ENRD Seminar on 'Revitalising Rural Areas through Business Innovation'

A possible role for LEADER – context, background

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LEADER and innovation

„Community-led local development shall be**...**designed taking into consideration local needs and potential, and shall **include innovative features in the local context**, networking, and where appropriate, cooperation"

<div align="right">(Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013)</div>

„Is innovation LEADER's YETI – more talked about than seen?"

<div align="right">(participant at the ENRD Workshop on „Extending LEADER innovation")</div>

„Think beyond LEADER and **encourage the LAG to act as a 'brokerage'** across the whole innovation system..."
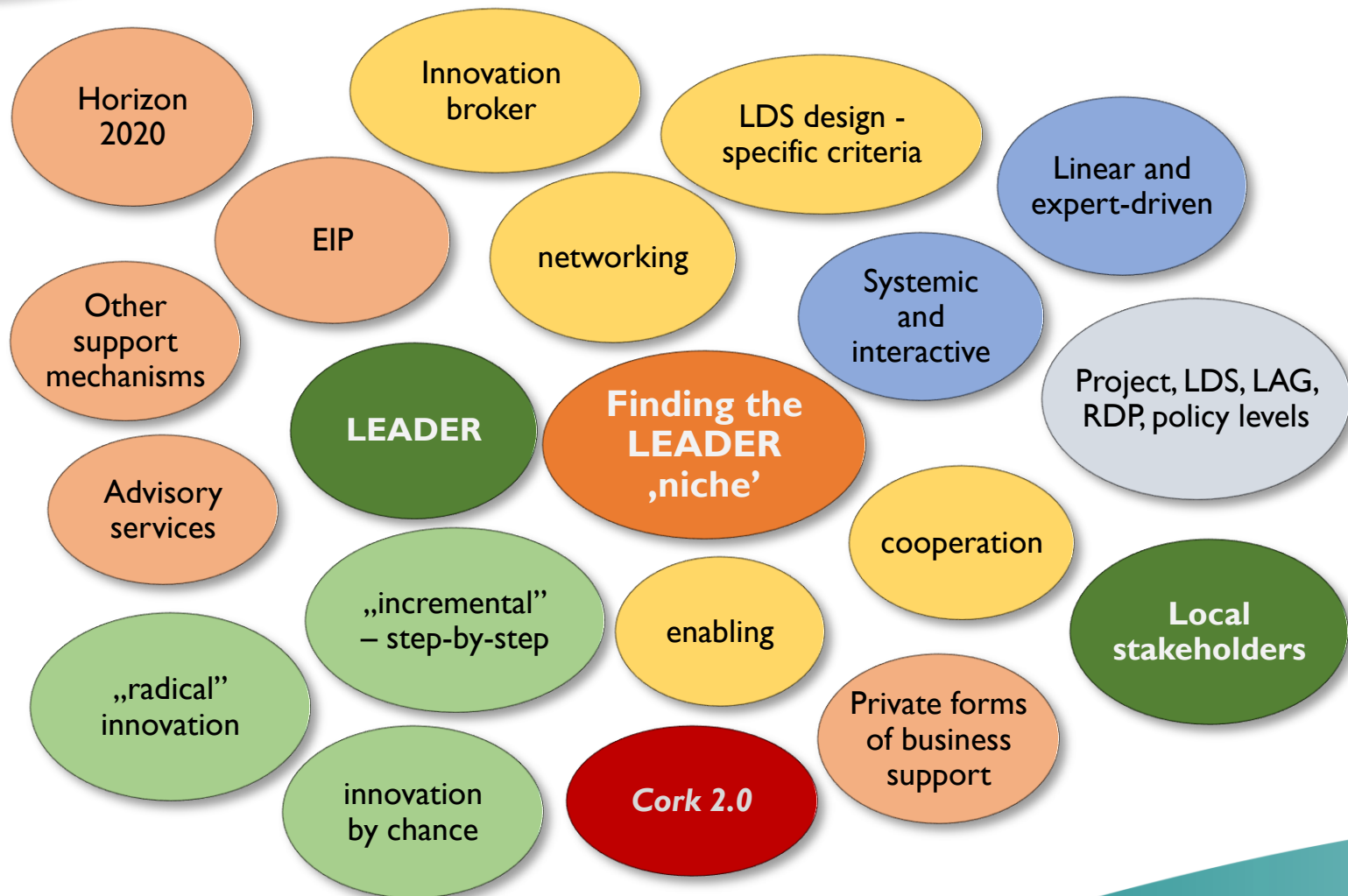
<div align="right">(ENRD Workshop on „Extending LEADER innovation")</div>

„Use **innovation in delivery** to encourage new opportunities in rural areas e.g. simplification, financial Instruments & social economy….

Rural communities must participate in the knowledge economy in order to fully utilize the advances in research and development." (Cork 2.0 Declaration)

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Context

European Network for
Rural Development

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Horizon 2020

Innovation broker

LDS design - specific criteria

Linear and expert-driven

EIP

networking

Systemic and interactive

Other support mechanisms

LEADER

Finding the LEADER 'niche'

Project, LDS, LAG, RDP, policy levels

Advisory services

cooperation

Local stakeholders

"incremental" – step-by-step

enabling

"radical" innovation

Private forms of business support

innovation by chance

Cork 2.0

THE LEADER NICHE: WHAT DOES LEADER DO BEST, WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE BETTER

Working in small groups participants identified those aspects where they thought LEADER did best in rural innovation and where it most needs to do better.

Does Best:

- Linking different actors and sectors, brokering
- A 'midwife' for local innovation
- Is an experimental space, pilots new approaches
- Place based strategy with local knowledge
- Supports the transition from idea to project
- LAGs create the space for discussion and sharing ideas
- Open to taking a risk
- Involves local people to identify local needs

Could do better:

- Allow room for risk, possible failure and the unknown
- Communicate innovation results better
- Innovate in how LEADER does things
- Broaden involvement – link with universities and researchers to identify innovators
- Link with other EU funds, act as enablers
- Improve synergies with EIP-AGRI
- Get out more and meet people face to face
- Strengthen innovation focus within strategies

Based on the conclusions of the ENRD Workshop on ‚Extending LEADER innovation'
(https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/news-events/events/enrd-seminar-smart-leader_en)

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European Commission

What LEADER can do...

- Initiate a ‚supra-regional innovation process' in a three-year project (‚Nature of Innovation', Austria)

- Make a LAG into an ‚innovation architect' and create the environment for innovation (LAG Midt-Nordvestsjaelland, Denmark) by focusing on the local resource

- A LAG can develop a ‚smart-specialisation strategy' for the local economy (Tagus LAG, Spain)

- Develop innovative projects with focus*

  - Promotion of renewable energy in rural communities (Hungary)
  - Introducing a new form of entrepreneurial education in rural schools (Hungary)
  - Farming conservation (Ireland)
  - A car-sharing system (Sweden)

*these and more examples available at: http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/fms/pdf/B16C6E54-95D9-07B8-6EC1-4CA9D6E42519.pdf

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In an „ideal" world LEADER/LAGs should be able to...

- Integrate innovation into local development strategy design and implementation

- Support and ‚drive' innovation

- Act as an innovation broker both within its territory and in building linkages with institutions outside its territory

- Connect various local stakeholders (business, NGOs, municipalities, consumers) and facilitate the development of innovative solutions

- Actively support capacity building for local stakeholders to increase their innovation potential

- Build and improve LAG capacities for innovation

Some considerations…

- LAG roles and capacities for providing innovation support to businesses

- Designing the local development strategy for innovation

- Networking and cooperation with businesses, business advisors, other sectors and stakeholders

- Innovation in the local context

- Learning from others through cooperation

- The RDP framework and implementation rules

Thank you for your attention.

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