DELIVERABLE 2
TASTYCHEESETOUR PROJECT "CHEESE, TERRITORY & TOURISM IN THE EU: STATE OF THE ART REPORT"

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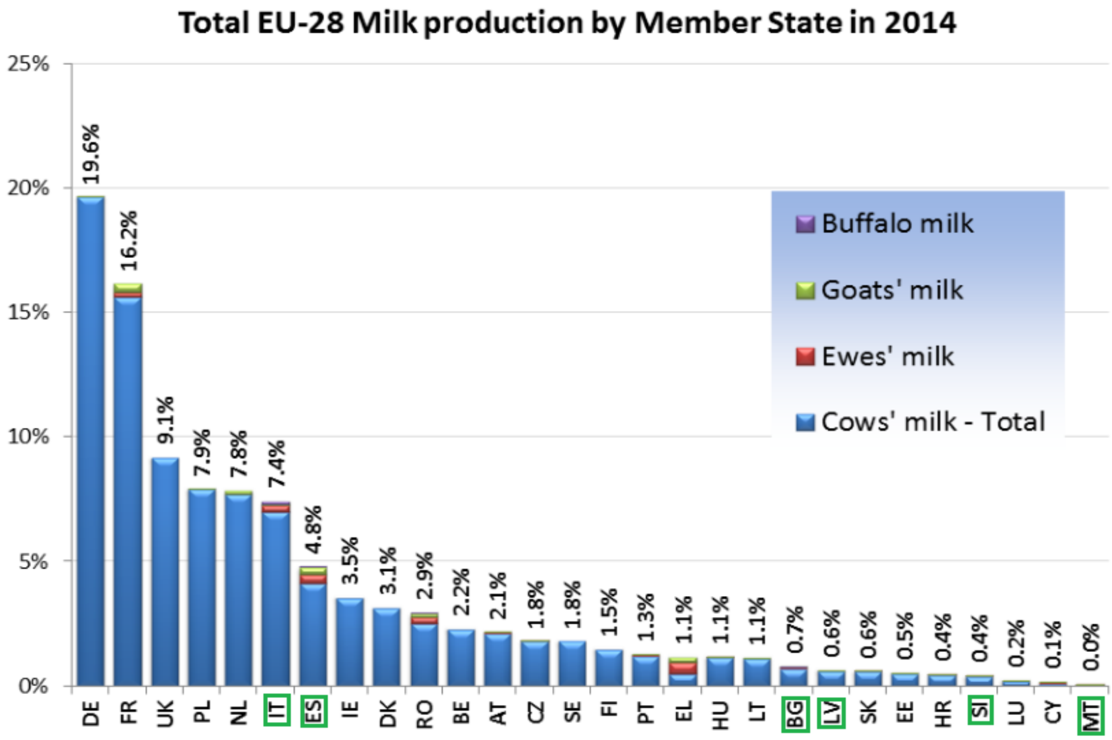
Introduction

The EU cheese market is changing, forcing cheese suppliers to rethink their business models and explore new opportunities for growth. The main drivers behind these changes are falling growth rates in the EU, more pressure on margins because of higher revenues in powder and butter products, and volatility in commodity cheese markets. “Cheese, Territory & Tourism in the EU: State of the art report” presents analysis of the current situation in EU regions concerning cheese and tourism sectors. Report is par of the “TastyCheeseTour” project which is facilitateing and developing blended itineraries: - cultural, industrial, culinary, agricultural and livestock, in rural and deprived regions that produce high quality cheese. Through this report joint understanding of the situation and challenges within the pilot territories will be sought. As well as opportunities and new interdisciplinary solutions for the region promotion through cheese production related tourism services will be looked for. EU cheese market is the largest in the world and TastyCheeseTOUR will try to bring out uniqnes of each territory through specific charasteristics of the local cheese and make a difference by developing and fostering sustainable tourism products that promote and valorise their production by attracting visitors, enhancing their rural and culinary experience. With help of the report project team and other interested parties will have an insight on the gathered information concerning cheese and tourism sectors in the EU looking for the opportunities and new strategic options for targeting further growth and profitability. Project team as one of the main opportunities for the local cheese producers see value-adding services such as integrated tourism activities as there is a growing population of travellers that have become more interested in the various cuisines and cultures from countries all over the world, and are planning vacations specifically to incorporate culinary trips. To evaluate perspectivity of tourism activity integration in the rural regions represented by cheese producers also analysis of the conducted survey will be provided. It will help to identify which suggestions could be uptaken from the societies point of view, including both service provider and service customer opinion in 6 involved countries: Spain, Slovenia, Malta, Latvia, Italy and Bulgaria as pilot territories of the project which are seeking new interdisciplinary solutions for the region promotion through cheese production related services as EU cheese market is the largest in the world and TastyCheeseTOUR can make a difference by developing and fostering sustainable tourism products that promote and valorise their production by attracting visitors, enhancing their rural and culinary experience.

Cheese Market

In Europe there are 245 different types of cheese with these indications and each one is located in a different province, but in truth, the science is fairly simple. Take some milk – a cow, sheep or goat will provide just fine. Add a starter enzyme and then some rennet to separate the curds (solids) from the whey (liquid). Making cheese is as simple as that because almost every cheese begins its life like this. So, why is there such variety in cheese's taste and textures? "One word tells you: terroir. It all starts with the land. The climate and the soil affects the animals, the food they eat – whether that is cows grazing pasture or goats foraging. Everything affects the taste of the milk, and therefore the cheese." says Patricia Michelson of La Fromagerie (La fromagerie, 2016) here comes in the regional aspect that strongly influences the traditions and taste characteristics of the cheese.



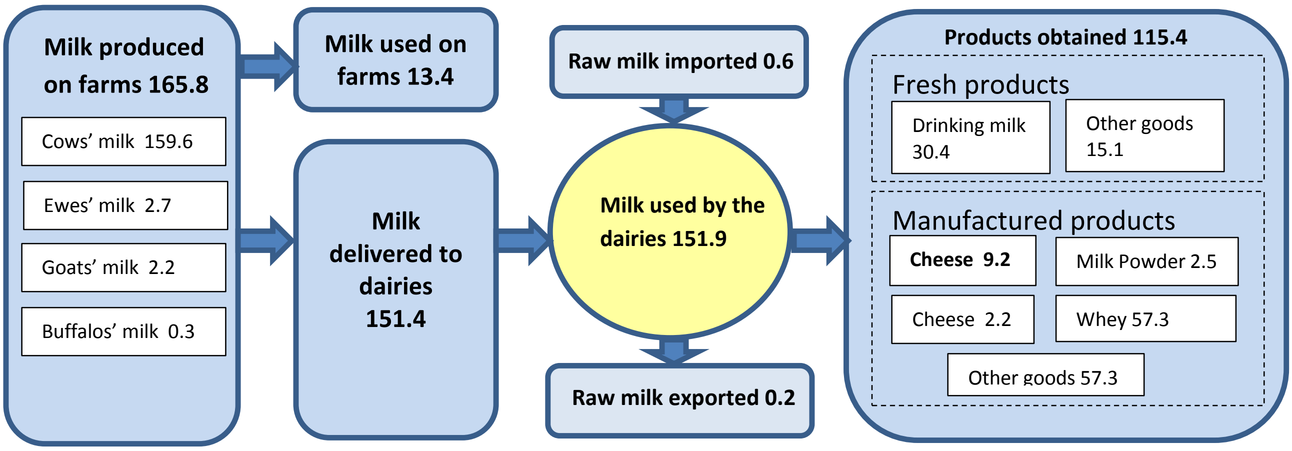
Another thing all great cheeses share is the attention of a genuine artisan cheese maker. Greatest share of the European cheeses are produced in small dairy, using raw, unpasteurized milk from a single herd. An artisan follows the process from pasture to table, making everything by hand. Even the starter used to begin the curdling process can be made from the previous day's milk. The result is almost endless variety, between countries and regions, styles, even neighbouring villages. So each region can epmphasize its own tipe of cheese oftenly getting recognision for produceing high quality cheese, mainly Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI). This means the regions already producing quality cheese is just growing as many other are waiting to be registered amongst PDO, TSG and PGI, which would create additional support and promotion of the product for hundreds of EU cheese producers and their represented regions, mostly rural, facing serious problems such as poverty, social inclusion, depopulation, remoteness. This clashes with the fact that the European Union cheese market is the largest in the world and counts with a very high per capita consumption level 17,2kg (2013). It is forecasted that in 2016 more than 368,000 tonnes of cheese will be produced in the European Union (EU) and only around 31,000 will be net traded. Milk is produced everyday in the EU and gives a regular income to the numerous small producers. Its production is highly labour-intensive and provides employment.

Cheese has traditionally been considered the preferred outlet for milk from the European Union (EU) after local fresh-milk requirements have been satisfied. The EU cheese market is the largest in the world, and despite very high per capita consumption levels, growth has remained attractive and stable.

The high production costs of milk in most of the EU rule out a competitive role in supplying the world's net importing markets with low-priced dairy commodities. Cheese has therefore provided much better export opportunities than any other dairy product, as the willingness to pay for quality European cheese has always been high, and the impact of higher raw-material costs is less problematic. As a consequence, the share of EU milk that is processed into cheese increased from 43 percent to 45 per cent between 2001 and 2010.[1]

Total milk production increases as the milk yield per animal improves every year as well as growth of milk production is stimulated after the termination of the quota system in 2015. Based on EUROSTAT (Economic accounts for agriculture) EU28 total milk production is estimated around 165 million tons per year (2014 data) in comparition to 153 million tonnes of milk in 2013, i.e. around 20% of the world production. Close to 40% of the production takes place in Germany and France. The other significant producers are the United Kingdom, Poland, the Netherlands and Italy. With close to 55 billion EUR, the value of production for the dairy sector represents 15% of the total EU agricultural output (average 2011-2013). The importance of the dairy sector relative to agriculture is the highest in Estonia, Ireland, Luxembourg, Finland, Germany, Sweden and Latvia. Around 50% of the milk is used to produce cheese. In 2013, the EU produced 9.2 million tonnes of cheese, from which 8.1% of the cheese production was exported outside the EU.[2]

Production and use of milk in EU28 in 2014[3]



1 EU Cheese market, 5m Publishing, 2011 (http://www.thedairysite.com/articles/2875/european-cheese-market/)

2 Analysis of the EU dairy sector, European Comission, 2014 (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/russian-import-ban/pdf/dairy-production_en.pdf)

3 Eurostat, 2016 (http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=apro_mk_pobta&lang=en)

Corresponding to the use of milk similar structure can be noticed also amongst cheese production. Most industrial cheeses are made from cows milk, but small local producers as oftenly as cows' also choose to produce ewes', goats' and buffalos' milk as it shows more region specific cheese production traditions and region specific taste. There is lack on the statistic on what share of each type of milk has been processed in chees. Other problem that must be pointed out is the lack of fully comparable statistics within the milk and milk product statistics which are collected under Decision 97/80/EC, implementing Directive 96/16/EC which should cover statistics on production and utilisation of milk by dairy farms, as well as statistics on milk collection, utilisation and use by dairy enterprises. Such information are often subject to statistical confidentiality. Thus, providing EU totals in this context is a challenge and information presented in the analysis may be based on data not available with the usual precision. Thereby it creates obsticles to fully see the situation and evaluate trands within the sector. Also comparability of the collected data often creates new barriesrs to compare country by country or data credibility as the presented data creates incompability. For example, statistics on the cheese produced are given in tons of the cheese produced, but sector it self is shown as milk produced which later is represented by dairy products obtained. To understand the amount of the cheese production process some 115 million tonnes of raw milk were used to produce 9.2 million tonnes of cheese in the EU-28 in 2014. As previously mentioned around 50% of the milk is used to produce cheese which in this table is shown into a number of fresh and manufactured dairy products from the milk delivered to the dairies. With the data presented in the table of dairy products obtained in 2013 we can see that do to the small amounts of milk collected and dairy products produced some data is not shown in the EU statistics, some information is lacking, but on the total Malta, Slovenia and Bulgaria in the cheese production are below the average, Spain and Latvia on the average and Italy is amongst the biggest cheese producer states in the EU.

Most of the growth on the global market will be in milk powders and butter oil rather than cheese, as the needs of developing dairy markets are more geared towards these products. As a result, cheese specialists are reconsidering their business models and trying to incorporate new growth areas either in new geographies or in value-adding services. To compare available choices of the dairy product producers in the EU, please take a look at the available data on the Farm production and dairy product obtained in EU 2013. Looking at data from EU28 dairy production we can see that there is a great difference between product lines and shares of the total milk consumtion per dairy product line and it is individual for each of the country. However, the cheese market has changed in recent years due to developments in the EU and to global trends. Competition within the EU market is heating up, as the market has become more saturated, the traditionally higher premium for cheese versus other dairy products has eroded, and the commodity segment of the cheese market has become more volatile and unpredictable. For further growth, however, processors in supply growth regions will have to develop new cheese markets or prioritise other products. After having determined how much new milk can be expected from their suppliers, individual processors will have to decide which products this new milk will be used for based firstly on EU and global market growth opportunities in cheese versus powder and butter, secondly on individual company and local producer capabilities in processing efficiency, creating new markets, customer access and marketing, and thirdly on careful consideration of the growth ambitions, and capacity expansions of the competition.

Farm production and dairy product obtained in EU, 2013[4]

EU-28	153774	5084	141243	31925	2105	1707	9300
Eu-10	108619	2959	105564	20989	1710	1700	7190
Belgium	3528	0	3475	747	165	53	79
Denmark	5082	0	5026	492	138	135	325
Germany	31324	14	30301	4931	530	473	2182
Ireland	5601	0	5581	494	98	202	183
Greece	731	1087	607	441	:	:	187
France	24426	865	23994	3640	368	398	1936
Italy	11281	759	10397	2563	:	98	1158
Luxembourg	296	3	287	20	0	:	:
Netherlands	12408	232	12213	508	297	199	793
United Kingdom	13943	0	13687	6981	116	145	349
Other Eu-28	45156	2125	35679	10900	365	433	2060
Bulgaria	1149	157	511	71	0	1	68
Czech Republic	2849	0	2358	620	31	29	118
Estonia	772	0	706	88	2	4	44
Spain	6559	1072	5949	3662	24	36	315
Croatia	588	22	504	294	:	5	33
Cyprus	163	43	157	71	0	0	20
Latvia	912	3	736	61	:	:	:
Lithuania	1720	4	1339	96	23	13	113
Hungary	1773	5	1364	399	:	9	68
Malta	41	3	41	:	:	:	:
Austria	3393	32	2933	788	5	34	158
Poland	12718	17	9922	1616	137	161	732
Portugal	1848	103	1777	834	15	26	70
Romania	3966	653	882	219	2	10	70
Slovenia	596	1	517	153	:	2	16
Slovakia	912	10	827	320	5	9	9
Finland	2328	0	2287	735		53	102
Sweden	2870	0	2870	864	80	35	89

Althought the size of the EU milk production along with the largest cheese market is the number one in the world, it directly depends on the global trends within dairy market and economical situation within the each region as most of EU's production of dairy products and 91.9% of cheese is consumed domestically. So there can not be one optimal solution for the all players in the market. But there can be sought new opportunities for the local small and medium size enterprises which faces in many ways similar situation in all the EU.

As size of the cheese market is not questionable it is hard to count all the cheese types produced, as there can be uncountable variations on the each typology of the chees, but the final products

4 Eurostat, 2014

can be groupt after specific characteristics: texture, age, content of fat, curdling technique, place of orrigin etc. Cheese described by texture can be devided in following categories: soft cheeses (creamcheese, spreds, veriety of brie, camaber, chevres and other cheeses). Semi soft and semi hard cheeses. Hard cheeses. Categories can be counted on and on, but taking into account tourism activity perspective amongst cheese related activities most important typology of cheeses would be its place of origin. So here are briefly introduced project involved region specific cheeses showing its typology and region specific characteristics.

From Latvia it would be Jāņi cheese, that is a Latvian sour milk cheese, traditionally eaten on Jāņi – the Midsummer celebration. Today it is available and well demanded all year through. Its basics are raw quark and fresh milk, but other products like eggs and butter can be added to taste. Traditionally, caraway seeds are added as spice but today cheese makers compete in creativity to make new varieties and tastes based on the original Jāņi cheese. Most oftenly it is made in round form. The cheese is often served as a snack to go with light or dark beer. The cheese has also received EU Traditional Speciality Guaranteed - TSG logo. From Spain, Gran canaria region there is no one tipe specific cheese but their speciality is shown through the curding agent usage. This region is specific as for the curding process flower of the thistle from the species "Cynara cardunculus" and "Cynara scolymus" are used which gives so called "Flower cheeses" their distinct taste characteristics. Slovenia is known for its Upper Soča region cheeses, which belong among the full-fat hard cheeses. The long history and rich tradition of production and specific climatic conditions (transit zone between the Mediterranean and Alpine region) are reflected in the taste and due to this specifics, cheese of Soča Valley gained EU certificate Protected designation of origin. The valley has two protected cheeses: Tolminc cheese (sir Tolminc), originating from the area around the town of Tolmin and Bovec cheese (Bovški sir), originating from the area around the town of Bovec. Tolminc cheese is made of cow's milk. It is shaped in rounds with a diameter between 23 and 27 cm and of height between 8 and 9 cm. One round weighs between 3,5 and 5 kg. Cheese rind is smooth, straw-yellow color. The dough is flexible, connected, yellowish color, eyes are rare and in size of lenses or peas. The smell is typical, clean and flavor in sweet to slightly spicy. The cheese matures after 60 days. It can be aged for more than one year. Bovec cheese is produced from sheep milk in is formed in rounds with a diameter of 20 to 26 cm, from 8 to 12 cm in height and weighs 2.5 to 4.5 kg. The rind of the cheese is firm, smooth, straight, circumferential side slightly convex and the edges slightly rounded, gray-brown to dull beige. The dough is compact, flexible, linked to shell breakage, brittle but not crumbly, evenly gray-beige in color, with a few evenly spaced eyes size of a lens or a small pea bean or a few tiny holes, small cracks which do not prevail. Taste and smell: typical spicy, full, intense, slightly spicy. In case of added cow's or goat's milk, the taste and smell is lighter. The cheese matures after 60 days. It can be aged for more than one year. Speciality of the malta could be mentioned cheese Irkotta, which is special with a mixture of calcium and sodium salts in the making process. The calcium is necessary to bind the proteins while the sodium prevents the curd from being too hard. The sodium used is therefore a necessary ingredient in the manufacture of Irkotta. It also gives the irkotta a pleasant taste which would otherwise be bland. The amount of salt used is however kept to a minimum and has been reduced over the years to make Irkotta more acceptable for people with moderate hypertension. The amount of Sodium is very low when compared to other cheeses. These and other examples are just few that shows variety and specifics of cheeses in EU. And do to the offered diversity it opens many opportunities for the tourism activity integration amongst cheese related enterprises.

Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the EU because of its economic and employment potential, as well as its social and environmental implications. Based on the Eurostat tourism is defined as “the activity of visitors taking a trip to a main destination outside the usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose, including business, leisure or other personal purpose, other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited”.[5] According to the European Parliament publiced report on recent trends and policy development on tourism in EU tourism is the third largest socio-economic activity in the EU (after the trade and distribution, and construction sectors), and has an overall positive impact on economic growth and employment. Tourism also contributes to the development of European regions and, if sustainable, helps to preserve and enhance cultural and natural heritage. In line with the cultural and natural heritage and tendencies in the tourism secto new opportunities for the rural, remote and deprived regions have been noticed by the Tasty Cheese Tour project team. Many cheese producers keep the recepies and traditions from generation to generation and with the preserved traditions strongly enchence cultural heritage as well as creates opportunities for the tourism sector development in the regions.

If you ask how tourism is related to the cheese production sector, the answer is simple. Tourism as any other sector nowadays are facing many chalanges adapting to the fast changing global market needs. These changes are largely due to a number of factors such as demographic trends, geopolitical developments or technological evolution. One of the main changes – senior tourists, as on average tourists are older than in past decades. Older persons' travel habits may differ from other age groups. As mentioned in the European Commission's 2014 report “Europe, the best destination for seniors”[6], 7 out of 10 seniors in the EU undertake only domestic trips. They tend to prioritise safety and be increasingly quality conscious. Those of retirement age can travel during off-season periods. Where all these factors could benefit TastyCheeseTour blended itineraries which will be related to the cheese production in the partner regions.

Other trend that has rapindly changing the tourism sector is digitalization and independent travel. Tourists, especially younger tourists, increasingly tend to use digital technologies and social media channels (such as review portals, blogs and forums) for tourism purposes. The internet has contributed to self-organised holidays and independent travel by shifting “the balance of power from the providers of tourism services to consumers”.[7] Also the number of people booking various parts of the trip separately increases every year. According to the Eorubarometer study 2015 “Preference of Europeans towards tourism” two thirds of respondents used the internet to organize holidays as well as more than half (55%) of respondents considered recommendations

5 'Methodological manual for tourism statistics', Eurostat, 2014, p. 16. (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/6454997/KS-GQ-14-013-EN-N.pdf/166605aa-c990-40c4-b9f7-59c297154277)

6 Europe, the best destination for seniors, European Comission, 2014. (Seniors - age 55+)

7 OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2014, OECD (http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/industry-and-services/oecd-tourism-trends-and-policies-2014_tour-2014-en)

by friends, colleagues or relatives the most important source of information when making travel plans, which closely where followed wit 46% relies on the peoples references mentioned on internet websites. To keep up with the latest trends in the tourism industry TastyCheeseTour developed interaries must be easily accesable online and all the bookings can be done based on the preferences of the website visitor.

Compared to the past, today's tourists demand, in general, more individual and authentic experiences. To respond to this need, new players have entered the market, both in service providers and travellers – joint online platforms, new types of tourism offers etc. One of the growing tourism activities is culinary tourism which is defined as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences.[8] By combining travel with these edible experiences, culinary tourism offers both locals and tourists alike an authentic taste of place. TastyCheeseTour team culinary tourism in particulalry sees as one of the new small and medium cheese producer value-adding services that can be incorporated in the business carried out activity. One of the reasons for the evolution of culinary tourism has been wine, beer and food festivals where we see also new opportunity for the cheese producers. As food in general plays a major role in the travel plans of Europeans tourists cheese can bee a regional delicatesse that distinguishes one region from another and attract tourists to plan travels deeper in the country exploring the regions behind the walls of the major cities. This would allow tourists to experience local culture through its authentic cuisine – region specific cheeses and complimentary products. Interaction with locals would add an authentic touch to culinary experiences. Food has always been core to the DNA, tasting new dishes, encountering unusual ingredients, enjoying local hospitality -- after all, it's one of the most direct and very delicious way to experience authentic local culture. Culinary travel-based TV shows, food magazines and food and travel blogs has generated a segment of travellers seeking a style of travel in which cuisine takes centre stage. These travellers want to taste firsthand the flavours they have read, seen and heard so much about and generaly asociates with the specific country, region or city. The growth of the culinary tourism niche was a key driver to see the opportunity to increase economic activity through promotion of the tourism services amongst cheese producers and support it with the project created blended interarries joining various tourism activities with cheese topic as well as provide platform to support all target groups with interest in regional, culinary and cheese related tourism activities. Such initiative will deliver a wide range of socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits to the society creating synergies with the cheese producers and the tourism industry that have been unexploited so far, bringing employment, growth and innovation to EU rural areas.

Tourism activities related to the cheese production and sales services creates a wide range of socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits to the society creating synergies with the tourism industry that have been unexploited so far, bringing employment, growth and innovation to EU rural areas. European travellers like to combine culinary tourism with other activities, like adventurous excursions. To provide such services one of the main chalanges is food safety which is also a key to the sustainability of the success of the provided services. Many regions and municipalities have attempted to revamp rural and culinary tourism with diverse initiatives but theTastyCheeseTOUR challenge is to create easily accesable and transferable support model for

8 The Culinary Tourism Alliance, http://www.growfoodtourism.com/, 2016

the cheese producers in the rural regions in different EU countries and regions that face similar problems. The focus on tourism to tackle rural areas problems is essential as it has been found as a main driver for the growth and employment in rural areas.

Analysis of the strategic role of the territory for the individual producers of local products

Recognize the importance of bringing the customer to consume in the territory where production takes place, implies recognizing that the territory itself becomes the stage-essential support to the producers themselves. The strategic role of the territory with its geographical, morphological, climatic, and socio-cultural constraint implies the opportunity to develop marketing policies able to integrate in a systemic way the offering perspective of the individual producers of local products (cheese and food products, wine, typical catering, accommodation, museums, shows and local culture, etc.).

Moving on, in fact, from the perspective of the distribution of products to the customers of the attraction of the strategic competition is no longer between individual businesses, but becomes one between the local supply systems. A territory can become the place of production of local products with characteristics, nature, complexity and different value. Important to be able to put the system in the different local production to increase the competitiveness of production themselves and increase the value produced by the territory.

To this end, and in line with the strategy that focuses on the customer attraction that turns an agricultural and / or the manufacturing area into a multifunctional area (which also produces services, experiences and transformations), the question is how best to use the marketing tools that appear crucial today in this process: the image and the brand, communication and distribution channels.

The territory's image allows and encourages the launch or the revitalization of local food and craft goods little known in distribution circuits and consumption. Associating, in fact, the product label the name of the territory it is possible to promote the inclusion in the distribution channels of qualified productions territorial origin.

The report of the territory brand - brand of the product can also be interpreted in a reverse perspective, in the sense that the combination of the name of a little-known or low image area from the public with that of products made in the widely known and equipped high reputation can be an action on the exploitation of the territory also in the tourist sense by relying on the identity of the brand conquered from local villagers.

The marketing of local products represents, along with communication, the critical variable for an appropriate valuation of the offer on domestic and international markets.

In addition to identifying the channels of distribution adapted to transfer the products in the time and places of consumption, it is important to think about how to bring the offer of local products in the widest sense, what products experiences and transformations related to the territory, for which the distribution (tour operators, travel agencies, etc.) has the role to mobilize customers from places of residence to the territory where these services, experiences and transformations are accomplished. It must be considered, moreover, that there are several synergies between the commercialization of different types of products and the communication of the image and the mark of the same and of the territory: The typical local excellence marketed outside the territory is an extraordinary promotional vehicle and land communications and other types of local products that it can offer (services, experience and transformation); The typical local experiences such as sightseeing tours, events, festivals, etc. are, in addition to a business itself, also a tremendous opportunity to market other types of local products such as materials (they consume in their living room), goods (buying as supply or simply as a souvenir) and services (bar, restaurant, etc.). These and other suugestions will be taken into account when developing action plan for the region support and development of joint interaries for the raise of the tourism activity within the territories of the created interaries.

Conclusions and Recomendations

Delivered report should be used throughout the development of the action plan for the pilot territories and should be prepared in such way that it could be replicated and be usable by any rural region within EU, facing serious problems such as poverty, social exclusion, depopulation, remoteness, etc.

Tourism activities related to the cheese production and sales services creates a wide range of socio-cultural, environmental and economic benefits to the society creating synergies with the tourism industry that have been unexploited so far, bringing employment, growth and innovation to EU rural areas.

Development of services provided amongst cheese producers tovards creation of tourism activity integration should be supported by the accesable support sistems and easily accessable in the online surounding.

Tendencies in the tourism sector are favorable to the new service creation as well as culinary tourism development. Furthermore increase in the tourist activity within EU as well as demand for the emotionaly and educationaly replete experiences provided by the tourism sector encourages the diversification of the supply of tourism products and services by the development of innovative products and services in rural and deprived areas with high-quality cheese indications.

Better valorisation/awareness and market uptake of the European natural, cultural and industrial heritage and gastronomy for local communities and visitors are incompletely reclaimed sector which must be uptaken and developed by the joint strategy sequentially implemented by the cheese producers.

Althought cheese production increases it still faces many chalanges amongst small and medium size producers which are looking for the new approaches of the business development. TastyCheeseTOUR team sees opportunity through the supporting activities for the economic regeneration and jobs creation. Capacity building for SMEs, local authorities and other stakeholders, fostering public-private partnerships and transnational cooperation of all actors are foreseen during the trainings and in the process of the blended interary creation.

Important aspect of the longterm success for the tourism service integration within cheese production activity is the inclusion of all the interested parties for the optimal developed platform accordance to the users needs for the promotion of the newly created touristic products and routes based in “experienced-based” tourism activities related to cheese in rural and deprived areas.

Capacity building and development of the tools for SMEs and other public authorities/chamber of commerce related to tourism and cheese to get the tourism benefits is the key activity for the better valorisation / awareness and market uptake of high-quality cheese, especially those with

PDO, TSG and PGI including their integration in short channel distribution strategies for the tourism industry.

Cheese production related tourism activities has a high added value as it preserves and ensures support for the unique cultural/industrial characteristics in the most rural regions related to agriculture and traditional way of goods (in this case cheese) production and in such way creates alternative touristic product and promotes sustainable tourism for the socio-economic development and enhancement of a territories.

Creation of new services within rural regions gives a direct benefits to the socioeconomic environment due to the job creation related to the cheese and tourism industries in the areas. Furthermore it supports entrepreneurship in the agritourism field.

TastyCheeseTOUR international cooperation and best practices exchange among partners with different background in agritourism creates opportunities for the developed product improvement and adaption for the optimal benefit for the achievement of the project objectives through fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs) in rural and deprived areas.

Shown analyses and study of the current situation and possible synergies between tourism and the cheese industry in EU and regions will be used setting out the Action plan with the aim to use common methodology to tackle the problems of EU rural and deprived regions that count with high-quality cheese thanks to the tourism.