

## Newsletter No. 5 – March 2019

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#### Partnership:

- ✓ Regional Development Agency of West Region Romania (RO) – Lead Partner
- ✓ Donegal County Council (IE)
- ✓ Derry and Strabane District Council (UK)
- ✓ Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia (FI)
- ✓ Tartu Science Park (EE)
- ✓ Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship (PL)
- ✓ Region of Crete (GR)

NICHE is an Interreg Europe Project running from 1st April 2016 until 31st March 2020. NICHE will establish effective open innovation ecosystems, at both regional and interregional level, that will bring together all the relevant actors in food sector to facilitate technology and knowledge Exchange that will be translated in New products and services.

*Dear Readers,*

*The food sector as a whole is facing major challenges that arise from changes in the sector's economic and non-economic environments. The availability of safe, sustainable and healthy food has taken a new and pressing dimension in the light of an ever-growing global population and increasing environmental and sustainability concerns. Based on that vision, 7 partners from EU Regions have established a common international partnership.*

*By working together the NICHE partnership aims, by 2019 and through the improvement of existing policies, achieve an average 15 % increase in the adoption of research and innovation solutions by food sector companies in their regions to give response to the demand of this sector identified as high-potential sector for their smart growth. There are already examples of fruitful cooperation between producers from the partner regions, which are presented in this newsletter.*

*On behalf of the project team I am very pleased to introduce you to our 5th NICHE Newsletter.*

*Enjoy reading!*



To get further information please visit the project website at:  
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/niche/>



## Implementation of Action Plans in NICHE Regions

Last year at the turn of March and June each region starts the implementation of its action plan and five out of seven partners start the implementation of the pilot actions. Actions proposed in the plans are based on the exchange of knowledge during the last years of the project implementation.

## Outcomes of NICHE implementation in Derry

Over the last number of months work in Derry City and Strabane district has been concentrated on development of region as a Food and Drink Destination alongside continued relationship building with SMEs. As a result of activities they have been shortlisted in top 10 Foodie Destinations Ireland.

The NICHE project has sparked many innovative partnerships and new products within our region.

Also food festivals such as Flavours of the Foyle which promote Seafood offer and Slow Food festival which promotes good, clean and fair food have been collaboratively delivered.

More information on:  
<https://www.interregeurope.eu/niche/news/news-article/4434/successful-outcomes-of-niche-implementation-in-derry/>





### NICHE updates from South Ostrobothnia Finland

One main focus of the Action Plan of South Ostrobothnia is to develop the region's competence in **food safety** by new development projects, new training programmes as part of SeAMK's (Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences) curriculum and education export, gathering a network of regional enterprises and organizations with competences on food safety. As part of the action an ERIAFF (European Regions for Innovation in Agriculture, Food and Forestry) conference was held in Seinäjoki in June 2018.

More information on:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/niche/news/news-article/4698/niche-updates-from-south-ostrobothnia-finland/>



### Innovation in Estonian healthy food production

Several workshops related to product development targeting food businesses have been organised with BioCC OU, Polli Horticultural Research Centre, Tartu Business Advisory Services and NICHE local stakeholders' group.

"**Science in the porridge - functional food**" was one of the thematic workshops organised to introduce the development of an innovative healthy product – **Helde mixed grain porridge** <http://helen.ee/en/helde-mixed-grain-porridges/>. The Helde range of mixed grain porridges was created in cooperation with scientists from BioCC OÜ and the University of Tartu. The porridges contain an abundance of the nutrients, minerals and vitamins that everybody needs. The new Helen Helde range of functional porridges are the first in Estonia to have been created in cooperation with scientists.

More information on:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/niche/news/news-article/5222/innovation-in-estonian-healthy-food-production/>



**HIVE honey model in West Region  
Romania**

As part of NICHE project, the honey cooperative APIVEST from West Region Romania is the first implementation “use-case” for HIVE Honey Ireland. The objective is to create a higher price for organic honey produced in the region and sell into export markets as a premium higher value product. This will be achieved by using advanced testing protocols which will enable HIVE project partners to differentiate and validate the quality of the product. By using a combination of IoT technologies in labelling and packaging, a “farm-to-fork” traceability confidence to the consumer will be also ensured.

**HIVE**

**EXTRACTING GREATER VALUE FOR EU HONEY**

**WITH A BLEND OF:**

**TRUST, TRANSPARENCY & TECHNOLOGY**



**NICHE** PROJECT 2016 - 2020  
Interreg Europe

**INNOVATING THE FOOD SECTOR  
THROUGH TECHNOLOGY & COLLABORATION**

**MARKET DRIVER - AUDIT & COMPLIANCE**

**NEW LEGISLATION:**

**OFFICIAL CONTROLS REGULATION 2017 / 625**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 14TH DEC, 2019**

### 5<sup>th</sup> Project Management Meeting in Tartu, Estonia

The 5<sup>th</sup> NICHE project meeting took place on the 13-14 March 2019 in Tartu, Estonia. An overview of the progress of implementation of the action plans in each NICHE region and management aspects were the main points on the agenda of the meeting.

NICHE partners met two relevant local stakeholder organisations involved in the implementation of NICHE action plan in Tartu Region - BioCC and Polli Horticultural Centre.

BioCC is a competence centre for the development of functional food, food supplements and feed additives (<https://biocc.eu/>).

Polli Horticultural Research Centre is a fruit and berry product development centre, competence centre for knowledge-based healthy goods and natural products (<http://polli.emu.ee/en/>).

