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UniClaD Newsletter n°5, March 2023 - December 2023

Project “Enhancing capacity of universities to initiate and to participate in clusters development on innovation and sustainability principles” (UniClaD)

Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education (CBHE)

**EU Program Erasmus +, Project KA2
n° 609944-EPP-1-2019-1-LT-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP**

Editorial

Focus: UNICLAD STUDY TOURS IMPLEMENTATION **UniClaD study tours in European partner countries**

From **March 2023 to October 2023 seven 5-day study tours** have been implemented, one in each of the European Partner Countries, namely Austria, Lithuania, Italy, Hungary, Poland and Spain.

The study tours aimed to assist consortium partners in developing Agrofood clusters in Moldova, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan. Each tour brought together experts from these countries to learn about successful agri-food clusters in European Commission (EC) contexts and understand the challenges involved in their establishment and management. The tours included seminars, interviews, visits to key informants, and workshops.

By the end of the study tours, participants gained knowledge on the essential requirements for creating successful clusters in sustainable farming and agri-food systems. They learned about the actors involved in clusters, including their motivations, roles, and responsibilities. Furthermore, they acquired an understanding of cluster setup, governance and financing models, as well as the ways in which universities and research institutions can support cluster development.

The study tours employed the methodology of **action learning**, which is an experiential learning approach based on observation, dialogue, reflection, participation, and visioning. This involved activities such as field visits, seminars, classroom work, and a post-study reporting period. Participants engaged in programmed instruction, where a coach introduced the methodology, followed by participative action through interactions with actors. Critical reflection and questioning encouraged participants to explore the situations they encountered and the information they gained during the field visits.

Direct interaction with key actors, including research groups, incubators, private companies, and cluster organizations, was a crucial aspect of the study tours. Each interaction and place visited during field visits were considered as unique learning opportunities. Participants actively acquired knowledge through peer and co-learning in groups, experimental learning, and complex problem-solving.

In the classroom activities, participants were expected to reflect on their field activities in written and/or oral form, serving as co-learning activities and a repository for the final reporting. Group work, interactions, dialogue, and individual reflection and visioning contributed to the development of a list of key success factors that could be transferred back to their home organizations.

At the end of the study tour, assessment took place through self-evaluation, individual reports, and group presentations, allowing participants to demonstrate their understanding and the knowledge gained from the experience.

Noureddin Driouech, CIHEAM Bari (Partner 6)

Leader of WP4: Dissemination and Results Exploitation

Leader of Task 2.2. Study Tour Planning (WP2 Development)

[UniClaD Website](#)

ST: Where, When & What

Where	Dates	Thematic
Vienna (AT)	27/03/2023 – 31/03/2023	Green Care, Nature Education, Farm Holidays
Kaunas (LT)	03/04/2023 – 07/04/2023	Agrobiotechnology, Agrifood cluster
Debrecen (HU)	15/05/2023 – 19/05/2023	Aquaculture
Bari (IT)	22/05/2023 – 26/05/2023	IT in Agriculture/Agri-food cluster/Grape and olive supply chains/Dairy Milk Processing
Poznan (PO)	12/06/2023 – 16/06/2023	Agrifood cluster
Debrecen (HU)	11/09/2023 - 15/09/2023	Milk processing
Valladolid (ES)	2/10/2023 – 6/10/2023	Biotechnologies in Poultry Production, Milk processing



Vienna (Austria) Study Tour

From **March 27th to 31st**, 2023, a study tour was conducted in Austria, organized by the **Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics Rural and Mountain Research (BAB)** and the **University College of Agricultural and Environmental Pedagogy (UCAEP)**. During this week the Ukrainian study participants got insight into various Austrian clusters. The diverse program included theoretical and practical experiences of activities related to Green Care, Nature Education, Farm Holidays, Eco-Pedagogy, Food Clusters and Food- and Agrotechnology. The work areas and focal points of BAB and UCAEP were also presented in the course of the study trip... **Read more:** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Vienna Study Tour](#)



Kaunas (Lithuania) Study Tour

The Study Tour took place at **Kauno kolegija Higher Education Institution, Kaunas on 3rd-7th April** 2023. Participants from Azerbaijan Technical University, Comrat State University, Agrarian Innovation Center of Ministry of Agriculture of Republic of Azerbaijan, SRL " Fabrica Oloi Pak", visited Lithuanian businesses, higher education institutions and research centres, where they learnt about best practices in the agricultural and information technology sectors. The foreign guests visited various companies in these sectors to learn about the subtleties of work organisation, mutual cooperation, research and new product development. Most importantly, the partners increased their knowledge of how clusters work in Lithuania. ...**Read more:** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Kaunas Study Tour](#)



Debrecen (Hungary) Study Tours

Within the framework of UniClad (Erasmus+), Azerbaijani, Moldovan and Ukrainian agricultural professionals came to Debrecen for the second time this year 2023. The topic of the study trip in **May 15th to 19th** was **aquaculture**, and that of **September 11 to 15** was **milk processing**. **University of Debrecen**

Faculty of Agriculture, Food Science and Environmental Management team managed to put together a program that demonstrated the increasing scale of processing. We started with the Institute's pilot plant on Monday, followed by a family manufactory, Nárcisz Birtok. Mircz Nárcisz's premium products, business policy, and worker-centeredness captivated the visitors. Since there were Azeri innovation specialists among the participants, the innovation ecosystem of our university, the unique programs supporting students and researchers also provided an example that could be boldly presented to the world..**Read more:** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Debrecen Study Tour](#)



Bari (Italy) Study Tour

The Italian Study Tour was held in Bari in Apulia Region from **22nd to 26th March 2023** and it was organised by **CIHEAM Bari**. The Study Tour included theoretical lessons and field visits to farms and realities of a selected Apulian cluster, i.e. GALSeb. The former gave participants insights into digital agriculture, Slow Food, the development of agri-food districts, startups, sustainability assessment of agri-

food products and the AKIS system. During the field visits participants had the opportunity to meet local stakeholders and visit farms specializing on food and livestock production, many of which adopted IT tools for the production. At the end of the study tour, a workshop was held, in which participants shared their feedback on the study tour and discussed lessons learned that they could apply to their countries...**Read more** [LINK](#) **See Phostreaming here** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Bari Study Tour](#)

Poznan (Poland) Study Tour



From **12-16 June 2023**, **9 participants from Moldova, Ukraine** took part of the study tour at **Poznan University of Life Sciences, Poland**. The Study tour aimed to support consortium partners in the development of Agrofood clusters in Moldova and Ukraine. Specifically, it brought a group of experts from these countries to know about consolidated experiences of Agrofood clusters in Poland and Polish agricultural and agricultural entrepreneurship overview. They had a chance to learn about challenges for their set up and management. Due to the itinerary they have participated in 15 lectures (operation of PULS, cooperation of the University with industry, current state of clustering in Poland, possibilities of applying research in clusters, food supply chains, opportunities for cluster development, etc.) and visited 7 sites involved in the ST theme (Wielkopolska Guild, experimental farm, Łukasiewicz PIT Research Center etc.)...**Read more:** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Poznan Study Tour](#)

Valladolid (Spain) Study Tour



The study Tour related to the UniClaD project was held at the **University of Valladolid (UVa) in Spain, from the 2nd to the 6th of October 2023**, and which included a number of activities that were successfully implemented. This initiative, which is being developed on the La Yutera Campus in Palencia, is based on the project's objective of developing the potential of universities in Eastern European countries as an integral part of their countries' agri-business clusters, and creating innovation centres. the participants were able to discover all the university's expertise through a number of visits, experimental wineries (UVaMox and "las Muelas"); etc.); field visits (ITAGRA Greenhouse, milk and cheese production in Viñalta, a visit to the technical school of agriculture, etc.); Research institutions (CARTIF Technology Centre, Agricultural and Agri-food Technology Centre (ITAGRA), Fabrication Laboratory (FabLab) etc.); associations (VITARTIS Association of the Food Industry of Castilla and Leon)..**Read more:** [LINK](#)



[Watch the video of Valladolid Study Tour](#)

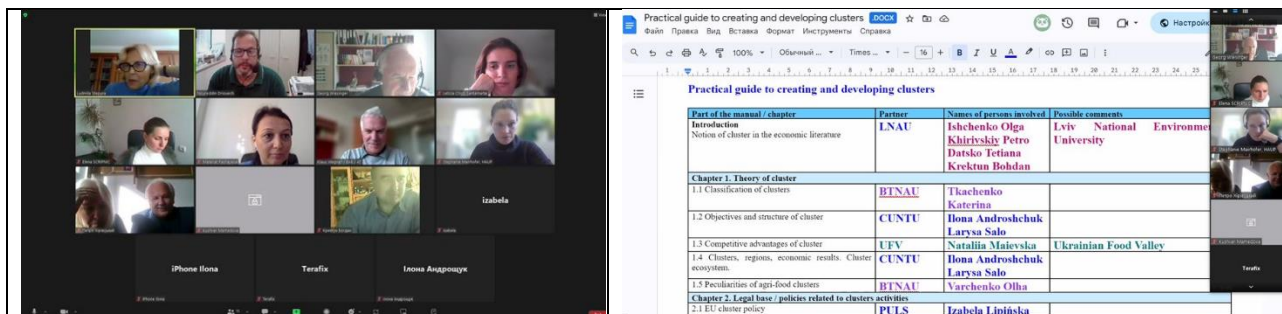
Steering Committee meeting in Spain UVa-Palencia, October 2023

From **October 9 and 10, 2023** a meeting of the Steering Committee of the Erasmus+UNICLAD project is held at the Palencia Campus of the University, with the participation of delegates (professors, researchers and academic authorities) from **Lithuania, Ukraine, Moldova , Azerbaijan, Austria, Italy, Hungary, Poland and Spain**. The activity is organized by the GIR-TADRUS (Advanced Technologies for Sustainable Rural Development) and is a continuation of the activities that already began last week with the Study Tour to the School's R&D facilities. Higher Technical of Agricultural Engineering of Palencia, the Scientific Park of the University of Valladolid and various technological and research centers in our region....[Read more: LINK](#)



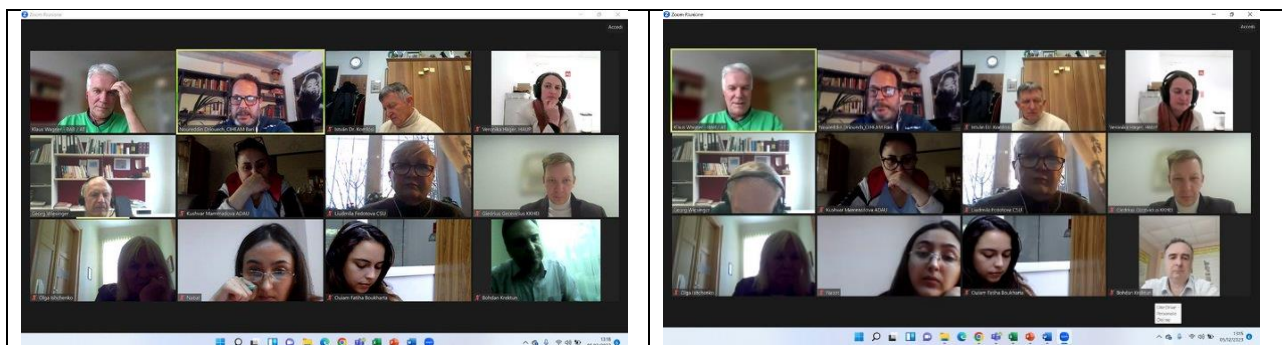
Steering Committee e-meeting, November 2023

On 2nd November 2023 from 11:00 to 13:00 CET, UniClaD Project partners had performed a zoom meeting following up on Palencia's Spain Face-to-face Annual Steering Committee meeting and activities! The discussion had focused elaboration of a practical guide to creating and developing agri-food clusters.



Steering Committee e-meeting, December 2023

On 5th Dec.2023, UniClaD partners, Chapter Working group (WG) on "Practical Guide for creating and developing Clusters" performed an e-meeting. Partners discussed work progress by illustrating the structure and content of 3 country case studies #Austria, #Italy, #Moldova!



Expertise Centers [LINK](#)

At every **Ukrainian, Azerbaijani and Moldavian** university an expertise center is created together with their partner institutions. These expertise centers are around the following areas: **water management and aquaculture, new technologies (IT) in agriculture, rural tourism, milk production and processing with the focus on traditional local products, expertise biotechnologies in poultry farming.**

They are designed for the implementation of common projects among universities and their partners enterprises including common **research and their implementation into practice, practical training of students** with the perspective of further employment, transfer of technologies, common development of services that can be proposed outside such as **advisory services, support of start-ups**, target research and trainings...*Learn more* [LINK](#)

Our Publications [LINK](#)

News from No-EU partners

Do you want to learn more, please contact our Partners Focal points at the countries listed below

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	<h3>Ukraine</h3>			
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"><p>Scientific and Methodological Center of Higher and Pre-higher Education Olga Getya o_getya@ukr.net Public Union “Ukrainian Food Valley “ Natalia Majevska natali_maevsckaya@ukr.net Central Ukrainian National Technical University Larysa Salo salo_l@ukr.net Institute of Steppe Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Halyna Kozelets kozelets.2009@ukr.net</p></td><td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"><p>Poltava State Agrarian University Oleg Gorb gorb@pda.edu.ua Farm enterprise “Dobro-Kraft” Olena Tovsta dobro-kraft@ukr.net Lviv National Environmental University Olga Ishchenko olga_ishchenko@hotmail.com Yavoriv National Nature Park Bohdan Datsko despob@outlook.com Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University Olga Varchenko omvarchenko@ukr.net</p></td></tr></table>			<p>Scientific and Methodological Center of Higher and Pre-higher Education Olga Getya o_getya@ukr.net Public Union “Ukrainian Food Valley “ Natalia Majevska natali_maevsckaya@ukr.net Central Ukrainian National Technical University Larysa Salo salo_l@ukr.net Institute of Steppe Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Halyna Kozelets kozelets.2009@ukr.net</p>	<p>Poltava State Agrarian University Oleg Gorb gorb@pda.edu.ua Farm enterprise “Dobro-Kraft” Olena Tovsta dobro-kraft@ukr.net Lviv National Environmental University Olga Ishchenko olga_ishchenko@hotmail.com Yavoriv National Nature Park Bohdan Datsko despob@outlook.com Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University Olga Varchenko omvarchenko@ukr.net</p>
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About UniClaD Project “Enhancing capacity of universities to initiate and to participate in clusters development on innovation and sustainability principles” (#UniClaD)

UniClaD is aiming to Development of the potential of universities as an integral part of agro-industrial clusters and the Creation of the innovative centers as pre-conditions for the development and successful functioning of agro-industrial clusters.

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[Get to Learn about UniClaD Partners](#)

[CONTACT](#)

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