Welcome to the fourth release of the MedDiet Newsletter.
The purpose of this Newsletter is to provide information and updates on the MedDiet Project.

The MedDiet Project aims to raise the awareness of consumers about the importance of the Mediterranean Diet, as an integral part of the Mediterranean lifestyle, and as a vehicle for development, stability and solidarity in the Mediterranean basin.

MedDiet project operates on the whole Mediterranean area and aims to promote the benefits of the Mediterranean Diet to consumers and to SMEs, such as restaurants. The partnership of MedDiet project is composed of 13 international bodies belonging to six Mediterranean countries: Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia.

The project “Mediterranean Diet and Enhancement of Traditional Foodstuff - MedDiet” is a strategic project funded by European Union in the framework of the ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme (www.enpicbcmmed.eu).
The ENPI CBC Med Programme aims at reinforcing cooperation between the European Union and partner countries regions placed along the shores of the Mediterranean.
“This is a project that focuses on the Mediterranean, on the spirit of internal cohesion and identity of the countries involved”.

In this way, Anna Catte, Director of the Managing Authority defined the MedDiet project during the final conference held at Expo.

“The most positive aspect - she said - is that MedDiet is helping to demonstrate that the benefits of the Mediterranean diet are not reflected only on people but also on local economies and is strengthening the spirit of internal cohesion as well as the identity of the countries involved. Not least, the fact that it helps to improve the image of the Mediterranean region on the outside”.

The MedDiet Final Conference has been the occasion to represent the strategic importance of a project that operates at several levels.

Three main pillars form the basis of the MedDiet project, the first of which is the creation of a shared knowledge system of the Mediterranean diet, the second is leading a process of nutritional education in schools and for final consumers and, the third pillar is capacity building of local authorities and the creation of a legal framework for the protection of the Mediterranean Diet heritage in the Southern Mediterranean countries.

With action targeted at schools, local government and private businesses, the MedDiet project works to improve the sustainability of food consumption patterns in the Mediterranean basin by preserving the Mediterranean diet, a common cultural heritage which is currently under threat.
The Mediterranean diet, beyond being a healthy diet also includes a set of skills, knowledge and traditions going from farm to fork.

Its promotion among consumers, especially young people and children cultural heritage, helps to prevent diseases.

By spreading the know-how of the Mediterranean diet among farmers, food producers and restaurants the project aids in proposing a genuine Mediterranean Diet brand, which will stimulate the local economy and increase environmental sustainability.

In order to preserve the heritage of the Mediterranean Diet on the long term, the MedDiet project also works to increase the capacity of local authorities and reinforces national institutions for the protection and safeguarding of the Mediterranean Diet in the partner countries with a regulatory framework.

The MedDiet Capitalization Event has also represented an opportunity to demonstrate the interest of Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia to become a part of the UNESCO Intangible Heritage of the Mediterranean Diet and then find emblematic communities in their countries.

This process, with the help of the presidency of Italy, could lead to a positive outcome within the period of six months. During this time, Italy, that is coordinated by Ministry of Agriculture and that represents the countries of the Mediterranean Diet already recognized as a part of the UNESCO Intangible Heritage, will help the three countries to see recognized their ‘Mediterranean diet’ as the ‘Heritage of Humanity’.

The objective of the process will not only ensure their support to be shortlisted but also to enhance the opportunities for intercultural and interreligious dialogue between different realities starting from the element that unites all: eating together, the lifestyle, the conviviality in mutual respect for diversity.

Also Alaa Ezz, the Secretary General of CEEBA, underlined that “We do not speak only about ingredients, production processes and the food itself, but about the way we eat, the way we treat it and how we look at food as a part of life”.

“At the same time we want to create a network of solidarity and support from the local authorities and international organizations and spread the concept to children in schools: all this is a part of hundreds of activities that the partners in the project have conducted in three years under the project MetDiet”.

For the Secretary General of the Confederation of Egyptian European Business Associations, the MedDiet project itself is “an opportunity to preserve our cultural heritage as well as an economic benefit that is seen in two ways: promotion of the traditional food stuff export from Mediterranean countries and the attempt to attract cultural tourism, which accounts for about 7% of world tourism”.
Here are some numbers on the initiatives already put in place under the project during the last three years in Italy, Greece, Spain, Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia: 118,000 consumers, 4,800 children of 160 schools, 1,200 teachers, 355 officials of national political institutions, 240 restaurateurs, 160 school administrators, promoters of 160 local authorities, 20 officials of the Chambers of Commerce have been involved.

In total, 48,200 MedDiet tool kits have been distributed, 20 Info points have been created, 165 events have been organized on nutrition during three years, 126 Declarations for the Protection of the Mediterranean Diet have been signed and 90 institutions of the Mediterranean countries have been involved.

“The results that we presented - explained Amedeo Del Principe, the MedDiet Project Coordinator on behalf of Unioncamere - are the results of a very important project that has managed to share some tools from 6 Mediterranean countries starting with the MedDiet Pyramid.”

“We achieved the objectives that we have set, in other words we have shared the scientific basis of the Mediterranean Diet and, above all, we have created a link between the Mediterranean diet and typical and traditional products of the individual countries”.

“This competitive leverage - concluded Amedeo Del Principe - can create a real benefit for small and medium enterprises in the Mediterranean basin and, at the same time, bring important results in terms of international export”.

The Final Conference has been closed with the signing of the Declaration for the Safeguard and Promotion of the Mediterranean Diet by all participants and, in particular, by ministers and representatives of institutions.
Considering the event was about food, a cooking show and tasting session took place at the Bio-Mediterraneum Cluster starring chefs from Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia.

Its aim was to introduce visitors of Expo Milano 2015 to tasty healthy and traditional dishes which highlight the flavors of the Mediterranean diet.

Six kiosks representing all the six countries of the project were set up in the Bio-Mediterraneum Cluster: the best way to sample the various interpretations of the main principles of the Mediterranean diet, with a Food Pyramid differentiated from country to country depending on the availability of local products.
POSTCARDS FROM EXPO
The Tunisian Capitalisation Event was held in Carthage on the 21st of May. The event was organized, under the auspices of the Minister of Agriculture, by the National Agriculture Research Institute of Tunisia (INRAT) in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tunis (CCIT).

The event was the occasion to present the main achievements of the project and to discuss about the promotion and awareness-raising on the Mediterranean diet among young people and consumers.

The event was also the occasion to present the launching of the advertising and promotional campaign on local level for promoting the MedDiet Quality Label and all the restaurants that have obtained the certification.

The seminar was concluded with the signing of the Declaration for Safeguard and Promotion of the Mediterranean Diet.
May was a very active month for Meddiet in Alexandria with a major capitalization event and numerous activities in cooperation with local authorities.

On the 23rd of May the Meddiet label for restaurants was launched in Alexandria in a highprofile setting with the attendance of an Egyptian Minister, the head of the EUdelegation, the Vice Governor of Alexandria and high-level representatives of Egypt’s Tourism federation and Egypt’s Chef Association.

The label was deemed highly interesting and relevant by the target audience from the restaurant and hotel business. Subsequently, more than 50 Chefs and 30 restaurants participated in MedDiet’s Label for restaurants workshop in the beginning of June.

The Ministry of health in Alexandria was quick to embrace Meddiet as an effective project for preventative health care and combatting child obesity.

As a result, Meddiet cooperated with the ministry in a workshop for ministry employees, doctors, nurses and children at the Anfoushi Pediatric hospital.

Following the success, more mutual cooperation was planned and realised in July. From the stand point, that the Mediterranean Diet and a sustainable agriculture go handin hand, the directorate of Alexandria cooperated with MedDiet on two workshops last month and Meddiet supported them in the implementation of a farm to fork initiative.
WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN IN ANCONA

29-31 May
Ancona, Italy

The project continues to enjoy great success, not only in the Marche Region, where the local Ancona Chamber of Commerce has set up an official MedDiet Infopoint, but also in other territories through the efforts of the Chambers of Commerce belonging to the AIC Forum.

The joint efforts of the AIC Forum and the Ancona Chamber of Commerce (the latter in its capacity as MedDiet Info point) was then further reinforced with the “Tipicità In Blu” initiative held over three days (29, 30, 31 May 2015) in Ancona. This was an event of great impact on the civil society with moments of in-depth discussion, displays, exhibitions, referring to the Blue Economy and to the Adriatic-Ionian Macroregion with considerable space dedicated to workshops on wellness and healthy living.

In particular, Saturday 30 May saw the presentation seminar by the MedDiet Info Point of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce, in the widest context of the initiative promoted in conjunction with Biomedfood (a spin off of the Polytechnic University of the Marche region) entitled: “Basic principles for a healthy diet: Mediterranean Diet and fashion diets”. During the course of the morning especially, MedDiet gadgets were distributed (shoppers, caps, pencils, oven gloves and T-shirts) to pupils from junior and middle schools of the Marche Region, within the framework of the initiative “Rules for healthy eating, the importance of the food pyramid and product seasonality” which provided for teaching workshops especially for children.

These workshops also made use of the teaching materials created in support of the MedDiet project, as well as the two MedDiet guidelines for local government and for schools being distributed to teachers and to local authorities. The informative material and an initial orientation will continue to be provided at the MedDiet Info Point located in the Economic Development Area of the Ancona Chamber of Commerce.
On Friday 12 June, an in-depth technical-scientific seminar for a lay audience was held at the initiative of the Polytechnic University of the Marche Region in Ancona, entitled “Focus on the Mediterranean diet: clinical data and scientific evidence”.

The Chamber of Commerce of Ancona, on behalf of MedDiet Infopoint, helped the realization of the event by organising, in the seminar room, a space to exhibit materials from the MedDiet Project (guidelines for schools and local bodies, gadgets, project brochures, an illustrative roll-up).

The event was also an opportunity to share the MedDiet project with the Marches Polytechnic University, represented here by the Chancellor Sauro Longhi, and Professor Maurizio Battino. The latter, in particular, was officially congratulated by the Ancona Chamber of Commerce and the AIC Forum (a MedDiet project partner) due to the importance of the project’s dissemination activities which help generate a wider awareness of the studies and research by the relevant research institutions.

This combination is all the more relevant and timely considering that the Marches Polytechnic University is the only University to have officially taken part in realising the new version of the Food Pyramid, which was subsequently recognised as a world heritage by UNESCO and which, in fact, inspired the entire MedDiet Project.

The institutional players of Ancona territory and of the Marches Region, therefore, again demonstrate their full commitment, synergy and unity of purpose on an issue such as the Mediterranean Diet, where there will also be ongoing activities coordinated in the future: to this end, the MedDiet Declaration has already been submitted to the Polytechnic University of the Marche with a view to obtaining a new signature and thus formalise this joint commitment for the future.
KITCHEN SHOW FOR TUNISIAN SCHOOLS

14 June
Tunis, Tunisia

The 14th of June, CCIT has organized a MedDiet Theater Kitchen Show for schools. The event took place in Tunis with the participation of many young students.

The show was a cooking demonstration introducing young students to products and recipes of the Mediterranean Diet. Thanks to the chef Wafik Belaid, who has showed a variety of cooking tips, recipes and techniques, the young students have learned in an easy way some important principles of the Mediterranean Diet.

MEDDIET LABEL FOR TUNISIAN RESTAURANTS

16 June
Tunis, Tunisia

A local event was held in Tunis on the 16th of June. The event was organized, under the auspices of the Minister of Commerce and the Minister of Tourism, by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tunis (CCIT) in order to promote the MedDiet Quality Label among restaurants.
The consumption of pre-packaged and processed food, rich in salt and saturated fats, has tripled in the Mediterranean area during the last decades. Bad diet habits contribute to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and weight gain.

The MedDiet project works toward the promotion of the Mediterranean diet, which is praised by scientists for its healthy benefits. This includes a quality label for restaurants. Over 300 restaurants in Egypt, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Spain, and Tunisia have been awarded the MedDiet quality label. This label certifies that restaurants offer authentic Mediterranean meals complying with precise terms of reference. Among the main criteria are:

- use of olive oil as main source of added fat, better if extra virgin olive oil;
- use of local and seasonal products, including large quantity of fruit and vegetables;
- dishes cooked according to traditional recipes and/or in line with the Mediterranean diet;
- transparent food information to customers;

- activities to promote the benefits of the Mediterranean diet.

The MedDiet label also considers the design of the restaurants and cultural elements which are integral part of the Mediterranean diet.

An app for mobile is now available on the new project’s website in order to help people to find the nearest “MedDiet” restaurants. The new MedDiet Restaurant app is also designed to increase the visibility of all restaurants promoting the Mediterranean diet.

* Source: ENPI CBC Med Programme  
http://www.enpicbcmed.eu/communication/
OUR NEW WEBSITE HAS BEEN LAUNCHED!

We are very proud to announce the launch of our newly designed website.

The project’s website is the main source of information, it should ensure a large visibility to the project’s activities and facilitate relationships among partners.

It was important for all MedDiet partners that the website could reflect our objectives and what we do more accurately.

We have updated it thinking on these objectives!

The new website is now a more comfortable browsing and reading experience, in which it is possible to find new sections containing all relevant information about the different target groups we are working on.

At the same time, the new website includes also the web app entirely dedicated to the search of all MedDiet restaurants (http://www.med-dietrestaurant.eu/+).

We believe the new website is faster, easier to navigate and more user friendly.

We hope also that it could provide visitors with the necessary information and be attractive to all target groups and other visitors.
How do consumers search for the perfect restaurant?

Many studies demonstrate that a large part of consumers search for a restaurant using a web browser or a mobile app. In the majority of cases, consumers say they are more likely to dine at a restaurant based on the results of their digital searches.

Also for these reasons, the MedDiet Project has realized a new web app dedicated to consumers interested in finding a Mediterranean Diet restaurant. This new web app includes all the restaurants of the Mediterranean basin which have already obtained the MedDiet Quality Label. The MedDiet Quality Label identifies restaurants which respect the healthy and tasty model of the Mediterranean Diet.

The MedDiet restaurant APP (http://www.med-dietrestaurant.eu/) allows all consumers to search for the nearest MedDiet restaurants (GPS technology) choosing among three different kinds of search query: by country, by list, by map. Furthermore, the QR code that restaurants can show through the window stickers allows all consumers to connect to a MedDiet website page with details about the Mediterranean Diet and all MedDiet restaurants.

The web app is the first step to get into a larger network on the Mediterranean Diet and just one of the many tools for the restaurant to become more visible.

In fact, once gained the Label, the MedDiet restaurants are supported by many promotional campaigns and initiatives, such as advertising campaigns on social networks and on the most specialized website
Join the MedDiet Project!

Embrace value of Mediterranean Diet as a unique lifestyle and cultural model.
Subscribe the Declaration for Safeguard and Promotion of the Mediterranean Diet!

For more information visit www.med-diet.eu

Disclaimer
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Statement about the Programme
The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region. The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestinian Authority, Portugal, Spain, Syria, Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French.

General statement on the European Union
The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

The MedDiet Project
The project “Mediterranean diet and enhancement of traditional foodstuff - MedDiet” is implemented under the ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme (www.enpicbcmed.eu). Its total budget is 4,99 million Euro and it is financed, for an amount of 4,49 million Euro, by the European Union through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. The ENPI CBC Med Programme aims at reinforcing cooperation between the European Union and partner countries regions placed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.