



**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND
ECONOMIC RELATIONS**

Agricultural Policy Forum and Annual Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from South-Eastern Europe in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 7th – 10th, October 2009

BACKGROUND:

South - Eastern European (SEE) Countries are moving constantly towards European integration and the EU accession. The main pre-condition for full EU-membership is the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria. The second important pre-condition, is extensive regional co-operation on all possible levels such as constant political and policy dialogue, development of regional trade, free movement of people and sharing common ideas for future development.

Agriculture and rural areas in South Eastern Europe play significant role in the overall development of the national economies. Development of rural areas in accordance with the EU-guidelines and policies is therefore a major challenge for the EU member countries, candidate countries as well as for the potential candidate countries. Agriculture and rural development strategies, legislation and programming documents have been developed in many countries of the region in the recent years, while in some countries it is still an on-going process. The implementation of respective policy measures and instruments has started or is foreseen to start.

To foster these processes, the Agricultural Policy Forum has been institutionalized as a platform for dialogue and mutual learning.

Starting with the first Agricultural Policy Forum in November 2001, a series of events have been organized. Apart from the two events in Leipzig, and one in Dresden, Germany, and the meetings held in Romania, Albania, Macedonia/Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro. Concurrent theme of all events was the agricultural and rural transition process in SEE countries. One of the main achievements was the formation of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in SEE.

TOPICS:

Main Topic: Support system/ schemes in the SEE and their complementarities with the EU

Sub-topic: Influence of the world economic crisis on the investments in the agriculture and food production in the SEE countries

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the **Agricultural Policy Forum 2009** are to present and discuss the support system/schemes in the SEE and their complementarities with the EU CAP.

The main objective is to provide a discussion forum for the achievements and future needs for adjusting the support schemes for the SEE countries with the EU CAP.

The specific Forum objectives are:

- To emphasize the importance of the approximation and implementation of the agricultural and rural development policy of the SEE Countries (candidate and potential candidate countries) in accordance with the current and future EU CAP changes and trends;
- To elaborate the existing and to collect recommendations for the adjustment of the support schemes of the SEE countries with the EU CAP;
- To discuss the influence of the world economic crisis on the investments in the agriculture and food production in the SEE countries and to discuss possible recommendations for overcoming such problem;

The objective of the **Annual Working Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from SEE** is to decide upon the next steps for strengthening regional co-operation in the field of agriculture and rural development.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- World economic crisis and its implications to the agriculture and food production (opportunity and possibilities)
- How to support agricultural and food productions in world economic crisis and support systems in the SEE countries and their complementarities with the EU support systems (will be discussed and evaluated during the APF 2009.)
- What are possible cross-sector links, and contributions to other sectors

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Ministers of Agriculture from SEE countries;
- Officially appointed Ministry representatives in the SWG;
- Representatives of the European Commission Representatives of the internationally financed organizations and projects from Bosnia and Herzegovina and other SEE countries (FAO, GTZ, EAR, InWent)

VENUE: Agricultural Policy Forum and Annual Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture from South-Eastern Europe will be held in the period 7th – 10th, October 2009 in Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The participants will be accommodated in the Hotel Termag, Vučko and Board).

WORK LANGUAGE: English with translation on into the official language of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Note: Detailed information will follow in the middle of July.