



PRESS RELEASE

Driving a new phase of development for Geographical Indications: AREPO adopts the Mantova Declaration to shape the 2027 Action Plan

Mantova, 15 October 2026,

European Regions and producers call for an ambitious EU initiative in 2027 to strengthen Geographical Indications, support farmers' incomes and foster rural development.

The Association of European Regions for Products of Origin (AREPO), gathered in Mantova for its General Assembly, has adopted the “*Mantova Declaration on the Future of Geographical Indications*”, calling on the European Commission to give renewed political impetus to EU quality policy and ensure that Geographical Indications (GIs) deliver tangible economic benefits for producers and rural territories.

Presented by AREPO President, **Alessandro Beduschi**, Minister for Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry of the Lombardia Region, the Declaration sets out a common political vision developed through consultation with AREPO's member Regions and producer representatives.

The Declaration was unveiled during a public thematic session dedicated to the future of EU Geographical Indications, featuring high-level institutional representatives, including **Francesco Lollobrigida**, Italian Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and Forestry; **Diego Canga Fano**, Director at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI); and **Carlo Fidanza**, Member of the European Parliament, alongside other institutional and sector representatives.

Accompanied by an annex containing policy recommendations, the Declaration aims to contribute to the forthcoming EU initiative on Geographical Indications, announced by Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Christophe Hansen for 2027.

“European quality policy is not a niche policy. It is an agricultural, economic and territorial policy. It is a policy for competitiveness and for the future of Europe's rural areas,” stated **President Beduschi**.

Building on the strengthened and modernized GI system following Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, AREPO stresses that the next step must be to translate this framework into concrete opportunities for producers, value chains and rural communities.

The Mantova Declaration identifies six priorities for future EU action:



1. **Supporting GIs throughout their life cycle**, from registration to long-term economic development and resilience.
2. **Turning protection into economic value**, by strengthening producer groups, bargaining power and fairer value distribution.
3. **Bringing GIs closer to European citizens**, through stronger promotion and greater integration into tourism, gastronomy and public procurement.
4. **Preparing GI value chains for the future**, supporting generational renewal, innovation, sustainability and climate adaptation.
5. **Recognising Regions as key partners**, through stronger multilevel governance and cooperation with producer organisations.
6. **Ensuring measurable results**, with clear objectives and better monitoring, without creating additional administrative burdens.

At a time when the EU is discussing the future Common Agricultural Policy, AREPO emphasises that Geographical Indications can play a strategic role in strengthening agricultural competitiveness, supporting generational renewal and maintaining vibrant rural territories.

The Association therefore calls for a genuinely European approach, developed and implemented in cooperation with Member States, Regions and producer organisations.

“We call for an ambitious, concrete and truly European Action Plan, capable of turning protection into value, value into income, and income into the ability to continue producing in our territories, while helping to ensure the necessary generational renewal in the agricultural sector and fostering stronger, better-connected, more resilient and more prosperous rural areas”, concluded **President Beduschi**.

Through the Mantova Declaration, AREPO reaffirms its commitment to working with EU institutions to ensure that Geographical Indications remain a strategic investment in the economic and social future of Europe's rural areas.

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About AREPO

AREPO - the Association of European Regions for Products of Origin, is a network of regions and producer associations that deals with products of origin and EU quality schemes. It represents 35 European regions and over 800 associations of producers for over 60% of EU GIs.