cooperation and competitiveness of agri-food cooperatives in Sudoe](#) (launched during the [AGROSMARTcoop](#) project) by developing advanced support tools and services to strengthen their positioning and internationalisation through the **implementation of digital marketing strategies** that rely on inter-company cooperation.

AREPO is part of the AGROSMARTglobal consortium as an internal partner and plays a major role in the activities aimed at **promoting and protecting agricultural and agri-food products that benefit from European quality schemes on the Internet**. The project has identified the need to support and strengthen the promotion and protection on the Internet of quality agri-food products such as GIs, which represent an important part of exports from Southwest Europe.

To carry out this activity, AREPO - in collaboration with [UTAD](#), [IrRADIARE](#) and competent experts in the field of intellectual property - is working on the elaboration of a **"best practice" guide** for GI consortia, producer associations and cooperatives in the EU, which would aim to:

1. **Improve their knowledge on how to promote their products that benefit from EU quality schemes** (PDOs, PGIs, TSGs and organic farming) **on the Internet**, to take better advantage of their added value on international digital markets;
2. **Provide them with operational tools to protect their Geographical Indications (GIs) on the Internet**. To date, there is no strong protection for GIs with regard to the allocation of domain names. The fight against Internet fraud is essential to protect the rights of producers and consumers.

In order to develop the most relevant guide possible, AREPO has developed a survey to identify the needs of GI consortia, producer associations and cooperatives in both these areas. The survey is now closed and has been completed by around 70 GI producer groups and cooperatives.

AREPO will also play a key role in disseminating the project results to its network and to strategic political representatives, and it is in this context that AREPO will organise its major **European event for the promotion of quality and origin products** on 30 March 2023 in Brussels (Save the date!); AREPO will benefit from €26 820 co-financed at 75% by the ERDF to finance the organisation of this event during the first quarter of 2023 within the framework of the AGROSMARTglobal project in order to highlight the project during the afternoon of conferences and to allow the agri-food cooperatives of the Sudoe to promote their products of quality and origin to a large audience of agricultural stakeholders during the evening of tasting. The conference will be about the review of the geographical indications system (more information to come soon).

AREPO has a **total budget of €118,360, 75% co-financed by the ERDF**, to implement all its activities.

## 12.2 MOVING (RIA PROJECT OF THE HORIZON 2020 PROGRAMME)



**RUR-01-2019:** "Building modern rural policies on long-term visions and societal engagement"

[MOVING - MOUNTAIN VALORISATION THROUGH INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND GREEN GROWTH](#) is a four-year project (September 2020 - August 2024) gathering 23 partners and coordinated by the University of Córdoba, Spain.

The **overall objective** of MOVING is to build capacity and co-develop relevant policy frameworks across Europe for the **establishment of value chains that would contribute to the resilience and sustainability of mountain areas to climate change**. To achieve this objective, MOVING has launched a bottom-up participatory process with the value chain actors (regional and European stakeholders and policy makers): **the Community of Practice (CoP)**.

The CoP is a core feature of the project. It consists of a Science-Society-Policy interface at European level to involve different stakeholders (MOVING partners and external to the project) and at different territorial levels (regional and European) around climate change resilience of mountain value chains, and to bring together interested stakeholders to contribute to the co-creation and validation of all research outputs delivered by MOVING.

The MOVING CoP has been materialised through Multi-Actor Platforms (MAPs). MOVING has created 24 MAPs across Europe:

- **23 regional Multi-Actor Platforms (regional MAPs)**, established in the 23 reference regions identified by the project partners: they will enable the exchange of local knowledge between stakeholders from the reference regions up to the European level. To find out more about the regional MAPs, [go here](#).
- **1 European Multi-Actor Platform (EU MAP)**: it will provide a space for stakeholders that are interested to exchange, learn and interact at European level on the climate change resilience of mountain value chains. Interested in joining the EU MAP? [Find out more here](#).

AREPO is part of the MOVING consortium as an **internal partner** and will play a major role in the **evaluation of the policy recommendations** issued by the project. AREPO's main work will effectively start in 2023 when the project will start developing policy recommendations and the first results can be disseminated. However, AREPO is actively involved in the promotion of the MOVING project and the EU MAP and will organise a **webinar on November 8th 2022 on the topic of EU quality schemes and their added value for mountain value chains** ([click here for more information and registration](#)).

AREPO has a **total budget of €85 600, 100% financed by the programme**, to implement all its activities.

On 17-18 October 2022, AREPO participated in the first in-presence MOVING Steering Committee Meeting in Saignélegier (Switzerland).

### AWAITING TO BE SUBMITTED

## 12.3 HORIZON EUROPE CALL ON GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY

AREPO has identified an important topic in Horizon Europe draft work programme for 2023. It is the call "*HORIZON-CL6-2023-COMMUNITIES: Investigating the contribution of geographical indications (GIs) to sustainable development and optimising support for newly established schemes*".



The main objective of the project is to improve the design and implementation of the GI system in order to support the implementation of sustainable agriculture, healthy and sustainable food and sustainable food systems in line with the objectives of the Farm to Fork strategy.

The draft foresees a € 3 million budget in order, among other objectives, to provide a sound analysis of the state of the art research on the impacts of GIs schemes in terms of sustainability; to assess sustainability impacts of all GIs products and formulate best practices, decision tools and recommendations for producers and policy makers to improve GIs sustainability.

The official text of the call will be published in November 2022. Nevertheless, AREPO is already working with some members of its scientific council and other scientific partner to build a consortium and present a project proposal in Spring 2023.