



**Newsletter  
#3  
May 2020**

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- Good practices
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**PROJECT GOAL**

EUREGA aims to have food, food habits and gastronomy included and recognised in EU, regional and national strategies and policies. Both should be seen as a cultural asset and strong element in regional cultural identity and as a necessary tool to boost sustainable products and services.



Dear recipient,

In this last edition of our newsletter, you can read about the most recent EUREGA project activities. What did we learn? Did we succeed in getting local gastronomy on the map and at regional, national and European policy level? Read all about it!

## Meetings and Events

### Food for Thought: EUREGA Interregional Exchange visit in Ireland

Over 30 leading Gastronomy experts from across Europe were hosted in Sligo and Galway by the Northern & Western Regional Assembly on 10-12 March 2020. EUREGA is a €1.7M European Territorial Cooperation project looking at food under 5 headings; Education, Health, Urban/Rural, Tourism and SME Supports. The project partners from seven different countries across Europe travelled to Ireland to discuss how the EU can help Member States support businesses in the Gastronomy Sector.

The European partners were exposed to the array of supports currently available in Ireland for businesses in the gastronomy sectors. From the Food Works Programme, The Food Academy to the new Bia Innovator Campus in Athenry in Galway costing €5.5 million, the partners visiting had certainly had some food for thought on how best to support their SME following their visit to the West of Ireland.



Brendan Mooney, EU Programmes Executive in the Northern & Western Region Assembly, highlighted that this Interregional exchange visit was a great opportunity to showcase the great gastronomy culture and the vibrant sector of the northern & western region of Ireland, as well as for local stakeholders to learn from the visiting experts.



## Action Planning

### Brabant inspired by Galway

A delegation of Province of North Brabant/Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch Sjef de Pont, Cindy Hagenstein and Iris van Seumeren attended the EUREGA Interregional Exchange Visit in Ireland. Read their experiences in this report.

#### Inspiration for the action plans

We have started 10th March in Sligo: a nice and characteristic Irish town. On this first day, several Irish projects and initiatives were shared with us in the morning, such as the **'Digital School for Food'** (a platform where food producers learn how to effectively develop their businesses) and the **'Food Works Program'** (a program that helps entrepreneurs in scaling up and eventually exporting food and / or drinks). It was very interesting to see how the Irish government is taking on a not only supportive but above all stimulating role in this. On the first day there was room for stakeholders from different regions to share their experiences.



Visit to Galway Interreg project  
EUREGA – Gastronomy

This led to interesting discussions and parties who, despite the many differences in background, recognized each other's approach. In the afternoon there was room to spar as project partners about the design and content of the action plans, the project ideas that will have to be delivered. Through this session, a new step can be made in the writing process. During lunch and dinner we experienced how gastronomy in Ireland treats its guests: creative and with excellent food!

#### Experiences of entrepreneurs in the food sector

The next day we left Sligo behind and travelled by bus to the **BIA Innovator Campus** near Galway. This campus gives entrepreneurs who have a concrete business plan, but not the space and materials, the opportunity to rent a production space at a low rate. They can take the first steps in the production process without making large investments. All this combined with sharing knowledge to maximize the chance of success for the entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurs then spoke about their experiences in the food sector. Beautiful examples of Ireland's various projects related to supporting SMEs came along. For example, there was an oyster farmer who lost a large part of the export market and got into trouble because of this. Through support from the Irish government, he learned how to receive visitors and educate them about oysters. This move ultimately saved the company. Partly because people paid mainly for the visit to the farmer and because learning to open oysters to visitors increased the demand for oysters in the Irish market.

#### Beautiful examples

The afternoon was spent by the project partners on the EU's requirements for the action plans. The plans must really result in a policy change. In Brabant the policy for the leisure sector. In the evening we went for a delicious dinner at John Keoghs Gastropub. A typical Irish pub that immediately gave you the feeling of being really in Ireland with very good quality food. This pub is a nice inspiration for a possible action plan in which we can create a real Brabant 'feel'. Finally, much praise to our Irish partners who organized this trip very well. We are inspired with regard to our action plans, and have made many interesting (international) connections.

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## First on-line stakeholders' meeting for the South Aegean

On 29th April 2020, READ S.A. organized an on-line meeting attended by a representative of the Agency, the external expert hired by READ S.A. to assist with its action planning and five stakeholders from the South Aegean Region. The scope of the meeting was to discuss among the group and thus finalize the action plans of READ S.A., in view of the end of phase one of the project.

In particular, the stakeholders that participated were Mrs. Maritana Alakiotou, representative of the Dodecanese Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Nikos Renesis, Director of the Regional Plant Nursery, Mr. Kostas Hatzidakis, Director of "KEK Gennimatas" Vocational Training Center and Mrs. Chrysa Karagianni, Nutritionist from the island of Rhodes as well as Mrs. Mary Triantafyllopoulou, Wine Producer from the island of Kos.

During the 2-hours discussion, proposals for at least 3 new projects that could be implemented by the South Aegean Agri-food Cluster came up and many ideas and different views were exchanged regarding the challenges that the gastronomy sector is currently facing due to the covid-19 pandemic and possible solutions.

## Pohjois-Savo's Action Plan

Pohjois-Savo's Action Plan is joining several local SMEs to foster their talents and resources together to plan and implement a new food-related wellness tourism model. The core elements in this development work are sustainability, nature, local food, gastronomy and co-operation of SMEs.

The objective is to take advantage of the opportunities to integrate companies in the wellness sector with the food and tourism industry. Food products as well as health cluster are among the top innovations areas in the region. Tourism can be viewed as an industry that cuts across these sectors, supporting the regions economic and business activities and helping to promote prosperity.



Original photos by Visit Finland / Elisa Manninen

We aim to influence to two specific objectives by implementing new projects with local SMEs and this way show, that with this cluster model SMEs can create new business.

Priority 1. Generating new business. Most of the rural tourism enterprises are micro-scale companies and thus vulnerable. The cluster model with bigger operators, such as hotels in business development helps companies when developing new sustainable tourism products and services across industries. This way also micro-scale companies can grow stronger and new economy that attracts new audience can raise.

Priority 2. Promoting growth (and internationalization) of enterprises. These new food-related wellbeing products can be piloted with (international) test groups; media, as well as tour operators after the covid19 pandemic.

-Text by Niina Vääntinen

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## Good Practices

### **#AlimentsDeProp: A public tool to facilitate contact between consumers and local agri-food producers in COVID-19 exceptional situation**

One of the effects of the COVID-19 has been the closure of schools, restaurants, street markets and other food services in which the local agri-food producers were suppliers. Therefore, they have now seriously difficulties to sell their products although there is demand and interest in contacting them.

In this coronavirus exceptional context, the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food of the Catalan Government through Prodeca, has launched the website #AlimentsDeProp which includes a huge range of individual and collective initiatives that put producers and processors in contact with the potential consumers in order to assist the local agri-food products marketing.

#AlimentsDeProp, meaning local food in English, is a search engine that allows the consumer to easily find the information in this directory by selecting the region to which the order is addressed and the products they want to buy. The website automatically offers a list of producers who meet the search criteria on the product demand. Transactions are managed directly on the producer website or marketing channel.

The registration to #AlimentsDeProp is free and open to all Catalan region producers, processors and agri-food commercial establishments that supply products during the state of alarm.

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## The “Taste of Sárrét” food festival in Hajdú-Bihar County, Hungary

“Taste of Sárrét” is a food festival organized in Nagyrábé, a large village of Hajdú-Bihar County. This festival has a history of more than a decade; as a nationally recognized gastronomy event focusing on traditional cuisine of the Sárrét area, it attracts more than 10.000 visitors every year. About 100 amateur “chef groups” create their own outdoor meals in traditional pot („bogrács”) while celebrity chefs qualify and rank those. Entertainment, cultural and community programmes serve as a colourful background inviting visitors even from cross-border areas of neighbouring countries.

This year the programme was planned to be organized on 25 April but considering the current pandemic situation and the related stay-at-home issues, the organizers

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– some wonderful committed people conserving local traditions and building communities – decided to choose an innovative way: they announced a home cooking festival called “Taste of Sárrét #homeoffice”. Families prepare their meals at home or in their gardens and share the process and the result online. As the organizers told, it is important to ensure continuity, to preserve traditions even in these challenging times and keep people's attention alive. Beyond these goals, it is also essential to fill „stay-at-home” days with beneficial activities and experience.

Online visitors also can follow the [event via Facebook](#) – numerous live sessions will create the “on-site” feeling and tries to bring people as close as possible:



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## Satoa Food Festivals, Finland

### SATOA Festival / Summer

The SATOA Goes WILD food festival conquers the streets of Kuopio City Center in June. The event turns the Kuopio city center into culinary haven for one weekend, where 10 local restaurants will pamper customers with culinary flavors of Pohjois-Savo with the local wild food.

[VIDEO](#)

### SATOA Festival / Autumn

SATOA – Kuopio Food Festival is a cultural street food event in the beautiful Kuopio city centre, where customers can buy small dishes from 20-25 local restaurants. The Festival celebrates the traditional harvest season and local tastes. There is no entry fee and it's suitable for everybody. Food portions sold reach 40.000 per year.

[VIDEO](#)

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### SATOA influences

When SATOA Street Food Festival was organized for the first time it was awarded by the City of Kuopio as the phenomenon of the year. Visit Finland and Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences made the event one of Finland's fourteen leading food tourism products.

Co-operations with stakeholders and SMEs (new models) in the region  
Increased usage of local food, products and foraged ingredients in the local restaurant  
Increased awareness with environmental impacts locally Increased awareness with uneaten food and environment locally

The SATOA Festival was part of the RuokaSavo project (2015 – 2018). The vision of Northern Savonia's rural strategy is that by 2020, Northern Savonia will be a nationally and internationally known food province.

– Text, photos and videos provided by Niina Vanttinen







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## The REKO Model

The REKO (translates into “sincere consumption”) retail and distribution model offers customers a way of ordering products directly from the producer, without the need for middlemen. REKO-ring is to establish an online local food market, offering an effective, direct and easy way for both local food producers, and consumers. REKO started in Finland as a way to explore solutions to the problems local food producers experienced in getting access to the traditional distribution channels of traditional grocery retail. Interested? Comprehensive REKO presentation in English on YouTube <https://youtu.be/NfdJ4678oIQ>.

The map that also appears in the video can be found here:

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1sb6CW\\_Q0UWukBdIYko-85fqB0H7lyOQ7&usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1sb6CW_Q0UWukBdIYko-85fqB0H7lyOQ7&usp=sharing)

-Text by Niina Vanttinen

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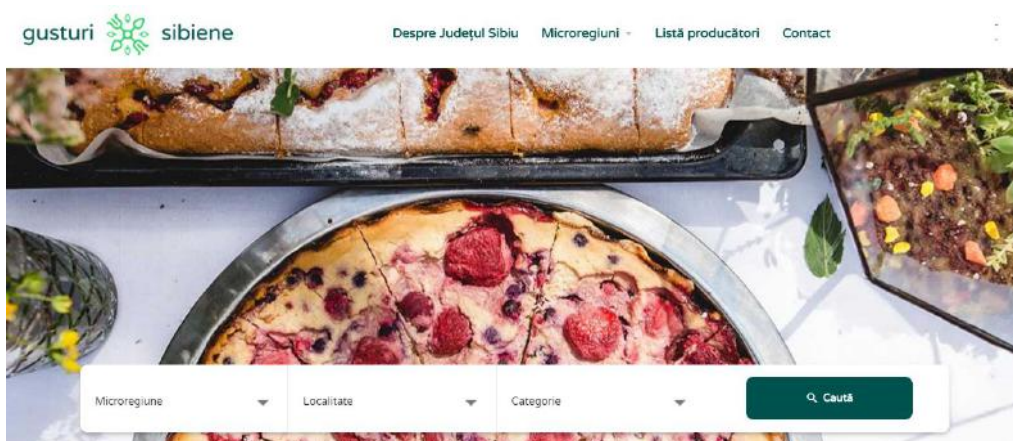


## Good Practices

### Sibiu County Council has launched Gastro Map online - [www.gusturisibiene.ro](http://www.gusturisibiene.ro)

The online gastro map [www.gusturisibiene.ro](http://www.gusturisibiene.ro), launched by the Sibiu County Council, represents a communication tool that supports the producers in our county, but also strengthens and develops the short regional food distribution chains, and stimulates the consumption of local products, all of them being objectives set within the EUREGA Interreg Europe project. In this regard, the online gastro map Gusturi Sibiene, while promoting Sibiu products, brings together local producers and thus facilitating access of the buyers to them via the online environment.

The platform's structure is adapted to the county of Sibiu and it's the five micro-regions - Valea Târnavelor, Valea Hârtibaciului, Țara Secașelor, Mărginimea Sibiului, and the micro-region Sibiu. Visitors to the Gusturi Sibiene platform can select according to their preferences, both the area and the type of products they wish to purchase.



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Gusturi Sibiene has integrated within the platform, both producers that can be found for the past 7 years at the Sibiu County Council's Piața Volantă Transilvania, but also producers with certified recipes or ecologically certified producers from the Sibiu county.

Although the platform is not an online store, Gusturi Sibiene contains all the details of the manufacturer, from the contact details to data on the products they market, thus making it easy for buyers to access local products.

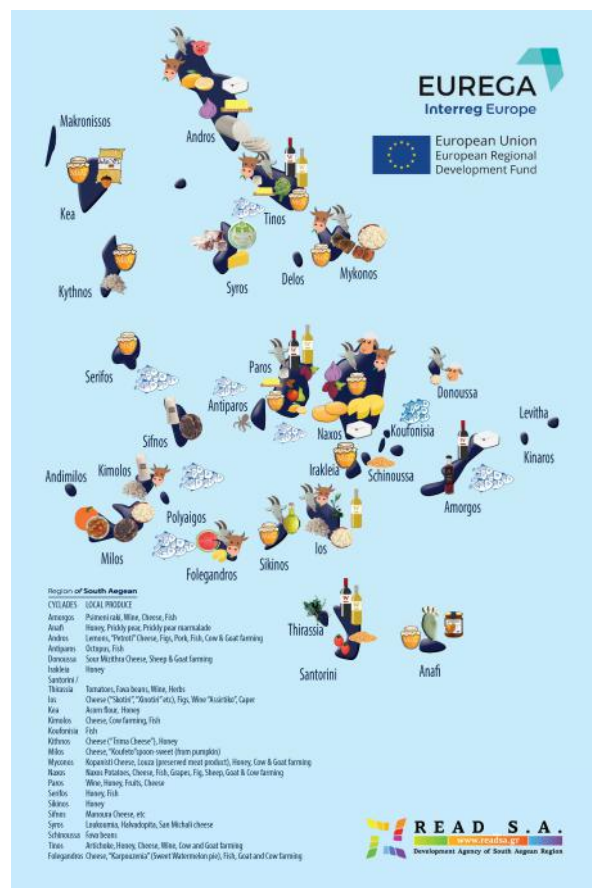
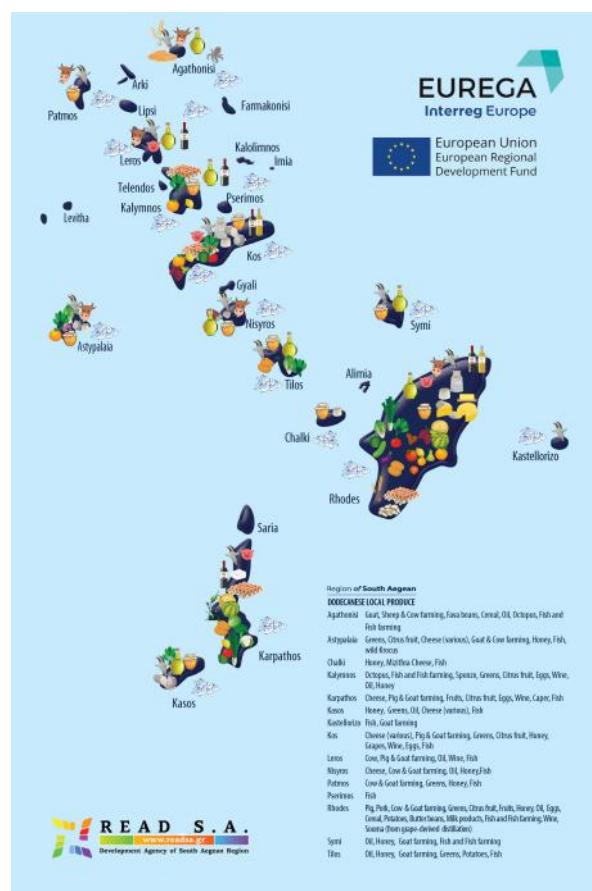


## South Aegean's Gastro Map and leaflet are ready

READ S.A. has finalized the design of the South Aegean Region's Gastro Map, creating two different maps that indicate the local gastronomic produce per island complex that constitute the region: one Gastro map for the local products of the Dodecanese islands and another one mentioning the products of the Cyclades islands. Both versions of the Gastro map were produced and printed in English and in Greek.

In addition, a threefold leaflet with general information about the project, its objectives and expected outputs was produced in Greek language as well, also containing representative photos of local food and gastronomic traditions of the South Aegean Islands.

Finally, a factsheet detailing the three good practices that were identified in the South Aegean Region was also created and printed in Greek, soon to be followed by two more editions.





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## Pohjois-Savo digital Gastromap to be launched

Digital Gastromap is to be launched at the end of May and it is going to provide platform for sustainably working entrepreneurs, producers & organisations to be found more easily by the tourist and local people. Pohjois-Savo digital Gastromap is designed to be a database where all the information can be shared to multiple platforms and applications.

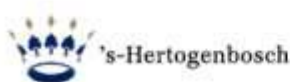
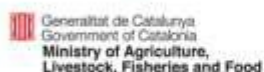
First launches will be at [www.tastesavo.fi](http://www.tastesavo.fi) and [www.kuopiotahko.com](http://www.kuopiotahko.com) websites. Pohjois-Savo is a paradise for gastronomy lovers and the Capital of Lakeland does not abandon the hungry and the thirsty. There are several top quality restaurants offering both foods and drinks made from local natural products as well as international flavors.

-Text by Niina Vanttinen



Gastronomy of Kuopio Region, photo by Marc Sabat

## Project partners



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