

INTERREGIONAL SITE VISIT CASTILLA Y LEÓN

9th, 10th, 11st May. SORIA

The autonomous community of Castile and Leon is the largest Spanish region with an occupancy area of 94,227 square kilometers, approximately 19% of the national territory. It comprises nine provinces: Ávila, Burgos, Leon, Palencia, Salamanca, Segovia, Soria, Valladolid and Zamora. In turn, it contained 2,248 municipalities, 28% of the national total.



Its population is 2,447,519 inhabitants, which represents roughly 5% of the national total. As a result, the population density in Castile and Leon is much lower than the Spanish average (26 and 92 inhabitants per km², respectively).

Demographic trends have been negative since 1950, especially in their rural areas. Its consequences have been manifested in the loss of productive potential and the lack of job opportunities for its inhabitants. The sparsely populated areas have been defined as the group of municipalities belonging to each of the provinces of Castile and Leon in which, on the whole, their population density is less than 15 inhabitants per square kilometer and they have a radius of at least 45 kilometers.

(Extract of the study *Study on social entrepreneurship in Castile and Leon*, by Lucía Velasco and Marcelo Segales Kirzner)

Area, number of municipalities, population and population density in Castilla y León. 2016				
Province	Area (km ²)	Number of Municipalities	Population 01/01/2016	Density of population (hab./km ²)
Ávila	8.050	248	162.514	20,19
Burgos	14.291	371	360.995	25,26
León	15.582	211	473.604	30,39
Palencia	8.052	191	164.644	20,45
Salamanca	12.350	362	335.985	27,21
Segovia	6.923	209	155.652	22,48
Soria	10.307	183	90.040	8,74
Valladolid	8.111	225	523.679	64,57
Zamora	10.561	248	180.406	17,08
Castilla y León	94.227	2.248	2.447.519	25,97

Source: D. G. of Budgets and Statistics of the Junta de Castilla y León with data from the National Institute of Statistics and the National Geographic Institute.

Thursday, 9th of May

1. EL Hueco

9.00h -10.00 El Hueco (Soria). <http://www.elhueco.org/>

El Hueco is an ecosystem for the promotion of social entrepreneurship and the implementation and development of those entrepreneurial initiatives.

It's an open, collaborative and attractive ecosystem to companies and entrepreneurs that generates opportunities for the creation of sustainable companies, quality jobs and economic, social and responsible development.

Its main lines of action are:

- create coworking spaces to improve the entrepreneur talent.
- spread a culture that grows values and entrepreneur vocation.
- inform, train and advice the entrepreneur about his/her start-up business.
- provide access to entrepreneur funds.
- encourage the public/private links.

Huertos de Soria (<https://www.huertosdesoria.org/tienda/>).

Verónica Rubio, Huertos de Soria General Manager

Huertos de Soria is a social entrepreneurship boosted by the NGO Cives Mundi with the aim of creating jobs for people at risk of exclusion from the labor market as well as contributing to the development of the province of Soria by means of promoting and selling ecological and Km.0 fruits and vegetables. In its first phase, the project has collaborated with FADESS, which is a nonprofit organization that promotes actions and programs that improve and facilitate the well-being, protection, care and psychosocial reinsertion of people with mental illness.

Nowadays, Huertos de Soria is employing people from other groups in risk of exclusion, like people with physical disabilities.

Megara (<http://www.megaraenergia.com/>).

Fernando Rubio, Megara Sales manager.

Megara Energía is a Consumer Union that sells energy from 100% renewable and local sources. Megara's energy is capable to be a relevant engine for sparsely populated areas, also a way to reduce energy poverty.

La Exclusiva (<http://www.laexclusiva.org/>)

Victoria Tortosa, La Exclusiva Executive Manager.

La Exclusiva is a social entrepreneurship that seeks the reduction of the depopulation in the province of Soria by means of meeting the basic needs of its inhabitants with no additional cost through a social logistics system which provides: access to basic products and services coming from the city without added cost; time saving and convenience of having your order collected and delivered at your home; security and improvement of the well-being of vulnerable groups as the elderly.

Fora (<http://fora.es/en/>)

Ángela Blazquez, Föra Technical Officer.

Föra is a spin-off from the University of Valladolid, focused on environment and, particularly, forest management promoting a Smart Sustainable Forest Management, based on new measurement and simulation tools and on the use of information technologies. Föra is focused on forest innovation: its mission is to help and collaborate with companies, Universities and Public Research Institutions through the search of integral solutions including research, development, innovation, technology transfer and specialized training, providing high value-added solutions where technology and innovation play a key role.

2. Montes de Socios

10.30-12.00 La Póveda de Soria (Soria)

Amador Marín Gutiérrez, ASFOSO Technical Officer.

<http://www.montedesocios.es/>

The project “Montes de Socios” aims to recover and put value on the missed mounts of partners while contributing to economic diversification, modernization and improvement of life quality in rural areas.

13.30-15.00 Lunch in Los villares de Soria (Soria).

15.30h-17.00h Magaña (Soria)

Fernando Marín Redondo, Mayor of Magaña.

Magaña is a small town situated in one of the most depopulated areas in the region, and represents most of the specific problems of sparsely populated areas: lack of population (1,86 inhabitants per Km²), population ageing, deteriorated infrastructures, lack of internet connection and lack of telephone coverage, funding shortfall...

Its Mayor talked us about the problems, but also about the opportunities that the rural life has. He also spoke about the successful and not successful, public and private initiatives that are being carried out and achieved in the town to fix population so it won't disappear:

Public initiatives

- Construction of a small complex of 5 social housings by the local Municipality. All this social housings are now inhabited by people from 25 to 50 years old, including families.
- Participation in the contest #enredatupueblo to gain free Internet by satellite for at least one year (<http://hispatatconectate.es/magana-ganador-del-concurso-enredatupueblo/>).

Private initiatives:

- Natural medicine shop. A couple of young entrepreneurship grows its own natural medicines to be sold. With the proper access to internet or even to the telephone coverage, their scope would be wider.

- Rural Hotel
- Rehearsal place and base of the musical group ÀRNICA

18.00-19.00 Gómara (Soria)

Juan Carlos Gonzalo Hernández. Mayor of Gómara

Ana Ruiz. Representative of the Local Action Group PROYNERSO

Gómara is the head of the most unpopulated region of Soria according to the latest statistics of the INE. It is called Campo de Gómara, and the density of population of this area, which encompasses 21 municipalities, is of 1,98 inhabitants per Km². The depopulation of this region is so alarming that there are only 5 population centres that exceed 100 inhabitants, and none of them reaches even 300 inhabitants. What it supposes for the populations and the great lack of services and great impediment when setting up the commercial or economic activities.

PROYNERSO is a nonprofit Development Agency that promotes the integral development of three main areas of the province of Soria (Moncayo, Campo de Gómara, and Tierras altas de Soria), that encompasses 64 municipalities. Its main objectives are:

- Improve the development potential of rural areas.
- Develop and manage new initiatives.
- Encourage the acquisition of knowledge.
- Organize and stimulate rural development at a local level.
- To promote endogenous development, through innovative solutions.
- To promote, support and encourage all kinds of cultural activities.
- Possibility of becoming a promoter of vocational Training Schools and Employment Workshops.
- Collaborate with the Public Administrations in promoting employment.
- All types of initiatives aimed at promoting activities of general interest.

Wednesday 10th May

9.00-10.30. El Hueco Soria

Opening of the III Spring Meeting

<http://www.elhueco.org/socialmeeting/en/>

12.00 -13.30. Marta&Maté Wineries, Tubillo del Lago (Burgos)

Tubilla del Lago is a town in the province of Burgos, which is another province that belongs to the Castilla y Leon Regional government.

Marta&Maté Wineries is another example of social entrepreneurship:

<http://www.martamate.com/en/>

They produce ecological wine and they work into a Land Stewardship Network (Red de custodia del territorio). They introduced us in their different way to produce wine, but also in how this industry is part of a solid ecosystem that includes the population, other industries and services in the town and how it can be effective as a way to develop rural areas in an inclusive and sustainable way.

15.00h-16.00. Lunch time. El Burgo de Osma (Soria)

16.00h-18.00 El Burgo de Osma (Soria)

Javier Martín, Representative of the Local Action Group Tierras del Cid.

Armando García, leader of the project El Hueco Osma and other private initiatives.

The Asociación Tierras Sorianas del Cid is a private- nonprofit organization with a regional scope, and it's integrated by different economic and social, public and private agents in the territory, and encompasses 32 municipalities in the territory of Soria.

Statistical introduction on the depopulation in Soria and the initiatives in which this group is working and has worked with the aim of slow down the depopulation in these rural areas.

Armando García introduced us El Hueco Osma, an initiative similar to EL Hueco but adapted to this specific context, and he talked about other original initiatives in these rural areas to generate development and to maintain people in rural areas like:

Santa Compañía Association is an association of historical and cultural recreation that are committed with this mean to vindicate and to put in value the history of the El Burgo de Osma and its lands. They have participated in cinema productions, fairs and exhibitions.

Kairosvfx is a film production company based in El Burgo De Osma, specialized in documentaries and history.

19.30 Visit to the Gormaz Castle and the chapel of San Miguel.

Thursday 11st May

9.00. El Hueco Soria.

Day 2 of the **3rd Spring meeting on Social Entrepreneurship in Soria. Impact investing and Social innovation in Europe.**

Participation in the panel: NEW SPACES, PLAYERS AND PROJECTS FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION – INTERREG EUROPE SOCENT SPAS PROJECT. Participants:

Florian Birk (Social Impact, Germany);

Anu Harju-Mylyaho (University of Applied Sciences in Lapland, Finland);

Carmen Sánchez (dirección General de Economía Social y autónomos de la Junta de Castilla y León, Spain)

María Nadazdyova (EPIC, Slovakia)

Ana Gómez Garcés (Cives Mundi, Spain)