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## ECOBREEDS

**Policies and strategies for environmental protection and preservation of pastoral systems and local livestock breeds in the Adriatic Ionian region**

Let's explore how  
ECOBREEDS is helping  
preserve native breeds and  
support sustainable farming  
across Adrion area!

**Interreg**



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**IPA** ADRION

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## 1st ECOBREEDS newsletter

Dear readers,

we are excited to share the latest developments from the ECOBREEDS project, funded by the Interreg IPA ADRION Programme. Dedicated to safeguarding pastoral systems and indigenous livestock breeds across the Adriatic-Ionian region, ECOBREEDS promotes biodiversity, sustainable rural development, and the

protection of high nature value areas.

Join us as we continue our journey—strengthening cross-border cooperation, supporting local communities, and ensuring that traditional practices and ecosystems thrive for generations to come!



### **About ECOBREEDS project**

ECOBREEDS project, funded by the Interreg IPA ADRION Programme, tackles pastoralism in the ADRION area with a view to protect and enhance its various roles in the Programme Area. In particular, a project focuses on the provision of Ecosystem Services (ES) by pastoral systems, which play a primary role in the protection and enhancement of High Nature Value protected areas throughout the ADRION area and of flora and fauna biodiversity. Particular focus is given to floristic diversity and wildlife in these areas and especially on extensive grazing and local livestock breeds which constitute integral elements of pastoral systems. ECOBREEDS introduces an innovative interdisciplinary transnational approach, which is required in order to tackle the multiple common challenges and benefits of pastoral systems.

### **Kick-off meeting and 1<sup>st</sup> Transnational meeting of the ECOBREEDS project team**



The ECOBREEDS project, funded by the Interreg IPA ADRION Programme, was officially launched with a successful Kick-off meeting held in Thessaloniki, Greece, from 31<sup>st</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024. The event brought together project partners from across the Adriatic-Ionian region to align

efforts, exchange knowledge, and shape a common vision for protecting pastoral systems and safeguarding local livestock breeds.

On 1<sup>st</sup> November, the consortium held its 1<sup>st</sup> Transnational Workshop at the Aristotle University Research Dissemination Center, engaging participants both in-person and online. The workshop featured:

- Partner Introductions – Presentations highlighting the strengths and expertise of each participating organization.
- Associated Partner Discussions – Collaborative sessions defining roles and responsibilities crucial to achieving ECOBREEDS' goals.

## ***Dissemination and communication activities***



In the initial months of the ECOBREEDS, AZRRI was actively engaged in developing and implementing key communication and visibility tools to establish the project's visual identity and ensure effective dissemination. This included production of Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (CDEP), adapting the official logo, in both, vertical and horizontal formats to ensure consistency across all materials, A3 poster design, Word and PowerPoint templates development, and a roll-up banner production. Project's official social media were launched; Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube channel, and a dedicated subpage was published on the Interreg IPA ADRIAN official website.

The ECOBREEDS official website: <https://ecobreeds.interreg-ipa-adrian.eu/>

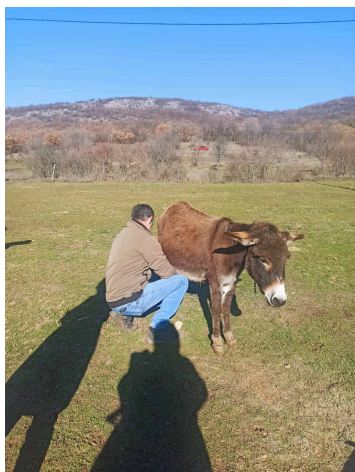
Join us in growing the ECOBREEDS community!



## ***Business Development Center Kragujevac visited local actors***

In December 2024, as part of the ECOBREEDS project, the Business Development Center Kragujevac visited Pirot, Serbia, to strengthen partnerships for preserving autochthonous breeds.

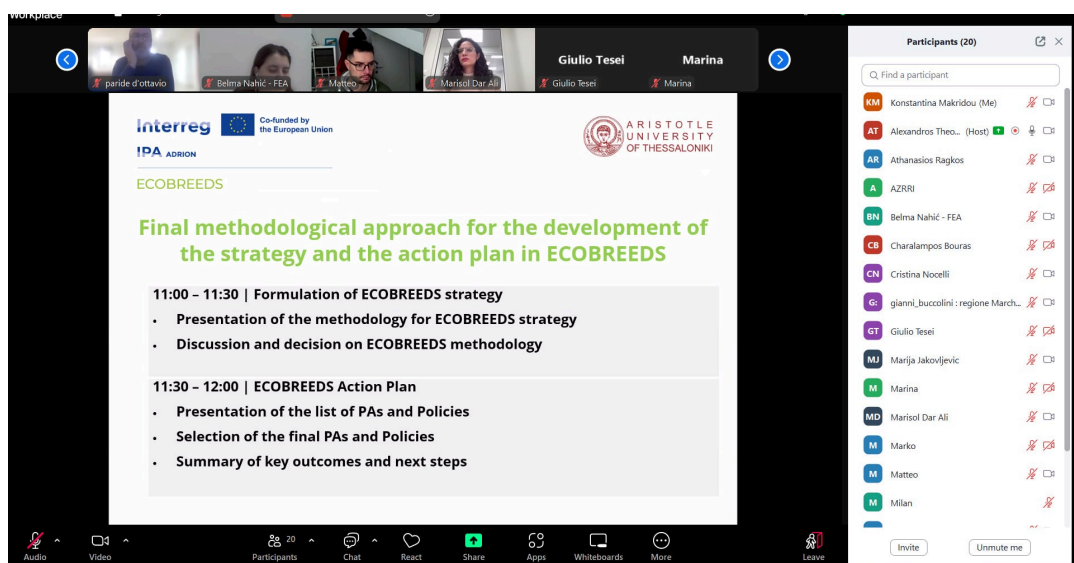
Meetings with cattle registry offices, the Tourist Organization of Pirot, and the women-led cooperative "Ladies' Heart" explored the



link between local traditions, tourism, and sustainable livestock practices. The team also visited the Secondary Dairy School “Dr. Ognjen Prejić,” known for its protected Pirot cheese.

In January 2025, the team visited Sergej Ivanov’s farm near Stara Planina, where he has been dedicated to preserving indigenous breeds such as the Pirot and Karakatsan sheep since 2005. His mission-based work helps ensure the survival of valuable local species through care, breeding, and education.

## Dissemination and communication activities



On 3rd February 2025, our partnership held the 2nd Transnational Workshop of the ECOBREEDS project. Partners across the Adriatic-Ionian region joined remotely to finalize the methodological approach for the ECOBREEDS strategy and action plan.

Key outcomes included:

- Methodology Presentation – Outlining the ECOBREEDS strategy framework
- Review of Protected Areas & Policies – Discussing priorities and approaches
- Action Plan Finalization – Selecting the final PAs and Policies, and defining next steps



## University of "St Kliment Ohridski" Bitola Veterinary Faculty - Bitola R.N.Macedonia

As part of the ongoing project activities, representatives from the University of "St Kliment Ohridski" Bitola Veterinary Faculty - Bitola R.N.Macedonia - UKLO/VFB team conducted field visit to several sheep breeders situated in Pelagonia region N Macedonia. A number of these farmers have been identified as key focus group stake holders within the project framework, due to their active





engagement in the preservation of autochthonous sheep breed. The primary objective of the visit were to evaluate current farming practices and to foster initial collaboration by facilitating the exchange of information and gathering firsthand empirical data. These farmers are characterized by there adherence to traditional management systems and breeding methods which have been sustained across generations. Their dedication underlines the importance of conserving the traditional knowledge and practices, which are integral part of the cultural and genetic biodiversity of this region.



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