EXPERT MEETING ON AGRICULTURAL FINANCE AND CREDIT INFRASTRUCTURE IN TRANSITION ECONOMIES

29-30 May 2001, Portorož

PROGRAMME

Target countries: South Eastern Europe (SEE) region – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, – and also Russia and Ukraine.

Objective: to continue dialogue on major problems of rural finance and credit in transition economies; discuss new issues having particular relevance for the countries of the target region, especially how to develop viable credit systems for small-scale farming and rural households in general.

Tuesday, 29 May 2001

08:30 Registration

10:00 Opening of the seminar: Mr. Shigeki Moriyama, Counsellor, Japanese Embassy to Austria; Mr. Franc But, Minister of Agriculture, Slovenia; Mr. Mitja Drobnic, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia; Mr. Ken Ash, OECD

SESSION I: Overview of agricultural finance and credit in transition economies

Issues for discussion: what are the latest developments and main problems of rural finance and credit in SEE countries; what has been achieved in rural finance and institutional reform during more than a decade of transition and what challenges remain; what should be the role of the governments to facilitate the development of sustainable finance and credit systems. The session is conceived to provide a general background for further discussions.

10:30 Introduction by Chairperson: Mr. Iztok Jarc, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Slovenia

10:45 Results of the Second Expert Meeting on Agricultural Finance and Credit Infrastructure in Transition Countries

11:00 An overview of agricultural credit instruments, institutions and challenges in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia

11:15 Public policy and preconditions for sustainable rural finance systems

Mr. Fujiki Hayashi, OECD

Mr. Michael Ryan, OECD

Mr. J.D. Von Pischke, Frontier Finance International, USA
11:30 Agricultural finance and institutional reforms in transition economies: the 1990s and challenges ahead (focus on SEE region) Mr. Ulrich Koester, Kiel University, Germany

11:45 Agricultural finance and institutional reforms in Bulgaria Ms. Lena Roussenova, European Institute and University of National and World Economy

12:00 Farm debt in the CIS: multi-country study of major causes and proposed solutions Mr. Csaba Csaki, World Bank

12:15 Coffee break (hosted by Slovenia)

12:40 Large farm debt in Ukraine Mr. David Sedik, FAO

13:00 Welcome lunch for all participants (hosted by OECD)

Discussion

14:30 Discussants: Mr. Jo Swinnen (Belgium), Mr. Tamotsu Kawamura (Japan)

14:40 Discussion

SESSION II: Private and co-operative banking for the agricultural sector and rural areas

Issues for discussion: how to develop sound rural banking in the difficult conditions of transition; how the banking sector should change and innovate to respond to significant changes in farm ownership and production structures; what should be done to facilitate banking for small-scale borrowers; what is the current role of credit co-operatives and what could be their future strategies.

15:30 Introduction by Chairperson: Mr. Ulrich Koester (Kiel University, Germany)

15:40 Agricultural and rural co-operative banking: EU experience and lessons for emerging markets Mr. Gerard van Empel, Rabobank, The Netherlands

15:55 Multi-service co-operative financing and other facilities of agri-financing: Japan’s experience Mr. Tamotsu Kawamura, Iwate University, Japan

16:10 Romanian Banca Agricola: Agony and Ecstasy Mr. Eugen Radulescu, Banca Agricola, Romania

16:30 Coffee break (hosted by Slovenia)
16:50 The role of co-operative financial institutions in rural and agricultural development  
Mr. Paul Armbruster,  
German Co-operative Confederation, Germany

17:10 Agricultural credit co-operation in Slovenia: lessons from the past and strategy for the future  
Mr. Tomaz Sila,  
Association of Savings and Loans Services of Slovenia, Slovenia

Discussion

17:30 Discussants: Mr. David Sedik (FAO),  
Ms. Lena Roussenova (Bulgaria)

17:50 Discussion

19:00 End of day 1

19:30 Cocktail for all participants (hosted by Japanese Embassy)

Wednesday, 30 May 2001

SESSION III: Informal credit for the agricultural sector and rural areas

Issues for discussion: what are the benefits and limitations of non-bank lending; what role is it currently playing and can potentially play in improving the financing situation in the agricultural sectors of transition economies; how important are own capital resources of rural areas; what are the ways to mobilise these resources; can micro-credit be successful in transition economies; in what ways and to what extent can it help overcome constraints of traditional lending.

09:00 Introduction by Chairperson: Mr. Csaba Csaki (World Bank)

09:10 The role of trade credit and foreign direct investment in improving the agricultural finance situation in transition countries  
Mr. Jo Swinnen,  
Leuven University, Belgium

09:25 Equity financing for women  
Ms. Astra Michels,  
ISIS Management Group, USA

09:40 Financing agriculture through vertical integration: the case of Hungary  
Mr. Tamás Székelyhidi,  
House of Hungarian Tastes Ltd., Hungary

09:55 The role and development of informal and co-operative financial channels in Albanian agriculture  
Mr. Hamish Gow,  
University of Illinois at Urbana, USA
10:10 The experience of rural micro-credit in north-west Russia

Ms. Renata Yanbykh, Government of the Russian Federation, Russia

Discussion

10:30 Discussants: Mr. J.D. von Pischke (USA), Mr. Tomaz Sila (Slovenia)

11:00 Coffee break (hosted by Slovenia)

11:20 Discussion (continued)

13:00 Lunch break (hosted by OECD)

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR:

Developing sustainable finance and credit systems: challenges for policy making

Issues for discussion: this session will present the results of the three sessions in the form of policy conclusions

14:00 Introduction by Chairperson, Mrs. Alexandra Trzeciak-Duval (OECD)

14:10 Summaries and policy conclusions for the 3 sessions presented by the discussants

14:40 Discussion

15:50 Closing of the seminar

16:00 Close of day 2