

WELCOME TO OUR THIRD 3 KITCHENS NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025



3 Kitchens
Volunteer • Seek Employment • Become an Entrepreneur



Welcome to our project

Welcome to our third newsletter. Such a fulfilling and productive time we have had! **3 Kitchens** is a European initiative that will support migrant and refugee women to build confidence, skills, and opportunities through three connected pathways: **volunteering, employment, and entrepreneurship.**

Rooted in culinary heritage and community connection, the project will strengthen social inclusion and economic participation, while also equipping adult educators with new approaches and resources to better reach, teach, and support migrant women across Europe..

WHAT'S INSIDE...

01 Partners Meet in Leitrim, Ireland,
dynamic visit hosted by Momentum

**02 Spotlight on Start your Food
Business -Entrepreneurship for
Migrant Women**

03 Global Food in Pictures

04 Success Story, Meet Nariné Lalayan

www.3kitchens.eu



Co-funded by
the European Union

Partners meet in Leitrim, Ireland



Our Autumn 2024 partner meeting brought the 3 Kitchens team **to Leitrim, Ireland**, where we were warmly welcomed by Momentum for two days of collaboration, learning, and rich cultural food experiences. We began with a grounding session at Momentum's offices, followed by focused discussions on the final touches to the Volunteering and Employment Kitchens. Partners shared updates, explored challenges, and aligned on the practical steps ahead.

One of the true highlights of the visit was our time at **The Food Hub, Drumshanbo**, Ireland's leading food incubator and culinary training facility. A community owned facility, the Hub has become a national model for food-sector training, incubation, and workforce development. Experiencing the facilities first-hand helped partners imagine how migrant and refugee women can access similar high-quality training environments across Europe. The visit sparked valuable conversations about shared kitchens, enterprise supports, and the role of accessible training hubs in empowering women.

The meeting was specifically focused on the **Start Your Food Business – Entrepreneurship Kitchen**. Momentum and Le LABA introduced the pathway and guided partners through the work plan, exploring how women's food heritage, creativity, and lived experience can become the foundation for simple, low-barrier food business ideas.

Evenings offered their own moments of connection and culture. A shared dinner in Carrick-on-Shannon, complete with Irish music, created memorable moments. On day two, the partnership continued with a podcast-style dissemination workshop, evaluation and quality sessions, and joint planning across all work areas.



Spotlight on Food Entrepreneurship Kitchen

The third pathway of 3 Kitchens focuses on one powerful idea: food can open the door to economic independence. Many migrant and refugee women arrive with strong culinary skills, deep food heritage, and a desire to contribute. The **Start Your Food Business – Entrepreneurship Kitchen** supports them to turn this strength into small, sustainable food enterprises that fit their lives and celebrate their cultures.

Who is this for?

- Migrant women living in the EU who want to start a home-based or local food business
- Community educators, mentors, and organisations supporting migrant integration, entrepreneurship, and women's empowerment
- Trainers working in non-formal education

This pathway is designed to support migrant women in Europe to start and grow small-scale, culturally rooted food businesses. Built around practical tools, low-cost strategies, and accessible guidance, this programme empowers women to turn their cooking skills into income and independence.

Developed with the support of adult educators, the resources are tailored for real-world use, easy to understand, easy to apply, and rooted in the strengths of migrant women themselves.

CHECK OUT OUR 8 MODULES IN 4 LANGUAGES on

WP4 - Start your Food Business -Entrepreneurship for Migrant Women - 3 Kitchens



Spotlight on Steps to Entrepreneurship Kitchen

Mentoring and Support

A key feature of this pathway is the ongoing support women receive. The programme builds step by step, from early business ideas to refining products, identifying potential customers, and discovering local funding or microenterprise supports. Women are encouraged to grow at their own pace and to develop businesses that reflect their culture, family needs, and personal ambitions.

Alongside the training, the pathway includes a **mentorship programme** for 50 women (we actually mentored 54 women) that connects aspiring entrepreneurs with mentors who share similar experiences. These mentors offer practical advice on real challenges migrant women face such as language, cultural expectations, confidence, and navigating local food production systems. Peer support is an important element, giving women the encouragement and solidarity needed to move from idea to action.

The Entrepreneurship Kitchen also brings women into a wider community through **networking meet-ups, guest speakers, and informal events** that introduce them to industry professionals, other entrepreneurs, and organisations that can support enterprise creation. These gatherings help women build essential networks and feel a sense of belonging in their new communities.

A final element of this pathway is the development of **ambassadors and role models**. Successful participants will be supported to share their stories in workshops, events, and community settings. Their achievements will inspire other migrant and refugee women to explore enterprise as a realistic, meaningful option for income generation and social participation.



WHAT BUSINESSES ARE EMERGING?

Our mentoring programme has met the most interesting women who are exploring a rich mix of food enterprise ideas inspired by their cultures, skills, family traditions, and local community opportunities. Many women are already taking early steps, while others are building confidence and shaping their first ideas. The emerging business concepts include:

Catering and Event Food

A strong interest is growing in small-scale catering services, from home-based catering to culturally specific menus. Several women are already running informal catering businesses and want to formalise and expand them, including one who is developing *Cœur d'Oran*, an Algerian catering and pastry initiative specialising in traditional sweets.

Baking and Home Bakery Ventures

Baking is one of the most popular pathways. Women are eager to start home bakeries, formalise existing baking activities, supply local cafés, or offer cake design services. Some are already baking for their communities and want to reach wider audiences.

Street Food and Food Stalls

Many women are drawn to simple, flexible models like selling traditional dishes at local markets, pop-ups, or food festivals. Interest includes street food, weekend pop-up cafés, and food truck concepts. Several women want to understand market rules, food safety requirements, and pricing before taking their first step.

Preserves, Spices, and Specialty Products

A number of women want to sell small packaged products such as spice blends, condiments, fermented foods, and culturally rooted homemade items. These ideas often come from treasured family recipes and traditions.

Workshops, Cultural Food Experiences, and Community Cooking

Some women want to share their food heritage through cooking workshops, tastings, or cultural food events. They are interested in teaching traditional dishes, hosting community cooking sessions, or taking part in local food festivals.

Global Food in Pictures

While the women in our project are always the heart of everything we do, the food they create deserves a spotlight of its own. Their dishes are full of global culture, colour, and creativity, and we are delighted to share a small taste with you. We apologise in advance if these photos make you hungry!



SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN THAT INSPIRE US

In this edition, we are delighted to introduce **Success Stories**, a new feature on our website [Success Stories - 3 Kitchens](#) that celebrates women who are moving forward through the 3 Kitchens pathways. Each story shows the real impact of volunteering, employment, and entrepreneurship. Women who once felt unsure or isolated are now developing skills, gaining confidence, and discovering their own strengths. Some have taken their first steps into community life through volunteering. Others have moved into training or employment. Some are exploring small business ideas rooted in their culinary heritage. Every journey is unique. By sharing these stories, we hope to inspire other women, families, educators, hosts, and employers across our partner countries. Success grows when people support each other, and these stories remind us of the power of community and the importance of creating welcoming spaces where women can thrive.

From food aid to entrepreneurship

Nariné Lalayan
Armenian pastry business owner
now living in France

Nariné Lalayan

Country
France

Find out more
<https://refugee-food.org/festival/>



My Story

Originally from Armenia, I arrived in France after leading a very active life back home. To cope with the challenges of migration, I looked for ways to stay engaged. I volunteered with Secours Populaire and cooked in the shelter where I lived, sharing meals and recipes with women from different backgrounds. Later, I led cooking workshops at the cultural center in Villenave d'Ornon, where I could talk about my country and culture. I then joined a European peer-help project and was mentored by an Armenian caterer who inspired me to pursue formal training. I completed two CAPs in cooking and pastry-making, and today I'm self-employed, creating personalized cakes to order.

Motivation

Cooking has always been more than just preparing meals – it's my way of connecting, expressing my culture, and rebuilding myself. Every opportunity I had to cook, share recipes, and talk about Armenia helped me find confidence and direction. Today, creating personalised pastries allows me to bring joy to others while continuing to tell my story through food.

From cooking in shelters to leading workshops and eventually starting my own business, I've built my journey step by step.

Sharing my culture through food has always been my way of connecting with others and finding my place here.



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.