



Workshop IV

Mediterranean diet and agrarian landscapes in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

Module 1 - The Mediterranean diet as intangible cultural heritage: the emergence of a concept

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Mediterranean diet and agrarian landscapes in the Euro-Mediterranean Region

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Duration: 3 hours

University of Évora

Workshop Format:

Online training.

Expository session and interactive class, group work, research, and debate.

Equipment required:

Laptop or other device that allows online search and selection of information.

Module 1 - The Mediterranean diet as intangible cultural heritage: the emergence of a concept

Módulo 1- A Dieta Mediterrânica como património cultural imaterial: a emergência de um conceito

Module description:

The Mediterranean diet is not just a healthy eating pattern; it represents a way of life deeply intertwined with the history, culture, and social traditions of Mediterranean countries. This workshop traces the evolution of the Mediterranean diet from a simple nutritional practice to its recognition as a cultural heritage element, rooted in the Greek concept of *diaita* – a balanced lifestyle where physical exercise plays a crucial role.

In 2013, after joint efforts by seven Mediterranean countries, the Mediterranean Diet was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This heritage is safeguarded by representative communities in each of these seven countries, who work to preserve and promote it.

While the Mediterranean Diet has ancient origins, it is vital to understand that it remains a living, evolving heritage. The ever-changing history of food in the Mediterranean is a testament to this ongoing vitality.

Over the last decade, with the support of the FAO, the Mediterranean Diet has also come to be recognized as a model of sustainability, adding a new dimension to its significance. This workshop will further explore how the Mediterranean Diet aligns with EU policies on sustainable food systems.

Learning objectives:

- Recognize the factors that led to the acknowledgment of the Mediterranean Diet as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO;
- Identify the communities representing the Mediterranean Diet listed by UNESCO;
- Understand that the Mediterranean Diet is a living heritage;
- Understand the Mediterranean Diet's link to sustainability.

Readings and resources:

Mediterranean diet, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage:

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/mediterranean-diet-00884>

<http://www.dietamediterranea.pt/?q=pt>

Medina, F.X. (2021) – “Towards a Construction of the Mediterranean Diet? The Building of a Concept between Health, Sustainability and Culture”. *Food ethics* 6, 3.

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