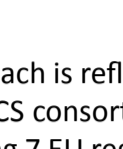


PRESS KIT

WHAT IS SME-ORGANICS?

The organic market in the European Union has developed significantly in recent years, the total value being approximately 19.7 billion euro with a 9% growth rate in 2011. As organic production grows in Europe, the sector's focus is on **competitiveness and sustainability**.

The overall objective of **SME-ORGANICS** is to improve policies and programmes under the Investment for Growth and Jobs goal in order to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs in the organic sector of 8 EU regions.



WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

This strong partnership approach is reflected in the multi-stakeholder composition of SME ORGANICS consortium which brings together 11 different partners representing 7 EU regions and a Swiss Canton. This includes:

Regional governments and development agencies

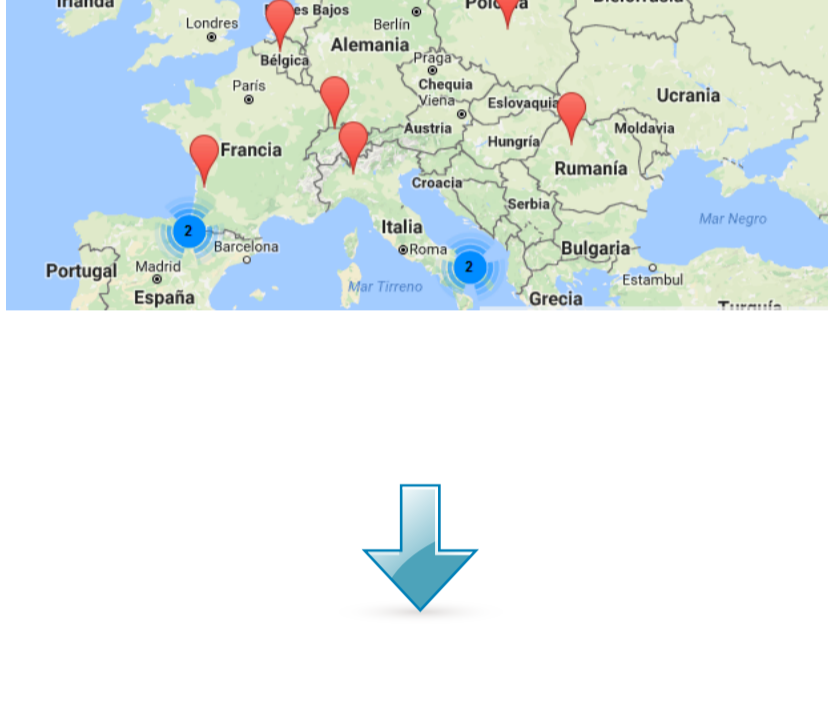
- INTIA - Institute for Agri-food Technology and Infrastructure of Navarre (ES)
- Department of Rural Development of the Government of Navarra (ES)
- Lodzkie Region Marshall's Office (PL)
- Puglia Region Managing Authority (IT)
- North-West Regional Development Agency (RO)
- Organic food and farming and enterprise bodies
- International Federation of Organic Agriculture - IFOAM EU (BE)
- Interbio Aquitaine/Limousin/Poitou/Charentes (FR)
- Union Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture of Lombardy (IT)

Research Institutes

- CIHEAM MAIB Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (IT)
- Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (South Ostrobothnia-FI)
- FiBL Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (Aargau-CH)



WHERE ARE THEY FROM?



WHICH ARE THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES?

To conduct regional diagnosis based on a SWOT analysis of the organic sector in four large thematic areas: production and processing, commercialization and marketing, training and advice, organic value chain efficiency and governance.

To mobilize stakeholders at the regional level in order to include their contributions in the development of the Regional Action Plans.

To carry out the exchange of experience and interregional learning among project partners and regional stakeholders.

To carry out the strategic thinking processes at regional level in order to identify the relevant measures to be integrated into the regional policies.

To identify the synergies and complementarities between different policy and funding instruments.

To develop Regional Action Plans with tailored funding and policy mixes.



WHEN?



BUDGET



THE IMPORTANCE OF SMEs

SMEs are the backbone of our economy, accounting for 99% of businesses and up to two-thirds of all private sector jobs in the EU. This is why the competitiveness of SMEs is at the forefront of Interreg Europe, feeding into the broader Europe 2020 strategy for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth.

Some 1.2 million enterprises are created in the EU every year, yet only half of those survive the first five years. So the challenge for regions is to improve policies that can boost entrepreneurship and support SMEs - in all stages of their life cycle - by helping them to grow and innovate and breaking down the barriers that prevent business growth.



CLICK ON NAME TO OPEN PARTNERS' WEBPAGE



USEFUL LINKS

