



**i2connect**  
INTERACTIVE INNOVATION

**Regional AKIS Stakeholders workshop**

8<sup>th</sup> of June from 09:00 to 12:30 (CET)



# Cross analysis of AKIS reports in i2connect partner countries

Patterns and trends

Andrea Knierim, Sangeun Bae  
(University of Hohenheim)  
2<sup>nd</sup> AKIS stakeholder workshop  
8<sup>th</sup> June, 2022

## Key topics of discussion

- 01 The AKIS concept and its relevance in science and practice
- 02 Key features of a well functioning AKIS
- 03 Current trends on the use of the AKIS concept in Europe
- 04 Findings from the cross analysis of AKIS reports in i2connect

## What is AKIS and why do we need it ?

Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) is:

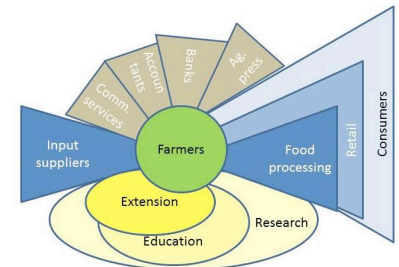
➔ ...a **concept** to describe the exchange of knowledge and the services which support these exchanges in agriculture.

➔ ...a **system** that links people and institutions to promote mutual learning and to generate, share, and utilise agriculture related technology, knowledge, and information.

➔ ...a **network** of organisations, enterprises, and individuals focused on bringing new products, new processes, and new forms of organisation into economic use, together with the institutions and policies that affect the way different agents interact, share, access, exchange and use knowledge



Source: Rivera et al. (2005)



Source: EU SCAR (2012)

## Characteristics of a well functioning AKIS

- An AKIS **supporting policy** with dedicated resources  
e.g., public investment available to enhance advisory services, knowledge production and exchange
- **Diverse influential actors** or organisations at national/regional level that support (parts of) the knowledge system
- Well established AKIS **coordination mechanisms** in place
- Effective formal **linkages for knowledge exchange** among various AKIS actors
- There are sufficient advisory service providers reaching farmers

*Knierim und Prager (2015)*

## Current discussions about AKIS in the EU

- Since 2007, attention and financial support for advisory systems have been steadily increasing (FAS)
- In particular, political support for innovations in the agricultural sector is taking place (EIP agri)
- Establishment of network structures for thematically focused and targeted knowledge exchange
- Increase in practice-oriented research funding focused on agricultural topics (MAA in Horizon 2020/Europe)
- The new EU CAP reform envisages strengthening of national agricultural policies which is to be achieved through developing national AKIS strategies



## The i2connect AKIS inventory



### **Objective**

Update existing AKIS inventory for EU states and expand to Croatia, Serbia, Switzerland and Montenegro



### **Main activities (by country)**

- Provide a national-level AKIS characterisation
- Schematic representation of AKIS actors and their linkages
- Describe policy and coordination mechanisms at the national level
- Assess advisory service provision

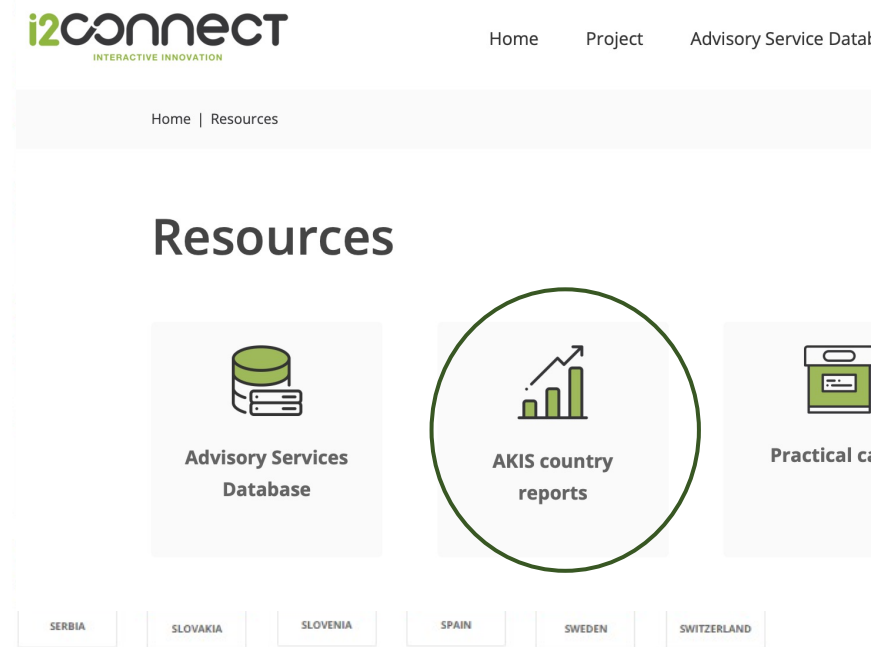
**Coordination of activity:** University of Hohenheim (2019 - 2021)

## Result: The i2connect AKIS inventory

27 AKIS country reports updated or written for first time based on information from

- More than **100** AKIS expert interviews
- Survey results from **515** respondents in advisory service provision
- Diverse published and grey literature

Reports available on <https://i2connect-h2020.eu/resources/akis-country-reports/>



## Result: Organisation and governance of the AKIS

Most countries coordinate and manage their AKIS at national level

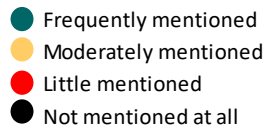
Few countries have regional AKIS governance, particularly concerning education, research and advisory services



## Result: AKIS actors diversity and presence in the system

Public authorities, Research and FBOs visible in many countries

All actor categories present in a few W. European countries.



Country	Public authorities	Research and Education	Farmer based organizations	Third sector NGOs	Private companies/ entrepreneur
Belgium	●	●	●	●	●
France	●	●	●	●	●
Germany	●	●	●	●	●
Ireland	●	●	●	●	●
Italy	●	●	●	●	●
Netherlands	●	●	●	●	●
Switzerland	●	●	●	●	●
Austria	●	●	●	●	●
Bulgaria	●	●	●	●	●
Spain	●	●	●	●	●
Hungary	●	●	●	●	●
Malta	●	●	●	●	●
Latvia	●	●	●	●	●
Lithuania	●	●	●	●	●
Luxembourg	●	●	●	●	●
Denmark	●	●	●	●	●
Estonia	●	●	●	●	●
Finland	●	●	●	●	●
Slovakia	●	●	●	●	●
Slovenia	●	●	●	●	●
Denmark	●	●	●	●	●
Estonia	●	●	●	●	●
Finland	●	●	●	●	●
Croatia	●	●	●	●	●
Cyprus	●	●	●	●	●
Czech republic	●	●	●	●	●
Poland	●	●	●	●	●
Serbia	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal	●	●	●	●	●
Sweden	●	●	●	●	●
Greece	●	●	●	●	●

## Result: Advisory organisations reaching farmers (predominantly)

### Public advisory org.

Bulgaria Cyprus Hungary Ireland Latvia Lithuania Croatia Serbia  
Montenegro Switzerland

### Farmer Based Org. (FBO)

Austria Denmark Finland France Portugal Sweden  
Poland Slovenia Belgium Flanders

### Private adv. Org.

The Netherlands Greece

### Public & Private adv. org

Czech Republic Estonia Belgium- Wallonia

### FBO and Public

Luxembourg Malta

### Public, Private and FBO

Germany Italy Spain Slovakia

## Result: Policy and resources supporting AKIS



**EAFRD funding**, described as the most prominent policy support of the AKIS at national or regional level



Other national policies and funding, mainly oriented towards research and innovations and/or focus on one AKIS sub system (e.g., Germany, Italy, France)

AKIS prominence in policy documents has advanced since 2014 and systematic planning and funding required for the CAP strategic plans post 2020

## Result: Types of AKIS Coordination mechanisms



### **National network for rural development**

- Facilitates cooperation and knowledge dissemination
- For countries benefiting from the EU rural development support fund



### **Collaborative working groups, councils or thematic platforms**

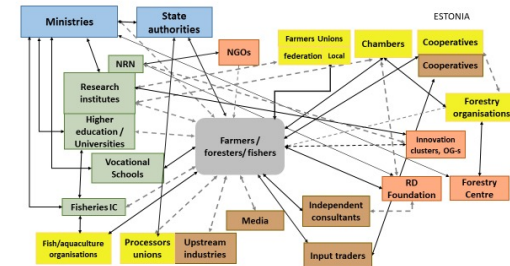
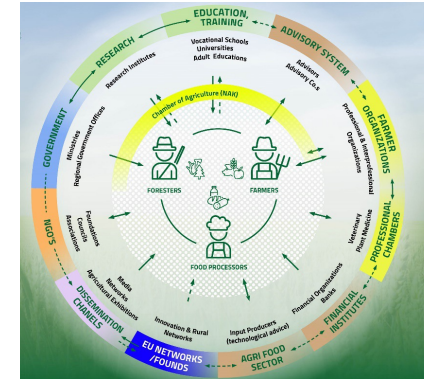
Strategic bodies for planning and decision making

E.g. Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary.....

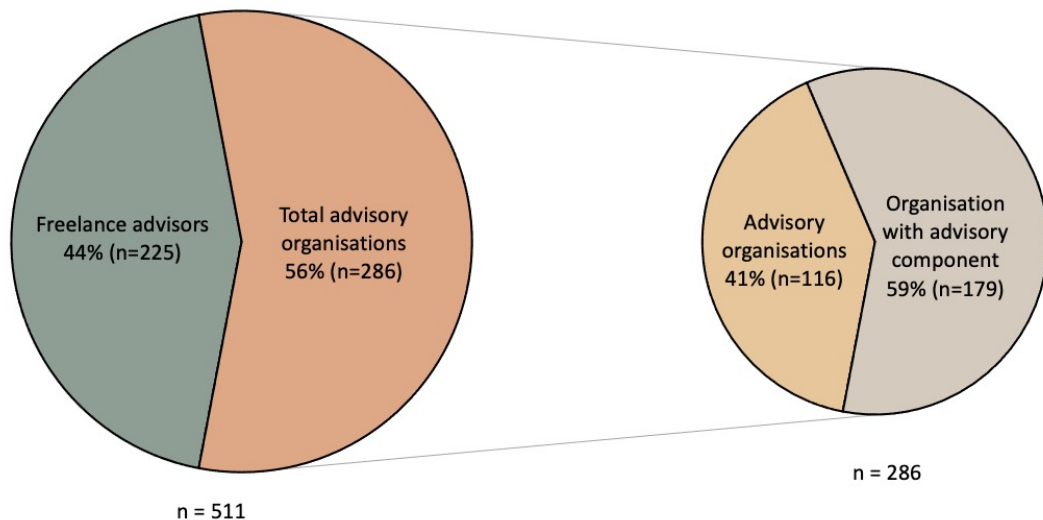
## Degree of linkages between actors for knowledge flows

In many countries:

- Stronger linkage between farmers/farmer organisations and vocational education and advisory service providers (e.g. Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Sweden and Denmark)
- Degree of vertical linkages stronger compared to horizontal linkages
- Linkage between science and practice are weaker than among other actors



# Advisory service survey: Overview



**96** Private/Commercial



**58** Government or ministry based



**55** Farmer based organisation



**33** University or research based



**25** Non-Governmental Organisation



**19** Others

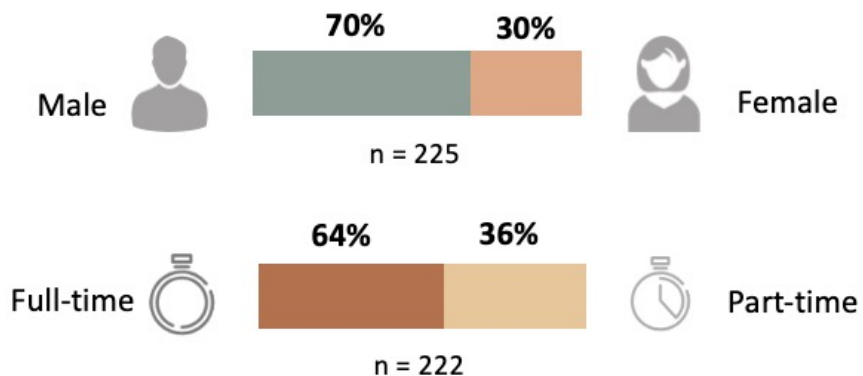
## Scale of operation

% of advisory service providers



# General profile of freelance advisors

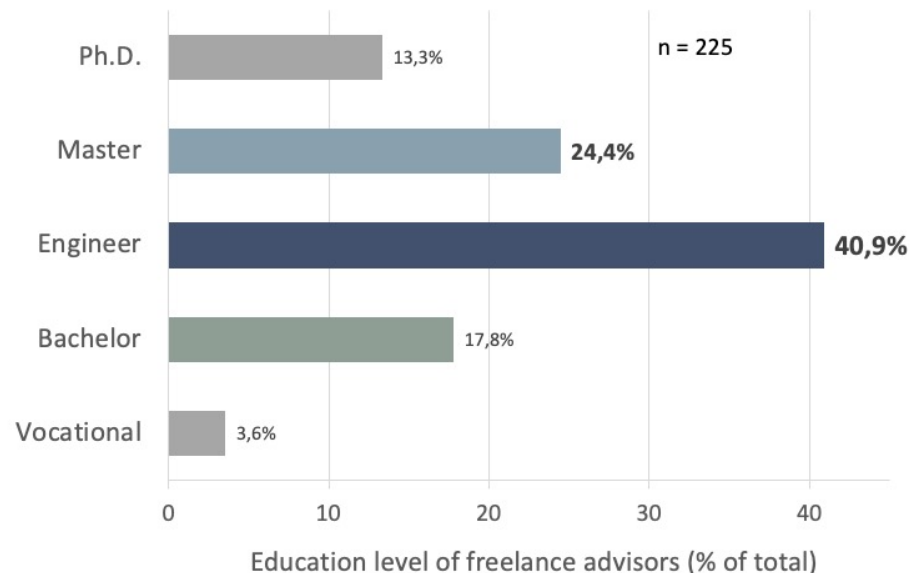
General profile



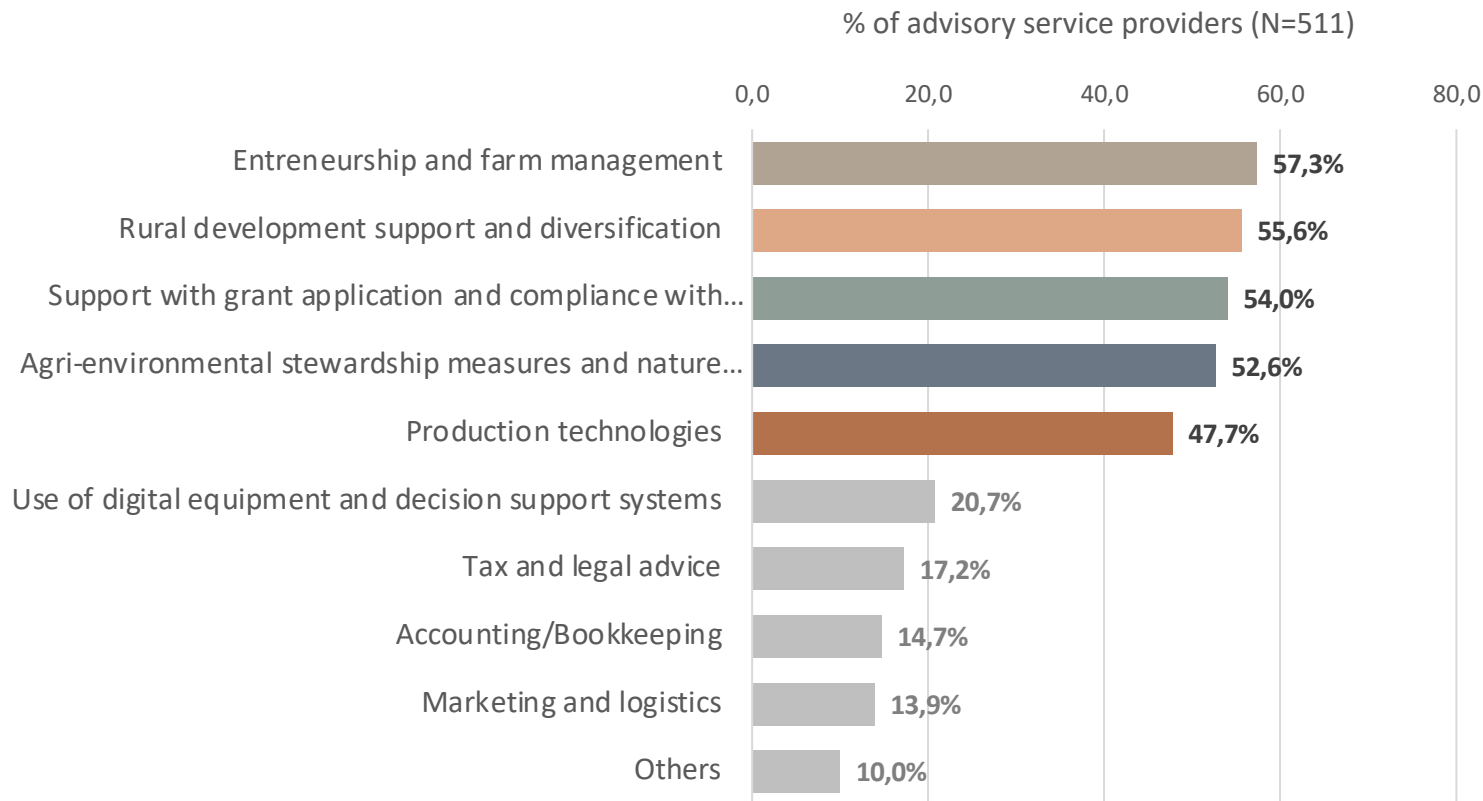
Experience (years) in advisory work



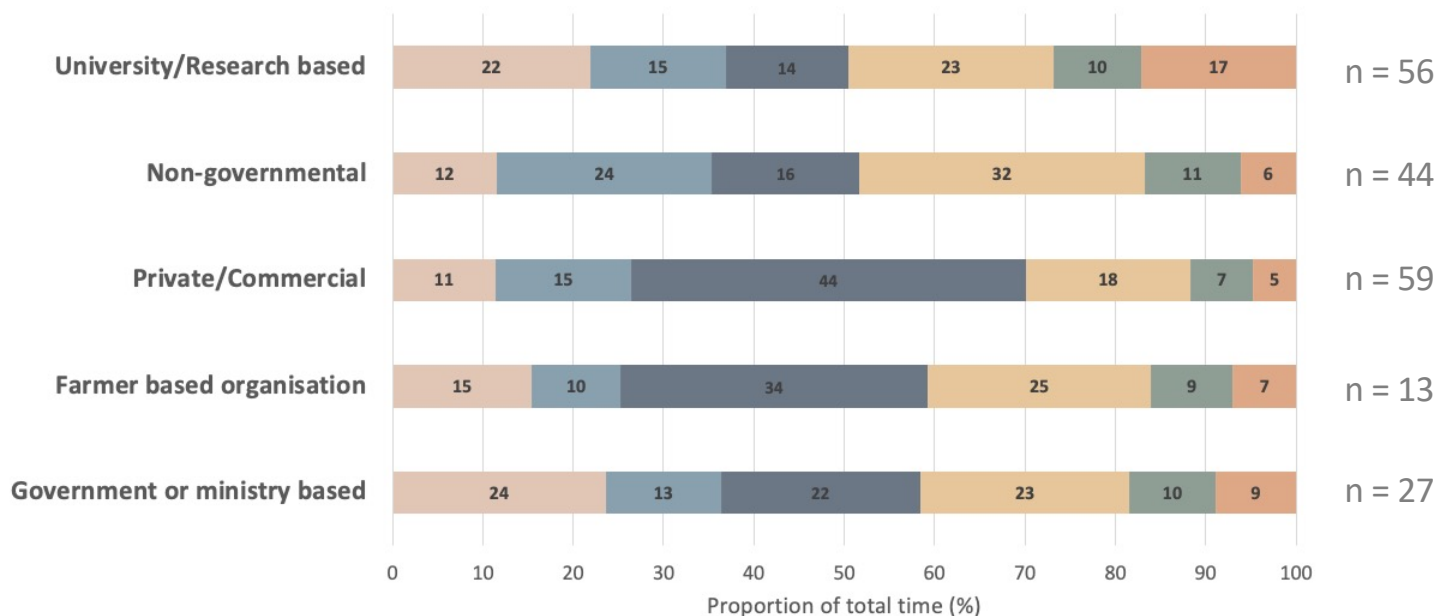
Education level of freelance advisors



## Topics demanded most frequently



## Proportion of time dedicated to various advisory activities



Teaching and training activities

Innovation support activities (facilitation, networking, brokerage)

Targeted consultation services (business plans, credit/subsidy application, etc.)

Information dissemination (face to face, via digital tools)

Further development of one's knowledge and skills (participating in training programs)

Others

## Conclusion

- Good resonance of the AKIS concept among the interviewees in the partner countries, although not yet widely known
- Evidence for great institutional diversity of AKIS actors
- Growing presence of coordination mechanisms aimed at facilitating collaboration of AKIS actors
- For the advisory subsystem, differences among the different categories of service providers
- Varying degree of involvement in innovation support activities



# Thank you!

Individual country reports available on  
[i2connect webpage!](#)

# i2connect

INTERACTIVE INNOVATION

## Contacts

Email

Website

Phone

Links



THIS PROJECT HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM  
THE EUROPEAN UNION' HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH  
AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME  
UNDER GRANT AGREEMENT N. 863039