

# Agricultural University - Plovdiv participated in the high-level EIT Food conference "The Future of Food" in Brussels

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On 26 October in Brussels, the EIT Food high-level conference "The Future of Food" (<https://futureoffood.eitfood.eu/>) was held. The Agricultural University of Plovdiv was represented by the Vice-Rector for Research and Project Activities, Prof. Dr. Vladislav Popov. The University is the official Bulgarian representative for Bulgaria of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology in Food EIT Food.

The conference created a unique opportunity for the largest food community in the world to inspire policymakers by sharing experience, business case studies and concrete recommendations on how we can jointly bring about

change in order to transform our food systems. With its extensive experience in developing innovations, implementing them in the agri-food system and providing regular feedback to political institutions, EIT Food contributes to shaping a more sustainable and transparent system that the world needs. The keynote speaker at the conference was EU Commissioner Ms. Iliana Ivanova. In her speech, she explained what support the European Commission provides in the fields of innovation, education and research. Ms. Ivanova cited as an example the European Commission initiative „Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems“ and its official launch, held on 13 October at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, as a useful tool for strengthening the regional innovation ecosystem in Europe within the framework of the New European Innovation Agenda.

Commissioner Ivanova paid particular attention to the role of education in the process and emphasized the importance of the European university alliances, referring to the first "green" alliance UNlgreen <https://unlgreen-alliance.eu>, in consolidating the European Education Area and the EU's green policies.

UNlgreen is the first alliance in Europe in the fields of agricultural, biotechnological and natural sciences, bringing together eight universities, with the Agricultural University of Plovdiv as a partner.

Prof. Dr. Vladislav Popov, Director of the EIT Food Hub Bulgaria, held a meeting with Commissioner Ivanova. He expressed gratitude for the support for the European research and innovation ecosystem. The two discussed the key points from the conference „Regional Innovation Valleys for Bioeconomy and Food Systems“, which took place at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, as well as future opportunities for the development of the research and innovation ecosystem in Bulgaria.