



AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WB – POTENTIAL, NEEDS, GAPS IN RESEARCH, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, INNOVATION

23 – 24 November 2020



What is SWG?

- **SWG** = Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in Southeast Europe
- **International Intergovernmental** Organization, consisted of governmental institutions responsible for agriculture and rural development in countries/territories of SEE
- **Regional policy dialogue platform**
- Managing and coordinative body - SWG Head Office/Secretariat, Skopje, North Macedonia.



Member institutions

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection, **Albania**
- Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Srpska, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, **Kosovo***
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, **North Macedonia**
- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, **Montenegro**
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, **Serbia**

* 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.

Observer institutions

- Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism, **Austria**
- Ministry of Agriculture and Food, **Bulgaria**
- Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, **Germany**
- Ministry of Rural Development, **Hungary**
- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, **Italy**
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, **Slovenia**
- Ministry of Agriculture, **Croatia**
- Provincial Secretariat of Agriculture Water Management and Forestry, Autonomous Province of Vojvodina, **Serbia**

Agricultural policy analyses

(2017 – 2019)

- **Areas with Natural Constraints in SEE: Assessment and Policy Recommendations** (Zdruli et al, 2017)
- **Natural Resource Management in SEE: Forest, Soil and Water** (Dragovic et al, 2017)
- **Application of the LEADER Approach in the Western Balkan Countries – from a Local Initiative to a Mainstream Concept in the Rural Areas** (Bogdanov et al, 2018)
- **Agri-Environmental Policy in SEE** (Cukaliev et al, 2018)
- **Agrobiodiversity in SEE – Assessment and Policy Recommendations** (Rivera et al, 2018)
- **Agricultural Policy Developments and EU Approximation Process in the Western Balkan Countries** (Volk et al, 2019)
- **Land Market Development and Small Farms' Access to Land in the Pre-Accession Countries** (Bedrac et al, 2019 draft report)
- **Schemes of Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialties in SEE** (Srbinovska et al, 2019)
- **Economic Diversification Policies and Rural Tourism in SEE** (Djordjevic Milosevic et al, 2019)

More than 100 national, regional and international experts/researchers
+ representatives of relevant institutions and organizations



Crucial enabling factors for evidence-based policy-making

- High-quality **information bases** on relevant topic areas
 - **In WB: Lack of data and information** - central problem for evidence-based policy
- Cohorts of **professionals with skills** in data analysis and policy evaluation
 - **In WB: Need to upgrade analytical capacities** for regional agricultural policy
- Substantial **mutual understanding between the roles** of policy professionals, **researchers** and decision-makers
 - **In WB: Lack of awareness, understanding and involvement of stakeholders** in the policy-making process



Assessment of research, innovation and technology transfer capacities in the agri-food sector in the WB countries

- Provide an **inventory and description of all relevant agri-food research capacities, advisory and extension services, business incubators**;
- The **role of farmers' cooperation** in prompting technological and knowledge transfer and adoption;
- The **capacity of small agri-food firms** to adopt innovations and new technology;
- The **role of business networks/clusters** in promoting transfer and adoption of innovations and technology;
- The **role of foreign direct investment** in promoting innovation and adoption of technology in the food chains;
- The **role of education system** in facilitating innovation and technology transfer capacities in the agri-food sector;
- The state of innovation and technology transfer **capacities of processing and retail companies**;
- How could **Horizon Europe or Structural funds or IPA** play a role (e.g. funding) to contribute to the research, innovation and technology transfer capacities in the agri-food sector.



Methodology for Task 2

- Data sources

- Structured interviews

- Respondents – Research institutions, educational institutions, advisory services, business incubators, policy makers

- Official documents

- General literature

- Workshop “Research capacities – factor of sustainable development in rural areas in SEE” - Agricultural Policy Forum 2019



Issues

- **COVID-19 pandemic** - Restricted mobility and closed institutions
 - Reduced ability of data collection and reduced response rate
 - Disabled physical presence in meetings
- **Extensive and detailed questionnaires**
 - Impacted the response rate

