

Meeting of the SWG SCAR AKIS Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems

AKIS Strategic plans for the CAP post 2020

Webinar 24-26/3/21

Member State: ESTONIA

SCAR
Standing Committee
on Agricultural Research



A) Characteristics of your AKIS: SWOT

- **Main characteristics of Estonian AKIS:**
- Estonian AKIS is defined by the size of the country: small, compact, contacts across sectors.
- ICT opportunities widely used, broadband internet across country.
- AKIS in EE benefits from the easy access to education on all levels and available research expertise in our universities /research institutions (top global level in some disciplines).
- Innovation-friendly mindset of the people.
- Dependence of the AKIS structure on the state support (funding, but not only). *E.g., MoRA supports applied research and innovation activities (applied research programs, RDP measures), knowledge transfer and advisory services (RDP), etc.*
- Two support measures address innovation cooperation in our RDP (Innovation clusters for longer term and strategic cooperation; and the 16.1/16.2 for EIP OGs).
- The advisory and extension system has undergone a series of reforms over the last decade (fragmentation → coordination).
- Knowledge transfer is more and more regarded as an integral component of applied research.

A) Characteristics of your AKIS: SWOT

- **Main characteristics of Estonian AKIS (main actors, knowledge flows)**
- High quality education on all levels. Vocational schools restructured (decrease in number).
- Availability of research expertise in our universities / research institutions (top global level in some disciplines).
- A mixed structure of the advisory and extension system: the RDP supported advisory services is coordinated by one central player responsible for the services, ensuring the availability of professional advisory services throughout the country; in parallel, there is a free market of advisers rendering their services without RDP support.
- Innovation clusters, EIP OGs (funded by RDP).
- Existence of the innovation network.

A) Characteristics of your AKIS: SWOT

- Which **barriers and bottlenecks** are hindering knowledge flows in your AKIS? How to overcome them? What should be the main **changes to implement** if you compare with the current situation?
- Enterprises lack the resources for funding their RD+I
 - support measures provided. *E.g., MoRA supports (and continues to do so) applied research and innovation activities (applied research programs, RDP measures), knowledge transfer and advisory services (RDP), etc.*
- The „silos“ of support measures
 - more flexibility, joint activities, mixed target groups
 - better integration of advisors across all AKIS related interventions
- Not all the necessary topics are covered by certified advisors, some topics are not covered by our research (i.e., knowledge creation/knowledge transfer discrepancies)
 - more flexibility, joint activities, emphasizing the AKIS-approach

A) Characteristics of your AKIS: SWOT

- **How is the preparation process for the future AKIS going in your country? How is the interaction with non-agricultural Ministries?**
- In the preparation process for future AKIS, all relevant ministries were involved in the CAP AKIS working group discussions (Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Research and Education, Ministry of Economic Affairs).
- There is still some room for more cooperation between the funders/ministries in terms of understanding the sectoral needs.

E.g.: if the research infrastructure necessary for maintaining a high level basic research in our domain is not prioritised, it may affect the quality of applied services as well as the overall capability of knowledge creation providers to participate in AKIS as a source of state-of-the-art expertise, to act as the partner to enterprises/state, and to fully meet the needs of agricultural sector.
- However, the interaction and cooperation has been getting nice momentum over the last few years, there are pan-ministerial national strategies etc.

B) CAP AKIS plans: strategy and planned **priorities**

Starting from Art 102 in the Commission proposal, and in order to tackle the cross-cutting objective on K&I&D, please explain:

- (i) how will the **organization and structuring of the AKIS** be improved?
- (ii) in particular, how will **advisors, researchers and CAP networks improve their cooperation** and the sharing of knowledge in an integrated manner; and
- how they will **provide advice, knowledge flows and innovation support services?**

B) CAP AKIS plans: strategy and planned **priorities**

- No major reform of the AKIS system is foreseen (“Evolution, not revolution”), but some additional elements and new opportunities promoting the integration of different AKIS actors.

Main AKIS2020+ priorities:

- **1. Facilitating a coherent AKIS.**
- **2. Better access to advisory services, a well-functioning support structure for advisory services (overcoming the thematic gaps, lack of personnel) as a better support system for advisors. Advisors in innovation projects.**
- **3. Knowledge transfer, information services, and creating the digital knowledge reservoir for better access to knowledge flows.**
- **4. Continuing support for innovation cooperation with sufficient flexibility.**

Overarching aim: more flexibility and less bureaucracy

B) CAP AKIS plans: strategy and planned priorities

- The support for innovation cooperation (innovation clusters, EIP OGs) will continue, but the involvement of advisors will be increased.
- In advisory services, a number of issues need to be addressed to safeguard the viability of the service.
- The advisory system itself would benefit from more relaxed regulations to increase its flexibility and adaptability.
- Integrating digitisation across all AKIS interventions, not as a „silo“ intervention, i.e., making use of various digital solutions across different interventions contributing to knowledge flows (*e.g., the knowledge reservoir in knowledge transfer*).
- Creation of the knowledge reservoir to store the relevant information and provide easy access to the information necessary for the relevant actors in one spot, thus facilitating the cooperation. *E.g., both the state-supported advisory services and the private advisors alike will have access to the knowledge reservoir.*
- Innovation Network/CAP Network serves as the contact point between the farmers, the researchers and advisors, and as a networking platform, and also as the provider of information and market place of the results and opportunities in the innovation cooperation activities. They organise meetings, webinars, circulate the newsletter, etc.

C) interventions planned for your future AKIS

- What are the **main CAP interventions you plan** for your national AKIS with regard to:
 - a. Enhancing knowledge flows and strengthening links between research and practice
 - b. Strengthening farm advisory services within the AKIS
 - c. Strengthening interactive innovation and EIP OGS
 - d. Supporting digital transition in agriculture
- Any issues with the **budget** needed to come to a good result?

C) interventions planned for your future AKIS

Planned AKIS related interventions:

- **Support for innovation cooperation**
- **Support for knowledge transfer**
- **Support for rendering advisory service**
- **Support for knowledge transfer and advisory system (AKIS)**
- **Support for training advisors**
- **Support for training programme of new advisors**

Some of the guiding considerations across AKIS 2020+ interventions:

- Current measures used as building blocks to be rearranged into interventions of with increased functionality
- More flexibility to accommodate different needs and occasions (*vouchers*)
- Fewer, but broader interventions, catering better to the individual specifics of the beneficiaries.

E.g., one single innovation cooperation intervention, but eligible applicants can be both a single agricultural producer to find solution to a single practical challenge, or a group setting up an innovation cluster project to implement a series of innovation activities together with researchers)

- Less bureaucracy: optimising reporting periods, simplified cost options, etc.

C) interventions planned for your future AKIS

Innovation cooperation

Objective: flexibility and combinability

- Innovation cooperation support continues to be available, but instead of two innovation measures (M 16.1/16.2, and Innovation clusters) → **one innovation cooperation intervention with multiple choices**. These will include large/small projects, innovation clusters, EIP OGs, vouchers, etc.
- **Innovation development vouchers** - for preparation of an innovation cooperation project.
- **(Plus: All-round AKIS vouchers** to be used for one or more AKIS interventions - can be used to get advice, training, information, expertise, research consultation, ..., etc, whatever the voucher holder will consider necessary.)

C) interventions planned for your future AKIS

Knowledge transfer – main highlights

- We continue supporting the **Long-term Knowledge Transfer Programmes** (M1; a consortium for training/knowledge transfer activities in a thematic field) as an overarching (and flexible) intervention. Potential for channeling the **output from OGs**.
- **Knowledge reservoir** as a multifunctional online portal for AKIS-related information (one gate to access information, events calendar, etc).
- More **diverse training** activities, e.g.:
 - work shadowing programmes (an advisor following a researcher during one week)
 - joint study trips/bus seminars for **mixed group of farmers/advisors/researchers** to share information, gain new knowledge, build closer contacts
- Special attention: new entrants in agriculture (currently, some prior experience is needed to be considered eligible for trainings)
- Universal **AKIS vouchers**

C) interventions planned for your future AKIS

Advisory services - main highlights

- Need to pay more attention to next generation of advisors → **targeted support scheme for new advisors** (headhunting, motivating career, training for new and existing advisors), involving retired advisors as mentors for newbies, etc.
- Need to nurture the **motivation** of the existing advisory staff → motivation, career path, various types of (obligatory) training. Beginner vs experienced advisor – different wages possible. This is the task of the back-office coordination.
- **Coordination and support structure for AKIS** – back office for advisors, promoting advisory and knowledge transfer services to clients.
- Collaboration (mixing supported with not supported advisors, mixing advisors with researchers, etc), **integration** with other AKIS players.
- **Diversified formats**: individual advice, group actions (e.g. discussion group), online consultations, mentoring, universal AKIS vouchers, self-service in knowledge reservoir,....
- **Diversified topics**, e.g. processing advice was much missed → will be available.

Discussion:

All comments, questions and suggestions very welcome!



SCAR

AKIS

Agricultural Knowledge
and Innovation Systems

**Thank you for your
attention!
and for your active participation
and commitment!**

Report available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/knowledge-and-innovation-unlocking-potential-food-and-farming-2019-sep-26_en (more paper copies can be asked to Inge.Van-Oost@ec.europa.eu)

