

Minutes of the joint kick - off meeting

for the projects:

Agricultural Policy Developments and EU Approximation Process in the Western Balkans Countries (APDAP-WB)

Land Market Development and Small Farms' Access to Land in the Pre-accession Countries (LMSF-AC)

14 – 15 December 2017

Skopje, Macedonia

The joint kick-off meeting for the projects APDAP-WB and LMSF-AC was organized in Skopje, on 14-15 December 2017. It gathered total of 17 participants, including national experts from Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo*, Serbia, Montenegro and Republic of Srpska; international experts from Slovenia; representative (SWG Assembly delegate) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of Macedonia; representative of the EC - DG AGRI; as well as representatives of the SWG. Due to the bad weather conditions, national experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina were prevented from attending the meeting. For those reasons, as well as due to unexpected job-related obligations, ministry representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro did not participate in the meeting, although had previously registered. The full list of participants can be found in **Annex 1**.

The aim of the meeting was to refine the scope of the work, agree on the research questions, and discuss the overall approach and workplan. The program of the meeting is given in **Annex 2**.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

14 December 2017

1. Welcome address, background and rationale

Mr. Boban Ilic, on behalf of SWG, and Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis, on behalf of DG AGRI, gave welcoming addresses to the participants, as well as the background and the rationale of the projects from both perspectives: EC on one side, and SWG and the WB region on the other side. These projects represent a continuation of the cooperation between EC through JRC and SWG, which so far has resulted in two previous studies “Analysis of agricultural and rural development policies in Western Balkan countries” and “National policy instruments and EU approximation process: effects on farm holdings in the Western Balkan countries”. Main achievements of those studies are:

- Up-date on the agricultural policy developments in the WB
- Analysis of the availability and quality of FADN data in the WB countries
- Providing the comprehensive data set about the agricultural policy budgetary transfers in the WB as a tool for monitoring the developments and benchmarking
- Providing the statistical data set on agriculture in WB
- Elaborating policy recommendation for the ministries including in SWG
- Strengthening the agricultural policy network and cooperation in the WB including agricultural economists and ministerial representatives
- Creation and up-dates of the Agricultural Policy Plus (APP) web platform.

The full presentation provided by Mr. Ilic is given in **Annex 3**.

2. Presentation of the project “Agricultural policy developments and EU approximation process” APDAP-WB

Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, on behalf of SWG, presented the project APDAP-WB, including research questions, overall approach and workplan.

Overall objective of the project is to collect information on agricultural policy developments in the Western Balkan (WB) countries and to conduct comparative cross-country analysis of the agricultural policies and their state of harmonisation with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Specific objectives are to:

- Collect information on most recent developments of agricultural policy in the WB countries;
- Provide a comparative cross-country analysis of the agricultural policy instruments and support levels for producers and processors;
- Provide an analysis on the state of harmonization of agriculture and rural development policies of the WB countries with the CAP

In order to achieve the objectives, the following tasks need to be completed:

Task 1: Collect information on agricultural policy developments in the WB countries

Task 2: Provide country case studies on agricultural policy developments in the WB countries/territories

Task 3: Provide a comparative cross-country analysis of the agricultural policy developments in the WB countries.

The research team is comprised of the following experts:

- International Experts Team (IET):
 - University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty, represented by Mr. Emil Erjavec, PhD
 - Ms. Tina Volk, PhD
 - Mr. Miroslav Rednak, PhD
- National Academic Experts (NE):
 - Albania – Mr. Edvin Zhlima, PhD
 - BiH – Mr. Sabahudin Bajramovic, PhD
 - Republic of Srpska – Mr. Zeljko Vasko, PhD
 - Kosovo* - Ms. Mihone Kerolli – Mustafa, PhD
 - Macedonia – Mr. Dragi Dimitrovski, PhD
 - Montenegro – Mr. Mirsad Spahic
 - Serbia – Ms. Natalija Bogdanov, PhD

The presentation of the proposed workplan was oriented towards finding possibilities for joint interim and final meetings for both, APDAP-WB and LMSF-AC, as well as realistic timelines for achieving the given tasks, within the framework agreed upon with JRC, and making sure the deliverables are provided on time. This triggered discussion among participants around the availability of the data for 2017, and the period that needs to be covered. Namely, in several cases, such as Serbia and Macedonia, data for 2017 will not be available before April. Therefore, the solution was to organize the interim meeting in the first half of May, enabling the first versions of the country reports to be presented at the interim meeting (full presentation can be found in **Annex 4**). The final workplan is the following (IET = International Expert Team; NE = National Experts):

Task	Who	Activity	Deadline
	SWG, IET, NE	Kick-off meeting (scope of work, research questions, workplan, methodology)	14-15 Dec'17
	SWG	Submit Minutes of the kick-off meeting	28 Dec'17
1	IET	APM, total transfers to producers (TTP) and country report templates	15 Jan'17
1	NE	County paper 1, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the policy strategic documents on the future development of national policies in the WB countries Overview of the existing policy framework to ensure compliance with EU standards in primary production and processing 	8 Mar'18
1	NE	Collect agricultural policy data in the WB countries from relevant national policy documents and legislation (APM for all, plus TTP for BiH)	20 Apr'18
	IET	Contribution to first draft interim report (results of Task 1, outline for Task 2 and 3)	25 Apr'18
	SWG	Submit first draft Interim Report (APM database + TTP database for BiH + Country paper 1) to JRC	27 Apr'18
	NE, IET, SWG	Interim meeting (discuss interim report, improve Task 1, plan Task 2 and 3)	11 May'18
	SWG	Submit Minutes of the Interim Meeting	25 May'18
	NE	Provide improved Task 1 (APM database, TTP database, country paper 1) per the IET feedback	25 May'18
2	NE	Country paper 2, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country specific analysis of agricultural policy developments and the EU accession process for all WB countries based on policy information collected in Task 1 Identified major changes in policy instruments adopted in last years in the WB countries Implications of adopted agricultural policies for the farming sector 	25 May'18
	IET	Provide input to the second draft interim report	3 June'18
	SWG	Submit second draft Interim Report (Final APM database + final TSA database + final country paper 1)	6 Jun'18

3	IET	First draft final report, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-country comparison of agricultural policies in the WB countries based on the policy information collected in Task 1 and country specific analysis in Task 2 • Evaluation of the EU approximation process of WB countries • Identification of the main successes and failures of agricultural policies 	7 Jul'18
1, 2, 3	SWG	First draft Final report to JRC	5 Aug'18
1, 2, 3	NE, IET, SWG	Final meeting (discuss Task 1, 2, 3)	20 Aug'18
1, 2, 3	NE, IET, SWG	Final report and Databases	15 Sep'18

3. Elaboration on methodology for collection and analysis of information for APM and TTP databases (APDAP-WB)

Ms. Tinca Volk, Phd and Mr. Miroslav Rednak, PhD, presented the proposed changes to the Agricultural Policy Measures Classification (APMC) scheme. The spreadsheet showing the draft new version of the APMC, and the modifications from the previous version is shown in **Annex 5**. The final version of the APMC will be shared with all experts by mid-January.

Mr. Emil Erjavec, PhD, from the University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty, presented the methodology for collection and analysis of the Total Transfers to Producers (TTP), as a tool for measurement of agricultural support, developed by the Slovenian AgEcon research group, accepted in the EU horizon project and published in a research paper. This tool will be used in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to the APM tool. PSE/CSE method is a trade mark of OECD, and thus is not used by other researchers. The full presentation can be found in **Annex 6**.

4. The CAP scene setting: The future of food and farming

Mr. Zigo Rutkovskis, Program Manager EU Policies, EC DG AGRI, presented the Communication on the future of food and farming from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the Committee of the Regions. The communication presents the major achievements of the CAP reform path confirmed by analysis and wide public consultation, but also identifies shortcomings that need to be addressed. The objectives of the Communications are to:

- Strengthen the environmental and climate ambition
- Better target support

- Rely more of knowledge and innovation
- Rebalance the responsibilities between EU, MS and the farmers

The full presentation given by Mr. Rutkovskis is given in **Annex 7**.

15 December 2017

1. Presentation of the project “Land market development and small farmers’ access to land” LMSF-AC

Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, on behalf of SWG, presented the project LMSF-AC, including research questions, overall approach and workplan.

Overall objective of the project is To strengthen the understanding of the functioning of land markets in the WBs and small farm households’ access to land.

Specific objectives are to:

- Collect information and data about rental and sale markets in the WB countries;
- Collect information about formal rental and sale market regulations in WB countries;
- Conduct focused group discussion with relevant stakeholders to identify factors affecting the functioning of land market (including informal norms) with special focus on small farm households’ access to land;
- Analyse the implications of formal regulations and informal norms on small farm households’ access to land.

In order to achieve the objectives, the following tasks need to be completed:

- **Task 1:** Collect information about rental and sale land markets in the WB countries/territories
- **Task 2:** Collect information about the land market policy and regulations in the WB countries/territories
- **Task 3:** Conduct focused group discussion with relevant stakeholders to identify factors affecting the functioning of land markets and small farms’ access to land in the WB countries/territories
- **Task 4:** Provide a comparative cross-country analysis of the land markets and small farms’ access to land in the WB countries/territories

The research team is comprised of the following experts:

- International Expert/Senior Researcher (SR) – Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, represented by Ms. Maja Kozar, PhD

- National Academic Experts (NE):
 - Albania – Mr. Edvin Zhlima, PhD
 - BiH – Ms. Dragana Ognjenovic, PhD
 - Kosovo* - Ms. Mihone Kerolli – Mustafa, PhD
 - Macedonia – Mr. Dragan Gjosevski, PhD
 - Montenegro – Mr. Mirsad Spahic
 - Republic of Srpska – Mr. Zeljko Vasko, PhD
 - Serbia – Agroecconomic Institute Belgrade

The full presentation of the LMSF-AC project is given in **Annex 8**.

Regarding the workplan, it was agreed that the interim and the final meeting are organized jointly with the APDAP-WB project. That would enable implementing more of the activities by the time of the interim meeting and presenting the country reports at the interim meeting. The final workplan is the following (SR = Senior Researcher; NE = National Experts):

Task	Who	Activity	Deadline
	SWG, SR, NE	Organization of kick-off meeting (scope of work, research questions, workplan, methodology)	14-15 Dec'17
1, 2	SR	Final version of the questionnaire template	22 Dec'17
	SWG	Submit Minutes of the kick-off meeting	28 Dec'17
1, 2	NE	Completed questionnaires including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected information about rental and sale market developments in the WB countries/territories • Collected information about rental and sale/ownership market regulations • Identified implications of land market regulations for small farm households 	31 Jan'18
3		Methodology (templates and guidelines) for focused group discussion with relevant stakeholders to identify factors affecting the functioning of land markets and small farms' access to land in the WB countries	31 Jan'18
1, 2	SR	Feedback on the completed questionnaires per country	15 Feb'18
	NE	Provide improved completed questionnaires (per the SR feedback)	28 Feb'18
	SR	Input to the first draft interim report to SWG (results of Task 1 and 2, outline for Task 3 and 4), including templates for the country reports	9 Mar'18
	SWG	Submit first draft Interim Report (Database) to JRC	16 Mar'18

3	NE	Conduct focused group discussion with farmers, farmers' associations and other relevant stakeholders in order to identify factors affecting the functioning of land markets	March'18
1, 2, 3	NE	Submit country reports including summary of findings from the questionnaires and focus groups (based on the country report template provided by the SR)	31 Mar'18
	SR	Provide input to the second draft interim report	18 April'18
	SWG	Submit second draft Interim Report (Database)	25 April'18
1, 2, 3, 4	NE, SR, SWG	Interim meeting (discuss interim report, improve Task 1, 2 and 3, plan Task 4)	11 May'18
	SWG	Submit Minutes of the Interim Meeting	25 May'18
	SR	First draft Final Report (results of Task 1, 2, 3, 4), including development of a comparative cross-country analysis of the land markets and small farms' access to land in the WB countries	7 Jul'18
1, 2, 3, 4	SWG	First draft Final report to JRC	15 Jul'18
1, 2, 3, 4	NE, SR, SWG	Final meeting (discuss Task 1, 2, 3, 4)	20 Aug'18
1, 2, 3, 4	NE, SR, SWG	Final report and Databases	27 Aug'18

2. Elaboration on methodology for collection and analysis of information (LMSF-AC)

Ms. Maja Kožar, PhD, representative from the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia, presented the methodology for collection and analysis of information needed within the project LMSF-AC. Draft questionnaire was presented that should be used in completing Task 1 and Task 2 of the project. The final version of the questionnaire will be distributed to all experts by 22 December 2017. The presentation by Dr. Kožar is given in **Annex 9**.

List of annexes:

Annex 1 – List of participants

Annex 2 – Program of the kick-off meeting

Annex 3 – Background and rationale

Annex 4 – APDAP-WB project presentation

Annex 5 – Draft Agricultural Policy Measures Scheme

Annex 6 – TTP Methodology

Annex 7 – EC Communication Future of Food and Farming

Annex 8 – LMSF-AC Project presentation

Annex 9 – LMSF-AC methodology