



## EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

# Rural and Agricultural Advisory Systems (RAAS): Best Practices and Experience in the Eastern Partnership

15 – 16 April, 2015  
Riga, Latvia

Venue: *Bellevue Park Hotel Riga*, Slokas iela 1, Riga, Latvia

The Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission in the framework of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Agriculture and Rural Development organize the international conference.

The Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia organizes this conference together with:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia;
- European Commission;
- Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre which serves Latvian Rural Network

The conference is meant to share experience and best practices on advisory and extension systems in rural areas, discusses their different organisation structures, ways of setting-up, sources of financing and best practices in improving the quality and efficiency of their intervention.

The event will aim at strengthening the cooperation between the decision makers and stakeholders involved in rural and agricultural advisory in EU Member States and Eastern European partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).

Ministers and high level representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, state organizations, advisory and extension bodies, farmers representatives and other civil society groups active in rural areas in the EU Member States and Eastern European partner countries are invited to exchange views on the following main topics:

- Preconditions for successful development of rural and agricultural advisory systems (RAAS);
- Success factors in development of sustainable and efficient RAAS;
- Benefits and opportunities for cooperation between RAAS within the Eastern Partnership.

After the plenary part, the conference will be organised in two parallel sessions – one for Ministers and the other – for high-level representatives. The Ministers gathered will sign a joint statement (tbc) to conclude the conference.



Ltd "Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre"





## EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Program for Ministers and One Accompanying Person

# Rural and Agricultural Advisory Systems (RAAS): Best Practices and Experience in the Eastern Partnership

15 – 16 April, 2015, Riga

Tuesday, 14 April

Arrival of the ministers and their delegations in Riga, transfer to the Hotel

Check-in at *Bellevue Park Hotel* (Sloka iela 1, Riga)

Dinner at the Hotel restaurant *Bellevue* on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor

Wednesday, 15 April

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 9.00 – 9.05   | Opening of the conference<br><b>Mr Jānis Dūklavs</b> , Minister for Agriculture, Republic of Latvia  |
| 9.05 – 9.25   | The role of rural and agricultural advisory services in rural development and promotion of agriculture<br><b>Mr Mario Milouchev</b> , Director for Rural Development Programmes in DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission |
| 9.25 – 9.40   | The role of advisory service in sustainable development of Latvian rural areas<br><b>Mr Mārtiņš Cimermanis</b> , Chairman of the Board, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre   |
| 9.40 – 10.00  | The role of higher education and science in the development of agriculture and rural development<br><b>Ms Irina Pilvere</b> , Professor, Rector of Latvian University of Agriculture   |
| 10.00 – 11.00 | Ministers' Panel discussion<br><i>Moderator: <b>Mr Aivars Lapiņš</b>, Deputy state secretary, Head of Latvian Presidency team for Agriculture, Food, Veterinary, Forestry and Fisheries</i>  |
| 11.00 – 11.15 | Tea and Coffee break   |



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- 11.15 – 12.00      Transfer to lunch
- 12.00 – 13.30      Lunch at restaurant *Aitiņlauvas*  
*Valgundes parish, Jelgavas county, <http://aitinlauvas.lv/eng/>*
- 13.30 – 14.15      Transfer to the enterprise
- 14.15 – 16.00      Farm visit – LTD *Lestene*

Ltd. *Lestene* (Mr Egils Senkāns - Chairman of the Board) was established in 1992. The farm manages 1872 hectares of land out of which 800 hectares are used for grain growing, 300 hectares for rapeseed and 100 hectares for beans feed as well as for Lucerne and corn growing. The farm has herd of 412 milk cows. The average milk production in 2013 was 8506 kg of milk per cow, but in 2014 – around 9400 kg. There are 60 people working at the farm. A contemporary milk farm *Pienenes* was additionally opened in 2012 with 500 places for milk cows meeting all comfort requirements.

Farm visit will provide an insight on the advisors work of Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre. The Centre provides advisory and training on agricultural production, forestry and fisheries, providing services in bookkeeping, business planning, research, education etc. that are adapted to the needs of clients. The guests will have an opportunity to discuss farming related issues with the farmer and advisors.

- 16.00 – 17.15      Transfer to Riga
- 17.15 – 18.30      Free time
- 18.30 – 19.00      Transfer to Dinner place
- 19.00 – 22.00      Dinner at restaurant *Lido*  
*Krasta iela 76, Riga, [http://lido.lv/eng/about\\_us/](http://lido.lv/eng/about_us/)*
- 22.00 – 22.30      Transfer to the Hotel

### Thursday, 16 April

- 8.45 – 9.00      Transfer to the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia  
*Republikas laukums 2, Riga*
- 9.00 – 9.30      Signing of the Joint Statement by the ministers or vice ministers (tbc) and press briefing  
at the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia  
*23<sup>rd</sup> floor*
- 9.30              After the press briefing – time for bilateral contacts and free time before departure





## EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

### Program of the Conference

# Rural and Agricultural Advisory Systems (RAAS): Best Practices and Experience in the Eastern Partnership

15 – 16 April, 2015, Riga

Venue: Bellevue Park Hotel Riga, Slokas Street 1. Conference Hall Paris

Wednesday, 15 April

8.30 – 9.00 Registration

9.00 – 9.05 Opening of the conference  
**Mr Jānis Dūklavs**, Minister for Agriculture, Republic of Latvia

### ***Session 1: The role of rural and agricultural advisory systems***

9.05 – 9.25 The role of rural and agricultural advisory services in rural development and promotion of agriculture  
**Mr Mario Milouchev**, Director for Rural Development Programmes in DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission

9.25 – 9.40 The role of advisory service in sustainable development of Latvian rural areas  
**Mr Mārtiņš Cimermanis**, Chairman of the Board, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre

9.40 – 10.00 The role of higher education and science in the development of agriculture and rural development  
**Ms Irina Pilvere**, Professor, Dr.oec. Rector of Latvian University of Agriculture

10.00 – 11.00 Ministers' Panel discussion: *Implementation and possible adjustment of available EU instruments to improve rural and agricultural advisory services in the East European partner states to promote agricultural economic development*

**Mr Armen Harutyunyan**, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Republic of Armenia

**Mr Leanid Marynich**, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Food, Republic of Belarus

**Mr Otar Danelia**, Minister for Agriculture, Georgia

**Mr Ion Sula**, Minister for Agriculture and Food Industry, Republic of Moldova

**Mr Volodymyr Lapa**, Deputy Minister for Agrarian Policy and Food, Ukraine

**Mr Jānis Dūklavs**, Minister for Agriculture, Republic of Latvia

Moderator: **Mr Aivars Lapīšs**, Deputy state secretary, Head of Latvian Presidency team for Agriculture, Food, Veterinary, Forestry and Fisheries

11.00 – 11.20 Tea and Coffee break.

11.00 – 11.07 Family photo, Hall Event Plaza, 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

***From this point ministers follow separate program***



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### ***Session 2: Preconditions for successful development of rural and agricultural advisory systems***

- 11.20 – 11.40 Theories and models of advisory services – advisory and extension  
**Mr Erich Waldmeier**, Delegate of International Academy of Rural Advisors (IALB)
- 11.40 – 12.00 The sustainability of advisory services - experiences, instruments and approaches  
**Mr Henry Jørgensen**, Senior Adviser, Business Development. SEGES, Denmark
- 12.00 – 12.20 Development of rural advisory system in Latvia: challenges and changes  
**Mr Kaspars Žūriņš**, Member of the Board, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre
- 12.20 – 12.35 Panel discussion  
*Moderator: **Mr Edgars Linde**, Member of the Board, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre*
- 12.35 – 13.40 Lunch

### ***Session 3: Success factors in development of sustainable and efficient rural and agricultural advisory systems***

- 13.40 – 14.00 The role of state and municipalities in development of advisory services  
**Ms Barbara Odrobińska**, The Chief Specialist in the Agricultural Advisory, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland
- 14.00 – 14.20 Agricultural and rural advisory services -challenges for Eastern European partner countries.  
**Mr Michael Kuegler**, EUFRAS (European Forum for Agricultural and Rural Advisory Services)
- 14.20 – 14.35 Panel discussion

### ***Session 4: Benefits and opportunities for cooperation between rural and agricultural advisory systems within the Eastern Partnership***

- 14.35–14.55 Rural advisory services in Armenia and outlook into the future  
**Mr Gagik Sardaryan**, Director of the Centre for Agribusiness and Rural Development foundation, Armenia
- 14.55 – 15.15 Rural advisory services in Azerbaijan and outlook into the future  
**Mr Eldar Guliyev**, Head of the Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Institute of Economics and Organization of Agriculture of Azerbaijan
- 15.15 – 15.35 Rural advisory services in Belarus and outlook into the future  
**Mr Aleksei Smirnov**, Counsellor, Embassy of Belarus in Latvia
- 15.35 – 15.55 Tea and Coffee break.  
15.40–15.47 Poster presentation “Farm Advisory System in Lithuania”,  
**Mr Jan Žukovskis**, Assoc. prof., Aleksandras Stulginskis University, Lithuania





## EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

- 15.55 – 16.15 Rural advisory services in Georgia and outlook into the future  
**Mr Zviad Bobokashvili**, National Scientific Research Center, Georgia
- 16.15 – 16.35 Rural advisory services in Moldova and outlook into the future  
**Mr Gheorghe Cainarean**, Deputy director, National Agency of Rural Development (ASCA), Moldova
- 16.35 – 16.55 Rural advisory services in Ukraine and outlook into the future  
**Mr Roman Korinets**, President of Association, National Association of Agricultural Advisory Services of Ukraine
- 16.55 – 17.15 Panel discussion
- 17.15 – 17.25 Identification of future project needs, ideas and topics for development of rural and agricultural advisory services
- 17.25 – 17.30 Conclusions of the first day
- 18.30 – 19.00 Transfer to dinner
- 19.00 – 22.00 Dinner at Restaurant Lido  
*Krasta iela 76, Riga*
- 22.00 - 22.30 Transfer to Hotel

### Thursday, 16 April (Participants' program)

- 8.00 – 9.00 Drive to Zemgale region Zaļenieki Parish
- 9.00 – 10.00 Best Practices and Experience. Farm "Mežacīruļi" visit

It is a multidisciplinary farm: dairy farming, biogas plant, vegetable gardening, and wetlands. Farm "Mežacīruļi" is winner of an international competition "Farmer of the Year in the Baltic Sea Region 2014". Farm is managed by family members: **Mr Juris Cīrulis, Mrs Vija Cīrule, Mr Oskars Cīrulis and Mr Pēteris Cīrulis**

- 10.00 – 10.45 Drive to Ozolnieki
- 10.45 – 11.00 Tea and Coffee break at *Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre*
- 11.00 – 12.00 Visit Ltd *Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre*. Informative groups  
**Mr Kaspars Žūriņš**, Member of the Board, Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre
- 12.00 – 13.00 Return to the *Bellevue Park Hotel*
- 13.15 – 14.15 Buffett lunch. Closing of the conference. Transfer to Airport