



# SAY CHEESE! BALKAN CHEESE

TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECT

LEADER / CLLD



ΑΥΤΟΝΟΜΟ ΠΕΡΙΟΧΕΣ (ΑΠΕ) ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ 2014-2020: Ηλεκτρονική Πρόσβαση για τους φορείς και μέλη της ομάδας εργασίας  
από τον ιστότοπο: [www.παιοςοε.ελλάδα.gov.gr](http://www.παιοςοε.ελλάδα.gov.gr) Το παρόν προκήρυξη υποστηρίζεται οικονομικά από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση (Ε.Ε.) μέσω του Κοινού Συστήματος

SAY CHEESE!



BALKAN CHEESE

## White cheese

Feta, Greek white cheese



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## White cheese

Sirene, Bulgarian white cheese



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## White cheese

- **Albania** (djathë i bardhë or djathë i Gjirokastrës or djath greke, "Greek cheese")
- **Bosnia** (Travnički/Vlašički sir, lit. cheese made on Vlasic/Travnik - Vlašićki sir)
- **Bulgaria** (бяло сирене, bjalo sirene, lit. white cheese)
- **FYROM** (сирење, sirenje)
- **Romania** (brânză telemea)
- **Serbia** (сир, брнза sir)
- **Turkey** (beyaz peynir, lit. white cheese)

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## White cheese

- **Azerbaijan** (ağ pendir, lit. "white cheese")
- **Slovakia** (Balkánsky syr, lit. "Balkan cheese")
- **Canada** (feta style cheese)
- **Czech Republic** (balkánský sýr, lit. "Balkan cheese")
- **Egypt** (domiati)
- **Finland** (salaattijuusto, salad cheese)
- **Georgia** (ყველი, kveli, lit. cheese)
- **Germany** (Schafskäse, sheep cheese)
- **Iran** (Lighvan Cheese; ليقوان پنير panīr-e līghvān')
- **Israel** (gvina bulgarit, lit. Bulgarian cheese)
- **Italy** (casu 'e fitta Sardinia)
- **Lebanon** (gibneh bulgharieh, lit. Bulgarian cheese)
- **Palestine and Jordan** (Nabulsi cheese; جبنة نابلسية, and Akkawi; عكاوي)
- **Poland** (bryndza)
- **Russia** (брынза, brynza)
- **Spain** (Queso de Burgos, lit. "Burgos cheese")
- **Sudan** (gibna beyda, lit. white cheese)
- **Ukraine** (бринза, brynza)

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## Yellow cheese

Kaskaval, Bulgarian yellow cheese



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## Yellow cheese

Kaskaval, FYROM yellow cheese



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## Kaskaval yellow cheese

- **Bulgaria:** кашкавал, pronounced [keʃke'vat];
- **Romania:** cașcaval
- **FYROM:** кашкавал, pronounced [kaʃka'val]
- **Serbia:** качкавалъ or kačkavalj
- **Albania:** Kaçkavalli
- **Turkey:** kaşkaval/kaşar
- **Arabic countries:** قشقوان / qashqawān
- **Greece:** Κασκαβάλι (kaskavali)



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## The truth

**So many excellent cheeses in the Balkan countries.**

People that live together for centuries,  
moving from one place to another,  
carrying techniques and habits.

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## The truth

**So many similarities, so many differences.**

Similar tastes,  
similar techniques,  
similar names.

Different tastes,  
different techniques,  
different names.

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The truth

**So many “common” cheeses.**

So many “Balkan” cheeses.

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## The truth

**But also, so many unique cheeses.**

**Pule cheese, Serbia.**

Made from the milk of Balkan donkeys. The most expensive cheese in the world (€ 600-900 per kg).



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## The truth

**But also, so many unique cheeses.**

**Tcherni Vit** green cheese, Bulgaria.  
Made with the help of “noble” mould.



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## The truth

**But also, so many unique cheeses.**

**Bucegi Mountain Branza de Burduf, Romania.**  
Matured in the bark of a tree.



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## The truth

**But also, so many unique cheeses.**

**Manoura gilomeni, Greece.**

Matures in wine lees and gets wine flavors.



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## The question

**What is so special about the cheeses in the Balkan countries?**

The ancient tradition in dairy and cheese production (from Homer, Odysseus and Polephemus to Apellon Tyritas /Apollo cheese maker).

The natural / traditional way of production.

The small-scale local production that still exists.



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## The question

**What is so special about the cheeses in the Balkan countries?**

The micro-organisms.

The biodiversity of “local” - autochthonous micro-organisms that cause the fermentation and produce that special and unique Balkan flavor, as an alternative to industrial, universal production.

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## The objective

**Micro-organisms are the invisible treasures of the Balkan cheeses that we must discover, preserve and utilize.**

By encouraging and promoting traditional and non-industrial cheeses:  
we are investing in a healthier nutritional future,  
we are building a decent income for producers,  
we support a sustainable productive sector with new parallel opportunities for tourism and cultural activities (cheese routes, festivals, gastronomic events etc).

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## The idea

### **Functional foods**

With the new trend of dairy products to be characterized as “functional food” that do not simply fill up but contribute to good health, the traditional way of cheese making seems to have a prospective future.

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## The idea

### **Balkan cheese routes**

The Balkan cheeses, not only as products but connected with the usual provincial and mountain areas of production, can develop a new trend:

Cheese lovers (almost all of us) are prompted to discover local cheeses, visit dairies and important cheese producers and production units (same way as wine lovers do in the wine routes of the wine making sector).

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## The idea

### **Balkan cheese routes**

The combination of products such as cheese and wine can expand the usual tasting events or create new **alternative touristic products** focusing on gastronomy, cheese and wine and also include cultural activities, local festivals and events about cheese etc.

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## The TNC project

### **1. Recording of Balkan cheeses.**

- Investigation of the similarities and different names in each country.
- Creation of a printed and electronic book of Balkan cheeses.
- Collaboration with scientific institutes and laboratories.

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## The TNC project

### **2. Creation of the “Balkan cheese” brand**

Based on the particular value of Balkan cheeses as a combination of:

- the quality and uniqueness (traditional - "clean" way of production),
- the various contributions to health,
- the connection with the producer and the place.

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## The TNC project

### 3. Creation of touristic products

- Creation of the "Balkan cheese routes".  
Storytelling, myths, history and tradition about cheese. Combination with gastronomy, culture and wine actions and routes.
- Registration of dairies open to visit, exhibitions, collections and other points of interest on cheese production.



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## The TNC project

### 4. Creation of tools

- Internet web sites and tools.
- Graphics, logos and slogans.
- Databases.
- Promotion campaigns.

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## The TNC project

### 5. Network of cooperation

- Creation of a transnational network for the implementation of the Balkan cheese routes and the Balkan cheese brand.
- Information and awareness raising actions for entrepreneurs and institutions.
- Participation in various events, conferences, festivals etc.

### 6. Services for the design, coordination and implementation of the TNC project.

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## The TNC project

### **Partners**

At least 5 countries from the 12 Balkan countries

[Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYROM, Greece, Kosovo (a), Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey (European part)]

At least 10 partners in total.

### **Budget**

At least € 30.000 per partner.

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## The TNC project

**More...**

All ideas and suggestions are happily acceptable!

Discussion has just started.



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Thank you  
Sotiris Bolis