



13th Annual Meeting of the
Ministries of Agriculture from SEE

11th – 13th November, Pristina, Kosovo*

13th Annual Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture in South Eastern Europe (SEE), 12th November, Pristina, Kosovo*





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- **2 (two) Ministers** of Agriculture from South Eastern Europe (SEE) and the **8 (eight) Heads of Delegations** and representatives from international organizations gathered on 12th of November 2019 in Pristina at the 13th Annual Working Meeting
- **13th Annual Working Meeting** was organized under the joint auspices of the **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development of Kosovo*** and the **Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-Eastern Europe.**
- Grounded on the **initiative of founding a regional** platform and convening an Annual Ministerial Meeting, the representing delegations adopted a set competitiveness and development objectives to be achieved in line with the regional economic integration benchmarks of the European Union .





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The topics discussed during the Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture from SEE:

- EU approximation of the candidate and potential candidate countries from SEE in agriculture and rural development;
- Regional Cooperation and way forward in the region;
- Results and the Agenda from the Agricultural Policy Forum 2019

Key note speakers:

Mr. Mario Milouchev, Director - Director "Rural Development I and Pre-accession assistance", Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development – “Update on the CAP and IPARD”



Mr. Gery Boyle, Director of Teagasc, Teagasc, Agriculture and Food Development Authority – "The critical role of research, education and advice in driving agricultural development - lessons from Ireland"



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The Annual Meeting of the Ministries of Agriculture from SEE reconfirmed the importance of regional cooperation and rural development through the SWG as a tool for economic growth, sustainability, and fighting rural depopulation and poverty in South Eastern Europe, most importantly, impact regional divides essential for addressing development policies taking into consideration different development paths.



The Conclusions of the Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture and Heads of Delegations of South Eastern Europe summaries the discussions to future regional rural development in the face of changing international dynamisms that are reshaping our economies, environment and social conditions.



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Conclusions/Recommendations:

- The Ministers and Heads of Delegations discussed priority issues of a joint matter for agriculture and rural development in the SEE region.
- Reaffirm their dedication towards EU membership and commitment to the EU enlargement project, which will allow SEE countries to seize their stability, democracy and economic permanence over the region.
- Appel for the need of closer cooperation with European Commission and new dynamism with responsible institutions for regional cooperation, agriculture and rural development.
- Remain devoted to the restructuring and setting up national institutions for proper programming, implementation and monitoring of the IPA tool for agriculture and rural development (IPARD II).
- We are keen on the developmental steps for IPARD III and anticipative to provide our input on indispensable changes and improvements, making the tool adoptive to the actual needs of the SEE region.
- Recommend inclusion of all potential and candidate countries from SEE region for the application of the IPARD programme.

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Conclusions/Recommendations:

- Recognized the Geographical Indications (PDO and PGI) and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed (TSG) - Quality policy as a useful tool for rural development that includes economic, social and environmental dimensions.
- Strongly recommended the involvement of rural communities and farmers into the planning and implementation of policies, considering territorial approach, LEADER/ Community-led Local Development (CLLD) and Area-Based Development Approach (ABDA).
- Identify the need for improvement of the competitiveness of the wine sector in the Western Balkan region.
- Recommend that research, advisory services and education should achieve a higher position amongst governmental priorities.
- Welcome the Agricultural Policy Forum (APF) endorsements and the Ohrid Agenda 2019, held on 9th -10th October 2019 in Ohrid, North Macedonia under the theme: “Contribution to Diversification of Economic Activities for Sustainable Rural Development”.
- The Ministers congratulate the fortitude of SWG regional body in upholding regional ownership and its efforts of introducing new paradigms for cooperation towards joint EU enlargement path.

