

NATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA (NCEU-MK)

Fourth working session of WG1 of NCEU-MK

Family farming - a sustainable model for the development of the rural areas

RECOMMENDATIONS:

**1. Supplementing the statistics on family farming**

- Improve the links among competent institutions with regard to statistics (administrative sources from the registries and databases of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and the Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development, should be available in the form and content useful for statistical surveys of the State Statistical Office).
- Follow the recommendation in the European Commission Progress Report (2018), where the need for improvement of the process of harmonization of the Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) is emphasized.
- Include the aspects of family farming in the statistics (e.g. in the next Agricultural Census and statistical surveys of the State Statistical Office, to harmonize with European standards, such as participation of the family workforce in the total workforce of the holdings; in the registers, to take into account that both individual holdings and business entities can be family farms).
- Encourage the holders of agricultural holdings to register regularly at the databases of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Water Economy.

**2. Directing policies towards sustainable development of family farming**

- Recognize the concept of family farming (FAO, 2014) in policy-making context and give it proper attention (e.g. in the next Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development, as well as in the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development, to appropriately include family farms and the strategic directions for their development);
- Coordinate and integrate cross-sectoral government policies and strategies that will have economic, social and developmental components to ensure an overall better quality of life in rural areas, with particular emphasis on young people and women in rural areas (for instance, in context of Article 5 of the EU Regulation No. 1305/2013)
- Revise the classification of family farms by income (as in Article 15a of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development).
- Encourage more intensive land consolidation applying the Law on agricultural land consolidation (to understand the land consolidation as basis for family farms and competitiveness in the pre-accession period);
- Pay timely attention and planning of the inter-generational transfer in family farms and farm inheritance (e.g. Article 68 of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development on regulating the transfer of ownership of the agricultural holding from one entity to another).

**3. Encourage ancillary or secondary business activity and diversification of agricultural and non-agricultural activities (linked to Articles 14, 15, 27, and 28 of EU Regulation 1305/2013)**

- Raise the awareness of all stakeholders about the possibilities for ancillary or secondary business activity in context of the family agricultural holdings (Article 82 of the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development), especially for women and young people in the family agricultural holdings;
- Investing in formal and vocational education, especially for young farm members and agricultural education to be an important criteria for using the measures for new and young farmers;
- Improve access to information, knowledge, and innovation to supplement and diversify the family agricultural business.
- Include procurement of protective nets and foils, anti-freeze systems and other necessary mechanisms for mitigating climate change in the Program for Financial Support for Rural Development.
- Follow the recommendation in the European Commission Progress Report (2018) to preserve domestic products with geographical origin and encourage more efficient implementation of the protection (family farming is one of the mechanisms for protecting traditional products).
- Introduce European practice for direct sale of agricultural products from family farms, through regulation of production and sales of these products (harmonization of certain Rulebooks with the Law on Agriculture and Rural Development and the legislation on taxation; regulation of the direct sale of home-produced wine and grape products from individual farmers and direct producers through the Law on Wine, etc.).