

PRESS RELEASE

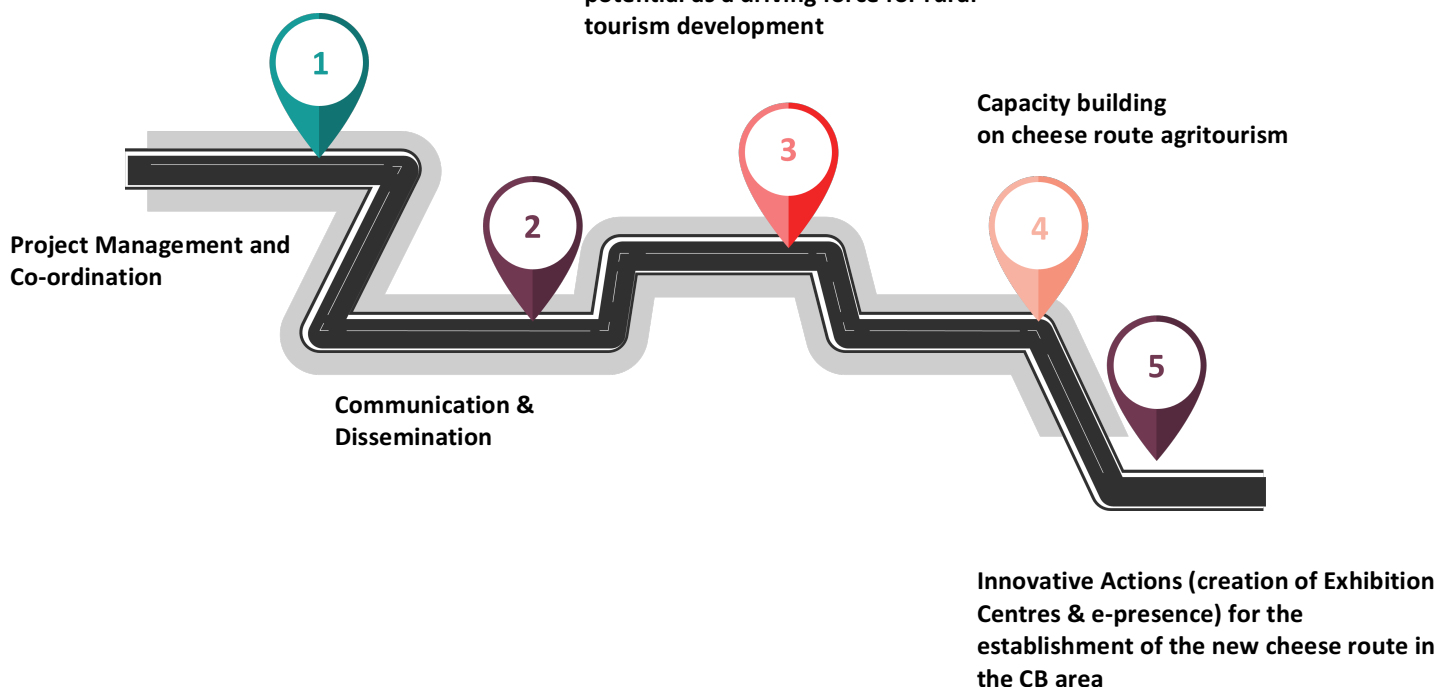
Organization of kick off meeting for CheeseCULT project, co-funded by “Interreg IPA II Greece-Albania Programme 2014-2020”

Arta, 04.12.2019

The Department of Agriculture, University of Ioannina participates as Lead Partner in the project "CheeseCULT – Cheese route as an innovative cultural heritage driving force for rural tourism development in the cross-border area", which is co-funded by the Interreg IPA II Greece-Albania Programme 2014-2020, through European Union and National Funds of Greece and Albania.

The Department of Agriculture, University of Ioannina is organizing the CheeseCULT kick off meeting in its premises. The meeting will take place on Monday 16th December 2019 at 18:00 to 20:15 and on Tuesday 17th December 2019 at 09:30 to 16:00 at the Central Library Meeting Room at Kostakioi, in Arta, with the participation of all partners, "Hellenic Agricultural Organization - Demeter: Dairy School of Ioannina", as well as the two Albanian partners, the University “Eqrem Çabej” Gjirokastër and the ARGJIRO.

Establishment of a traditional cheese route in CB area for raising gastronomic potential as a driving force for rural tourism development



CheeseCULT is designed to capitalize the CB area’s agri-food focus on dairy production, and incorporate it to local sustainable tourism on a viable development plan for the regions involved.

The basis of the project and main output will be the identification of the linkages between the CB Dairy Value Chains & Tourism potential via relating Diagnosis Studies, leading to the design/mapping of a joint Cheese Route. The Cheese Route will be mapped based on activities such as selection criteria procedure, development of a respective database and GIS, using regional data for the production of various thematic routes. The design of the Cheese Route will be supplemented by a set of jointly developed training activities for local stakeholders on both countries, focusing on Agritourism, Cheese Production and Quality, Marketing and Culinary Innovation.

The joint training of differentiated target groups such as producers and tourism enterprises is expected to create an effective chain of Cheese Route stakeholders of common understanding. Other outputs will be the results on the innovative actions linked to the Cheese Route. The deliverables of these include the drafting and pilot application of a Local Action Plan for the project's areas, combined with exchange visits and meetings to stimulate cooperation by stakeholders in both countries, according to a common established framework. An important outcome of the Innovation activities will be the creation of two Cheese Exhibitions Centres (one in each country) that will be incorporated to segments of the Cheese Route and provide exhibition services and representations of traditional dairy procedures. As a supplementary activity, the project partners will prepare and development an electronic version of a Joint Cheese Cookbook. As a final outcome, a Cheese Agri-tourism network will be developed to include all interested tourist enterprises of the CB area and link them to the Cheese Route initiative.

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The Interreg IPA CBC Programme "Greece – Albania 2014 – 2020" supports the cooperation between the two countries. Under a common fund, the two countries join forces and capitalize on the advantages of the cross-border region to achieve benefits for both countries.