



Innovation, circular economy and agricultural waste management: TANGO-Circular, first meeting in Corigliano d'Otranto. Minerva: "It starts from Salento, with participation and innovation."

The first meeting of the cycle of participatory meetings of Tango-Circular, a project funded by the Erasmus+ program with the aim of offering specific training to agricultural operators and other stakeholders, on the subject of valorization of what is considered agricultural "waste," aiming at the improvement of economic revenues and environmental sustainability of productions, was held this afternoon (June 28, ed.).

Five European countries are involved in the project, 15 institutional partners, including the **Union of Apulian Provinces**, led by President **Stefano Minerva**.

Opening the meeting, moderated by Il Nuovo Quotidiano di Puglia journalist Giuseppe Martella, was the mayor of Corigliano d'Otranto, **Dina Manti**, who thanked the president and the entire Union of Provinces for "the work that continues to be done in the territory. Occasions like today's allow us to build virtuous networks and spread the culture of participation in choices. By doing so, citizens, associations, businesses and local governments can truly take responsibility for change."

After all, it was President Minerva himself who had pointed out that "despite the fact that the regulatory framework of reference has seen in recent years a significant reduction in the resources and powers assigned to the provinces, we do not stop offering our contribution in terms of coordination and territorial governance."

Tango-circular, thanks to the work of the Directorate General headed by Dr. **Roberto Serra**, is in fact yet another example of how Puglia's provinces know how to meet the challenge of the future, rolling up their sleeves and working side by side with citizens, entities, institutions, businesses and trade associations."

During the meeting, attended by local governments, experts, trade associations and citizens, it was Director General Serra himself who clarified why UPI Puglia strongly wanted to be part of a project that brings together five states and fifteen institutional project partners: "The Union of Apulian Provinces, keeping faith with its being an association of the Entities of Wide Area, continues to demonstrate its territorial organization and governance capabilities. In this particular case, UPI championed a model of dissemination of the project results of TANGO-Circular that was not solely based on frontal systems, but founded on the concept of participation and direct involvement of stakeholders."

In fact, today's will be followed by other appointments along the Apulian territory, making sure that the project's innovation is understood and practiced, then, consequently also to the training cycles planned in collaboration with trade associations."

In detail, as explained by university professor and project coordinator **Pietro Picuno**, **"TANGO-Circular was born from the realization that, if properly managed and included in a proper value chain, agricultural waste, organic and otherwise, can prove to be a new resource to be exploited as part of a circular economy approach, especially in rural areas.**

However, although the farmer is responsible for end-of-life management of agricultural by-products and wastes, he or she cannot do it alone. Therefore, **farmers, as well as other stakeholders involved in the related value chain, deserve specific training, which currently does not exist throughout Europe."**

Hence the co-financing of project activities by the European Union.

"The purpose of Tango-Circular is thus **to contribute to the development of regional ecosystems through a work-based learning model**, thanks to a 'Quadruple Helix' approach involving public institutions (ministries, regions, local governments, and agencies), vocational training institutions, private stakeholders (farmers' associations, collectors/recycling companies/associations), and civil society (NGOs, nonprofit association)," explained Picuno.