

38th Traditional Conference of the Public Agricultural Advisory Service Service (PAAS),
Slovenia

Set-up and Development challenges for agricultural advisory services in **AUSTRIA**

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FLORIAN HERZOG LANDWIRTSCHAFTSKAMMER ÖSTERREICH (AUSTRIAN CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE) UNIT 4.3 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND INNOVATION

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Coordination across federal states, project
development/implementation and political
representation of interests in the areas of



lkberatung
Starker Partner, klarer Weg
lko.at/beratung



VERANSTALTUNGSFORMATE

DIGITALES LERNEN	Onlinekurs	LIVE	Onlineseminar	Webinar
	Cookinar		Farminar*	

Blended Learning
Hybridveranstaltungen

PRÄSENZ VERANSTALTUNG	Lehrgang	Seminar	Vortrag
	Exkursion	Workshop	

- Advisory Services
- Research & Innovation
- Training (LFI, ab 1.12.2023)



ARBEITSKREISE
Potenziale erkennen – Chancen nutzen – Zukunft sichern

ATTRACTISS
Empowering Innovation
Support Services

**modern
AKIS**
Together for
Systems' Innovation

lkdigital



*Further Development of the
Agricultural Knowledge and
Innovation System*



EU-FarmBook



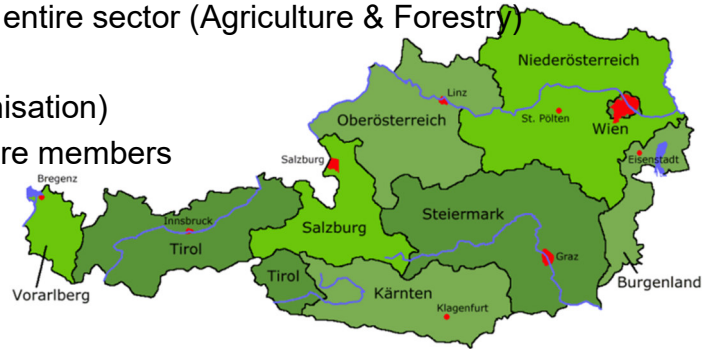
FAIRshare
Digital tools for farm advisors

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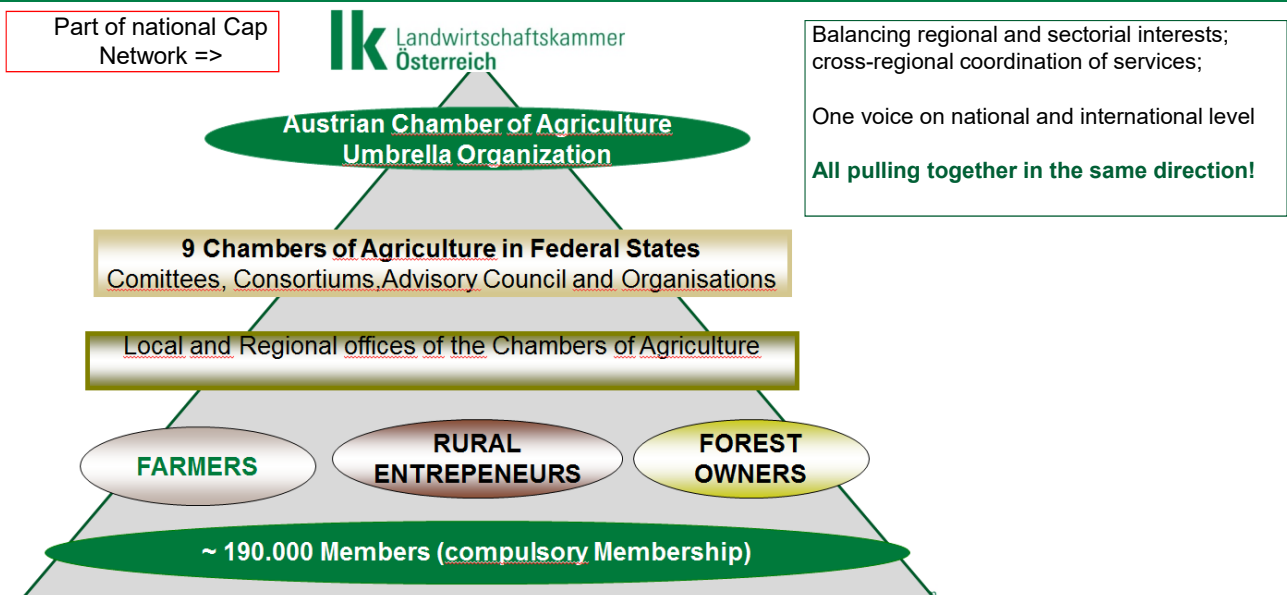
The Chambers of Agriculture in Austria

Territorial Organisation:

- Austria: 9 federal regions („Bundesländer“) --> **9 regional chambers of Agriculture**
 - Public bodies established by state laws (professional representation falls under the jurisdiction of the regional governments)
 - statutory membership of farmers and landowners (mandatory membership)
 - Guarantees the representation of interests of the entire sector (Agriculture & Forestry)
- **Austrian Chamber of Agriculture** (Umbrella organisation)
 - Organized as association, 9 regional chambers are members



Austrian Chamber of Agriculture Structure & organization



Chambers of Agriculture

main tasks

- **Interest representation:** Represent the interests of agriculture and forestry in every respect and in all areas
 - **Services** (Administrative tasks, delegated by government to the regions)
 - e.g. formal processing of funding applications in frame of the CSP
 - **Training**
 - Provision of training through the chambers own Rural Further Training Institute (www.lfi.at)
 - **Advisory Services**
 - Provide legal, economic, technical and social advice to those involved in agriculture and forestry
- **official extension service**, institutionalized by federal law

Rural Advisory Services in Austria

Organisation

- **Chambers are the official extension service**
 - Close cooperation with research, education, other service providers and AKIS actors
 - Chambers as crucial AKIS actor (farmers rep., advisory services, training provider, ...)
- The **Ministry of Agriculture** supports RAS actively:
 - Participation in the planning and evaluation of RAS (setting priorities for RAS together)
 - Funding of personnel costs for advisory staff and of technical and methodological trainings for advisors
 - Providing applied research results and material (through teaching and applied research centers)

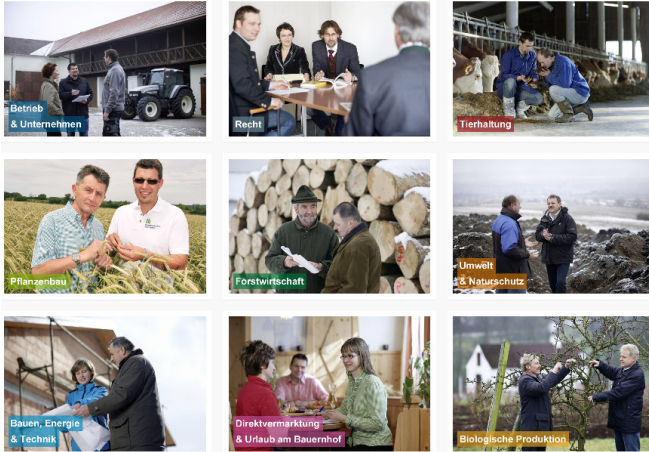


LK Advisory Services

comprehensive range of topics covered

Comprehensive, nationwide, high-quality and affordable advisory services in all federal states for all questions related to agricultural and forestal production and farm business management

(www.lko.at)



■ All topics!

- incl. **areas of public interest** and supporting policy priorities & initiatives

Austria wide:

- 800+ advisors in 70+ regional/local offices

RAS branch is managed and quality-assured by ISO 9001 certified **quality management system**



LK-Beratung

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LK Advisory System

Costs of & Financing the advisory system

- **LK advisory system offers**
 - **affordable** (still largely free of charge)
 - and **independent** (no economic interest) advice!
- **Advisory Services financed through:**
 - Membership fees (compulsory membership)
 - Public Funding
 - by Federal states (institutionalized as official agr. extension service by federal law)
 - cofinanced by Federal States, national, EU (RDP M2 / CAP intervention 78)
 - Other funding sources
 - Fee-based advisory offers (<10 %)



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Results of the Austrian chamber based RAS

high customer satisfaction & reach

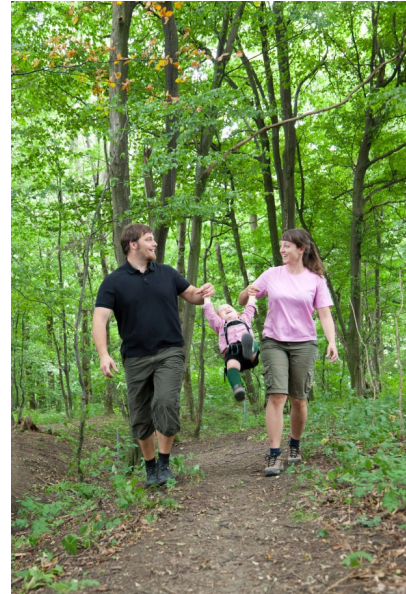
Measuring the impact of RAS and knowledge transfer activities difficult → indirect measurement

High customer reach

- **88% of farmers** reached with advisory services in 2 yrs.
- **150k+ participants** with info, training & education activities

Highly satisfied clients:

- Customer survey: Ø grade 1.6
- Best rated: staff competence



Challenges and Success Factors for agricultural and forestry advisory services in Austria

Key facts – Agriculture in Austria

Overview

- **31 %** of area is **agricultural land**, **43 %** is forests
 - **2/3 of farms** located in Less Favoured Areas (LFA)
 - high **share of organic agriculture**: app. 20 % of UUA
 - App. **160.000 farm holdings**
 - **55 %** part time holdings
 - High share of **small and medium farms**: Ø **19,5 ha UUA**
 - **2/3** of agricultural expenditure for 2nd pillar
 - **Agri-Environment** (90 % of area) and **Mountain Farmers Program** (compensation for natural constraints) are key
- **Overall goal of policy (and advisory work) is to sustain a comprehensive agriculture**

Challenges & Consequences for advisory work & services

Diverse topography and **large variety of mainly small-scale farm types** that pursue different objectives & business models

- requires advisory service to cover a **wide range of topics (and methods)**, also in niches
- **farm-tailored, high-quality, professional and transparent** services required
 - **Focusing on the average farmer's needs is insufficient, specialization is needed**

Rapidly changing external conditions (markets, environm., technology, policy & legal framework, ...)

- require **fast development and adaptation of services**
- while maintaining **Stability and reliability (TRUST!)**

Highly dynamic advisory services / knowledge transfer sector

↑ **client needs** – ↑ **competition** – ↓ **public funding**
Quality
Professionalism

Agriculture and forestry are becoming more knowledge-intensive



Challenges can only be mastered with an effective knowledge and innovation system (AKIS)!

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Success factor I

highly skilled & trained staff – technical, methodological and social competence-driven agricultural advisory system

- Advisory work intends to generate stimuli for agricultural development
- Only **technical & methodological** trained advisors can meet clients needs



Strong focus on advisors skills

- Basic qualification and periodic training requirements defined within the QMS
- Quality target: > **25 hrs./year**

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Success factor I

highly skilled & trained staff – technical, methodological and social competence-driven agricultural advisory system

“Continuing Training plan for agricultural advisors and teachers”

<https://www.haup.ac.at/weiterbildung/fortbildungsplan/>

key tool anchored in the Austrian AKIS to support:

- dissemination of current / new knowledge;
- lifelong learning and integration in AKIS of agricultural and forestry educators and advisors



Annual Training program is planned together with representatives from advisory services and continuing education based on actual knowledge needs

- implemented in cooperation with research institutes
- new knowledge is quickly passed on to multipliers (advisors) and
- the exchange between education and training, advisory services and research is accelerated

Nationwide implementation by the College of Agricultural and Environmental

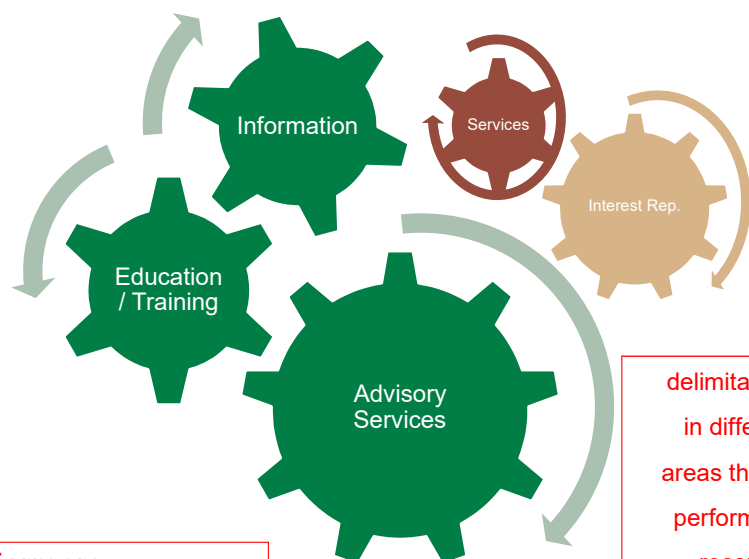
Pedagogy and funded by the Ministry of Agriculture: ~150 technical and methodological trainings with ~ 4,500 participants each year

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Success factor II

cross-linking: Advisory Services – Information – Training/Education – Interest Representation

- **mix of methods** as **fundamental success factor**
- **Intertwining** of advisory & training services
- Link with Interest representation and Services enables **fast reaction to political or legal changes** (bridge between practice and policy)
- Best use of **synergies** and **cross connections!**



→ One-Stop-Shop for Farmers

delimitation of activities in different business areas through electronic performance and time recording system

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Success factor III

cooperation within the chambers and the AKIS

Farmers requests and needs are becoming increasingly specialized and can only be handled by interdisciplinary teams and cooperation within the chambers and the wider AKIS!

- Division of tasks and **specialization across regional chamber boundaries** → across federal states
- Cooperation with other AKIS partners on national and international level
 - Active participation in **projects and networks** related to knowledge exchange and innovation support → Service desk for innovation projects

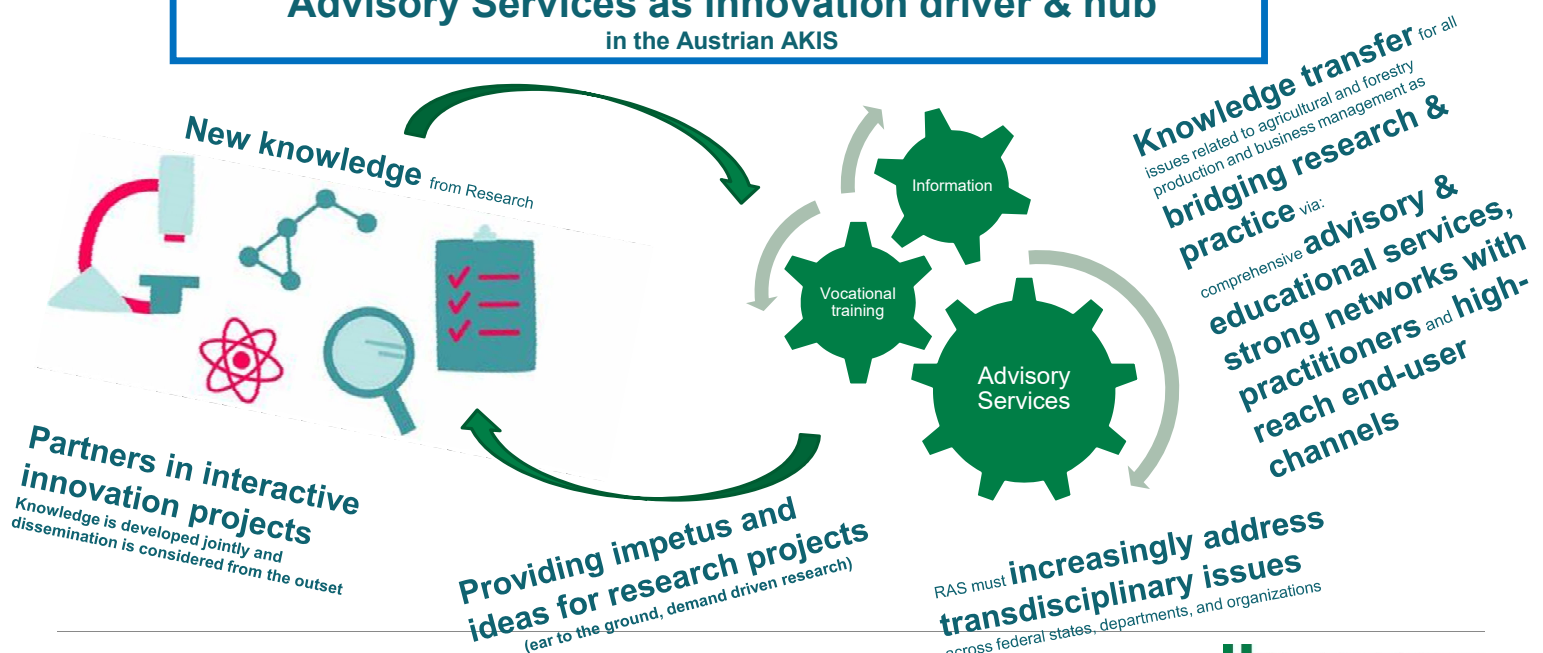
→ Chambers are crucial actor in the Austrian AKIS



Success factor III

cooperation within the chambers and the AKIS - (New) Role of advisors in the AKIS

Advisory Services as innovation driver & hub in the Austrian AKIS



Success factor IV

high quality services - effectively meeting farmers needs

Being close to farmers and their needs - geographically and personally!

- **70+ regional & local offices**

ISO 9001 **quality-certified advisory system** is constantly evolving:

Intensive and systematic dealing with customers & their needs

- Surveys on **customer needs & demands**
- Awareness of **customer complaints**
- **Measurements of customer satisfaction** using different methods



→ **Suggestions for improvements** are the mission for the future

Success factor V „TRUST and INDEPENDENCE“

As **farmer based organizations** the chambers enjoy a **high level of trust** among the farming community

- We provide **independence advice** (no economic interests)
- Farmers can be certain, that we only give advice **in their best interest** (interest representation) and deal with the information obtained **confidentially**

→ **Openness and trust in the advisor leads to better results and impact of the services**



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Thank you for your attention!

In case of any questions don't hesitate to contact me:

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