



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture



Western Balkans: expert dialogue on wine regulation

Bilateral Cooperation Project

The Project

The expert dialogue on wine regulation supports Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo¹, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia in aligning their wine regulations to each other and to EU standards.

Wine production is an important factor for the rural economy and its employees in the entire Western Balkans region. So far, the development of the regional wine sector has been hampered by divergent regulations. Knowledge transfer and exchange of experience between German and regional experts will help to improve the sustainable development of the regional wine sector by harmonising wine regulations. This will significantly increase the opportunities for regional trade as well as trade with the EU.

The project is embedded into an established regional cooperation between Germany and the Western Balkans. This cooperation aims to strengthen the region's economic and political stability as well as relations with the EU. The project approach can serve as a model for other, even non-agricultural areas.



1 This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Project Objectives and Fields of Action



The project aims to support the harmonisation of wine regulations within the region, as well as with EU standards. It seeks to create a common understanding of relevant regulations and necessary measures.

The project pursues the following results:

- Identification of suitable topics for regulatory alignment
- Harmonisation of regional regulations, taking into account relevant EU legislations
- Knowledge transfer in the wine sector: producers, processors and traders, research institutions, associations
- Establishment of a regular professional exchange on wine regulation.

Specific aspects of the consultation include the development of digital vineyard registers as well as the introduction of uniform inward and outward registers and accompanying documents. In addition, questions of quality standards, certification of wine grafting and protected geographical indications of origin will be discussed. All of these topics offer ample opportunities for regional cooperation.

The project can serve as a role model for regulatory alignment in other areas, thereby improving neighbourly relations and regional trade as a whole.

Project Partners and Cooperation

The regional cooperation partner in the Western Balkans is SWG, the Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development in South Eastern Europe. The SWG is composed of representatives of the governments responsible for agriculture and rural development in the respective countries and territories. The SWG supports intergovernmental projects with regional institutions necessary to promote long-term agricultural and rural development. Within the SWG, various regional expert groups have been set up to deal with specific agricultural areas. This project in particular enlivens the regional expert advisory group on viticulture and wine.

On the German side, IAK Agrar Consulting GmbH (IAK) implements the project together with the Hochschule Geisenheim University (HGU). IAK has extensive experience in agricultural consulting in Germany as well as in project implementation for various donors abroad. HGU supplements these competences with its expertise in viticulture and wine law. As a pan-European university, it has up-to-date specialist knowledge from both research and practice.



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