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FOODGaP Project Kicks Off: Building Inclusive Food Policies Across the Mediterranean

The **European Public Law Organization (EPLO)**, through its **Institute for Sustainable Development**, will organize the official **kick-off meeting of the [FOODGaP](#) Project** on 29–30 September in Athens, in its capacity as a project partner.

The event marks the start of an ambitious initiative under the **Interreg NEXT MED Programme**, aiming to strengthen food governance across the Mediterranean.

FOODGaP brings together a diverse partnership including the EPLO (Greece), City of Tyre (Lebanon), Houmt Souk (Tunisia), the Metropolitan City of Rome (Italy) and the Metropolitan City of Mersin (Türkiye), coordinated CIHEAM Bari.

With a total budget of **€1,320,573.41** — of which about **€1.2 million is co-financed by the European Union** — the project is set to address critical challenges in food governance across the Mediterranean.

FOODGaP supports local authorities and stakeholders in developing **participatory and coordinated food policies** at both local and cross-border level. The project focuses on two key dimensions:

- **Institutional Capacity** – strengthening the ability of local authorities and public officers to manage food policy, integrate it across municipal departments, and link it with national decision-making frameworks.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue** – promoting collaboration between civil society, businesses, researchers, and public institutions to co-design services and policies that respond to local needs, and testing these solutions through pilot actions.

By bridging governance gaps, the project seeks to **enable municipalities and communities to jointly develop inclusive, equitable, and locally tailored food policies**. Innovative approaches to food access and the coordination of local policies will be tested and showcased through the **Mediterranean Food Policy Coalition**, raising visibility and promoting greater engagement at higher policy levels.

The launch of FOODGaP represents a significant step toward creating **resilient, participatory, and sustainable food systems** in the Mediterranean, placing **local communities at the center of policy innovation**.