National Rural Networks

Approaches and methods to build national rural networks
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Connecting Rural Europe

RDP article 68

- The EU RDP article 68: *Each Member State shall establish a national rural network, which groups the organisations and administrations involved in rural development.*

http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/national-rural-networks

European Evaluation Network
for Rural Development

National Rural Networks > Finland

Summary

The Finnish Rural Network has been fully operational since October 2007.

The Rural Network Unit forms part of the Managing Authority (MA), within the Department of Agriculture of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, responsible for the implementation of the rural development programmes (RDPs). The Rural Network Unit coordinates the activity of the Rural Network and implements the tasks established for the network, managing operational activities and the implementation of the action plans.

The overall mission of the Finnish Rural Network Unit is to establish and promote synergies between rural actors and improve competencies in order to develop the countryside.

These goals will be achieved through increasing the flow of information about the opportunities and results of the RDPs among stakeholders; improving the flow of information between the authorities and interest groups; implementing the programmes; increasing human capacity and skills through the exchange of experiences at local, national and international level.

Network Participants

The Finnish Rural Network consists of the main stakeholders involved in implementing the RDP from both public administration and civic organisations. Moreover, the network also encompasses numerous rural development actors operating at a local level.

Read more about the organisational structure of the Network [PDF en]

What is a network?

- Connections between people and organisations with different skills and without hierarcy
- All members contribute with their resources
- Membership is based merely on activity
- Can have a formal structure with a service unit
- Can be temporary or more permanent

The success factor is to deliver

- To get legitimacy from the stakeholders they have to be satisfied with the network outputs.

- The extent of network involvement is decided by the benefit for each stakeholder

- The only way to get a functioning network is to deliver good services

- The top down approach in the start gives often an up-hill process in the start

Abbreviations often used

- RDP – Rural Development Program

- MS – Member State

- MA – Managing Authority

- NRN – National Rural Network

- NSU/NNU – National Support Unit/National Network Unit

- ENRD – European Network for Rural Development

- TNC – Transnational Cooperation

- TA – Technical Assistance

Approaches to the management of rural networks

- Within the Managing Authority
  - Within the ministry or a official body, department, institute run by the MA

- Partially outsourced
  - External contractor performing certain tasks of the NSU like web site, publications, events etc

- Fully outsourced
  - External contractor running the entire network

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How to involve the stakeholders

- ## A formal membership
  - Application for membership
  - Criteria for who can be a member
  - Steering committee approving membership

- ## Based on activity and participation
  - Identify and invite stakeholders to events, subscription etc
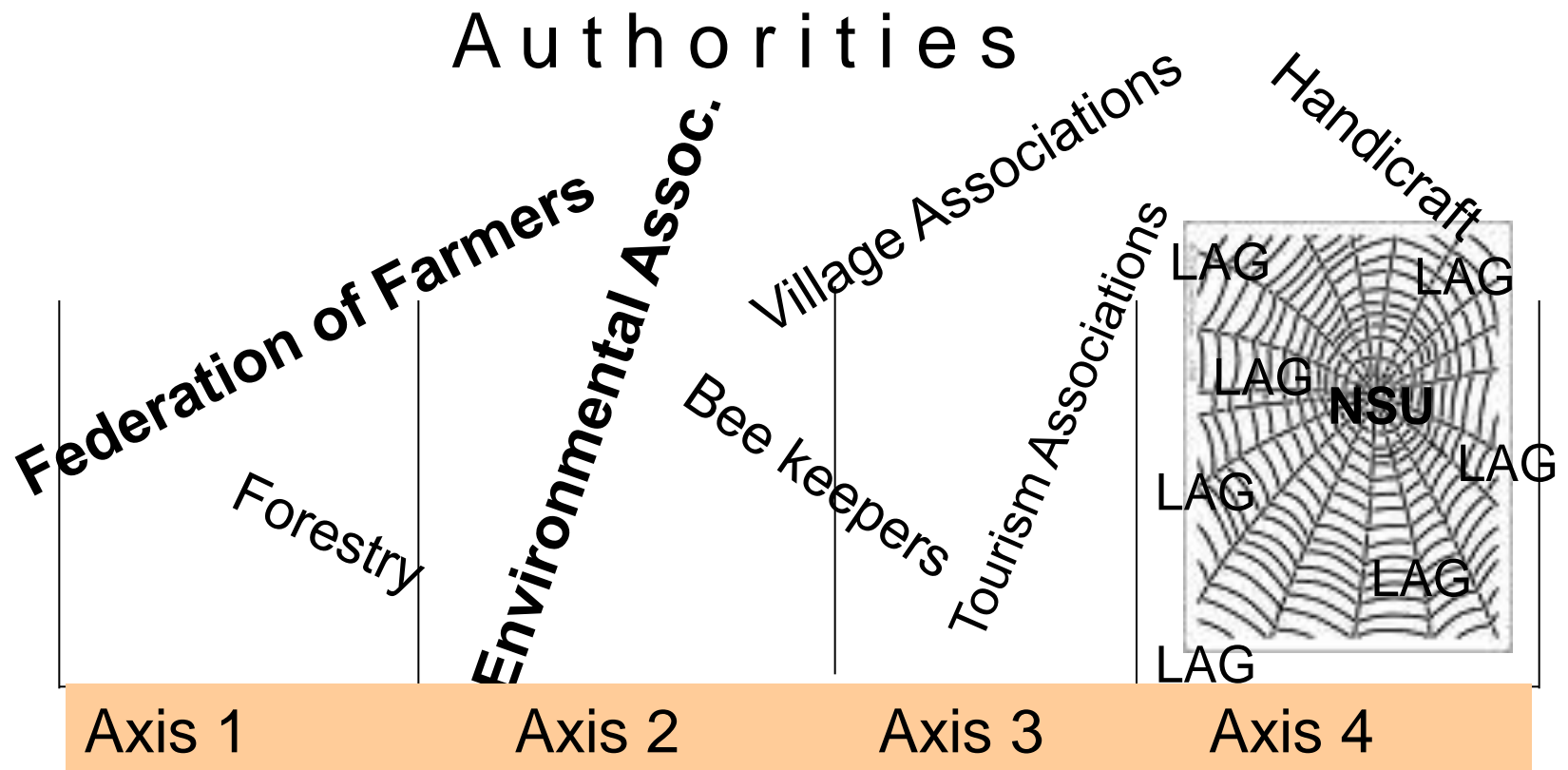 - The active and interested stakeholders and the subscribers are then the network members

Different types of networks

	Within managing Authority	Partially outsourced	Fully outsourced
Formal network membership based	SE	?	RO
Informal network activity based	FI, EE	UK,Scotland	BE, Wallonia IE

From Leader Network towards the whole RDP

- Starting with a Leader network
- Like in Leader+

A u t h o r i t i e s

Federation of Farmers

Environmental Assoc.

Village Associations

Handicraft

Forestry

Bee keepers

Tourism Associations

LAG LAG

LAG NSU

LAG LAG

LAG

LAG

Axis 1   Axis 2   Axis 3   Axis 4

Growing
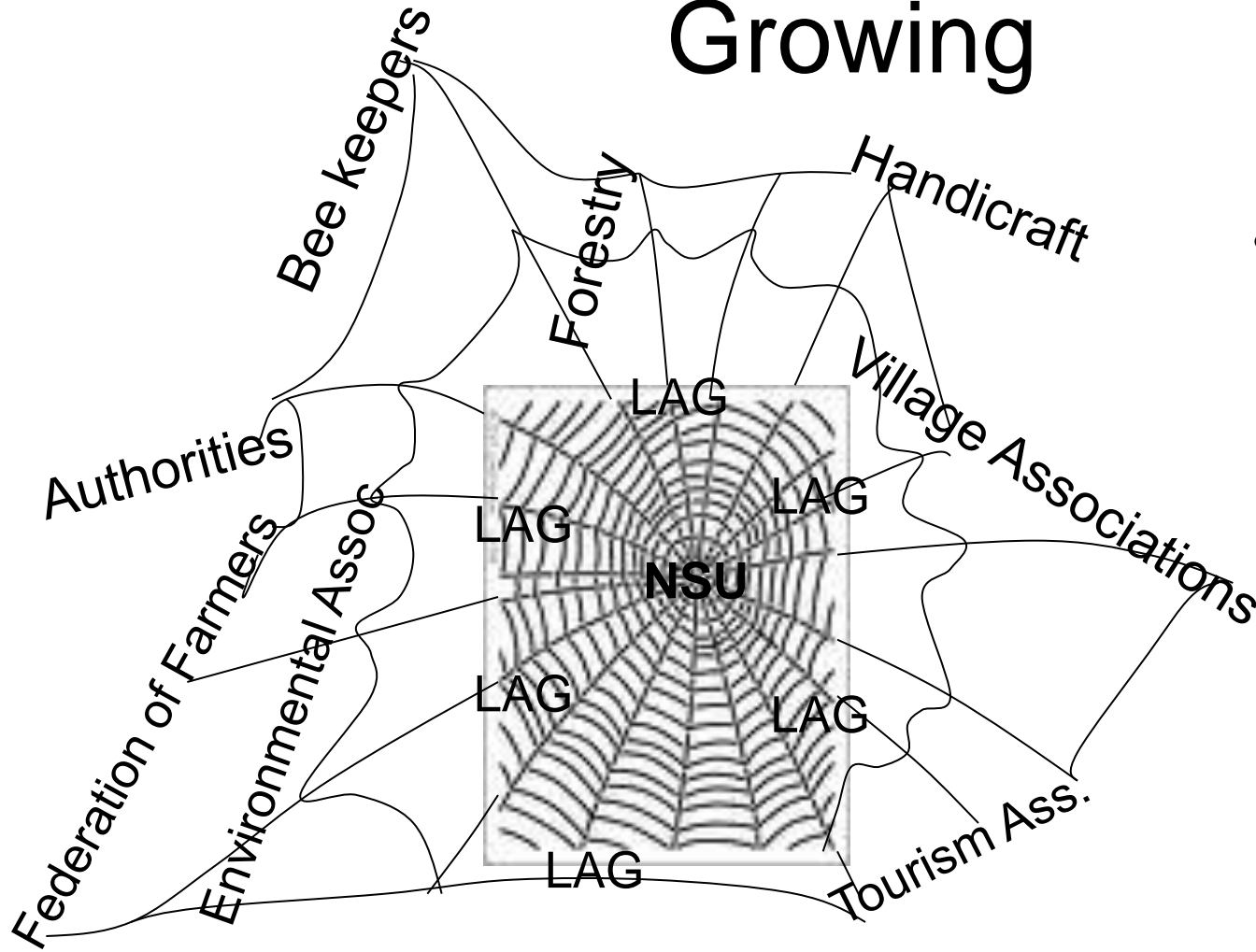
- Developing into a network for the whole RDP

Regional and national networks

- Federal states tend to have regional networks and a national network

  - Spain, Germany

- National states (smaller states) tend to have just a national network

  - Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Estonia

- But there are differences
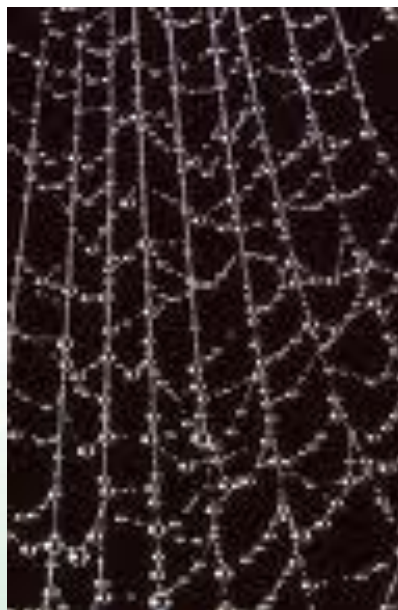
  - Belgium, France, Italy, UK

There are different cobwebs

Beautiful and structured

Structured

Not so well structured but functioning