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Joint Conference Reveals the Future of Agro & Bio & Wine Tourism between Bulgaria and Greece

On October 9th, 2023 a conference on capitalizing on the results of the project "Agro-Tourism Business Academy - SME Support System" was held at the Santa Beach Hotel in Thessaloniki. The project was implemented with the financial support of Interreg V-A "Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020" Cooperation Programme, with the goal of promoting the development of agro-tourism and wine tourism in the region.

The organizers of the conference - Eurointegration Association and Prosperity and Development for Bulgaria Association from Blagoevgrad, as well as AgriEntrepreneurship from Thessaloniki - brought together experts to discuss current trends and opportunities for tourism development in the cross-border region.



The event was honored with a welcome address by the Consul General of the Republic of Bulgaria in Thessaloniki, Mr. Anton Markov. In his opening speech at the conference, he emphasized the significance of Agro Business Academy project for the sustainable development of agriculture and eco-tourism in the region. Mrs. Desislava Doncheva, the project coordinator, provided a clear framework for the goals and significance of the conference. With a strategic view of project implementation and achievements, she presented the key accomplishments of the "Agro-Business Academy" and the lessons learned.



One of the most interesting topics for the attendees was related to the future opportunities for supporting tourism in the region through the Interreg V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2021-2027 Cross-Border Cooperation Program. Mrs. Aphrodite Lyolyu from the Program Managing Authority provided detailed information about the goals and priorities outlined in the new program. Particularly useful and interesting was the presentation by Mrs. Galina Georgieva, the project officer from the Joint Secretariat. She detailed the approaches to creating a successful project proposal and the importance of proper planning for the successful project execution.

This was followed by presentations by Mr. Vladimir Inkov, who analyzed "Trends in Strategic Bulgaria-Greece Projects and Their Role in the Economic Growth of the Cross-Border Region." Professor Dr. Ivo Hristov, with an academic approach, examined Bulgarian-Greek economic relations through the lens of sociology, while Ms. Maria Atanasopulu, founder of the tourism marketing company Respond On Demand, explored sustainability in wine production and agriculture. She emphasized the importance of an innovative approach to green practices in the industry, especially considering the challenges of the modern world.



Mr. Nikolay Dalakov, a renowned expert in the field, revealed the uniqueness of his business "Better Half" and presented his villa "Villa Yana." He emphasized that an individual approach and personal commitment to the process are key factors for success in the dynamic world of wine and tourism.

The event concluded with a wine exhibition, where participants had the opportunity to taste wines from six wineries - three Bulgarian and three Greek - showcasing cooperation and innovations in the sector.

The project is funded under the Interreg V-A Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020 Program and is implemented with the participation of the Eurointegration Association, AgriEntrepreneurship, and the Prosperity and Development for Bulgaria Association.

For more information about the project and contact information, you can visit the project's website at <http://agrotouracademy.eu/>.

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