



## The role of the Eloro LAG in the process of local development of the southern area of Syracuse.

The cooperation among cross-border clusters of SMEs in the agro-food sector (as well as in the environmental, crafts and tourism related sectors) in terms of quality and safety of products and services for the enrichment of the local know-how, can provide an added value in competitive terms in the new Euro-Mediterranean market that is arising in a difficult time, such as that of globalisation and its cyclical crises.



The ELORO LAG deals with sustainable rural development since 1998; it has participated, since its establishment, in many cooperation activities and distinguished itself especially in the planning and management of local integrated development initiatives and sustainability interventions in rural areas, as in the case of the activation of participatory technical tables on specific agro-food supply chains; or, again, in the

drafting of memoranda of understanding and creation of networks with professional associations, consumers associations, local authorities and institutions, to support the productive chains and the integration of the stages of production / processing / marketing of agro-food products in the local agricultural economy; or, finally, in the case of the launching of public tenders and the activation of special support measures to encourage the productive chains of the quality typical products of the area (oil, wine, almonds, and several fruit and vegetables with the PGI, PDO brand, etc.) and the direct sale of products (according to the philosophy of 'food mile' or 'zero km').

The action of the Eloro LAG unfolds into two main areas: one closely linked to the support of local economies (agriculture and agro-food, crafts, tourism, culture, social economy, environment, SMEs, etc.) and another one related to the cooperation with other territories with inter-territorial, interregional and transnational scope.

## The support for local economies

Through the **Community Initiative Programmes LEADER II, LEADER+ and of the Axis IV LEADER Approach of the Sicily RDP 2007-2013**, the Eoro LAG has made some real integrated and participatory Action Plans for local sustainable development that allowed to experience a common methodology with local



actors and to promote development initiatives mainly addressed to individuals and associated entrepreneurs, especially in the areas of agriculture, tourism, environmental protection and promotion of sites of natural interest, demonstrating the benefits of actions implemented at district level. The Eoro LAG has proceeded with the creation of an integrated production system in which agriculture, crafts, SMEs, tourist – receptive offer and services in general can contribute to the enhancement of land resources, increasing their attractiveness and the quality of life of its inhabitants. It has also made the practical application of the chain approach, first with the signing of three " Supply Chain Pacts" (oil, wine and almonds) with the major producers; then, by implementing a strategy of connection and completion designed to cover any areas of development remained outside of the initiatives promoted by the clustering tools available and to strengthen the tourism sector integrated with the promotion of the short chain in agriculture and agro-food. In about 20 years of local planning, the Eoro LAG has proven to be an active player in the local administration and distribution of the project finance awarding, as contracting authority



of the LEADER programme, approximately 14 millions of Euros in 15 years of activity in the Eoro district, that is to say, in the territory of the 5 municipalities (Avola, Noto, Pachino, Portopalo di Capo Passero and Rosolini) where it has territorial competence. About 120 beneficiaries, primarily SMEs and their clusters, followed by associations and some local authorities. That is, that in about 20 years it has gone from supporting individual micro-business initiatives to supporting business combinations, up to the

packages of systemic aids or supply chain aids.

This process continues in terms of strengthening and improvement, in fact, the new Local Action Plan "Eoro 2020", recently approved under the Rural Development Program Sicily **2014-2020**, whose main idea is inspired to the valorisation of the Mediterranean Diet as a way of life, concerns two main pillars: Development and Innovation addressed to local production systems and chains and to Sustainable Tourism, and a transversal objective, Promotion of Innovation, which supports and connects the two main thematic areas in a balanced manner; the identified strategy consists in strengthening the organisation in supply chains of the quality circuits of local productions by integrating agricultural production, craftsmanship and tourist offer.



Of course, the support for local economies does not end here. The Eoro LAG has played a key role in the socioeconomic animation in the Eoro district as for tourism development and environmental requalification projects included in the PRUSST "**The Economies of Tourism**" (1999 - 2006), with a budget of more than 720 million Euros; as co-actuator in the **Territorial Integrated Programme - TIP n° 9 "Eco-museum of the Mediterranean"** (1999-2006) promoted by the Regional Province of Syracuse to enhance, with a budget of over 55 million Euros, cultural, environmental, ethno

anthropological resources and those of the typical productive activities of the territory identity, transforming them into as many products to be allocated to the tourism market through the creation of a network of an unified, integrated and coordinated offer, functionally organised under a single brand of quality. Still, in the framework of the **thematic territorial Pact for agriculture and fisheries "ELORO VENDICARI"** (1999 - 2004), the Eoro LAG played the role of socioeconomic animator of 75 entrepreneurial initiatives included therein, for a value of about 35 million Euros, in the agricultural, agro-food and fishing sectors, the investments related to the provision of complementary services to agricultural and fishpond production and investments related to the agricultural and fisheries products promotion. In addition, as part of the **Strategic Planning "City Development"** (2005 - ongoing), funded by the Sicilian Region with over 300 thousand Euros to the Municipalities of Avola (lead partner), Ispica, Noto, Pachino, Portopalo di Capo Passero, Pozzallo and Rosolini, the Eoro LAG plays the role of socioeconomic animator, involving potential beneficiaries in order to implement the framework program of urban requalification and improvement of the quality of life that the strategic plan subtends. Finally, under the EAFRD Fund O.P. Sicily 2007-2013, Sicily RDP 2007-2013, the Eoro LAG became the creator and promoter and is currently the lead partner of the **District of Quality Fruits and Vegetables of the Noto Valley - DOQVN (Jan. 2008/ongoing)**. The DOQVN is the first local big cluster (productive district) based on quality fruit and vegetable production in the Eoro District, recognised by the Sicilian Region, Department of Cooperation, by Decree no. 546/12S published in the GURS on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2007, which now has over 102 subscriber companies, with 1,621 workers, 13 Producer Organisations, 3 Protection Consortia and 29 other entities, including 7 local institutions and 22 organisms (universities, research centres, associations of producers, trade associations, financial institutions, local associations, etc.), with a business turnover of the subscribers amounting to more than 130 million Euros. The Eoro LAG maintains the role of lead partner and is the official representative of the DOQVN and is an integral part of the Network of the Sicilian Productive Districts, composed of the eight productive districts officially recognised by the Sicilian Region.





The Eloro LAG was the promoter of a project for the creation of a **Network of Shops of Short Chain**: specific protocols were signed between the Eloro LAG, The Municipality of Noto, the SOAT of Syracuse (Regional Dept. For Agriculture) and the Permanent Association of *Testa dell'Acqua* District (April 2013), in order to pursue a strategy to revitalise the historic centres and the rural villages of the area, the retailers and small shops located there, enhancing the consumers exigencies of food quality and safety and the need for the socioeconomic redemption of producers and processors of agricultural and agro-food products, typical of the territory. It is a new deal for 'short chain' between the world of agriculture and that of the urban consumption, with direct and immediate benefits to farmers and the citizens, with the launch and promotion of the brand "zero miles, done close to your home" and the system of Organised Direct Sales (ODS). The project was assisted by two young Spanish researchers assigned to the Eloro LAG by the University of Alicante (Comunidad Valenciana) through the **Leonardo da Vinci European programme**.

## The cooperation activities

The Eloro LAG has been since its constitution and is still a true pioneer of cooperative activities in Sicily, of inter-territorial, inter-regional and cross-border or transnational nature. Within the LEADER II Sec. C, we mention the **transnational cooperation Project AGROBIOTOUR (2000-2001)**, aiming at the creation of a transnational network of organic producers for the promotion and marketing in network of a joint basket of organic farming



products, the common participation in exhibitions and international fairs on organic products, the testing of electronic commerce, the definition of the statute draft of an European Economic Interest Group (EEIG) for the management of the organisation. The Eloro LAG played the role of lead partner, with the following involved partners: Terre del Sosio LAG (Italy), Asdepr LAG (Portugal), Ader Sousa LAG (Portugal). During the same period, always through the Leader II Sec. C Community Initiative Programme, the LAG Eloro was the lead partner in the **INOVATOUR**

**transnational cooperation project (2000-2001)**, aimed at testing techniques of restoration conjugated with those of seismic retrofitting of rural buildings of historic value for tourism - receptive aims, in order to increase the know-how in the field of conjugation of restoration techniques and seismic retrofitting of valuable rural buildings, thanks to the creation of a manual of good practices, the exchange of training for engineers and architects and the start-up of an experimental site for green architecture. Partners involved: CEDER AITANA LAG (Spain), University “La Sapienza” Rome (Italy), CNR – GNDT (Earthquakes Defence National Group) Rome (Italy), Polytechnic of Turin (Italy), Inst. Bio-Architecture of Alicante (Spain). In the same time



frame, the Eloro LAG was the promoter and lead partner of the **ADDCI project, on Cooperation**

**with Tunisia (1999-2001)**, which consisted in the diffusion of know-how on the role and tasks of a local action group and the related socio-economic animation activities. It was planned and implemented, according to the participatory approach, an extra-EU LAG in Tunisia, based on the organisational model and realised through the transfer of know-how from the Eloro LAG, called ADDCI, *Association pour le Développement Durable et la Coopération Internationale de Zarzis*, inaugurated in 2001 and it is still an Eloro LAG partner in several European projects of



integrated and sustainable local development. This process of cooperation also had the official recognition as “exemplary good practice” by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a specialised ONU agency for agricultural development, during an international event of diffusion and sensitisation towards the ACP and Latin America countries, held in Rome in June 2011. Still, at the same time, the Eloro LAG was lead partner in the **EUROYOUTH project, funded under the Transnational Cooperation Programme PRINCE, European Commission - DG ECOFIN (2000-2001)**. The project aimed at spreading knowledge, among young people, on the Euro in

order to gain a greater understanding about the opportunities and consequences of the introduction of the Euro in the markets; at develop, among young people, through games of simulation, the operational capabilities of the Euro use in commercial transactions and, thanks to the use of the technologies of the information society, the practical application of the Euro in the electronic business of typical products of the



cultural identity of the participating countries. Partners Involved: IEPS (Belgium), IEBA (Portugal), GAL OATEP (Greece), Carrefour Bragança (Portugal), GAL ADER SOUSA (Portugal), GAL ASDEPR (Portugal), Video Mediterraneo S.r.l. (Italy), Set S.r.l. (Italy).

Cooperation in Tunisia has also continued with the Regional Programme for decentralised cooperation for development, **AGECAVA project: Agents for the promotion of a network of holiday homes and hospitality rooms (2005-2006)**. Also in this case, there has been the transfer of know-how and best practices for the creation of a sustainable transnational network for an extra-hotel and tourism local cultural offer, linked to the increase of the income of local families.



Under the LEADER+ Community Initiative Programme, ELORO Local Development Plan, the Eloro LAG has played the role of lead partner in the **transnational cooperation project entitled SOLISOL - Eco-museum of the Mediterranean (2006-2007)**, which has triggered a complex euro-Mediterranean tourist development pattern, with the planning of integrated joint initiatives among LAGs and equivalent entities of Mediterranean Europe and Countries of the Mediterranean basin in general, aimed at the promotion of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, the environmental resources, such as the agro-food typical organic and eco-friendly products, the

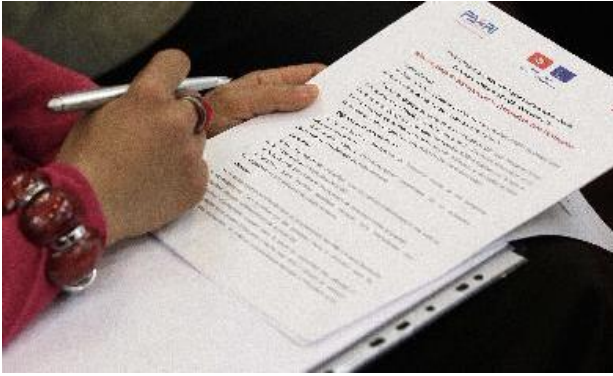


artistic handicrafts of their own territories, as well as to the strengthening of the moments of constructive dialogue among local development actors of the euro-

Mediterranean context, as an essential basis for the transfer of know-how, for the strengthening and dissemination of innovative practices for sustainable rural development, in view of the enhancement of local resources to be achieved through the integration of local systems. Involved partners: Trihonida S.A. Development Agency (Greece), Elikonas-Parnassos S.A. (Greece), Aitoliki Development Enterprise A.a. (Greece), Fokiki Developing S.A. (Greece), Platani Quisquina LAG (Italy), ADDCI Zarzis (Tunisia), Larnaca District Development Agency (Cyprus). Also in the framework of the LEADER+ Community Initiative Programme, ELORO Local Development Plan, the Eloro LAG has played the role of project partner in the **transnational cooperation project entitled Rediscovery and Enhancement of Mediterranean Rurality (2007-2009)**, which aims to promote and market the reception system of the

partner countries, and in particular: hospitality, food and wine, local products and crafts, culture of rural areas in the European and non-European markets, more and more sensitive to quality products and its territories. In particular, it is aimed to promote, strengthen and consolidate the supply of the





rural-tourism system, the knowledge of DOC, PDO, PGI, TSG, QWPSR certified quality products of the European Union's rural areas, as well as the access of the LAG areas products in international markets. The project has foreseen the preparation of the Marketing Plan of the Mediterranean Rurality, the logo design and the "Mediterranean Rurality" specifications, the

creation of a Web Portal, the communication and promotion activities of the Mediterranean Rurality, the constitution of an EEIG and of the "Mediterranean Rurality" Association. Partners involved: Altocasertano LAG (lead partner), 6 more LAGs from Campania, 12 LAGs from Sicily, 3 LAGs from Greece, 1 GAL from Malta, for a total of 23 partners. Website: [www.ruralitamediterranea.com](http://www.ruralitamediterranea.com).

Between 2007 and 2009, the Elero LAG was partner in the **project of inter-territorial cooperation Network of Mediterranean Rural Districts**, through which we proceeded with the construction of a "system" for the functional and operational connection of different affected areas and allow an effective process for the international enhancement of the rural Mediterranean, in all its expressions, around which create quality tourism products and effective



distribution and promotion systems for local products. Operationally, it was to create a system of public and private entities that could help to define and manage a new tourist offer and an effective international distribution of local products. Partners involved: all Sicilian LAGs, as lead partner the Agency for the Mediterranean (ApM). Outside the scope of the PIC LEADER, the Elero LAG has played the role of expert partner in the **EuroMed Youth III Programme, "Prevention of violence against young women" Project (2007-2008)**, a project aimed at promoting equality of sexes and the preparation of young people to a couple life more respectful of the rights of the human person and the dignity of the other. In this context, it was signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the implementation of transnational cooperation activities in the euro-Mediterranean context. Partners involved: young people, politicians and operators in the sector from Italy, France, Morocco and Tunisia; as observers, Egypt, Sudan and Malta.



Still, since March 2008, the Elero LAG is the official representative of all Italian LAGs in the euro-Maghreb cooperation network called **RE.MA.DE.L. - Réseau Maghrebin**

**Développement Local**, an association between rural development agencies, foundations and rural associations of Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Spain, France and Italy (Website:



[www.remadel.org](http://www.remadel.org)), that is the recognition of the role played since years by the Eoro LAG in cooperation with southern Mediterranean countries.

In addition, in the field of cross-border cooperation, the Eoro LAG is partner in the **ENPI CBC «Italy-Tunisia» 2007-2013 programme: *Les Voyages de la Connaissance 017*** Project (Nov. 2011 / Dec. 2015), which deals with the valorisation of the resources related to territorial identities, in particular the intangible cultural heritage and the handicrafts of excellence; with a set of proposals for innovative paths to discover the heritage founded on traditions and common roots of the two territories; and with an offer of concrete information on the territories through a system of modern communication that promotes various types of offer in every season. Partners involved: PRO.PI.TER (lead partner, Italy), Circuito Castelli e Borghi Medioevali (Italy), Elimos LAG (Italy), Quisquina LAG (Italy), Municipality of Modica (Italy), O.N.A. (Tunisia), A.M.V.P.P.C. (Tunisia).

Always in the field of cross-border cooperation, the Eoro LAG is the lead partner in the **ENPI CBC «Italy-Tunisia» 2007-2013: SERVAGRI 045 - Italo-Tunisian Observatory at SERVICE of sustainable quality AGRiculture Project (Nov 2011 / Mar 2015**. It is the creation of an Italian-Tunisian Observatory on agro-food safety and quality policies, inaugurated in Tunis on 21<sup>th</sup> September 2012, with the objective of creating euro-Mediterranean quality clusters / productive districts,



the implementation of pilot projects in the fields of olive growing , beekeeping, organic farming and short chain, as well as the spread of brands, specifications, protocols and labelling to ensure consumers quality, traceability and food safety. Partners involved: TENMYA 21 (Tunisia), APEL (Tunisia), CIA Siracusa (Italy), EURISPES Sicilia (Italy), CISS ONG (Italy), ADDCI Zarzis, associated partner (Tunisia). Website: [www.servagri.eu](http://www.servagri.eu) – Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/servagri.eu>; Link: <http://www.ciheam.org/images/CIHEAM/PDFs/Publications/LV/wl24.pdf> (see. page 24 and following).

Finally and always in the same field of cross-border cooperation, the Eoro LAG is the first partner in the **ENPI CBC «Italy-Tunisia» 2007-2013: “HI.L.F.TRAD. - Hilal sicilo-tunisien de la Filière Laitière-Fromagère Traditionnelle à travers les Nouvelles Technologies”, Project (Jun. 2014 / Jul. 2016)**. Creation of a scientific and institutional network between research and stakeholders in the



dairy field for the transfer of knowledge, skills, production technology, conservation, characterization and optimization of traditional historical cheeses made from sheep raw milk in the Beja region of Tunisia. Thanks to HILFTRAD and the intense communication activity coordinated by the LAG Eloro, Tunisian traditional cheeses have become important tools for the understanding of their production sites, breeding and feeding systems, promoting the first certification recognized in Tunisia for products of animal origin, namely the AOC (*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*), through a knowledge transfer action between managers of ministries and food departments of the two countries.



Under **Measure 421 "Cooperation"** of the Rural Development Programme of Sicily, we implemented three complementary projects, listed below, aiming at strengthening the process of exploitation of land resources and real economic recovery, started in the 2000-2006 European programming with the transnational cooperation project "**Rediscovery and enhancement of the Mediterranean Rurality**", which was attended by 23 LAGs and which laid the groundwork for the creation of an integrated tourist offer, tailor-made for those territories being mostly marginal from a tourist point of view, and the inter-territorial cooperation project "**Network of Mediterranean Rural Districts**" that gave birth to the **Agency for the Mediterranean**, established in 2008 by the Sicilian LAGs and the Campanian partner GAL Consortium Alto Casertano, as common legal entity to consolidate network policies at both national and international levels, and to give continuity to the policies of cooperation, so ensuring the management of the brand "Mediterranean Rurality", according to law.

The cooperation projects being implemented for the period 2007-2013 are:

**"Mediterranean Rurality - Typical products - RAMSES (Network of Market Areas for the Development of a Sustainable Economy)"**, aimed at creating a network of companies for the promotion of typical products of the LAG areas, in order to enable actions to strengthen agricultural and regional agri-food supply chain policies; that is, a network connecting entrepreneurial structures and professionals of the LAG areas, promoting collaboration at local level and reducing the fragmentation of the sector. The strategy of the project was based on strengthening the degree of integration of the economic chains, the creation of an integrated and reticular system for the promotion and dissemination of agricultural and agri-food production, capable of connecting public and private institutions; the development of services to local enterprises, aimed at supporting the best functioning of the reticular system created. The "network" aimed to implement a collective approach to enhancing strategies and testing of innovative forms of cooperation. This logic has been shown to be successful because: improves globally and systemically competitiveness and overall quality of companies and productions; provides benefits for consumers; impacts positively in socio-occupational terms and for the quality of life of local populations. The project activities, in fact, concerned:

- the construction and improvement of a common identity among manufacturers of the individual territorial areas, so that each participant in the system can be both the founder but also a guarantor in front of other producers and third parties;
- the creation of a uniform offer of Sicilian products from rural areas that is competitive and attractive;
- the construction and diffusion of a unique system of tools and services aimed specifically at enhancing the common identity; the definition of the sensorial profile contributes to the realisation of a product specification, a description of the quality provided through a sensorial "passport of taste". The "passport of taste", usable by the buyer, the consumer, and also the enterprise, is essentially a product identity card, useful for transmission to the target consumers/buyers. The passport is divided into several sections: product description, characteristics, organoleptic description, story, nutritional, healthy and quality facts, safety and traceability aspects (see [www.ilpassaportodelgusto.it](http://www.ilpassaportodelgusto.it));
- the construction of a participatory governance model able to stimulate the development of the local agricultural economy.



The expected results, for which a multiplier effect was expected, have improved the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the sector, increasing productivity and efficiency, favouring the improvement of production, not only in quantitative terms, but also in terms of quality. The project has also strengthened the collaboration relationships between the territories concerned, and between territories and regional governance with the attained medium-long term objective of fostering a stable and continuous cooperation (LAG Eloro as lead partner);

**"Mediterranean Rurality - Tourism - RADAMES (Network of of Agro-Environmental Areas and Districts for the Tourism Movement, Touring and Leisure)"**, with the aim of consolidating the tourist system in rural areas through a network action between the LAGs' partnership (the LAG Eloro as project partner) and

**"Mediterranean Rurality - Internationalisation - SALITIS (System of Local Actions for the Internationalisation of the Territories of Southern Italy)"**, for the valorisation of a common identity of rural areas and their productions of excellence in an international showcase of undeniable effectiveness, in synergy with the actions taken by the Regional Administration in the context of Expo 2015 (the LAG Eloro as project partner).

These projects represent concrete actions to enhance, organise and promote on the national and international markets the integrated territorial offer of Sicily and the whole Euro-Mediterranean area, with the platform **"Mediterranean Rurality"**. See: [www.ruralitamediterranea.com](http://www.ruralitamediterranea.com), [www.passaportidelgusto.it](http://www.passaportidelgusto.it) and [www.valoresicilia.net](http://www.valoresicilia.net).

Briefly, in about 20 years of activity, the Eloro LAG can now count on a partners network that groups several European countries (Spain, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, Malta, France, Cyprus), but also many countries of the southern Mediterranean (Tunisia, Morocco,



Algeria, Mauritania, Egypt, Sudan), spreading anywhere the values of which it focuses, i.e. those based on transparent procedures, the efficient and effective management of actions and interventions, the sustainability of the actions for future generations of the Eloro area, the **integrated approach** and the **participatory method** for the construction of future scenarios for local development and the sharing of the needed tools.

Currently, within the seven-year planning period 2014-2020, the LAG Eloro is the promoter of cross-border cooperation initiatives, under implementation or just submitted and still under assessment by the European Union, considered fundamental for the re-launch and the development of the Eloro district and its inhabitants.

Thanks to the **ENPARD PAP TUNISIA 2014-2020 Programme**, the LAG Eloro is participating as a Partner in the on-going project "**Bargou 2020 Strategy - Promotion of an inclusive territorial development in the Bargou Delegation**" (2017-2020). The LAG Eloro has worked, with the rest of the partnership, the NGO Oxfam Italia (IT) as lead partner, and the partners Oxfam Novib (NL) and the non-profit association Wifak Bargou (TN), to the preparation and, now, is collaborating all along the implementation of the approved project proposal, focused on the development and systemisation of production chains in the Delegation of Siliana (Tunisia) through the dissemination of the LEADER method, based on the integrated approach and on the CLLD (Community-Led Local Development) strategy; the task of the LAG Eloro is, in fact, to provide its undeniable expertise in the field of the LEADER Approach.

Under the **ENI CBC "Mediterranean Basin" 2014-2020 Programme, 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Standard projects**, the LAG Eloro submitted, in January 2018, two projects, one as lead partner and the other one as project partner, still under evaluation. The project **SERVAGRI CLUSTERS - Innovative SERVICES for AGRiculture in Mediterranean CLUSTERS**, aims at the



promotion and support of an Euro-Mediterranean district / cluster at the service of quality agriculture and safe agri-food, able to bring added value to the food supply chains and regional clusters, creating new services and networking a panel of quality, traceable and safe products, to be jointly marketed. The LAG Eloro is the Lead partner of a large partnership composed of of CCIAZ (Lebanon), NCARE (Jordan), ADDCI (Tunisia), CCCV (Spain), 3TS Society (Greece) and 10 Associates partners from Italy, Tunisia, Greece and Cyprus.

Also in response to the same call for proposals, the LAG Eloro presented, as a Partner, the proposal entitled **COOP4JOBS - Coopération publique-privée pour l'insertion sociale et l'emploi des jeunes et des femmes en zones rurales méditerranéennes basés sur des coopératives** (Public-private cooperation for the social integration and employment of young people and women in rural Mediterranean areas based on cooperatives), whose objective is to support the social and economic integration of young people, particularly those at risk of exclusion (NEET), and women in rural areas of the Mediterranean, relying on a public-private partnership to encourage collective responsibility and strengthen the role of cooperatives in the creation of micro-enterprises and local economic services. In addition to the LAG Eloro, the partnership is composed of CIHEAM - IAMM (France), Ministry of Agriculture -DGFIOP (Tunisia), SMSA de Zarzis (Tunisia), Ministry of Social Affairs (Lebanon), Rural Delights (Lebanon), TerraCoopa (France), APO (Italy) and by the three Sicilian Associates, all brought from the LAG Eloro: Sicilian Region - Agriculture Department, Agency for the Mediterranean and the MEDITERRAE Cooperative.



The LAG Eloro is also the promoter and leader of both the projects, them also submitted last January, in response to the **1<sup>st</sup> Call for Standard projects of the ENI CBC Program "Italy-Tunisia" 2014-2020**. The partnership of the project **SERVAGRI ZOOTECH - Recherche et Innovation au SERVICE de l'AGRIculture dans les filières de la ZOOTECHnie** (Research and Innovation at the SERVICE of AGRICulture in ZOOTECHnics supply chains), composed by INAT (Tunisia), UTAP (Tunisia), Corfilcarni (Italy), ASP-AG (Italy)

and GIVLAIT (Tunisia), capitalising on the experience of the SERVAGRI Observatory, aims to meet the needs of consumers and entrepreneurs in the internal and external markets of the cross-border area, to improve the quality and safety of meat, through: joint applied research aimed at the realisation and dissemination of the innovation technological transfer of product and process; exchange of experiences in R&D and innovation; cooperation actions; pilot actions on cross-border traceability of beef meat intended for export.

The project **CLUSTER SERVAGRI - CLUSTER transfrontalier à SERVICE du réseautage et qualification des filières de l'AGRIculture** (Cross-border CLUSTER at SERVICE of networking and qualification of AGRICulture supply chains), instead, aims to standardise Italian and Tunisian olive oil production and to typify the offer according to international standards: CLUSTER SERVAGRI, capitalising on the experience of the SERVAGRI Observatory, aims to meet the needs of consumers and entrepreneurs in the internal and external markets of the cross-border area, to improve the quality and safety of olive oil, thanks to a joint applied study aimed at achieving and disseminating technology transfer and the product and process innovation; to favour exchanges of competencies in health and innovation; to stimulate cooperation actions between organizations and companies; to launch pilot actions on cross-border traceability of olive oil for export. The partnership joining this initiative is made up of INAT



(Tunisia), Institut de l'Olivier Sousse (Tunisia), Sicilian Region - Agriculture Department (Italy), APO (Italy), UTAP (Tunisia).

In conclusion and as it is already well-known, the LAG Eoro distinguished itself in the last 2007-2013 programming period, not only among all the Sicilian LAGs, but also among the 192 LAGs existing at national level, for its recognised qualities and design dynamism, both in the LEADER field, and also outside of it, since the LAG Eoro was and is still the beneficiary, as lead partner or project partner, of a series of cross-border and transnational cooperation projects, for which, very often, it's mentioned as an example by organisms of international renown, such as, for example:

- ✚ the CIHEAM (*Centre International Hautes Etudes Agronomiques en Méditerranée*) in his specialised magazine *CIHEAM Watch Letter*; ([https://www.ciheam.org/en/publications/watch\\_letter/details?pub=WL\\_24&id=23](https://www.ciheam.org/en/publications/watch_letter/details?pub=WL_24&id=23))
- ✚ the RAI 3 television channel in the "Mediterraneo" TV program and in the services of the regional news program (TGR); (see: <http://youtu.be/bWnBF1f0dzk>; <http://www.rai.tv/dl/RaiTV/programmi/media/ContentItem-e42a7b73-3fcf-408d-9b1e-b2488382072c-tgr.html>);
- ✚ the INEA, nowadays CREA (National Council for Research on Agrarian Economy), in its researches commissioned by the National Rural Network, like the one published in March 2014 on cooperation among rural areas, which places the LAG Eoro at the second place in the national podium upon 192 LAGs for project quality and at the first place of the regional podium for project dynamism;
- ✚ the European Union itself has published, in late July 2016, the ENPARD programme (European Neighbourhood Programme for Agricultural and Rural Development) Tunisia where the SERVAGRI Observatory is the only project among the existing 33 ENPI CBC "Italy-Tunisia" projects, to be officially mentioned in the *European Commission's Financing Decision* of the current ENPARD pilot action programme of the European Union in Tunisia (see: [http://ec.europa.eu/.../d.../aap/2013/af\\_aap-spe\\_2013\\_tun\\_p4.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/.../d.../aap/2013/af_aap-spe_2013_tun_p4.pdf), page 5, third paragraph).

In short, it is a series of institutional awards that, all together, make the LAG Eoro proud, along with its project partnership and the whole team of professionals and experts who have worked so hard, encouraging them to progress in making any effort with the aim to ensure a better quality of life of the rural populations, as well as the full food security of cross-border production, a sustainable and high quality tourist offer, an attention to the identity traditions and cultural and environmental heritage of its territory and those ones of its partners.

GAL Eoro

Via Ruggero Settimo, 9

96017 Noto (Siracusa)

T +39 0931 836108

F +39 0931 836199

@ [info@galeloro.it](mailto:info@galeloro.it)

[www.galeloro.org](http://www.galeloro.org)

[www.facebook.com/GalEoro](https://www.facebook.com/GalEoro)

[www.servagri.eu](http://www.servagri.eu)

[www.facebook.com/servagri.eu](https://www.facebook.com/servagri.eu)