



modern **AKIS**

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*Modernisation of Agriculture through more efficient and
effective Agricultural Knowledge and Information
Systems*

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factsheets**

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Acronyms

AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
cbCoP	country-based Community of Practice
ccCoP	cross-country Community of Practice
CNA	Capacity Needs Assessment
EIPs	European Innovation Partnerships
MS	Member State
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MAA	Multi-Actor Approach
OG	Operational Groups
RDP	Rural Development Program
RMA	Reflexive Monitoring in Action
SP	Strategic Plan
TAJ	Transformational AKIS Journey

1. Executive Summary

This deliverable, D4.10 - *AKIS Good Practices: Innovation Factsheets*, presents a synthesis of the main outcomes derived from the activities carried out within the cross-country Communities of Practice (ccCoPs) under Work Package 4 (WP4) of the modernAKIS project. It offers a curated selection of the most significant and strategically relevant results that have emerged from the ccCoP events held up to Month 30 (M30), following the strategic orientation set forth in D1.1 - *Conceptual and Methodological Framework for Transformative AKIS Journeys*.

The document is structured into three main parts. It begins by introducing a clusterization of the group work results obtained through the ccCoPs, analytically organizing the outcomes around five key strategic dimensions: the core strategic dimensions of AKIS development identified through group work. This first section highlights the initial progress achieved in collecting and reflecting the co-creative work of the ccCoPs to advance the transformative goals of modernAKIS. It aims to provide a conceptual framing that connects the practical experiences of the groups with broader system innovation processes, paving the way for the next events where the ccCoPs are expected to be fully established with representatives from all Member States (MS).

Following this, the deliverable provides a detailed and structured account of each ccCoP event held to date. Each event description includes comprehensive information about the agenda, the objectives pursued the logistical and organizational details, the composition of the target audience, the methodologies applied, and the specific results generated through guided co-creation activities. Special attention is given to the diverse methodological approaches employed — such as World Café, Policy Labs, Gamification, and Role-Playing — which have supported dynamic knowledge exchange, peer learning and collaborative problem-solving among multi-actor groups.

Finally, the deliverable presents the set of visual materials developed in the form of innovation factsheets, which synthesize the key outcomes of the group work. These factsheets are intended to facilitate knowledge dissemination across the modernAKIS community and beyond, capturing best practices and innovative approaches arising from the collaborative work carried out under WP4.

Overall, this deliverable documents the substantial progress achieved towards building a more integrated, capacitated and innovative AKIS at European level within the ccCoPs. It provides a foundation for continued development and consolidation of the ccCoPs, supporting the co-creation of transformative pathways that will contribute to achieving the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the modernization of AKIS.

2. Introduction

The Communities of Practice (ccCoPs) are a cornerstone of WP4 within the modernAKIS project. As outlined in the strategic framework of the WP4 presented in D4.7 - *Report on Activities to Increase AKIS Actors' Involvement*, the primary aim of this element is to establish and foster dynamic groups of key change agents from all European Union (EU) member states. These groups are categorized into five distinct thematic areas, each of which addresses critical dimensions of the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS). These thematic areas are as follows:

- **ccCoP1: Policy, Governance, and CAP Interventions** – This group focuses on the continuous improvement of AKIS Strategic Plans and the modernization of AKIS governance, particularly in the context of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) interventions.
- **ccCoP2: Integration of Advisors into AKIS** – This thematic area examines the role of advisors within AKIS, with particular emphasis on integrating innovation support into advisory services.
- **ccCoP3: Connecting Research and Practice** – This group seeks to strengthen the links between research and practical application.
- **ccCoP4: Knowledge Access and Knowledge Flows** – This thematic area aims to enhance the accessibility and flow of knowledge within AKIS.
- **ccCoP5: Life-long Learning Education** – The objective of this group is to exchange best practices related to life-long learning within the agricultural sector.

Through these thematic groups, the ccCoPs aim to promote capacity building while simultaneously generating valuable outputs through processes of co-creation and collaborative reflection. The insights derived from these interactions will provide comprehensive, representative information and knowledge regarding the current state and future needs of AKIS actors, thus contributing to the advancement of agricultural knowledge and innovation systems at the European level.

A central goal of WP4 is to systematically capture and analyse the outputs that emerge from the events and actions organized within the ccCoPs. These outputs, which result from the interactions and collaborations among actors, are critical for understanding the evolving dynamics of AKIS. The deliverable at hand focuses on collecting these results in the most accurate and comprehensive manner possible. It seeks to document both the tangible outcomes and the development of capacities during these events, providing a visual representation of the knowledge, skills, and insights that emerge from the various co-creation exercises that take place within the ccCoP events.

This deliverable will present these results both descriptively and visually, through factsheets that summarize the key findings and outputs from these activities. These factsheets will not only provide a structured overview of the events but will also capture the most significant outcomes, allowing for a detailed reflection on the impact of the ccCoPs in shaping the future of these AKIS groups. Through this approach, the deliverable will contribute to the overarching objectives of the modernAKIS project, ensuring that the insights gained from the ccCoPs are accessible and actionable for all stakeholders inside and outside the project.

3. Clusterization of Group Work Results from ccCoP Events.

Building upon the framework outlined in Deliverable D4.7 concerning the formation of the ccCoP groups, WP4 initiated its first activities in Month 9 (M9). The initial efforts were directed towards defining the strategic approach and drafting the preliminary structure of the ccCoP groups, composed of selected representatives from the country-based Community of Practice (cbCoPs) of each of the 27 Member States (MS). Consequently, during this early phase of the project, primary efforts were devoted to engaging with these profiles, facilitating the formation of the ccCoP groups, organizing the first events, and establishing an appropriate monitoring and follow-up mechanism.

Considerable progress has been achieved during this period: a significant number of ccCoP groups have been established, and multiple ccCoP events have been successfully organized, ensuring broad participation from the 27 Member States. Efforts are ongoing to consolidate these groups with full (100%) representation from all Member States.

This section presents the analysis of group work across the various ccCoP events reveals a coherent structure of critical themes that underpin the progress of AKIS integration and innovation within these communities. By clustering these outcomes, we can deepen our understanding of the conceptual foundations of the collaborative activities and their contributions to systemic transformation within AKIS. Five overarching clusters of group work results have been identified through the ccCoP events:

- **Co-Creation and Collaborative Problem-Solving**

Co-creation and collaborative problem-solving are fundamental to building effective Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS).

This cluster embodies participatory innovation processes where diverse stakeholders (such as farmer association representatives, advisors, researchers, and coordination bodies) collectively generate solutions.

Rather than knowledge flowing linearly from research to practice, knowledge is developed through interaction and mutual learning.

The theoretical basis for this lies in interactive innovation models, emphasizing that innovation is not an individual act but a socially constructed process.

Group work that stimulated role-play, co-design and scenario-building exercises reflected these principles, offering a space where systemic challenges could be addressed through shared responsibility.

- **Capacity Building and Skills Development**

Building individual and organizational capacities is a strategic precondition for fostering dynamic and adaptive AKIS.

Capacity building in this context is not limited to technical training; it involves cultivating soft skills (communication, facilitation, brokerage), strategic competencies (innovation management, system thinking) and adaptive leadership.

Skills development aligns with the notion that AKIS actors must be continuous learners within a constantly evolving agricultural ecosystem.

The group results emphasized that preparing advisors and coordination bodies for future challenges requires integrated approaches that link knowledge enhancement to behavioural change and network engagement.

- **AKIS System Strengthening (Governance, Integration and Impartiality)**

AKIS strengthening involves reshaping the governance mechanisms that organize how knowledge is shared, validated and utilized across the agricultural sector.

Integration refers to the effective inclusion of all AKIS actors into cohesive, interoperable systems rather than fragmented structures.

Governance here is understood not merely as administrative oversight but as the facilitation of participatory coordination, accountability, transparency and mutual recognition among diverse actors.

A key theoretical tension addressed in group work is the balance between openness (broad participation) and control (ensuring impartiality, avoiding conflicts of interest), which is vital for building credible and trusted AKIS frameworks.

- **Facilitating Knowledge Flows and Digital Innovation**

Efficient knowledge flows are the lifeblood of AKIS and are increasingly mediated by digital tools and platforms.

The theory of knowledge dynamics emphasizes that knowledge must circulate across institutional, disciplinary and cultural boundaries to drive innovation.

Digitalization acts as both a technical enabler (through platforms, data-sharing, decision-support tools) and a social enabler (by fostering new forms of collaboration).

However, the adoption of digital technologies must account for structural barriers such as interoperability issues, access inequalities and user-centred design failures.

The group work highlighted that successful facilitation of knowledge flows requires not only technological solutions but a deep redesign of interaction patterns among AKIS actors.

- **Evaluation and Metrics Development**

The ability to monitor and evaluate AKIS activities is essential for learning, adaptation, and system optimization.

Evaluation in a complex, multi-actor context like AKIS must move beyond output measurement toward capturing the quality of interactions, knowledge spillovers, and transformative impacts.

Theoretical models of learning systems suggest that feedback loops (where information on successes and failures is continuously reintegrated) are critical to resilience and improvement.

Group discussions indicated that developing shared evaluation criteria, participatory assessment methodologies, and dynamic indicators are crucial steps to embed reflexivity into AKIS practices.

Evaluation thus becomes not an administrative obligation but a central tool for steering innovation processes sustainably and inclusively.

4. ccCoPs events

This section provides a detailed account of the cross-sectoral, cross-border events and multi-actor activities carried out within the ccCoPs under Task T4.3: *Better Integration of Actors in the AKIS*. These activities span from the project's inception up to M9 (May 2023) and are designed to address key thematic areas relevant to the CAP and its MS strategic plans. Particular attention has been given to aligning these activities with the results of the Capacity Needs Assessment (CNA), ensuring that each ccCoP group benefits from a tailored approach that meets their specific requirements.

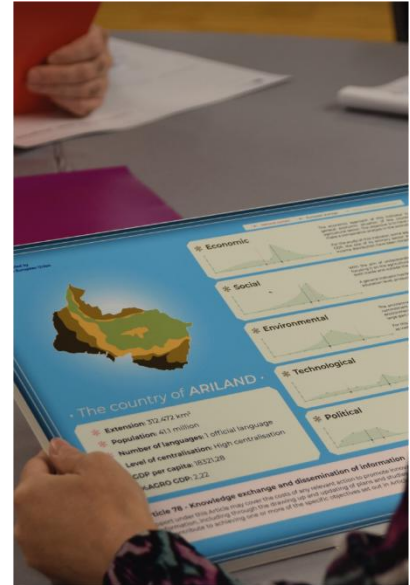
Each event is analysed in depth, focusing on critical aspects of design and execution, including organizational processes, facilitation strategies and applied methodologies.

Beyond immediate outputs, the evaluation explores the impact of hands-on activities that foster capacity building and facilitate knowledge exchange within multi-actor groups. The outcomes are assessed not only in terms of their direct results but also their contribution to strengthening collaboration, enhancing mutual understanding among diverse stakeholders and driving innovation within AKIS.

This comprehensive assessment identifies best practices (shared with WP1 for inclusion in the Compendium) along with challenges encountered and lessons learned. These insights help refine future cross-sectoral and multi-actor initiatives, contributing to a more effective integration of actors across sectors and borders, ultimately supporting the overarching objectives of the CAP and related strategic plans.

4.1. Joint ccCoP1 and ccCoP4 face-to-face event: How do they flow, the knowledge flows?

Title of the event: How do they flow, the knowledge flows?	
F2F/Online	F2F (modernAKIS 2 nd General Assembly in Zagreb, Croatia)
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP1: Policy, governance and CAP interventions - AKIS governance modernization ccCoP4: Knowledge access and knowledge flows
Date	08/11/2023
Coordination Partners	Lívia Kránitz (AKI), Krisztina Magócs (AKI), Sofia Mouseti (AUA), Lucía Braña (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
Type of actors	CBs, Project Partners
N. of attendees	91
Countries represented	28 (including Ukraine)



• Agenda

This event was incorporated into the second General Assembly of the modernAKIS project, held in Zagreb, on November 8th, 2023.

Meet and greet!

Team introduction, differences ccCoPs/cBCoPs, methodology overview (FEUGA)

Unlocking the power of knowledge flows and knowledge exchange.

Brief presentation introducing the topic- conceptual framework for the terms of information/knowledge flow/transfer/exchange (AKI).

Common interpretation of the terms above

Online voting, word cloud etc. (AKI).

Knowledge exchange and knowledge flows methodologies/activities

Brief presentation introducing knowledge exchange and knowledge flows tools and methodologies used in agriculture in a structured way + short survey results (AKI).

Knowledge exchange, WORKS – successes and challenges!

5 examples of different knowledge exchange/knowledge flows activities collected among the project consortia (AKI).

Ana Allamand (SOIL ASSOCIATION, United Kingdom): Innovative Farmers On-farm approach to research and innovation in the UK.

Susanna Lahnamäki-Kivelä (LUKE, Finland): AgriHubi – experiences of networking tools.

Dimitar Vanev (NAAS, Bulgaria): National Agricultural Advisory Services - On-farm demonstration and experiences of Horizon 2020 project NEFERTITI.

Myriam Gaspard (CRAO, France): Mixed technological networks (Réseaux Mixtes Technologiques) national thematic networks of France.

Mark Gibson (TEAGASC, Ireland): Farmer discussion groups in Ireland, a Teagasc perspective.

Embarking on the next chapter: A Preview of what's ahead in the Workshop (FEUGA).

Survey Insights (AKI).

Exploring key findings from the survey on knowledge exchange activities supported under Art. 78/2 CAP SP interventions – actions of other forms of knowledge exchange and dissemination of information.

Interactive Session - Collaborative Problem-Solving: Exploring Common Challenges (FEUGA).

Sharing and discussing experience on the implementation of Art. 78/2

Role-play activity.

Wrapping Up & Closing remarks

Q&A and Fast Voting Session for the Next ccCoP Focus

- **Target Audience**

The primary target audience for this event includes AKIS CBs, as the content is specifically tailored to their needs and interests. Additionally, project partners form an essential group, as their diverse expertise within the AKIS framework adds significant value. Their knowledge spans various domains integral to AKIS, ensuring that the session's highly relevant topic is addressed from multiple perspectives. This diversity enhances the depth and breadth of discussions during the interactive session, fostering a richer exchange of ideas and insights.

- **Objective**

The AKIS strategic approach to agricultural policies and the sector's sustainability performance has gained increasing importance in the new programming period, particularly within the 2023-2027 CAP MS Strategic Plans. As a result, actors such as the AKIS Coordination Bodies and CAP networks have taken a central role in facilitating a more effective and sustainable AKIS. These actors are expected to create an enabling environment for a well-functioning AKIS by fostering cooperation, facilitating knowledge flows, promoting knowledge exchange and aligning CAP interventions. This approach aims to meet the demand for a more efficient, inclusive and qualitative AKIS.

Key to driving this system change are capacity building, stakeholder involvement, and effective coordination. The primary objective of the joint ccCoP1 and ccCoP4 is to contribute to this transformation by fostering collective learning and exploring how AKIS CBs and CAP networks can best fulfil their roles. The first ccCoP1 and ccCoP4, will focus on clarifying and systematizing the commonly used terms related to knowledge, knowledge exchange, knowledge transfer and knowledge flows. It will also collect, discuss, and organize effective tools, methodologies, and practices already in use or planned for agricultural knowledge facilitation.

This event serves as an important meeting point for the thematic topics of both ccCoP1 and ccCoP4, as these two groups share a significant portion of their audience, primarily the AKIS Coordination Bodies. The General Assembly (GA) of modernAKIS provides a valuable opportunity to work across these themes, with knowledge exchange being the common thread that unites the discussions. A common understanding of key terms—such as information/knowledge, knowledge exchange/transfer/flows—is essential for the proper functioning of AKIS.

The first ccCoP1 and ccCoP4 joint event aims to establish a shared conceptual understanding of these terms, contributing to a unified AKIS terminology. As a result, the first ccCoP will produce a conceptual framework for modernAKIS that defines these terms. Additionally, the COP will review and assess the tools and methods that support knowledge exchange and/or flow in agriculture, highlighting their advantages and limitations in terms of applicability and efficiency at both national network levels and in relation to Article 78/2 CAP interventions.

- **Methodology and summary of the session**

For this event, a dual methodology was applied: the World Café Format and Gamification (Role-Play). The World Café Format was used to integrate the theoretical knowledge presented in the first part of the event, which focused on knowledge flows and the CAP (Article 78 – Knowledge Exchange and Dissemination of Information). This approach contextualized and exemplified the information, preparing participants for the second phase of the event. In this phase, participants applied the knowledge through The AKIS Country Game, a role-play exercise that was explained in detail earlier in the document (Methodologies Menu, Gamification) and is now an exploitable component of the project. The game allowed participants to engage in a dynamic simulation of AKIS within nine different country contexts and different AKIS roles (advisors, farmers, researchers, policy makers, NGOs and private associations), helping them better understand the complexities of knowledge exchange and collaboration in real-world scenarios.

The objective of the game is to come up with a list of proposals to implement Article 78 with the information, experiences and tools shared during the capacity building event, involving each of the participating actors in at least one of the proposals.

The achievement of this objective fulfils two functions: 1) to put into practice the theoretical knowledge explained during the first part of the workshop and 2) to make the participants think from the point of view of another AKIS actor, defending their interests as their own.

- **Group work results**

The joint ccCoP event provided valuable insights into improving knowledge flows within AKIS through collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches. This gathering demonstrated how role-play scenarios and group discussions could generate tailored solutions to address the unique challenges faced by each participating region, represented by the “made-up countries” of the game (Ariland, Arnems, Belmard, Elbenia, Ganedy, Ilem, Meiga, Orlow and Swelce). A recurring theme throughout the event was the recognition of the importance of engaging diverse actors, including farmers, advisors, researchers, educators, NGOs, private entities and policymakers. Effective knowledge exchange relies on these actors working together to identify challenges, develop solution and share best practices.

The outcomes of the event highlighted the necessity of adopting tools such as digital platforms, demonstration farms, and innovation hubs to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and technological advancements. Education and training were also central to many proposals, with programs designed to equip farmers and other stakeholders with the skills needed to adopt new practices and technologies. Equally important was the development of clear indicators to measure progress and impact, including metrics like farm productivity, the number of participants and policy influence.

The event fostered significant advancements in cross-sector collaboration and demonstrated the potential for shared efforts to address complex issues such as climate change, food security, and technological gaps. The initiatives proposed by the different country groups reflect a commitment to fostering innovation and sustainability. For example, Ariland focused on a knowledge exchange program that prioritizes on-farm demonstrations and technology adoption, while Arnems developed an innovation hub aimed at reducing carbon emissions and fostering committed participation. Belmard’s network of demonstration farms sought to improve food security and enhance farmer competitiveness and Elbenia emphasized regional coordination to accelerate agricultural technological development.

Ganedy introduced the concept of an agro-tech living lab, enabling early adopters of technology to become ambassadors for their peers, while Ilem proposed practice groups to train and mentor new farmers, supported by a transnational exchange program. Meiga prioritized on-farm networking events to showcase advanced techniques in precision farming and foster connections between stakeholders. Orlow took a phased approach to addressing its technological gap, starting with foundational cooperation and progressing

to the introduction of agro-tech solutions. Swelce focused on centres of expertise, enabling stakeholders to address pressing issues like climate change and digitalization through coordinated efforts.

The event's outcomes underscore the importance of tailored, context-specific approaches to knowledge exchange in agriculture. The proposals reflect a collective commitment to fostering innovation, addressing local challenges and creating a sustainable future for farming communities. The next steps involve implementing these initiatives, refining strategies based on pilot outcomes, and continuously evaluating their impact through robust metrics. By leveraging these insights and fostering long-term partnerships, the participants aim to create resilient knowledge flows agricultural systems that are adaptable to the challenges of tomorrow.

4.2. Online ccCoP2 event: Advisors and advisory services in AKIS

Title of the event: Advisors and advisory services in AKIS	
F2F/Online	Online. Parallel session of the Networking Event, WP2: <i>AKIS in action: Fostering knowledge flows in practice</i>
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP2: Integration of advisors into AKIS
Date	29/11/2023
Coordination Partners	Sylvain Sturel (CDAF), Myriam Gaspard (CRAO), Marleen Gysen (BBD), Sander Herinckx (BBD), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
Type of actors	Advisors, Advisory Services managers, ISS providers and other profiles present in the Networking Event
N. of attendees	270/35
Countries represented	34 (including UK, Iceland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, Ukraine, Switzerland, Serbia)

- **Agenda**

This ccCoP2 online event was included as a parallel session in the first Online Networking Event (WP2) on Novembre 29th, 2023, specifically for ccCoP2 members attending the event.

Advisors in AKIS

What is AKIS concept? What in the role of advisors in the system?

What type of interventions in the CAP SPs can support advisors?

When can be advisory services be funded?

How are they supported?

What kind of cost are taken into account?

Next steps

- **Target Audience**

The audience at the networking event consisted of all AKIS profiles. The parallel session for the ccCoP2 online event primarily attracted participants (35 of the 270) people with profiles related to advisory, ISS providers, and public/private agricultural consulting services. Also, managing authorities and researchers, being minor

profiles in the context of this session, had a more limited presence, as the invitation was extended to all attendees of the networking event.

- **Objective**

The objective was to establish a common understanding of the role and definition of advisory services within the AKIS and to address fundamental concepts that could serve as a foundation for discussions among the groups on the core thematic areas of the ccCoP2. The session aimed to analyse the role of advisors in fostering innovation and knowledge transfer, while exploring the notion of impartiality and its relevance to advisory practices. It also delved into the different interventions under the CAP that can support advisors, including funding mechanisms such as the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and national and regional initiatives. Participants were guided through both direct and indirect funding channels, with detailed explanations of the types of costs eligible for support. The session was enriched with real-world examples from France and Bulgaria, illustrating practical applications of funding interventions for advisory services.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

As the initial ccCoP2 online event, a straightforward yet effective methodology was implemented to accommodate participants engaging for the first time as members of the ccCoP2. This group included individuals with varying levels of familiarity with the network, as some attendees were not directly affiliated with ccCoP2 but participated in the parallel session due to their interest in the topic of advisory services. The session was designed as an introductory exercise to foster interaction among participants, enabling them to get acquainted and engage in meaningful discussions about the theoretical content presented, in line with the session's objectives.

A structured Online World Café methodology was utilized, leveraging digital tools such as Mentimeter to facilitate interactive and collaborative engagement. Participants were encouraged to contribute their perspectives and ideas in response to key questions, which were carefully crafted to spark dialogue and reflection on the main themes of the session. The activity was guided and monitored by Myriam Gaspard (CRAO), who ensured a smooth flow of discussion and active participation.

The questions posed to the group included the following:

1. Does the information presented here align with your views on your MS CAP Strategic Plans?
2. What barriers have you identified for advisors in AKIS?
3. How can advisors be better integrated into AKIS?

The methodology emphasized open dialogue and collaborative exploration of ideas, providing a platform for participants to share insights, express concerns, and propose solutions. This interactive approach not only helped participants engage with the theoretical content but also facilitated the exchange of experiences and viewpoints, laying the groundwork for future discussions within the ccCoP2 framework.

- **Group work results**

1. **Does the information presented align with your views on your MS CAP Strategic Plans?**

Except for the UK, most participants agreed with the presentation. In Romania, there were no AKIS CBs established at this time. In the UK, a similar process is already in place. Participants raised a few questions, including differences between EIP and LEADER (Belgium). Additionally, Greece requested more information.

2. **What barriers have you identified for advisors in AKIS?**

Different kind of barriers have been mentioned:

- Lack of awareness of options available for them eg more details and contacts on cooperation intervention (++), Lack of knowledge (++), AKIS is not too well known in advisory services (Poland), short information on AKIS.
- Limited amount of money (+++).
- Inefficient implementation of CAP measures and lack of coordination between agencies.
- Individual focus may not align with CAP headlines, themes are not always applicable to programs like LEADER.
- Difficulty in convincing farmers to adopt changes.
- Advisors facing time constraints due to competing duties or managerial priorities.
- Concerns about maintaining impartiality.
- Lack of engagement or recognition from other AKIS actors.
- Limited integration of the voucher scheme with modern AKIS network registration (++).

They can be categorized

- Many advisors lack sufficient understanding of AKIS, its principles and its practical applications. This gap limits their ability to engage effectively with AKIS-related initiatives. To address this, training modules, such as those developed by modernAKIS (WP3), could be used to demonstrate real-life examples of AKIS in action. These modules would also help advisors incorporate AKIS into their own activities, fostering greater awareness and practical implementation.
- The internal organization of advisory services presents another significant barrier. Inefficiencies in management, unclear processes and a lack of tailored support for advisors hinder the system's overall effectiveness. To mitigate these challenges, training programs for managers could be expanded and enhanced. Tools such as the i2connect toolbox and its trainer pool provide a strong foundation for developing these capabilities further.
- Advisors are often excluded from the governance structures of AKIS, which limits their involvement in critical decision-making processes. This exclusion is compounded by a lack of coordination between agencies, unclear definitions of impartiality and insufficient understanding of CAP measures. Current project activities aim to tackle these governance barriers by fostering better collaboration and alignment among the various actors involved.
- Insufficient financial resources pose a persistent challenge, with many advisors unable to access adequate funding to support their activities. In some cases, advisors are not even included as mandatory beneficiaries of funding schemes. Strengthening the exchange of best practices within AKIS CB networks could help identify and implement more effective funding strategies. These networks can serve as platforms for sharing innovative approaches to resource allocation and utilization.

3. How can advisors be better integrated into the AKIS?

Participants identified various ways to better integrate advisors into the AKIS:

- Provide targeted training programs to equip advisors and their managers with innovative approaches for advising farmers.
- Encourage peer-to-peer exchanges to facilitate the sharing of good practices and AKIS-related knowledge among advisors.
- Promote active participation in networks and cross-content events to enhance collaboration and communication within the advisory community.

- Foster collaboration between researchers and advisors, such as through joint on-field group activities, to strengthen the link between research and advisory services.
- Raise awareness among AKIS actors about the value and contributions of advisors to the system.
- Recognize and emphasize the diversity of advisory services, particularly in relation to their impartiality and unique roles.
- Implement frequent and concise promotional efforts that highlight clear benefits for advisors and encourage them to advocate for their role within AKIS.
- Focus future initiatives on addressing specific themes, presenting good practices, and organizing small-group discussions to encourage practical exchanges.

4.3. Online ccCoP3 event: How to enhance knowledge flows between research and practice

Title of the event: How to enhance knowledge flows between research and practice	
F2F/Online	Online
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP3: Connecting research and practice
Date	09/04/2024
Coordination Partners	Lívia Kránitz (AKI), Krisztina Magócs (AKI), Sangeun Bae (UHOH), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Eva Pérez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
External collaborators	Korinna Varga (Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, Ömki)
Type of actors	Researchers, academia
N. of attendees	25
Countries represented	Spain, Italy, Croatia, Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden

• Agenda

This event was held online on April 9th, 2024.

Introduction to modernAKIS ccCoP3 (FEUGA)

Common understanding of knowledge and its terminologies (AKI)

Achieving research impact through knowledge co-production (UHOH)

Inputs from practice: On-Farm Living Lab – External collaboration: Korinna Varga (Ömki, Hungary)

Diving into co-creation – Interactive discussion in breakout rooms (FEUGA)

• Target Audience

The target group for ccCoP3 includes professionals and academics specializing in agriculture, research, innovation, and knowledge transfer. While attendees were primarily part of ccCoP3, countries without representatives were invited to nominate targeted profiles aligned with the ccCoP3 thematic group. The final attendees held roles such as project managers, coordinators, directors, researchers, and lecturers,

highlighting their involvement in managing agricultural projects, fostering innovation, and bridging research and practice.

- **Objective**

The objective of the ccCoP3 event is to enhance knowledge flows between research and practice within the AKIS. The event focuses on deepening the understanding of knowledge co-production, which involves the collaborative generation of knowledge by researchers and other stakeholders. It aims to clarify practical incentives and mechanisms that encourage researchers to engage in the interactive innovation process and actively participate in co-producing knowledge. Additionally, the event addresses the common challenges faced during the co-production process and explores strategies to overcome these obstacles. Participants have the opportunity to learn from successful co-production initiatives across Europe, gaining valuable insights that can be applied to drive positive change in the AKIS.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

The first online event of ccCoP3 focused on the foundational concepts that will later become more complex as the group continues to build its capabilities. To achieve this, we employed a straightforward methodology that encouraged an initial discussion on the concepts introduced, while also assessing the participants' knowledge and understanding.

After the theoretical introduction, an interactive online activity was facilitated using digital tools (such as Mural), allowing for real-time feedback and capturing impressions from the discussion in two separate breakout rooms. In addition to enhancing knowledge and fostering discussion on co-creation, the session aimed to gauge the participants' current understanding of the topic and explore potential areas for further development in future ccCoP3 events.

The session guided participants through the following questions:

- What is your understanding of knowledge co-production? What are your thoughts on knowledge co-creation?
- How is co-creation implemented in your country? In what context do you practice knowledge co-creation? What has been your experience with knowledge co-creation?
- Based on your experience, what are the motivations and barriers in applying knowledge co-creation?

- **Group work results**

- **What is your understanding of knowledge co-production? What are your thoughts on knowledge co-creation?**

Knowledge co-production and co-creation are considered great ideas but often lack a structured framework for a real AKIS. Participants viewed these processes as important tools to involve diverse stakeholders through participatory approaches that foster real capacity development. This includes the involvement of all types of stakeholders, such as societal environments and local policymakers.

Common terms emerged, such as addressing shared needs in a concrete way, using dynamic models, and leveraging tools to raise awareness. These approaches were seen as contributions to policy and further local development. Collective ownership and the recombination of existing knowledge by different actors (practitioners and experts) were highlighted as pathways to creating new knowledge.

Participants also emphasized the importance of facilitation and ensuring a win-win scenario for all stakeholders. There was consensus that everyone, regardless of being a researcher, farmer or other practitioner is a knowledge provider.

- **How is co-creation implemented in your country? In what context do you practice knowledge co-creation? What has been your experience with knowledge co-creation?**

1. In some regions, such as Hungary, knowledge co-creation is still in its early stages, with limited implementation seen mainly through initiatives like EIPs (European Innovation Partnerships) and agricultural living labs. Despite these efforts, the role of practitioners in experimental developments is often undervalued.
2. In Italy, co-creation is emerging through EIP-Agri Operational Groups (OGs), regional initiatives, and projects driven by local municipalities or farmers' associations. However, there is a need to assess the extent of effective ownership and equitable interaction among actors.
3. The Netherlands demonstrates a more structured approach with a joint public-private knowledge and innovation agenda in agriculture, water and food. Instruments like field labs, subsidies for joint learning and living labs facilitate collaboration between researchers, farmers and independent advisors. However, challenges include the fragmented landscape of knowledge providers and the lack of systemic solutions.
4. Participants highlighted challenges such as difficulties in stakeholder communication, prolonged processes for fund allocation and the inefficiencies of knowledge flows within complex sector chains. There is a recognized need to prevent knowledge loss and misalignment with practical farming realities.
5. Demand-driven research investments and innovative methodologies, such as transparent and systemic knowledge-sharing are seen as critical for fostering effective knowledge co-creation across all contexts.

- **From your experience, what are the motivations and barriers in applying knowledge co-creation?**

Participants identified motivations and barriers in applying knowledge co-creation based on their experiences. Motivations include the drive to develop and implement innovative ideas, addressing needs that farmers find directly relevant, raising awareness of the benefits of co-creation to encourage active participation, identifying common issues significant to all stakeholder groups, and farmers finding ways to engage co-creatively with essential partners when critical solutions are needed.

Barriers include challenges such as the desire for dominance or financial gain by some stakeholders, which can hinder collaboration. The long and participatory nature of co-creation processes may discourage farmers who are already burdened by their responsibilities. Other barriers include the lack of long-term financing, discouragement caused by prolonged timelines, administrative burdens when public funding is involved, and the risk of stakeholders losing motivation due to extended durations or overly complex processes. While the motivations highlight the benefits and purpose of co-creation, the barriers reveal challenges related to human dynamics, time, funding and systemic inefficiencies.

4.4. Joint ccCoP1 and ccCoP2 face-to-face event: Session I.

Title of the event: Policy Lab - interactive discussion between AKIS CBs and advisors	
F2F/Online	F2F (modernAKIS 3 rd General Assembly in Madrid, Spain)
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP1: Policy, governance and CAP interventions - AKIS governance modernization ccCoP2: Integration of advisors into AKIS
Date	22/04/2024
Coordination Partners	Livia Kránitz (AKI), Krisztina Magócs (AKI), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
Type of actors	CBs, Advisors and Project Partners
N. of attendees	103
Countries represented	28 (including Ukraine)



- **Agenda**

This event was incorporated into the second General Assembly of the modernAKIS project, held in Madrid, taking place on April 22nd, 2024.

- **Target Audience**

This event takes advantage of the in-person format and the presence of attendees involved in advisory services, who were specifically invited due to the relation of the event with the advisory topic framework, to connect them with the profiles of CBs who regularly participate and attend the general assemblies of the modernAKIS project.

Also, other profiles were present as part of the project partners, such as policymakers, CAP network managers and coordinators, as well as multiplier organizations within AKIS (Innovation Support Services, Digital Innovation Hubs, Clusters, etc.). The topic of this session is particularly relevant to them, as it relates to key articles of the CAP, especially those concerning advisory services.

- **Objective**

The objective of this first session of the ccCoP1 and ccCoP4 joint event is to create an interactive platform for the systematic exchange of questions, challenges, and insights related to the latest requirements of the CAP for farm advisory services. By fostering collaborative capacity building and conducting in-depth analysis, this session aims to address the dynamic needs of coordination bodies and the advisory ecosystem, ensuring alignment with evolving policy frameworks and practical implementation strategies.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

The methodology selected to conduct this session was a Policy Lab workshop. This methodology involving coordination bodies and advisory services could be defined as a collaborative, interactive forum where stakeholders from these entities come together to explore, innovate and co-create solutions to complex policy challenges. It serves as a structured space for cross-sectoral exchange, drawing on diverse expertise and perspectives to inform evidence-based policymaking. Through hands-on activities and multi-actor discussions, participants engage in iterative processes to develop, test and refine policy proposals or frameworks. The workshop aims to foster dialogue, build capacities and catalyse actionable insights that enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of policymaking processes.

The Policy Lab is structured on five critical topics related to farm advisory services, their integration and new legislative requirements. The activity is designed to address seven specific questions that stem from these topics:

- **Topic 1: Farm advisory services must now address economic, environmental, and social dimensions, delivering up-to-date technological and scientific information, particularly from research and innovation projects, including public goods provision (2021/2115, Art 15(2)).**

Q1.1: What changes does the above new obligation require compared to the previous system?

- **Topic 2: Farm advisory services must integrate advisors, researchers, farmer organizations, and other stakeholders into the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) (2021/2115, Art 15(2)).**

Q2.1: How is this requirement interpreted and met? How is the integration of advisors in the AKIS promoted?

Q2.2: How can private advisors be effectively involved?

- **Topic 3: Member States (MS) are tasked with selecting suitably qualified advisors who operate impartially and without conflicts of interest (2021/2115, Art 15(3)).**

Q3.1: How should “suitably qualified” be defined, and how can MS ensure advisors meet these criteria?

Q3.2: How can conflicts of interest and impartiality be defined and maintained for supported advisors?

- **Topic 4: Advisory services are required to cover multiple fields such as antimicrobial resistance, innovation, digital technologies, and employment conditions (2021/2115, Art 15(4)).**

Q4.1: What changes does this new obligation require compared to the previous system?

- **Topic 5: Although certification or administration of advisors is not mandatory, a transparent platform must be established to list impartial advisors and their fields of expertise.**

Q5.1: How can the requirement to maintain a transparent and updated platform be met effectively?

Seven discussion groups are formed, each addressing one of the Policy Lab questions. At some point, groups will switch tables to tackle the next topic and question. The groups are carefully balanced, with around 12-15 participants from diverse backgrounds, ensuring varied perspectives and fostering productive discussions.

- **Group work results**

- **Topic 1, Q1.1:**

The group work focused on the new obligations for farm advisory services under Article 15(2) of the CAP (2021/2115), which require addressing economic, environmental, and social dimensions, as well as delivering up-to-date technological and scientific information. Ten MS participated, providing valuable insights, though limited discussion occurred on how to fully implement these changes.

The economic dimension remains the most emphasized in advisory services across most MS, particularly in Austria, Portugal, Hungary, Lithuania and Ireland, where advisory services are significantly production-focused. In many countries, advisory services also offer support for Rural Development Program (RDP) and CAP aid submissions. However, the discussion did not go into detail about other economic aspects that could be addressed by these services.

All countries represented have significant experience in addressing environmental issues through advisory services, with topics such as soil management and crop protection well-covered. However, the environmental dimension remains broad and handling these various issues requires more specialized knowledge and skills. Advisors need updated training to address emerging problems and to handle farmer resistance to change. There is also a strong demand for advice on maintaining profitability while adopting environmentally friendly farming practices.

Addressing the social dimension of farm advisory services is more challenging. Many countries identified gaps in areas such as youth departure from farming, health and labour conditions, employment of disabled people, migrant worker integration and farmers wellbeing. Financial tools, clearly defined roles and responsibilities for addressing these social issues are often lacking. In Sweden, advisory services cover all three dimensions but there is a need for stronger connections between them. In Austria, social challenges are mostly dealt with through an economic approach. In Germany, the social dimension is still new but has high potential, with growing demand for advice on issues like employing disabled people. Croatia has very few advisors addressing social issues, though the integration of migrant workers is becoming increasingly important. Ireland lacks services for issues such as isolation, health and safety and digitalization. In Greece, there are no advisory services on the social dimension, even though addressing these issues could play a crucial role in retaining and attracting young people to the sector.

The EU4Advice and COREnet projects highlighted the potential of short supply chains as an opportunity to address the economic, environmental and social dimensions simultaneously. These supply chains can bring producers closer to consumers, with measurable benefits across all three dimensions.

In conclusion, most MS are still in the early stages of addressing the social dimension in farm advisory services, and the integration of economic, environmental, and social aspects presents a significant challenge. Sharing experiences and ideas across countries could help make progress in tackling these issues more effectively.

- **Topic 2, Q2.1:**

The exercise revealed various approaches to integrating advisors into the AKIS from the perspective of the MS represented. In Slovenia, mandatory training for advisors focuses on soft skills, conducted twice a year,

though it is not a prerequisite for receiving CAP subsidies. Denmark and the Netherlands emphasize regular annual training, supplemented by activities like conferences organized with universities and specialized sessions on nitrogen management, economics, and crop protection. However, there is no financial support for advisory services via subsidies in these regions.

Spain's INTIA measures integration through the number of research hours and the involvement of advisors in fieldwork to address farmers' queries. Estonia goes beyond certifications, requiring training and a validation system that mandates three years of experience, committee-based validation and formal training. In Andalusia, Spain emphasizes innovation-driven integration through public agricultural campuses collaborating with universities to provide tailored advisory services, supported by programs like ATTRACTISS aimed at capacity building.

Belgium (Flanders) uses incentives such as calls and demonstration activities targeting both farmers and advisors, promoting integration through horizontal engagement. Romania employs a selection process to ensure quality advisors, focusing on specific qualification domains like environmental processes and crop protection. National-level advisory services in Romania address farmers' needs through specialized teams, with advisors undergoing soft skills training to meet market demands.

In Veneto, Italy, knowledge exchange platforms bring together researchers, farmer organizations and advisors through demonstrations, workshops, advisory services and training courses. The Netherlands fosters a strong connection between education and advisory services, using universities to provide vouchers for skill acquisition and offering training on specialized topics like nitrogen and the circular economy. Advisors in the Netherlands are required to complete over 20 hours of training annually, with registration monitored yearly.

In conclusion, the integration of advisors into AKIS is addressed differently across regions, tailored to specific agricultural and organizational needs. Training plays a central role, with regular capacity-building activities being a common theme. Collaboration with universities and research institutions is emphasized to ensure advisors remain current with scientific advancements. Financial support for advisory services remains a gap in some regions, which may hinder broader integration. Soft skills training is seen as critical, highlighting the need for advisors to possess strong interpersonal abilities alongside technical expertise. Incentive mechanisms, such as vouchers and demonstration activities, promote participation and strengthen advisory roles within the system. Training focus areas align with global priorities, including sustainability, economics, nitrogen management and crop protection, ensuring advisors are well-prepared to address contemporary agricultural challenges.

- Topic 2, Q2.2:

The activity produced several important insights regarding how private advisors can be effectively integrated into AKIS. Participants identified key challenges, including the time constraints faced by private advisors and their potential loss of income when engaging in AKIS activities. Some advisors, particularly those who operate to protect their own business interests, show limited interest in collaboration, which presents an additional barrier.

The exercise revealed that private advisors need access to networking opportunities with other stakeholders, such as researchers, farmers and policymakers. They also require tools and resources to enhance their capacities to effectively engage in the system. Sustained collaboration was deemed crucial, with an emphasis on follow-up mechanisms to maintain engagement over time. Mapping private advisory services was proposed as an essential step to better understand who these advisors are, their roles and how they can contribute to AKIS.

Participants stressed the importance of integrating more farmers into the process through intermediaries that link them with private advisory services. A clear focus emerged on prioritizing areas where there is a genuine need for knowledge sharing. Participants highlighted the dual need for private advisors to receive actionable knowledge and have opportunities to share their own expertise effectively.

To achieve these goals, several practical solutions were suggested. These included the establishment of operational groups for collaboration, the creation of back-office support for logistical and administrative needs and the development of centralized platforms for resources and communication. Knowledge brokering events were identified as a potential means of connecting stakeholders and facilitating exchanges. The idea of a "one-stop shop" was also proposed to streamline access to knowledge and services.

In conclusion, the exercise emphasized that private advisors are a crucial link within AKIS, capable of bridging gaps between farmers, researchers and policymakers. However, their integration requires deliberate efforts to address time, income and motivational barriers. Strategic engagement efforts, such as capacity building, networking and practical support frameworks, are necessary. Effective knowledge integration should focus on meeting real needs and providing mechanisms for continuous interaction and feedback, ensuring that private advisors can actively contribute to and benefit from the AKIS framework.

- Topic 3, Q3.1:

The activity revealed that defining "suitably qualified" advisors requires a multifaceted approach, emphasizing multidisciplinary expertise and a broad skill set. It was highlighted that a degree in agronomy or a single discipline alone is not always sufficient. Instead, advisors should demonstrate a combination of technical, management and innovation knowledge, along with practical experience. Experienced individuals, such as farmers with relevant and diverse backgrounds, should complement formal qualifications to bring a wider perspective to advisory roles.

The importance of establishing clear qualification criteria was a key outcome. These criteria should include proficiency in unique techniques and an ability to address broader agricultural challenges in a sustainable way. Certification processes and continuous professional development (CPD) were deemed essential to ensure advisors maintain competence. Training should cover both technical aspects and soft skills, such as communication and team collaboration, to enhance the effectiveness of advisors in varied contexts.

Team-based advisory models were identified as crucial for success. Rather than relying solely on individual expertise, advisors should work in teams that combine diverse areas of knowledge. This approach creates a synergistic "sum of parts" effect, enhancing problem-solving capabilities. Training programs should also focus on well-being, team-building and fostering a collaborative mindset among advisors.

The exercise emphasized the need for standardized service delivery through the creation of a service catalogue. This catalogue would outline the roles, responsibilities and services provided by advisors, supported by certification to ensure quality and consistency. Networking was also identified as vital, with advisors (both public and private) expected to connect within local and broader networks, particularly across the EU.

Accountability measures were another significant outcome. A ranking system for evaluating advisor performance, along with penalties for misconduct or non-compliance, would ensure adherence to ethical and ecological standards and a code of conduct. These mechanisms help maintain impartiality and minimize conflicts of interest.

Finally, it was concluded that advisors must adapt to evolving market demands and environmental challenges. Their training should incorporate coaching and address issues of well-being and environmental responsibility. This holistic approach to advisory roles ensures alignment with broader goals of sustainability and innovation within the agricultural sector. Each MS can use these insights to establish robust frameworks for selecting, training and evaluating suitably qualified advisors, meeting the requirements of Article 15(3) of the regulation (2021/2115).

- Topic 3, Q3.2:

The exercise identified critical issues and potential solutions for maintaining impartiality and addressing conflicts of interest among advisors. A significant issue highlighted was the risk of biased advice, where

advisors might be influenced by their personal or commercial interests. A clear distinction was emphasized between commercial advisors, such as sales representatives and private advisors, indicating the need for role clarity to ensure objective guidance.

To address these challenges, several measures were proposed. First, requiring advisors to formally declare their status, qualifications and any potential conflicts of interest was suggested as a way to enhance transparency. Second, fostering networking and collaboration among advisors and the AKIS was seen as essential for building accountability and shared professional standards. Finally, introducing or strengthening certification processes was proposed to ensure advisors meet impartiality and expertise criteria.

These measures collectively aim to create a framework where advisors operate impartially and without conflicts of interest, in line with the directives outlined in Article 15(3) of Regulation 2021/2115.

- **Topic 5, Q5.1:**

The activity outputs indicate various approaches and considerations from different countries regarding the establishment and maintenance of a transparent platform for advisors in the AKIS context. Lithuania highlighted the need to maintain a repository of around 450 advisors while ensuring their impartiality and transparency. They suggested involving farmers in the process to evaluate advisor effectiveness.

Latvia noted the absence of a regulatory requirement for such platforms and proposed using simplified processes for registering advisors and connecting them through dynamic databases. They also emphasized the importance of fostering knowledge exchange to ensure advisors remain relevant and capable of addressing evolving challenges.

Croatia emphasized the role of chambers and family associations in maintaining advisor lists and stressed the need for regular updates and verification of these lists. They also pointed out that service providers should demonstrate both impartiality and expertise to maintain trust in the system.

Finland and Portugal proposed integrating advisor platforms with paying agencies to enhance transparency and accessibility. They suggested that advisors should register through structured platforms, ensuring accountability and ease of access.

France, on the other hand, indicated no specific developments or frameworks in this area. However, the overall recommendations across the various countries point towards the need for clear frameworks, dynamic updating mechanisms, and collaboration with key stakeholders such as farmers and regulatory bodies to ensure the platforms remain effective and trustworthy.

4.5. Joint ccCoP1 and ccCoP2 face-to-face event: Session II.

Title of the event: build the perfect advisor in your AKIS	
F2F/Online	F2F (modernAKIS 3 rd General Assembly in Madrid, Spain)
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP1: Policy, governance and CAP interventions - AKIS governance modernization ccCoP2: Integration of advisors into AKIS
Date	23/04/2024
Coordination Partners	Sylvain Sturel (CDAF), Myriam Gaspard (CRAO), Marleen Gysen (BBD), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
Type of actors	CBs, Advisors and Project Partners
N. of attendees	103
Countries represented	28 (including Ukraine)



- **Agenda**

This event was incorporated into the second General Assembly of the modernAKIS project, held in Madrid, taking place on April 23rd, 2024.

- **Target Audience**

Same as in 4.4. Joint ccCoP1 and ccCoP2 face-to-face event: Session I.

- **Objective**

The objective of this session is to explore the evolving roles, responsibilities, and skillsets required of advisors to effectively meet the new demands of the CAP. It focuses on defining what it means to become "the perfect advisor": an individual capable of addressing the complexities of modern agricultural practices while navigating dynamic regulatory requirements.

The session aims to identify the key competencies, knowledge and qualities that enable advisors to achieve their full potential. It also examines their role as central and versatile contributors within the AKIS, emphasizing their ability to connect stakeholders, translate policies into actionable strategies and promote innovation.

Additionally, the session seeks to uncover potential challenges that may hinder advisors from reaching their full potential, as well as opportunities and mechanisms to support them. By providing a platform for collaborative reflection and dialogue, the session aims to generate actionable insights into how advisors can be better prepared and supported to meet the demands of modern agriculture while becoming integral to sustainable and productive agricultural systems.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

The activity is conducted in a World Café methodology and is structured to last one hour and a half. Participants are divided into eight groups, 4 in each room.

Each room hosts four distinct questions, assigned to groups based on a designated color-coding system. Participants engage in four consecutive rounds, each lasting 20 minutes. During each round, attendees use notes to write their responses and affix them to a flip chart corresponding to the group's assigned question always guided by a monitor from the coordination partners of the activity.

Following the completion of a round, a bell is rung to signal the rotation of groups. This systematic rotation ensures that all participants within each room address all four questions over the course of the session.

At the conclusion of the four rounds, a 30-minute period is allocated for presenting the conclusions. The note keepers from each group summarize and share the insights gathered during the activity. This approach fosters collaborative discussion, facilitates idea exchange and ensures comprehensive engagement with the questions.

The questions posed in this activity are distributed across seven thematic areas, which will be assigned to the tables in each room (with one area duplicated). These areas correspond to the seven functions outlined in the CAP Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 as essential for advisory services and ISS:

1. Awareness-Raising and Knowledge Dissemination (ISS1)

Activities focus on spreading knowledge and technical information to farmers, including organizing demonstrations, exchange visits and disseminating scientific and practical knowledge through various media (websites, brochures, webinars, etc.).

2. Advisory, Consultancy, and Backstopping (ISS2)

Tailored support to solve complex problems, including designing specific advisory packages, managing innovation processes and coordinating expert teams to address challenges.

3. Demand Articulation (ISS3)

Services that help actors articulate their needs to other stakeholders (researchers, service providers) through needs analysis, feasibility studies, strategy development and bridging gaps between stakeholders.

4. Networking, Facilitation, and Brokerage (ISS4)

Strengthening networks and collaboration through partner identification, mediation, conflict management and aligning services to ensure timely and efficient support for innovation.

5. Capacity Building (ISS5)

Enhancing the skills and capabilities of innovation actors via traditional training, peer-to-peer learning, coaching and experiential learning.

6. Enhancing/Supporting Access to Resources (ISS6)

Facilitating access to essential resources such as inputs, equipment, funding, and facilities, while also supporting project management and grant application processes.

7. Institutional Support for Niche Innovation and Scaling Mechanisms (ISS7)

Providing institutional support for experiments, incubators, scaling up innovations, and designing frameworks (norms, funding mechanisms, and patents) that facilitate innovation and its widespread adoption

The questions to be addressed within each thematic area are:

- What are the main tasks associated with this function?
- What are the skills required to carry out these tasks successfully?
- What are the limits to carrying out these tasks?
- What are the levers, ie. what could help to better perform these tasks (within the advisory organisation / ISS, in the wider AKIS, in the public policies...)?

• Group work results

The group work results of the activity could be condensed into five main conclusions, each highlighting critical aspects of the advisory role and strategies for improvement following the notes gathered after the activity:

Main Tasks for Advisors

Advisors play a vital role in connecting farmers with the broader agricultural knowledge and innovation system. They act as facilitators of knowledge exchange, ensuring that insights from researchers and policymakers are translated into actionable guidance for farmers while simultaneously bringing farmers' lived experiences and challenges back to inform research and policy. This two-way flow of information helps bridge gaps and improve overall agricultural outcomes. Another essential task involves tailoring solutions to individual farm needs, considering technical, economic and environmental realities. Advisors do not merely suggest solutions, they support their implementation and ensure that successful approaches can be scaled across farms and regions.

Trust-building is fundamental to the advisory role. Regular farm visits and personal interactions help advisors establish credibility and show farmers that their concerns are understood and respected. Advisors also play the role of brokers, connecting farmers with other stakeholders, such as researchers, policymakers and service providers to ensure access to expertise and resources. Additionally, gathering and analysing feedback

from farmers is crucial to refine advisory processes, improve tools and influence policymaking, creating a continuous cycle of learning and improvement.

Required Skills for Advisors

Advisors require a combination of soft, technical and contextual skills to effectively meet farmers' needs. Among the soft skills, communication stands out as essential, enabling advisors to translate complex technical language into actionable advice for farmers. Empathy and active listening are equally critical, fostering trust and showing genuine respect for the unique knowledge and experiences farmers bring to the table. Facilitating group discussions and mediating conflicts are also necessary soft skills, especially when working in collaborative settings.

Technical skills include a solid foundation in agronomy, regulatory frameworks and subsidy systems, combined with the ability to stay updated on advancements in agricultural practices and technologies. Digital literacy is becoming increasingly important as advisors use online platforms, apps and tools for both knowledge sharing and service delivery. Advisors also need a deep cultural and contextual understanding of the communities they serve. This includes fluency in local language and customs, enabling them to provide advice that resonates with regional needs and farming practices. Learning and adaptability are vital traits, as advisors must continuously update their skills and approaches to keep pace with evolving technologies, policies and market demands.

Identified Limits and Challenges

Advisors face several challenges that limit their effectiveness. Structural issues are a major concern, as many advisors operate in isolated silos with limited coordination among organizations and regions. This fragmentation hampers the sharing of knowledge and prevents the scaling of successful practices. High workloads and competing responsibilities also hinder advisors from dedicating sufficient time to personalized support or professional development.

Skill and resource gaps exacerbate these challenges. While many advisors possess strong technical knowledge, they often lack training in soft skills such as facilitation and communication. Additionally, insufficient funding, access to modern tools and limited organizational support further restrict their capacity to deliver high-quality advisory services. Farmer engagement presents another challenge, with resistance to adopting new practices often rooted in mistrust or a lack of understanding of their potential benefits. The digital divide also remains a barrier, as some farmers struggle to access or utilize online resources, limiting their ability to engage with contemporary advisory systems.

Levers for Improvement

Several strategies can address these challenges and enhance the effectiveness of advisors. Capacity building is a cornerstone, with structured training programs such as CECRA providing advisors with both technical and soft skill development opportunities. Mentoring systems can facilitate knowledge transfer between experienced advisors and younger professionals, ensuring that valuable insights are not lost. Field-based learning, including farm demonstrations and peer-to-peer exchanges, allows advisors to build credibility and gain practical experience.

Collaboration and networking are also crucial. Regional forums and networks can foster dialogue and resource sharing among advisors, researchers and policymakers, breaking down silos and encouraging multidisciplinary teamwork. Partnerships with private initiatives offer additional flexibility and resources, provided these collaborations are well-regulated. Policymakers have a significant role in supporting advisors through incentives for continuous learning and by funding programs that provide clear roadmaps and frameworks for their work. Integrated systems, such as centralized databases and feedback platforms, can streamline processes and enhance the delivery of advisory services.

Technology offers significant opportunities for improvement. Accessible and user-friendly digital tools can support knowledge sharing, monitoring and evaluation. Platforms that facilitate the creation and use of

regional databases enable better tracking of best practices, innovations and outcomes. These tools also help bridge the gap between advisors and farmers by making information readily available and actionable.

Innovative Approaches Highlighted

The discussions emphasized the need for innovative strategies to enhance advisory services. A shift toward holistic advisory models was identified as a key approach. This involves moving beyond problem-solving to addressing entire value chains, considering economic, social and environmental impacts. By adopting this systems-oriented perspective, advisors can provide more comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

Scaling innovations is another priority. Demonstrations, pilot projects and peer learning opportunities play a crucial role in encouraging farmers to adopt new practices. Advisors can act as innovation managers, guiding the scaling of successful practices and connecting farmers with necessary resources. Additionally, there is a need to evolve the advisory role itself. New positions, such as innovation managers or business development consultants, can complement traditional advisory functions and address broader more dynamic needs.

Focusing on niche innovations and fostering sustainable practices tailored to regional challenges can drive significant progress. By embedding these innovations within local contexts and leveraging the unique strengths of each region, advisors can help achieve widespread adoption of improved practices and technologies. These strategies highlight the need for a proactive, adaptive and collaborative approach to agricultural advisory services.

4.6. Online ccCoP1 event: Application of Simplified Cost Options for AKIS-related measures

Title of the event: Application of Simplified Cost Options (SCO) for AKIS-related measures	
F2F/Online	Online
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP1: Policy, governance and CAP interventions - AKIS governance modernization
Date	24/06/2024
Coordination Partners	Livia Kránitz (AKI), Krisztina Magócs (AKI), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Eva Pérez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
External collaborators	Valentina Carta (CREA), Noora Pehkonen (Finnish Food Authority), Els Lapage (Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries, Flemish Government), Markus Stadler (Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management of Austria)
Type of actors	Coordination Bodies
N. of attendees	35
Countries represented	Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden.

- **Agenda**

This event was held online on the 24th June, 2024.

- **Overview of the legal framework** - Krisztina Magócs, AKI Institute of Agricultural Economics, HU
- Simplified Cost Options for CAP interventions - examples and insights from Member States - Valentina Carta, CREA, IT

- **Application of flat rate for European Innovation Partnerships and standard hourly rate for agricultural advisory services** - Noora Pehkonen, Finnish Food Authority, Paying Agency, FI
- **Application of flat rate and unit costs for European Innovation Partnerships, demonstration projects and vocational training** - Els Lapage, Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries, Flemish Government, BE
- **Application of unit costs for agricultural advisory services** - Markus Stadler, Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management, AT
- **Q&A session with participants**

• Target Audience

The event primarily targets Coordination Bodies, Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies involved in AKIS-related interventions. Among these, Coordination Bodies are the main participants, as they constitute the core group of the ccCoP1.

To enrich the discussions and provide a more comprehensive perspective, additional profiles were invited on this occasion. These include Paying Agencies and direct representatives responsible for AKIS interventions. Their participation broadens the scope of expertise and enables the collection of in-depth knowledge, fostering a more dynamic and insightful dialogue on the topics addressed during the meeting. This diverse composition ensures a holistic approach to understanding and addressing the complexities of AKIS-related measures.

• Objective

The primary objective of the event is to enhance the capacity of Coordination Bodies, Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies in the effective implementation of simplified cost options (SCOs) for AKIS-related measures. This is achieved by providing a comprehensive framework for understanding and applying SCOs, a critical tool for improving the efficiency and transparency of funding mechanisms within AKIS.

The event aims to systematically organize and share knowledge on SCOs, offering participants a structured approach to their application in various contexts and different countries. By presenting concrete, real-world examples of successful implementation, the event illustrates best practices and common challenges, equipping attendees with actionable insights. Furthermore, interactive discussions will provide a platform for stakeholders to exchange experiences, address specific concerns and collaboratively explore innovative solutions tailored to the unique needs of AKIS measures.

This multifaceted approach ensures that participants are not only informed about the technical aspects of SCOs but are also empowered to apply them effectively, ultimately strengthening the operational capacity and impact of AKIS initiatives.

• Methodology and Summary of the session

Due to the technical nature of the event's topic and the fact that this was the first ccCoP1 session focused on simplified cost options (SCOs) that will continue to explore this theme in subsequent meetings, the methodology was structured to ensure a thorough understanding of the fundamentals. The session aimed to provide participants with a clear grasp of the key concepts and practical examples shared by external experts who presented best practices developed in their respective countries.

The identification of relevant SCO examples was the result of collaborative efforts between the ccCoP1 team and WP1, leveraging the Compendium of Good Practices compiled by WP1. This approach ensured that the examples presented were both relevant and useful for the Coordination Bodies involved in the ccCoP1 of modernAKIS.

The session began with a theoretical introduction to SCOs, which provided participants with essential knowledge and context:

Krisztina Magócs (AKI Institute of Agricultural Economics, Hungary):

This presentation outlined the legal framework of SCOs, comparing the 2014–2020 period with the current budgetary cycle. Key topics included the distinctions between standard unit costs, lump sums and flat rates, supported by detailed examples to clarify their application.

Valentina Carta (CREA, Italy):

The focus shifted to simplified cost options for CAP interventions, emphasizing their benefits as outlined in the Compendium. Key advantages discussed included reduced administrative burdens, fewer errors and enhanced support consistency. The presentation also highlighted how SCOs encourage participation among groups such as farmers and foresters by streamlining processes.

Noora Pehkonen (Finnish Food Authority, Finland):

Practical applications of SCOs in Finland were presented, covering the 2014–2022 period and extending to the 2023–2027 CAP plan. The presentation detailed the use of flat rates for European Innovation Partnerships and standard hourly rates for agricultural advisory services, offering valuable lessons from Finland's experience.

Els Lapage (Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries, Flemish Government, Belgium):

This presentation focused on the application of flat rates and unit costs in European Innovation Partnerships, demonstration projects and vocational training during the 2014–2020 CAP period in Flanders. It explored methodologies, objectives and challenges, concluding with lessons learned, including how SCOs reduced administrative burdens for beneficiaries.

Markus Stadler (Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Austria):

The final presentation centered on Austria's use of unit costs for agricultural and forestry advisory services. The speaker explained the characteristics of SCOs in this context and detailed the methods for calculating unit costs, providing a clear example of how these measures can be effectively implemented.

Following this, a Q&A segment allowed attendees to actively engage by sharing their experiences, discussing their national practices related to SCOs and asking questions to the invited experts. This interactive component enriched the discussions, fostering a deeper exchange of insights and knowledge among the participants.

- **Group work results**

The Q&A session at the event proved to be highly engaging and enriching, fostering knowledge exchange among participants. The attendees had the opportunity to explore various aspects of SCOs guided by insightful questions and responses from the expert panel.

Key Highlights:

Real-Life applications of SCOs:

Participants asked detailed questions about the implementation of SCOs, including how certain costs, such as soil or milk analysis are compensated. Experts clarified that in Austria, Belgium, and Finland, costs for analyses are generally not covered unless they are directly tied to advisory services, ensuring a focused use of SCOs.

Flexibility and decision-making:

A critical discussion revolved around the flexibility offered to beneficiaries in choosing between different cost models (e.g. flat rates or real costs). Experts from Finland explained that while beneficiaries can indicate preferences, the final decision rests with the managing authorities to mitigate optimization risks.

External studies and approvals:

Questions also explored the methodologies behind SCO calculations and their approval processes. Experts shared those external studies, such as those conducted by research institutions or commissioned firms like KPMG are often used to ensure fairness, transparency and compliance with EU regulations. These studies, while not always publicly available, form the backbone of SCO validation and are subject to audit readiness.

Lessons learned and adaptability:

Panellists reflected on lessons from previous CAP periods, emphasizing the reduction of administrative burdens and error rates achieved through SCOs. They noted the adaptability of SCO frameworks, highlighting how methodologies are updated to meet changing needs and ensuring compliance with EU guidelines.

Engagement and collaboration:

The session encouraged an open exchange of ideas, with attendees expressing interest in further collaboration in next ccCoP1 events. Suggestions included deeper dives into specific methodologies, such as those used for calculating hourly rates or addressing procurement challenges within SCO frameworks.

The session concluded with a positive consensus on the value of shared experiences, emphasizing the role of peer learning in strengthening the application of SCOs across MS. Participants left the event with enhanced understanding and actionable insights for implementing SCOs effectively in their respective contexts.

4.7. Face-to-face ccCoP2 event: Identifying and Overcoming Digital Barriers in AKIS

Title of the event: Transforming Advisory Services - Embracing Digital Tools and Overcoming Challenges	
F2F/Online	F2F (Synergy Days in Barcelona)
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP2: Integration of advisors into AKIS
Date	14/10/2024
Coordination Partners	Sylvain Sturel (CDAF), Myriam Gaspard (CRAO), Marleen Gysen (BBD), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Eva Pérez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
External collaborators	Francisco García (CIDAFCat , Spain), Gaëlle Chérut-Pottiau (Agdatahub , France)
Type of actors	Advisors, Advisory Services managers, ISS providers and other profiles present in the Synergy Days
N. of attendees	23
Countries represented	Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Greece, Poland, Spain, Macedonia, Netherlands.



• Agenda

This face-to-face ccCoP2 event is one of the workshops featured during Synergy Days, taking place in Barcelona on October 14th, 2024.

- Overview of ccCoP2 objectives and functions. Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
- Digital tools for advisors: Barrier and levers for an adoption. Myriam Gaspard (CRAO)
- Zoom to data: The role of data as intermediary. Gaëlle Chérut-Pottiau (Agdatahub)
- Mindset change: The role of the advisor in the adoption of digital technologies in agriculture. Francisco García (CIDAFCat, Spain)

• Target Audience

This workshop was aimed for Synergy Days participants with profiles related to agricultural advisory services, innovation support services (ISS), and agricultural technology/digitalization. While many attendees joined due to their interest and engagement in these topics, several of them are actually part of the current ccCoP2 group members.

• Objective

Given the nature of the Synergy Days event, which places a strong emphasis on digital innovation within the European agri-food sector, the ccCoP2 session aimed to bridge its core focus (centred on agricultural advisors and ISS managers) with the contributions of digital innovators and the exploration of cutting-edge technological themes. The session sought to create a space for meaningful dialogue and collaboration around the digitalization of agricultural advisory services.

Key objectives included analysing the main goals of digital transformation, mapping existing tools and technologies and discussing the growing significance of data in decision-making processes. Furthermore, the session delved into the evolving role of advisors in driving digital change, emphasizing the need for mindset shifts to enhance the adoption of digital solutions across the sector. By fostering connections between advisors and digital innovators, the event aimed to promote a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities, paving the way for more effective and impactful digital adoption strategies.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

The methodology employed in this event combined gamification with a theoretical introduction, guided by expert speakers who provided valuable insights into the topic:

Myriam Gaspard (CRAO, France): Identification of digital tools in the field of advisory services, analysis of the barriers and opportunities these tools present and a discussion on how digital transformation involves reshaping agricultural practices through advisory services.

Gaëlle Chéruey-Pottiau (Agdatahub, France): Focused on data and the current regulations surrounding its accessibility, highlighting examples of AgriDatahub as a data intermediary platform and its relationship with agricultural producers in controlling the use of the data generated on their farms.

Francisco García (CIDAFCat, Spain): Presentation of real-life success stories in the implementation of digital tools in agricultural advisory services, along with an analysis of the mindset shift needed within the sector to achieve better integration of these digital tools.

In the second part of the ccCoP2 event, the "[Sticking Barriers](#)" game was introduced. This game was specially designed for the event, with the vision of being shared with other networks as a valuable outcome of the project. Its purpose is to facilitate interaction among the different participants and enhance the understanding of the topics previously covered during the session.

The game is intended to help participants identify, analyse and address barriers within the AKIS, in this case oriented to advisors and ISS-related actors with a particular emphasis on the IT aspects. By fostering collaboration, the game strengthens connections, encourages innovation and contributes to the improvement of finding solutions to common issues within the AKIS.

In this interactive game, players work in groups to explore the barriers impacting AKIS. Using a set of predefined stickers that represented identified barriers for the adoption of digital tools in the AKIS, participants place them on a board that represents the various actors and contexts within AKIS (farmers, advisors, IT providers, academia, policy actors, etc.), indicating where they believe the barriers exist. Additional "joker" stickers allow teams to add their own barriers beyond the predefined set, fostering deeper analysis.

Each identified barrier is explained on sticky notes, where participants must outline its causes, the affected actors and potential solutions. Teams prioritize the barriers they find most significant, present their analysis and discuss strategies to overcome the most pressing challenges.

This game encourages collaboration, promotes problem-solving and deepens in participants' understanding of AKIS and its interactions. It is an excellent tool for agricultural professionals, policymakers, educators and other AKIS actors interested in improving innovation systems in agriculture. By sharing perspectives and working together, participants gain valuable skills and insights.

- **Group work results**

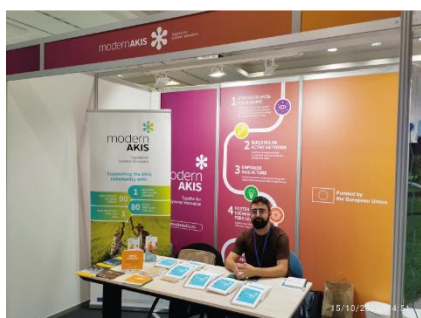
There were 3 different teams that gather the following results of the game:

- **Multiple Incompatible Digital Platforms and Tools:**
 - Cause: Various digital tools and systems are incompatible, inefficiencies in adoption.

- Affected actors: Farmers, IT providers, policymakers.
- Proposed solutions: Establish common standards, mandatory interoperability regulations, and create public funding to enhance system compatibility.
- **Insufficient Collaboration Across Sectors:**
 - Cause: Gap between research outputs and practical application.
 - Affected actors: Researchers, farmers and advisors.
 - Proposed solutions: Use "knowledge brokers" as intermediaries, organize ongoing training for farmers and improve the connection between research and practitioners.
- **Poor Infrastructure, such as limited internet access in rural areas:**
 - Cause: Limited availability of digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.
 - Affected actors: Farmers and IT providers.
 - Proposed solutions: Policy support to build robust infrastructure, especially focusing on small-scale and less-developed regions.
- **Cost of Digital Tools and Technologies:**
 - Cause: High costs of implementing digital tools for small-scale farmers.
 - Affected actors: Small farmers and advisors.
 - Proposed solutions: Implement a subscription model to make tools more affordable and accessible and provide financial incentives/subsidies.
- **Lack of Access to Policy Processes or Decision-Making:**
 - Cause: Weak regulatory frameworks and lack of trust among stakeholders.
 - Affected actors: Policymakers, farmers, and advisors.
 - Proposed solutions: Develop stronger policies with stakeholder involvement and foster trust through transparent communication.
- **Lack of Digital Support Services:**
 - Cause: Limited involvement of farmers and other stakeholders in decision-making processes.
 - Affected actors: Farmers, industry and policymakers.
 - Proposed solutions: Increase participation in policy discussions and establish collaborative platforms for joint problem-solving.

4.8. Face-to-face ccCoP4 event: Role-Playing Knowledge Flows in the Agri-Sector. Navigating Barriers and Challenges

Title of the event: Role-Playing Knowledge Flows in the Agri-Sector - Navigating Barriers and Challenges	
F2F/Online	F2F (Synergy Days in Barcelona)
ccCoPs addressed	ccCoP4: Knowledge access and knowledge flows
Date	15/10/2024
Coordination Partners	Sofia Mouseti (AUA), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Eva Pérez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
Type of actors	Knowledge transfer agents and other profiles present in the Synergy Days
N. of attendees	17
Countries represented	Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Macedonia, Netherlands, Spain.



• Agenda

This face-to-face ccCoP4 event is one of the workshops featured during Synergy Days, taking place in Barcelona on October 15th, 2024.

In the first part of the workshop there was an explanatory session in which we introduce the attendees to the fundamental concepts of the knowledge flows and its phases. After that a role-play game based on the concepts previously explained was developed.

• Target Audience

This workshop was designed for participants of Synergy Days who have backgrounds related to knowledge transfer, agricultural technology, digitalization and other relevant fields represented at the event. While many attendees joined the workshop due to their interest and active engagement in these topics, it's worth noting that several participants are also current members of the ccCoP4 group.

• Objective

The primary objective of this ccCoP4 is to explore the various stages of knowledge flows within the AKIS framework: knowledge generation, transfer, implementation and evaluation. By engaging in this process, participants gain a deeper understanding of the unique challenges that arise at each stage of knowledge flow and collaboratively identify solutions from a collective perspective.

Additionally, the alignment of this event with the Synergy Days provides a valuable opportunity to emphasize the role of digitalization and technology. These themes play a significant part in shaping the session's development, offering participants insights into how technological advancements can enhance knowledge flow processes and address key challenges effectively.

- **Methodology and Summary of the session**

The methodology implemented was gamification, leveraging the face-to-face event during Synergy Days as an excellent opportunity to expand and refine this approach.

During the session, we successfully developed the [Knowledge Paths game](#), a role-play dynamic now available as part of the materials on [akisconnect.eu](#). This game was designed to help AKIS actors gain a deeper understanding of the steps and interactions involved in knowledge flows, emphasizing how each role contributes to achieving a final solution for the challenges of each phase.

The session included sufficient participants to form two teams. Each team member was assigned a role, such as farmer, researcher, policymaker, IT provider, advisor, industry representative and group monitor. Together, the teams faced different challenges corresponding to the four phases of knowledge flows: knowledge generation, transfer, implementation and evaluation. These challenges were based on real-world scenarios, requiring the active participation of all roles to devise effective solutions.

At the end of the game, each team should preset their conclusions and potential actions for each challenge. Based on that, each team must value the other team from 1 to 5 taking into account the indicators of: clarity and understanding of the challenge, completeness of the solution, innovation and creativity and integration of stakeholder roles.

- **Group work results**

Team A: Key Results

- **Challenge 1: Knowledge Generation**

- Core issue: A devastating pest outbreak, ineffective traditional pesticides and environmental damage.
- Stakeholders involved: Farmers, researchers, advisors, policy makers, IT providers and industry.
- Proposed actions:
 - Farmers document pest outbreaks and observations.
 - Advisors synthesize field insights.
 - IT providers create data-sharing platforms.
 - Researchers explore biocontrol methods.
 - Policy makers allocate funding for research.
 - Industry develops sustainable pest solutions.
 - Barriers Identified: Limited funding, lack of staff, potential resistance and long-term solution.

- **Challenge 2: Knowledge Transfer**

- Core issue: Limited access to modern digital technologies and poor digital literacy among small-scale farmers.
- Stakeholders: Same as in challenge 1, with additional emphasis on IT providers.
- Proposed actions:

- Establish a farmer training network.
- IT providers design simple digital tools.
- Policy makers improve rural connectivity.
- Researchers identify literacy gaps.
- Barriers Identified: Trust issues, bridging the pioneer-regular farmer gap and funding challenges.
- **Challenge 3: Knowledge Implementation**
 - Core issue: Climate change impacts (droughts, floods) and slow adoption of climate-smart practices.
 - Stakeholders: Emphasis on farmers, advisors, and policy makers.
 - Proposed actions:
 - Advisors encourage adoption of practices.
 - IT providers offer climate monitoring tools.
 - Policy makers provide financial incentives.
 - Barriers Identified: Economic concerns and lack of incentives.
- **Challenge 4: Knowledge Evaluation**
 - Core issue: Mixed success of implemented innovations.
 - Stakeholders: Farmers, advisors, researchers, policy makers, IT providers and industry.
 - Proposed actions:
 - Gather feedback and analyse it collaboratively.
 - Use feedback for improvement and scaling.
 - Barriers Identified: Data collection limitations and insufficient information for evaluation.

Team B: Key Results

- **Challenge 1: Knowledge Generation**
 - Core issue: Pest outbreak's local effects and unclear conditions for spread.
 - Stakeholders: Farmers, advisors, researchers, IT providers, policy makers and community members.
 - Proposed actions:
 - Use a data-sharing platform to document cases.
 - Industry and policy makers collaborate on funding.
 - Researchers identify pest behaviours and solutions.
 - Barriers Identified: Bureaucracy and time constraints.
- **Challenge 2: Knowledge Transfer**
 - Core issue: Digital literacy and technological access issues for farmers.
 - Stakeholders: Emphasis on IT providers and community engagement.
 - Proposed actions:
 - IT providers train farmers on digital tools.

- Local demonstrations for tech use.
- Researchers ensure practical, simple technology development.
- Barriers Identified: Funding and technological adoption resistance.
- **Challenge 3: Knowledge Implementation**
 - Core issue: Slow scaling and adoption of proven climate-smart techniques.
 - Stakeholders: Farmers, advisors, researchers and policy makers.
 - Proposed actions:
 - Industry and policy makers provide subsidies.
 - Communication technologies to increase awareness.
 - Cross-sector partnerships for scaling solutions.
 - Barriers Identified: Economic barriers, funding and farmer awareness.
- **Challenge 4: Knowledge Evaluation**
 - Core issue: Need for consistent feedback loops on farming innovations.
 - Stakeholders: Farmers, advisors, IT providers and researchers.
 - Proposed actions:
 - Regular benchmarking and stakeholder meetings.
 - IT platforms for collecting and analysing data.
 - Feedback-based iterative improvements.
 - Barriers Identified: Lack of funding and resources.

5. Factsheets

This section showcases the factsheets developed from the outcomes generated during the ccCoP events. These factsheets serve as a visual compilation of the most significant results, insights and practices drawn from the experiences shared by ccCoP members throughout the events. The objective is to highlight and preserve the key learnings and innovative practices that have emerged from these collaborative exchanges.

ccCoP1

Policy, governance
and CAP interventions
- AKIS governance
modernization

ccCoP4

Knowledge access and
knowledge flows

General information:

- **Data:**
08/11/2023 in Zagreb
(Croatia)
- **Participants:**
91 attendees from 28
countries represented
(27 EU + Ukraine)
- **Target audience:**
Key stakeholders:
AKIS Coordination
Bodies, CAP networks,
agricultural policy
experts, and knowledge
facilitators.
- **Partners involved:**
Livia Kránitz (AKI),
Krisztina Magócs (AKI),
Sofia Mouseti (AUA),
Lucía Braña (FEUGA),
Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)

How do they flow, the knowledge flows?

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RESEARCH AND
TEACHING
GEOPONIKO PANEPISTHMIO AΘHNΩN
AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS

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Quick Overview

The first joint event of ccCoP1 and ccCoP4 focused on advancing agricultural knowledge systems (AKIS) within the framework of the 2023-2027 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It aimed to promote effective knowledge exchange, stakeholder involvement, and capacity building, essential for achieving more sustainable and inclusive agricultural policies

Objective

The primary objective of this joint **ccCoP1 and ccCoP4** event is to foster collective learning and promote the effective transformation of agricultural knowledge systems (AKIS). The event focuses on:

- **Clarifying and Systematizing Terminology:** Establishing a shared understanding of key terms related to knowledge exchange, transfer, and flows to ensure consistency across the agricultural sector.
- **Facilitating Knowledge Exchange:** Bringing together key stakeholders, including AKIS Coordination Bodies and CAP networks, to explore and share effective tools, methodologies, and practices that support agricultural knowledge facilitation.

- **Strengthening Coordination and Collaboration:** Supporting the development of a more integrated and inclusive AKIS by identifying practical approaches to enhance cooperation between various stakeholders and align CAP interventions.
- **Assessing Tools and Methods:** Reviewing existing tools and methodologies to evaluate their applicability and efficiency in fostering knowledge exchange and supporting sustainable agricultural practices at national and regional levels.

These objectives aim to equip actors within the agricultural sector with the knowledge, skills, and frameworks needed to drive a more sustainable and inclusive future for European agriculture under the 2023-2027 CAP.

Methodology

Role play game: **modernAKIS Role-Play Game**

To stimulate active participation and creative problem-solving, the event incorporated gamification and scenario-based exercises. Participants engaged in role-play through fictional “countries,” allowing them to explore challenges and test solutions in a low-risk, imaginative environment.



Game materials for all AKIS actors
Now available in the akisconnect.eu platform!



Group work results

The joint **ccCoP1** and **ccCoP4** event demonstrated how collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches can unlock stronger knowledge flows in agriculture. Through role-play exercises and group discussions, participants developed tailored strategies to address diverse regional challenges.

Key Insights:

- **Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement:** Building strong knowledge systems depends on collaboration between farmers, advisors, researchers, educators, NGOs, private entities, and policymakers.
- **Knowledge Exchange Tools:** Participants emphasized the use of digital platforms, demonstration farms, innovation hubs, and agro-tech living labs to enhance knowledge sharing and technology uptake.
- **Capacity Building and Training:** Many proposals included structured training programs, practice groups, and mentorship initiatives to strengthen skills, encourage innovation, and support technology adoption at farm level.
- **Regional Coordination:** Effective regional cooperation was seen as vital for accelerating innovation, ensuring knowledge flows across territories, and addressing shared challenges like climate change and food security.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establishing clear metrics—such as increases in farm productivity, stakeholder engagement rates, and policy impacts—was identified as essential for tracking success and refining initiatives over time.

Main Takeaway: A flexible, context-specific approach to knowledge exchange is key to building sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. The participants' proposals collectively aim to foster innovation, strengthen local capacities, and support long-term agricultural sustainability.



Co-creative outcomes

- **Promote Inclusive Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration: Policies should** actively support the creation of platforms and mechanisms that engage farmers, advisors, researchers, NGOs, educators, private companies, and policymakers in joint knowledge exchange and innovation initiatives.
- **Support Tailored, Regional Solutions for Knowledge Exchange:** Encourage the development of region-specific AKIS strategies, recognizing that knowledge transfer and innovation adoption must be adapted to local contexts and needs.
- **Invest in Knowledge Exchange Infrastructure:** Public support should fund the establishment and maintenance of digital platforms, demonstration farms, agro-tech hubs, and living labs to facilitate continuous innovation and peer-to-peer learning.
- **Strengthen Education, Training, and Mentorship Programs:** Policies should prioritize funding and support for lifelong learning initiatives that equip farmers and other stakeholders with the skills needed for digitalization, sustainability, and new farming practices.
- **Develop and Implement Robust Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:** Require that AKIS-related initiatives define clear, measurable indicators (such as farm productivity, stakeholder engagement rates, and policy impacts) to track success and inform continuous improvement.
- **Foster Cross-Border Collaboration and Knowledge Exchange:** Encourage transnational programs and partnerships that allow for the sharing of innovations, best practices, and lessons learned across regions and countries.

ccCoP3

Connecting
research and
practice

General information:

→ Data:

09/04/2024

→ Participants:

25 attendees from 10 EU countries (from Spain, Italy, Croatia, Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Sweden)

→ Target audience:

Researchers,
academics,
project managers,
coordinators, and
innovation facilitators.

→ Partners involved:

Livia Kránitz (AKI),
Krisztina Magócs (AKI),
Sangeun Bae (UHOH),
Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)

External collaborator:

Korinna Varga
(Hungarian Research
Institute of Organic
Agriculture, Ömki)

How to enhance knowledge flows between research and practice



Institute of Agricultural
Economics



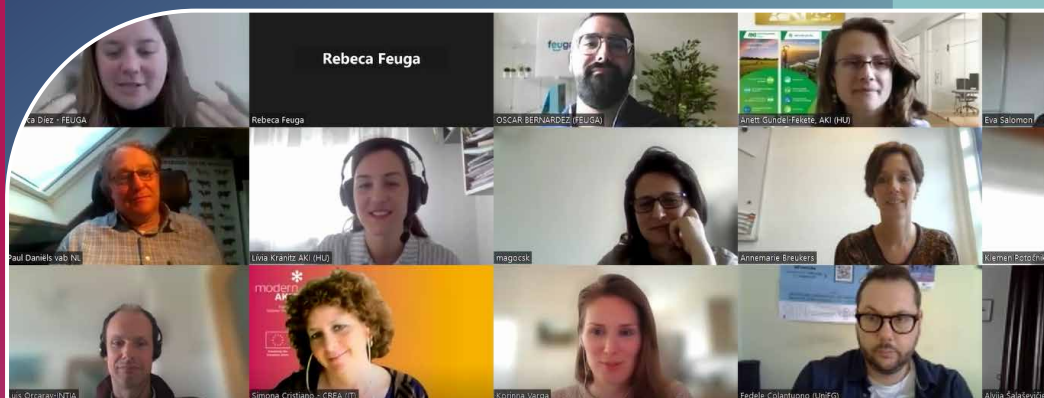
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ÖMki



Quick Overview

The first ccCoP3 online event brought together agricultural research and innovation professionals to explore how to better connect research with farming practice. Through theoretical inputs, interactive discussions, and breakout group work, participants deepened their understanding of knowledge co-production and exchanged experiences from across Europe.

Objective

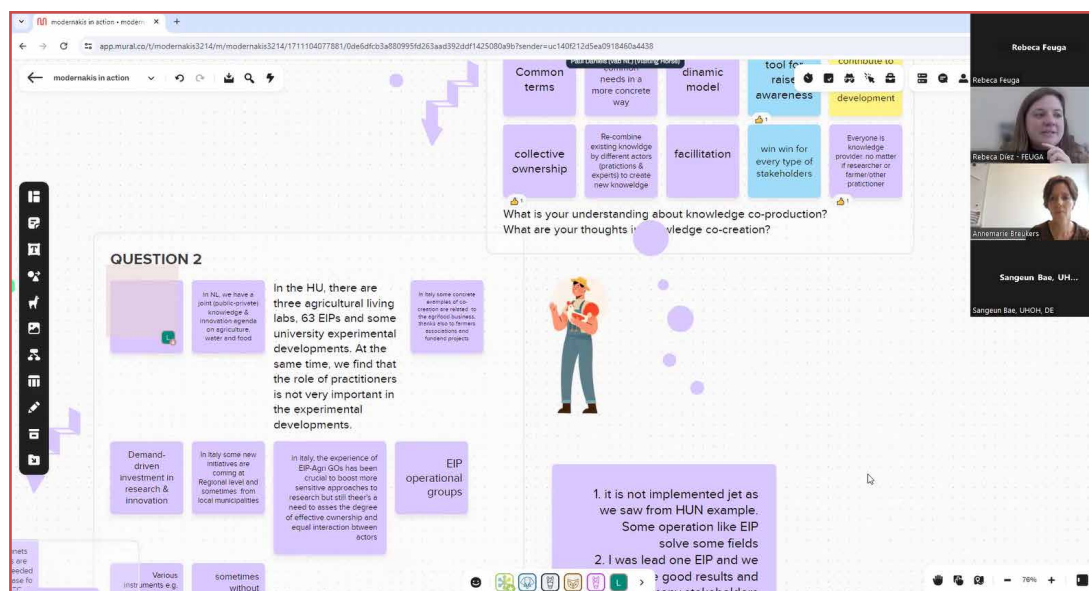
The event aimed to enhance knowledge flows within AKIS by:

- Strengthening understanding of knowledge co-production and co-creation.
- Clarifying practical incentives and mechanisms for engaging researchers and practitioners.
- Identifying common challenges and strategies to overcome barriers in co-production.
- Sharing real-world experiences to inspire future action.

Policies should actively support the creation of platforms and

Methodology

- Theoretical introductions on knowledge concepts and impact pathways.
- Real-world input from external practice (ÖMKi Living Lab example).
- Interactive breakout sessions using Mural to facilitate co-creation exercises.
- Reflective group discussions to capture motivations, barriers, and future directions.



Group work results

Understanding of Co-Production: Seen as a tool for participatory capacity building, creating collective ownership, and producing new knowledge through recombination of actors' expertise.

Implementation Across Countries:

- Early-stage initiatives in Hungary through EIPs and living labs.
- Local/regional projects and Operational Groups in Italy.
- Structured public-private cooperation in the Netherlands, though challenged by fragmented systems.

Motivations for Co-Creation:

- Farmer-driven innovation needs, relevance to practice, shared benefit.

Barriers to Co-Creation:

- Stakeholder competition, funding shortages, administrative burden, time demands, risk of losing motivation.

Inputs from Ömki

As part of the session, **Korinna Varga** (Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture – ÖMKi) presented the **ÖMKi On-Farm Living Lab**, a pioneering example of participatory agricultural innovation.

Key Highlights:

- A **nationwide agroecology-focused network** in Hungary, co-designing and co-implementing field trials and technology tests directly with farmers.
- A certified **Living Lab** that integrates research and innovation into real-life farming communities, enhancing practical knowledge creation and adaptation.
- Developed **market-ready products** such as species-rich seed mixtures, landrace tomato seedlings, and organic heritage flours.
- Promotes peer-to-peer learning, trust-building, and faster knowledge transfer by actively involving farmers as key innovation partners.
- Demonstrated how **co-creation** leads to tailor-made solutions for local agricultural challenges and boosts competitiveness in international research projects.

The ÖMKi Living Lab underlines the **importance of involving farmers from the ground up** to foster sustainable innovation, strengthen knowledge flows, and bridge the gap between research and practice.



ÖMKi On-farm Living Lab

Korinna Varga
Head of Agricultural Policy Research Group
Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (ÖMKi)

ÖMKi | Ökológiai Mezőgazdasági Kutatóintézet

Participants in the video conference:

- Rebecca Feuga
- Rebecca Feuga
- Rebecca Dier - FEUGA
- Lina Krantz ARI / IAO
- Korinna Varga
- Sangeun Bae, UH...
- Sangeun Bae, UHCH, DE
- Vyara Stefanova, BG

ÖMKi logo: Ökológiai Mezőgazdasági Kutatóintézet / Research Institute of Organic Agriculture | Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau

Inputs from UHOH

Sangeun Bae (University of Hohenheim) presented key insights on why and how **knowledge co-production** is essential for bridging the gap between research and practice.

Key Highlights:

- **Shift from Knowledge Translation to Co-Production:** Research impact is no longer achieved by simply disseminating findings; it requires collaborative processes where knowledge is created together with stakeholders, integrating multiple perspectives.
- **Benefits of Co-Production:** Encourages creativity, expands ownership and awareness, strengthens capacities, and transforms knowledge systems, making research outcomes more relevant and impactful.
- **Barriers Identified:** Researchers face challenges including inadequate evaluation systems, publishing difficulties, lack of funding and political support, and academic structures resistant to collaborative research.
- **Enablers for Success:** Dedicated funding mechanisms, recognition and awards for co-creation, transdisciplinary research centers, and professional development programs are key to fostering an environment where co-production thrives.
- **Policy Outlook:** Institutional change is necessary — scaling up co-production practices through supportive policies, improved evaluation metrics, and long-term commitment to collaborative, impactful research.

This presentation reinforced the importance of **embedding co-creation principles** within research and policy agendas to build a more dynamic, responsive, and effective AKIS.

Co-creative outcomes

Promote inclusive, participatory knowledge creation across all AKIS actors.

Strengthen long-term, systemic financing to support co-creation processes sustainably.

Streamline administrative processes for co-creation projects to reduce burdens and increase participation.

Invest in intermediary structures (living labs, field labs) that connect research and practice effectively.

Foster demand-driven, transparent research investments tailored to farmers' practical challenges.

ccCoP1

*Policy,
governance and
CAP interventions*

General information:

- **Data:**
24/06/2024
- **Participants:**
23 participants from 9 EU MS
- **Target audience:**
Coordination Bodies,
Managing Authorities
and Paying Agencies
responsible for AKIS
related interventions.
- **Partners involved:**
Krisztina Magócs (AKI),
Valentina Carta (CREA),
Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)

External speakers:

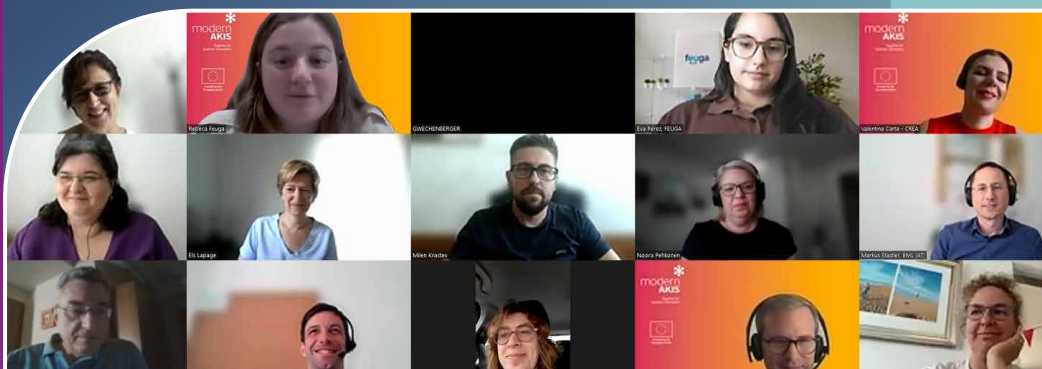
Noora Pehkonen,
(Finnish Food Authority,
Paying Agency),
Els Lapage (Agency
for Agriculture and
Fisheries, Flemish
Government),
Markus Stadler (Federal
Ministry for Agriculture,
Forestry, Regions and
Water Management)

Application of Simplified Cost Options for AKIS- related measures

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e l'analisi dell'economia agraria

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Quick Overview

The event explored the evolving use of Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), focusing on both the 2014–2020 and the current 2023–2027 budget periods. It began by outlining the regulatory framework that governs SCOs, explaining key distinctions between different cost calculation methods such as standard unit costs, lump sums, and flat rates. The discussions emphasized the practical benefits of SCOs, including the reduction of administrative burdens, lower error rates, improved consistency in public support, and the facilitation of participation by smaller actors like farmers and foresters. Practical experiences from various Member States illustrated how SCOs have been applied across different CAP interventions, particularly in areas like European Innovation Partnerships, agricultural advisory services, demonstration projects, and vocational training. The event highlighted methodologies for setting and implementing SCOs, shared lessons learned, and reflected on challenges encountered, with a recurring theme being the significant administrative simplification and enhanced focus on outputs rather than inputs.

Objective

The event aims to strengthen the ability of Coordination Bodies, Managing Authorities, and Paying Agencies to effectively implement simplified cost options (SCOs) in AKIS-related measures. By providing a clear framework, real-world examples, and opportunities for interactive knowledge exchange, the event seeks to build both technical understanding and practical application skills. This comprehensive approach is designed to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and overall impact of funding mechanisms within AKIS.

Group work results

The Q&A session fostered dynamic knowledge exchange, allowing participants to delve into practical aspects of implementing Simplified Cost Options (SCOs). Discussions covered real-life applications, such as the treatment of analysis costs, the balance between beneficiary choice and managing authority control, and the use of external studies to ensure fair and transparent SCO calculations. Lessons from past CAP periods highlighted the benefits of SCOs in reducing administrative burdens and error rates, while also emphasizing the importance of adapting methodologies to evolving needs. The session strengthened engagement among participants, with a shared interest in continued collaboration and deeper exploration of technical aspects, ultimately enhancing the capacity for effective SCO implementation across Member States.

Inputs from Finnish Food Authority

The presentation by Noora Pehkonen outlined Finland's application of Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) for AKIS-related measures, focusing on the 2014–2022 and 2023–2027 periods. It described the use of flat rates (15%, 19%, and 40%), lump sums, and standard hourly rates to simplify project funding under the Rural Development Program. Drawing on experiences from the previous CAP period, Finland found flat rates highly popular and effective, despite some challenges in verifying salary costs. For the 2023–2027 period, new methodologies were introduced, based on a KPMG study, to ensure transparent, fair, and EU-compliant cost calculations. Special attention was given to European Innovation Partnership projects and farm advisory services, with new standardized rates and procedures to reduce administrative burdens and enhance funding efficiency.

Inputs from Agency for Agriculture and Fisheries, Flemish Government

Els Lapage described the use of standard unit costs and flat rates in Flanders for EIP Operational Group projects and demonstration projects. To simplify administration and reduce error risks, staff costs are calculated using a standardized hourly rate based on gross monthly salaries, rather than actual costs. A flat rate of 15% of eligible staff costs is also applied to cover office and administration expenses. This approach streamlines project management for both beneficiaries and authorities, harmonizes procedures across different funding programs, and reduces verification workload and error rates. Key lessons included the importance of clear time registration and ensuring that SCO-covered costs are not reported elsewhere.

Inputs from Austrian Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management

Markus Stadler focused on the implementation of agricultural and forestry advisory services under Intervention 78-01 in Austria's CAP Strategic Plan. The objective is to deliver efficient, high-quality, independent, and cost-effective advisory services across a broad range of economic, ecological, and social topics. Funded with €45.5 million in public funds for 2024–2027, the program requires performance-based payment claims, including both qualitative reports and quantitative records like time logs. The emphasis on advisor qualifications and the potential future use of unit costs or lump sums to further streamline administration was also highlighted.

Co-creative outcomes

- Broader theoretical knowledge and a practical toolkit for the design and implementation of SCOs.
- Increased motivation and courage to establish, implement and continuously improve the right SCO.
- Increased ability of the target group to articulate which area of the topic they wish to learn more about.

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Together for Systems' Innovation

Welcome!
First Online ccCoP1 Event.

Application of Simplified Cost Options for AKIS-related measures

Krisztina Magócs (AKI)
Livia Kranitz (AKI)
Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)

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ccCoP2

Integration of the advisors into AKIS

General information:

- **Data:**
14/10/2024
- **Participants:**
23 attendees from 9 EU countries (from Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Greece, Poland, Spain, Macedonia, Netherlands)
- **Target audience:**
Professionals involved in agricultural advisory services, innovation support services (ISS), and agricultural digitalization — including advisors, digital innovators, and project managers participating in Synergy Days.
- **Partners involved:**
Sylvain Sturel (CDAF), Myriam Gaspard (CRAO), Marleen Gysen (BBD), Óscar Bernárdez (FEUGA), Eva Pérez (FEUGA), Rebeca Díez (FEUGA)
- External collaborator:**
Francisco García (CIDAFCat), Gaëlle Chéruiy-Pottiau (Agdatahub)

Transforming Advisory Services: Embracing Digital Tools and Overcoming Challenges



Quick Overview

This face-to-face ccCoP2 workshop, held during **Synergy Days** in Barcelona, focused on accelerating the digital transformation of advisory services in agriculture. Through expert inputs and a dynamic group exercise, participants explored challenges and strategies for embracing digital innovation within AKIS.

Objective

The session aimed to:

- Analyze goals for digital transformation in advisory services.
- Map existing digital tools and technologies.
- Explore the increasing importance of data in decision-making.
- Understand the evolving role of advisors in leading digital change.
- Promote collaboration between advisors and digital innovators to overcome barriers and foster adoption of digital solutions in agriculture.

Methodology

Gamification Activity – “Sticking Barriers” Game:

Participants identified, mapped, and analysed key barriers to digital adoption using interactive tools. They collaborated in groups to explore causes, impacts, and potential solutions, encouraging creativity, problem-solving, and peer learning.



Available in AKISconnect.eu



Group work results

Key barriers and proposed solutions identified during the “Sticking Barriers” game:

Incompatible Digital Tools:

→ Solutions: Set interoperability standards, enforce regulations, and offer public funding support.

Insufficient Cross-Sector Collaboration:

→ Solutions: Promote knowledge brokers, ongoing training for farmers, and better research-practice links.

Poor Infrastructure (Internet Access):

→ Solutions: Policy investment in rural connectivity, especially for small and remote farms.

High Costs of Digital Tools:

→ Solutions: Offer affordable subscription models and financial incentives for small-scale farmers.

Limited Access to Policy Processes:

→ Solutions: Foster transparent policymaking with active stakeholder participation.

Lack of Digital Support Services:

→ Solutions: Create platforms for joint problem-solving and enhance stakeholder engagement in policymaking.

Inputs from AGDATAHUB

Presented by **Gaëlle Chérut Pottiau**, Chief Service Officer at **Agdatahub (France)**

The agricultural sector faces significant challenges in data accessibility due to scattered, heterogeneous, and often non-interoperable data across different partners. Agdatahub acts as a **data intermediary**, providing a secure platform for agricultural data exchange and ensuring compliance with new European regulations like the Data Governance Act (DGA) and the upcoming Data Act.

Key objectives include:

- Streamlining data distribution and industrializing data processes
- Securing transactions and managing user consent and digital identity
- Enhancing data interoperability and reducing portability constraints
- Supporting compliance with CSR-CSR and other environmental, economic, and social performance regulations

Agdatahub's role is central to the development of the future **Common European Agriculture Data Space**, following the CSA AgriDataSpace Project, with full-scale implementation targeted for January 2025. Through their platform, farmers retain control over their data while enabling innovation across agribusiness, research, public services, and start-ups.

Inputs from CIDAFcat

Fran García (CIDAFcat) highlighted the critical role of agricultural advisors in driving the digital transformation of the sector.

Key Highlights:

- Advisors are essential for successful digital adoption:
- They act as technical, economic, organizational, and social support systems, helping farmers adopt and integrate digital solutions effectively.

Skills for Digitalization:

Advisors must stay updated, remain independent, communicate effectively, and adapt to different cases and contexts.

Challenges Identified:

Advisors often face pressure and may perceive digitalization as additional workload. There is also a risk of a digital divide if advisory services are not equally accessible.

Recommendations:

- Expand training and support for advisors to specialize in digital technologies.
- Promote independent, topic-specific advisory services.
- Encourage administrations to invest in extension services to prevent inequalities and ensure that agriculture's digital transition benefits society as a whole.

- The presentation emphasized that technical advice makes a real difference in the adoption of digital tools — and that empowering advisors is key to making the digital shift sustainable and inclusive.

Co-creative outcomes

- Promote interoperability and open standards for digital agricultural tools.
- Invest in rural digital infrastructure to enable equitable access to innovation.
- Support financial mechanisms (e.g., subsidies, subscription models) to make digital tools affordable for all farm sizes.
- Institutionalize knowledge brokerage to bridge research, advisory services, and practice.
- Enhance stakeholder engagement in policymaking to ensure inclusive, trust-based innovation ecosystems.
- Strengthen digital advisory support services through collaborative platforms and continued professional development.

