



HELLENIC REPUBLIC

Ministry of Interior

# Cross-border cooperation as a source of innovation in agrifood: The Case of the EGTC Efxini Poli

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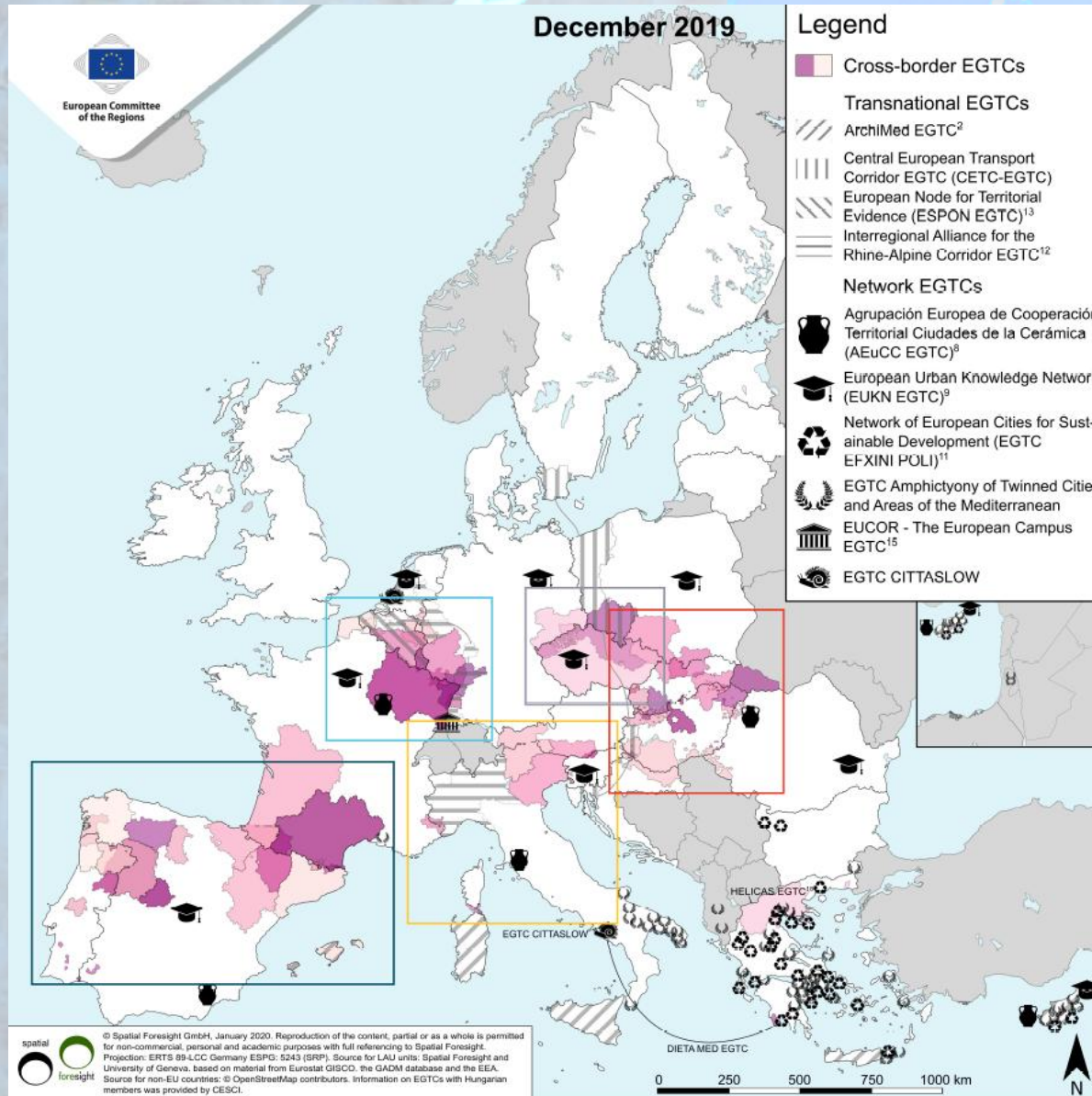
EGTCs National Contact Point





- ❑ European territorial development objectives date back to the European Spatial Development Perspective and were further detailed in the Territorial Agenda 2020
- ❑ Barriers can inhibit the full use of resources in border regions, which increases their peripheral position.
- ❑ The European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) was introduced in 2006 to overcome these barriers and assist public authorities in different Member States looking to implement actions across national boundaries
- ❑ The EGTC instrument enables public actors to establish an international entity under European law.
- ❑ This legal instrument complements funding instruments for European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), as known as Interreg, to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion.
- ❑ The legal entity provides a stable structure for public actors at different levels to cooperate, which helps multi-level governance within the EU and with Third countries.
- ❑ As of 2021, there are 79 EGTCs in the EU, with several more being set-up. These EGTCs fulfill many different purposes, all of which aim to add value through long-term territorial cooperation, going beyond the project horizon.

# EGTC trends and developments



## Figures

- ❖ **75 EGTCs** set up, according to the Register of the CoR
- ❖ More than **45.270 LRAs** involved
- ❖ A reality in **20 Member States & 4 Third Countries (Albania, Palestine, Switzerland, Ukraine)**
- ❖ Impact on the life of **137 million** Europeans



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## Missions

- ❖ Art. 7 (2) *"An EGTC shall act within the confines of the **tasks** given to it, namely the facilitation and promotion of territorial cooperation to strengthen Union **economic, social and territorial cohesion**, and the **overcoming of internal market barriers**."*
- ❖ Art. 7 (3) Tasks of the EGTC:
  - *specific actions of territorial cooperation between its members [...] with or without financial support from the Union.*
  - *Primarily [...] the implementation of cooperation programmes, or parts thereof, or the implementation of operations supported by the EU through the ERDF, the ESF and/or the CF.*
- ❖ **Limits:** Powers of the State such as police, regulation, justice or foreign affairs.



- ❖ EGTC can be used to address various aspects of territorial development such as:
  - ❑ **Cross-border healthcare and emergency services,**
  - ❑ **nature disaster prevention and solidarity,**
  - ❑ **nature protection and preservation of environment,**
  - ❑ **access to public services,**
  - ❑ **investment projects,**
  - ❑ **transport infrastructure and soft transport projects,**
  - ❑ **integrated tourism,**
  - ❑ **economic cooperation,**
  - ❑ **jobs and growth,**
  - ❑ **education,**
  - ❑ **culture**



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## The EGTCs established in GREECE- The Only Balkan-based EGTCs

1. EGTC Amphictyony- 2008 (<http://www.amphictyony.gr>)

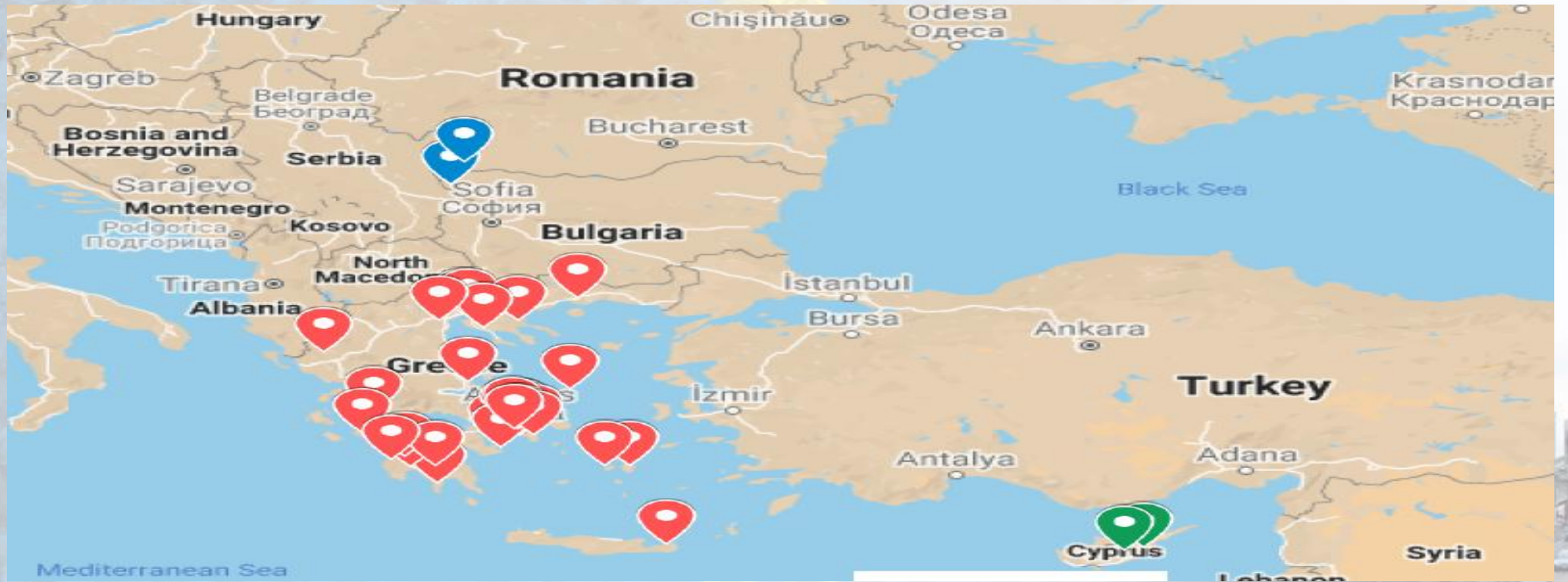


2. EGTC EFXINI POLI - 2012 (<http://www.efxini.gr/>)



3. EGTC H.E.L.I.C.A.S. (Holistic Efficient Local Initiatives for Cooperation and Synergy) - 2016 (<https://www.helicas.eu/>)





### **Membership of EGTC Efxini Poli**

- **GREECE:** Regions (2), Municipalities (29), Research Institute of Urban Environment and Human Resources (Panteion University), Development Association of Lavreotiki, Union of Local Authorities' General Secretaries (Klisthenis)
- **BULGARIA:** Municipality of Chuprene, RABC Vidin (Regional Agribusiness)
- **CYPRUS:** Municipalities (2)



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## Aristoil Project among the 8 finalists for Interreg Project Slam 2019



□ARISTOIL (Reinforcement of Mediterranean olive oil sector competitiveness through development and application of innovative production and quality control methodologies related to olive oil health protecting properties ) was coordinated by EGTC Efxini Poli with partners from Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Croatia, Spain and **the total budget** is 2.008.200 EUR.

□The project started on **1<sup>st</sup> November 2016** and was completed on **31<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

□However, more than 20,000 olive mills are operating in the Mediterranean countries and several millions of people are directly or indirectly affected by the economic viability of the olive oil sector. The olive fruit and the olive oil are the most important agricultural products in the three countries concerning their contribution to the agricultural GDP (5-10%).

□The main problem that has hindered the exploitation of the health claim advantage for olive oil is the lack of commonly accepted methods for the measurement of the ingredients related to the health claim. Although three partners (UOA,UOC, ARI) have developed and published or patented innovative methods of analysis their joint effort to conclude to commonly accepted methods is expected to change the view of olive oil from a simple lipid food to a health protecting food



5 countries  
17 partners & associates  
3200 olive oil producers and millers  
created AristOil Family

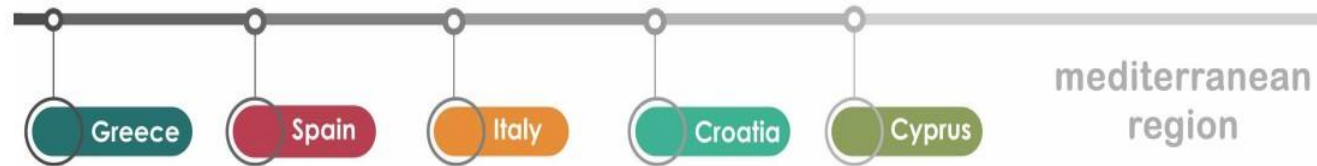


## The Rationale of the Project



- ❑ The Mediterranean region is the main place around the world for production of olive oil. 95% of the world's olive oil is produced in the Mediterranean and mainly in Greece, Peloponnese which produces 65% of Greek olive oil, Italian regions of Sicily, Calabria and Puglia and Andalusia in Spain, the biggest olive growing area on the planet.
- ❑ The main **common challenge** for all participating countries in the project is that the **average price of olive oil is low in comparison to the production cost** and moreover there is a **strong competition with the non-Mediterranean seed oil sector**. The producers in the Mediterranean are pressed either to reduce the cost of production or to increase the value or the demand for olive oil in the international market in order to maintain the viability and sustainability of the olive tree cultivation and the olive oil production.

## The Goals of the Project



1. Creation of a cluster for the production, bottling and trade of the new **MED HEALTH OLIVE OIL** category (**M.H.O.O.**)
2. Establishment of a Mediterranean certification body for **M.H.O.O.**
3. Establishment and operation of two **M.H.O.O.** certification centers in east and west Mediterranean regions
4. Funding for the research of **M.H.O.O.** properties
5. Consumers' awareness on preferring **M.H.O.O.**



## The Results of the Project



- ❑ The project offered trainings and seminars to olive oil producers and millers, introducing them to innovative production methods and tools that could support their production.
- ❑ A total of 39 trainings and 28 seminars were organised for olive oil stakeholders in all partner countries with the events received 1,282 and 1,933 participants respectively, of which 791 and 593 were SMEs/beneficiaries. In total, 67 trainings and seminars took place with 3,215 participants, of which 1,384 belonged to the SME target group
- ❑ In total, over 3,660 olive oil producers and olive millers benefitted from the project. The project also increased consumer awareness of the health benefits of olive oil. This information also reached local and regional public authorities (over 390 representatives), interest groups and NGOs (over 390), and international organisations
- ❑ Aristoil developed a standardised procedure for olive oil health certification, based on polyphenol concentration. This was done by creating a user-friendly colorimetric test kit (Aristometro) and two different laboratory analysis methods, which were calibrated to accurately quantify polyphenol. During the pilot phase more than 2,300 samples were analysed from over 1000 affiliated with ARISTOIL project olive oil producers in the research partner organisations, including the Universities of Athens, Cordoba and Split.
- ❑ The project has had a profound effect on the production and distribution approaches for olive oil. Through the development of the ARISTOIL Cluster for health protecting olive oil production and e-Hub, the continuation, expansion and international cooperation for the empowerment of high quality health-protecting olive oil producers is ensured.

## ARISTOIL PLUS: THE WAY AHEAD...



- ❑ ARISTOIL Plus was selected in the [Interreg MED 5<sup>th</sup> call for modular projects](#). The new project will transfer and mainstream during the next year the results achieved by the project that preceded it in the focus areas of [food systems](#) and [eco-innovation](#).
- ❑ ARISTOIL Plus will transfer some of the most important outcomes of [ARISTOIL](#) – the predecessor project – to new territories and new beneficiaries, focusing on [the Guidelines for olive oil producers](#) as well as the MED Healthy Olive oil Cluster.
- ❑ The project will focus on olive oil producers' associations, individual producers, olive growers, millers, chambers and local authorities in **Greece, Italy, Spain, Montenegro and Albania**. ARISTOIL Plus aims to increase local capacities with training of trainers to increase awareness on the benefits and methods of producing Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO).



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**Want to Know More**

<https://aristoil.interreg-med.eu/>



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**Thank you for your  
attention!**