



Federal Ministry  
of Food  
and Agriculture

# Agricultural Policy Dialogue

## Germany - Western Balkans

Interim Meeting of the Regional Expert Advisory Working Group on AKIS  
Novi Sad, 28th of March 2022

# Political Background

- From 2019 to 2021 were adopted:
  - EU Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy
  - Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and the Sofia Declaration
  - RCC Implementation Action Plan for the Green Agenda and the Brdo Declaration
- In July 2021, BMEL/GFA and SWG set up the Agricultural Policy Dialogue (APD) as a platform for structured dialogue between Institutions from the WB, Germany and the EU
- In 2022, regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and cooperation with Germany and the EU seems more important than ever to ensure stability and an consistent and efficient EU integration process

# Agricultural Policy Dialogue

- At the core of the APD are 4 Regional Expert Advisory Working Groups set up by SWG
  - Wine
  - Organic
  - Soil
  - AKIS
- The APD also supports collaborative studies on cross cutting issues
- It also facilitates high-level dialogue on strategic questions of Agricultural Policy

# Wine

- Since 2018, a regional working group has worked on harmonizing wine regulation with EU standards. Target: full EU harmonization in all WB countries/territories by 2024.
  - Increasingly, strategic questions of market development are discussed (small producer support, wine tourism, digitalization, sustainability, organic ...)
  - Some concrete regional cooperation are initiated (e.g. trial of fungus-resistant grape varieties in all WB countries; initiation of a transnational Geographical Indication).
- Nucleus of a sectorial AKIS at regional level?

# Organic

- State-of-the-art assessment in December 2021. First full meeting in March 2022
- The immediate goal is full harmonization with new EU organic regulation (848/2018) in all WB countries based on a harmonized regional draft law
- An exposure visit of REAWG to Germany will be arranged in June 2022
- Beyond 2022, topics of implementation and market development shall be treated, e.g. group certification of small producers → Significant opportunities exist for organic products from the Western Balkans in the EU and on regional markets

# Soil

- State-of-the-art assessment in November 2021. First full meeting in March 2022 with input from European Environmental Agency as well as German institutions
- In 2022, a sub-regional **soil partnership** shall be established under the European Soil Partnership by FAO as a vehicle for future thematic projects
- A broad range of issues should be discussed regionally, e.g. land monitoring, land degradation, contamination, carbon sequestration, sustainable land management, ... The focus of APD activities will be on monitoring, agricultural practices and erosion

# AKIS

- The SWG working group on AKIS assembles ministries of agriculture and education as well as advisory services, associations and universities from all WB countries.
- Connections to German institutions are developed based on exposure visit to Germany in Nov. 2022 -→ Nucleus of an open, multilateral innovation network.
- In 2022, national and regional AKIS plans will be developed and first concrete regional initiatives shall be initiated

# Studies

- Three studies on cross-cutting issues of regional importance are currently prepared in the framework of the APD:
  - Economic impact of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans
  - Effects of climate change in the Western Balkans
  - Women and youth in Agriculture
- Studies shall serve as a common point of reference to inform the activities in the working groups as well as strategic agricultural policy dialogue
- Researchers from all Western Balkans countries are involved, as well as experts from German institutions such as IAMO, Thünen Institut, University of Göttingen, Humboldt University, ...)

# High-Level-Dialogue

- BMEL actively engages in all high-level regional cooperation formats such as the Agricultural Policy Forum and the SWG assemblies and ministerial meetings
- Goal is exchange on strategic questions regarding implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and EU integration of all WB countries
- Ministerial meeting in Berlin (4th – 6th of April)

# Bilateral Cooperation Programme of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)

Dr. Tilman Reinhardt

GFA, General Agent for the Bilateral Cooperation Programme of BMEL