



20th – 21st
OCTOBER

Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

Agricultural 2021 Policy Forum

Green Agenda

for the Western Balkans:
Commitments and
Reality Check



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft



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Agricultural Policy Forum 2021:

Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: Commitments and Reality Check

20 - 21 October 2021

Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

Welcome to the Agricultural Policy Forum 2021!

Agricultural Policy Forum (APF) is a two-day event on regional agricultural policy in SEE organized by SWG, involving relevant regional and international stakeholders, resulting in regional policy recommendations. It has been organized on an annual basis since 2001 to serve as a wide platform for discussions and recommendations on regional policy issues in agriculture and rural development in SEE.

APF 2021, “Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: Commitments and Reality Check”, is held in Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia on 20 – 21 October 2021. It is organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of Serbia.

The Agricultural Policy Forum 2021 is serving as a platform for international and regional dialogue on agricultural and rural development policies with special focus on the commitments that come out of the Sofia Declaration and related to the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans. APF 2021 will present the impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture and rural areas in the Western Balkans, but also the new perspectives under IPARD III, as well as the opportunities for development through research, innovation, and technology transfer in agriculture. It will also address the agri-environmental aspects of sustainable grape and wine production and the instruments for effective implementation of the LEADER approach.

SWG and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of Serbia have the immense pleasure to welcome you at the Agricultural Policy Forum 2021!

Topics

- Sofia Declaration commitments and challenges
- Green Agenda for the Western Balkans
- IPARD III implementation
- Impact of COVID-19 on agriculture, food, and rural areas in the Western Balkans
- Research, innovation, and technology transfer in the Western Balkans
- Agri-Environmental aspects of sustainable grape and wine production in the WB
- Recent developments of LEADER approach under IPARD III

Program

Tuesday, 19 October 2021

17:00 On-site registration begins

20:00 Welcoming reception

Wednesday, 20 October 2021

09:00 – 09:10 Official address – **Mr. Branislav Nedimovic**, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Serbia (TBC)

09:10 – 09:40 Official address and introduction to the APF 2021 objectives and the program – **Mr. Boban Ilic**, Secretary General, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)
Sofia Declaration commitments and challenges – **Mr. Boban Ilic**, Secretary General, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)

09:40 – 10:10 Green Agenda for the WB and IPARD III implementation – **Mr. Krzysztof Sulima**, Pre-Accession Assistance Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI

10:10 – 10:30 Impact of COVID-19 on agriculture, food and rural areas in the Western Balkans – **Mr. Zeljko Vasko, PhD**, Professor, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Banja Luka, BIH

10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break and family photo</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Research, innovation and technology transfer in the Western Balkans – Mr. Charalambos Kasimis, PhD , Professor, Agricultural University, Athens, Greece
11:30 – 12:00	Agri-Environmental aspects of sustainable grape and wine production in the WB – Mr. Lutz van Elk , Expert for Wine, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany
12:00 – 12:30	Recent developments of LEADER approach under IPARD III – Mr. Mariusz Legowski , Pre-Accession Assistance Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI
12:30 – 12:40	Introduction to the working groups topics
12:40 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 18:00	Working groups (Coffee break 15:30 – 16:00) <i>WG1: Diversification of economic activities in rural areas through tourism (groupwork will be conducted on 18 – 19 Oct)</i> <i>WG2: Sustainable grape and wine in the Western Balkans</i> <i>WG3: The LEADER approach in the Western Balkans</i> <i>WG4: Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems in the Western Balkans</i>
19:00	<i>Dinner</i>

Thursday, 21 October 2021

09:00 – 09:30 Presentation of working group results WG 1

09:30 – 10:00 Presentation of working group results WG 2

10:00 – 10:30 Presentation of working group results WG 3

10:30 – 11:00 Presentation of working group results WG 4

11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee Break*

11:30 – 12:30 Discussion and formulation of the Vrnjacka Banja Agenda 2021

12:30 – 13:00 Official closing of the Forum

13:00 – 14:30 *Lunch*

14:30 – 19:00 Field trip

19:00 *Dinner*

Friday, 22 October 2021

Departure after breakfast

Plenary Session Speakers



Mr. Boban Ilic,

**Secretary General, Regional Rural Development
Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)**

Secretary General of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in Southeastern Europe since 2010 and chair of SWG Assembly Sessions. In charge of execution and implementation of SWG strategies and policies; establishing and maintaining effective high level protocolary and diplomatic relations with government and international officials as well as maintaining effective liaison and developing co-operative programs with international organizations and agencies, in particular with international organizations dealing in agriculture and rural development. Responsible for initiation and preparation of regional development projects in Southeastern Europe.

Over 20 years' experience in South Eastern Europe with public and private sector in developmental projects and programs in agro and food industries; food security and agricultural; rural development programs and reforms, principle advisory services for government agricultural policies; planning and reforms (legislation and implementation) related to the process of integration into the European Union.



Mr. Krzysztof Sulima,

Pre-Accession Assistance Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI

Krzysztof joined the European Commission after completing his studies in the fields of international relations and European politics and policies.

He first worked in the Directorate for Environment from where he moved to the Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development to focus on the aspects of the EU rural development policy. He recently joined the Pre-Accession assistance unit in this Directorate responsible for IPARD (instrument for pre-accession assistance for rural development).

Thanks to these professional experiences, Krzysztof has gained a valuable insight into different perspectives on shaping of the Common Agricultural Policy (the CAP) and in particular on the aspects of integration of environmental concerns into this policy. His work on this integration has been reflected in developing agri-environment-climate relevant instruments as well as in setting workable solutions to the interactions between those instruments and the CAP mandatory requirements of cross-compliance and greening requirements, also in the context of the European Green Deal.



Mr. Charalambos Kasimis,

Dr, Professor, Agricultural University, Athens, Greece

Charalambos Kasimis is Professor at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development of the Agricultural University of Athens since 2003.

He has served as Director of the Postgraduate Studies MSc. Programme “Integrated Rural Development and Management of Rural Space” (2010-2014) and Head of his Department (2013-2014). Between September 2014 and March 2015, he served as Deputy Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens.

For the period 1986-2003 he was a member of the academic staff of the Department of Economics at the University of Patras and between 1995 and 2000 the Director of the Institute of Urban and Rural Sociology at the National Centre for Social Research of Greece.

For a number of years, he served as a member of the Executive Committee of the European Society for Rural Sociology and between 2013 and 2015 as President.

His research and academic interests focus on rural transformation, agricultural policy and rural development in Greece, the Balkans and the Mediterranean region. International migration and migrant employment in rural regions drew his research interest for some years and in the years of the economic crisis he worked on the implications of the crisis in rural areas and the ‘return to the land’ movement in Greece.

In March 2015, he was appointed Secretary General of Agricultural Policy & Management of European Funds in the Ministry of Rural Development and Food, in charge of the CAP, Rural Development and Fisheries Development Programmes of Greece in the programming period 2014-2020. He completed his term in office in July 2019.

Between 2018 -2019 he served as an Executive Board member of the state organization “Enterprise Greece” in charge of the promotion of Greek exports and foreign investments in Greece.

For the period 2016-2020 Charalambos Kasimis he was member and Vice President of the Governing Board of the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM).



Mr. Mariusz Legowski,
Programme Manager, Pre-Accession Assistance
Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI

Mariusz Legowski is a Programme Manager in the Pre-accession assistance Unit in Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission. He worked as the Economic Analyst in the Policy Perspectives Unit and the Commission Research Centre. Before joining the European Commission Mariusz worked in the Polish administration in the field of agricultural policy, in on-the-spot check departments.

Mr. Lutz van Elk,
Official and Expert for viticulture and oenology,
Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture of Germany,
Unit in charge for questions regarding organic
viticulture, organic wine and sustainability.

Since 1998 official at the Federal Ministry and from that on in charge for questions regarding wine (especially oenological practices) and wine-regulation (especially on oenological practices, wine control, accompanying documents, inward and outward register, trade with third countries and protection of geographical indication) and aromatised wine products (especially on production and labeling, especially on protection of geographical indications).

In steady contact with the Commission services and with the other Member States within the framework of the measures to strengthen controls in the wine sector. German delegate at numerous EU-meetings since 1998; Council working Parties and Experts groups in the above mentioned fields. Member of the German delegation at the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV) since 2014.





Mr. Zeljko Vasko,

PhD, Professor, University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Agriculture, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Full professor at the University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Agriculture in Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Vice-dean for scientific research and international cooperation. Lecturer on several subjects of agro-economic orientation (Planning and Economic Development, Cost and Calculations in Agriculture Production, Investment and Investments Evaluation, Rural Finance, Project Management). Author or coauthor of ten books and a hundred scientific and professional papers. Participated in the design and implementation of over forty scientific-research, development or professional projects. Member of the European Association of Agricultural Economists and the Balkan Scientific Society of Agricultural Economists. Former director of the Agricultural Project Coordination Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Srpska (2001-2008), director of the Main Bank of the Republic of Srpska of the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2011-2015), and head of the Institute of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development at the Faculty of Agriculture. (2015-2019).

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WORKING GROUP 1:
**Diversification of economic activities
in rural areas through tourism**

Moderator: **Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska**

18 – 19 October 2021
Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

PROGRAM

Monday, 18th October 2021

13:00 – 14:00	Welcome lunch
14:00 – 14:20	Official opening and purpose of the meeting: • Mr. Boban Ilic, SWG Secretary General • Ms. Jasminka Varnalieva, Chief of Party, USAID EDGE project
14:20 – 14:40	Tour of the table
14:40 – 15:00	Achievements so far from the project “Support to the Inbound Tourism Development in the WB Cross-Border Rural Areas” – Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, SWG Senior Project Manager

15:00 – 15:30	Impact felt by the private operators – individual inputs from each representative of the selected tourism tours, 10 min each
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 16:50	Impact felt by the private operators – individual inputs from each representative of the selected tourism tours, 10 min each (continues)
16:50 – 17:00	Remaining activities until the project completion - <i>Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, SWG Senior Project Manager</i>
17:00 – 17:15	Discussion
17:15 – 17:30	Best practices from the region within the EDGE program - <i>Ms. Natasha Lazovska, EDGE Grants Manager</i>
17:30 – 17:45	Discussion
17:45 – 18:00	Concluding remarks - <i>Mr. Boban Ilic, SWG Secretary General</i>
19:00	Dinner

Tuesday, 19th October 2021

09:00 – 09:10	Opening and introduction to the meeting - <i>Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, SWG Senior Project Manager</i>
09:10 – 09:40	Recommendations by regional experts for enabling rural tourism policy environment - <i>Ms. Suzana Djordjevic Milosevic, PhD, University Singidunum, Faculty of Applied Ecology</i>
09:40 – 10:30	Discussion
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:00	Recommendations for enabling rural tourism policy environment in the WB – group work
12:00 – 12:15	Concluding remarks - <i>Ms. Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska, SWG Senior Project Manager</i>
12:15 – 13:30	Lunch

Continuing to the Agricultural Policy Forum 2021

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WORKING GROUP 2: **Sustainable grape and wine in the Western Balkans**

Moderator: **Bogdanka Leveska Gjorshoska**

20th October 2021
Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 20th October 2021	
14:00 - 14:20	Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group
14:20 - 14:50	Sustainable grape and wine production in the Western Balkans with the view on the EU Green Deal / Green Agenda for the Western Balkans, <i>Mr. Lutz van Elk, German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture</i>
14:50 - 15:10	Sustainable grape and wine production in the Western Balkans in comparison with Germany; – German expert – TBD
15:10 - 15:30	Discussion
15:30 - 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00 - 16:30	Discussion
16:30 - 17:00	Identifying key drivers/stakeholders for development of sustainable grape and wine production in the WB – group discussion
17:00 - 18:00	Formulating policy recommendations to be presented to the wide forum
19:00	<i>Dinner</i>

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WORKING GROUP 3: **The LEADER Approach in the Western Balkans**

Moderator: **Boban Ilic**

20th October 2021
Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 20 th October 2021	
14:00 - 14:20	Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group - Moderator
14:20 - 14:50	Community Development Program as a complementary model to LEADER approach- Mr. Petar Gjorgjievski , Rural Development Network of NM, Project (financed by USAID)
14:50 - 15:10	Identifying the implementation structures and delivery mechanisms for CLLD approaches and the LEADER measure (incl. LAGs) under IPARD III period - TBD
15:10 - 15:30	<i>Discussion</i>
15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 - 16:30	Overview and update on the implementation of LEADER in WBs 5 minutes each ministry representative
16:30 - 17:00	Identifying key drivers/stakeholders for implementation of LEADER in the WB – group discussion
17:00 - 18:00	Formulating policy recommendations to be presented to the wide forum – group discussion
19:00	Dinner

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WORKING GROUP 4: **Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (AKIS) in the Western Balkans**

Moderator: **Dori Pavloska Gjorgjieska**

20th October 2021
Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 20 October 2021	
14:00 - 14:20	Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteur for the group - <i>Moderator</i>
14:20 - 15:00	Agricultural Policy Dialogue Germany - Western Balkans and German AKIS model - <i>Mr. Tilman Reinhardt, PhD, GFA Consulting Group</i>
15:00 - 15:30	Discussion on the key barriers for development of AKIS in the WBs and on the future work to be done
15:30 - 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00 - 16:30	Planning next steps: Confirming the key stakeholders for development of AKIS in the WB as part of the Agricultural Policy Dialogue – groupwork
16:30 - 17:30	Preliminary plan for preparation of regional and national strategic plans for AKIS development as part of the Agricultural Policy Dialogue – groupwork
17:30 - 18:00	Concluding remarks
19:00	<i>Dinner</i>

NOTES





