

FOOD CORRIDORS

Lead Expert and Lead Partner visit,

28th & 29th October 2019, Tartu County (Estonia)



The visit of the Lead Partner representative, Paula Sivistre, and the Lead Expert, Antonio Zafra, took place in October the 28th and 29th, according to the Agenda included below.

Main objectives of the meeting

- To get to know and understand the local situation (challenge, needs)
- To discuss the partner profile document and gather further information
- To clarify expected local activities: set up of ULG, development / content of LAP
- To engage with potential stakeholders to be involved in the ULG
- To inform and discuss with the partner the issue / content of the RURBAN FOOD network
- To clarify the learning and exchange needs and desired support by the Lead Expert
- To clarify what is expected from the partner at the network level

PROGRAM

27 October	Arrival of Lead Partner and Lead Expert
28 October	Cooperation seminar in V-Spa hotel and field visits
09.00-09.30	Welcome coffee and registration of participants
09.30-11.00	Seminar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming by hosting partner; • Short introduction round of participants;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the URBACT Program and the project and its main aims and activities by lead partner Paula Silvestre and lead expert Antonio Zafra; • Presentation of Tartu area and its' main characteristics and development situation, description of food sector by Kristiina Tammets, CEO of Tartu LAG. Interventions from local partners about their specifics. Topics to be included: <i>Demography, population, geography, map and important neighbouring towns/cities/clusters, education and training, food sector background data, economy and employment sectors, employment data, framework conditions, key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, existing policy initiatives, current programmes aiming to address these challenges, e.g. short circuits; food waste; social gardens, local food sector, innovation and technology, etc., governance, local municipalities – roles and responsibilities, other key stakeholders, expectations, action plan thematic interest, potential, barriers and assets, ULG, types of stakeholders to be engaged.</i> <i>Questions & Answers</i>
11.00-11.30	Coffee break
11.30-13.00	<p>Seminar continues with discussions about URBACT Local Action Group and local ambitions regarding RURBAN FOOD project. Issues to be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • URBACT Local Action Group and types of stakeholders to be engaged; • RURBAN FOOD project. Theme and local potential – assets, challenges, barriers, etc; • Opportunities for learning from and feeding into transnational exchange.
13.00-14.00	Lunch at restaurant Joyce https://vspahotel.ee/en/joyce-restaurant/
14.00-18.00	<p>Field visits with degustations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tartu local food market in the city centre; • Food network “Farmers’ market” at Lõunakeskus shopping mall; • Small local food producer, cheese maker Andre Farm and their farm shop https://andrefarm.ee/en/ • Visiting the Widget Factory https://www.aparaaditehas.ee/en
19.00-	Dinner with political and administrative stakeholders
29 October	Visiting project partners in Tartu County and discussion of the further action plan
08.45	Pick-up from hotel
09.00-12.00	<p>Seminar and field visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Tartu Science Park https://teaduspark.ee/en/ <p>Seminar at Tartu Science Park. In-depth discussion on Action Plan to be developed. Following issues to be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RURBAN FOOD management (Work packages) • Roles and responsibilities • Workplan • Budget • Administration • Other topics
12.00-13.00	Lunch at restaurant JOP https://www.facebook.com/kohvikrestoJOP/ , townhall square with Raimond Tamm, Vice-Mayor of Tartu.

13.00-17.00	Visiting Onion Route tourism area near lake Peipus http://www.sibulatee.ee/en/front-page/
18.00	Departure to Tallinn



REPORT

28th OCTOBER

During the morning the local partner of the project organized a seminar in the V-SPA Hotel of Tartu, with the participation of different actors, (see attached signatures sheet) all related to the main theme of the FOOD CORRIDORS project. Antonio Zafra and Paula Sivestre presented the URBACT Programme and method as well as the main characteristics of the FOOD CORRIDORS project, sharing a lively dialogue and clarifying doubts.

Later, participants introduced different local projects, as well as territory descriptions, policies and actions connected with the FOOD CORRIDORS objectives. Among these presentations, the following are worth mentioning:

- Kristiina Tammets, CEO of [Tartu LAG](#): [Estonia and Tartu County](#): [Lake Peipus area Community Kitchen](#); [Ice Age Centre](#)
- Liis Lainemäe: [Onion Route network](#)
- Hemminki Otstavel: [Food sector in Elva region](#)

Ingrid Hunt (Tartu Science Park), Helen Kalberg (representative of Tartu City department of public relations and Tartu County Tourism Board) and Merle Vall (South Estonia Farmers Market and producers network), explained their projects. Ingrid commented some details about NICHE project (Interreg Europe) and FIT4FOOD (Horizon 2020) in which they participate.

After lunch, a series of working visits took place, as planned in the agenda:

- Tartu Market, where the person in charge commented historical details

and others related to the market management which receives between 2000 and 3000 people a day, showing a positive evolution.

- Merle Vall, [Farmers Market](#) and South Estonia producer's network manager guided the visit. This Market opened in 2010 at the Lounakeskus shopping centre. It was originally born thanks to the collaboration between several Rural Development Groups from South Estonia and a group of local producers. They opened two establishments where products from more than 200 small food producers are sold every day. They are about to open a new one in Tallinn, this time including a restaurant. This initiative, which is considered a really good practice, is currently owned by a group of six producers and two managers.



- [Andre Cheese Farm](#). Andre's family has bred cows for generations. The current owners started their activity some years ago with just a few dozen of cows, now they have 180. Since 2015 the farm has been producing Dutch cheese with their own milk, reaching an average monthly production between 8 and 9 tons with various cheese types. Their market is national base (95%), they combine direct sales on the farm with those made in shops and supermarkets, gastronomic events.... Their objective is to develop new activities and services on the farm itself while increasing their production in order to gain foreign markets. They are, despite their scale, real enthusiasts of the territorial cooperation established both in Tartu County and in South-Estonia area.

- [Widget Factory](#) is a parallel initiative to Telliskivi Creative City in Tallinn. Here, the old 14,000 m² factory, with diverse industrial production - umbrellas, secret submarine parts or taximeters were made here to supply the entire communist market - has recently been transformed into a cultural factory. Tartu's cultural effervescence has moved here, leading to the installation of various creative, cultural and craft workshops. At the same time, three restaurants are located here; a cultural and educational space linked to Italian gastronomy; and soon, a handmade ice-cream parlour will open its doors. Karmen Otu, Program Manager, told us that they organize three events related to food throughout the year. They are planning to consolidate the educational and sustainable approach in these events. It is a resource that can offer support and host different actions linked to a future territorial food plan which will be designed within the

framework of FOOD CORRIDORS. The project can find here some potential stakeholders interested in being active part of the FOOD CORRIDORS Local Group.

- At the end of the day the representative of the LP and LE were invited to dinner with Kristiina Tammets, CEO of TAAS, Liis Pärtelpoeg, manager of the Onion Route and Kairi Kell, member of the Board of TAAS.

29th OCTOBER

The morning started with a working session in the [Tartu Science Park](#). There also took place an explanatory visit about the incubated companies which they support.

In the working session, different aspects related to the following topics were addressed:

- Setting up and launch of FOOD CORRIDORS Local Group
- Small Scale Actions
- Administrative issues
- Partner profile review

After an open dialogue, LP and LE were invited to have lunch with Tartu's Vicemayor, Mr. Raimond Tamm, along with Helen Kalberg and Kristiina Tammets. During the lunch we had an interesting information exchange related to city food policies. We discussed the connection between projects carried out in collaboration with Tartu County and the region of South Estonia, as well as the celebration of the European Capital of Culture in Tartu in 2024. We also have the opportunity to talk to one of the owners of the restaurant about the principles that guide their gastronomic offer based on fresh and local product and culinary fusion.



During the afternoon Paula and Antonio, together with Kristiina, visited three beautiful sample activities of the Onion Route. There exists some characteristics among them and all give the Route a sense of originality, authenticity, uniqueness, living history, cultural mix, spirituality and deep

hospitality. The Onion Route is an exceptional asset to discover real sense of place and belonging sense to this community.

- [Mesi Tare](#), it's much more than a sweet house. Herling and Marko honor their surname Mesi (honey) and visitors immediately discovered this character. Tea does not need any sweetener in this nest of bees and humans. The peasant culture of Estonia, the Russian Old Believers and Baltic German merges at the Ivan Chai ceremony, which is a rite and history in this place. Smiles are plentiful in this house painted green, with Lake Peipus at the back and a boat stranded on the shore.

- [Kostja Onion Farm](#), welcomes you to its humble house full of onions strings hanging from the ceiling. Kostja tells you detailed stories about his life underwater, later as a fisherman and finally as a lake ecosystems expert. His welcome is unforgettable as well as the taste of whitefish and potatoes, the sweet onion pie, and his warm conversation.



- Külli Must, the previous Alatskivi Castle manager, now produces wine. But is it a wine made with grapes? No, all the production is made from local berries and plants. In [Alatskivi Manor Flavors](#) these are mainly wines, but also herbal teas, flavored vinegars and jams as well. The sunset light illuminates the faces behind the windows. The candles of the candlesticks make them shine. The honey wine pours its sweet aromas into the room. At the same time Külli does not lose her smile after the tourist innocent question who still looking for the grapes as if grape wine were the only one.

CONCLUSIONS

A farewell notes after the visit, which will be formally completed in the partner profile. They will be drafted and incorporated into the FOOD CORRIDORS Baseline Study.

1. Here the territory, the policies and actors involved show a clear interaction and capacity connecting work.
2. Experience shows a creative drive and an efficient resources management.

3. The people we have met show a deep and shared sense, a real community sense of belonging. They recognize they need to walk together if they want to go farther.

4. Political commitment is evident in both levels of municipal administration, urban and rural.

5. Cultural momentum. The celebration of Tartu European Capital of Culture in 2024 is an excellent opportunity to launch different cooperative cultural policies. Food culture will be, once again, the nexus that unites them.

6. During the visit, we had the opportunity to point out challenges, to outline spaces for cooperation and learning, to draw some small pilot actions and to weave networks. In short, underpinning the cohesion and strategy of the FOOD CORRIDORS network.

