



i2connect
INTERACTIVE INNOVATION

**Regional AKIS Stakeholders workshop
Southern Europe**

8th of June 2022

The AKIS and advisory services in ITALY

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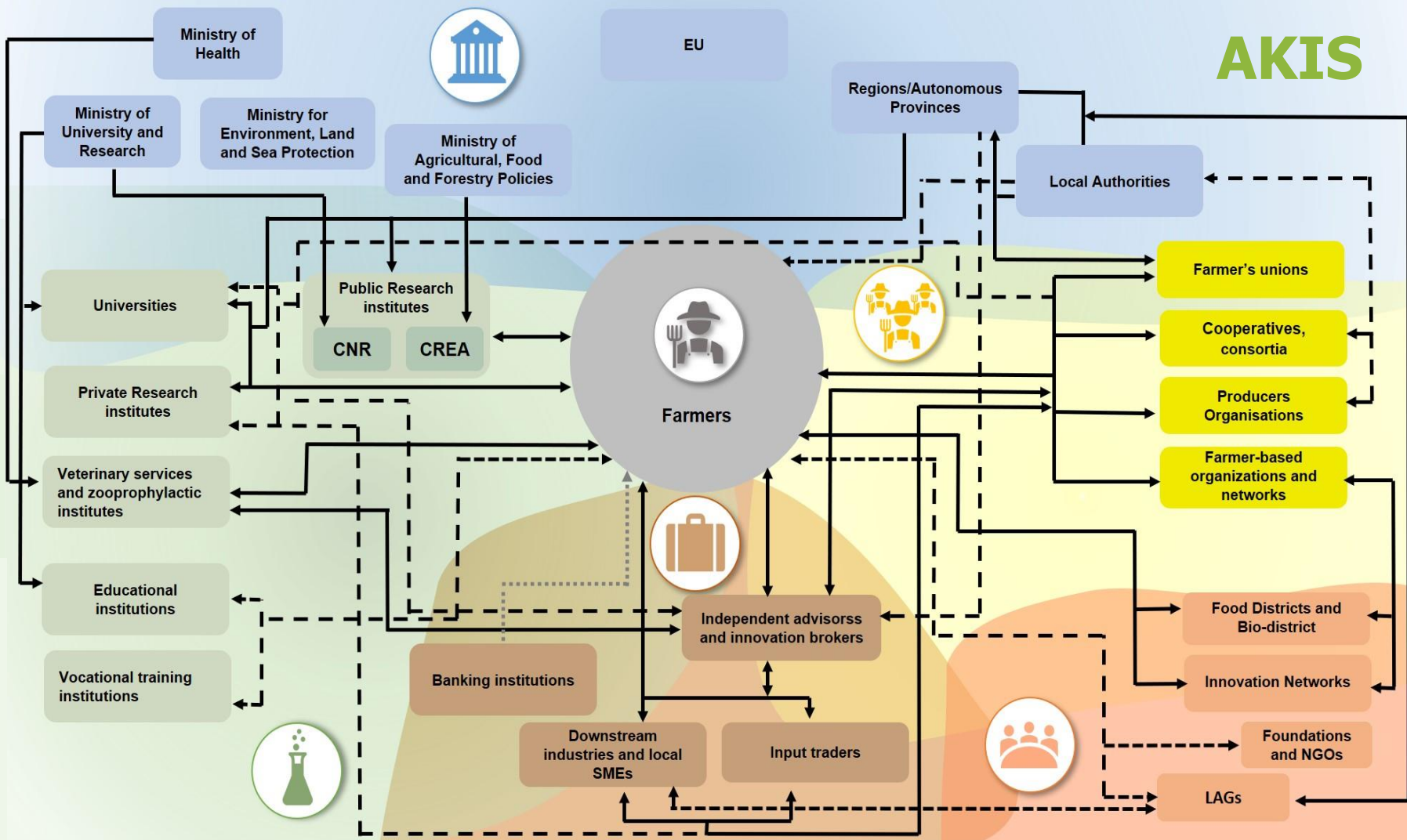
Background: a wide variety of farming systems

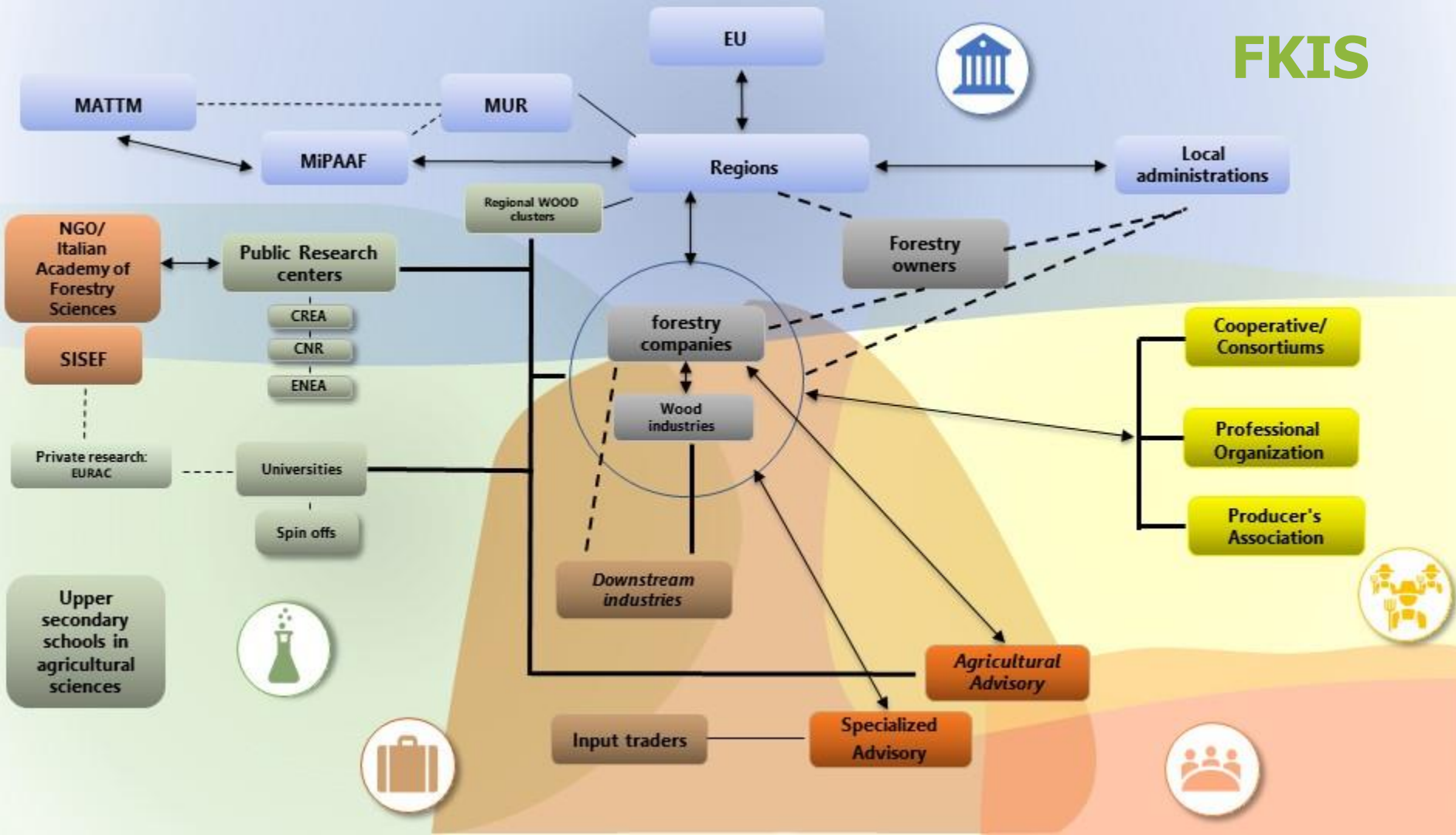


Background: structural and economic indicators of Italian Agriculture

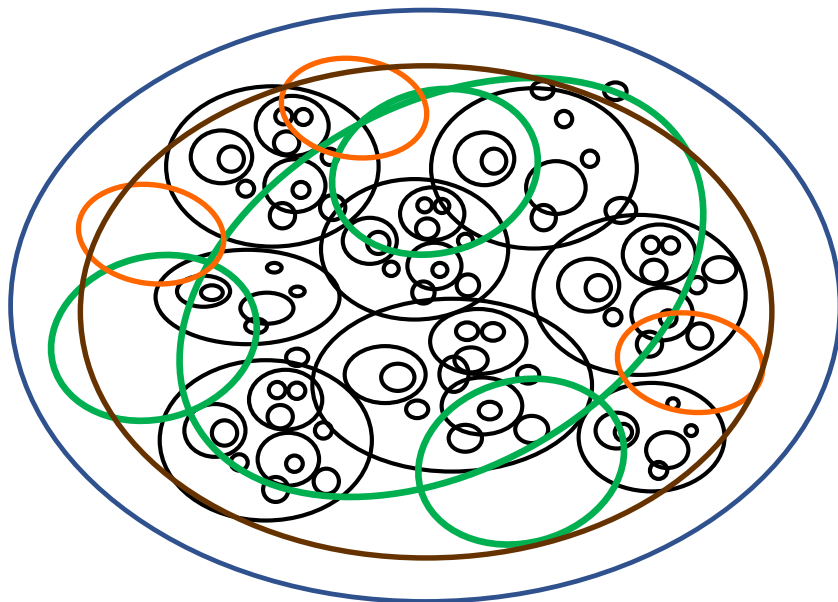
	Italy				EU 27
	North	Centre	South	Total	
UAA (ha)	4,441,170	2,088,310	6,068,670	12,598,150	156,662,970
Whereof: organic	339,837	420,606	1,197,597	1,958,040	11,445,112
Holdings	280,360	178,850	686,470	1,145,680	10,282,790
UAA/Holding	15.8	11.7	8.8	11.0	15.24
Livestock units (LSU) (thousand)	6,490	717	2,262	9,468	118,089
Whereof: Bovine	2,896	363	1,295	4,554	57,457
Swine	1,840	89	108	2,036	31,917
Sheeps and Goats	64	128	609	801	7,471
Workers in Agriculture, forestry and fishery (thousand)	288.1	125.6	430	843.7	7,903
% on total workers	2.43	2.60	7.16	3.72	4.06
Gross Value Added (million €)	16,110	5,686	12,931	34,727	220,725
% on Total GVA	1.74	1.60	3.48	2.10	1.83

Source: Eurostat National Accounts (2019), Farm structure survey (2016); Sistema di Informazione Nazionale sull'Agricoltura Biologica – SINAB (2019)





AKIS in Italy: plurality of systems



Local systems: territorial, sectoral or project level

Regional systems: administrative, sectoral level

National level systems: cross-cutting, sectoral

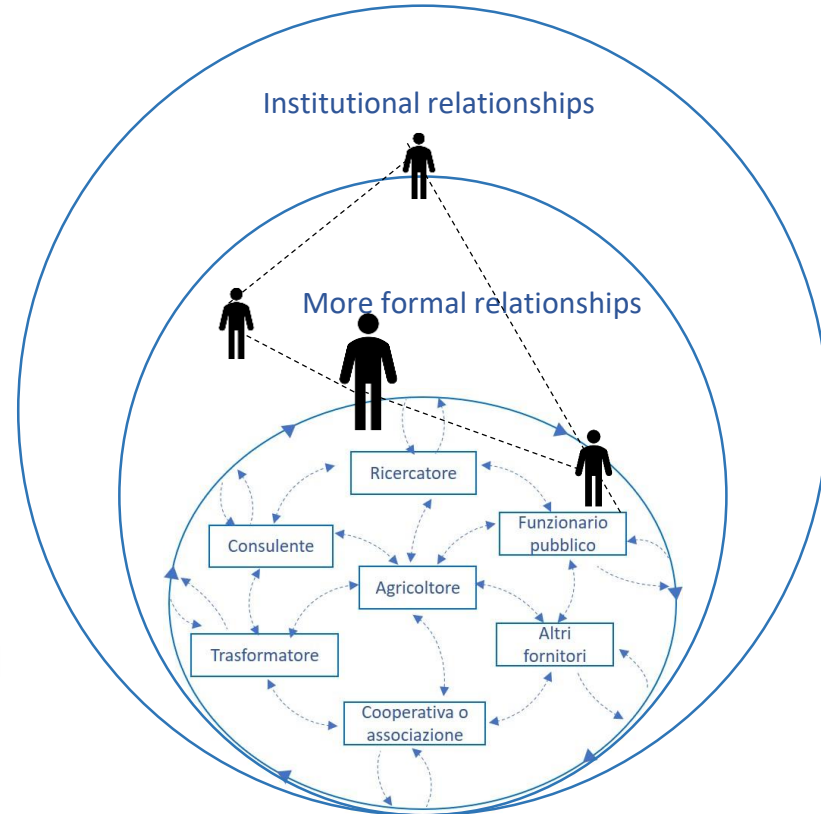
Different levels of definition of AKIS reflecting the administrative configuration, orographic diversity, cultural and relational specificities of the territories

Characteristics of the systems

- Strong interconnections between the different levels (trans-territorial relations)
- Actors who are part, indistinctly and actively, of national and regional AKIS



- Cross-fertilisation of different AKIS

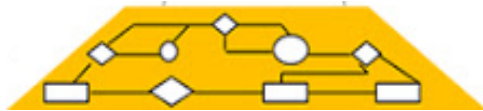


Knowledge flows

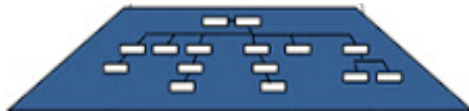
Knowledge flows between AKIS actors depend on the size scale considered and the regional AKIS of reference.



Local level: presence of stronger relationships between different AKIS actors and local learning and innovation networks (**micro-AKIS**) where an **interactive knowledge** transfer model is implemented



Beyond the local dimension: **more formal knowledge flows** characterised by a **low degree of system perspective** (64% of respondents). Institutionalised relations, in which representative institutions are involved.



Prevalence of a **traditional knowledge transfer model**

Intensity of relations between AKIS actors

Figure 1. Relations between research institutes/ universities and other AKIS actors in Italy

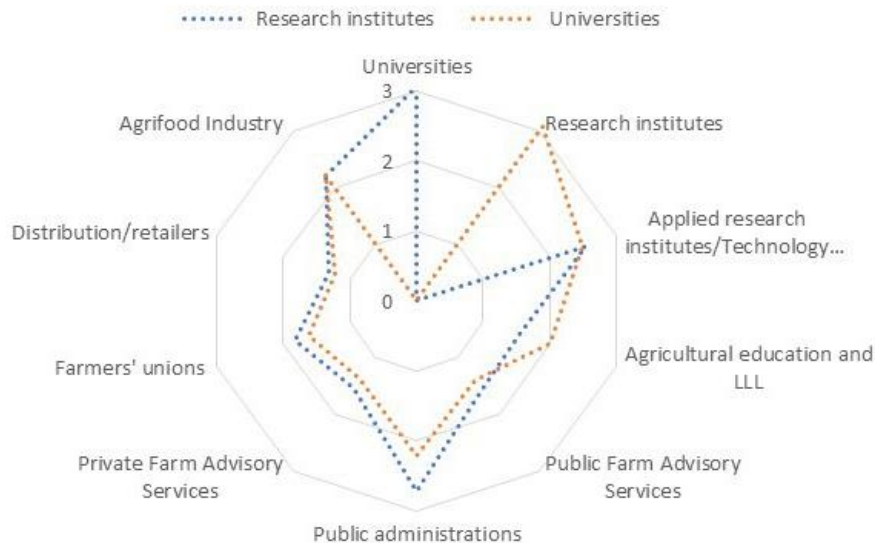
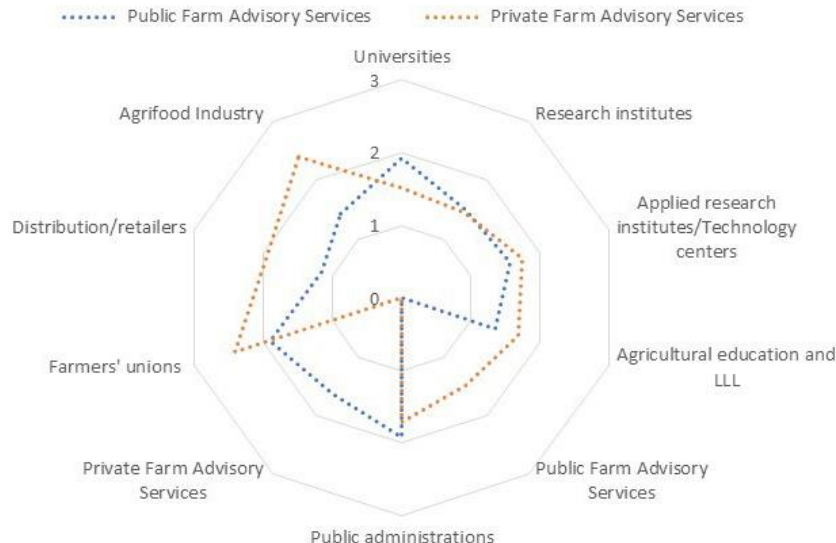


Figure 2. Relations between public/private advisory services and other AKIS actors in Italy



Source: Our own elaborations based on interviews

Policy framework and coordinating bodies

Multi-level governance, with coordination structures articulated by knowledge areas (R&I, Education and Services) and at national and regional levels.

Two main AKIS coordination bodies:

- **Interregional Network for Agricultural, Forestry, Aquaculture and Fisheries Research**
- **National Rural Network**

National Research Programme 2014-2020

Partnership Agreement 2014-2020

National Plan for Research Infrastructures 2014-2020

National Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2014-2020

Strategic Plan 2012-2020 on Innovation and Research for Agriculture, Food and Forestry

National Forestry Strategy

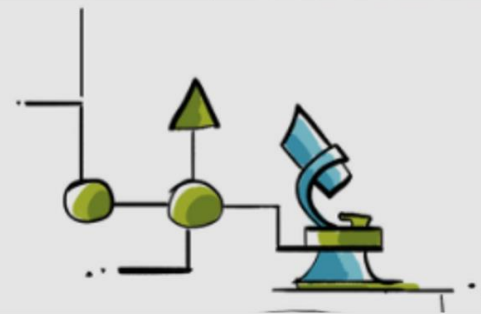
Regional instruments for the implementation of interventions

Research and Innovation

Large number of bodies responsible for research in the agricultural and forestry sector (MIPAAF, MIUR, Min. SALUTE, MATTM, MISE, Regions and Autonomous Provinces)

High number and variety of implementing bodies, both **public** (universities, CNR, CREA, ISMEA, ENEA, ISPRA, ISS, IZS, AICS, regional instrumental bodies, others) and **private**.

Strong dynamism of private agricultural research, especially at territorial level



- **Private research institutes,**
- **university spin-offs,**
- **food or other enterprises in the sector,**
- **high value-added farms,**
- **farmers' networks,**
- **producer organisations, agricultural cooperatives, consortia,**
- **multifunctional analysis laboratories,**
- **foundations, associations, scientific societies and others,**
- **public-private partnerships** (technology parks and clusters)



Education

- **153 Agricultural Institutes**, of which 9 oenological, 1 forestry
- **24 Departments of Agricultural Sciences**, 1 University School of Experimental Agricultural Sciences,
- **13 Departments of Veterinary Medical Sciences**
- Higher Technical Education Initiatives

High degree of **autonomy**: schools and universities define curricula, widen the scope of education, organise teaching.



Training

- **Public and private implementing bodies**
- **Different sources of funding**
 - European funds (ESF, EFRD, EAFRD),
 - NOPs and ROPs
 - Regional funds
 - National joint inter-professional fund for continuous learning in agriculture (FOR.AGRI)

Advisory services

Plurality of suppliers with different objectives and organisational models

- Presence of **new actors**, acting mainly as innovation support services
- **Reorganisation of structures and services** supporting innovation processes

- **Public Suppliers**
- **Private suppliers**
- **Farmers' unions**
- **Freelance advisors**
- **Cooperatives, farmers' organisations**
- **Upstream and downstream industries and large-scale distribution**
- **Suppliers from other sectors**



Continuous education for technicians and advisors

- International Centre for Veterinary Training and Information (CIFIV)
- Predominantly private, by professional orders (CONAF, FNOVI, CNAAL, CNPAPAL)

Characterisation of advisory service provision

Prevailing scale of service operation: regional (47%)

Main source of funding: 1) EAFRD (Measure 2 and Measure 16 of RDPs); 2) cost recovery from farmers

Clients: vary depending on the type of service providers, topics/contents of advice, productive sector and region in which the provider operates.

Main advisory methods: face-to-face, telephone, WhatsApp

Human resources: mainly men; outsourcing to freelance advisors within farmers' unions

Skills: mainly technical competences; more weaknesses in brokerage skills (mediation, facilitation, conflict management, networking, etc.)

Professional experience in years: mainly junior advisors in organizations; more than 30 years of experience among freelancers

Topics: wide range; support for the implementation of technical processes and production reconversions, regulatory compliance, financial and economic management, communication and marketing, use of data for financial and economic purposes.

Other actors



Farmers and foresters

Heterogeneity of actors in terms of age, gender, socio-economic aspects, cultural values and territorial identity, agricultural system and geographical aspects.

Farmers' behaviour, their role and their ability to shape the AKIS differ according to these key factors and their combinations

Farmers' organisations and networks

Network organisations operating in the organic farming sector

Organisations for promoting local socio-economic development / environmental and landscape protection

Organisations representing new society needs

Operational groups

Biodistricts

Environmental organisations

These actors are often drivers of innovation, driving the transition to sustainable agriculture

Summary



- **Plurality of AKIS**, representing different degrees of structuring and functioning
- **Plurality of actors**
- **Cross-fertilisation** of AKIS
- **System in transition**, characterised by the emergence of new actors, reorganisation of services and a slow but progressive awareness of new possibilities for innovation and knowledge sharing



Thank you!

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

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