

Pilot project application: Facilitating AKIS actors' interaction in Greece

Contact details of the facilitator

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Summary of the pilot project (Max. 1600 characters)

(Including stakeholders, problem/challenge, approach, relevant links)

In Greece, the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) is highly fragmented and ineffective¹ since the lacking coordination mechanisms between actors maintain extremely weak linkages and poor cooperation. As a result, the advisory / educational services provided to farmers are also poor with the public actors and the farm-based organizations being unable to adequately support farmers. Overall, the country so far has been proven very slow and ineffective in making full use of important EU policies (e.g. OGs/EIP Agri, Farm- Advisory System) to support advisors and farmers achieve more sustainable rural development².

However, through the appropriate utilization of its new CAP Strategic Plan, Greece aims to set-up a national AKIS that will encourage cooperation among different actors and promote innovation³. Though the expectations are high, none initiative towards their fulfilment have been launched yet (according to communication with the Managing Authority (MA) in Aug. 2023, in the framework of the ATTRACTISS project). Nevertheless, the MA appears to welcome the contribution of the Agr. University of Athens to activating processes leading to a functional AKIS.

In this context, the proposed pilot project (PP) seeks to facilitate the interaction among the (key) AKIS actors and increase their mutual understanding. In this way, it can accelerate their responsiveness and effectiveness in initiating the national AKIS

¹ https://i2connect-h2020.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022-04-29-AKIS-cross-analysis_final_compressed.pdf

² <https://www.agrilink2020.eu/category/others?tag=practice-abstracts&country=greece>

³ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-04/csp-at-a-glance-greece_en.pdf



Coordinating Body, establishing a functional AKIS and serving the respective objectives of the Greek CAP Strategic Plan.

Among the target actors are included: the Ministry of Rural Dev. & Food, the Hellenic Agr. Organization-ELGO DIMITRA, Farmers Cooperatives' Unions, the Geotechnical Chambers of Greece, the newly established Panhellenic Association of Certified Farmers' Advisors (PACFA) and independent advisors/ advisory companies (including those registered in the I2CONNECT Database).

The PP will include facilitated group meetings of 3-12 AKIS actors. The number of participating actors per meeting will be decided in order to help their efficient and meaningful dialogue. The actors will be identified during a preparatory phase prior to each facilitation event through personal contact between the facilitator with the respective actors. Based on the analysis of the preparatory contacts on the actors' needs, a structured facilitation process will be designed and the I2CONNECT toolbox will be used accordingly. The facilitator will keep minutes of each meeting; follow up meeting will be held, where appropriate.

Motivation for this proposal to be selected as a pilot project (Max. 1000 characters)

The proposed pilot project (PP) aims to activate the AKIS actors in Greece and contribute substantially to the implementation of the country's commitment to a functional AKIS. In parallel, it will provide new insights and understanding about the roles and functions of AKIS actors, contributing to the successful completion of the relevant tasks of the I2CONNECT project. In addition, the PP will generate synergies with the ATTRACTISS project, serving in particular the tasks about multi-actor engagement (Task 2.1), facilitating institutional capacity development activities for national EU MS ISS (4.1) and identifying silent actors as well as best fit models for MAs and national and regional AKIS actors (task 5.1).⁴

⁴ Grand Agreement 101061060

