



**Development of an innovative
network for the promotion
of extroversion of agro-food
companies in Adriatic - Ionian Area**

INNOVAGRO



3rd Transnational Networking Workshop publication

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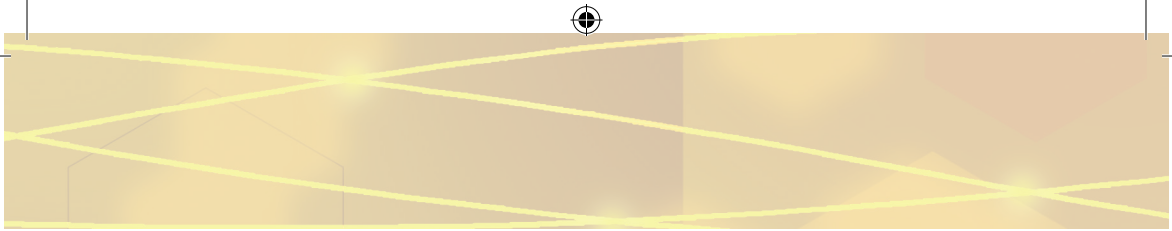
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1.1. Introduction

The ADRION area is characterized by low innovation performance, limited capacity of SMEs, inadequate cooperation among companies and research institutes, low synergies among agro-food and tourism sector and low implementation of environmentally - friendly farming practices.

On the other hand, there are some strong points, such as the existence of quality agro-food products, the existence of a number of competitive and highly active research and innovation clusters, albeit with poor intraregional joint activities, and also the existence of RIS3, where transnational cooperation can focus on, in order to find solutions in the common problem of SMEs extroversion. The field is complex and requires much learning in terms of internationalization, access to market, financing, networking, innovation capacity, business transfer, entrepreneurship, cross-border & cross-sector cooperation, and environmentally-friendly farming practices. It also entails incorporation of new forms of SME development, such as design, eco-conception and corporate social responsibility.

Based on the above, INNOVAGRO project focuses on the development of links and synergies among farmers, agro-food enterprises, research institutes and public authorities, for:

- a. the promotion of agro-food products' extroversion,
 - b. the development of agro-food companies' internalization,
 - c. the promotion of environmentally-friendly farming practices.
- 

1.2. Short presentation of INNOVAGRO project

The main aim of INNOVAGRO project is the development of an innovative network for the promotion of extroversion of agro-food companies in Adriatic-Ionian Area.

The project partnership consists of the following 10 partners from Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Serbia, & Albania:

- 3 Research Institutes and Universities with extensive experience in business innovation and rural development (Technical University of Crete, E-Institute, Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions, University of Basilicata)
- 3 Chambers/Union of Chambers (Chania Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Albania and Chamber of Serbia), fully representing the agro-food SMEs at their territories
- 1 Agriculture Confederation (Italian Confederation of Agriculture)
- 2 regional/local authorities (Region of Crete and Province of Potenza)
- 1 network (Network of the Insular Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the EU).

More specific, the main outputs of INNOVAGRO project are:

- 1) a Transnational Cooperation Network in agro-food & tourism sector,
- 2) a Virtual Transnational Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center (VI BIEC), offering support through e-incubators, e-business network platform, and other self-assessment tools.

Moreover, the main project's estimated results are:

- a) the improvement of agrofood SMEs' productivity, competitiveness and access to the international market,
- b) increasing the percentage of agrofood SMEs involved in networking, internalization and innovation process,
- c) strengthening the links between R&D Institutes, SMEs, and Regional & Local authorities in the field of innovative entrepreneurship,
- d) increasing the use of environment - friendly farming practices.

Finally, the main **INNOVAGRO** project's beneficiaries are:

- a. SMEs in the agrofood & tourism sector,
- b. farmers,
- c. business support organizations,
- d. R&D Institutes and
- e. Regional & Local Authorities

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1.3. Main discussion key-points

The 3rd Transnational Networking Workshop was organized by Insular Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the European Union (INSULEUR) on 6th of June 2019 in their headquarters in Chios, Greece, in the framework of the Interreg Adriatic INNOVAGRO Project.

The aim of this workshop was to critically examine the formation of clusters among the participants, which would promote the extroversion of agro-food

companies in Adriatic- Ionian Area and to produce guidelines for the establishment of innovative transnational network in agrofood and tourism sector by developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) template.

The 3rd Transnational Networking Workshop commenced with **INSULEUR's president Mr. Joseph Borg** delivering the introductory speech. Mr. Borg highlighted the importance of INNOVAGRO Project in the Ionian - Adriatic area and, in particular, he underlined the fact that such projects tend to enhance communication among different sectors, which in turn will ensure that this sector will continue to thrive.



Then, **Mr Theodoros Tsimrikidis, INNOVAGRO Project Manager** presented the main aims, activities, and outcomes of **INNOVAGRO** project and the project partnership details, emphasizing that despite the contemporary globalised era which is characterized by abundance of tools, the cooperation and collaboration between companies and research institutes are not as effective as they should or could be.

In this direction, INNOVAGRO project attempts to assist public and private bodies & agrofood companies from different countries to cooperate and exchange experiences beyond national borders. The formation of clusters is bound to drastically enhance competitiveness and productivity not only at national scale but transnationally as well.

Moving on, experts in the field of clusters and extroversion presented best practices in the field of agricultural innovative projects. **Mr. Apostolos Goulas, Expert on networking**, highlighted the need of change in light of the perpetually shifting business environment and the market conditions. In order competitive advantage to be not only achieved but maintained as well, it is vital that SMEs create appropriate partnerships with other businesses and institutions, which is to lead to remain competitive, enter new markets, invest in research and development, and become global players.

Furthermore, the theoretical background of the concept of clusters was thoroughly analysed and it was deduced that the formation of clusters tend to entail in increasing the productivity of participating firms and/or industries, enhancing their capacity for innovation and this way sustaining productivity growth, and mobilizing new business formation, innovation and cluster expansion.

However, what factors should be taken into consideration for identifying a cluster? The cornerstone factors are deemed to be the spatial scale (local, regional, national), the level of interaction, the breadth of sectoral coverage, and the focus on firms or sectors. Nonetheless, what we should bear in mind is the uniqueness of each cluster. In other words, there is no “ideal” cluster as such but what stands out is the unique style of innovation in each cluster.

The next part of Mr. Goulas’s presentation shed light on the following four case studies:

The first case-study refers to the German-Danish cross-cluster cooperation in “**intelligent logistics**”. The project facilitates the cross-cluster and transnational networking of actors from two clusters in Germany and Denmark, by systematically bringing together partners from logistics and IT with complementary skills, resources, and innovation components in order to set up innovation and business processes.

The second case- study refers to a **Californian wine cluster**, which consists an extensive complement of industries supporting both wine making and grape growing exists, including suppliers of grape stock, irrigation and harvesting equipment, barrels, and labels; specialized public relations and advertising

firms; and numerous wine publications aimed at consumer and trade audiences. The cluster also enjoys weaker linkages to other California clusters in agriculture, food and restaurants, and wine-country tourism.

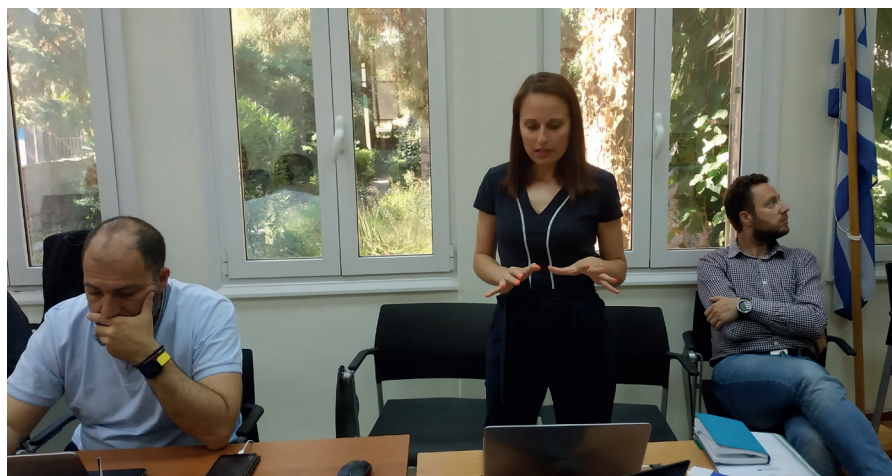
The third case - study presented by **Mr. Goulas** is called **Terra Thessalia Lactis** and it contains several small dairy industries from the Region of Thessaly and several institutions (university of Thessaly, cooperative banks, support organizations, research centers). The purpose of this cluster is to bring together those working in the industry around a regional platform for dialogue which establishes cooperation mechanisms.

The fourth case- study refers on **THESGALA** project (pun intended meaning “Do you want milk?”). Dairy farmers from the regions of Thessaly and Macedonia in Greece have found a new way of bringing fresh milk to customers. They are members of the Greek dairy farmers’ cooperative ThesGala, which supplies 63 outlets in three cities with special vending machines. The machines have proved popular with both customers and farmers, since ThesGala launched them in 2013. However, several drawback of the particular cluster was presented, for instance, the large number of employees and the lack of capital.

Finally, it was pointed out by Mr Goulas that partners should share a common vision in order to build on that their network. It is urged that the establishment of a strong bond between the partners be a fundamental goal in a cluster so that long- term objectives can be achieved and maintained.



In the next part of the Workshop, Ms Antoaneta Kuhar, Head of the Project Management Office in the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, presented the innovative the innovative cluster: “**Integrated Weed Management: Practical Implementation and Solutions for Europe**”. In the beginning of her presentation, Ms. Kuhar provided core information on the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, which carries out basic, applied and developmental research projects, expert projects defined by law, advising, studies and laboratory service, supervision and quality verification of agricultural products and products used in agriculture, qualification and post-graduate education of researchers as well as publication of research results, expert and control work.



Within her presentation, Ms Kuhar put emphasis on several projects, among which were **ECOBREED**, **IWMPRAISE** (Integrated Weed Management: Practical Implementation and Solutions for Europe), and **TREASURE**.

In particular, **ECOBREED** aims at increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of organic crop breeding. The main focus of **ECOBREED** is to improve the availability of varieties and seed suitable for organic and low-input production. Activities will focus on four crop species.

The project will develop: (a) methods, strategies and infrastructures for organic breeding, (b) varieties with improved stress resistance, resource use efficiency and quality and (c) improved methods for the production of high quality organic seed. ECOBREED species have been selected for their potential contribution to increasing the competitiveness of the organic sector.

Moreover, IWM PRAISE project is planned to be held until 2022 and it engages 41 partners from 8 countries (Slovenia, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Italy, Netherlands, Denmark & Switzerland).

Finally, regarding the project **TREASURE**, its aim is to improve knowledge, skills and competences necessary to develop existing and create new sustainable pork chains based on 20 European local pig genetic resources. According to the description of the project, TREASURE is built upon the inherent value encompassed in local pig breeds, their production systems and product qualities.



1.4. Guidelines for the establishment of Innovative Transnational Agrofood Network

After the presentations of the experts, the participants were actively engaged into further discussion and brainstorming about the necessary terms and pre-conditions for the establishment of innovative transnational network in agro-food & tourism sector.

Innovation, sustainability and transferability of a cooperation- collaboration network were the key-points of the discussion.

More specific, according to ADRION PROGRAMME & INNOVAGRO project's SWOT ANALYSIS, the study area is characterized by:

- Small number of effective regional and business collaborations /networks.
- Weak technology transfer activities between R&D Institutes & companies.
- Low level of innovation and internalization spirit in agrofood SME's.
- Relatively well developed research establishments & facilities in the majority of the territories.
- Slight increase of networking and clustering activities in SMEs.

Based on the above very important findings, INNOVAGRO project intends to capitalize the existing experience from previous success or not success regional/ national /cross-border relevant networking efforts (e.g. networks, clusters, initiatives) in order to develop a new real inter-regional approach, by establishing a real Innovative Transnational Cooperation Network in agrofood & tourism sector (INNOVAGRO NETWORK).

This proposed Network intends to link farmers & agro-food companies (production of agrofood products), tourism companies (consumption of agrofood products), Higher Education & Research Institutes, the relevant Local/Regional/ National Authorities, and Civil Society Organisations, in the logic of quadruple model of innovation, to provide to the SMEs innovative services in the field of marketing and management in order to increase their extroversion and internalisation.

With respect to the question about triple or quadruple helix, quadruple helix was preferred. Additionally, the involvement of a fourth NGOs category, environmental & consumer organizations relating to agro food sector was decided.

More specific, the fundamental objectives of INNOVAGRO NETWORK should be:

- Promoting dialogue, gaining new knowledge, and exchange of experiences among all relevant stakeholders,
- Linking with existing regional and inter-regional networks that are functional in the field of agriculture, rural development, and marketing,
- Promoting transnational clustering and networking,
- Strengthening the links among agrofood producers and final consumers,
- Promoting the main agrofood products in ADRION area (e.g. wines, olive oil products, dairy products etc.) to the internal and foreign markets,
- Promoting the most significant eno-gastronomy & culture tourism destinations in ADRION area,
- Contributing to the local/regional development, through agriculture, the protection of the environment, the improvement of human living conditions and the creation of additional employment opportunities against depopulation and abandonment of the territories,
- Contributing to the further implementation of EUSAIR strategy and the achievement of ADRION programme.

Furthermore, one of the cornerstone objectives is to pursue the Sustainable development goals in accordance with the **SENDAI framework** and the **Paris Agreement on Climate Change**.

Members of INNOVAGRO NETWORK could be the following types of entities:

- Chambers
- Associations of SMEs in agrofood & tourism sector
- Higher Education Institutes
- Research Institutes
- Agricultural Associations/Co-operatives
- Local/Regional/National Public Authorities
- Development Agencies

- Existing Clusters and Networks in agro-food & tourism sector
- NGOs (e.g. Consumer & Environment Associations)
- Gourmet & Gastronomy Associations
- Any other body relevant to the aims of the Network

In this point the following key aspects concerning the establishment of an Innovative Transnational Network in the agrofood sector & tourism on the ADRION area were considered by the participants in the workshop as innovative:

- Involve stakeholders in the logic of quadruple model of innovation (entities represented SMEs, R&D Institutes, Public Authorities, and NGOs),
- Find local solutions for local problems.
- Facilitate farmers & agrofood producers to use public services and research results.
- Involve existing local/regional/national networks/clusters.
- Capitalise relevant existing good practices.
- Focus on human resources - systematizing existing specific knowledge that is unique.
- Linking agrofood sector (production) directly with tourism sector & final consumers (consumption).
- Territorial focus on Adrian-Ionian Area.

The main expected results from the establishment & operation of INNOVAGRO NETWORK are:

- improvement of agrofood & tourism SMEs' productivity, competitiveness and access to the international market,
- promoting transnational cooperation & networking initiatives at interregional & transnational level.
- increasing the percentage of SMEs involved in internationalization and innovation processes
- strengthening research and innovation activities and technological development in the targeted areas by assuring the interaction between R&D and SMEs needs
- setting up the basis for new strategies/policies from local/regional authorities, to support SMEs innovation in agro-food sector i

- involving policy makers, stakeholders, and civil society by increasing awareness and enhancing their relevant knowledge, competencies and skills
- increasing the implementation of environmentally - friendly farming practices
- enforcing the link between agro-food & tourism sector
- Develop & transfer to SMEs fundamental knowledge & skills in the field of innovation and internalization.

More specific, the benefits for the Members of INNOVAGRO NETWORK could be very significant, such as:

SMEs Associations

- Increasing SMEs' internalisation and competitiveness
- Improved quality of agrofood products
- Improved strategic thinking (based on information about latest developments)
- Solving common problems

Public Authorities

- More jobs/employment
- Better supply of quality products to the markets
- Improved number of quality public services for private sector

Higher Education & Research Institutes

- Wider field for implementation of research results
- Connection with private sector
- Networks as source of expert knowledge

NGO's

- Increase awareness on quality (healthy) food
- Better quality of life (health)
- Better protection of the physical environment

Regarding the content of the relevant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the establishment of INNOVAGRO NETWORK, the following guidelines emerged from the discussion:

- A financial contribution of each member of the network (in money or Kind) should be determined by the network, with a specific provision of the MoU. The specific amount of this financial contribution could be decided by the network at the forthcoming initial stages.
- Active partners shall be provided with the capability to commit certain tasks.
- INNOVAGRO NETWORK should promote a direct and interactive relationship with final consumers and especially with tourism sector.
- The members of the network shall commit themselves to defend and support these goals and encourage “good” processes and good production practices.
- Use of participatory governance processes on the logic of multi-dimensional partners, by assuring consensus in decision-making.
- Gender equality both as a means of avoiding conflicts and managing conflicting interests and as a factor for the integration of representatives of the various links in the agro food chain shall constitute an integral part of the outcome.

Finally, based on the above guidelines, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) template was developed, as presented in the following ANNEX.



ANNEX: Memorandum of Understanding Template for the Establishment of INNOVAGRO NETWORK

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING *To establish* **INNOVAGRO NETWORK**

INNOVAGRO PROJECT *“Development of an innovative network
for the promotion of extroversion of agro-food companies
in Adriatic - Ionian Area”*

ADRION PROGRAMME 2014-20

In (place)..... today (date) the following bodies:

Name of the Partner 1 represented by
(name of the legal or authorized representative)

Name of the Partner n represented by.....
(name of the legal or authorized representative)

GIVEN THAT

The **ADRION area** is characterized by low innovation performance, limited capacity of SMEs, inadequate cooperation among companies and research institutes, low synergies among agro-food and tourism sector and low implementation of environmentally - friendly farming practices. On the other hand, there are some strong points, such as the existence of quality agro-food products, the existence of a number of competitive and highly active research and innovation clusters, albeit with poor intraregional joint activities, and also the existence of RIS3, where transnational cooperation can focus on, in order to find solutions in the common problem of SMEs extroversion.

The action of EUSAIR entitled “**Sustainable tourism R&D platform on new products and services**” focuses on joining forces in the Region among university departments, research centres, innovation and technology transfer networks, together with the business community for development and marketing of new products and services, development of clusters and smart specialization strategies.

ADRION Programme 2014-20 has defined as one of their main goal to act as a policy driver and governance innovator fostering European integration among Partner States, taking advantage from the rich natural, cultural and human resources surrounding the Adriatic and Ionian seas, and enhancing economic, social and territorial cohesion in the Programme area.

CONSIDERATING THAT

The main objective of “INNOVAGRO” project is the development of an interregional system for the reinforcing of the interaction between research centers and universities, companies of the agro-food sector, as well as the rest of the institutions dealing with promoting extroversion and entrepreneurship in the participating countries, so as to provide SMEs with innovative services of marketing and management, in order to increase their extroversion and internalization.

One of the main outcomes of “INNOVAGRO” project is the establishment of a Transnational Cooperation Network among representative entities of SMEs in the agro-food & tourism sector, Research Centers & Universities, Local/Regional/National Public Authorities dealing with promoting extroversion and entrepreneurship in the agrofood sector, Civil Society Organisations, so as to provide agrofood SMEs with innovative services of marketing and management trying to increase their extroversion and internalization.

Be part of this Network has many advantages, such as:

- SMEs Associations can support their members to increase their capacity to act in the international markets and solve common problems, upgrade their strategic thinking (based on information about latest developments), and finally improve the quality of their agrofood products.

- Public Authorities will have the chances to create more jobs/employment, assure better supply of quality products to the markets, and improve the quality of the public services for private sector.
- Higher Education & Research Institutes will achieve wider field for implementation of research results, create closer links with private sector, and participate in Networks as source of expert knowledge.
- NGO's will increase awareness on quality (healthy) food, assure better quality of life (health) for the citizens and better protection of the physical environment.

We, the signatories of this Memorandum of Understanding,

- Undertake the initiative in the framework of “INNOVAGRO” project for the establishment of a transnational co-operation network in ADRION area for the better introduction of innovation inside Agrofood SMEs and promotion of their extroversion and internalization.
- Accept the following fundamental objectives, principles and conditions for the establishment of this Network.

Title of the Network

INNOVAGRO NETWORK

Legal status of the Network

The joining of the Network is open to public and private organizations. Moreover, the participation within the Network will be conducted voluntarily, without association or formal legal constitution.

Duration of the network

The present Memorandum of Understanding will be valid for the next 10 years from its signing. In any case the Network has the right in the future to extent the duration of the Network with a decision of his General Assembly, and without any necessity for modification of this specific MoU.

Headquarters of the Network

The headquarters of the Network shall be the city of and the branches in The Network may change its seat or decide the establishment of antennas - offices inside each member's premises without this implying an amendment to this memorandum if there is a joint decision of the partners and the headquarters and antennas will be within the limits of the ADRION area.

Main aim of the Network

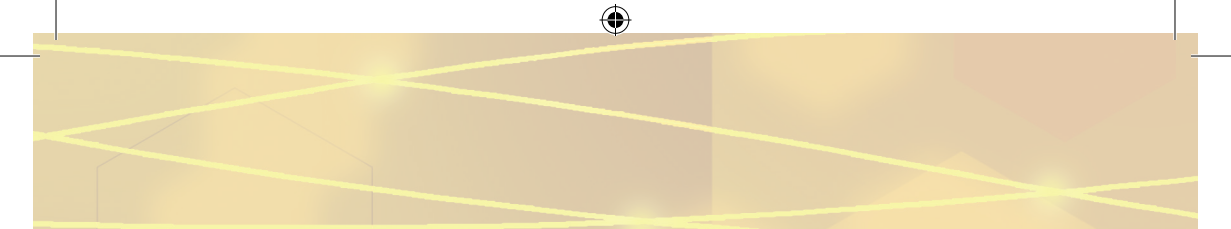
The development of an interregional system for the reinforcing of the interaction among:

- Research Centers & Universities,
- Companies of the agro-food & tourism sector,
- Local/Regional/National Public Authorities dealing with promoting extroversion and entrepreneurship in the agrofood sector,
- Civil Society

so as to provide agrofood SMEs with innovative services of marketing and management, in order to increase their extroversion and internalization.

Specific Objectives of the Network

- Promote dialogue, gaining new knowledge, and exchange of experiences among all relevant stakeholders.
- Link with existing regional and inter-regional networks that are functional in the field of agriculture, rural development, and marketing.
- Promote transnational clustering among the SMEs in the agrofood and tourism sector.
- Strengthen the links among agrofood producers and final consumers.
- Take initiatives for the promotion of the main agrofood products in ADRION area (e.g. wines, olive oil products, dairy products e.t.c) to the internal and foreign markets.
- Promote the most significant eno-gastronomy & culture tourism destinations in ADRION area.
- Contribute to the local/regional development, through agriculture, the pro-



tection of the environment, the improvement of human living conditions and the creation of additional employment opportunities against depopulation and abandonment of the territories.

- Transfer the gained and accumulated knowledge in the framework of “INNOVAGRO” project to other territories the project’s results trying to influence the EU agro-food policies.
- Contribute to the further implementation of EUSAIR strategy and the achievement of ADRION programme specific objectives.

Subject of Networking

One of the main outcomes of “INNOVAGRO” project is the creation of a **Virtual Transnational Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center (VIBIEC)**, offering support through e-incubators, e-business network platform, self-assessment tools of SME’s extroversion capacity, and other digital tools. In the framework of this outcome, all members of the Network could continue to collaborate towards the implementation of future transfer activities, right after project’s ending.

More specific, the Virtual Transnational Business Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center (VIBIEC), could continue to offer services to agrofood SMEs after the end of the project, and furthermore to be transferred to other institutes and territories interested in agrofood sector, in order to:

- attract new users of the VIBIEC and new members of INNOVAGRO Network,
- transfer INNOVAGRO business tools and results to other organizations and countries as good model for assistance for development of their economies,
- transform new international contacts and connections into new business opportunities,
- exchange of information & experiences and promote ADRION agrofood SMEs and their products to different markets,
- involve other relevant stakeholders from the whole ADRION area.

Main activities of the Network

- Exchange of relevant information and knowhow.
- Develop a WEB-SITE of the Network.

- Update & enrich the necessary data/content/tools of the VIBIEC.
- Promote/support the use of VIBIEC among the members of the Network in order to and offer e-support and information to agrofood SMEs.
- Take initiatives to improve the quality and branding of the local agrofood products and promote the clustering among SMEs.
- Use crowdfunding to support new agrofood products.
- Promote the most significant eno-gastronomy & culture tourism destinations in ADRION area enriching with content the google eno-gastronomy map.
- Organize Meetings, Thematic Workshops, Conferences, and other promotion and dissemination events.
- Implement dissemination activities (e.g. articles, newsletters, publications, open social media accounts)
- Prepare and submit quality projects to Regional EU Programs funded by EAFRD during the programme period 2021-27.

The above list of activities is indicative.

Members of the Network

The Network is always open to new members and institutions that operate at international, national, regional and local levels, and who may be interested in promoting extroversion & internalization of agro-food SMEs, such as:

- Chambers, Business Associations, Cooperatives, Clusters in the agrofood & tourism sector
- Universities and Research Institutions
- Local/Regional/National Authorities
- Local/Regional development agencies
- Gourmet & Gastronomy Associations
- Civil Society Organisations (e.g. Environment and Consumer Associations)
- Any other entity related with the aims of the Network

The only entry terms for a body interested to become Member of the Network are:

- to share some common ideas with the rest of the Members
- to agree with the main aims, objectives, and procedures of the Network.

The Members of the Network are distinguished in the following 3 categories:

- **Creator Members:** INNOVAGRO project partners and other relevant stakeholders who will sign the specific Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
- **Full Members:** Private and Public Entities interested to join the Network in the future after the submission of a relevant request and the acceptance decision of the General Assembly of the Network. The full members have the same rights and obligations with the creator members.
- **Associated Members:** Private and Public Entities interested in the objectives of the network and who intend to support their activities without undertaking any specific obligations and rights.

Members' Rights & Obligations

- Chania Chamber of Commerce & Industry, as Lead Partner of “INNOVAGRO” project, will lead and be responsible for the smooth operation of INNOVAGRO Network.
- Technical University of Crete, as responsible partner for the development and operation of VIBIEC, will be responsible for the smooth operation of VIBIEC.
- All creator and full members will promote and have benefit from the use of the outcomes and services developed in the framework of “INNOVAGRO” project.
- All creator and full members will actively participate and co-operate in the implementation of all activities, and especially in the organisation of the workshops, events, forums e.t.c.
- All creator and full members have the right to participate to all decisions making procedures of the network by voting.
- All associated members will participate in all events of the Network and contribute to the transfer and exchange of knowhow.
- All associated members have the right to attend the decisions making procedures of the network without any rights to vote.
- All members are obliged to make their membership status in the Network visible on their own website and on any other publications related to the innovation & extroversion in the agro food sector. All members undertake to provide and update their information for this purpose.
- In order to achieve the objectives of the network, all members are pledged

that will create conditions for realization of agreed cooperation goals and activities at the decision making and management level of their institutions/ authorities.

- All members will create conditions and will include activities in the annual plans of their institutions for permanent and long-term cooperation, and their representatives to the Network will be allowed to participate on professional and other events (workshops, conferences, presentations, professional seminars, study tours and other activities) in order to promote and strengthen the establishment of contacts, joint actions and cooperation.
- All members have absolute autonomy in choosing their representatives to the network.
- All members can present their resignation voluntarily and at any time, upon written notice.

Administration Bodies of the Network

The highest Administration Body of the Network is the General Assembly composed by all creator and full members (1 representative per Member). **General Assembly** is meeting annually in order to take the necessary major decisions and approve:

- The work-implementation and financial report of the previous year.
- The annual work-plan and budget of the next year.

Moreover, a **Monitoring Committee** that will act as a Supervision Body of the Network in order to manage the Network in a daily base will be elected every 2 years by the General Assembly.

Monitoring Committee will be composed by 11 persons /representatives of Members, including always 2 permanent representatives from Chania Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the Technical University of Crete.

Monitoring Committee is meeting every month, via face-to face or virtual meetings, in order to monitor the progress of the Network's activities, solve problems, and schedule the next activities. The Coordinator of Monitoring Committee will come always from Chania Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Finally, common **Working Groups** on different thematic areas may be established by a relevant decision of the General Assembly, which will work on common projects' proposals or solving problems that are of common interest.

The decisions in all the above Administration Bodies will be reached with the majority of votes, unless there is a different agreement.

Financing of Network's Activities

The Network Members will have access to the project services without any cost. All activities carried out by members for the benefit of the network will be carried out voluntarily and each party will cover its own expenses incurred in relation to it.

The Network will try to stimulate external support from national or transnational bodies that could be interested in promoting their activities in favor of the European Union and participating countries.

Confidentiality

All members are pledged to protect business, personal and other confidential information, including written or electronic materials that are result of cooperation and are in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding. Information or material will not be published or made available to third parties without written permission of the concerned party.

We, the signatories of this Memorandum of Understanding express the readiness to comply with its provisions, and will do everything in their power for mutual cooperation and achievements of the goals that are set.

This Memorandum shall enter into force upon signature by the representatives of all participating in the Network bodies.

This Memorandum of Understanding was drawn up in.....
(.....) identical prototypes, each party having received one (1).

SIGNED BY:

Partner 1

Name of the Institute:

Name of the legal Representative:

Signature

Partner n

Name of the Institute:

Name of the legal Representative:

Signature

INNOVAGRO



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