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## GIFT

**GIFT kick-off seminar in Kuopio 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025, Summary**

# Geographical Indications Gain Momentum – Untapped Potential in the Northern Periphery Area

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The NPA/Interreg project GIFT - Geographical Indication boosting Food, Non-food and Tourism sectors in Northern areas arranged the kick-off seminar in Kuopio Finland in 11<sup>th</sup> of November 2025. The seminar brought together speakers and experts well versed in GI matters and stakeholders interested in GIs to set the stage for GI topic and discuss the significance and use of geographical origin from the perspective of regions and businesses. A current highly update topic discussed at the seminar was the GI system for craft and industrial products, which will enter into force at the beginning of December 2025.

The European Union's system of Geographical Indications (GI) is gaining renewed attention as a tool for strengthening local identity and boosting regional development. By protecting products whose quality and reputation are tied to a specific place, GI status offers producers a competitive advantage both within Europe and in international niche markets.

Built on EU legislation, the GI system provides a reliable framework that reinforces trust among consumers. Beyond well-known examples like Champagne, GI status can help smaller regional products stand out, communicate their story and reach new audiences.

Finland and Sweden have become increasingly active in exploring GI opportunities. Experts of the seminar see significant untapped potential across the Northern Periphery, where GIs could support rural development, strengthen country branding and enhance tourism appeal.

### **Challenges Remain**

Low producer engagement in the Nordic countries and limited administrative resources continue to slow progress so far. The application process is also time-consuming, raising questions about how effectively GIs can help safeguard region-based intellectual property. Now the European Commission is preparing a new GI Action Plan aimed at supporting producers more effectively. The GI Action Plan is expected to be published in 2027. In order to facilitate the application process, the European Commission has also published a step-by-step guide with an eligibility check tool: producers can go through the survey and get a first evaluation on whether their product would be eligible for registration. [Registration of the name of a GI product - Agriculture and rural development](#)

Communication is expected to shift toward a more business-oriented approach, and stakeholders are encouraged to join Commission mailing lists to stay informed about initiatives and e.g. high-level visits. As upcoming opportunities will be the GI call for craft and industrial products, which opens on 2 December 2025, and the EU promotion campaign call from January to April 2026.

Future activities are planned within the GIFT project and therefore stakeholders are highly welcomed to propose GI-related themes for upcoming national and transnational webinars.

The material of the seminar can be found via this link: [Boosting geographical indications -seminar materials](#)

### **Summary of the speakers' key messages**

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### Positive future prospects

- GIs have a role in connecting people - and cultures together
- Inclusion of GIs in country-branding
- EUs GI system is based on law
- GI is an Instrument for local development
- Nordic potential - especially Finland and Sweden have been active
- Worth having GI → There are success stories other than Champagne
- GI Action plan coming by EU commission
- Communication should be more business-oriented
- EU promotion funding instrument -make market research first!
- Make sure that you are on email list: Commission makes own initiatives and high-level visits
- EU GI status can help to enter the niche market in another country
- Crafts and industrial products GIs: the same logo as PGI
- Networking offers opportunity for growth and innovation and transparency

### Challenges

- Low producer engagement
- Limited authority resources
- Application process time consuming
- Could GIs prevent the loss of regionally based intellectual property

### To keep in mind

- Call for crafts and industrial products published 2 December 2025
- Call for promotion campaigns opened Jan-Apr 2026
- GIFT project's future activities
- Propose GI related topic for our webinars (transnational and national)