



Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) in the Western Balkans

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Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Forsten





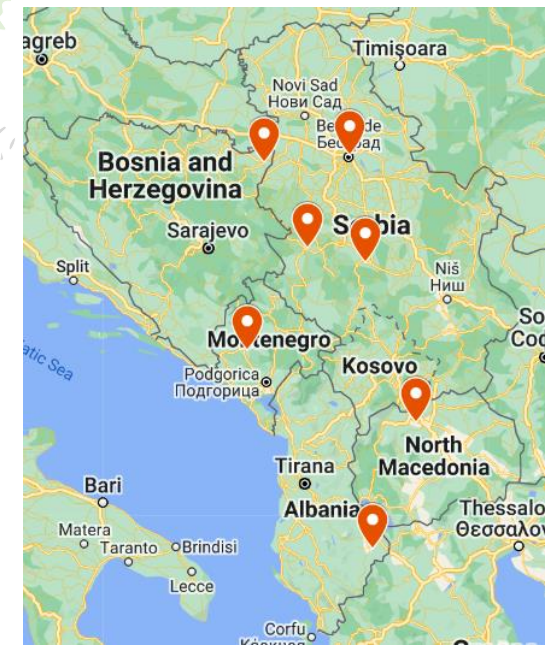
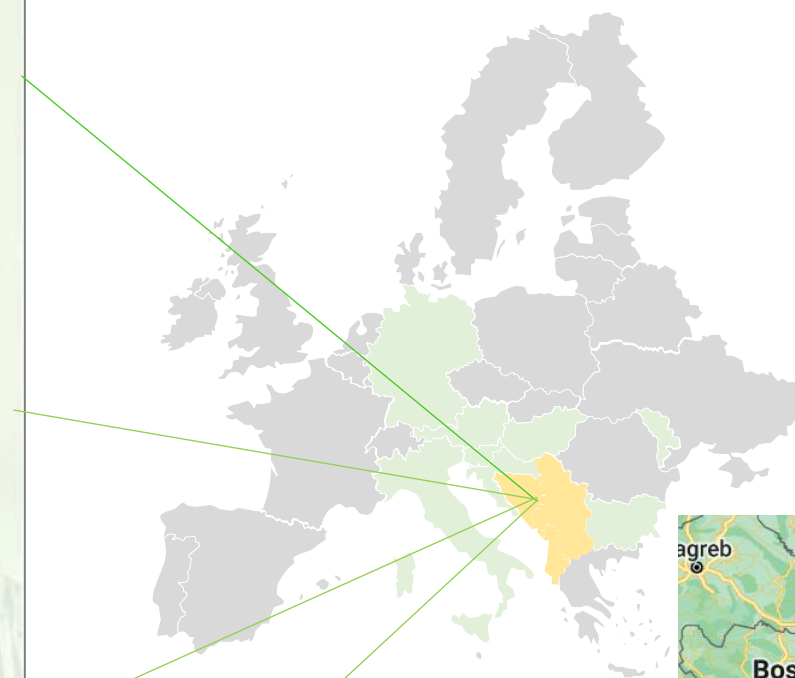
South Eastern Europe
Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

“SWG” = Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe.

International Intergovernmental Organization, platform for policy dialogue, networking and regional cooperation in the area of agriculture and rural development.

Managing and coordinative body - the SWG Head Office/Secretariat, in Skopje, North Macedonia.

Regional offices in: Korca (Al), Niksic (MNE), Bijeljina (BiH), Uzice (RS), Belgrade (RS)



Member Institutions

- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development, **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
- 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 Management, **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
- Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry, **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, **Moldova**

Policy Assessments: 250+ experts and policy makers involved in 16+ Regional Experts Advisory Working Groups (REAWGs)

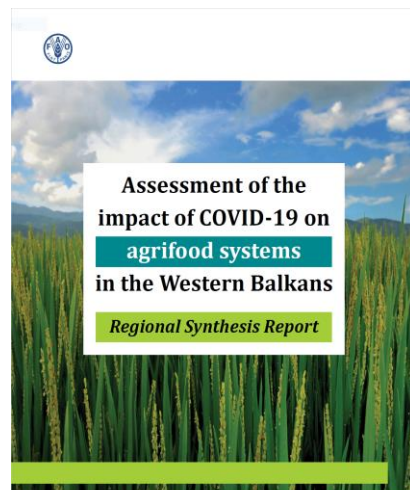
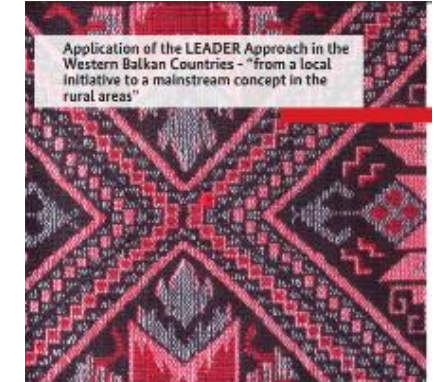
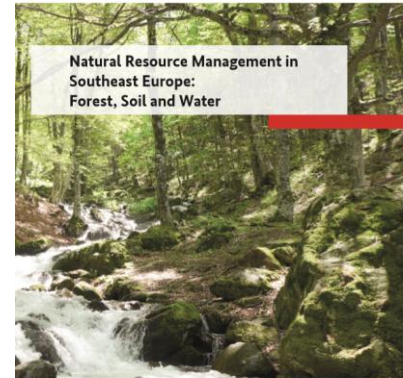
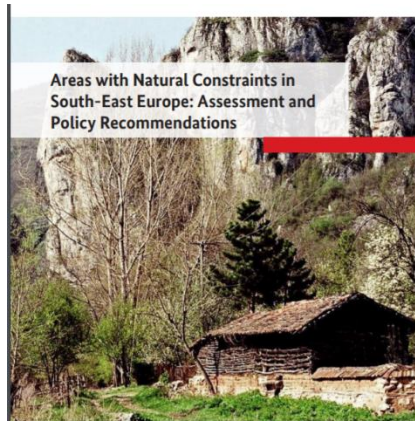


A collage of 16 JRC Technical Reports coversheets, each featuring the European Commission logo and a title in the respective language. The reports are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some overlapping. The titles include:

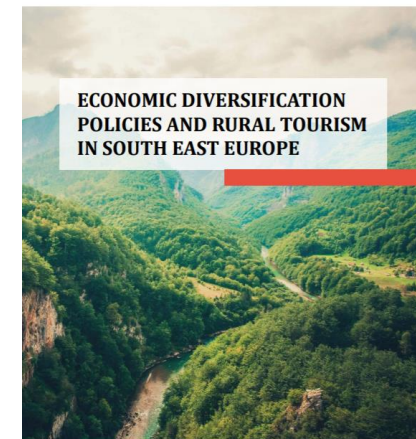
- Monitorimi i zhvillimeve të politikave bujqësore në vendet e Ballkanit Perëndimor** (Monitoring of agricultural policy developments in the Western Balkan countries)
- Analiza e politikave për zhvillimin rural dhe bujqësor të shteteve të Ballkanit Perëndimor** (Analysis of agricultural and rural development policies of the Western Balkan countries)
- Аgricultural policy developments and EU approximation process in the Western Balkan countries**
- Мониторинг на развојот на земјоделската политика во земјите од Западниот Балкан** (Monitoring of agricultural policy developments in the Western Balkan countries)
- Анализа на политиките за земјоделство и рурален развој на земјите од Западниот Балкан** (Analysis of agricultural and rural development policies of the Western Balkan countries)
- Recent agricultural policy developments in the context of the EU approximation process in the pre-accession countries**
- Прачење развојnih trendova poljoprivredne politike u zemljama Zapadnog Balkana** (Monitoring of agricultural policy developments in the Western Balkan countries)
- Анализа политика за poljoprivredni i ruralni razvoj zemalja Zapadnog Balkana** (Analysis of agricultural and rural development policies of the Western Balkan countries)
- Monitoring of agricultural policy developments in the Western Balkan countries**
- Analysis of the agricultural and rural development policies of the Western Balkan countries**

The coversheets also feature various images related to agriculture, such as fields, sunflowers, and rural landscapes. Some coversheets include the SWG RRD logo and the year of publication (2017, 2018, 2019).

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Published by: Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in SEE (SWG)



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Food Quality Policy:
Schemes of Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialities in South East Europe

Politika kvaliteta hrane:
Šeme geografskih oznaka i tradicionalnih specijaliteta u Jugoistočnoj Evropi

Politika e Cilësise Ushqimore:
Skemat e Treguesve Gjeografik dhe Specialiteteve Tradicionale në Evropën Juglindore

Политика за квалитет на храна:
Шеми за географски ознаки и традиционални специјалитети во Југоисточна Европа

Short guidelines on the steps and procedures for
REGISTRATION OF QUALITY PRODUCTS WITH GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AND TRADITIONAL SPECIALITIES

Kratke smernice o koracima i procedurama
REGISTROVANJA GEOGRAFSKIH OZNAKA I GARANTOVANIH TRADICIONALNIH SPECIJALITETA

Udhëzime të shkurtër mbi hapat dhe procedurat për regjistrimin e prodhimeve cilësore me tregues gjeografik dhe specialiteteve tradicionale

Кратко упатство за чекорите и постапките за
РЕГИСТРИРАЊЕ ПРОИЗВОДИ СО ГЕОГРАФСКА ОЗНАКА И ТРАДИЦИОНАЛНИ СПЕЦИЈАЛИТЕТИ

More here: <https://seerural.org/publications/>

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

- Inventory and description of all RITT players in the WBs
- Evaluation of the role of:
 - Farmers' cooperation
 - Small agri-food firms
 - Business networks/clusters
 - Foreign direct investment
 - Education system
 - Processing and retail companies;
 - Horizon Europe or IPA



Regional Expert Advisory Working Group on RITT (later REAWG on AKIS)

Country/territory	Ministry of Agriculture	Higher education	Advisory services	Research Institute	Private sector/ Chamber of Commerce	Ministry of science
Albania	Grigor Gjeci	Edvin Zhllima (key expert)	Festim Shytaj	Aulona Veizaj	Evelina Azizaj	Liri Hajdari
BiH, state level	Renata Gavric					
FBiH, BiH	Pejo Janjic	Sabahudin Bajramovic (key expert)	Pejo Janjic	Berina Basic	Mirsad Hubanic	Damir Ravlic
Republic of Srpska, BiH	Slavica Samardzic	Zeljko Vasko (key expert)	Goran Bursać	Zeljko Lakic	Dragan Sepa	Branka Savic
Kosovo*	Nysrete Doda	Iliriana Miftari (key expert)	Rinor Qehaja		Besim Mustafa	Bujar Gallopeni
Montenegro	Milos Kusovac/Mirsad Spahic	Milan Markovic (key expert)	Miodrag Dosljak	Sanja Radonjic	Ratko Batakovic	Ivan Tomović
North Macedonia	Goce Georgievski	Association of Agricultural Economists (key experts)	Zlatko Sireta	Lazo Dimitrov	Stevan Orozovic	Ardijana Paloshi
Serbia	Jasmina Miljkovic	Tamara Paunović	Veljko Djordjevic/Vladimir Sabados/Ana Bogunovic/Mirko Vlaco	Ankica Kondic Spika/Ana Marjanovic Jeromela (key experts)	Aleksandar Bogunovic	Jelena Miocinovic

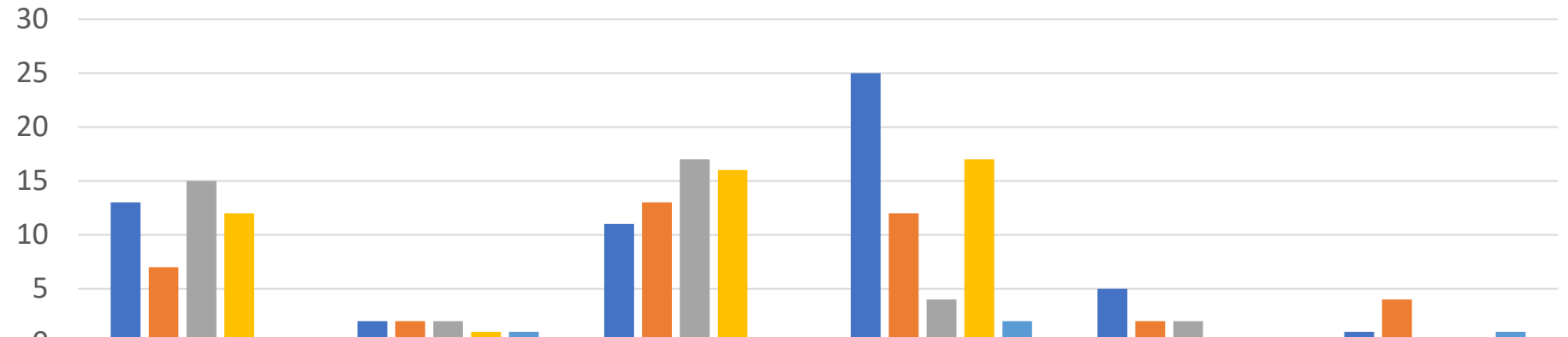
With expert's support from professor Charalambos Kasimis

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Inventory of all relevant agri-food research capacities

Agri-food research capacities in the WB



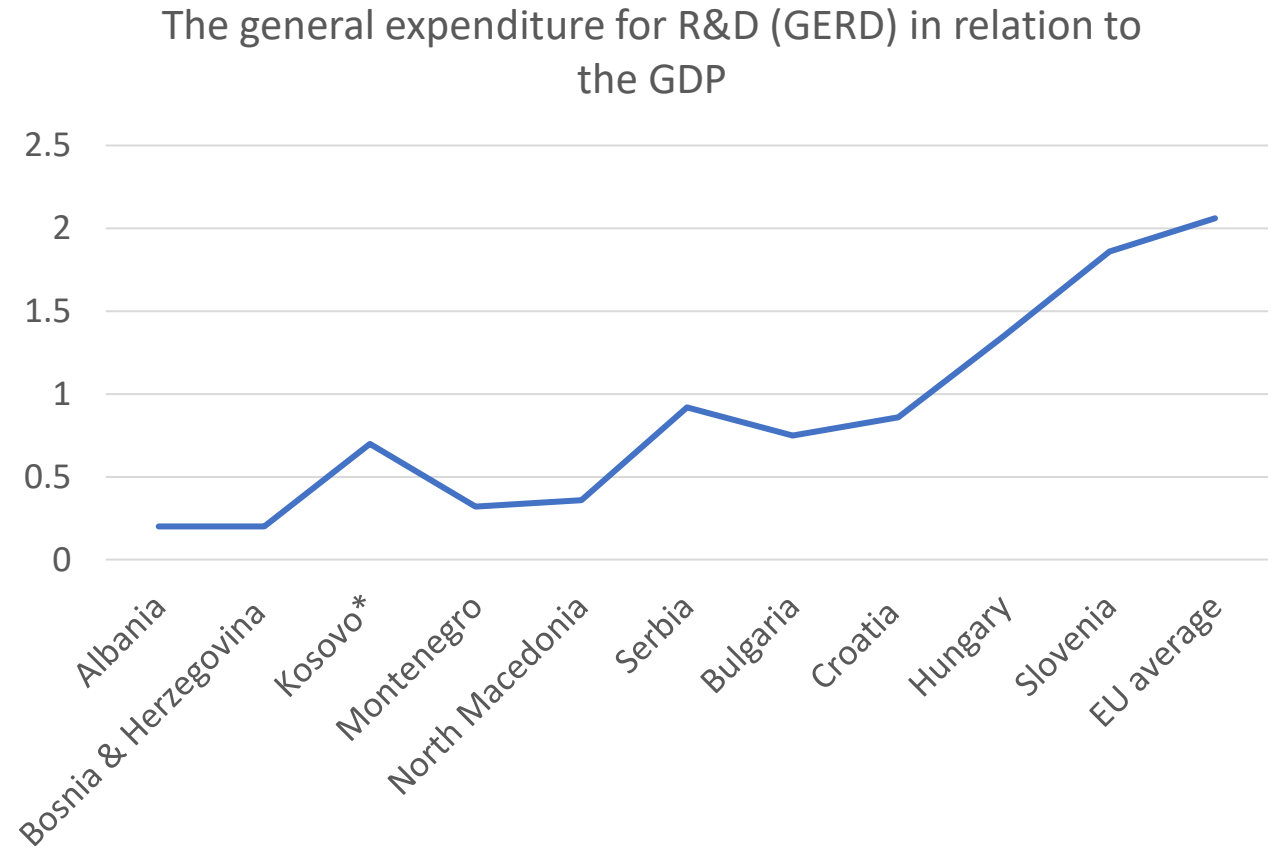
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Albania	Kosovo*
■ Research institutes	13	2	11	25	5	1
■ Faculties	7	2	13	12	2	4
■ Business incubators	15	2	17	4	2	
■ Clusters	12	1	16	17		
■ Centers of excellence		1		2		1



	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republic of Srpska	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	Albania	Kosovo*
Advisory and extension services	10 cantonal services as a part of the Ministry of agriculture	1 on entity level	3 (advisory services in plant production, livestock advisory - within Ministry, IFAD Rural Clustering and Transformation Project)	1 national extension agency + several NGOs that provide some services	35 regional extension services as part of the Ministry of agriculture	4 regional extension services as part of the Ministry of agriculture	1 NGO (Initiative for Agricultural Development of Kosovo*)

Strength of all relevant agri-food research capacities in the WB countries

- **Number and quality** of research institutions, researchers and available funds for science - **different** from country to country
- Most of the facilities are **old, with outdated equipment and poor infrastructure**
- Not **competitive** when competing for European funds
- Largely **dependent** on government budget funding
- **Research focus – heterogeneous**, includes almost all areas of agriculture and food technology, but **not demand driven**



The role and capacity of the education system

- Well developed educational system - faculties specializing in the agriculture field, food technology and biotechnology, and secondary schools with branches in agriculture
- Study programs NOT adapted to the labor market needs
- Institutional capacity building – insufficient
- Most frequently used sources of knowledge on new technologies: seminars, workshops, media, cooperation between educational institutions.



The capacity of small agri-food firms to adopt innovations and new technology

- Capacity of **individual farmers, farmers' organisations, small agri-business firms** to adopt innovations and new technology is **insufficient**
- **Farmers' cooperation** is **encouraging** the transfer of knowledge, **but not sufficiently**
- The most important **boosters** of knowledge and technology transfer and sources of information on innovations and technological development of small agri-food firms: **participation in fairs, advises from extension services, business clusters** and **business incubators**

The role of other relevant stakeholders in agri-food sector

- **Farmer's organizations**
 - Small share of individual farmers included
 - Lack of cooperation and trust
- **Cooperatives**
 - Small-scale, very little capacity for investment in research and innovation
 - Most of the funding from international projects
- **Business networks/clusters**
 - Created to better sell on the markets
 - Supported by foreign donor projects
 - Lack of potential for innovation, new products and services development
- **FDI**
 - Have not brought significant upgrade of the economy
 - Often contributed to deterioration of labor standards and environmental degradation
 - Rarely enter the agricultural sector and even more rarely as greenfield investments (mostly as acquisition and re-branding of established brands)
- **Retail companies**
 - Strongest position in the agri-food chain
 - Some influence on agri-food firms in introduction/developing of new products
 - Some innovations in marketing activities
 - Online retail – especially evident during the period of COVID pandemic



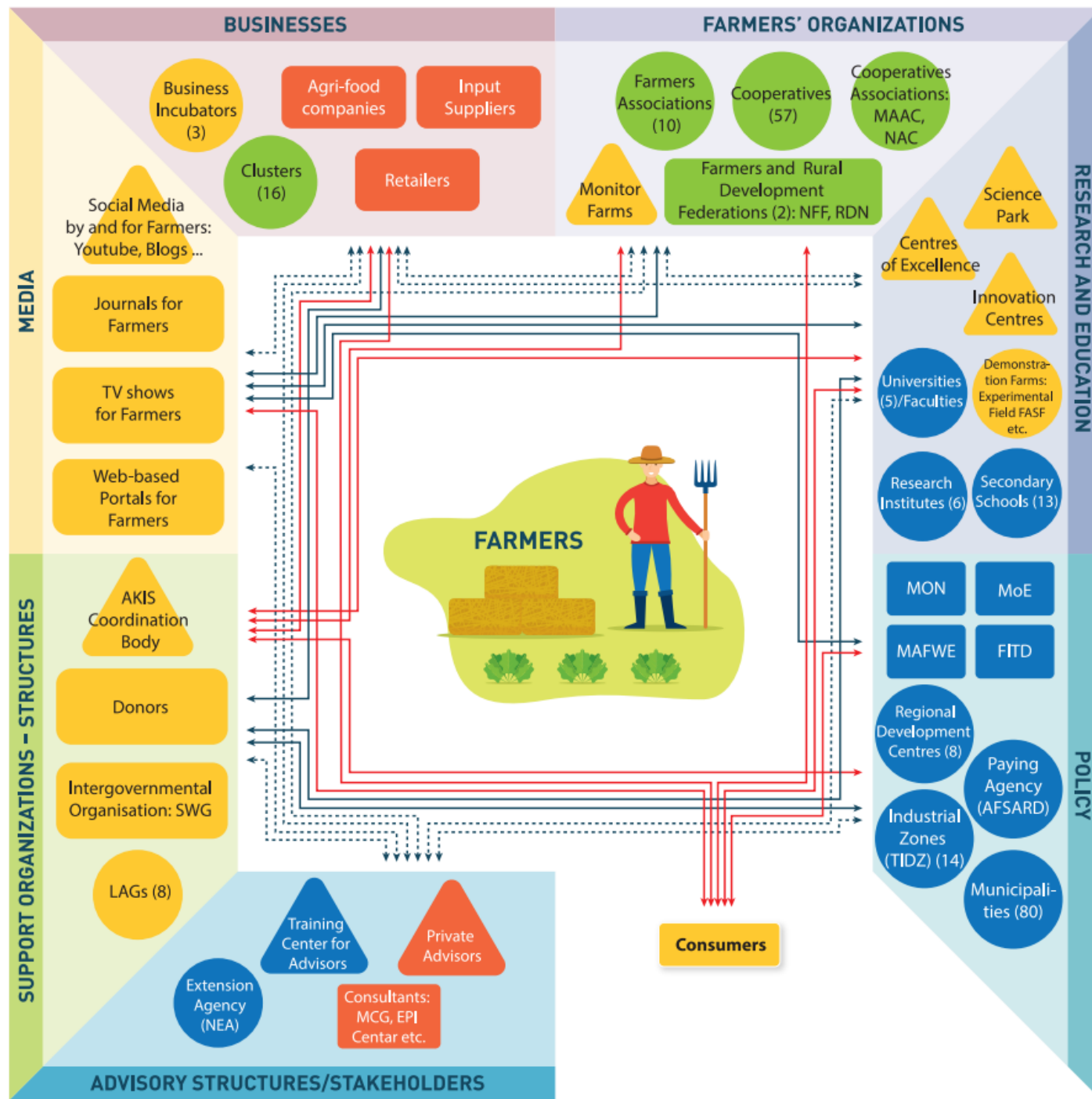
The role of Horizon Europe

- **Research institutions from WB** - low success rate and minor participation in research projects funded by the HORIZON 2020 program
- **Small and medium enterprises** – very low involvement in H2020 projects
- **Reasons** - very competitive programme, insufficient capacities in research and lack of international networking
- **Potential** - there are university professors and experts with significant experience in participation in the European programs FP7, Horizon 2020 and COST as well as in bilateral and multilateral cooperation

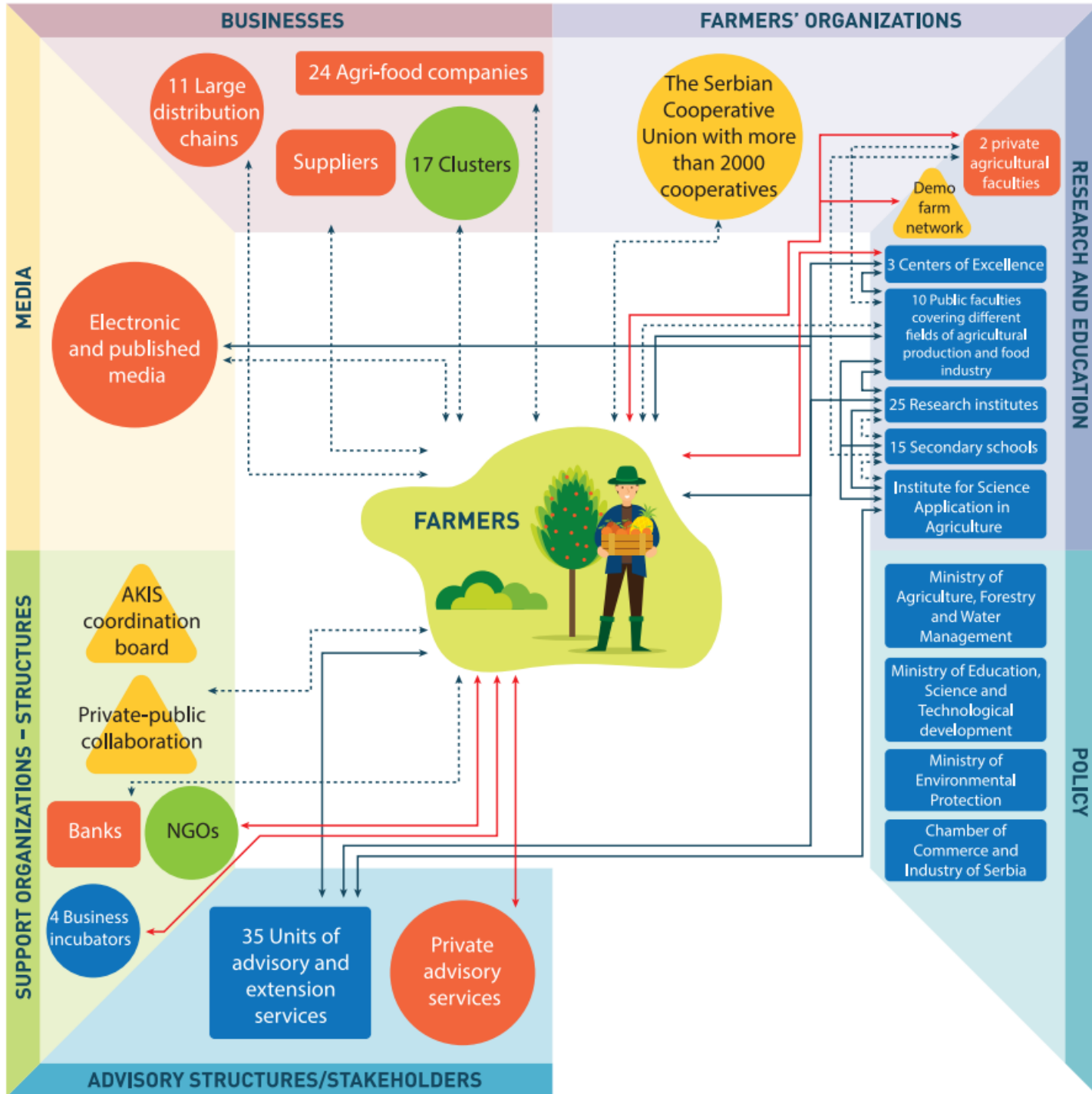
How Horizon and IPA could be adjusted to provide better support to agri-food sector

- Allocation of funds to **targeted key areas** for the agricultural sector in the WB
- **Preferential treatment** for proposals containing institutions from WB (with special focus on young researchers)
- **Special calls** (within HORIZON or IPA) for the WB regional scientific development
- Endorse more funds with **more flexible conditions** for strengthening the links between business, science and advisory services in the WB
- Introduction of a **mentor institutional program** of EU countries for institutions in the Western Balkan countries/territories
- Providing **funds to EU institutes for the dissemination** of knowledge and innovation in partnership with institutes **in the Western Balkan countries/territories**

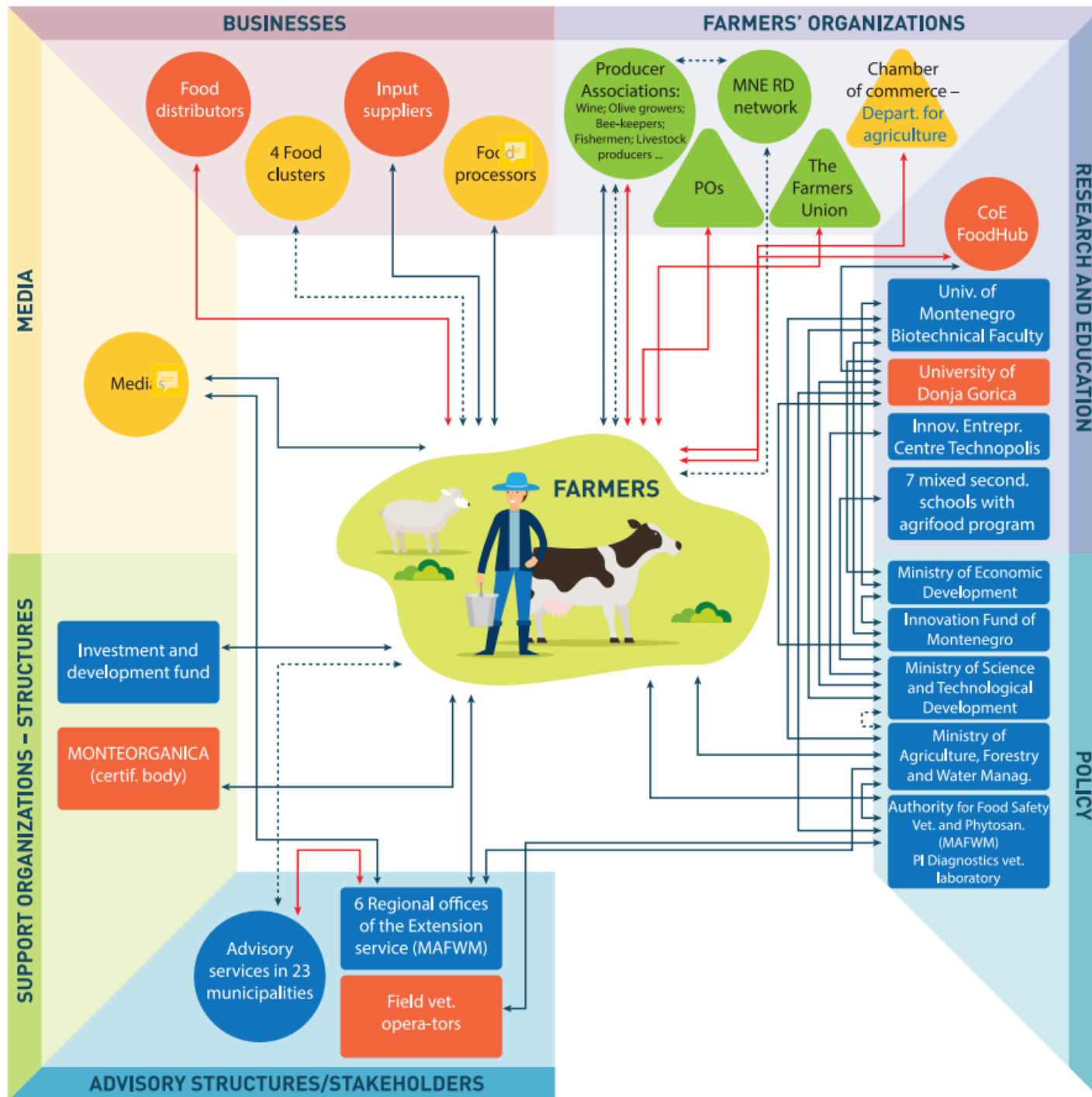




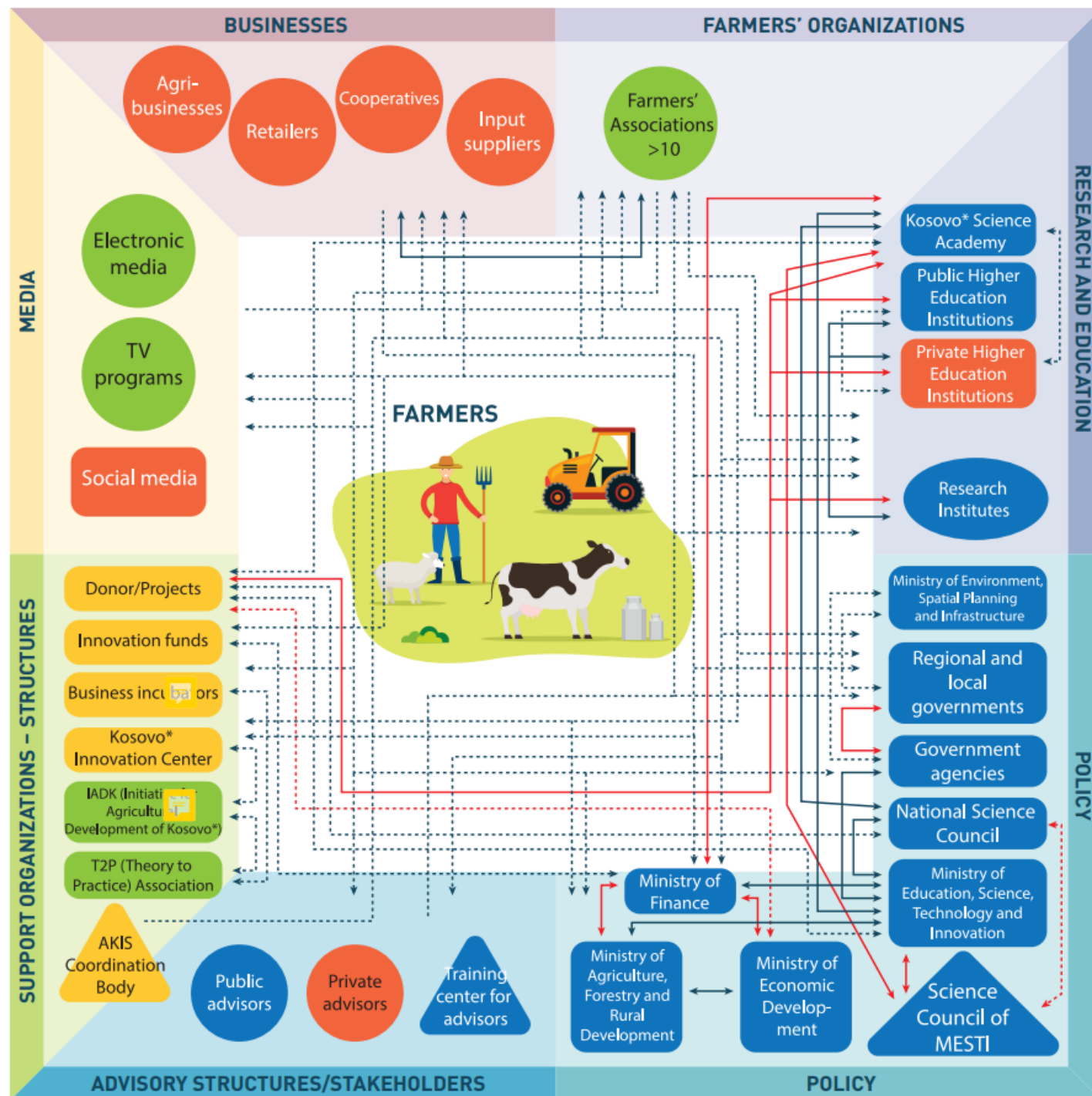
National AKIS Map – North Macedonia



National AKIS Map – Serbia

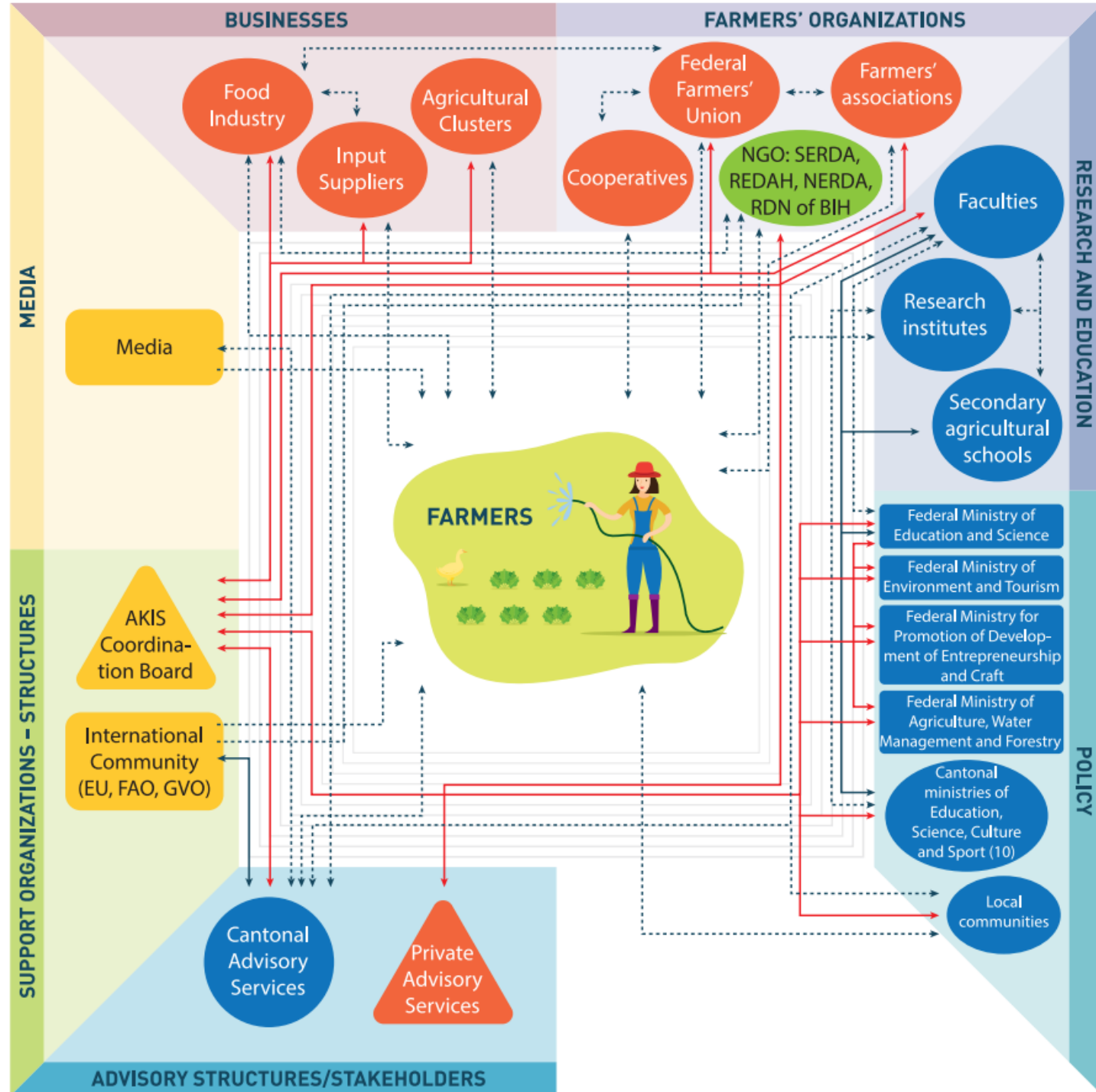


National AKIS Map – Montenegro

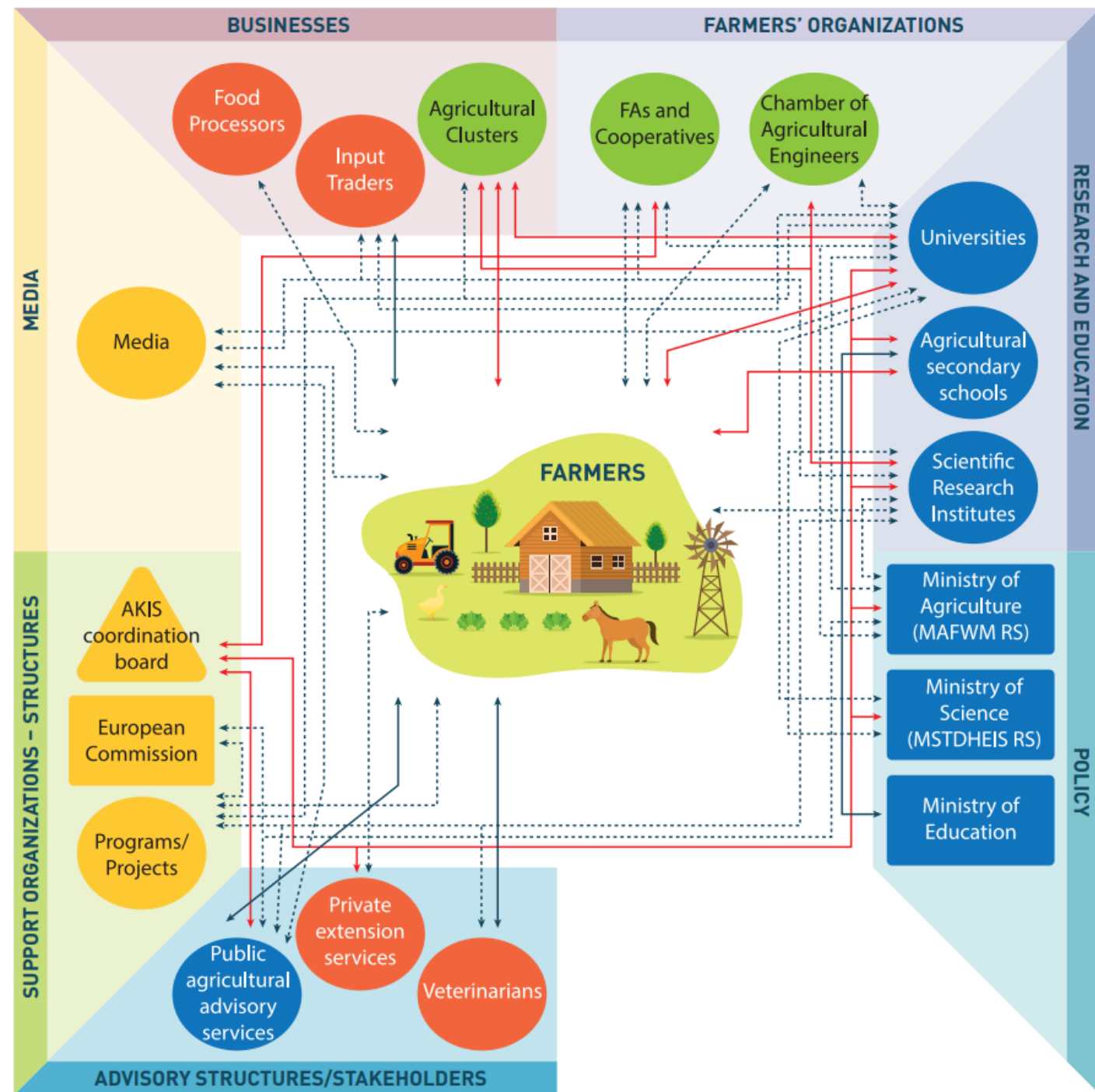


National AKIS Map – Kosovo*

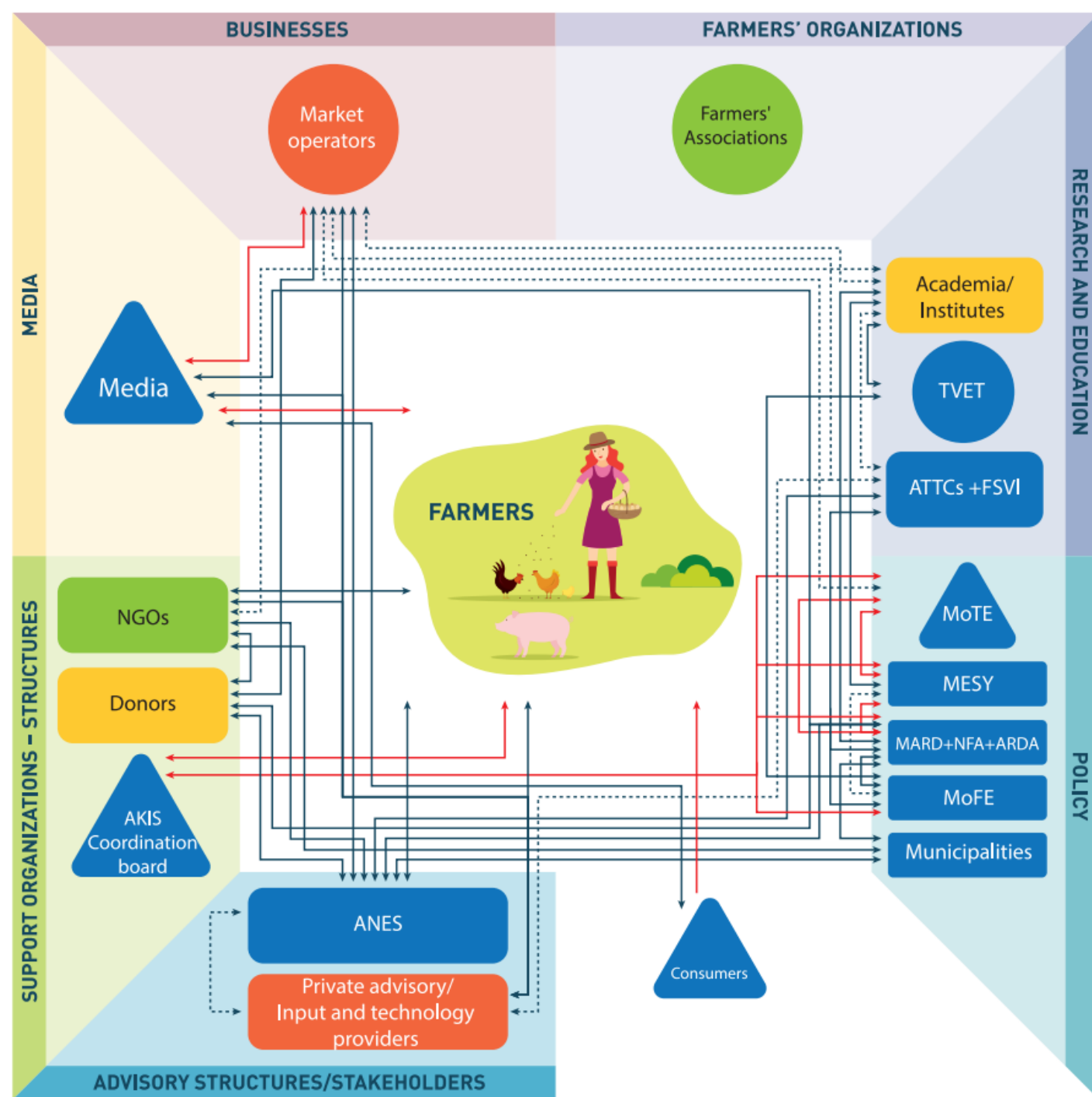
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National AKIS Map – Federation of BiH, BiH

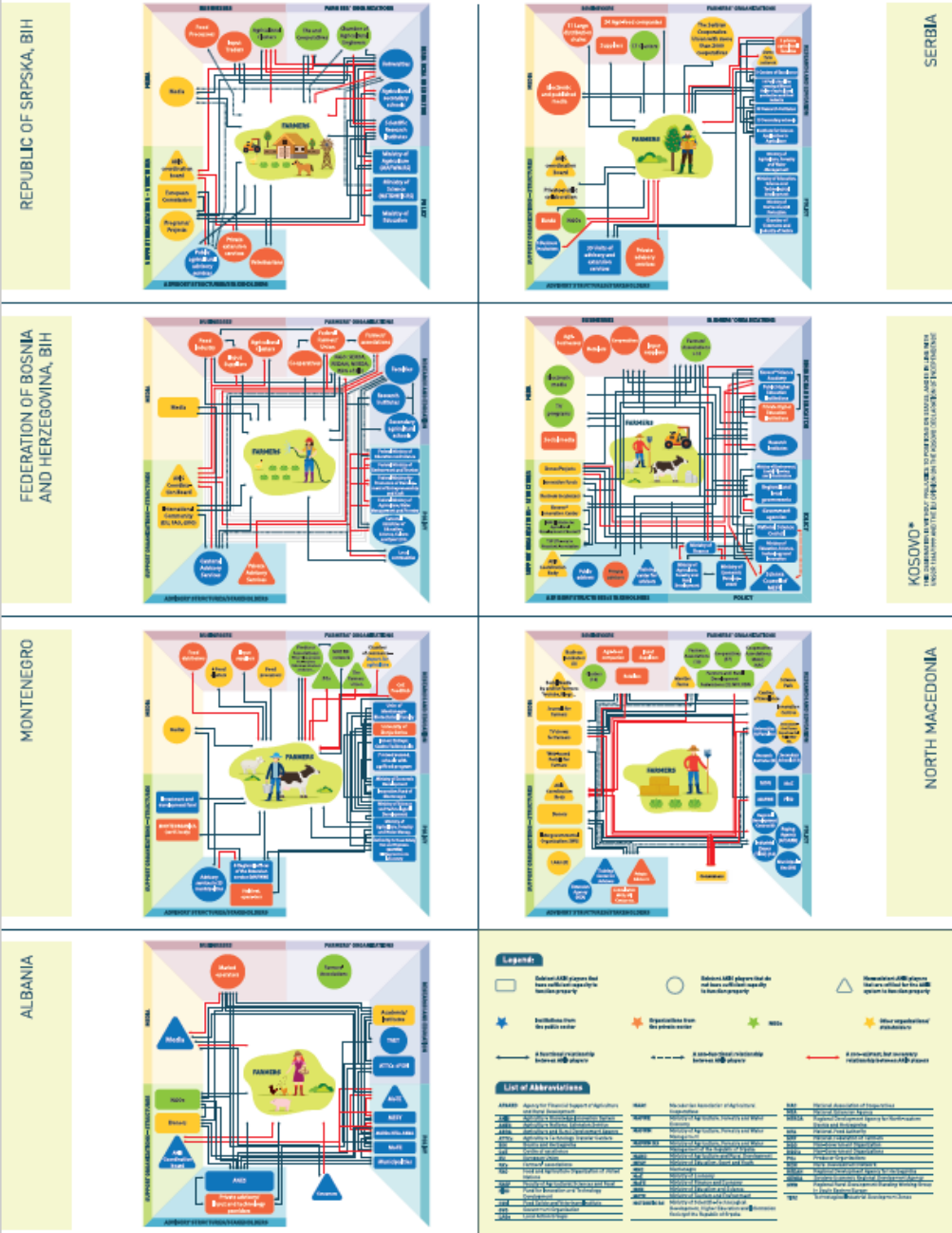


National AKIS Map – Republic of Srpska, BiH













National AKIS Map – Albania

AGRICULTURE KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION SYSTEMS (AKIS)



Regional AKIS Map

Legend:

-  Existing AKIS players that have sufficient capacity to function properly
-  Existing AKIS players that do not have sufficient capacity to function properly
-  Non-existent AKIS players that are critical for the AKIS system to function properly
-  Institutions from the public sector
-  Organizations from the private sector
-  NGOs
-  Other organizations/stakeholders
-  A functional relationship between AKIS players
-  A non-functional relationship between AKIS players
-  A non-existent, but necessary relationship between AKIS players

Completed milestones in the WBs

- National SWOT on AKIS
- National AKIS Roadmaps
- Proposed Draft AKIS Plans
- Regional AKIS priorities
- <https://seerural.org/publications/>

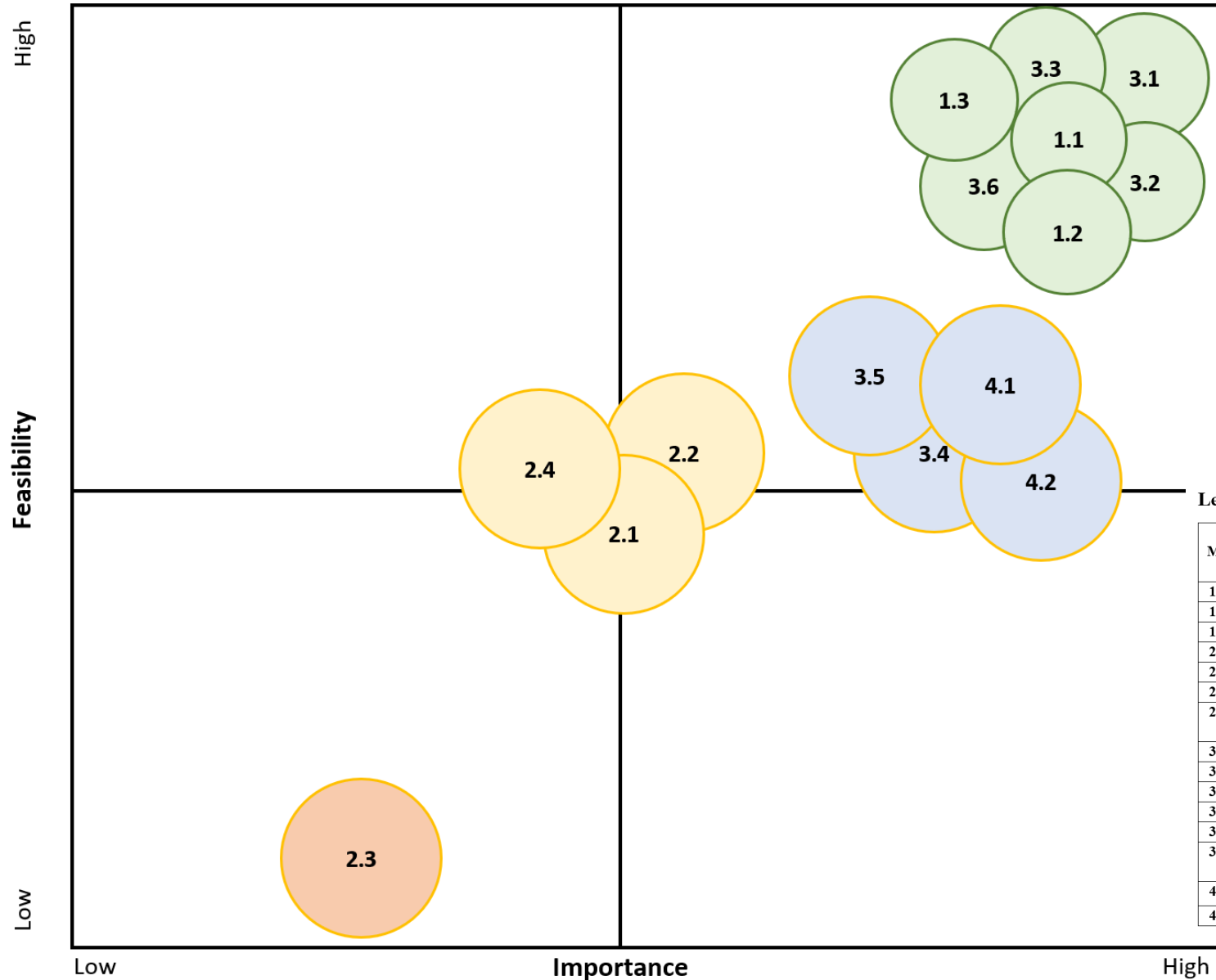


Excerpt from the proposed National AKIS plan for North Macedonia

Table 4. Action Plan for AKIS development in North Macedonia (*1-7, 1 least impact; **1-7; 1 least feasible)

Specified objectives	Required action	Milestones	Deliverables	Resources needed	Deadline	Impact*	Feasibility**
Strategic objective 1: Formalisation of AKIS							
1. Adoption of a Law and by-laws on AKIS (led by MAFWE in collaboration with relevant stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare Law on AKIS - Prepare by-laws on AKIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government decision on the formalisation of AKIS - Establish a working group (with different stakeholders) for the preparation of the Law and the by-laws - Organise meetings and workshops on the Law and by-laws - Public discussion on the prepared Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law and by-laws on the AKIS prepared and adopted 	MAFWE (with the support of Donors EU funds)	2023-2025	7	7
2. Strategy for AKIS (led by MAFWE in collaboration with relevant stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government decision on preparing a long-term strategy for AKIS - Gather different representatives of AKIS actors in governing the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define objectives, tasks, regulations, roles, jurisdiction etc. on the AKIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategy on AKIS prepared 	MAFWE (with the support of Donors EU funds)	2023-2025	7	7
3. Adoption of the new Law and by-laws on Advisory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare (complete) the Law on Advisory Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the process of the Law adoption (round up the public discussion on the Law) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law and by-laws on the Advisory Services adopted 	MAFWE (with support of EU funds)	2022-2023	7	7

Example: Map of priorities for North Macedonia



Legend:

Milestones	Priority score: Importance	Priority score: Feasibility
1.1. Government decision on formalisation of AKIS	High	High
1.2. Strategy for the formalisation defined (objectives, tasks, regulations, etc.)	High	High
1.3. Adoption of the new Law on Advisory Services	High	High
2.1. Establish private advisory service	Medium	Medium
2.2. Establish Academy for certifying advisors	Medium	Medium
2.3. Establish Science Park	Medium	Low
2.4. Establish other institutions/organisations to support research, innovation and technology transfer (RITT) in the agri-food sector	Medium	Medium
3.1. Enhance human capacities of (the existing public and new private) advisory services	High	High
3.2. Enhance human capacities employed in the research and education sector	High	High
3.3. Enhance human capacities of public institutions in supporting RITT	High	High
3.4. Introduce reforms in the agri-food education with focus on RITT development	High	Medium
3.5. Strengthen RITT capacities of research and education institutions	High	Medium
3.6. Strengthen capacities of <u>farming based</u> organisations in their RITT mediation role between private and other sectors	High	High
4.1. Establish a broker entity that supports creation of functional relationships of the AKIS	High	Medium
4.2. Encourage farmers-led interactive innovation	High	Medium

Common objectives

- Finalization of **Smart Specialization Strategies**
- **Formalization of AKIS** and its key components (such as advisory services)
- **Integration of private advisory services** in the system
- **Training, accreditation and impartiality** of advisors
- **Capacity building, digitalization**
- **Farmer awareness raising** in the use of knowledge, technology and innovation
- **Science internationalization** and external fund raising
- Establishment of **new AKIS structures** like: National Coordination Board, new institutional structures (innovation centres, centres of excellence, hubs), AKIS local structures (operational groups EIP like and joint local government structures)
- **New forms of networking** and exchange (focus groups, demonstration and monitor farms, mentoring)
- Upgrading of **new forms of linking** between the various AKIS stakeholders (bottom up organisational structure and networking)
- Improve usage of **IPARD support**: Cooperation for Innovation and Knowledge Transfer; Advisory services.



Proposed future regional interventions

- Adjustment of the **currently operational REAWGs** (Wine, Organic Production, Soil) to bring together all related stakeholders for Interactive **exchange of research, knowledge and innovation**
- Establishment of a **Regional Educational and Training Centre** for training and accreditation of **advisors**
- Identification of **model monitor farms** and establishment of **WB region-wide network of demo farms** for the exchange of organized visits for sharing of knowledge, practices, challenges and solutions.
- Establishment of an Operational Group for '**AKIS awareness raising**' amongst farmers and other agri-food stakeholders.

AKIS as part of the Agricultural Policy Forum 2022, 19 – 20 October, Tirana, Albania

Excerpt from **Tirana Agenda 2022** (to be conveyed to the SEE Ministerial Meeting on 15 Nov in Montenegro):

“**The Forum calls** public authorities of the Western Balkans to enable **functional and integrated Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems** (AKIS) in the region. This would be a long-term process that could be achieved gradually through steps that focus on the transfer of knowledge pertinent to addressing the impact of the global challenges of food security and climate change. **National AKIS action plans should be adopted**, leading to enhancing existing and creating new structures and forms of networking, capacity building and knowledge exchange of all actors in the agri-food system. The **level of awareness** of farmers should be raised on the benefits of the use of knowledge, technology and innovation. Use of all **financing mechanisms**, including IPARD support for the knowledge - based measures, should be availed of as part of this process.”

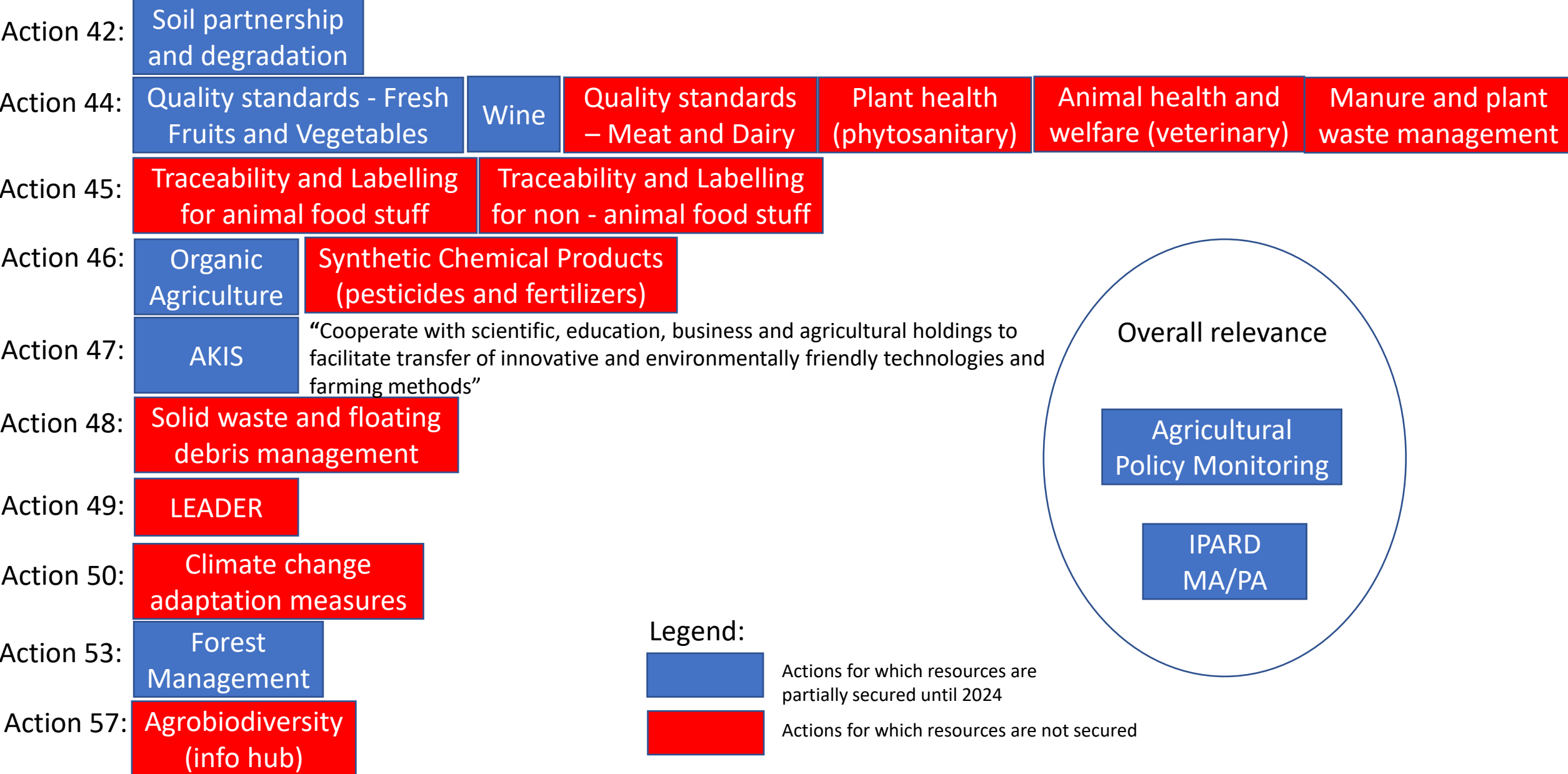


Sofia Declaration

- The **Green Agenda** for the Western Balkans - endorsed on 10 November 2020;
- **Commitment** by the Leaders from the Western Balkans to implement actions in **five pillars**:
 1. Climate, energy, mobility
 2. Circular economy
 3. Depollution
 4. Sustainable agriculture and food systems (**SWG as main coordinator for the WBs**)
 5. Biodiversity



Action Plan for the GAWB – actions under responsibility of SWG



Question (proposal):

Why not embedding
SWG Western Balkans AKIS
Into
SWG SCAR AKIS?





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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Working Group (SWG) in SEE

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