

DIMITRIS MANIATAKIS

Chairman of the Maniatakeion Foundation, Greece



Dimitris Maniatakis was born in Koroni, Messinia. He is a businessman, economist, holds an honorary degree from Kingston University and has been honored by the Athens University of Economics and Business for his contribution to the academic community and to market research.

He is best known as the founder and CEO of ICAP until 2005, the largest management consulting and business information services firm in Greece, which provides credit risk services, management consulting services, market research and executive search and selection services.

He was CEO of the Public Power Corporation of Greece during 2005-2006, after which he resigned. During his tenure at the PPC a number of significant reforms were introduced and implemented concerning its reconstruction, modification and internationalization.

He is Chairman of the Maniatakeion Foundation, which he founded in 1995 together with his wife Eleni Tagonidi Maniataki, a literary writer. The Maniatakeion Foundations is a private, nonprofit, public service institution. Its main purpose is to identify, promote and internationalize the comparative advantages of Koroni and the wider region of Messinia, through three pillars of actions: cultural, economic development and social.

He was elected external member in the Administrative Council of the Technological Educational Institute of Peloponnese on March 2012 (under the Presidential Decree No. 160 for the organization and the operations of the Universities).

He was elected General Secretary of the Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development on January 2012, wherein he promotes Greek exports and the development of investment opportunities in African countries.

He was elected member of the Board of Directors in the “Fund Relief of the Poor Students from Messenia of the Holy Metropolis of Messenia” on February 2009. Its main purpose is to grant scholarships to poor students of Higher Education. The Maniatakeion Foundation supports financially the abovementioned Fund.

He has been a member of the Board of Directors of several corporations and institutions in Greece and abroad and his name is listed in the International Who Is Who Of Professionals.

He is also the author of several articles in business and economic affairs in Greece and abroad. His recent article refers to the restructuring of the Public Sector through processes, using high technology in combination with the introduction of fully assessment and evaluation systems for human resources.

The UNESCO Mediterranean Diet adventure. An Insight Perspective by the Maniatakeion Foundation as a Founding Member and Technical Advisor of the Greek Emblematic Community

The Mediterranean diet has long been celebrated as the gold standard of healthy diets for its highly tasteful nature and favorable impact on the prevention of chronic diseases, promotion of greater longevity and quality of life. However, it is not an unequivocal phenomenon, since it involves cultural elements, renewed alongside with the evolution of the groups of people who consume food. It also includes religious, philosophical, symbolic and in general, cultural perceptions: gatherings on social, religious and ceremonial events. Moreover, it is characterized by its links to the various food cultures of the different countries of the Mediterranean area.

In 2008, four countries namely Greece, Italy, Morocco and Spain undertook the initiative to highlight the cultural value of the Mediterranean Diet and consequently, submitted a request to be included in UNESCO's world treasures. The 5th Session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee assessed the request and on November 16, 2010, decided to include the Mediterranean Diet in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and declared Koroni (on behalf of Greece), Cilento (on behalf of Italy), Chefchaouen (on behalf of Morocco) and Soria (on behalf of Spain) as Emblematic Communities. It is important to underline the fact that Greece for the first time is listed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The Maniatakeion Foundation became involved in this matter of national importance by the end of 2009, when the Hellenic Ministry of Culture & Tourism asked from the local bodies of Koroni (Greece) letters of support for the transnational nomination of the Mediterranean Diet in order for it to be registered in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO. Since 2011 the Maniatakeion Foundation is assigned as the technical advisor of the Municipality of Pylos-Nestoras, taking initiatives as well as actions, in order to promote UNESCO's decision. It collaborates with the Network of the Emblematic Communities of the Mediterranean Diet in order to safeguard and promote the cultural dimension of the Mediterranean Diet. It also participates in European Consortiums aiming to promote the cultural and economic development dimensions of the above mentioned cultural asset.

Conclusion

Koroni's cultural heritage is becoming a tool for the economic development of the region as well as a reference point for Cultural Europe. The inscription increased the visibility of intangible cultural heritage and its components. Moreover, it promoted the community's cultural identity and intercultural dialogue as well as respect for biodiversity. It highlighted direct and indirect social and economic impacts of cultural heritage in terms of realizing growth, competitiveness, jobs creation, social inclusion and cohesion, sustainable development and innovation.

The challenge nowadays is to highlight the element in such terms and conditions, so as to form a new relation between society and nature; and since cultural heritage is constantly recreated, it is part of the human creative force to exceed its era and to create bridges for the future.



Wine Making