



**FRIDGE project seeks to increase food industry SME competitiveness by providing relevant actors with information about productivity, market reach and capacity building.**

## Dear reader,

The first phase of FRIDGE is coming to an end and it's time to wrap up the busy last semester. In this newsletter we would like to inform you about our results and achievements, the outcomes of three years of cooperation. We wish you a pleasant read!

## 1. FRIDGE Handbook - Solutions for supporting Food Industry SMEs in growth

The FRIDGE project Handbook has been released! Three years of active project work during the phase one, including surveys, speciality studies, consultations with experts and study visits in partner regions lead to a deeper understanding of the food & drinks sector which we summarized in the FRIDGE Handbook.

Obtaining this knowledge was one of the core objectives of this project. In the Handbook, you can find all the Good Practices sorted by the regions of where they come from and explained how they affect the local business and stimulate growth.

You can read the Handbook on a separate webpage that we prepared specifically to display our handbook. Both links are attached below.

### Get familiar with the Handbook:

- ▶ [Online version of FRIDGE Handbook](#)
- ▶ [PDF version of FRIDGE Handbook](#)
- ▶ [Article about the Handbook](#)

## 2. Action Plans

During the past year our partners have been working hard to finalise their action plans with their local stakeholders to improve their regional or national support schemes and programmes. As each of the regions has its own specific needs, action plans focus on very different aspects of supporting food industry SMEs. Get familiar with all Action Plans on our website, find links below!

### a. Action Plan of Tolna County

In Tolna County, shortage of labour and lacking management skills are important issues according to our SME survey. The Food Pilot GP inspired the partners from TCDA to consult with their Managing Authority and suggest including advisory and training services in a call supporting food SMEs that might help fill the gap.

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Action Plan of Tolna County.](#)

### b. Action Plan of Harghita County

Taking into account the local needs and the discussions held with their stakeholder, the action plan of Harghita focuses on two main activities: 1. establishment of a product brand system quality assurance system, 2. preparation of the milk production chain cooperation with the involvement of product chain actors. Both activities are inspired by the Good Practices identified in the project.

#### Read more on our website:

- ▶ [Action Plan of Harghita County.](#)

### c. Action Plan of Bavaria

Through the many discussions and Good Practices, the partners from KERN learned the importance of different approaches to accessing and using existing resources. The Action Plan of Bavaria will further develop Premium Products and foster the Project Genuss Schätze Bayern, our Policy Instrument. The various approaches from the FRIDGE partners to promote regional products were inspiring for an improvement of marketing measures through direct dialogue with consumers and other stakeholders. Public events and training courses, participation in markets and trade fairs will be part of the marketing strategy in the future.

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Action Plan of Bavaria.](#)

### d. Action Plan of South Ostrobothnia

The action plan of South Ostrobothnia focuses on two development themes. First, supporting the development of the regional Food Innovation Ecosystem and second, the development of the regional food business environment. Under these two themes, partners from South Ostrobothnia are initiating five actions that support the competitiveness of our Food SMEs and that are all based on the lessons learned and the Good Practices identified in the project.

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Action Plan of South Ostrobothnia.](#)

### e. Action Plan of Western Macedonia

In Western Macedonia Region, a lack of specific actions to promote the agricultural SMEs is recorded. Based on lessons learned from the project including many useful Good Practices the FRIDGE Action Plan will be a tool for us to boost extraversion, the Regional Agrifood Partnership of Western Macedonia, the Regional Food Cluster.

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Action Plan of Western Macedonia.](#)

### f. Action Plan of East-Flanders

The Action Plan of East-Flanders is based on two main actions. First, creating a mentoring network for consumers: inspired by the Szekler Product Trademark, the Food Province Label and the Völgység Kincse Social Cooperative, the project partners want to set up a communication campaign to further develop and strengthen our pride towards and knowledge about East Flanders and East Flemish gastronomic specialities.

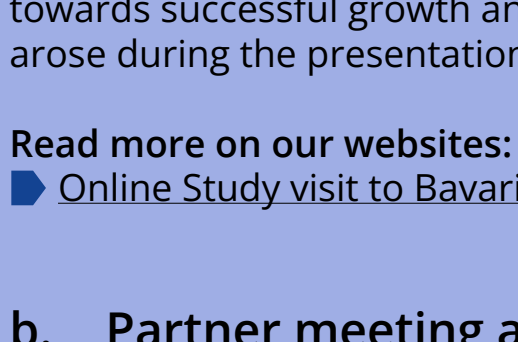
Second, creating a mentoring network for producers: there is little collaboration between food SMEs in our region. A lot of good practices prove that for small SMEs, this could be the key to strengthening export, promotion, sales and distribution. To build on this, the partners from ECEF want to build a network between SMEs in the food industry and knowledge centres

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Action Plan of East-Flanders.](#)

## 3. Past interregional events

### a. Online Study Visit to Bavaria



On Tuesday the 1st of February, we had a chance to visit our partners from KERN – Competence Centre for Nutrition from Bavaria, Germany. This time only online, as the pandemic restrictions kept us in our homes.

Partners from KERN and invited speakers prepared an action-packed day and did not let us be bored even for a moment. They shared their expertise in the area of boosting local food SMEs towards successful growth and answered all our questions that arose during the presentations.

#### Read more on our websites:

- ▶ [Online Study visit to Bavaria.](#)

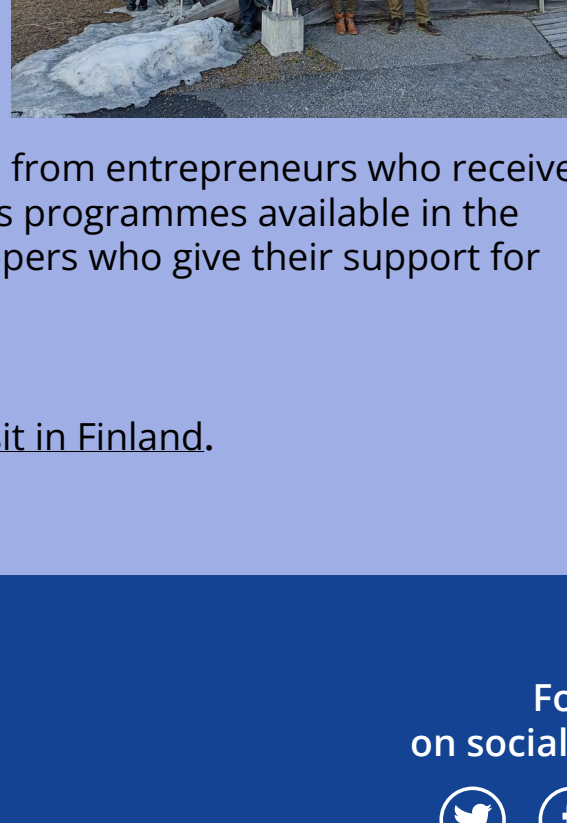
### b. Partner meeting and Study Visit in South Ostrobothnia

In the end of March 2022, all FRIDGE partners have gathered in South Ostrobothnia, Finland to learn about the region, good practices coming from it and finally, after a long break caused by the global pandemic, meet face-to-face to discuss project progression.

Participants had a chance to visit local restaurants and a distillery, and more importantly, listen to more than 10 great presentations both from entrepreneurs who receive help and support through various programmes available in the region and food business developers who give their support for the SMEs.

#### Read more on our website:

- ▶ [Partner meeting and Study Visit in Finland.](#)



More on project [websites](#).

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