

Workshop 3: Pathways for semi-subsistence farming:  
Integration in to the food chain, diversification

## Semi-subsistence farming in the EU: Current situation and future prospects

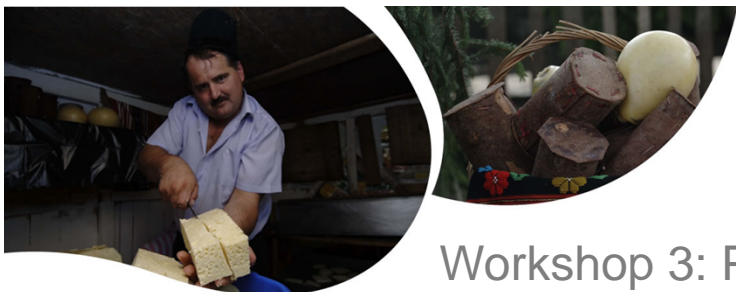
Report on Workshop 3

*Pathways for semi-subsistence farming:  
Integration into the food chain, diversification*

**Rapporteur: Michael Gregory, EN RD Contact Point**



*Connecting Rural Europe*



## Workshop 3: Pathways for semi-subsistence farming: Integration in to the food chain, diversification

**Chair: Cornelia Mihai**, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural  
Development, Romania

### Presentations

- Integration of semi-subsistence farming in the food supply chain – new opportunities or new barriers? **Liesbeth Dries**, Wageningen University
- Pathways for semi-subsistence farming from experience in EU15: strategies for diversification, pluriactivity, 'exit strategies'. **Elena Saraceno**, ENRD Contact Point
- Increasing market participation: experience of Romanian Farmers' Market 'Targu Taranuliu'. **Teodor Frolu**, Association Group of initiative 'Radu Anton Roman'



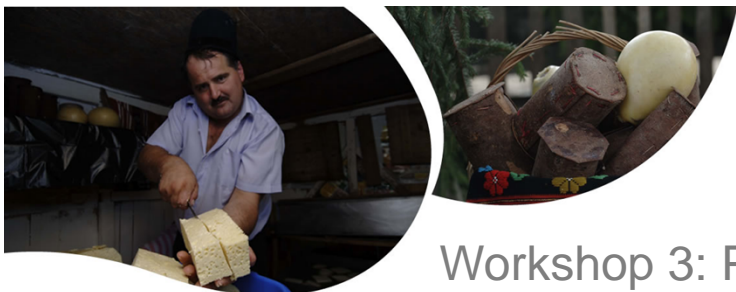


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### Context

- 'A SSF may be considered as a socio-economic - family – unit
  
- 'Pathways'
  - long term – often intergenerational
  - Not only 'one way'
  
- Situation facing SSF in 2010 very different to that in previous decades
  - Relatively underdeveloped small farm agricultural sectors in newer Member States – different 'histories'
  - Very advanced and competitive agri-food sector
  - Consumer sophistication different in different MS
  - Changed macro-economic situation / market conditions





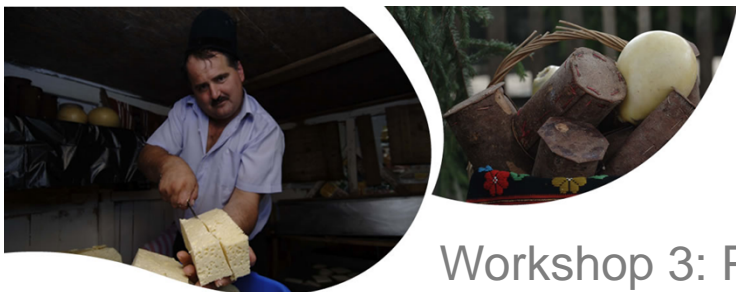
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### Challenges

Considered to be fairly well known. - include:

- Lack of physical and financial capital
- High transaction costs
- Difficulties in meeting standards (health and quality – including those of the agri-food companies)
- Insufficient knowhow - particularly marketing
- Social / cultural constraints
- Additional challenges for small farms / SSF in less favoured areas
  
- But **New Opportunities as Well** (e.g consumers evolving priorities...)





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## When to actively encourage diversification / restructuring

- No 'model pathways' considering the individual SSF
- Critically limited options in some situations – e.g. remote mountainous areas
- Focus on improving the physical, economic, and institutional environment in ways that will tend to benefit SSFs





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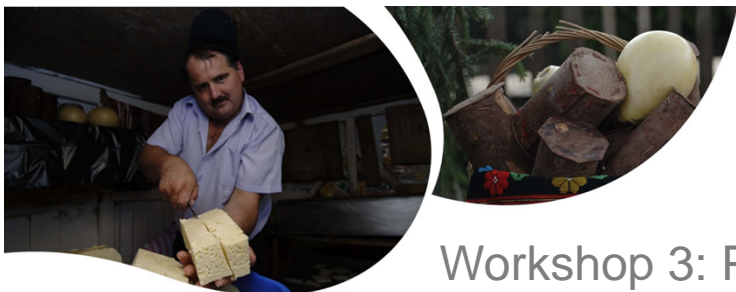
## How to actively encourage entry into the food chain

### (i) – Physical Infrastructure

- Transportation, storage, processing, marketing
- Key role for local administrations
- Availability not just existence







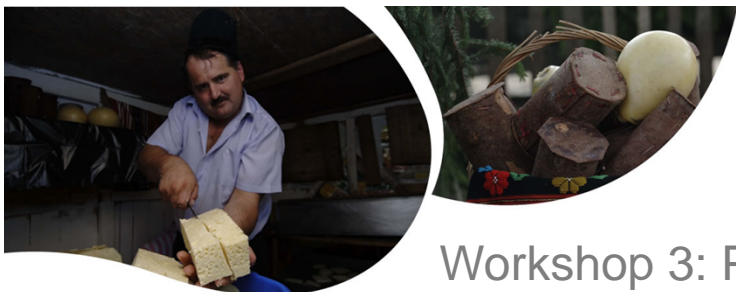
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# How to actively encourage entry into the food chain

## (ii) – Institutional Environment and support

- Encouraging and leveraging private sector initiatives and investments which use SSF production
  - SSF not just commodity suppliers
- Encouraging 'hard' cooperation (e.g. Processing and quality standards) not just associations
- Public:private partnerships
- Key role for on-going advisory support and coaching (not just advice for applications or business plans – important role for NGOs)
- Broader communication initiatives (urban:rural, including aimed at consumers)





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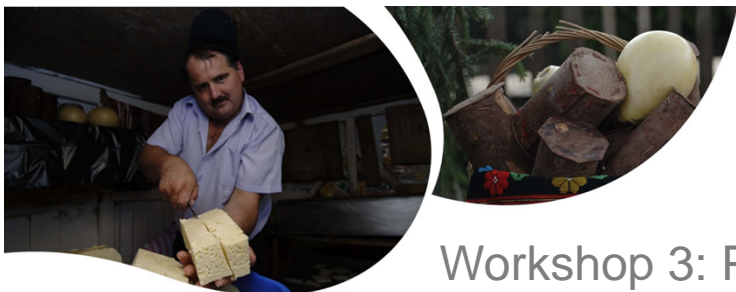
# How to actively encourage entry into the food chain

## (iii) – Differentiated and progressive approaches

- Recognising through the policy framework local as well as regional and national specificities
- Development of 'direct' food chains at local level – sometimes relatively simple interventions can be successful
- Step-by-step approach
- more comprehensive interventions required for larger areas
- Interventions with a SSF focus but not exclusive to SSF ?
- Proportionality (e.g simplified rules and procedures)?





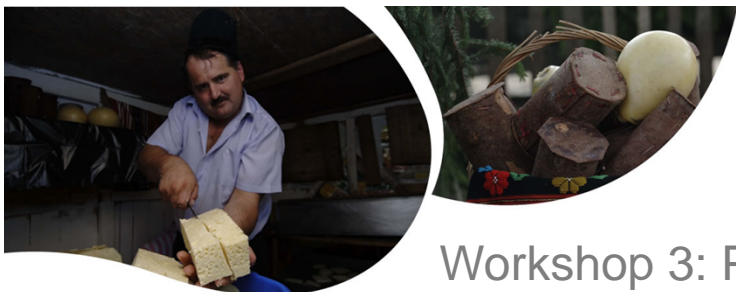


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# The Critical Role of Cooperation

- Essential not just desirable
  - certain important policy interventions would be impractical with individual SSF
  - An element that can make at least some impact in redressing the imbalance of market power
- Horizontal (mainly among producers, different types of producers)
- Vertical)
  - Production and processing and packaging
  - marketing including farmers markets
- Credit





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### Key Issues / Conclusions

- Cooperation is essential
  - Horizontal and vertical
  - Specific role for Leader
- Private sector and Civil society/ NGO's play a critical role (and policy should reflect this)
  - Public:Private partnerships
- Policy focus on improving the institutional-physical-economic conditions vs direct support to individual SSF
- Differentiated approaches - local / regional / national-international
- Key importance of innovation and facilitating the 'demonstration effect'

