European Network for Rural Development

Bioeconomy value chains and Rural Development: overview of on-going initiatives in Southern Europe and main barriers

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#Bioeconomy

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Overview of main findings from our study

*BE can represent 7 to 12% of Economy in EU countries

*Most development has taken place in the bioenergy production, helped by EU funds and MS fiscal incentives

*Progress is being made for biomaterials and bioproducts

*Each southern EU country shows different development stages

*Key barriers to BE development have been identified

*Various Actions can be taken to overcome such barriers

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Country level findings - ITALY and SPAIN

*National strategy (2017) and some clusters/networks

*IT= Strong development of biogas production (2.000 plants)

*Several R & D centres and private initiatives in various regions (mainly in IT)

*Pilot biorefineries for biomaterials (e.g. biopolymers for replacing plastics-IT; micro-algae in ES)

*IT= Cultivation of dedicated crops (e.g. thistle, hemp)

*Active participation in many European projects

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Country level findings - PORTUGAL and GREECE

*No National strategy, and just one national network (a few regional strategies in GR)

*Very limited development of biogas production

*No clear R & D centres (one in PT)

*Limited (yet growing) participation in European projects

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Development Indicator	ITALY	SPAIN	PORTUGAL	GREECE
BE strategy exists	Yes	Yes	No	In a few regions
Presence of R&D centers	Several	Several	Limited	Limited
Cultivation of dedicated crops	Yes	Limited	No	No
Participation in EU projects	Very active	Very active	Limited	Limited

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Type of barriers to BE development

A possible CATEGORIZATION :

*CULTURAL

*ECONOMIC

*TECHNICAL

*BUREAUCRATIC

*SOCIAL

*SUSTAINABILITY

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CULTURAL barriers (and possible solutions):

*Farmers tend to be sceptic about most innovations (->Support younger ones)

*Low attitude to cooperate, low support from existing farm associations (->improve networking schemes)

*The complex character of BE makes it more difficult to be understood and approached (-->Start early to involve farmers)

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ECONOMIC barriers (and solutions):

*Low Income/Funds gap: too poor or old to diversify (-> new RDP tools)

*Scale issues: too small to make an income (as above)

*Too costly (Investment and/or transaction costs) to set up a new VC or a pilot plant (-> easier risk finance)

*Overall difficult "Marketability" of many BE's products (-> GPP and coordination of EU policy)

TECHNOLOGICAL barriers (and solutions):

*Severe agronomic challenges: (rotations) taking jointly into account soil+ biomaterials + markets (-> improved M & E tools)

*Difficulty in ensuring constant quality of products (-> improved technical assistance)

* Flexibility and reliability of Biorefineries' processes (-> improved R & D)

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OTHER RELEVANT barriers AT STAKE:

* BUREAUCRATIC (e.g. time consuming procedures)

* SOCIAL (e.g. scared of biotechnology as such)

* SUSTAINABILITY (e.g. The “Food *versus* Non-Food” dilemma)

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Final notes about some possible actions

- Improved Awareness of Stakeholders and Public
- Active Demand and Offer management
- Enhancement of High Value BE niches
- New RDP funding tools
- Set-up of Flexible and Integrated Biorefineries (re-using existing facilities)

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Thank you for your attention!

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