



Programme MED 2007–2013
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Regional Development Fund

Newsletter of the project Philoxenia



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Alkis Kalliantzidis
general coordinator
of the project Philoxenia



Successful arrival !



The partners of the Philoxenia project **successfully arrived at the end** of their three year course. They proved in practice that they were in a position to implement the welcoming policy of non-agricultural activities in their five rural areas.

Before the termination on March 31, 2012, the partners met in Lithotopos Greece on the 9 March in order to :

- have the final meeting of the steering committee of the project.
- complete the DVD of the twenty-five good practices of the Philoxenia project.
- do the last preparations for the transnational seminar on the capitalisation and dissemination of their results, with the participation of the beneficiaries of the said countries (10-11 March).

The project Philoxenia already has to its credit, as a continuation, the participation of three partners (TIEESI, Larnaca Development Agency and Local Councils' Association of Malta), together with other partners from eleven EU countries, in the project *Geomatics Regional Information Society Initiative Plus (Grisi Plus)*, which was recently approved within the framework of the programme Interreg IVC. Its theme is the promotion of the welcoming policy of populations and activities, by means of telework in the European countryside. Finally, with the partner Local Employability as leader and in collaboration with the partners of the French Collectif Ville Campagne, TIEESI and four other actors, a new collective project, **Welcoming**, with the theme « reception

policies and attractiveness of local government », is currently being evaluated within the framework of the community programme Black Sea Basin 2007-2013.

Thus the project Philoxenia deserves to say that it is successfully terminating its actions. Because :

- it realised its activities.
- it already boasts an international continuation with the project Grisi Plus.
- it will exam, during the operation of the transnational capitalisation seminar of Lithotopos, the prospect of **creating a cluster** within the framework of the MED programme.



Fourteen new entrepreneurial testimonies from the Mediterranean countryside

For the second time, the partners of Philoxenia project have a series of **testimonies** to show from their **five areas** : they are again micro-entrepreneurs beneficiaries of the individualised tutoring and of the financial support of this project. Thanks to the help of Philoxenia, they could settle down in the rural target areas and start up their business project.

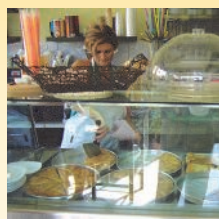
These testimonies prove that non-agricultural activity in the rural space is actually feasible !

Testimonies from Sintiki and Iraclia – Greece

Maria Evangelou was born in Karditsa, while her husband comes from Sidirokastro, in the municipality of Sintiki. They both moved to Germany, where they stayed for many years.

Maria Evangelou's extensive experience in Germany in the catering and entertainment business, along with her husband's need to repatriate, contributed to the birth of her small business project.

Claiming a small financial award of 4 500 euros and receiving a free 40-hour individualised tutoring by the technical consultant of TIEESI – all thanks to project Philoxenia – was an extra motive for Maria Evangelou.



Using this help she covered a significant part of the creation and operational expenses of her shop, in which she produces and sells **traditional pies** together with another woman.



Fotios Pantazis, aged 23, worked for twelve months in the carpet wash Galaxias in Thessaloniki. He chose to repatriate to his homeland, Rodopoli of Sintiki, where his parents live.

Having the know-how of carpet washing, Fotios Pantazis decided to create a single professional space where he washes cars and carpets for his clients, at the entrance of Rodopoli.



In order to become successfully self-employed, Fotios took advantage of the fact that there is no other competing **carpet wash** in the broader area of Rodopoli. He works together with his fiancée, his sister and his brother-in-law.



Dimitrios Georgiadis studied to be a physicist in the Aristotle university of Thessaloniki and though he has been a resident of Kalamaria, a neighbouring municipality, he comes from the area of Sintiki, where his parents live.



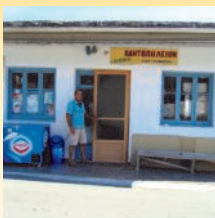
As a new scientist, Dimitrios Grigoriadis needed to return to the land of his parents and establish a **private school** at Rodopoli, entering this way the labour market as a self-employed individual. In his school, he has already hired other professors as well. Dimitrios Georgiadis profited from the fact that he is for now the only private school in the broader area of Rodopoli, where students have to travel to Sidirokastro or Kilkis for extra lessons in their public schools. This gives him good hope for the sustainability of his effort.



Antonios Gouvatzidakis had a pastry shop in Kilkis for eleven years but recently it had not been doing very well.



Originating from Monastiraki Sintiki, Antonios Gouvatzidakis decided to return to his village, to purchase and to run an existing **traditional grocery store**, as its previous owner had to retire.



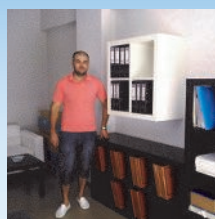
Antonios Gouvatzidakis return to Monastiraki was facilitated by his wife's uncle who donated his house free of charge to Antonios and his four member family.

Today Antonios Gouvatzidakis and his wife work in the grocery store.

Georgios Leonakis studied mechanics. It was logical therefore that he would want to do something connected to his studies.



As a mechanical engineer, Georgios Leonakis was interested in directly contributing his scientific knowledge to the creation of a technical office which would be a useful technical tool for the existing businesses in the region of the municipalities of Sintiki and Iraclia.

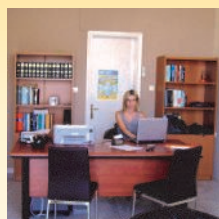


Georgios Leonakis used to live in Serres, however he is from Kerkini Sintiki. As a citizen of this municipality, he understands the prospects for the economic regeneration of the wider area. For this reason he returned and he opened up a **technical office in mechanical engineering** in Sidirokastro. Naturally he was motivated by the Community project Philoxenia under realisation in the region of his origin.

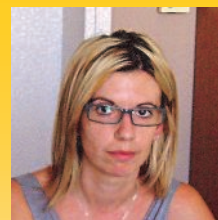
Paschalina Psatha is a young lawyer, with postgraduate studies. She resided in Serres, though she originates from Iraclia.

For this reason she desired to create and operate her law office in the municipality of her origin, Iraclia.

As a lawyer, Paschalina Psatha is keen to contribute her legal expertise in creating and developing a modern **law office** which can be a useful technical tool for existing businesses and residents in the area of Iraclia.



Paschalina Psatha's effort of course was motivated by the Community project Philoxenia under realisation in her area to which she returned after two years of practical training which she completed in an experienced law firm in Serres.



Georgios Vagionas and Grigorios Zervos, having worked recently with photovoltaic systems decided to form a general partnership in Iraclia aimed at the **provision of photovoltaic installation**, renewable energy source and relevant financial services.

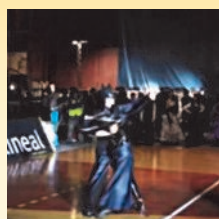


Their faith in renewable energy sources, to act as a lever of local development, lead Vagionas and Zervos to the creation and development of a service to provide a useful technical tool for potential stakeholders in the municipalities of Iraclia and Sintiki.

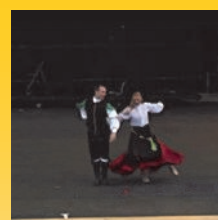


Till recently **Jernej Brendholc** was professional dancer in various kinds of dancing. When he finished his professional career, he decided to make a go of it on his own by offering the following expert services : **dance teaching** (classes or individuals ; different age groups), whole **management of different events**.

Because of his interesting professional dancing activity, Jernej Brendholc was included in the Philoxenia project with these two professionally taken videos, where he is dancing with his female partner in



big dancing competition, both with very interesting themes : the first from Batman and the second with Slovenian national music where he is dressed in national costume. These two videos are very good examples of what Jernej Brendholc teaches.



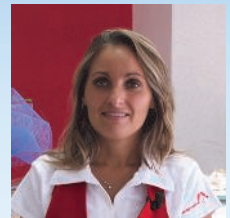
After many years of completely different work experience, **Maria Antonietta Uda** and **Gianfranco Tomasi**, from Oristano, decided to merge their know-how. Their passion for cooking was the common point which led them to start up a **business for the retail trade of biological products** in the historic centre of Oristano.



Upon mutual agreement, they decided to concentrate on the production of biological goods, fresh pasta and local traditional sweets, such as *lorighittas*, *malloreddus*, *culurgiones* and ravioli. For technical reasons, the search for commercial premises was not easy, however they finally found the ideal place to open their workshop.



Sil Oristano supported them within the framework of the project Philoxenia, it financed some of the expenses of their financial activities. Contini Stefania Bonaria is also a member of the cooperative.



Giadda Ricci, from Oristano, used to visit childrens play centres and worked for many years in pre-school restaurants. The main reason which led her to establish a company to **organise children's parties**, was to fill the void of similar services in Oristano. She was lucky enough to find a place that had previously been a nursery.



Giadda Ricci also has a colleague Katuscia Cardia. She is 38 years old and handles the communication and the management of the play activities. In their opinion, the said economic activity will develop as there is a great demand for this kind of service.

Gianluca Generoso, who is 37 year old, had a very varied career path dotted with periods of unemployment.



Gianluca Generoso always had a passion for sports, and over the years he dedicated himself to cycling and in static cycling (spinning).

Thanks to the project Philoxenia, he managed to transform his passion into a job.



So, he decided to open a **spinning centre** which he named Village Spinning Academy. He managed to buy, by means of the financial assistance of 4 500 € from Philoxenia, fifteen bicycles and to start his activity. He was lucky enough to find a gymnasium which gave him a space to organise spinning lessons.

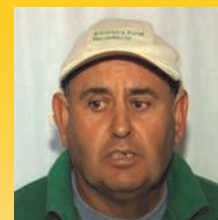
The idea to create a **cooperative for the promotion of sustainable products** was presented by twenty-four residents and farmers of a small village named Manikata.

Emphasis was put on the natural environment, its protection and inviting people to visit the farms and fields and all its natural and historical resources. These resources make up the « rural heritage trail » which will be a new source of



income to the cooperative. Target visitors to the heritage trail include mainly students at various education levels, tourists and the general public.

The said cooperative, with **Mario Cardona** as president, was incorporated into the project Philoxenia through the Local Councils' Association of Malta. It is supported by the Bank of Valletta and the public actor of investment attraction Malta Enterprise.



Mario Fava is one of two shareholders who created a company designed to provide **analytical and diagnostics laboratory services** to industrial organisations such as the food, water, pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries. Target customers are small and medium enterprises in the aforementioned sectors.

Initially the company intends to offer routine tests and gradually increase the



specialisation and know-how of its services as it expands. In the longer-term, the company also intends to export its services to clients in North Africa and Southern Europe.

Assistance and coaching were essential for Mario Fava and his business partner to convince them that participating in the Philoxenia project would be beneficial not only financially but also for networking with other foreign beneficiaries.



Marie-Claire Camilleri has been producing sprouted beans for the past ten years for her own and her friends' consumption. Her idea to produce a variety of pulses such as lentils, chick peas and others became evident following a period of four months living in London, where she could find the said products at most retail outlets. This was not the case in her own country of Malta. If these products were to be imported, they would not be fresh, giving rise to contamination and a waste of materials. This fact reinforced Marie-Claire Camilleri's idea to develop these products further, giving them the name Glorious Greens.

The assistance provided by the Philoxenia project encouraged her to pursue the idea further and proceed with the next steps towards setting up a small facility to start **producing pulses** for the local market. The main equipment that she requires is a seed germinator which has been partly financed by the Philoxenia project.

The DVD of good practices of Philoxenia project

The DVD of the project Philoxenia presents twenty-five local initiatives of return migration or relocation of micro-entrepreneurs who contributed to the revitalisation and attractiveness of five Mediterranean rural areas :

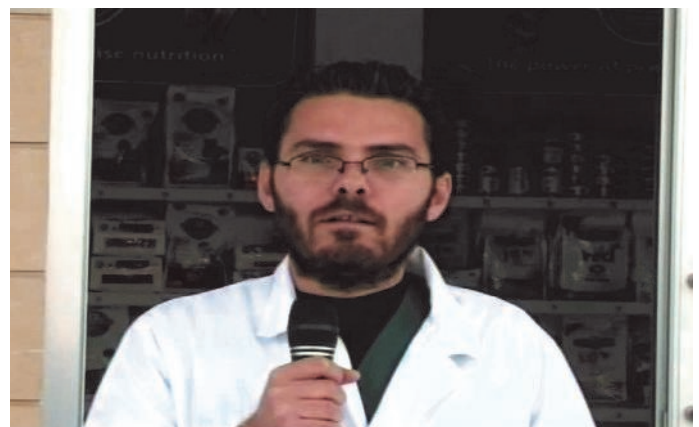
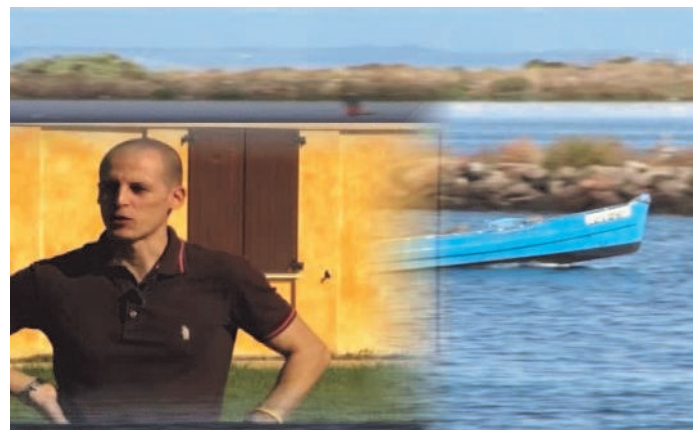
- Greece (Sintiki - Iraclia),
- Italy (Oristano),

- Slovenia (Ptuj),
- Cyprus (Voroklini),
- Malta (Gozo).

The relevant reports were realised by Local Employability within the framework of the Community project that was co-financed by the European Fund for Regional Development (through the MED programme) and by the Greek

ministry of development competitiveness and shipping.

The ultimate goal of the DVD is for similar initiatives to be replicated elsewhere or to graft new project ideas, according to the peculiarities of the rural areas.



26 – 27 September 2011 – Lithotopos – Greece

The partners of Philoxenia project on the final stretch

➔ See the reports from the press conference of Lithotopos on the web site of Philoxenia project : http://philoxeniamed.tpa-kepi.gr/meetings_el.html#2011_09_26

During the first day of the meeting, the partners and the external evaluator Dr. Éric Gazon mainly discussed the presentations of the bi-annual reports of all partners. Dr. Gazon made his presentation for the progress of the project, which was followed by a discussion between partners with an emphasis on the low absorption rates of Community funds. The dialogue continued on the issues of the good practices which will be included in the common DVD and the organisation of the international seminar on the capitalisation of the project results. Loc.Em. presented a first methodological approach on the organisation of this seminar. After lunch the partners were guided by Loc.Em. TIEESI, Christos Arabatzis, Alkis Kalliantzidis, Jimmy Magro, Efstratios Mylonas and Alexandra Vyziotou, all spoke about the progress of project Philoxenia. Extensive coverage of the press conference was given by almost all local TV channels. During the meeting of the steering committee in the afternoon, the partners signed the minutes of the Larnaca meeting (6th and 7th April 2011) and decided to meet again at TIEESI's headquarters in Greece, on the 9, 10 and 11 March 2012. They all agreed concerning the need to actively participate to the international capitalisation seminar of the project Philoxenia. ■



Orestis Kalliantzidis
economist

Representatives of the partners in Lithotopos

■ **Territorial Initiative for Employment and Entrepreneurship of Sintiki - Iraclia (TIEESI) :**

Christos Arabatzis, president. Éric Gazon, external evaluator.

➤ **Local Employability (Loc.Em.) :**

Apostolos Kalliantzidis, president. Orestis Kalliantzidis, economist.

■ **Patto Territoriale Oristano (Sil Oristano) :**

Marco Massa, welcoming policy manager. Bernadette Serra, community programmes officer.

➤ **Larnaca District Development Agency (ANETEL) :**

Spyros Elenodorou, president. Damianos Kosma, member of the board. Michalis Zanos, director.

■ **E-Zavod :**

Matjaž Fras, welcoming policy manager. Tanja Ostrnam Renault, interpreter.

➤ **Local Councils' Association of Malta (LCA) :**

Jimmy Magro, executive director. Maureen Azzopardi, community programmes officer.



The Philoxenia partners during their meeting in Lithotopos



Session of the steering committee of Philoxenia project, with the representatives of Patto Territoriale Oristano, ANETEL, TIEESI, Loc.Em., e-Zavod and LCA



Press conference of Philoxenia partners, with the general coordinator Alkis Kalliantzidis, the president of TIEESI Christos Arabatzis, and the president of ANETEL Spyros Elenodorou



One of the work visits of the partners to the beneficiaries of Philoxenia project : here, in the office of the lawyer Paschalina Psatha

11 October 2011 – Paris – France

Participation in the fifth exposition of the « Projects in the Countryside »

➔ Website of the exposition « Projects in the Countryside » : www.proemploi.fr



PROVEMPLOI 2011
LE SALON POUR VIVRE ET TRAVAILLER EN PROVINCE
WWW.PROEMPLOI.FR

After an invitation by the French association Collectif Ville Campagne, the general coordinator of Philoxenia took part in the fifth exposition of « Projects in the countryside », held in Paris on 11 October 2011. The reason for his participation is rather obvious : the subject of the exposition is similar to the one of project Philoxenia. Meanwhile, the coordinator had the opportunity to meet speakers and welcoming areas for the international capitalisation and diffusion seminar of the action. The reason for this bi-annual established exposition is to call for persons interested for installation and working in the green French countryside to come and discover the existing opportunities offered by the welcoming areas. The target group includes mainly those living in cities and having a personal and professional project. According to the website of Collectif Ville Campagne, from 2001 to 2009, five expos of installation at a rural space were organised at the same space at Limoges. They were entitled « Projects in the countryside » and lasted for a weekend. To those expositions there were invited all those having a project for installation, the welcoming areas and the consulting bodies of the candidates for installation. ■



The general coordinator of Philoxenia project Alkis Kalliantzidis at the fifth exposition of the « Projects in the countryside », in Paris

30 November 2011 – Marseilles – France

The partners of Philoxenia project took part in the capitalisation event

Marco Massa and Alkis Kalliantzidis, representatives of Patto Territoriale Oristano and Local Employability (Loc.Em.) respectively, took part in the Cluster and Capitalisation Day organised in Marseilles by the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) of the MED programme.

This event was the follow-up of a three-year capitalisation procedure which began in 2011 by the MED programme. In June 2011, four capitalisation work-

shops were organised in Rome (one for each thematic priority). This series of workshops served as an important starting lab for sharing the capitalisation methodology. Moreover, this process proved useful for the exchange of capitalisation practices, project approaches and common problems and needs. Finally the workshops resulted in the first orientation for the definition of thematic clusters.

According to the JTS, the event offered an opportu-

nity for the 104 MED project partners to meet and exchange views. To grab the occasion to participate in the capitalisation effort and take part in the preparation of the following calls of the programme, to identify opportunities to share and transfer, to enhance their project results by co-lobbying in their governments and EU institutions for mainstreaming.



Stéphane Clochey
studies manager
of Loc.Em.

The panel of the Cluster and Capitalisation Day in Marseilles



The continuation of Philoxenia : the project Grisi Plus



➔ **Grisi Plus :**
14 partners from
11 EU member states :
France, Ireland, Latvia,
Estonia, Czech Republic,
Slovenia, Romania,
Bulgaria, Malta,
Greece and Cyprus



European Union
European Regional Development Fund



Christos Arabatzis
president
of TIEESI,
head of administration
for the project Philoxenia

In the fourth edition of our newsletter the general coordinator wrote : « TIEESI, ANETEL and the Local Councils' Association of Malta were invited by the Gers Chamber of Commerce and Industry to participate in the collective project Grisi Plus (Geomatics Regional Information Society Initiative Plus) within the framework of the Interreg IVC programme. The said project also promotes reception policies of populations in the provinces. » We are particularly pleased to inform our readers that the said transnational project was approved and our commemorated partners will have a significant role to play for the next three years, as a continuation of the Philoxenia project. In a few words, Grisi Plus will :

- improve and modernize economic development policies of rural areas.
- contribute in the revitalization, attractiveness and economic development of isolated rural territories.
- contribute in bringing new inhabitants, entrepreneurs and tourists in rural areas.
- provide to decision-makers policy support tools for the economic development of rural territories.
- develop new methods for the promotion of local traditional products thanks to the new information and communications technologies.
- contribute in developing and promoting local brands, in line with the specific characteristics of rural territories.
- reinforce the visibility and importance of independent telework at local, national and European level.

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