



Meeting of the Working Group of Agro-economists of the Western Balkans

“National policy instruments and EU Approximation process: Effects on farm holdings in the Western Balkan countries”

**Joint Research Centre of the European Commission – JRC
Seville, Spain**



20 June 2017

Introduction

As agreed at the Third Interim Meeting held in Skopje on 2-3 February 2017, instead of final technical meeting, meeting for young researchers was organized at the JRC premises in Seville with the purpose to present their research on farm productivity in the Western Balkan countries. The presentations were given by young researchers representing the experts' teams from Serbia and Macedonia, as well as the international experts' team. The full list of participants can be found in Annex 1, and the agenda of the meeting in Annex 2.

Presentations

Ms. Maja Kozar, from the University of Ljubljana, as a representative of the international experts' team, gave an overview of the efforts within the EUEWB project related to the farm productivity in the Western Balkan countries, stressing the motivation for the farm productivity analysis. According to the international experts' team the research was a useful analytical exercise because it used farm-level data, provided insights into the selected topics, contributed towards strengthening analytical capacity in WB countries, improved the regional and international cooperation. Therefore, it is recommended to further develop and upgrade the regional agricultural policy analytical work in the Western Balkans, using the established infrastructure, and unify methodology to enable cross-country comparability. The presentation is given in Annex 3.

Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska from the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, University St. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Macedonia, presented the research paper: "Farm Productivity in the Western Balkan Countries: Technical efficiency analysis of Macedonian vegetable farms".

Ms. Ruzica Papic from the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Belgrade in Serbia, presented the research paper: "Application of Two-Stage DEA Approach to the Serbian FADN Database".

Discussion and conclusions

The feedback from the JRC representatives was positive in terms of the quality of the conducted research. Recommendations for improvements of the research methodology were given. Some examples include:

- It is important to distinguish between efficiency analysis and productivity analysis;
- For very big populations use bootstrapping as a statistical method;
- Stochastic Frontier Analysis could also be used instead of DEA;
- Free software package (FEAR) could be used for frontier efficiency analysis;
- Malmquist Productivity index can be used to measure productivity change.