

NEWSLETTER 2

SmartAL

Master: European Innovations for a Sustainable Management of Albanian Territories, Rural Areas and Agriculture: Instruments, policies, strategies

**SMARTAL IS AN ERASMUS + CAPACITY BUILDING
IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROJECT FOCUSING ON:**

- 1 Strengthening the linkages between universities and job providing institutions
- 2 Improving the theoretical and practical knowledge of students
- 3 Offering innovative teaching tools and methodologies
- 4 Consolidating synergy among Albanian universities
- 5 Creating 9 teaching modules at executive and professional master level

2018: A year full of structural events which laid the foundations of the SmartAL Master in “European Innovations for a Sustainable Management of Albanian Territories, rural areas and agriculture: Instruments, policies, strategies”

The job market review and the benchmark, carried out under the auspices of the European University of Tirana, led to the identification of key thematic fields, discussed among stakeholders and future employers, during a Concertation Meeting as soon as January 2018. This founding step enabled the constitution of a list of nine modules, for the future executive master, identified as meeting the current needs in terms of competency for the development of agricultural and rural territories in Albania.

In March 2018, the University Fan S. Noli in Korçë hosted the consortium for a 1st Design Workshop, to establish a preliminary basis for a quality process, and to set up the rules of the financial management of the project. The occasion to incorporate the University Paul Valéry as a new partner in the consortium, in a view to foster the necessary dynamics for the definition of an ongoing quality improvement process, but also the necessary safeguards for the final accreditation of the SmartAL Master, in accordance with the Bologna process (cf newsletter 1).

The design of a visual identity of the project, a website and an exchange platform dedicated to the SmartAL; the release of the first Newsletter issue; the creation of the booklet and promotional objects now ensure a greater visibility of the project

and of its development for students and future employers.

The Erasmus+ Office in Albania, on the occasion of a Monitoring Visit in June 2018, indeed took note of the good pace of implementation of the project, the cohesion of its teams and the dynamic infused by all the partners.

The first Steering Committee, jointly organized by the Agricultural University of Tirana and the CIHEAM-IAMM in October 2018 in Tirana, was the occasion to hold a High Level Segment, gathering the Embassies of France, Greece and Germany in Albania, the Albanian Ministries in charge of Agriculture and Environment, representatives of the European Union, as well as several regional stakeholders who demonstrated during a Panel Discussion the consistency of the future SmartAL Master with the needs and with their expectations in terms of development of rural territories in Albania. This event was transmitted on the Albanian first national channel, giving the project a high national visibility.

For the year 2019 –which should be a determining year for the Master's design– I wish all the members of the Consortium: the University Fan S. Noli Korçë, the University of Hohenheim, the Agricultural University of Tirana, the European University of Tirana, the Panteion University of social and political sciences, and the University Paul Valéry, a wonderful year! I particularly commend them for the exceptional commitment they have demonstrated since the beginning of the project.

Magali Maire, CIHEAM-IAMM,
Coordinator of the SmartAL Project

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

Lead partner

International Center for Advanced
Mediterranean Agronomic Studies -
Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of
Montpellier -CIHEAM-IAMM (France)



Partners

Fan S Noli University Korçë - UNKO (Albania)
University of Hohenheim - UHOH (Germany)
European University of Tirana - UET (Albania)
Agricultural University of Tirana - UBT (Albania)
Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences - UPSPS (Greece)
University Paul Valéry Montpellier - UPV (France)

Associated partners:

Network for Rural Development (Albania)
Ministry of Education and Sports (Albania)
Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development
And Water Administration (Albania)
Ministry of Urban development (Albania)
Korçë Regional Council (Albania)



Project duration: 2017-2020
Total EU Grant: 760 000 EUR

SMARTAL EVENTS

Monitoring visit Erasmus+ in Albania

A preventive Field Monitoring Visit for the SmartAL project took place from 1 to 7 June 2018 at the European University of Tirana (UET) and at the Albanian Erasmus + Office.

Ms Aida Breiti, Coordinator of the Erasmus+ Office in Albania, and Mr Oltion Pengu, Erasmus+ Office Staff in Albania, met with project partners in Albania and discussed the project implementation from the perspective of the Albanian institutions involved.

The monitoring team acknowledged that the project made good progress towards achieving its goals and objectives.

A strong incentive to continue our collective work!

The 1st Steering Committee - October 2018

The 1st Steering Committee of the SmartAL project was co-organised by the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies-Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier (CIHEAM-IAMM) –as the Coordinator– and the Agricultural University of Tirana (UBT) –as a member

of the Project Consortium–, on 22 & 23 October 2018. On 22 October, Magali Maire, SmartAL Project Coordinator, CIHEAM-IAMM representative, after the welcome of the



Dr. Ketrina Çabiri Mijo, European University of Tirana during field monitoring visit

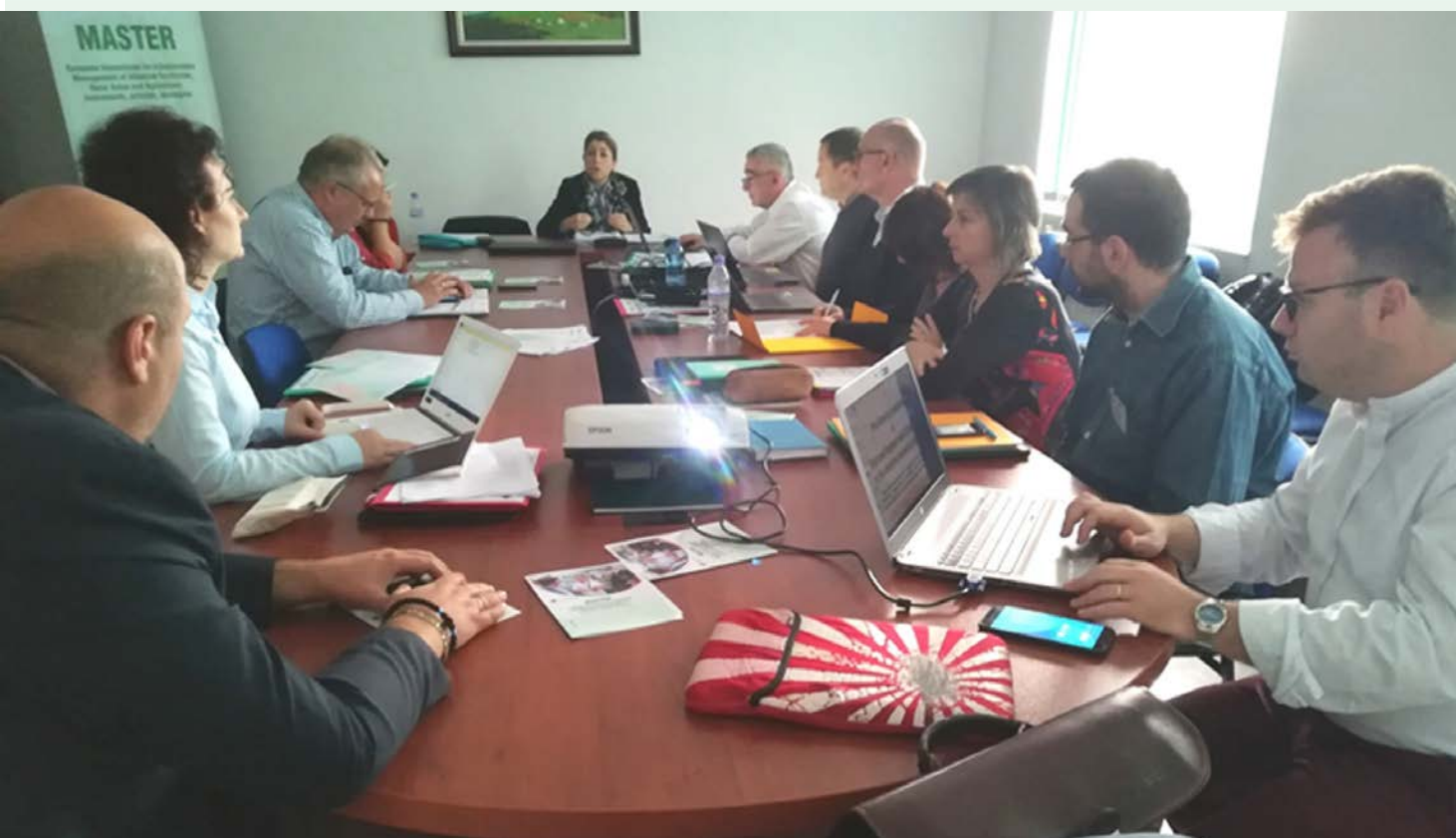
consortium members, thanked them for their high involvement and commitment in the project. The members of the Steering Committee, after a presentation of the Quality Plan submitted by Dr Fatmir Guri of the UBT and Pr Pascal Chevalier of the University Paul Valéry Montpellier (UPV), in collaboration with the CIHEAM-IAMM, validated it as a structural framework of the project.

The Communication Plan and communications tools were then presented by Dr Ketrina Çabiri Mijo, European University of Tirana (UET), as the leader of the Communication Work Package, and validated by the Steering Committee. Finally, a reminder of the financial rules related to the Management of Capacity Building Projects as well as a financial statement of the project to date, were provided by the Coordinator.

On 23 October, a reminder of the 2018-2019 Work Plan was provided by the CIHEAM-IAMM and the objectives of the mobilities of Albanian & EU teachers were detailed. Dr Elena Kokthi, Teacher and Researcher at the UET, presented her first experience of the mobility at the CIHEAM-IAMM and pairing of teachers with Dr Tahani Abdelhakim of the CIHEAM-IAMM, and the starting of a Master module design.

The pairing of Albanian / EU teachers was set up, and discussions on the design of modules' methodology were held among partners: the UBT, the UET and the University Fan S. Noli of Korçë (UNKO), as the Albanian higher education institutions of the Consortium; the University of Hohenheim (Germany), the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Greece), the University Paul Valéry Montpellier (France) and the CIHEAM-IAMM (France) being the European ones.

More than 38 mobilities of teachers and students will be organized in the 2 upcoming years in order to co-build the Master



From left to right: Ardian Cerava, University Fan S. Noli, Korçë. Elena Kokthi, European University of Tirana. Reiner Doluschitz, University of Hohenheim. Magali Maire, CIHEAM-IAMM. Philippe Le Grusse, CIHEAM-IAMM. Pascal Chevalier, Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier. Marc Dedeire, Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier. Sofia Nikolaidou, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens. Theodosia Anthopoulou, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens. Gerasimos Rodotheatos, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Fatmir Guri, Agricultural University of Tirana

A High Level Segment: A great spotlight to the project - October 2018

On the occasion of the First Steering Committee of the SmartAL project, the CIHEAM-IAMM, in collaboration with the UBT, organized a High-Level Segment in Tirana. A large panel of stakeholders attended and debated on the optimization of the sustainable development of agricultural territories in Albania: among them, the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Administration, the Erasmus+ Agency in Albania, the DG Agri of the European Union, the Regional Environmental Center but also the Ambassadors of France, the Ambassadors of Greece and the Ambassador of Germany. They highlighted the interest and the necessity of such a project for the strengthening of the employability of young people which would benefit to rural areas in Albania. They also stressed the importance of the collaboration of EU countries with Albania in this context. A wide range of institutional, but also private stakeholders such as the Union of Agro Business, Krop Agricultural Consulting, Geotechniki Aigaïou emphasized the fact that the creation of such a training offer was totally coherent and fitted their needs in terms of skills as future employers. In addition to a continuous dissemination through social networks and the production of a video for the project's website, the event was covered throughout its duration by the first Albanian channel, offering a great visibility to the project.

The modules co-conception of the upcoming SmartAL Master

Each module will be designed by pairs of EU and Albanian teachers through a peer to peer capacity building process:



Speaker: Ms Magali MAIRE, Coordinator of the SmartAL Project, International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies -Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier (CIHEAM-IAMM).



From right to left: H.E. Ms Christina VASAK, French Ambassador in Albania. H.E. Ms Eleni SOURANI, Greek Ambassador in Albania. Mr Enrico GUENTHER, First Secretary - Head of Press and Cultural Section, German Embassy in Albania



The panel, from left to right: Pr Remzi KECO, Deputy Rector of the Agricultural University of Tirana. Dr Fatmir GURI, Lecturer-Researcher, Agricultural University of Tirana. Mr Mihalaq QIRJO, Regional Environmental Center. A representative of Geotechniki Aigaïou. Mr Agim RRAPAJ, Union of Agro-business in Albania (KASH). Pr Jani MAYROMATI, Vice Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Agricultural University of Tirana. Pr Adrian CIVICI, President of the European University of Tirana. Pr Ali JASHARI, Rector of the University Fan S. Noli Korçë. Mr Evangelos GKLAVAKIS, Krop-Agricultural consulting

9 Albanian teachers will participate in courses in the most suitable European University. These teacher's capacity building mobilities have started in September 2018.

First mobility at the CIHEAM-IAMM

Dr Elena Kokthi, European University of Tirana, was the first Albanian lecturer-researcher to experiment the pairing in a European university, in September 2018. She stayed for a month at the Centre International de HUBTes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes-Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen de Montpellier (CIHEAM-IAMM), where she worked with Dr Tahani Abdelhakim on

the design of the module dedicated to “Territory actors and institutions”. The definition of the module perimeter, course attendance and literature review were some of the activities undertaken in the framework of this mobility. A draft module was prepared and discussed in several pair meetings.

Collaboration between the Agricultural University of Tirana and the CIHEAM-IAMM

Prof. Asoc. Dr. Fatmir Guri, Agricultural University of Tirana, was welcomed by the CIHEAM-IAMM in November 2018, where he worked with Dr Philippe Le Grusse, Dean of studies and Dr Mélanie Requier-Desjardins, teacher and researcher. They launched the co-building of the module on “Natural resources and environmental management”.



From left to right: Philippe Le Grusse, Dean of studies, CIHEAM-IAMM, Magali Maire, Chargée de mission to the Director - Coordinator of the SmartAL project, Pascal Bergeret, Director of the CIHEAM-IAMM, Elena Kokthi, Lecturer at the European University of Tirana, Tahani Abdelhakim, Researcher and Lecturer at the CIHEAM-IAMM, Virginie Avignon, SmartAL Project Manager

Collective work between the European University of Tirana and the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

Dr. Ani Mbrica, lecturer at the European University of Tirana conducted her mobility at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece during December 2018. Elaboration and review of the draft module in regard to objectives, topics' content, learning outcomes and literature review were some of the issues discussed during the meetings with the team of professors in charge: Prof. Elias Beriatos, Prof. Theodosia Anthopoulou, Dr. Sofia Nikolaidou and Dr. Gerasimos Rodotheatos. During these days, Ani Mbrica conjointly worked with the UPSPS teams in a view to provide a first draft of the Module untitled: “Territorial administration, planning and governance”.



Fatmir Guri, teacher and researcher, Agricultural University of Tirana and Mélanie Requier-Desjardins, teacher and lecturer at the CIHEAM-IAMM

SIDE EVENTS

International Fair of Tirana

SmartAL project has attended the International Fair of Tirana on Albania Works (Panairi “Shqipëria punon token”, edicioni II), 12-13 October 2018, Tirana. The fair was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Albania. The SmartAL project was presented as part of the activities of the CIHEAM in Albania, and had a double objective: 1) showing the continuity of the long date activities that the CIHEAM perform in Albania with the collaboration of the Albanian HEI, and 2) introduce to the public and the professionals the new study program on administration of the rural areas in Albania. Being a fair for the agriculture and rural development professionals, this was an ideal opportunity for us to communicate on the new degrees available, and to discuss about their expectations on the content of the modules.

Signature of Erasmus+ Inter institutional agreements between the CIHEAM-IAMM and three Albanian Universities

In a view to strengthen the existing close cooperation relation, the CIHEAM-IAMM, in collaboration with the



Ani Mbrica, PhD European University of Tirana, Prof. Elias Beriatos, Prof. Theodosia Anthopoulou, Dr. Sofia Nikolaidou and Dr. Gerasimos Rodotheatos UPSPS



Presentation of the SmartAL project as a CIHEAM activity. From left to right: Fatmir Guri lecturer at the UBT, Sali Metani former Director of the Foreign Relations Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Albania, and former member of the CIHEAM governing board, and Pandeli Pasko, researcher at the CIHEAM-IAM Bari



Dr Philippe Le Grusse, Dean of Studies, representing Pascal Bergeret, Director of the CIHEAM-IAMM. Pr Remzi KECO, Deputy Rector of the Agricultural University of Tirana. Pr Ali JASHARI, Rector of the University Fan S. Noli Korçë. Pr Adrian CIVICI, President of the European University of Tirana

Agricultural University of Tirana, the European University of Tirana, and the University Fan S. Noli of Korçë, has submitted a project and obtained a grant for 32 mobilities. This will stimulate exchanges of teachers, students and staff of the four institutions during two years: a wonderful support of the Erasmus+ Program, optimizing the existing dynamics between France and Albania, and a successful example of a contribution to the internationalization of Higher Education Universities in Albania.

The presence of the rectors and presidents of the three Albanian universities during the high-level segment was an opportunity to sign the three interinstitutional agreements.



Albanian Universities, CIHEAM-IAMM and Erasmus+ Office in Albania Representatives

Contact:
Magali Maire, Coordinator
CIHEAM-IAMM
3191, route de Mende
34093 MONTPELLIER cedex 5 - FRANCE
E-mail: maire@iamm.fr



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