

## POLAND

# Innovation & cooperation

### Location

Opole

### Programming period

2014 – 2020

### Priority

P1 – Knowledge  
transfer & innovation

### Measure

M20 – Technical assistance

### Funding (EUR)

RDP contrib. 96 776.61

### Project duration

2016 – 2016

### Project promoter

Opolska Regionalna  
Organizacja Turystyczna

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Supporting activities for the development and promotion of a Culinary Trail in the Opolskie Voivodeship, combined with capacity building for its members.

## Summary

The Opolskie Voivodeship\* is a lesser known tourist destination, in comparison with the neighbouring regions of Upper and Lower Silesia. However, its rich and multicultural tradition offers significant opportunities for the development of the region, if actively promoted through a culinary trail.



Opolska Regionalna Organizacja Turystyczna

RDP support was used to finance diverse activities such as training sessions, study trips in Poland and the Czech Republic, hosting journalists and culinary bloggers in the Opolskie Voivodeship and publishing a guidebook. Thanks to these activities, the Opolski Bifj Culinary Trail has become a more recognisable 'tourist brand' not only in the region, but also more widely throughout Poland.

## Results

As a result of the project, the first culinary trail network of this type was created in the Opolskie Voivodeship, bringing catering, accommodation and tourism businesses together.

The active promotion of the culinary heritage of the Opolskie Voivodeship, will contribute to protecting it from being lost.

The project has a positive contribution to the balanced territorial development of the area and will improve its competitiveness.

The project activities significantly increased the involvement of residents in their local communities and in initiatives for the development of their area.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ☐ Thanks to the diversity of activities, such as training sessions, study trips, participation in fairs, etc. it was possible for network members to gain practical knowledge, about the potential of traditional products, in promoting the region. Community awareness was raised about the benefits of networking and of joint initiatives, and how to create tourist products based on local resources.

\* The highest-level administrative subdivision of Poland, corresponding to a 'province' in many other countries.

## Context

The idea behind the creation of the Opolski Bifj Culinary Trail was to promote the multicultural, traditional cuisine of Opole Silesia, which is less well known compared to the neighbouring regions of Upper and Lower Silesia. Being a neighbour to such large and thriving tourist areas is hoped to have a positive impact for the Opole region, as in its own right, it is not considered to be one of the most attractive tourist regions. It also faces the challenge that its regional cuisine is not highly recognisable in other parts of the country and abroad.

## Objectives

The aim of this project was to promote the economic development of rural areas and to involve local communities in the development of these areas in the Opolskie Voivodeship.

## Activities

A series of seven one-day thematic training sessions were delivered covering themes such as traditional products in Poland, and in the Opolskie Voivodeship, sharing information about the Opolskie Culinary Heritage Network and other initiatives. The sessions were aimed at disseminating knowledge about traditional products with emphasis on tourism resources in rural areas. In total 115 people participated.

Two study visits were organised, one in Poland and one in the Czech Republic, for members of the Opolski Bifj Culinary Trail. During the visits participants learnt about the principles of restaurant operations on culinary trails, exchanged experiences and good practices and established relationships with other entrepreneurs. The visit to the Czech Republic was organised to learn about the culinary trail 'A Taste of Moravskolezsko'.

Network members participated in tourist and culinary events such as the 'Attractions of the Regions' fair in Chorzów and the Festival of Opole Flavours in Opole. The weekend tourism fair 'Attractions of the Regions' in Chorzów, was an opportunity to learn about agrotourism and how to promote traditional local and regional products. The Opole Flavours Festival in Opole is a family and recreational event, promoting healthy lifestyles and nutrition, as well as high-quality food and traditional local and regional products.

- The project organised a three-day study visit for culinary journalists and bloggers in the Voivodeship to promote the region. During the visit, the invited guests learned about the 'Opolski Bifj' Culinary Trail and tourist attractions of the province. They also

participated in two culinary workshops: preparing a non-Modlinian carp in the Na Wyspie restaurant in Niemodlin; and baking a traditional Silesian Kotoczek cake at the Pawłowice Palace.

- 20 000 copies of the network guide were published, providing information about traditional products of Opolskie, along with photos of traditional dishes. A map of the voivodeship which marked out services and attractions that are part of the network was included.

## Main results

Feedback from evaluation surveys found that for 65% of respondents; the training sessions met their expectations; the information obtained was very useful in raising their skills and knowledge; and was useful to their everyday work. Nearly 90% of the participants in the domestic and foreign study trips indicated that the trips met their expectations to a very high degree. Over 60% of respondents also indicated that the knowledge acquired during the journey was useful in terms of gaining skills and knowledge and for their everyday work.

As a result of the project, the first culinary trail network of this type was created in the Opolskie Voivodeship, bringing catering, accommodation and tourism businesses together.

The active promotion of the culinary heritage of the Opolskie Voivodeship, will contribute to protecting it from being lost.

The project has a positive contribution to the balanced territorial development of the area and will improve its competitiveness.

The project activities significantly increased the involvement of residents in their local communities and in initiatives for the development of their area.

## Key lessons

Thanks to the diversity of activities, such as training sessions, study trips, participation in fairs, etc. it was possible for network members to gain practical knowledge about the potential of traditional products in promoting their region. Community awareness was raised about the benefits of networking and of joint initiatives, and how to create tourist products based on local resources.

- The members of the network also came up with the interesting idea to publish a guidebook about the Opolski Bifj Culinary Trail in a smaller, pocket format, making it easier to use in practice, which can be found online at [www.visitopolskie.pl](http://www.visitopolskie.pl).