



Research, innovation and technology transfer in the agro-food sector in the Western Balkan countries – the case of Kosovo*

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**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence*

SWOT analyses of the AKIS

Strengths:

- A good tradition of research in universities in agriculture;
- There is some good infrastructure for research and innovation in this sector (Institute of Agriculture, Kosovo* Food and Veterinary Agency, university research, etc);
- There are several distinguished researchers with great potential in the sector;
- Agriculture research is one of the key research priorities in Kosovo*, requiring also financial attention on that;
- Great potential for initiation of cultivation of crops and livestock in non-traditional ways;

Weaknesses:

- Lack of knowledge management and utilization of agricultural research and development;
- Lack of research and innovation funds;
- Lack of sufficient subsidies for farmers to stimulate innovative practices;
- Land mismanagement;
- The inability of farmers to own/manage large areas of land, because of land cadastral registration problems;
- Lack of functional irrigation systems in many areas of fertile land;
- Lack of logistics in the public sector (more administrative role), lack of regular training and capacity building,

Opportunities:

Highly productive, intensive and market connected agriculture:

- New initiatives on targeting difficulties faced by all stakeholders in Agriculture
- Newly established networking through innovation centres presents a new business climate and more opportunities for job creation in rural areas.
- New business competitive skills needed for companies will improve production and access local and foreign market

Strengthening of smallholder farmers:

- Support to young farmers will guarantee the future of Kosovo*'s agricultural sector.
- New T2P Centres will invest in innovation and training, aimed at a future-oriented approach to realize business-oriented and societal goals.
- Increase of resilience and sustainability of the agricultural sector.

Threats:

- Business investment stability in agribusiness, since state subsidies, are low, and market security of products is low and not competitive enough;
- Too much administration and not clear role of the advisory services

Priorities

- Prioritizing RITT in agri-food-segment, both financially and collaboratively among all relevant actors (industry, research & academia, and government).
- Enhance public-private cooperation.
- The government to define and launch and implement the RITT financial instruments in the sector to bring to joint collaboration research and academic institutions, private sector and governmental agencies.
- Differentiated innovation and practice policies for agricultural must be designed to fit the sector needs and transformation.
- Connect agri-food sector potentials with Smart Specialization Strategy measures, which is now under development.
- Create and stabilize the innovation funds, and its implementation schemes.
- Foster linkages to ensure synergy and complementarity among the AKIS stakeholders through networks, partnerships and other activities.
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