

# Challenges for European advisory services

## Key findings from PRO AKIS case studies

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# AKIS in the ground

## In-depth analysis through 12 case studies

- Effectiveness of advisory services to respond demands and needs of small-scale farmers
- Capacity of advisory services to bridge research with knowledge needs of farmers
- Agricultural innovation networks which enhance the farmers ability to co-innovate in cooperation with other rural actors



# AKIS in the ground

## In-depth analysis through case studies

- Effectiveness of advisory services to respond demands and needs of small-scale farmers
  - Young farmers and semi-subsistence farmers in South Central region of Bulgaria
  - Crofters in the West of Scotland
  - Agri-tourism farms in the Carpathians, Poland
  - New entrants in berry sector in North Centre region of Portugal



# Challenges for advisory services to respond needs of small-scale farmers

- Diversity and vitality of small-scale farmers
  - Multiple and heterogeneous needs and demands
  - Evolving needs and demands
  - New farmers profiles, competences and resources



# Challenges for advisory services to respond needs of small-scale farmers

- Multiple and heterogeneous needs and demands
  - ✓ Advice on no-farming activities, and new topics
  - ✓ Young inexperienced farmers demand for complete advice package: project development, technical and commercial....
  - ✓ Need for local-specific knowledge which is increasingly scarce due to gaps in applied research (due to public disinvestment)
- 
- Evolving needs and demands
  - ✓ Small farmers needs and demands are many, diverse and constantly evolving

Young farmers in Bulgaria



# Challenges for advisory services to respond needs of small-scale farmers

Crofters in  
West  
Scotland

- New farmers profiles, competences and resources
- ✓ High educated with ability to self-search information and to convert knowledge
- ✓ New entrants bringing-in to farming outside experiences, knowledge, skills and networks
- ✓ Intensive users of ICT resources, using them to search, share and co-create (tacit) knowledge
- ✓ Prone to use informal networking and networks as tools to share knowledge and information, to co-create knowledge and to co-innovate with their peers



# Challenges for advisory services to respond needs of small-scale farmers

## Challenges highlighted

- **Diversity and vitality of European small-scale farmers**
  - Multiple and heterogeneous needs and demands
  - Evolving needs and demands
  - New farmers profiles, competences and resources

What do you add, contradict, reinforce.....?



# AKIS in the ground

## In-depth analysis through case studies

- Capacity of advisory services to bridge research with knowledge needs of farmers
  - Knowledge transfer mechanisms in Bulgaria linking science to practice
  - Experimental stations in Bavaria, Germany
  - Development of decision support tools in France
  - Demonstration farms in Poland





# Challenges for advisory services to bridge research with knowledge needs of farmers

- Coexistence of traditional and novel models to bridge research with farmers
  - Traditional models with well-functioning linkages between research and practice
  - ✓ Experimental stations (in Bavaria, Germany) and in Bulgaria (also applied research institutions and agricultural universities)
  - Novel models
    - ✓ Network of demonstration farms (in Poland), that join farmers, advisors and researchers
    - ✓ Decision support tools (DST) for agriculture allowing for direct linkage between research and farmers (with ICT)



# Challenges for advisory services to bridge research with knowledge needs of farmers

## ● Challenges of novel models to advisory

- Network of demonstration farms
- ✓ Advantages of putting together farmers, researchers and advisors
- ✓ Need public support
- ✓ Advisors need to be effective in diffusing and disseminating knowledge generated
- DST allowing for direct link between farmers and researchers
- ✓ Often developed by actors outside the AKIS and without link with advisory
- ✓ Designed and usable by medium-large commercial farmers (excludes small farmers and others)

Demonstration farms

Decision support tools (DST)



# Challenges for advisory services to bridge research with knowledge needs of farmers

## Challenges highlighted

- Coexistence of traditional and novel models to bridge research with farmers
- Traditional models with well-functioning linkages between research and practice
- Challenges of novel models to advisory

What do you add, contradict, reinforce.....?



# AKIS in the ground

## In-depth analysis through case studies

- Agricultural innovation networks which enhance farmers ability to co-innovate with other rural actors
  - Research project-based agricultural innovation network in Brandenburg, Germany
  - Anti-Mafia rural network in Southern of Italy
  - Farmer-based berries knowledge and innovation network in Portugal
  - Monitor Farms: Farmer-based knowledge and innovation networks, Scotland



# Agricultural innovation networks enhancing farmers co-innovation and advisory services

- Diversity in agricultural innovation networks
  - Different goals, configuration, actors involved
  - ✓ Agricultural vs rural networks
  - ✓ Project-based, farmer-based, bottom-up, top-down...
  - ✓ Well defined boundaries, sectoral delimited, territorial fuzzy
  - Enhancing collective learning and incremental innovation
  - ✓ Create platforms for multi-actor interaction
  - ✓ Oriented to farmers needs, practice and problem-solving
  - ✓ Facilitate integration of codified and tacit knowledge



# Agricultural innovation networks enhancing farmers co-innovation and advisory services

- Role of advisory services in/for these networks
  - Networks complementing conventional advisory services
  - ✓ Novel models for delivering advice involving multi-actors and holistic experiences
  - ✓ Integrated in publicly funded programmes lead by leading institutions of AKIS
- Networks filling (temporarily) gaps in advisory service
  - ✓ Farmer-based and research-based, sectoral, national and local networks, which address the delivering of quality advice by joining multi-actors from AKIS
- ✓ Funded by projects which tend to dissolve when funding gets over

Monitor Farms

Cluster of soft fruits



# Agricultural innovation networks enhancing farmers co-innovation and advisory services

## Challenges highlighted

- Diversity in agricultural innovation networks
- Roles of advisory services in/for agricultural innovation networks

What do you add, contradict, reinforce.....?



# Challenges for European advisory services

## *Take-home messages*

- Challenges posed to advisors:
  - Multiple, heterogeneous and constantly evolving needs and demands of European small-scale farmers
  - New roles for advisors in the novel models that bridge directly science and practice
  - New roles and place of advisors in/for agricultural and rural innovation networks



What do you add, contradict, reinforce.....?



- Check on PRO AKIS website [www.proakis.eu](http://www.proakis.eu)
- Country report per each case study (12 reports)
- Synthesis report per topic (3 reports)



Prospects for Farmers' Support : Advisory Services in European AKIS (PRO AKIS)

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**Thank you!**