

PAPESHE

Protection of Autochthonous population
of Pelagonia Sheep breed in the
cross-border area

Interreg - IPA CBC

Greece - Republic of North Macedonia

PAPESHE



2nd Newsletter

January 2020




Profile of PAPESHE project

The objective is to save, protect and valorize existing populations of the Pelagonia sheep breed in the cross-border area, which are currently in danger of extinction, through coordinated synergies. The PAPESHE project through an interdisciplinary holistic approach pursues to:

- record the existing situation of the Pelagonia breed in Greece and North Macedonia
- describe the relevant research regarding the production characteristics of the breed
- establish the necessary infrastructure for genetic improvement initiatives in the cross-border area (CBA)
- improve the quality and hygiene of milk and dairy products from autochthonous breeds in the CBA
- propose market-based strategies which will increase the incomes of sheep farmers and benefit the whole value chain of sheep farming in the CBA
- convince sheep farmers about the benefits of indigenous sheep breeds and to increase public awareness towards the protection of genetic diversity
- promote networking among actors in the CBA to achieve synergies in increasing the quality of farmer education.

The main outputs of PAPESHE will include:

1. A genetics laboratory, an Artificial Insemination laboratory and a nucleus farm for future experimental actions
 2. A database with information about Pelagonia sheep populations in the CBA
 3. Improvement of quality and hygiene of dairy products in the CBA
 4. Training of farmers on best hygiene techniques for milk.
 5. An integrated strategic plan for the conservation and development of Pelagonia sheep.
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The budget of the PAPESHE project is € 771,738 and concerns research on sheep farming and in particular the endangered native breed of sheep Florina - Pelagonia of the research team headed by the Laboratory of Livestock Economics of the Department of Veterinary Medicine of the Aristotle University in the framework of competitive bilateral INTERREG IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme "Greece - Republic of North Macedonia 2014-2020".

Partners of the project

1. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki - School of Veterinary Medicine
2. Hellenic Agricultural Organization DEMETER-Research Institute of Animal Science
3. Geotechnical Chamber of Greece - Branch of West Macedonia
4. Faculty of Veterinary Sciences Bitola
5. Municipality of Dolneni
6. Centre for Rural Development

More information about the project is available at:

Papeshe.vet.auth.gr

Communicate with us and join our community!

m.me/Papesheproject

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<http://papeshe.vet.auth.gr/en/home-4>

[Watch our launch video](#)

PAPESHE Open Day, Training Visit and Dissemination



PAPESHE brings scientists, practitioners and stakeholders closer!

Two dissemination events took place in the framework of PAPESHE during October 2019.

The first took place at the Research Institute of Animal Science (RIAS - HAO "DEMETER") in Giannitsa in October 17th 2019. Researchers, farmers and stakeholders from North Macedonia visited the Institute and were shown around the infrastructure. Participants visited the sheep flocks and cattle herds that are kept at the Institute for research purposes and had the opportunity to discuss with the staff of the Institute. Researchers of RIAS - who cover all the main disciplines of Animal Science - were there to show the current activities undertaken in RIAS and explicitly explained the situation regarding the flock of Pelagonia sheep which is kept there - the largest Pelagonia flock actually in Greece. After the technical tour, a brief workshop was held with presentations about current activities of RIAS and the vision of PAPESHE project.

[See video](#)

In October 18th 2019, two Professors from "St Kliment Ohridski" University - Faculty of Veterinary Sciences Bitola visited the School of Veterinary Medicine of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The scientists visited several Laboratories of the School of Veterinary Medicine (Laboratory of Animal Husbandry, Laboratory of Livestock Production Economics, Laboratory of Anatomy, Laboratory Laboratory of Food Hygiene - Veterinary Public Health and were shown around the infrastructure of each establishment. They also had the opportunity to discuss about research interests and methods currently applied with their colleagues.



PAPESHE was also hosted in September 12th 2019 by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) in the 84th Thessaloniki International Fair (TIF). Members of AUTH, RIAS and Geotechnical Chamber presented the results in PAPESHE so far.



Body measurements of Pelagonia sheep in Greece and North Macedonia

An important step towards more knowledge about Pelagonia sheep in the cross-border area



The first step of the characterization of local genetic resources is based on the knowledge of variation in morphological traits. In experimental work and in selection practices for a variety of reasons body measurements and live weights taken on live animals have been used extensively. In the framework of PAPESHE project, a coordinated activity between the two countries was undertaken regarding the collection of body measurements from sheep of specifically chosen flocks. The objective is the morphological characterization of the breed and the description of the variations of the morphometrical traits in the geographical areas of Greece and North Macedonia.



Body measurements were taken on 300 adult female and male sheep of Palagonia Breed in each country. In Greece, sheep from five flocks were measured, two of which were from Florina area, and the other 2 from Thessaloniki area. In North Macedonia the same Task was undertaken in three flocks.

Autochthonous sheep and goat breeds in Greece

Why are they important? How to save them?

Local breeds have an essential role to play in local development as an efficient and effective strategy to ensure their long-term sustainability



Local farm animal breeds constitute important assets for European territories. However, their societal, economic, and environmental roles are not properly acknowledged and interest is focused only on productivity.

Local breeds

- Are better adapted to local conditions
- Exhibit higher resistance to disease
- Have relatively low requirements (mainly for food)
- Graze
- Are suited for traditional production
- Support the cultural heritage of rural areas
- Live longer in a productive state
- Produce milk and meat of very high quality

Nonetheless, in Greece their high quality products are not remunerated as they should by dairy companies and consumers are not aware - in many cases - of that quality



Local breeds are suitable for traditional farms throughout Greece, as everywhere in Europe. These systems play multiple roles (social, economic environmental, developmental) and contribute to sustainability, healthy lifestyles and activities close to culture and nature.

The loss of such breeds will put in danger traditional farmers and will have impact on environmental balance and land productivity.

And what exactly is the problem?

The past decades have witnessed significant losses of genetic diversity. In 1992, it was reported that **28% of livestock breeds had already disappeared or had become threatened or rare** during the last 100 years. A main objective is the development of a **World Plan of Action on Genetic Resources of Farm Animals** (Interlaken Declaration). This Declaration called for registration, monitoring, characterization, sustainable use, development, and conservation of the genetic resources of farm animals.



In Greece, many local breeds are actually in danger of extinction and are supported through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Under the most current policy framework, **5 bovine, 17 sheep, 1 goat, 1 swine, and 6 horse breeds are eligible for support.**

How to save them?

Protect and rescue them in the short run, especially those under imminent danger of extinction or the vulnerable ones

- Provision of income support for the economic losses incurred by choosing to maintain them. In Greece, relevant legislation has been introduced in order to implement European Rural Development legislation.

Long-term sustainability - Incentives to keep these breeds not as part of a campaign to maintain tradition or for environmental conservation, but as tools for development

- Support farms in terms of productivity and economic performance against other types of farms which rear improved animal breeds
- Maintain linkages with markets, existing value chains, and other actors

PAPESHE annual meeting in Thessaloniki (27/9/2019)

The Annual team meeting of project "Protection of Autochthonous populations of PelagoniaSHEep breed in the cross-border area – PAPESHE" was held on Friday 27/09/2019 in Hotel Mediterranean Palace, Thessaloniki. The main purpose of this meeting was to bring together all project partners in order to present the results of the project so far, to clarify the actual status of deliverables and to discuss its progress and to design the next steps and actions. All partners presented their progress so far regarding all the deliverables of the project. Two members of the JS were present and were informed about the project and how it aspires not only to deliver all activities that are planned to be implemented, but mainly how partners plan to maximize the impact of the project through communication and dissemination activities to a large basis of stakeholders.





PAPESHE is implemented in the framework of competitive bilateral INTERREG IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme "Greece - Republic of North Macedonia 2014-2020". The project is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of the participating countries



More information about the project

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