

## CEEAG - Centre of Excellence for European Agri-Food Chain

Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence project  
No. 611446-EPP-1-2019-1-SK-EPPJMO-CoE

### Project background

The agri - food sector is one of the largest and the most supported economic sectors in the EU. It is a key sector for sustainable economic development and food safety and security. Despite of the huge support, agricultural sectors in Member States are facing serious problems; in Slovakia it is especially a low level of domestic agricultural production, low quality of food products, high unemployment rate especially among young people, ageing of the population and the abandonment of rural areas.



Source: <https://www.pexels.com>

The project starts from the important and irreplaceable role of agriculture and food industry in national economies of (not only) Member States, ensuring their food security under conditions given by the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The topic of the CAP is supplemented with the relatively new concept of the short food supply chains, which is considered to be an appropriate tool for achieving objectives defined by the Slovak Government within the Rural Development Programme SR 2014 – 2020.

### Project aim

The aim of the project is to strengthen a multidisciplinary approach in the teaching process of the project target group - PhD. students and provide them professional knowledge and information in the focus areas of the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU, risk factors in the food chain, land, environment and food legislation and marketing of agricultural products, with the goal to create the “from farm to fork” experts.

Source: <https://www.pexels.com>



## Planned project activities

**Teaching** activities will focus on creation of the four new interactive training courses for the PhD students; the courses will be placed in the e – learning platform and provided to students in the second and third year of the project. The following new courses will be created:

- the course **Challenges and Impacts of the EU Agricultural Policy** provides the information on system, elements, structure and legislation of agriculture and agricultural institutes in the EU and development of Slovak agriculture in conditions of EU mainly for students of faculties not providing directly the EU studies. Details of the short food supply chains will be explained, too.
- the course **Risk Factors of Food Chain** provides a complex knowledge and expert information in terms of factors affecting human and animal health in Europe in the context of the EU territory, detection risk factors related to food and feed for decreasing the food borne risks, measures helping to sustain food and feed quality, stimuli for improving the situation at local/regional/national or multinational level and control tools to protect human and animal health in Slovakia and the EU.
- the course **Agri-Environmental and Food Legislation of the EU** reacts to the legal issues of EU agri-environmental policy by underlying the importance of integration of environmental considerations into Common Agricultural Policy rules in order ensure sustainable agriculture and environment.
- the course **EU Agrarian Marketing** provides deeper information about marketing with regard the agrarian market specifications. It informs about role, importance and specifications of agrarian marketing on the Slovak and European markets.

**Research** activities will focus on the two basic dimensions – European dimension of short food supply chains and risk factors affecting animal and human health. The methodology of research in terms of the two dimensions will generally consist of the following steps:

- analysis of national and the EU legal documents;
- collection and ex post evaluation of the data, comparison with the other EU countries, resources: EUROSTAT, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the SR, Agricultural Paying Agency, FADN, EFSA, State Veterinary and Food Administration of the Slovak Republic etc;
- creation of the questionnaires and its distribution to respondents;
- processing collected data, comparison with the situation in other EU countries, proposal of possible changes and improvements.

Methods of research to be used: method of analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, scientific abstraction, methods of monitoring, evaluation of measured indicators.

A variety of **events** – study visits, international conferences, roundtables and workshops are planned to support the project implementation and dissemination of its outputs:

- a study visit to the EC DG Agriculture and Rural Development in Brussels, Belgium is planned to help the members of the Centre of Excellence to clarify the future aspects of the EU Common Agricultural Policy;
- roundtable debates are dedicated to teachers, researchers and doctoral students to broaden their knowledge on specific EU and national legal documents defining rules and conditions for direct payments and to be provided with the complex information on the concept of the short food supply chains;
- a workshop is dedicated to teachers, researchers, bachelor, master and doctoral students and to the general public to get the complex information on mutual interactions between the EU Common Agricultural Policy, environmental policy, food policy, cohesion policy, land policy and rural development policy and on the complementarity of these policies, emphasizing their implementation in agricultural practice;
- the final conference will summarise the results of the project implementation; the project outputs will be presented to teachers, researchers, and students at all cycles. The conference will be supported by experts from other EU universities, expecting the participation of representatives of public authorities and farmers;
- members of the Centre of Excellence will participate at three international scientific conferences organised in other EU countries to disseminate and support the project and its results.

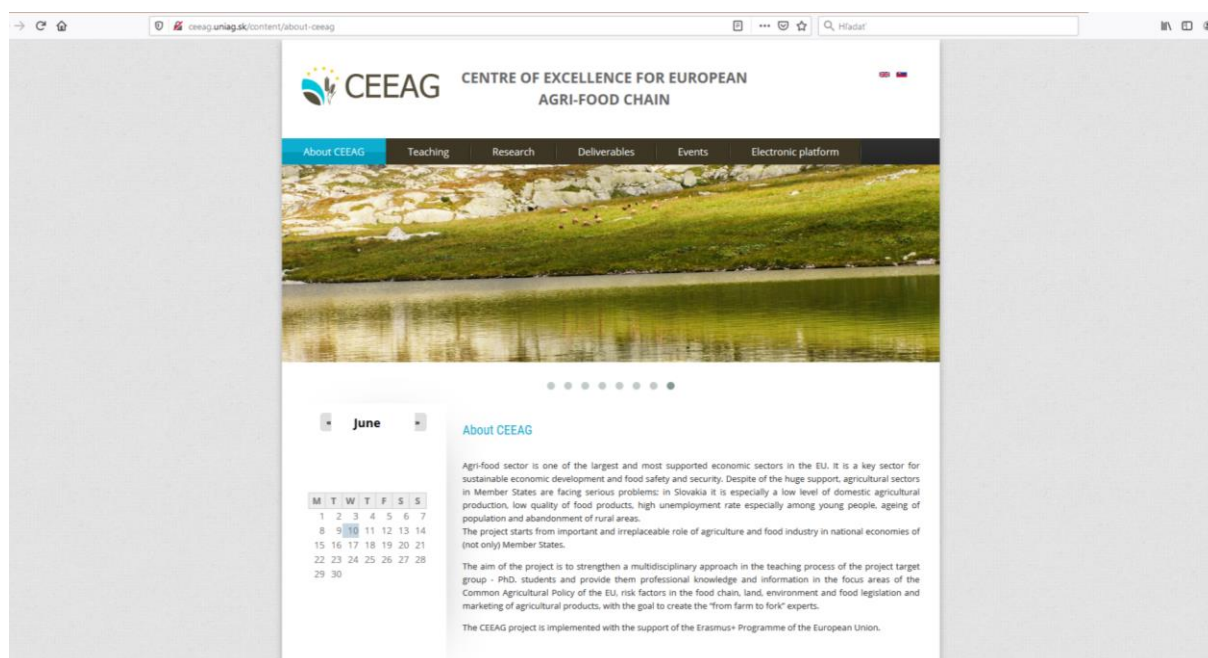


Figure 1: Website of the project

## Expected deliverables

- **Website of the project** (Figure 1) provides the basic information about project activities (especially news and coming events) and the information for about the teaching activities, informs about news in terms of project focus areas and disseminates about research activities of the Centre of Excellence. The website is the place with an access to the e – learning platform;
- **International conference proceedings** will gather selected scientific papers from the final international conference. Proceedings will contain papers with expert information on current issues in terms of the CAP, further EU policies, the concept of short food supply chains and risk factors in food chains, food policy and the food safety and marketing of agricultural products. Information will be updated for the period post-2020;
- **Newsletter** will inform project target group and wide public about current development of the Centre of Excellence. One newsletter will be issued every academic year;
- **E – learning platform** is an electronic platform for placing an interactive e – learning course. Creation of the e – learning platform is necessary for target groups to have a simple access to information within the e – learning programme (Figure 2).

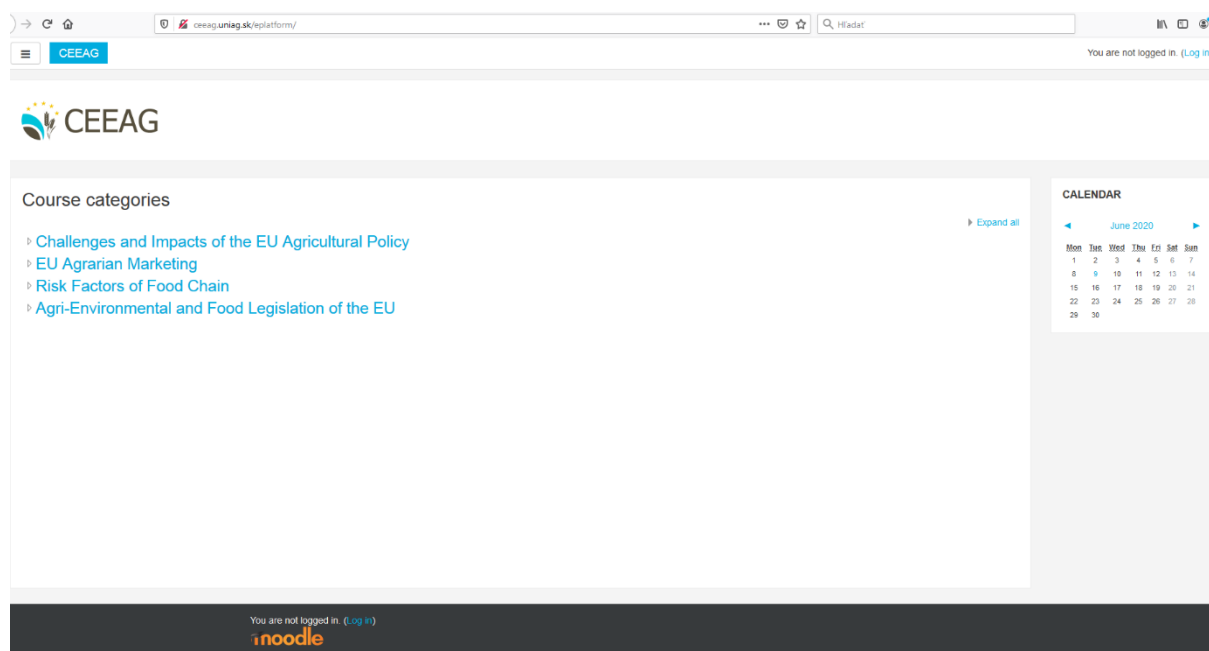


Figure 2: E – learning platform



## Project dissemination and the social networks

**Project dissemination** has been carried out through the project web page and the Facebook page.



The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of CEEAG (@CEEAGproject). The profile picture and cover photo both feature the CEEAG logo, which consists of a stylized blue and green leaf with three yellow stars above it. The page name is 'CEEAG' and the handle is '@CEEAGproject'. The 'Informácie' (About) section is visible, showing the category 'Web v oblasti vzdelávania', the name 'CEEAG', and the user handle '@CEEAGproject'. It also lists contact information: phone number 037/641 50 81, website m.me/CEEAGproject, email ceeag@uniag.sk, and website http://ceeag.uniag.sk/. The 'Príbeh' (Bio) section contains the text: 'Centre of Excellence for European Agri-Food Chain - ... Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence project "Centre of Excellence for European Agri-Food Chain" No. 611446-EPP-1-2019-1-SK-EPPJMO-CoE. The aim of the project is to strengthen a multidisciplinary approach in the teaching process of the project target group - PhD. students and provide them professional knowledge and information in the focus a...'. There is a 'Zobrazíť viac' (Show more) link below the bio.

## News in the Slovak sector of agriculture and in the EU

### **More funds for Slovak agriculture**

The objective of the new management of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic is more money for the agricultural sector for higher food self-sufficiency in Slovakia. The programme of the new Common Agricultural Policy for Slovakia will be adapted to this objective. For these funds, the higher food self-sufficiency, increase of the share of the agricultural sector in Slovak GDP and reduce of the huge balance of foreign trade in agricultural and food products are expected.

Additionally, there will be no transfer of financial resources between the I. and II. pillar of the CAP. Instead, the ministry management decided to transfer 45 million euros under II. pillar of the RDP SR for new effective measures. More info at: <https://www.mpsr.sk/aktualne/viac-penazi-agrosektoru-za-vysiu-sebestacnost-slovenska/15525/>

### **CAP after 2020**

The European Council introduced at its web page legislative proposals and strategic plans of the future CAP. Briefly, a fairer distribution of payments and higher ambition on environmental and climate action are the most important points in the EU strategy for the future CAP.

More info at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/cap-future-2020/>

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