



**ERA-NET Grant Agreement No:** [KBBE 219262](#)

**ERA-NET acronym:** [ARIMNet](#)

**PROJECT FULL TITLE:** **Mediterranean biodiversity as a tool for the sustainable development of the small ruminant sector: from traditional knowledge to innovation**

**Project acronym:** **DoMEStic**

### **Final Summary Report**

The small ruminant sector is one of the most important components of agricultural activities in the Mediterranean countries. Sheep and goats are efficient in transforming feed resources from marginal lands to high quality animal protein. However, the production systems in Mediterranean countries are facing numerous threats, which will likely threaten the sustainability of many livestock production systems and their associated feed and animal genetic resources. The main challenge therefore is preserving diversity in production systems while ensuring adequate levels of income for the farmer and providing products to the market at a price and a quantity acceptable to the consumer. The DoMEStic project aimed to investigate the factors that influence the sustainability of sheep and goat production systems in the participating countries, through examining: 1.) the different components of the production systems, 2.) the role of local authorities and the organisation at territorial level, 3.) the supply chain, the trends in the market and the role of the different stakeholders. The ultimate objective was to develop proposals and frameworks that could be used to exploit traditional knowledge on small ruminant production (farming systems, management of breeds), to include innovation, and enhance the positive impact of the sector on rural economies.

In this context, the objective study of the interactions between management approaches of local breeds and add value strategies was to provide the keys for identifying possible tensions and difficulties, along with positive aspects to support favorable dynamics. The project aimed to define principles, criteria and indicators to assess the sustainability of the system to achieve a better understanding and exploiting of the interaction of livestock production with the environment, the social and economic aspects. The above objectives have been achieved and shared with local stakeholders at several occasions. The information was gathered using a

comparable grid for each case, using experts' information. The main outcome was a table with a comprehensive list of criteria explaining their impact on sustainability, the level within the farming system for which the indicator is relevant (farm, breed, territory, value chain etc.), the kind of information that would be necessary to describe the indicator, and whether such information was available in the collected information for DoMEsTic.

This report describes the different stakeholders, their role, and the interaction between stakeholders, the main tools, and the main steps identified in the collective action. A map is designed in each situation, including also possible tensions between stakeholders or absence of collective action in certain areas. The report includes also a comparative analysis of the case studies. In this respect, a Protocol has been developed to facilitate coordination and cooperation between stakeholders and to support the development of a common project for breed management. The mediating role of the local breeds between the livestock farming system and the product add-value process has been revealed by the proposed light framework of a "checklist" of levels. Furthermore, the farmer profile and related factors that affect marketing and channel choice decisions were outlined. In this respect, the livestock distribution channels and the particular interrelated factors linked with the production and sales price, quantity of milk, income contribution, and product differentiation, loyalty, speed of payment, personal relationships are analyzed, determining the profile of the farmers and their marketing strategies. The information provided can be used for designing and implementing appropriate development programs and policies.

The results obtained from the DoMEsTic project could have significant impact on dissecting the economic, social, environmental and institutional factors that affect sheep and goat management, collective organisation, marketing decisions, stakeholder involvement and the sector's sustainability, in all four participating regions, but have also the possibility to be extended to the whole Mediterranean sheep and goat sector. The outcomes, through specific follow-up activities that should take place, involving the various stakeholders, may set an environment in benefit of the sheep and goat sector, as these refer to the factors that influence the farming system, the management of local breeds and the exploitation of the products.



**Project coordinator:**

Dr Christina Ligda, HELLENIC AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION – DEMETER, Veterinary Research Institute Thessaloniki, Greece, [chligda@otenet.gr](mailto:chligda@otenet.gr)

**Partners**

Dr. Anne LAUVIE, LRDE, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, France, [lauvie@corse.inra.fr](mailto:lauvie@corse.inra.fr)

Dr. Georgia HADJIPAVLOU, Animal Production, Agricultural Research Institute, Lefkosia, CYPRUS, [georgia.hadjipavlou@ari.gov.cy](mailto:georgia.hadjipavlou@ari.gov.cy)

Professor Abdelilah ARABA, Feeding, Qualification and Environnement in Animal Production, Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II, MOROCCO, [a.araba@gmail.com](mailto:a.araba@gmail.com)