

development  
and agri-food policies in  
the Mediterranean region

annual report  
1998

## **CIHEAM**

Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes  
International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies

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## *Preface*

- I. The publication of this report - which will then be up-dated on a yearly basis - is the natural outcome of a long process grounded in the missions entrusted to CIHEAM by its charter in 1962, on the initiative of a group of Southern European members of former OECD (Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Turkey and Yugoslavia). Having realised that their agriculture was lagging behind that of the other Member States of the Organisation, the above countries committed themselves, in 1960, to accelerating their progress. The aim was to bring the development of their agriculture up to the standards of that in more advanced Northern countries through the strengthening of vocational training and agricultural research.

The International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) has been the result of this initiative. Initially made up of seven founding Member States, since the 1980s it opened up to some other Mediterranean countries, in conformity with the rules which govern its establishment.

Today, thirteen countries are members of CIHEAM, five of which are also EU Member States (Spain, France, Greece, Italy and Portugal). The other eight are Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey).

Yugoslavia, which was one of the Founding Fathers of CIHEAM, is no longer a member. The countries of former Yugoslavia, despite CIHEAM's official steps towards negotiations, have, so far, not taken any actions to apply for full membership.

CIHEAM's permanent mission is to foster co-operation between Mediterranean countries in the spheres that fall within its scope of activity, i.e. postgraduate agricultural training and the promotion of co-operative agronomic research.

Hence, CIHEAM is a regional Organisation which focuses on a sector - agriculture - which is strictly related to a number of economic activities, in particular the agro-food industry, as well as to many sensitive regional problems such as the use of water and land resources, the protection of the environment and rural development policy.

Thanks to its four Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes, located in Spain (Saragossa), in France (Montpellier), in Greece (Chania - Crete) and in Italy (Bari) and which are fully funded by the host countries, CIHEAM provides, according to the specialisations of the above Institutes, long-term postgraduate training leading up to a postgraduate certificate (duration of the course: one year) or to a Master of Sciences certificate (duration of the course or of the research: two years). In the academic year 1998-1999, 383 trainees followed the courses at the four CIHEAM Institutes: 224 for the 1<sup>st</sup> year and 159 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

CIHEAM also organises short-term courses (lasting a few weeks) to update agronomists working for Public Administrations or professional or academic institutions and train them in specific topics identified within the framework of co-operative networks sponsored by CIHEAM.

This training and research work is carried out by the Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes in close co-operation with the Institutions in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries with a view to providing joint and targeted training according to the needs of the various Mediterranean countries.

Over the period 1998-2002, CIHEAM will commit itself to implementing a co-operation programme with the Commission of the European Union aimed at transferring the management of training and research activities to the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean partners. This programme is based on four regional action plans and the

Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes will work closely with appropriate Institutions in the Member States.

The regional action plans will take place:

- in Egypt, where it will be focused on water (and will be developed by Bari MAI);
- in Morocco, where it will be focused on rainfed agriculture (and will be developed by Saragozza MAI);
- in Tunisia, where it will be focused on the development of agricultural policies (and will be developed by Montpellier MAI);
- in Turkey, where it will be focused on renewable resources (and will be developed by Chania MAI).

- II. This short overview of the activities carried out by CIHEAM testifies to its firmly rooted mission and thriving activities in the fields of agriculture and agro-food economy. It would suffice to review the training and research programmes implemented in the Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes and those envisaged within the framework of the new co-operation scheme approved by the European Union Commission to realise the deep agricultural nature of CIHEAM activities.

However, despite such evidence and the fact that CIHEAM has devoted years to studies - which are published in its "Options Méditerranéennes", a journal that deals with the state of agriculture in some Member States, especially Maghreb countries and Albania - there remains a gulf which has not yet been bridged. The gap should be filled by a reference document which should reflect the progress of agriculture in all the Mediterranean countries and provide decision-makers with insights into this field. The lack of such a document is particularly felt under the present circumstances when Mediterranean agricultural economies - regardless of their degree of progress - are

suffering from the fall-out of trade globalisation and are being called to establish the Euro-Mediterranean partnership initiated in Barcelona by the EU Member States and by all the Mediterranean countries. The need to follow closely the developments of agriculture in the Mediterranean would obviously take into due consideration the peculiarities of the Mediterranean region. “The Mediterranean is in the first place a sea and the so called «Mediterranean region» includes countries encompassed in three continental sub-groups: Southern Europe, Northern Africa and Western Asia. Each sub-group is currently characterised by a different geo-political scenario and particular economic and social dynamics which lead them to drift away from each other”<sup>1</sup>. But quoting Jean-Claude Flamant again, a “region” is not only defined by a homogeneous territory, but most of all by “the existence of an active network of relationships”.

Owing to its original composition and regional calling, focusing on agriculture, food supply and relating issues, CIHEAM boasts an “active network of relationships” which should be properly used in order to help establish an area of shared prosperity which is the ultimate goal of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

The following report on agriculture and food supply in the Mediterranean is aimed at filling the gap we have acknowledged.

- III Thanks to the hard work and the political impetus of its Board of Directors, CIHEAM is delighted to have succeeded in devising a valuable tool to thoroughly investigate, analyse and consider the major issues and events which characterise the Mediterranean agro-food systems. It is too early to foresee the impact that this report - the first edition of which is fully funded by CIHEAM - will have on the

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Claude Flamant, Chairman of CIHEAM Scientific Committee, cf. *«Les nouveaux enjeux pour le CIHEAM...»*. Communication submitted at the Workshop held in Istanbul (November 9-11, 1998), organised by CIHEAM the proceedings of which will be published in the journal “Options Méditerranéennes”.

dynamics of the investigated phenomena. This first edition - that we are confident will be improved by the experience gained in the meantime and by the readers' critical remarks - will nevertheless remain a reference point in terms of method and structure for the future editions.

The method of work was devised thanks to the close co-operation between a network of correspondents from CIHEAM Member Countries and the editorial staff including researchers from the Institutes and was co-ordinated by the General Secretariat.

The report consists of three parts.

The first part, as wanted by the editorial staff, is divided in two chapters: the first chapter reviews the international or regional events that have marked the Mediterranean agriculture; the second focuses on recent macro-economic developments, in particular on the progress of agriculture in the Mediterranean Countries. The second chapter draws heavily on the contributions given by the local CIHEAM correspondents, complemented by information available in the publications edited by international organisations.

The second part of the report focuses on a topic of major interest to the Mediterranean region which will be chosen every year according to the circumstances. In this first edition, the focus is on the training of agro-food system specialists in the Mediterranean region. The choice has been conditional on the efforts made by CIHEAM in 1998 which were unquestionably crowned with success following the workshop held in Istanbul in November 1998.

The third part of the report provides statistical data and bibliographical notes which will be regularly updated in the future in order to provide useful data on key indicators to assess the progress of agricultural, food and rural economies.

In this edition, the major events which characterise the agricultural economies in the Mediterranean countries and which are described in the first chapter are those that have occurred in the wake of the liberalisation process affecting the trade in agricultural products. The agricultural policies of the Mediterranean countries are currently adjusting to a freer environment resulting from the Uruguay round of negotiations and the talks over a partnership with the European Union aimed at the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area.

The analysis of the impact of these moves highlights the potential and the weakness of the various regional agricultural economies connected mainly to the foreseeable developments in agricultural produce prices. The European policy and the implementation of Agenda 2000 have stressed the role of the EU as the largest importer of Mediterranean products and, within the EU, the role of Northern European countries which import 86% of citrus, 77% of tomatoes and 76% of vegetables from Southern Mediterranean countries. The role of Southern European countries in the production process, the trade in Mediterranean products, the lessons which can be learnt from their dynamic exports in a key sector such as that of fruit and vegetables, the competing productions in the Mediterranean region and the future developments of the co-operation policy are some of the topics which are analysed, discussed and constantly considered with a view to settling interest disputes the solution of which, though, remains in the hands of the regional policy-makers.

However, in order to fully understand the arguments put forward in the first chapter, it is necessary to read the second chapter which provides insights into the sectorial and national scenarios based on the analysis of the macro-economic developments - occurring in agriculture, in the agricultural and agro-food production and in the consumption trends - which stresses the traces left in each country by the changes which have taken place.

Hence, the first and the second chapter complement each other and should be read carefully before drawing any conclusions. Equally discussed are the most sensitive issues to an Organisation, such as CIHEAM, which groups together on an equal footing both Southern EU Member States and some other Mediterranean States which are not EU members but have committed themselves to establishing a Euro-Mediterranean partnership with the EU co-operation. The difficulties that some EU Southern regions are experiencing with their agricultural productions in increasingly freer markets are recognised and the potential repercussions of the exports of products from Southern Mediterranean countries are foreseen. The reading of the publication should confirm the equilibrium which the writing of the said publication has aimed to achieve. The suggested response to the shortcomings that Southern EU Member States are facing is to make an increased use of the structural funds to fuel the rural development. This strategy is likely to offset, in the long run, the impact of the removal of protection measures for agricultural exports from non EU Mediterranean countries.

But these countries - as the report points out - are also exposed to the consequences of the establishment of a Free Trade Area which might jeopardise any future prospects of increased agricultural productions which at the moment show a deficit. Why can't a special section, within the framework of the MEDA programme and symmetrical to the current Agricultural Guidance and Fund, be envisaged to remedy the specific agricultural handicaps which constitute the biggest stumbling blocks to freer markets and the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean partnership?

Here again, policy-makers will have to draw the relevant operational conclusions.

The objectives which the CIHEAM Board of Directors intend to achieve through this report are the following:

- improving the knowledge of the problems relating to the agricultural, food and environmental development in the Mediterranean countries,
- carrying out an economic analysis of some issues central to agriculture, food supply, and the management of natural resources in the Mediterranean countries,
- offering a retrospective and perspective analysis to help understand the development of agricultural, food and rural economies against the background of global, national and international economies.

We are convinced that the above objectives have been met. This report is addressed to Governments, national parliaments, local bodies, international organisations - in particular within the EU -, professional organisations and Universities and Research centres which are directly involved in devising the policies for the agro-food systems in the Mediterranean region. It is up to them to assess and react.

In deciding to publish this report, CIHEAM has acted in accordance with its desire to be of service to all the Mediterranean Countries and give substance to an ambition: becoming the privileged ground for the debate, the analysis and the monitoring of the major phenomena which guide the progress of the Mediterranean agriculture, the mother of all its activities.

*Enzo Chioccioli*  
*CIHEAM Secretary General*

***Foreword***

The purpose of this report is to highlight the significance of the current process of internationalisation of agro-food systems in the Mediterranean Basin.

It brings together the results of a number of national reports and regional case studies on development and agro-food policies in the Mediterranean region either commissioned to a collaborative network of national correspondents or prepared by CIHEAM four Mediterranean Agronomic Institutes.

Much emphasis was put on external consultation in preparing this report.

The networking activity proved to be a valuable channel for clearing information and receive constructive feedback to prepare the report.

The national correspondent's network included S.Bedrani (Algeria), A. Abu-Zeid (Egypt), M. Hamze (Lebanon), N. Akesby (Morocco), M. Lasram (Tunisia) and E. Isikli (Turkey).

This report was prepared under the immediate supervision of Enzo Chioccioli, Ciheam Secretary General, by a team led by A. Di Giulio (Ciheam) and comprising A. Simantov ( Delegate of Greece at Ciheam Governing Board), M. Allaya ( Ciheam-Iam-M), F. Lerin (Ciheam-Iam-M), G. Mergos (University of Athens, Greece), G. Malorgio (University of Bologna, Italy), and J.M. Alvarez-Coque (University of Valencia, Spain).