

## SPEAKER AND FACILITATOR BIOS

Update 10 June 2025

### Speakers (in order of the programme)



**Klavdija Ramšak-Noemi**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks**

Klavdija Ramsak-Noemi is a Policy Officer at the European Commission, DG AGRI, 'Rural areas and networks' unit. Her portfolio encompasses innovation, knowledge exchange and EIP-AGRI. As a programme manager she managed the approval negotiations and implementation of the Rural Development Programme for Slovenia 2007-2013 and contributed to the preparation of the Partnership agreement with Slovenia 2014-2020. She has held a socio-economic researcher position in Switzerland. She studied economics in Ljubljana and holds a Master's degree in Human Ecology from Free University of Brussels.



**Orsolya Frizon Somogyi**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks**

Orsolya Frizon Somogyi works in the European Commission DG AGRI, in F2 unit responsible for agricultural, forestry and rural research as deputy head of unit. Previously in the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture, she joined DG AGRI in 2005. The last 20 years she was responsible successively for market management, rural development, she dealt with social inclusion issues in the agricultural sector and in rural areas. She recently worked as deputy head of unit until January 2022 on agricultural statistics. In F2 Orsolya is involved in Horizon Europe agricultural, forestry and rural R&I and contributes to the unit work on the Mission Soil.



**Laure Triste**

**Coordinating expert**

I am a Senior Researcher at the Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) in Belgium. As part of the research group "learning and interactive innovation", I was involved in consecutive Horizon Europe projects focussing on farm demonstrations and demonstration networks: such as H2020 AgriDemo-F2F, H2020 NEFERTITI, H2020 IPMWORKS and the current HE ClimateFarmDemo. During these projects, I built substantial knowledge on farm demonstrations and peer-to-peer learning. Besides this, I am currently also involved in the HE-network project ClimateSmartAdvisors.



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the European Union



**Margarida Ambar**  
**Facilitator**

Margarida Ambar is part of the EIP-AGRI Support Facility team, where she is the Head of the Division dealing with AKIS and stakeholders' involvement. She is an agricultural engineer and has a master's degree in Geography - Territorial Management, focusing on stakeholders' involvement. Margarida Ambar is part of the EIP-AGRI Support Facility team, where she is the Head of the Division dealing with AKIS and stakeholders' involvement. She is an agricultural engineer and has a master's degree in Geography - Territorial Management, focusing on stakeholders' involvement. She worked for over 20 years for the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, then working full time with EIP-AGRI since 2013. She has also gained experience in international cooperation through other projects and networks aiming at knowledge exchange on various topics.



**Luís Alcino da Conceição**  
**IPPortalegre/InovTechAgro**

Dr. Luís Alcino Conceição is a Professor of Biosystems Engineering with a strong academic and applied research background in precision agriculture, remote sensing, and agricultural mechanization. He currently serves as the Coordinator of InovTechAgro – the National Innovation Network for Agriculture, where he fosters collaboration between research institutions and the agrifood sector to promote innovation and sustainability in Portuguese agriculture. He also represents Portugal as a national delegate in EurAgEng (European Society of Agricultural Engineers) through SCAP – Sociedade de Ciências Agrárias de Portugal. Dr. Conceição's work focuses on bridging the gap between cutting-edge agricultural technology and field-level application, advancing the future of smart and sustainable farming.



**Fritz Höfner**  
**Hochschule Weihenstephan-Triesdorf**

My name is Fritz Höfner, and my work focuses on sustainable agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and agroecological practices. With a strong background in orchard management and landscape ecology, I am particularly engaged in promoting biodiversity-enhancing farming methods, including the establishment of Beetle Banks—a habitat restoration technique that supports natural pest control and enhances ecosystem services on agricultural land. Beetle Banks are raised strips of land planted with grasses and flowering plants that serve as refuges for predatory insects, such as ground beetles and spiders. These beneficial species contribute to reducing pest populations in adjacent crop fields, ultimately decreasing the need for chemical pesticides. My work involves advising farmers, conducting practical demonstrations, and integrating these methods into broader agroforestry and orchard management systems, such as traditional Streuobstwiesen (orchard



meadows). Through hands-on projects, education, and collaboration with local communities, I aim to foster a deeper understanding of how biodiversity-driven solutions can create resilient agricultural landscapes. I look forward to sharing insights and experiences at this event while learning from others engaged in innovative, nature-based farming practices.



**Agnès Fiamma Papone**

**Ferme Lavancia / Service de remplacement des Alpes Maritimes**

Organic regenerative new entrant farmers in the southern French Alps since 2010, we brought an abandoned family farm back to life and into production as a lifestyle change from a background in Public Health research. Our unique perspective coming from non-farming backgrounds, self-taught in very short supply chains and very inquisitive, we chose to open the farm to other new entrants wishing to learn how work in diversified vegetable, fruit and laying hens to provide smooth and stable incomes. We host farm visits and have incubated numerous new entrants as well as providing mentoring through Community-Supported Agriculture (AMAP) farming programmes to engage peers wishing to upskill or develop CSA approaches. We believe attracting new and diverse entrants into the profession and producing new farming vocations is one of our best agricultural achievements.



**Tamara Urbančič**

**Srednja gozdarska, lesarska in zdravstvena šola Postojna**

Tamara Urbančič, M.Sc., serves as the teacher of Agriculture and project manager primarily responsible for rural development and Erasmus+ initiatives at a secondary forestry and wood technology school in Postojna ([www.sglzs.si](http://www.sglzs.si)). In addition, she operates under her company, "Education Tamara Urbančič s.p.," where she conducts workshops focused on agriculture and food, emphasizing local supply chains for both schools and adults. She has extensive experience participating in multi-actor projects at both national and international levels, particularly in the fields of sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and rural development. Her involvement spans teaching, project coordination, stakeholder engagement, and proposal writing, ensuring that interdisciplinary collaboration leads to impactful results.



**Rossano Filippini**

**BioEco**

A polymath and a polyglot, a deeply curious person in 'permanent' study and skills learning mode. Owner of an organic farm. Been in 55 countries, so far, for work and study. Deeply worried and active about the environment and the effects of climate change. Never giving up attitude (and yes, sometimes it is really difficult to remain positive).





**Audronė Ispiryan**

**Lithuanian Berry Growers, Processors and Traders Association**

Audronė Ispiryan, with over 20 years in berry agriculture, blends academic and practical expertise in natural product chemistry and horticulture. At Tikberries ([www.berrivia.eu](http://www.berrivia.eu)) Farm and as Director at the Association of Berry Growers, she promotes industry innovation and compliance. She's also a researcher at Vytautas Magnus University and Association for European Life Science Universities (ICA), focusing on food and bioeconomy. With a PhD in Agricultural Sciences, her research spans nutritional chemistry to sustainable farming. Audronė's work is foundational in advancing berry industry standards and sustainability.



**Christine Mittermeier**

**Agrarbüro Mittermeier**

I am a practical farmer with a scientific background and interest. Many different on-farm trials take place on our farm, which are presented at field days.

I was and am also a lead partner in EIP-Agri projects.



**Sonsoles Jimenez**

**Alberizas**

Farmer, entrepreneur, and agrofood business and law expert with 25+ years of international experience. As a business promoter, board member, and CEO of different ventures, she specializes in innovation, regenerative economy, management and sustainable agri-food systems. She actively contributes to EU projects like Gen4Olive, CARE, and FAIRFOOD and is a member of networks such as Andalucía Agrotech and the European Cluster Alliance. I have developed my career globally and lived different countries such as the USA, Mexico, Chile, UK, The Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovakia.



**Anna Bago Mas**

**BETA Technological Center**

Capitalisation Processes Specialist at the BETA Tech Center (Governance for Sustainability Team), and coordinator of the Horizon Europe project NUTRI-KNOW, focused on amplifying results from Operational Groups on nutrient management. She works on bridging knowledge from local innovation to European policy, promoting peer learning and collaborative governance in agriculture.







**Fabio Cossu**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks**

Policy analyst at the European Commission - DG AGRI (Policy perspective Unit) in charge of knowledge, innovation, skills and digital. Working on the CAP post 2027.

## European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI)



**Elin Johnsson**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks**

Elin is a Policy Officer at the European Commission, DG AGRI, unit D.1 - Rural areas and networks, where she works in the EIP-AGRI/AKIS team. Before joining the Commission in 2022, she worked with rural development with a special commitment to environmental sustainability and climate action. Agronomist with an MSc in Rural Development and Natural Resource Management, originally from an organic family farm in the north of Sweden.



**Aniko Seregelyi**

**European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, D.1 Rural areas and networks**

Anikó Seregelyi is Policy officer at the European Commission DG Agriculture and Rural Development. She works in the EU CAP Network European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) team that defines and coordinates the European level networking activities. Since 2015, she is supervising numerous EIP networking activities, events such as Workshops, Seminars and Focus Groups mainly related to the sustainable management of natural resources and capacity building activities. She graduated in Geography at ELTE Budapest and holding a Master's degree in European studies from Aachen University.



## EU CAP Network Team

### 1. Support Facility 'Innovation & Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI' team



**Julia Ritsche**  
**Main facilitator**

Julia Ritsche is a facilitator, educator and policy advocate for sustainable land use based in Marburg (Germany). She guides teams and groups through participatory events and change processes, believing that meaningful conversations drive impact. Julia currently works at 'BaumLand-Kampagne', an advocacy campaign aiming at improved legal and economic conditions for agroforestry in Germany. Previously, she led the educational program at 'Projekt "100 nachhaltige Bauernhöfe"', a network of demonstration farms in Hesse, Germany. Julia's academic background is in Geography and Forestry.



**Jasmin Sepahzad**  
**Main facilitator**

I work as a free-lance facilitator, living in Germany. My focus is on participatory processes that are dialogue-centered. I hold degrees in Biology, Horticulture and Strategic Leadership towards sustainability.



**Lies Debruyne**  
**Coordinating expert**

Lies Debruyne is a senior researcher in the cluster 'learning and innovation' at the Social Sciences Unit of the Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in Belgium. She has been involved in different national and European projects (AgriDemo-F2F, DESIRA, Fairshare, i2connect, Climate Farm Demo, FarmLIFE) and is currently coordinating the ClimateSmartAdvisors project (Horizon Europe). Her research focus is on networking, learning environments (such as on-farm demonstrations), and competency development of advisors, farmers and other AKIS actors.



**Aleksandra Zlateva**  
**Task manager**

Currently a Knowledge and Innovation Officer in the EIP-AGRI Support Facility, Aleksandra has a background in environmental sciences and sustainable development studies which has only added to her curiosity and drive in improving socio-environmental dynamics, including in the field of agriculture. During this seminar, Aleksandra is part of the organising team - please feel free reach out in any case, she is always happy to help!





**Darius Kavaliauskas**  
**Co-task manager**

I work as a Research & Innovation Officer at EIP-AGRI and as a senior researcher at Vytautas Magnus University, specializing in forest genetics. I hold a PhD in Forestry and a Master's degree in Forest Ecology. With over 10 years of experience in forestry, forest management, and genetic research, my work focuses on forest genetic resource conservation, sustainable forest management, forest genetic monitoring, and the traceability of forest reproductive material.



**Stefania Lombardo**  
**Co-task manager**

Since 2021, I have worked as a Sustainable Forestry Management Officer at EIP-AGRI and as a Programming Officer for rural initiatives, knowledge transfer, and farmer adoption at Ente Terre Regionali Toscana. Previously, I conducted research at the University of Florence on the adoption of precision agriculture technologies. I hold a Master's in Forestry and a PhD in Agro-Forestry Engineering from a joint program between the University of Florence and the University of Sevilla.



**Rocío Losada Iglesias**  
**Co-task manager**

Rocío is a Research & Innovation Officer at the EIP-AGRI Support Facility, where she contributes to the organisation of events such as Focus Groups, Workshops, and Seminars. An agronomist engineer from the University of Santiago de Compostela, she also holds a Master's in Geoinformatics for Natural Resource Management from the University of León. Currently pursuing a PhD in Sustainable Land and Territory Management, Rocío's research explores how green infrastructure can combat climate change and how to integrate it effectively into territorial planning.



**Nina Skybyk**  
**Event communication officer**

As part of the Support Facility's communication team, Nina coordinates the EU CAP Network Innovation and Knowledge Exchange newsletter. She also contributes to publications, website content, and event support.

French, with a Georgian background, she holds a Master's degree in Biology and has a 16 years' experience in scientific communication, network facilitation, event management, and EU projects. She has organised numerous international scientific events and is also a European project officer at AC3A.





**Pacôme Elouna Eyenga**  
**Team Leader**

Team Leader of the Support Facility for 'Innovation & Knowledge Exchange | EIP-AGRI and previously, Team Leader of the EIP-AGRI Service Point



**Sergiu Didicescu**  
**Deputy Team Leader**

Sergiu is working at the Support Facility for Innovation and Knowledge Exchange EIP-AGRI since 2013, currently in the role of deputy team leader. Sergiu holds a MSc in rural development from the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca and earlier degrees in agricultural economics and oenology from the Romanian Academy of Economical Sciences and the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest. Sergiu has worked as young oenologue in one of Romania's largest vineyards in Buzau county. He then joined the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture where he was involved with the programming of the agri-environmental measures in the pre-accession programme SAPARD. Later, he was part of the core team in charge with the programming of Romania's first rural development programme, being responsible for the programming and implementation of 'Axis 2' land management measures. Sergiu is passionate about traditional wine making, landscapes in marginal rural areas and photography.



**Céline Karasinski**  
**Facilitator**

I started in June 2014 as policy officer for the European innovation partnership 'Agricultural productivity and sustainability' (EIP-AGRI Service Point), I am now head of division C "environmental care and climate action" at the EIP-AGRI support facility. I organized and facilitated a large number of events, Focus groups (8) and workshops (3). In parallel, I work since 2009 for Chamber of Agriculture network in France. I was involved in rural development and research and innovation.  
I am Agricultural engineer, specialist of environment and ecology.



**Xurxo Loureiro Veira**  
**Facilitator**

Xurxo Loureiro is Research and Innovation Officer in the EIP-AGRI Support Facility. He has a doctorate in sustainable land management, with an academic background in forest engineering and agri-food business. Xurxo is currently working as associate researcher in the Land Laboratory (University of Santiago de Compostela) collaborating in projects on several topics such as food security and food systems, sustainable land planning, resilience, biogovernance, ecosystem services and rural development.







**Rasa Pakeltiene**  
**Facilitator**

Rasa serves as the Knowledge and Innovation Officer at the EU CAP Network - Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Support Facility. She is also an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Bioeconomy Development at Vytautas Magnus University. She is a coordinator of Lithuanian AKIS cluster and Lithuanian Bioeconomy HUB. As a researcher, Rasa frequently publishes scientific work in areas such as circular bioeconomy, rural development, innovation assessment methodologies, rural social infrastructure, and environmental management. She actively participates in both national and international research and study projects, and is a dedicated member of various scientific associations and thematic networks. Additionally, she is a Secretary General of the Association for European Life Science Universities (ICA) and a chair of ICA EU committee.

## 2. Communications and logistical support team



**Francesco Aiello**  
**Travel & logistical support**

After years working on making events happen on the ground as a steward, Francesco joined the EU CAP Network - Communication and Logistical Support Team. He also brings with him the volunteer experience at the International Short Movie Festival CinemàCinemà as part of the event organisers and as Art Director.



**Anne-Fleur Labbé**  
**Travel & logistical support**

Anne-Fleur, Managing Partner at Phrenos, is a multilingual professional with 15+ years of experience in events and communication. She is the Events Team Leader for the Logistical & Communication Support for Networking Activities of the CAP (Lot 4) for DG AGRI. She graduated from the London School of Economics with a MSc in History of International Relations, and from Université Paris II – Panthéon Assas with a MSc in Banking & Finance. In 2020, at INSEAD, she completed a certification in "Design Thinking and Creativity for Business", as well as one in "Leadership in a Crisis". She speaks French, English, Italian, and German.





**Irene Sanchez Valdovinos**  
**Travel & logistical support**

Irene studied protocol, event organisation, and corporate Communication in Madrid. She is passionate about travel and cultural exchange. She lived in the U.S. for a year before moving to Brussels for her Erasmus and internship. She loves meeting people from diverse backgrounds and finding joy in new experiences.

