

Reassessing of
**Agricultural and Rural
Development Policy** in
South Eastern Europe

**Food
Sovereignty**

**Climate
Change
Impact**

**Demographic
Renewal
of rural
areas**

supported by:

Welcome to the **AGRICULTURAL POLICY FORUM 2024!**

APF 2024 is being organized by the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The forthcoming “Forum” place particular emphasis on fostering partnership and cooperation in addressing the impacts of climate change on agriculture in Southeast Europe. Its primary objective is to strengthen cooperation in SEE towards combating climate change and promoting the adoption of sustainable and resilient economic and productive development models in the Agricultural sector. Discussions will explore recent trends in agricultural policy developments highlighting challenges and opportunities for the implementation of IPARD III program of the EU.

Furthermore, the “Forum” will address the commitments outlined in the Action Plan for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and its implementation as crucial process for advancing sustainable development and environmental protection in the region. Technical discussions will give attention to promotion of organic farming, with an aim to bolster biodiversity, soil health, and diminish reliance on synthetic inputs, thereby bolstering the resilience of farming systems and conserving natural resources.

By focusing on these key areas, the APF aims to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and innovative solutions among policymakers, researchers, academia, and other stakeholders. Ultimately, this collaborative effort seeks to address the complex climate-related challenges facing agriculture and rural development in SEE, with the overarching goal of building more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems in the region. Additionally, through the preparation of the „APF Jahorina Agenda 2024“ policy brief, the “Forum” aims to lay the groundwork for discussions at the upcoming meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from SEE, scheduled for September 2024.

TOPICS:

- The EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy within a broader context in the CAP and IPARD Programme;
- Action Plan for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and its implementation and challenges for the future as crucial process for advancing sustainable development and environmental protection in the region;
- Berlin Process Initiative as a Regional fora for EU Integration of the SEE and Inclusion of Food and Agriculture sector in it;
- Climate Change Adaptation in agriculture, forestry, viticulture and wine production in the SEE: Challenges, Status and Prospects and strategic approach;
- Demographic renewal of rural areas - future prospects and policies for rural regeneration in SEE;
- Global and EU Food Security Trends, Land Use Pressures and Sustainability Challenges;
- Recent trends of Agricultural Policy Developments in the Western Balkans;
- Implementation of the LEADER approach and enhancing the livelihoods in Southeast Europe (SEE);
- Soil protection challenges, focusing on EU and the Western Balkans;
- EU Policy developments on organic production and Strategy for fostering further development of the organic farming in SEE;
- BIOEAST Partnership including the Western Balkans an opportunity to support the sustainable transition;

PROGRAM

Tuesday, 04 June 2024

19:00 On-site registration begins.
20:00 Welcoming reception

Wednesday, 05 June 2024

09:00 - 09:10 **Welcome address** - Mr. Slobodan Cvijanovic, *Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

09:10 - 09:15 **Welcome address and introduction to the APF 2024 objectives and the program** - Mr. Boban Ilic, *Secretary General, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)*

09:15 - 09:20 **Welcome address** - Mr. Lorenzo Donatelli, *Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Italia in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

09:20 - 09:40 **EU Green Deal and Farm to Fork Strategy – progress in the CAP and IPARD implementation** - Mr. Krzysztof Sulima, *Neighborhood, Enlargement and Pre-accession assistance Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI – online address*

09:40 - 10:00 **Implementation of Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: update of ongoing processes and challenges for the future** - Mr. Boban Ilic, *Secretary General, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)*

10:00 - 10:20 **Pathway Towards Incorporating Food and Agriculture in to the Berlin Process** - Ms. Antje Frehse, *Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL)*

10:20 - 10:40 **Towards strategic road maps for climate change adaptation in agriculture in the WBs** - Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska, *PhD, Professor, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food – Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje*

10:40 - 11:00	Coffee break and family photo
11:00 - 11:20	New Forest strategy as adaptation response on climate change challenges in WB region - Mr. Nenad Petrovic, <i>PhD, Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of Belgrade, Serbia</i>
11:20 - 11:40	Climate change and compliance with EU requirements for viticulture and oenology in the SEE region - Mr. Darko Jaksic, <i>PhD, Professor, Institute of Agricultural Economics, Belgrade & Faculty of Biofarming B. Topola, Serbia</i>
11:40 - 12:00	Progress of LEADER Approach implementation in the Western Balkan countries - conclusions and recommendation on future steps for accelerating LEADER implementation in the WB region - Mr. Petar Gjorgievski, <i>President of the Balkan Rural Development Network in the WBs</i>
12:00 - 12:30	On Food Security Trends, Land Use Pressures and Sustainability Challenges - Mr. Tassos Haniotis, <i>Senior Guest Research Scholar, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis; Former Director for Strategy and Policy Analysis - EC, DG AGRI – online address</i>
12:30 - 12:35	Introduction to the working groups topics
12:35 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 18:00	Working groups (Coffee break 16:00 – 16:30) WG1: Soil and Water WG2: Crop and Livestock WG3: AKIS and Agricultural Policy Developments
20:00	Dinner

Thursday, 06 June 2024

09:00 - 09:20	Agricultural Policy Developments in the Western Balkans - Mr. Sabahudin Bajramovic, <i>PhD Professor of University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>
09:20 - 09:40	Soil protection challenges, focussing EU and the Western Balkans - Mr. Rainer Baritz, <i>European Environmental Agency</i>
09:40 - 10:00	Demographic renewal of rural areas - future prospects and policies for rural regeneration in SEE - Ms. Emelj Tuna, <i>PhD, Professor, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food – Skopje, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje</i>
10:00 - 10:20	EU Policy developments on organic production and Strategy for fostering further development of the organic farming in SEE - Mr. Toralf Richter, <i>The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL)</i>
10:20 - 10:40	BIOEAST Partnership including the Western Balkans an opportunity to support the sustainable transition - Mr. Barna Kovacs, <i>PhD, BIOEAST, Secretary General</i>
10:40 - 11:10	Coffee Break
11:10 - 11:25	Presentation of working group results WG 1
11:25 - 11:40	Presentation of working group results WG 2
11:40 - 11:55	Presentation of working group results WG 3
11:55 - 12:40	Formulation of the Jahorina Agenda 2024
12:40 - 12:50	Official closing of the Forum
12:50 - 14:00	Lunch
14:30 - 19:00	Field trip
19:00	Dinner

Friday, 07 June 2024

- **Departure after breakfast**

PLENARY SESSION SPEAKERS



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.



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. After that he has joined the Neighbourhood, Enlargement and Pre-Accession assistance unit in this Directorate which is also 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. He has also been involved in work related to the European Green Deal and Green Agenda for the Western Balkans.



Antje Frehse

Head of Unit 625 at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)

Antje Frehse is a seasoned professional in the field of government and public administration, currently serving as the Head of Unit 625 at the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Berlin, Germany. Her unit focuses on Eastern Europe, Eastern Asia, Central Asia, and EU enlargement. Frehse has been serving in BMEL since 2006, leveraging her extensive expertise in political science and law, and her personal experience with international relations. Prior to this, she served as a representative of the State of Saxony-Anhalt to the Federal Government from 1991 to 2006.

Frehse's academic background is robust, having studied Political Science and Law at Martin-Luther-University of Halle-Wittenberg, where she earned her diploma. She furthered her studies in law at Georg-August-University of Göttingen. Her early career included a role as a research assistant at the Faculty of Law at Technical University Otto-von-Guericke in Magdeburg. Besides being fluent in German as her mother tongue, Frehse is also fluent in English and advanced in Russian, bringing linguistic skill alongside her professional and academic experience to her previous and current professional engagements.



Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska

PhD, Professor, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food-Skopje, Institute of Agricultural Economics

Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska is full professor at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. Her research interests are in the area of economic and technical performance in agriculture, efficiency and productivity analysis, cost of production of agri-food products, cost-benefit analysis, and also socio-economic aspects of climate change, farmer behavior in decision-making and strategic choices, as well as agricultural and rural development policy. She participated in various national and international projects (SIDA, FAO, USAID, WB, FP7, JRC, HORIZON 2020, HORIZON EUROPE/COST etc), development of national strategic documents, and edited and (co)authored a number of research publications and applicative studies. Has so far published more than 90 research and technical papers and 2 university textbooks. She is member of the National Council for Higher Education and Research; National IPARD Monitoring Committee; National Liaison to the European Association of Agricultural Economics; Key expert in the National Convention for the EU – MK; and EDP Coordinator of the Smart Specialisation S3 domain “Smart agriculture and food with higher added value”.



Nenad Petrovic

*Associate professor at University of Belgrade,
Faculty of Forestry*

Dr. Nenad Petrovic is associate professor at University of Belgrade, Faculty of Forestry. Since 2003 he is working at chair of forest management planning where is responsible for teaching activities on same name subject. Special focus of his research is on forest planning, forest policy and small scale private forest management. He worked as visiting professor at University of Sarajevo and University of Banja Luka and is active in implementation of several regional and international project. He speaks English, German and Spanish language.



Darko Jaksic

PhD, Research Associate for viticulture and oenology and Profesor, Belgrade, Serbia / Regional SWG Expert for Viticulture and Oenology

Darko Jaksic is an experienced professional with over 23 years of experience in viticulture and oenology. In his career he has made an important contribution to various prestigious institutions in Serbia. Currently, Darko works at the Institute of Agricultural Economics in Belgrade and at the Faculty of Biofarming in Bačka Topola. His scientific and professional activities are mainly focused on the research of *terroir* factors using innovative models and local grapevine varieties from the Balkans. He has trained in Italy, Spain, Japan, USA, Switzerland and other countries and has led numerous national and international EU projects with Italian and Spanish partners, projects in Ukraine, Western Balkan countries and territories, etc. He is the author and co-author of numerous scientific papers and monographs and has been awarded several national and international prizes for his professional and scientific contribution.



Petar Gjorgievski

Balkan Rural Development Network and The Rural Development Network of North Macedonia

Petar Gjorgievski is the president of The Balkan Rural Development Network and The Rural Development Network of North Macedonia. His experience of near 25 years is in agriculture and rural development with an up-to-date knowledge of National and EU rural development policy programmes. He is an expert in community development, utilizing participative tools for local community actions and cooperation between communities at local, regional, national, and international levels. In the past 15 years Petar works on transferring experience to help others understand the complexity of rural development challenges driven by a large number of factors, and which requires multi-disciplinary and team-work response. Currently he is focused on, rural CSO capacity building, networking, and EU LEADER approach as a model for local economic development and enhancement of the capacity of rural civil society organizations in sustainable development.



Tassos Haniotis

*Senior Guest Research Scholar, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis;
Former Director for Strategy and Policy Analysis - EC, DG AGRI*

Having retired in August 2022, after a 33-year career in the Commission, as the Director of Strategy, Simplification and Policy Analysis in the Directorate General for Agriculture of the European Commission, Mr. Haniotis previously held posts as Head of Unit in the Agricultural Policy Analysis and Perspectives unit and the Agricultural Trade Policy Analysis unit in the same Directorate General, as Member and subsequently Deputy Head of the Cabinet of former European Commissioner for Agriculture (with respective responsibilities the preparation of the 2003 reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, and the agricultural chapter of the Doha WTO Round and the EU-Mercosur negotiations), and as the Agricultural Counsellor of the European Commission's Delegation in the United States.

He holds Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in Agricultural Economics from the University of Georgia, USA, and a B.A. in Economics from the Athens University of Economics and Business, in his native Greece. Before joining the European Commission, he spent six months as a visiting Fellow at the Centre for European Agricultural Studies, Wye College, University of London, focusing on EU-US agricultural trade relations in the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations. He is a Fellow of the European Association of Agricultural Economists and holds a Honorary Doctorate degree from the University of Thessaloniki.

Active in the ag research community, Mr. Tassos is a member of the International and European Associations of Ag. Economics, the International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium, and the EU Nitrogen Expert Panel.



Sabahudin Bajramović

PhD, Full Professor, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sabahudin Bajramović is full professor of the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences within the University of Sarajevo. He teaches several courses such as Rural development, Farm Management and Basics of Sustainable Food Production Systems. In last two decades his research is focused on agricultural policy analysis, rural development policy and sustainable development. With 36 years of fruitful professional experience in both education and research he is considered one of the leading agro-economists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has participated as main coordinator in the development of numerous state, entity and cantonal strategic documents, and is author and co-author of more than a hundred scientific articles and studies in the field of agricultural economics. He was involved in numerous research projects funded by national and international funds. He was the national coordinator in five EU projects (FP6, FP7 and Erasmus+) and national expert in FAO, USAID, UNDP, IFAD, UCODEP and CRS projects. Since 2023 he is member of Commission for Agriculture and Rural Development of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Rainer Baritz

PhD, Soil Expert, European Environmental Agency (EEA), Copenhagen, Denmark

Rainer Baritz is currently working for the European Environmental Agency (EEA) as soil expert. He chairs the Thematic Group Soil in the European Information and Observation Network (EIONET) as well as the European Soil Partnership (ESP). Trained in forest science, he holds a PhD in ecology and soil science. Before joining EEA in 2017, he has worked as a forest ecologist and soil information expert in several regional and national public research institutions in Germany, and later worked for the EU Joint Research Centre in Ispra, Italy, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Rome, Italy. At FAO, he was deeply involved in designing the global soil information system and global soil governance. Recently, he strongly supported the creation of the Western Balkans Regional Soil Partnership, and is now launching an EIONET regional project on soil contamination.



Emelj Tuna

*PhD, Professor, University Ss. Cyril and Methodius
in Skopje,
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food-Skopje,
Institute of Agricultural Economics*

Emelj Tuna is an associate professor at the Institute of Agricultural Economics at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. She obtained MSc and PhD degrees at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Department of Economics, Uppsala – Sweden.

Currently, her research interests are in the field of social networks and agricultural cooperatives, socio-economic aspects of rural development (poverty, the role of youth and women in rural areas), value chain analyses, AKIS and agricultural advisory.

She has been involved in various activities within national and international projects (SIDA, SWG, FAO, WeEffect, UN Women, DG AGRI, etc.). Have also been part of developing national strategic documents and plans. As an author or co-author, she has published different research based and practical publications, and book chapters in the field of agricultural economics. She is an awarded teaching fellow (CERGE-EI) and part of a Rural NEET Youth Network COST action.



Toralf Richter

PhD, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), Switzerland

Dr Toralf Richter is as an Agricultural Economist specialist in marketing, market research and the development of organic sectors with a business and organic sector experience of more than 25 years. Presently he is working as senior consultant for the international organic market development at FiBL. He is involved in policy and market related projects in Ukraine, Albania, Serbia and Kosovo. Further he provides technical support to Smallholder Producer Groups, Business Support Organisations and Organic Certification Bodies in regard to their business development and implementation of organic standards on a global level.

Link: <https://www.fibl.org/en/about-us/team/richter-toralf>



Barna Kovacs

PhD, Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU, Secretary General of the BIOEAST Initiative

Mr Barna Kovacs is currently working as counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU. He has been appointed as the Secretary General of the BIOEAST Initiative, as vice-chair of the FACCE JPI, and as SCAR member on behalf of Hungary. His responsibilities covers the follow up of the European Council discussion with regard to the research and innovation in the field of bioeco

WORKING GROUP 1: **CCAA SOIL AND WATER**

Moderator: Mr. Darko Konjevic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 05 June 2024

14:00 – 14:20	Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteurs for the group – Moderator
14:20 – 14:40	Study on climate change adaptation in Agriculture, cross country synthesis report (soil) – Mr. Duško Mukaetov, <i>Regional and National Expert</i>
14:40 – 15:00	Study on climate change adaptation in Agriculture, cross country synthesis report (water) – Mr. Vjekoslav Tanasković, <i>Regional and National Expert</i>
15:00 – 16:00	Presentation of national reports (soil) (country case studies), max 10 min each (by alphabetical order)
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 17:30	Presentation of national reports (water) (country case studies), max 10 min each (by alphabetical order)
17:30 – 18:30	Setting up the Roadmaps/Action plans for CCAA in the countries
19:00	Dinner

WORKING GROUP: 2

CCAA CROP AND LIVESTOCK

Moderator: Mr. Boban Ilic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 05 June 2024

14:00 – 14:20	Introduction of the objectives of the working group, presentation of participants (tour-de-table), appointing rapporteurs for the group – Moderator
14:20 – 14:40	Study on climate change adaptation in Agriculture, cross country synthesis report (crop) – Mr. Ordan Cukaliev, <i>Regional and National Expert</i>
14:40 – 15:00	Study on climate change adaptation in Agriculture, cross country synthesis report (livestock) – Mr. Sreten Andonov, <i>Regional and National Expert</i>
15:00 – 16:00	Presentation of national reports (crop) (country case studies), max 10 min each (by alphabetical order)
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 17:30	Presentation of national reports (livestock) (country case studies), max 10 min each (by alphabetical order)
17:30 – 18:30	Setting up the Roadmaps/Action plans for CCAA in the countries
19:00	Dinner

WORKING GROUP 3:

Regional Expert Advisory Working Group (REAWG) on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) Eight Interim Meeting

Moderator: Mr. Dusan Neskovic

PROGRAM

Wednesday, 05 June 2024

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|---------------|--|
| 14:00 – 14:05 | Welcome addresses – Mr. Dusan Neskovic, SWG |
| 14:05 – 14:20 | Progress report of the REAWG AKIS – Mr. Dusan Neskovic, SWG |
| 14:20 – 16:00 | <p>Progress in the adoption of the national AKIS plans and selected AKIS actions to be implemented within the Agricultural Policy Dialogue Germany – Western Balkans 2023/24 (up to 10 minutes each):</p> <p>Albania – Mr. Edvin Zhllima, <i>National Expert</i>
 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of BiH – Mr. Sabahudin Bajramovic, <i>National Expert</i>
 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska – Mr. Zeljko Vasko, <i>National Expert</i>
 Kosovo* – Ms. Iliriana Miftari, <i>National Expert</i>
 Moldova - Ms. Olesea Cojocaru, <i>National Expert</i>
 North Macedonia – Ms. Ana Simonovska, <i>National Experts</i>
 Montenegro – Mr. Miljan Joksimovic, <i>National Expert</i>
 Serbia – Ms. Ankica Kondic Spika, <i>National Expert</i></p> |

16:00 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 16:50	Discussion - Moderated by Mr. Charalambos Kasimis
16:50 – 17:10	Steps for the Development of an AKIS Knowledge Reservoir Mr. Dimitar Vanev (TBC)
17:10 – 17:30	Discussion
17:30 – 17:40	Framework for future cooperation between the SWG and the CIHAEM Bari in Enabling Functional and Integrated AKIS in the Western Balkan Mr. Mladen Todorovic CIHEAM
17:40 – 18:00	Formulation of the AKIS contribution to the Jahorin Agenda 2024 in achieving the goals of the green transition policy Concluding remarks Mr. Charalambos Kasimis and Mr. Dusan Neskovic
19:00	Dinner