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Research Report

Governance of policy at a local level LEADER programs analysis

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Governance of policy at a local level LEADER programs analysis

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Deliverable 3.3

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Deliverable Relation between EU changes, LAG composition and performance (D3.3)

Description This report is the final deliverable of task 3.3. It present the research protocol of the task 3.3., the methodology used and most of results. LEADER Programme is qualified as down-up approach combining EU policy framework and local strategy. Implementation of these EU program is quite heterogeneous dependind on institutional factors and political choices at at national level and structural characteristics and socio-political local factors.

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FOREWORD

This report aims to present final analysis and results of Task 3.3. Pegasus program. Nevertheless, some analyses are still on going, in particular concerning case studies cross-analyses, in the perspective of further publications. Thereby, this report present the recheach protocol of the task, the methodology used and one part of the results.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Work package 3 focuses on rural development and cohesion policy. It aims to analyse the economic mechanisms that explain diverse situations of economic performance levels in rural areas across European countries, the role of development policies in peripheral areas, and their various impacts; and the local mechanisms that may or may not favor specific local dynamics.

CESAER (French research center from Dijon) and Thünen Institute from Braunschweig (Germany) contribute to this WP with a task focuses on governance of policy at local level. Indeed local governance is seen as an important tool for synergy between economic development and eco-system services and LEADER programme is as emblematic example of European policy for the support of local governance innovations.

To find appropriate policy interventions in specific situations for different types of regions is a major issue. Such policy interventions must be able to address very different problem situations, because the need for support is highly context-dependent and problem specific (Tovey, 2008, Wellbrock et al., 2012). Thus rural development has to deal with diverse demands and usages of space (Gallent et al. 2008, 19).

Overall, so called integrated and place-based approaches become more popular with policy makers, because such approaches are supposed to contribute more to a highly complex task like influencing rural development than approaches focussed solely on single sectors (Tomaney, 2010, Birolo et al. 2012, Terluin, 2003). A suitable rural development policy should enable to act on the different tasks with flexible measures, including cooperation and mobilisation of different stakeholders. This is also connected to discussions about OECDs “New Rural Paradigm” (OECD 2006, Hurlings and Marsden, 2014).

The LEADER¹ -approach was devised as one possibility to bring forward rural development. LEADER started in 1991 (reissued up to now four times²) and is now one axis of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). LEADER is usually classified as a bottom-up oriented, participatory approach. Different stakeholders come together in a Local Action Group (LAG) as a kind of a public-private partnership and make decisions about the financial support for projects. Those groups collaborate on the basis of an integrated local development strategy. Topics are mainly tourism, recreation, village renewal, cultural heritage, basic services and other aspects of quality of life.

One objective of LEADER is to bring public, private and civil organisations together as a local governance arrangement. LEADER is also viewed in the context of regional identities to foster a

¹ LEADER is an acronym derived from the French: Liaisons entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale = links between actions for the development of the rural economy.

² Whereas it was seen as an experimental “pilot” scheme under LEADER I (in the first period 1991-94). LEADER II in the following period (1995-1999) focussed the “laboratory” aspect, making use of the momentum to engage innovative, inexperienced pathways, but was still mainly limited to disadvantaged rural areas. During the period 2000-2006 as LEADER+ it was extended to a wide range of rural regions. In the last funding period there was a “mainstreaming” of LEADER: it have been integrated to the Rural Development Programmes (RDP) and builds a horizontal priority “axes” under which all RDP measures should be eligible (Oedl-Wieser et al. 2010). In 2014-2020 there will again be a new edition of LEADER (further remarks for the next funding period: Copus et al. 2011).

common “sense of place” and a related mobilisation of the commitment of local actors (Pollermann et al. 2013, Lee et al. 2005). A general assumption for LEADER is that there is an added value because of a better identification of local needs and solutions, more commitment of stakeholders and a greater scope for innovation. Further benefits are the pooling of local resources, networking to allow mutual learning and an integrated approach to address complex economic and social issues (High and Nemes, 2007).

This final report of task 3.3. first clarifies the research problem and describe the framework, which is used to analyse European, national, regional and local factors influencing local governance organisation and their impacts on rural development. The following section presents methodology we use, based on ten cases studies in France, Germany and Italy. Results are presented in two following sections in coherence with framework. A first results section analyses how framework conditions and institutions influence LEADER implementation. The second results section analyses what are different forms of local governance, and what are their impacts on local development.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

2.1. Research aim

One main assumption of the LEADER approach is that rural support measures become more effective if decision-making and implementation are locally embedded. Nevertheless, this assumed added value of the LEADER approach has not been convincingly demonstrated so far (ECA 2010). The diverse and scattered evidence might partly be due to the context dependence of implementation and success of LEADER at local level. In order to better understand this context-dependence and heterogeneity and consider it, it is necessary to identify the influences that explain it. We ask in how far the administrative environment affects the implementation of LEADER. In the context of European rural development support, different levels and areas of administration are affected and the specific relations between EU, nation state, subnational level (region/Land) and community are of relevance.

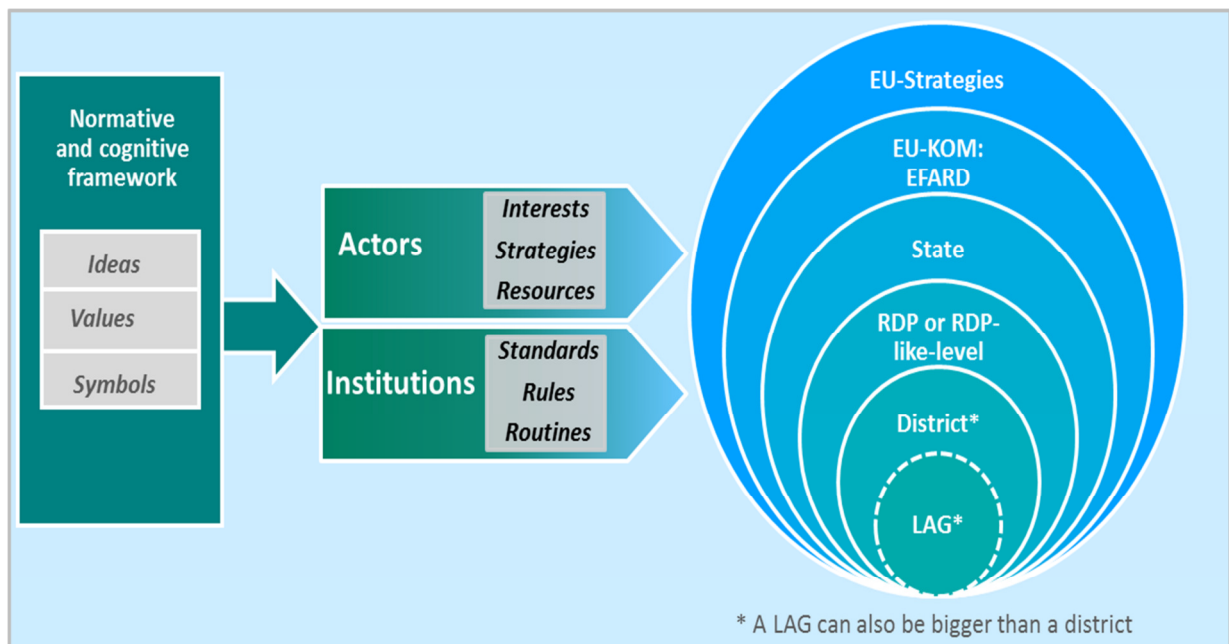
We ask in how far, (1) national differences in the multi-level-governance system, (2) differences in the rural development implementation processes and (3) differences in the local administrative environment, affect the implementation of LEADER and its organization.

2.2. Theoretical framework and state of art

2.2.1 Conceptual approach in context of multi-level-governance

The research approach is based on the theory of multi-level governance (Bache & Flinders 2004; Pollermann et al. 2014a) (see further classification in chapter 2.2.3) - understood as a mode of coordination - involving different spheres of actors and forms of regulation of various kinds (Jessop 2002). We developed a concept that helps with an integrated assessment of governance arrangements at local level as well as regulations at European and national Level. Based on the concepts elaborated above we will use the framework shown in fig. 1 to answer our research questions.

Figure 1 : Conceptual approach for LEADER analysis



The entities involved in rural development in general (and also more specifically in LEADER) can be grouped into the categories “Institutions” and (individual) “Actors” (Mayntz 1998), each of them determined by a normative and cognitive framework. The visible actions of the individual actors are the result of a process driven by their interests, operationalized in a strategy limited by the access to resources. When it comes to interaction with others – in “institutions” – Standards, rules and routines (commonly agreed, top down established, historically grown) apply to organize the interaction.

Looking at LEADER as a multi-level governance phenomenon, we have to consider the different levels shown on the right side of figure 1. On each level we find institutions and individual actors which influence the implementation of LEADER at the local level. This might be for example by setting standards and rules like the EU-KOM in its regulations for EAFRD and other policies, or by individual behavior for example of the head of the district authority supporting (or not supporting) the LAG, or the requirements of national or regional policies which have to be fulfilled to receive national co-financing.

2.2.2 Classification of LEADER

In the last funding periods there was steady increase in the number of LEADER-regions in Europe, and, at least in Germany, it is already evident that this gain will continue: for the 2014-2020 funding period there around 300 LAGs expected in comparison to 244 LAGs in the last period (Wehmeyer 2014). In addition, the post-2013 EU Structural Funds setting, including the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), introduces a newly-arranged structure for funding instead of the current regulations. The new regulation envisages a Common Strategic Framework (CSF) to provide all EU Funds with a set of basic rules in line with the general principles - partnership, multi-level governance, equality and sustainability. Now there are common options for a so-called “Community-Led Local Development” (CLLD). After

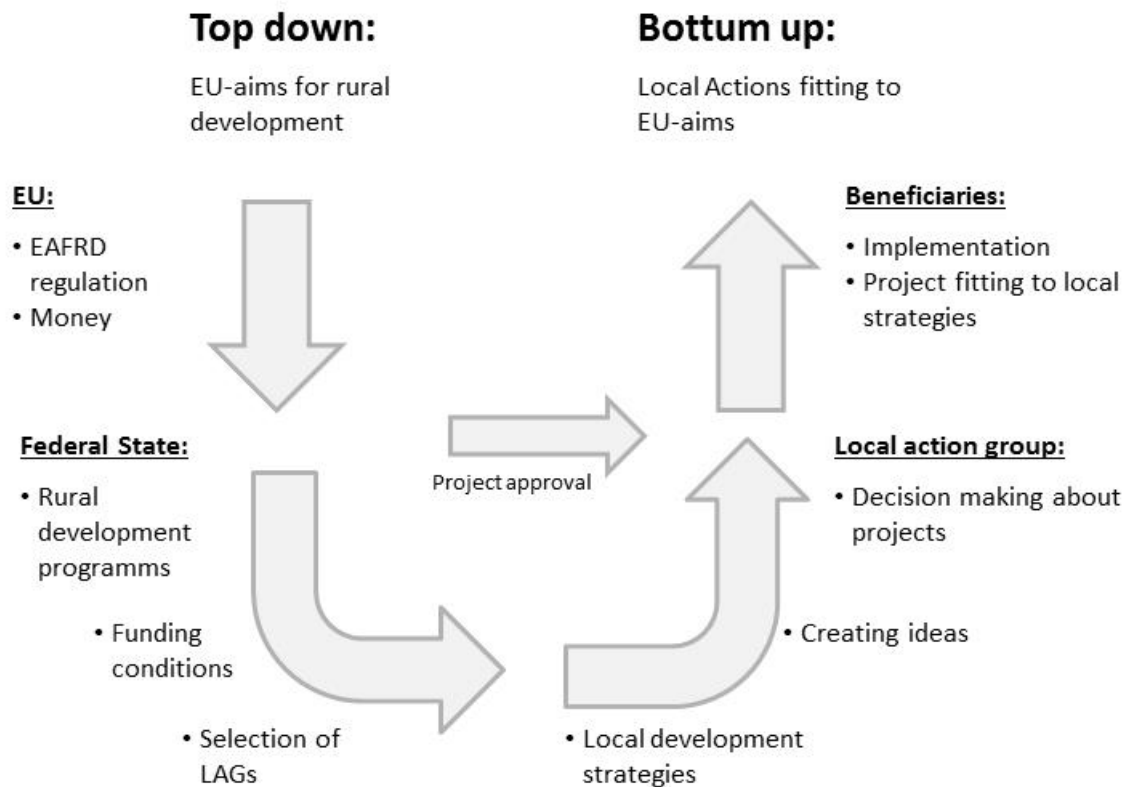
experiences with the LEADER-approach, the Commission believes that the support of integrated local development strategies and local actions groups can facilitate the sustainable and synergetic implementation of multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral interventions. Consequently, a coherent set of measures can be addressed to all EU areas (rural/urban/coastal, etc.) to foster new opportunities, socio-economic benefits, equality, diversification of activities, networking and innovation (Birolo et al. 2012).

Although LEADER is commonly called a bottom-up approach, it has to be pointed out that there is a high influence through a superordinated framework of funding regulations. For example there are detailed regulations about what kinds of projects are fundable and which not. Thereby different levels of regulations exist, in general there are basic settings from the EU, which are more elaborated in detail by the RDP-managing authorities (either on national level or in the case of Germany, on the federal state level). So from above there are politically legitimated aims, funding regulations, and possibly also political influences on actor constellations or the shape of regions. From bottom up there are ideas for projects, engaged actors (with their own interests) and local knowledge.

So more precisely LEADER is neither “top-down” nor “bottom-up”, but can be classified as a “**down up**”-approach (Fürst et al. 2005, Pollermann et al. 2014a, see Figure 2). There is top down frame setting from EU in a first step and from federal state level in a second step, but a major aim of LEADER is a bottom up mobilisation of local stakeholders, whereby the Local Action Group is dealing with the Local development Strategy and makes decisions about projects. The implementation of projects is done by the beneficiaries, but only after approval (following general regulations from EU-level and more detailed regulations from federal state level). Finally the impact of these actions should serve the EU-aims. In addition also the policy design is not just a top down elaboration, because there are different consultation processes so the bottom-level also gives information and proposals for new regulations.

- Also for one of the key elements from LEADER the Local Development Strategies there are typical frictions between bottom-up and top-down: the strategies should be elaborated and written on the local level ideally within a broad participation process, but the program managing authorities can set formal and content related requirements. Thereby they have a strong position, because the program managing authorities have to approve the Local Development Strategies as part of the application of the LEADER-regions. Without this approval of the strategy there is no LEADER-funding at all.
- A governance perspective includes questions of legitimacy (Buser 2014) related to the actors and decisions on the different levels. Whereby questions of “input” as well as “output” legitimacy have to be taken into account (Thuesen 2011).
- Against this background in context of the TRUSTEE research project we want to analyse LEADER with a multi-level-governance perspective. To analyse LEADER performances we developed a model of multi-level governance, which integrates governance arrangements at the local level as well as regulation at the European and German federal state level.

Figure 2 : LEADER as a “down-up”- funding approach



Source: Pollermann et al. 2014a

2.2.3 Key Terms: Governance – Local governance – Multi-level governance

Governance

There has been growing interest in the potential contribution of new forms of governance to solving co-ordination problems in and across a wide range of fields such as the economy, the legal system, the political system and in other parts of society (Jessop 2002, 142, Kooiman 2002). Currently the term “Governance” is used very often in the scientific community (also in German language where usually no translation is applied).

The expansion of governance discussion and practices into so many spheres represents a secular response to an intensification of societal complexity (Jessop 2002, 145). Another reason for the rise of the governance concept is, “that the direct ‘command and control’ mode of power of the state no longer seems to be effective. Instead, other more indirect technologies of power are used to govern at a distance, with power exercised by the state across space by drawing others in through delegated instruments such as partnerships” (Derzken et al. 2008, 466).

The broad reception is reflected in growing ambiguities about the meaning of governance (Jessop 2002, 142). “The term ‘governance’ is popular but imprecise” (Rhodes 1996, 652).

So it is necessary to define the characteristics of “governance” for our work. We use Governance with a wide definition in an analytical sense: not focused on a normative perspective like in good governance concepts, not with a narrow definition as self-governance. So Governance is seen as

an umbrella term for regulation of collective actions with different modes of steering³. Main characteristic for governance are:

- **Involvement of different groups of actors:** A key element is the involvement of Non-State actors (Rhodes 1996, 660), governance is about governmental and non-governmental organisations working together (Stoker 1998) but the state sector actors can play a major role. Thereby Governance is not really “Governance without Government” (Rhodes 1996, 652), but state actors have a different role in governance processes.
- **Different steering mechanisms:** Governance “can be distinguished from the ‘invisible hand’ of uncoordinated market exchange based on the formally rational pursuit of self-interest by isolated market agents; and from the ‘iron fist’ (perhaps in a ‘velvet glove’) of centralised, top-down imperative co-ordination in pursuit of substantive goals established from above” (Jessop 2002, 143). Governance can imply a mixture of hierarchy, market interactions or negotiations/solidarity (the latter is often named as ideal type steering in civil society). So by definition governance is not solely the use of hierarchy or market as a steering mechanism, but there is no narrow determination for how steering mechanisms work together.
- **Network like cooperation:** There are continuing interactions between network members, caused by the need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purposes. Typical are game-like interactions, rooted in trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed to by network participants. The participants are not bound into the network, they always have an exit-option. There is a significant degree of autonomy from the state. Networks are not directly accountable to the state; they are self-organising. Although the state does not occupy a privileged, sovereign position, it can indirectly and imperfectly steer networks (Rhodes 1996, 660).
- **Role of power:** Governance need not entail a complete symmetry in power relations or complete equality in the distribution of benefits: indeed, it is highly unlikely to do so almost regardless of the object of governance or the ‘stakeholders’ who actually participate in the governance process (Jessop 2002, 142).

Local Governance

To analyse governance processes in a certain place/ territory different terms are used in literature like regional governance, local governance or urban governance. All their definitions based upon the general governance characteristics and involve in addition a spatial dimension.

The terms “local” and “regional” governance are used very similarly. In the German literature the term “regional governance” is more common, in contrast in the English literature “local governance” is more often used. In Germany the term “region” refers to a smaller area than in the UK. So the site of a LEADER area in Germany is normally referred to a “region” (typical with 50,000 to 150,000 inhabitants) although in the European view LEADER is named as Local Development. So the EU-term for the development concepts of the LEADER-Region is also “local

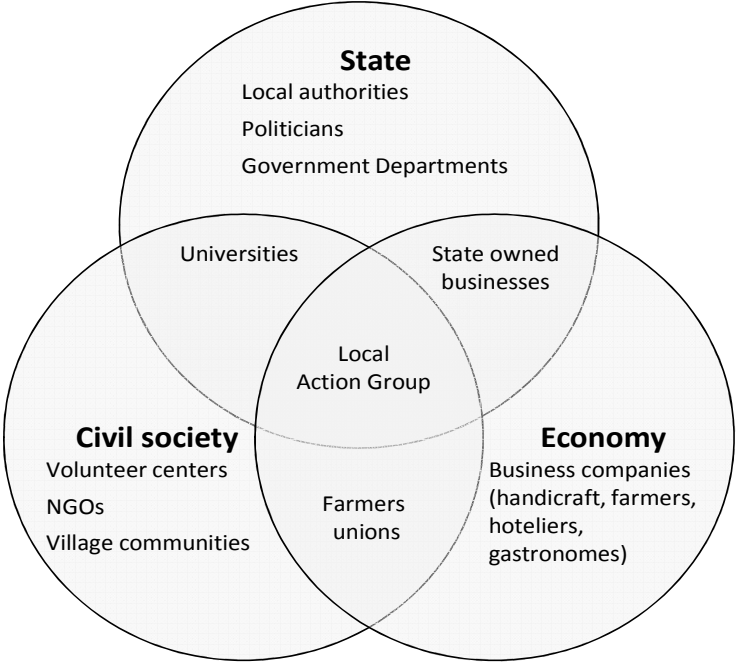
³ This notion refers to the various governance definitions of political sciences (Mayntz 2004).

development strategy”. To avoid misunderstandings we will use the EU-term and speak about “Local Governance”, which take place in a rural area. Local governance is a major concern of the LEADER methodology. So the Common Evaluation and Monitoring Framework (CMEF) for EAFRD includes the question: “To what extent has the LEADER approach contributed to improving governance in rural areas?” (Grieve et al. 2010, 23).

The focuses of local governance are the contributions to steering issues at the level of one LEADER-Region to support rural development. It can be defined as: a network-like collaboration between local actors of three sectors (public administration, private/ economic sector and civil society) aimed at collective action (Grieve et al 2010, 24). Typical is voluntary involvement (so actors always have an exit option), and horizontal modes of interaction between partners instead of only hierarchical modes of steering. Local governance processes are marked by the continuous transformation of complex structures and impacts on the different participants (and their skills, readiness for cooperation, belief-systems) (Healey 2002, Fürst et al. 2005, Macken-Walsh and Curtin, 2012, Pollermann, 2006). In our analyses we include private-public as well as private-private or public-public relationships as far as those contribute to a different steering of local development issues.

A key issue of local governance is to involve very different kind of actors. Therefore organisational structures of a governance arrangement have to connect actors with diverging interests: thematically, for example actors from agriculture, tourism, nature conservation or the local trades and handicrafts. Another distinguishing feature to be taken into account is the sector: the state, the private sector or the civil society. Examples of important actors in rural areas and their classification into these sectors and their intersections are shown in the figure below (Pollermann 2005: 94).

Figure 3 : Groups of actors in a rural governance arrangement



Source: own figure (based on Fürst et al. 2006)

Multi-Level Governance

Many different levels of the institutional framework influence processes of local development. So Patterns of local governance are embedded in a multi-level governance system (Bache & Flinders 2004) in context of LEADER highly related to European Community governance with its regulations and policy making procedures (Pollack 1996). Thereby LEADER can create a series of tensions both in a horizontal sense, between spaces, territories and political or local administrative structures, and in a vertical sense, between local and extra-local forces, be they regional, national or European (Buller 2000, 190). To analyse LEADER performances we develop a model of multi-level governance⁴, which integrates governance arrangements at local level as well as regulation at European and German Federal State Level (s. Chapter 1.3).

Multi-level governance is the context of rural development processes, defining the institutional, regulatory and procedural environment as external circumstances for the operation of LEADER. It can greatly influence the style of interaction between (and within) different levels and institutions of the development system, the degree of autonomy of the local level, the administrative procedures applied, and the autonomy of local partnership in general (Grieve et al. 2010, 24). In theory, under multi-level governance, the role of the state shifts from one of control to one of co-ordination, using new mechanisms to guide a plurality of network actors (Bache and Flinders 2004, Stoker 1998).

The different levels have different characteristics: "The central administrative system is characterised in terms of formal institutions: written rules, established procedures and formally derived and explicitly stated aims with an underlying logic that is modernist and technocratic and is expressed through bureaucratic control" (High and Nemes 2007, 105). The local system is more likely connected on bottom-up processes. Its elements comprise local economic, political and social actors and social networks. The institutions of co-ordination are often tacit and based in personal and cultural values as much as externally visible mechanisms. Local systems are therefore socially embedded and highly specific to context, oriented towards keeping the processes and benefits of development under local control⁵ (High and Nemes 2007, 105).

Thereby there are also differences in different countries. For example in Germany formal institutions play also a major role at local level, because there is a strong history of a local self-administration of municipalities.

The different levels and their influence are summarized in Table 1.

Each level has influence on the composition and work of the LAGs. For example at the European level there is a regulation that not more than 50% of LAG members are allowed from public

⁴ Thuesen (2013) use the term: Multi-Level Meta-Governance for another research focus.

⁵ But Osti (2000) with a view on LEADER in Italy remind to check different hypothetical scenarios including such as: LEADER "camouflaged forms of the corporatist agreements that have always dominated in rural areas, with certain powerful and well-organized interest groups continuing to establish stable accords with the local organs of public administration in order to monopolize the flow of resources from the centre to the periphery" (Osti 2000, 174).

sector. At the national level there were consultations to safeguard procedures for decision-making to avoid conflicts of interests. Some federal states make settings, like a minimum of 10 members in each decision making body, which was not regulated at European level). At the LAG-level there are typically different modes of self-recruitment, often with a special role for public authorities. Thereby at LAG-level in Germany there are two levels of public administrations: county and municipality/ parish (also explained in Lacquement 2013).

Table 1 : Different levels and their main elements from a multi-level-perspective

Level:	Examples of Rules and regulations	Examples of involved actors
European Union	Common Strategic Framework (CSF) European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) Common Guideline for Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) Related implementation acts	European Commission European Parliament European Council DG-Agri, DG-Regio and other DGs Expert networks
National Level	National Framework guideline	Conference of Ministries of agriculture, working groups for Ministerial departments self-organisation of LAG (BAG LAG), Networking institutions (DVS)
Federal state	Rural Development Program Selection of LAG applications Guideline for project approval	Advisory boards, Ministerial departments
LAG-Level	Local Development Strategy Project selection criteria	LAG with stakeholders of state, economy and civil society, Approval agencies

2.2.4 LEADER glossary

In the context of LEADER it is helpful to use a common terminology for the different elements constituting LEADER in praxis.

Rural development program – (RDP): program funded by EARDF (European Agricultural and Rural Development Fund), the related “program level” is the level at which the RDP is implemented and where the managing authority is situated (this can be the member state or in case of Germany a single federal state)

LEADER-program – Operational program for LEADER at member state /program implementation level (where managing authority is situated) for the funding periods before 2007 (when LEADER was a Community initiative), for simplification we use “LEADER-program” also for the Axis 4 of RDPs (2007-2013).

For RDPs as well as for LEADER-programs the funding period should always be indicated clearly.

LEADER region – territory defined by the LAG, for which it developed and implements its Local development strategy.

LAG /LEADER group – the so called “local action group” steering/guiding/implementing LEADER in its LEADER region.

Local development strategy (LDS) – the concept/strategy elaborated by the local LEADER group as a basis for its LEADER application and the implementation during the respective funding period.

LAG management – the staff employed by the LAG for the running of the LAG and other animation, sensibilisation and advisory service.

LEADER project – a single operation (e. g. an investment, a training course, a tourism marketing concept) approved by the LAG and the approval agency and funded from the LEADER budget of the LAG.

LEADER process – the whole process related to LEADER in a LEADER-region including the governance process (designing the LDS, working together in the LAG, deciding about project approval, work of LAG management, implemented projects, ...).

2.2.5 Overview about LEADER literature

As there is a long history of LEADER-implementation there is also broad experience with research about LEADER. Table 2 gives an overview of international literature about LEADER research (only literature in English language is included). While research about earlier LEADER-periods is limited to western and southern Europe corresponding to the EU enlargements for the last funding period there are also a lot of research results from transitions countries in eastern Europe. There are also some international LEADER-cross-comparisons⁶.

Findings from literature review

Altogether LEADER effects are very different between regions and countries as well as between funding periods, so **generalisations are not possible**. “As reflected in the large and growing literature, LEADER effects are so different between regions and countries that any transnational or trans-regional generalization is likely to be unreliable” (Papadopoulou et al. 2011, 672). So it is still difficult to judge the real impact on socio-economic development⁷ (Saraceno 1999, ECA 2010). Regarding the research methods to detect “soft aspects” like governance (Panebianco et al. 2005, Romeo and Marcianò, 2014) or social capital (Farrell and Thirion 2005, Nardone et al. 2010), there have been significant improvements in the last years, whereby the effort for

⁶ Not included in the table (because it is in German) is Mose et al. (2014) with case studies in Poland, Spain and Scotland.

⁷ An evaluation report with ten case studies from ten European countries summarises "The implementation of the LEADER method promoted multi-sectoral and integrated development and contributed to strengthening the local economy and the social capital in rural areas" (Metis et al. 2010, 15).

measurement is quite high. Mostly the research is only able to examine a small part of the overall multi-level processes, which means limitations for an impact analysis.

The following findings are a small excerpt, whereby the focus is to briefly present some background information for **questions how to improve the LEADER policy design** (also as a hint for a CLLD-approach). First we provide a very short view on areas with positive assessments and then the negative aspects are translated into challenges for a further framework elaboration and shaping of governance processes.

Overall in the literature there are **positive assessments** regarding fields like a better cooperation, participation, networking, innovation (but see the remarks in next chapter), linkage between different types of knowledge, mobilisation of actors and suitable projects fitting to the local areas (Esparcia Perez 2000, Bosworth et al. 2013, Pollermann et al. 2013, Böcher 2008, High and Nemes 2007, Dargan and Shucksmith 2008, Metis et al. 2010). Also for some special focused examinations there are positive results like the creation of social capital (Nardone et al. 2010).

Besides the positive estimations, also **negative aspects** become evident, some of them are named quite often in different research contexts and countries. To use the multi-level-perspective we can distinguish between major findings for “bottom-up” as well as “top-down”-aspects in the next two subchapters.

Challenges from bottom-up aspects

Regarding the bottom-up mobilisation a look on **horizontal aspects** like power-relations within and surrounding the LAG is needed. This is related to legitimacy and the abilities of the LAGs. Especially often reported are problems like **dominance from the public sector**. A key aspect is the composition of LAG boards. Because of the current 50% regulation, in theory there is no dominance in numbers possible.

For example in Denmark, examinations show that although there is no domination of representatives of public authorities on the boards, the LAG composition is characterised by a **biased representation** in relation to gender, age, education, main occupation and native country (Shortall 2004, Shortall 2008). The inclusion of only individuals with very similar socioeconomic characteristics can even provide effective steering, but does not support the creation of new solution strategies, for which heterogeneity would be advantageous. The linkages between the elite and the public are relatively weak and involve only small parts of the public. This reduces the potential for local capacity-building and weakens the opportunity to increase the feeling of community in the LAG area (Thuesen 2010).

Table 2 : Overview about LEADER-literature

Country	Reference	LEADER period	Focus / empirical basis
Austria	Oedl-Wieser et al. 2010	L07-13	Influence of Mainstreaming/ Interviews, case studies
Bulgaria	Nedelcheva 2013	L07-13	Check for opportunities/ One region
Denmark	Thuesen 2010	L07-13	Participation in LAG/ Survey: 450 LAG-members
Denmark	Teilmann & Thuesen 2014	L07-13	LAG-municipality-interactions/ qualitative case study in one LAG, quantitative analysis on program level
Estonia	Liping 2016	L14-20	Programme implementation with focus on multi-level governance /
France	Buller 2000	L-II	Creating territory, shift from LEADER I to LEADER II
Germany	Böcher 2008	L+	Regional Governance/ Six LEADER+ regions
Germany	Pollermann et al. 2013, Schnaut et al. 2012	L07-13	Innovation, regional fit, cooperation/ Surveys 1500 LAG-member & 100 LAG-management, 9 case studies
Germany	Lacquement 2013	L07-13	Participation in LAG in Eastern Germany/ one case study
Greece	Papadopoulou et al. 2011	L+	Comparision of projects, networks / case study in one area
Ireland	Storey 1999	L-I, L-II	Participation and empowerment/ overview 34 LAGs
Italy	Osti 2000	L-II	Partnership, interactions in LAGs/ general view on Italy
Italy	Nardone et al. 2010	L+	Social capital/ case studies in 4 LAGs, 28 interviews
Hungary	Katona-Kovács et al. 2011	L+	Animation actions, governance/ 4 LAGs, 15 interviews
Hungary	Fekete 2014	L07-13	Cross-community cooperation/ LEADER and other cooperation in a long-term analysis
Netherlands	Oostindie & van Broekhuizen 2010	L07-13	Rural Policy/ Case study in one area
Poland	Fałkowski 2013	L+	Governance, municipalities, accountability / Comparision from municipalities that applied or not applied
Poland	Furmankiewicz & Macken-Walsh 2016	L07-13	Functional interest representation, role of statutory sector/ all LAGs in Poland
Romania	Marquardt et al. 2012	L07-13	Networks / quantitative with social network analysis
Romania	Rahoveanu & Rahoveanu 2013	L07-13	Socio-economic development/ data of implementation
Slovenia	Volk & Bojnec 2012	L07-13	New implementation/ Survey: 100 LAG-member
Slovakia	Brković & Hamada 2013	L07-13	Evaluation of LEADER/ case study
Spain	Barke & Newton 1997	L-I, L-II	Administration, framework/ 2 case studies

Spain	Esparcia Perez 2000	L-I, L-II	General set up of regions/ history of implementation
Spain	Cazorla-Montero et al. 2005	L+	Rural development model/ case study
United Kingdom (Uk)	Shucksmith 2000	L-II, L-II	Social capital, capacity building/ history of implementation
Uk: Scotland	Shortall & Shucksmith 1998	L-I	Integrated rural development/ overall implementation
Uk: England	Convery et al. 2010	L07-13	Mainstreaming/ interpretative phenomenological analysis
Uk: England	Bosworth et al. 2013	L07-13	Neo-endogenous rural development/ survey 550 LAG-members/ stakeholders, 80 interviews
Uk: N. Ireland	Scott 2004	L-II	Institutional capacity, governance/ view on 15 LAGs
International Comparisons			
Italy and Finland	Rizzo 2013	L+	Policy processes, agency-structure-debate/ 2 case studies
Austria and Ireland	Dax et al. 2013	L07-13	Innovation/ 8 case studies, 43 interviews, focus groups
France and United Kingdom	Ray 1998	L-I	Territory, Structures and Interpretation/ 2 case studies
Denmark, Finland and Sweden	Thuesen 2011	L+	LAG partnerships, 3 case studies
Hungary and Germany	Ruszkai & Kovács 2013	L-I&II,L+	Institutions and results in LEADER-implementation/ reports from different countries, 4 pilot areas

Another study in Denmark shows also that the **municipalities are valuable partners** in fulfilling the LAG objectives; however, it is difficult to define the inflection point at which municipalities become too dominant and come into conflict with the rationale behind the LEADER approach to self-governance in LAG partnerships (Teilmann and Thuesen 2014).

Similar observations exist for France: “the composition of the lags reflects the key role played by the **local political elite**, with the virtually ubiquitous presence of mayors, councillors from the département and region, the presidents of semi-public agencies and the consular chambers. This should not necessarily surprise us. [...] Indeed, outside a relatively restrained set of local political and economic leaders, few people amongst the local population within the territories concerned are aware of the LEADER initiative or its application to their local area” (Buller 2000, 195).

Problems in implementing a real bottom up approach were also reported from the Netherlands: there LEADER was seen to be strongly dominated by representatives of **professional rural stakeholder organizations** such as municipalities, nature organizations, water boards, farmers’ organizations, tourism organizations, etc. and –therefore- relatively weakly embedded in the rural area. This LAG-composition expresses little serious political willingness to strengthen participatory rural policy delivery systems (Oostindie & van Broekhuizen 2010).

In transition countries and also in some regions in southern European countries, a **weak history of collective action** is reported, and the collaborative approach encouraged by LEADER not engage well. For Example in Calabria, Italy: “most actors still work atomistically rather than collectively because of their lack of trust in collective action” (Dargan & Shucksmith 2008, 287). For Hungary Katona-Kovács et al. (2011, 238) highlight the importance to take social animation more seriously, and that social networks, local participation, the culture of co-operation and making decisions should be improved through a clear, strategic approach.

Another possible problem in decision-making are **conflicts of interests** (ECA 2010). So it is possible that **local political power coalitions** weaken possibilities for participation (Ruszkai & Kovács 2013). This can be termed a “closed shop” (Pollermann 2013). In most LEADER-regions in Germany there is a good tradition of participation, but in the current funding period in most federal states there is an additional influence of public actors, because of **cofinancing rules** (Böcher 2008, Pollermann et al. 2013).

So a close look has to be taken at “**who decides how**” about the money for project funding. There are also changes between the different funding periods: an observation in Spain was that LEADER was promoting a new ‘project class’ of technicians who were first able to formulate new innovative projects for developing marginal areas, this challenged pre-existing clientalistic power relations and the local political class. During LEADER II the LAG-staff had considerable freedom to pursue this new approach, importing a new vision of a territorial approach to rural development, but as the regional government realised the importance of LEADER, it re-exerted control with the transition to LEADER+. This reassertion of control over LEADER LAGs will be something to monitor carefully (Dargan & Shucksmith 2008, 287).

Challenges from top-down aspects

Problems from the top-down side are based on **vertical relations** like too narrow funding conditions or political influences from higher levels.

Especially often are observations about **obstacles for innovation**⁸ within the LEADER framework and conditions denote a mismatch between desirable local opportunities on the one hand, and pre-defined measures and dealing with bureaucracy throughout the process on the other hand (Bosworth et al. 2013). In general, reduced options for innovation are seen (Dax et al. 2013, Volk & Bojnec 2012, 11, Schnaut et al. 2012). In contrast to this for earlier funding-periods there are quite positive estimations for innovation (Dargan & Shucksmith 2008, Pollermann et al. 2013; relatively positive for the 2007-2013-funding period: Bosworth et al. 2013).

The **restricted funding conditions** can also lead to the loss of interest by civic actors to participate in the decision about projects.

⁸ Here innovation is defined as “new approaches” in general, but not solely in a sense of a technical innovation, but more as social innovations (Neumeier, 2011). A “new approach” can also be imported from another region.

Although some of these problems are similar in the different countries, in eastern European **transition countries typical top-down problems seem to have a stronger** impact, so for example Fekete (2014) indicates that the LEADER principles in Hungary have been disobeyed in many respects: “excessive central governance, political party influence, excessive bureaucracy, the lack of funds financing operation, low level of innovation and scarce local social capital hinder operation predicated on an area-based approach, decentralisation and subsidiarity, partnership, innovation, integrated measures and networking (jointly: the LEADER principles). Communities play a less-important-than-expected role in the shaping of such spaces” (Fekete 2014). But also in Spain top-down controls over LEADER LAGs are reported (Dargan & Shucksmith 2008, 287).

Top down problems are also influences on the shape of regions or imposing thematical defaults. For example a **dominance of the agricultural sector**, also regarding the kind of selected projects, was examined for regions in Austria (Dax et al. 2013). The standard agricultural projects are distributed via email to members of the LEADER committee for (tacit) approval within a short period (1-2 weeks). In other words the decision-making bodies “rubber-stamp” such projects. Despite the administrative advantages of these procedures, there is rising concern about the legitimacy of this approach and the shift of decision-taking power from the local to the higher levels (Oedl-Wieser et al. 2010).

All in all the top down-problems are much **more a problem of the expiring founding period 2007-2013**, whereas the earlier funding periods have given more freedom to the local level. An increasement of bureaucratic settings was especially related to the mainstreaming of LEADER as a part of the EAFRD (Convery et al. 2010, Dax et al. 2013).

Conclusions from literature review

A major issue for a suitable CLLD-framework is to enable the strengths which have been visible through the LEADER experiences up to now and to tackle the challenges named in the previous two subchapters.

For a further research it should taken into account that the exemplified international differences are hard to judge because the different findings rely on different methodological approaches. For example a (negative) political top-down influence seems to be more problematic in Hungary or Austria, but less in Germany or England. But because of different research approaches maybe the research methods or just the focus of examinations have been more effective in some observations to detect such influences?

For our research approach within TRUSTEE it will be beneficial to use the identical research approach in context of different RDP-designs and boundary conditions (in France, Italy and Germany). The research is conducted in close cooperation with French partners (Agrocampus-Ouest and Economic and sociology Center applied to Agriculture and Rural Areas) and the Thünen Institute of Rural Studies.

For the aim of TRUSTEE to provide information on both (top down and bottom up challenges) a case study approach seems to be the most suitable to get also deeper insight into interactions in the local policy arena within and surrounding the LAG.

Regarding considerations to spread the LEADER principles to other funds there are still challenges like methods to coordinate between different funds. There is also a need for more evidence-based impact analysis regarding especially the economic development. Anyhow the experiences with LEADER in the last 25 years can give valuable insights. Altogether, the literature review already supports the need to have a multi-level-view on CLLD. In accordance, concerns about different aspects within a system of multi-level governance are considerable: on the one hand, how “bottom-up-problems” can be reduced via top-down settings, for example to safeguard participation opportunities against local power coalitions, which created a closed shop. On the other hand, how “top-down-problems”, for example restricted funding opportunities hindering innovation can be resolved.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. General approach and research areas

In order to understand how the leading program is implemented locally with a framework for the analysis of multilevel governance, we have chosen the case study as the main methodological approach (10 case studies in 9 Regions).

Research has been conducted in two main steps and four research areas (RA).

Step 1 : Analysis of framework conditions at national and regional level

Hypothesis 1: The basic conditions (set by the different institutional levels mentioned in fig. 1) influence the LEADER implementation and development. From the state-level on, different framework-settings (goals, ideas, implementation...) between France, Germany and Italy are possible.

First Research questions (RA 1):

What are the territorial administrative structures which can influence or set frameworks for the LAG? What is the level of autonomy of Regions and municipalities (to understand their room for manoeuvre in the LAG)?

For RDP and LEADER implementation overviews:

- Which are the differences in the written documents?
- Which are the differences between the written/documented and the real implementation?
- What are the changes between the funding periods?

Based on the mobilized grey literature and interviews:

- Rural Development program at national level in France, at regional level in Italy and Germany
- Evaluation reports : LEADER II, LEADER +, LEADER Axis 4 (midterm or final one) at national or regional level
- Interviews of stakeholders

Step 2 : Comprehensive analysis of design of governance LAG and effects-outputs

This second step is focused on LAG case-studies with three research areas :

❖ Research Area 2 (RA 2): Design of LAG governance

Hypothesis 2 : LAGs differ in their kind of adaption to the frameworks demands, depending on their specific conditions LAGs choose probably different ways to adapt to changing policy framework.

So the focus of research area 1 is to characterize the studied LAGs and their specific conditions as well as LAGs development from former LEADER-phases (LEADER I, II or +) up to now. The focus will be on changes as well as on continuous developments.

Research questions:

- How are the LAGs set up? How did they start (building process)? What are the management structures? How does decision making take place (e.g. steering mechanism, internal proceeding regulations, cooperation/communication climate)? Available resources?
- What changes and different implementations can be observed in the LAG? (e.g. Thematic focus, LAG composition, procedures, funding of projects, type of beneficiaries, ...)
- How do the changes and different implementations in the LAG correspond with the frameworks?

❖ Research Area 3 (RA 3): Reasons for adaptations within the LAG-“organization”

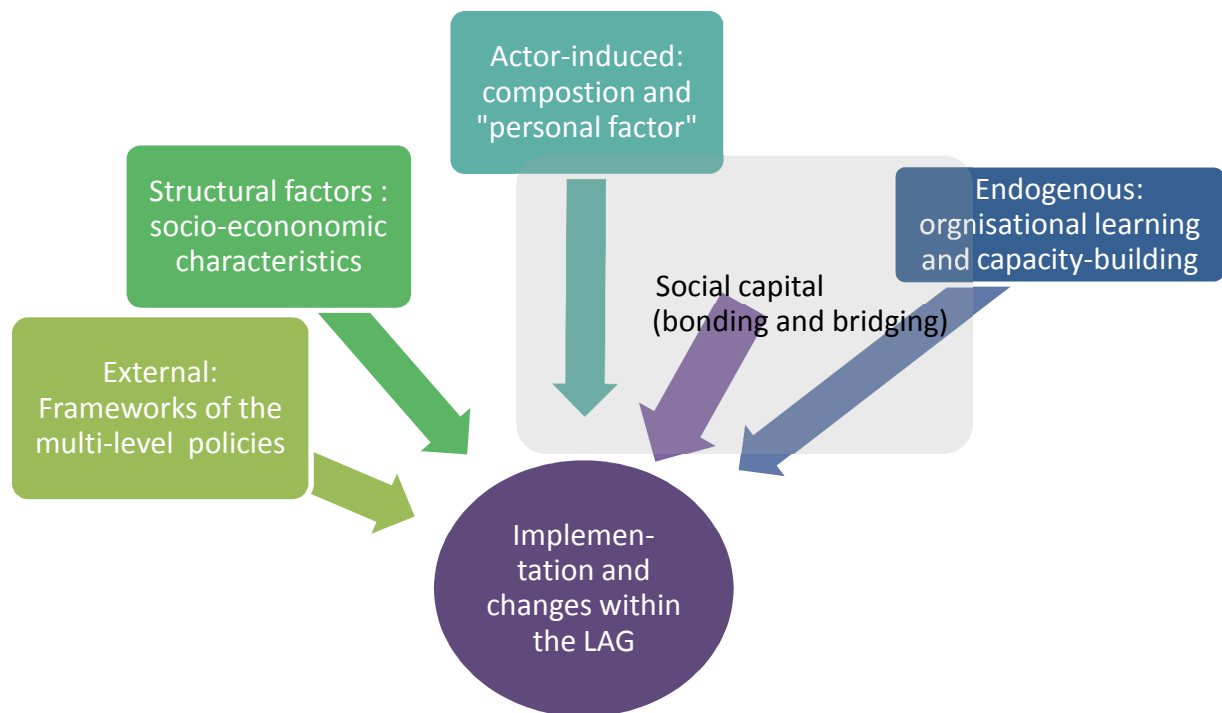
Hypothesis 3: The kind of adaption depends on the LAG’s governance (structures, processes and routines, and capacity for organizational learning), LAG’s vision and LAG’s actors

Research questions:

- How are these changes (in LAG-organization and rural development) governed / brought about?
- Which changes are due to framework changes?
- Do other experiences / stimuli bring about changes in LAG’s organization / processes / routines? (fig 2)
- How do the LAGs handle adaption/changes in the networks? What are relevant factors?

Concerning networking or network like cooperation at local level I found a quite interesting article focussing on networking as strategy to overcome crisis for municipalities. One important aspect is, that dissent and conflict are important for learning and change: Only in a conflict situation participants articulate their hidden expectations and objectives which then lead to a discussion about meaning and relevance. The creative potential of crisis can only be mobilised if tensions are not covered by too much need for harmony. Thus inter-organisational learning needs first of all the competences to deal with conflict and insecurity (Straßheim, 2013, p. 129).

Figure 4: Aspects of influence for the adaptations



❖ Research Area 4 (RA 4): LAG’s governance effects

Hypothesis 4: LEADER has an impact on governance aspects beyond the LEADER-“organization”

Research questions:

- Economic perspective: How does the information spread from the LAG to other arenas for example to economic actors like enterprises, business associations and further and what do they make out of it?
- Political perspective: How does the competence of LAG actors (caused by the experiences, learning and capacity building within the last and current funding period) influence the implementing and managing local policies? How does the LAG modify the rules of game (standards, rules, routines) between institutions at the local level (change of policy framework linked to the Europeanization)?

We propose to focus our analysis on two main impacts:

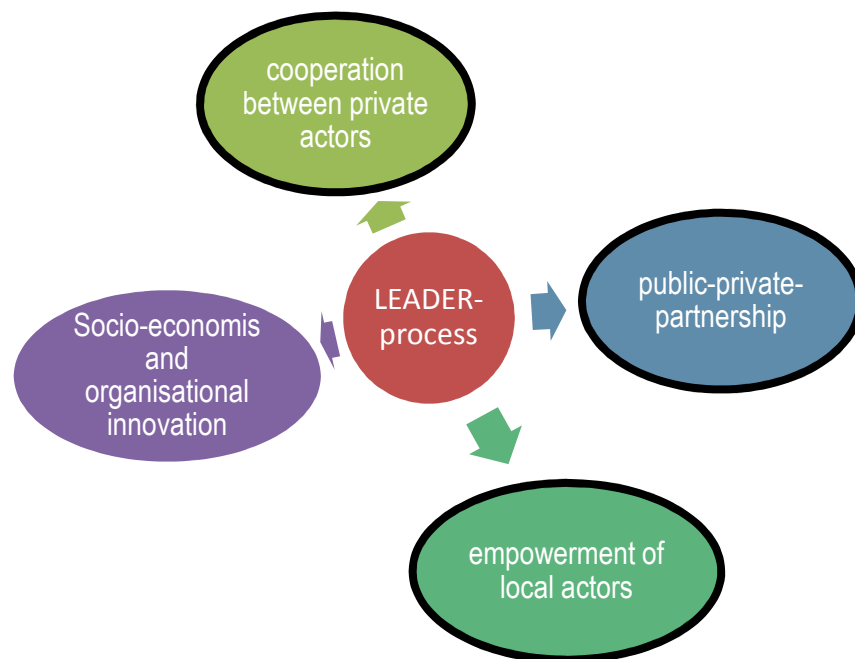
- LEADER impacts on cooperation between actors :

LEADER aims to promote interaction between actors and the opening up of relations between actors. This parameter defines cooperation as “a state of mind and a pattern of behaviour in which individuals conduct their relations and trade in a non-confrontational manner or non-competitive, seeking the appropriate methods to analyse together and shared with situations

and work in the same spirit to achieve common or acceptable purposes by all (Rey-Valette et al., 2014).

Cooperation engages individual actors or institutions (company, association, ...) into concrete action for mutual benefit. The public-private partnership is a specific type of cooperation where a public service is funded and managed by a private operator. Cooperation analysis will involve: characterise the nature, form and intensity of this cooperation and what are outputs for actors involved in this cooperation., to identify how cooperative behaviors are favored by the LEADER program.

Figure 5 : impacts of LEADER on governance aspects and stakeholders beyond the LEADER-“organization” in LEADER area



There are two possible levels of factors influencing local cooperative behavior:

- Individual factors: economic interest, social, symbolic
- Institutional factors: institutions injunctions of influence (in the sense of “moral values” shared but also formal instances), presence of public policy networks (policy network), professional networks and non-governmental organizations.
- LEADER impact on local empowerment

Empowerment is seen as a process of multidimensional transformation, bottom up. It is defined by three types of power (Calvès, 2009):

- a creative power which makes it able to accomplish things (power to),
- collective and political power, in particular mobilized in organizations and networks (with power)
- an internal power related self confidence (power from, within)

Our analysis will focus on the impact of LEADER on the stage of the local public action, through the capacity development process of individual and collective actors (learning) and transformation of power relations between individuals and social groups (coalition, consultation and cooperation).

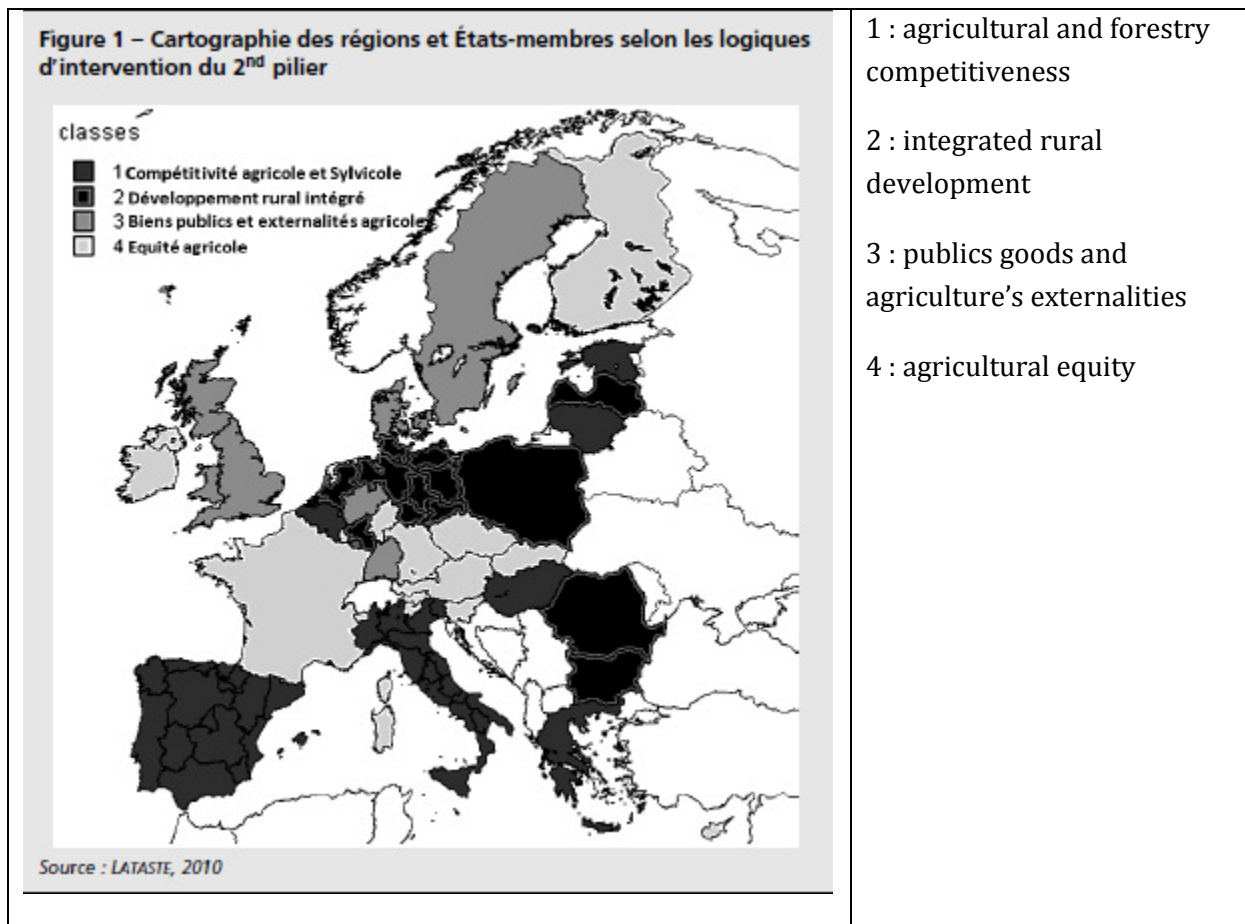
3.2 Case study methodology

3.2.1. Regions and cases study selection process

To select the case studies, we propose 4 criteria:

1. This research aims at understanding the governance of policy at a local level in **various national/regional contexts** (France as a centralized country, Italy as a decentralized country, Germany as federal country).
2. The **RDP design and spatial contexts** condition the rural development 2nd pillar intervention logics (in France, agricultural equity, in Italy agricultural and forestry competitiveness, in Germany, according to the Regions, integrated rural development or public goods and agriculture's externalities) (Lataste and al., 2012).

Figure 6 : RDR logical 2007-2013



It is important to highlight that national logics could be different from the regional one in France and Italy, because the French regional declination or the Italian regional plan of the national

rural development plan could not fit with the national logic.

3. **Territorial coherence** influences the LAG governance mechanism when drawing the project and its implementation.

One of questions is to know if development structure's perimeters affect the governance mechanism of LAG? How are they influenced by LAG dynamism? So we will choose LAGs which, i) correspond to administrative entities like districts or inter-municipality associations, ii) are based on other delimitations like nature parks, "Pays" in France or socio-cultural homogenous regions, smaller than districts.

4. **LEADER experience** : To understand what happens on LAG territories in terms of **experiences**, learning and capacity building, it's important to compare LEADER+ and LEADER. But for some aspects or exceptionally for one LAG, it could be interesting to do also the comparison between LEADER and LEADER2014+. So LEADER + experience is the 4th criteria.

In **conclusion**, the choice of case studies could be done as presented below.

Figure 7 : Criteria to choose the LAG case study

National organization	Various state/regional contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized state • Federal state or decentralized state → Regional steering of territorial policies (European/national/regional)						
National/regional level	RDP design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agricultural and forestry competitiveness • integrated rural development • public goods and agriculture's externalities • agricultural equity 						
Different types of regions	Spatial contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peripheral rural areas, • urbanized rural areas 						
Territorial coherence	Coherence with administrative borders	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>In France:</td> <td>In Germany:</td> <td>In Italy:</td> </tr> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = Σ inter-municipality associations (Σ "intercommunalités") • LAG = "Pays" • LAG = "PNR" </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = part of a district • LAG = one district • LAG = part of 2 (or more) districts </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = "Provincia" • LAG = part of 2 "Province" </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	In France:	In Germany:	In Italy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = Σ inter-municipality associations (Σ "intercommunalités") • LAG = "Pays" • LAG = "PNR" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = part of a district • LAG = one district • LAG = part of 2 (or more) districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = "Provincia" • LAG = part of 2 "Province"
In France:	In Germany:	In Italy:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = Σ inter-municipality associations (Σ "intercommunalités") • LAG = "Pays" • LAG = "PNR" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = part of a district • LAG = one district • LAG = part of 2 (or more) districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG = "Provincia" • LAG = part of 2 "Province" 						
Anteriority	Involvement in LEADER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEADER-Regions which had LEADER+ Experience 						

From other criteria we think it would be advantageous, if there are different characteristics :

Territorial Changes in LAG-area (from LEADER+ to LEADER): a) LAGs which remained unchanged and b) LAGs with significant changes in the borders of their territory,

Signs of a possible public dominance: a) chairman of LAG have a high position in public/political administration or in addition the LAG has an additional structure (beside the “official” steering group) which prepares the decisions, b) the LAG have a much higher share than 50% for non-public actors, and the chairman belongs to civil society/private sector (in Germany there are often LAGs, who have a 50-50 share, but also other who have two thirds of non-public actors in LAG-board)

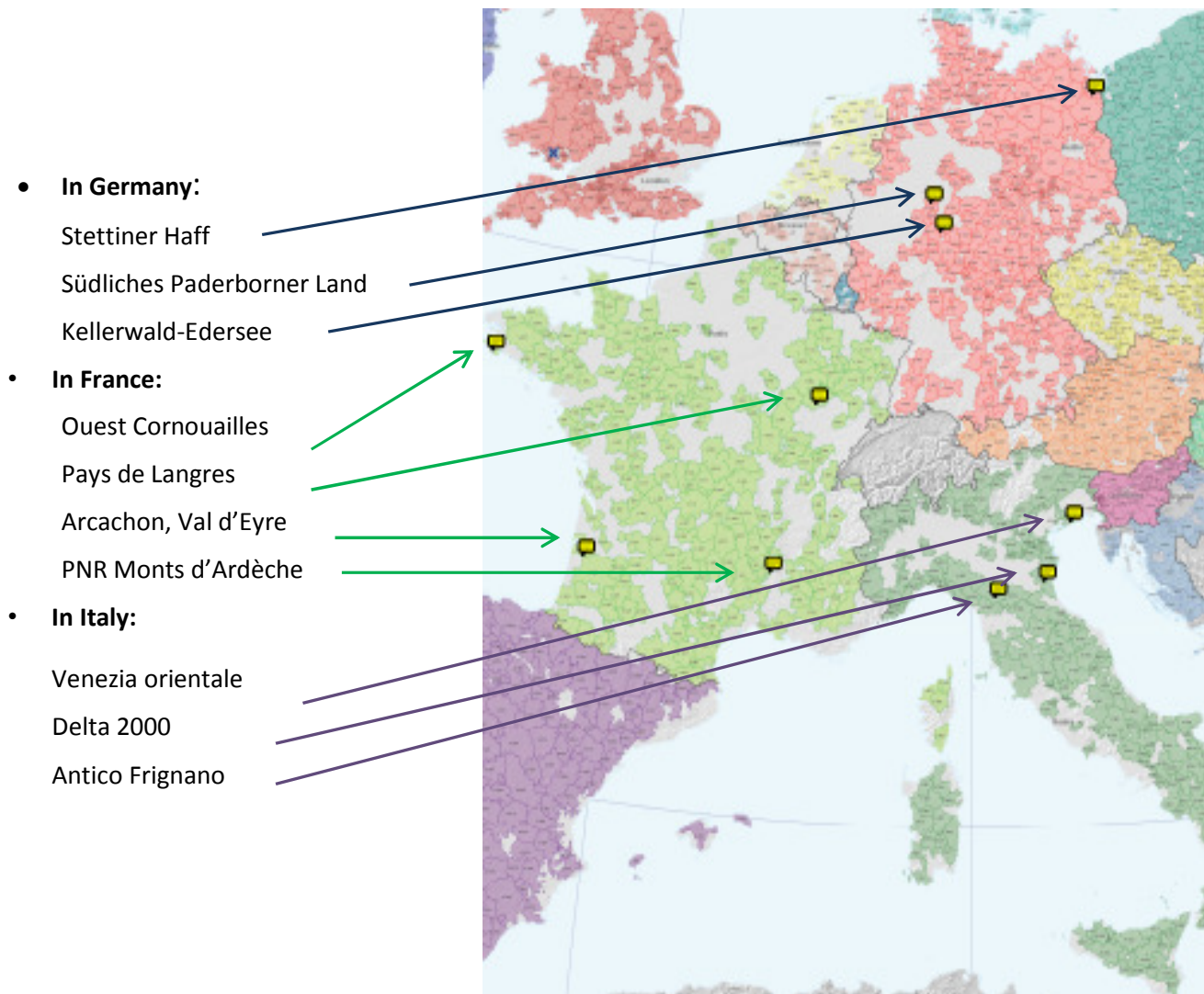
Participation structure: a) in addition to LAG-board there are a lot of working groups b) no working groups

Figure 8 : Presentation of the case studies

National context		RDP design	Spatial context	Territorial coherence	Anteriority No. of LAG programs/other remarks
France : National program (RDP) with partial regional adaptation of strategy and implementation	1. LAG Ouest Cornouaille	National : Equity Regional: Agricultural competitiveness	Coast area with tourist attractiveness	∑ inter-municipality associations	3
	2. LAG Arcachon Val de l'Eyre	National : Equity Regional	Coast area with high residential growth (proximity with Bordeaux)	Pays	2 different
	3. LAG PNR Monts d'Ardèche	National : Equity Regional : integrated rural development	Remote area	PNR	
	4. LAG Pays de Langres	National : Equity Regional : integrated rural development	Remote area	Pays	
Italy : Decentralized state European rural development program at	5. LAG Delta 2000	Regional (Emilia Romagna): Agricultural competitiveness		Part of 2 province	3
	6. LAG Antico Frignano				
	7. LAG Venezia	Regional (Veneto):		Provincia	3

regional level	orientale	Agricultural competitiveness			
Germany Federal state	8. LAG: Südliches Paderborner Land	Federal state (North-Rhine Westphalia): public goods and agriculture's externalities	Urbanized	Part of one Landkreis	Since Participation: L+ 5 additional working/project groups
	9. LAG: Stettiner-Haff	Federal state (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern): integrated rural development	Remote area, Deep rural, tourism at coast-attractive	One Landkreis,	Since LEADER-II Participation: no additional working groups, stronger role of state, high share of women in LAG
	10. LAG: Kellerwald-Eder	Federal state (=Hesse): Equity	Remote area, rural, tourism at lake	Part of two Landkreise, National park	Since LEADER-I Participation: very high share of actors from economy in LAG

Figure 9 : Map of case studies location



3.2.2. Regional and local case study implementation

Case study implementation was based on local bibliography and interviews of different types of local actors. Following table presents informations use for each resaerch areas

Table 3 : Case study working plan

What?	How?
Step 1	
Research Area 1: Framework analysis: Clarify the national/regional/supra-local context in general:	Bibliography :

<p>The organization of the state regarding its local territory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the administrative levels between municipality and national government? (Including average size – km² and inhabitants?) • Are there Sublevels to municipalities? • Level of autonomy of sub-national levels regarding administration/development of the territory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High level of autonomy could be – own budget based on own resources (taxes etc.) and own decision making power (including legislative power) - Low level could be – dependence on funds allocated by national level and spending following national guidelines or local administration mainly executes national decisions without own decision making power - My proposal is, that we first try to describe the situation in our countries (and Italy) and then define categories based on a common understanding • Other important structures linked to administration of the territory / rural development, when relevant for LEADER-processes (for example associations of municipalities only or municipalities and other stakeholders from private sector and civil society, nature parks and other ecosystem preserves) 	<p>About regional development in each country</p> <p>Grey Literature :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rural Development program at national level in France, at regional level in Italy and Germany - Evaluation reports : LEADER II, LEADER +, LEADER Axis 4 (midterm or final one) at national or regional level
<p>The implementation of LEADER in each state/region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of LEADER: overview since 1991, only for LEADER+ detailed fact sheets:-No. of LAGs, budget (in total. Per LAG), managing authority, scope of autonomy of LAGs regarding selection of projects) • Basic information about the program with relevance for LEADER: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU/national/regional Funding available for LEADER, total, % of public spending in RDP, - Which priorities, which evolutions of LEADER? - Managing authority for RDP, other levels of management of RDP - Selection of LAGs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Requirements/criteria ○ Procedure – who, when ○ No of LAGs selected 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - main changes from LEADER+ to 2007 - 2013 - an overview of LEADER implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Who does the eligibility check for LEADER-projects? o Who does budget allocation and payment of LEADER-funds? A vision of cofounding o Which power is given to the LAG? How is organized decision making? o Main problems/main success mentioned in Midterm Evaluation at national (France) or regional level (Italia and Germany) o Network and support structure • Resume: role of LEADER in RDPs and main similarities and differences between France, Italy and Germany <p>The supra-local context specific to each case study-region will be elaborated during case study (prepared/ supported by previous document analyses (needed information should be found in the Local Development Strategy (LDS).</p>	
Step 2	
<p>Research Area 2: LAG adaptations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Definition of the LAG territory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify how is defined the LAG territory? - Which changes from LEADER II or + to now? 2. Local development strategy (Creation and Implementation) <p>Creation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the elaboration process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o participating actors, o topic involved, thematic, o decision making processes, o administrative procedure, o cofounding, o information flow between the managing authority/other relevant divisions of the respective ministry, funding offices⁹ and LAGs. 	<p>Grey Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local development strategies of each LAG : LEADER II, LEADER +, LEADER Axis 4, LEADER 2014-2020 - Evaluation reports of each LAG : LEADER II, LEADER +, LEADER Axis 4 (midterm or final one) <p>Interview with LAG manager, representatives, partners...</p>

⁹ Which approve applications for funding

<p>- Comparison to the elaboration of LEADER+</p> <p>Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the implementation regard to the projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Information (kind of information) o selection (criteria) o support to local beneficiaries and projects (kind of support) o which experiences, learning and capacity building gives LEADER - Identify the implementation regard to LEADER managing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o funding, o decision rules o procedures: understandability, length, time requirements,... o evaluation - Which changes ? <p>3. Composition of the LAG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify which actors involved in the initiation of the LAG/the LEADER region? (District, District Administrator, Associations or Cooperatives, Business representatives,...)? - Comparison between LAG composition and important actors for the region - Identify the changes in the composition compared to LEADER+? - Identify the role of the LAG in the project building - Identify how the LAG makes decision <p>4. Regional management / Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the changes/adjustments in the organizational structure/operating methods in contrast to LEADER+? 	
<p>Research Area 3: Reasons for adaptations within the LAG-“organization”</p> <p>Which stimuli are responsible for these changes? (the categories will be elaborated further in coherence with the research framework in the case study report)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG’s governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they external stimuli? Frameworks of the multi-level policies 	<p>Interview with :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG manager, • representatives, • LAG partners...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they peripheral? Other regional and local organisation - Do they belong to the policy network? • LAG’s vision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they political core beliefs? • LAG’s actors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are they actor-induced? composition and “personal factor” - Are they endogenous? organisational learning and capacity-building - Do they form the social capital (bonding and bridging)? • Other? 	
<p>Research Area 4: LAG’s governance effects</p> <p>Characterization of LEADER impacts on governance beyond the LEADER-“organization”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the social and political effects : <p>This will be operationalized in the case study report structure (some ideas are: New forms of democracy, new arenas, enhancement of local capacity building, using a combination of a participatory and representative democracy; Multi-level governance : interactions between locality, regional policy and rural-proofing of national/ regional municipal policies; Closed shop, Local funding based “economies” (means dependent on funding sources)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the impact of LEADER for the regional development: <p>This will be operationalized in the case study report structure (some aspects might be: Cooperation between private actors; Public/private partnership;...)</p>	<p>Interview with :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAG manager, • representatives, • partners, • project leaders... • Other people not involved in LEADER? <p>Bibliography : LAG Evaluation</p>

We also elaborate data base with data coming from national statistical sources. The objective is to be able to compare all of 10 case studies with common quantitative statistics indicators. The data availability scale did not always allow for the processing of the LEADER programs, sometimes requiring the use of the nuts 3 level. Following table presents data using, scale and sources.

Table 4 : Case study data base contents and sources

Data	Level	Sources
1. Size and spatial position of case studies		
- Surface	F & IT : Municipality D : Nuts 3, LAG	F : INSEE
- Degree of urbanisation	Nuts 3	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Degree_of_urbanisation_classification_-_2011_revision .
- Nearest City >200K inhab.		F : CESAER
2. Population dynamics		
- Population 90-99	F & IT : Municipality	F : INSEE / IT : ISTAT / D : not available
- Population 99-2001	D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : EUROSTAT
- Population 2010-2012		F : INSEE / IT : ISTAT / D : EUROSTAT
- Natural balance		F : INSEE/ D : not available
- Net migration balance		F : INSEE/ D : not available
3. Social structure		
- Population 0-19 years 2010-2012	F & IT : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : EUROSTAT
- Population 20-64 years 2010-2012		F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : EUROSTAT
- Population 65+ years 2010-2012		F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : EUROSTAT
4. Employment structure		
- Total employment (99-2000 / 2010-2012)	F & IT : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : Regionaldatenbank D
- Agriculture forestry ans fischerie / industry / tertiary 99-2000	F & IT : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ / D : Regionaldatenbank D IT & D (LAG Stettiner Haff due to territorial reform) : not available
- Agriculture forestry ans fischerie / industry / tertiary 2010-2012	F : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE / IT : ISTAT / D : Regionaldatenbank D
5. Labour market		
- Active population	F & IT : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : Regionaldatenbank D

- Unemployment		F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : Regionaldatenbank D
- Commuting balance	F : Municipality D : Nuts 3	F : INSEE/ IT : ISTAT / D : Regionaldatenbank D IT : not available
6. Land Use		
- Natura 2000 area (2010-2012)	F & IT : Municipality	Corine Land Cover
- Woodland (2010-2012)	D : Nuts 3	
- Grassland (2010-2012)		

4. FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS AND INSTITUTIONS IN LEADER IMPLEMENTATION

In this chapter firstly the main challenges in rural areas are explained, then the institutional frameworks in France, Germany and Italy are shown.

4.1. Main challenges facing rural regions in Italy, Germany and France

Of course, it could appear quite ambitious (and rather false) to present in general the main challenges facing rural regions in Italy, Germany and France, as each region has its own specificities. Here our objective is not to detail all these challenges and the underlying models. Nevertheless we try to present rough components of each country and to keep in mind the influence of historical and institutional data as path dependence factors for each case study.

In France, rural regions have faced agricultural challenges for a long time. French rural strategies have long been characterized by agricultural issues encouraged by powerful farm lobbies. Although these historical trends continue, they are strongly challenged by new issues (Trouvé et al., 2013). Since 1990, the development issues are indeed mostly to maintain services in rural territories and organize relations between cities and the countryside (Lécole et al., 2014). France also faces hard financial constraints locally (Chevalier and Dedeire, 2014). However it is important to specify the precise challenges in each region that we obtained as case studies.

- Brittany is an agricultural region with a powerful agro-food sector based on intensive production. There are now important sectorial challenges to faced sustainable development issues (water quality, animal welfare, extensification, ...). Residential activities are quite important because of the settlement of new populations and tourism.
- Rhône-Alpes is an area combining an extensive urban network and mountain areas with many national and regional parks, a region with population growth and strong economic dynamics in the high tech industry, tourism, agriculture and food processing, geared towards quality products.
- Champagne-Ardennes is a rural area with a low population density (half of the national average) with remote areas that are losing residents. Economic activity is productive but poorly diversified. The agriculture and forestry represent a significant share of employment.

- In Aquitaine, the region is quite diverse and shows two main socio-economic models: the first is a production-focused model with industrial agriculture and forestry, and the second is a combination of residential and natural zones in coastal areas or mountains, where agriculture is declining.

Italy is characterized by large territorial disparities. For a long time, Italy was seen as a country divided in two parts, the North, rich and industrialized, and the South, poor and rural. But Bagnasco in 1977 highlights the third Italy (Cotta, 2011, 193) in the northeast of the country, with industrial districts characterized by small, networked, craft industries. All around Europe, the third Italy became a model of “endogenous development” and “local development” (Hadjimichalis, 2006). For Veneto and Emilia Romagna their RDPs are focused on the competitiveness of agriculture. Both regions are well-developed regions, among the richest Italian regions.

- Veneto, is undergoing a process of peri-urbanization, and it is considered as a “diffused city”, challenged by serious environmental problems, in particular water quality and land pollution and by a strong demand of decentralization of the rural policy’s governance coming from territories (OECD, 2009, p. 123-124).
- Emilia Romagna is home to a diversified economic base in which agro-food, manufacturing and tourism activities are strongly developed¹⁰; but Emilia Romagna faces a process of counter-urbanization with problems of sustainability, similar to Veneto’s diffused city. It poses problems related to congestion and pollution due to intense commuting and pressure on natural resources.

In Germany challenges in rural areas differ between regions. One main issue is the demographic change. Some areas grow while most have losses of population and an aging society. In rural areas in eastern Germany (parts of the former German Democratic Republic, GDR), there are ongoing societal transformations connected to the post-socialist transition with an often weaker economic structure than in western Germany (Pollermann et al. 2014b). The challenges faced in the case-studies of the three different Länder are quite different:

- In Hesse: South-north divide (better in the south) in terms of economic performance, population density and development, small scale agriculture with a high share of part-time farms
- In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (part of former GDR): low population density, population decline, weak economic structure, especially in coastal areas high importance of tourism,
- In North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW): Most populated federal state in Germany, economic problems in former industrialised regions like the Ruhr district, small scale

10 Firms and farms are quite small but strongly integrated along supply-chains, with some important agro-food districts. It is the number one region for production of EU brands (14 protected designation of origin, and 11 Guarantee of origin for foods, such as Parmesan cheese, balsamic vinegar of Modena, Parma ham...). The tourism sector has shown a remarkable increase for the last decade.

agriculture in the south and intensive agriculture with some environmental problems in the north.

After describing the main challenges in Italian, German and French rural areas, the question is how the administrative and political structures manage to take into account these specificities? More precisely we analyze the implementation of the European Rural Development Regulation (RDR) and especially the case of the LEADER programs, often considered as “textbook case” for subsidiarity in Europe.

4.2 Institutional framework in France, Germany and Italy

To understand to what extent the administrative and rural development framework influences LEADER, we analyze the administration systems in Italy, Germany and France (3.1) and the implementation of the Rural Development Regulation (RDR) in each country (3.2).

4.2.1 Three different administration systems

The three countries show significant national level differences in terms of political and administrative organization and the decentralization of power. Some convergence can be observed in Italy, Germany and France, as they are three “old” Member states of the European Union and are concerned with similar concepts, ideas and discourse on administrative reforms. But the concrete decisions and practical implementations tend to follow country-specific peculiarities and path dependencies (Kuhlmann and Wollmann, 2014, p. 265, p. 268). So the public administration systems of France, Germany and Italy have similarities as well as differences. All three are shaped by the traditional Continental European model of “rule of law” as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon “public interest culture”. But if we consider the underlying principle of the organisational model, their internal organization is quite different. Italy and France have a Napoleonic administrative system, characterized by a strong centralized government and a powerful centralized bureaucracy, which is organized from the central to the local level.

A crucial difference between Germany and the other two countries is the prevalent principle of territorial organization with a high importance of subnational decentralized levels and the principle of subsidiarity. Besides the federal structure, Germany is characterized by a strong position of local government and the territory-related form of organization leading to multi-purpose administrative units (Kuhlmann and Wollmann, 2014, p. 17). Local self-government and local administration units below the “Länder”- level are the municipalities (Gemeinde) and the districts (Landkreis)¹¹, together referred to as communes (Kommunen). The communes have a double nature:

- as local self-government with elected councils and directly elected mayors/head of district as head of the administration

¹¹ and the so called district free cities (bigger cities) which assume at the same time the functions/role of municipalities and districts

- as part of the administration of the upper levels (state, Länder) executing tasks delegated by the upper levels.

In the 1970s there was a “wave” of territorial reforms in West Germany to create viable administrative units at the local level. This was enforced by law in some Länder like NRW and Hesse with a substantial decrease in number and an increase in the size of communes, voluntary in others. In Lower-Saxony there was at this time nearly no change, then voluntary administrative units for joint administration were introduced. After reunification, a similar process of territorial reforms took place in East Germany. As it was also to a great extent voluntary e. g. in MV the small municipalities persisted leading to the establishment of supra local intercommunal cooperations for administration.

The process of decentralization in France and Italy is more recent. Historically, the two countries have a Napoleonic administrative system: a strong centralized government and a powerful centralized bureaucracy, which is organized from the central to the local level. Nevertheless, despite this centralized system, France has for 50 years (and reinforced in the 90’s) a narrow territorial network at the local level (intra-departmental) composed, for example, by “pays” and Natural Parks.

In the last decades both countries made substantial administrative reforms, for example, to more decentralized structures or to a shift of responsibilities and tasks from the national state to subnational levels. As a result of the decentralization processes, the role of local governments has gradually been strengthened, but there are strong differences between France and Italy.

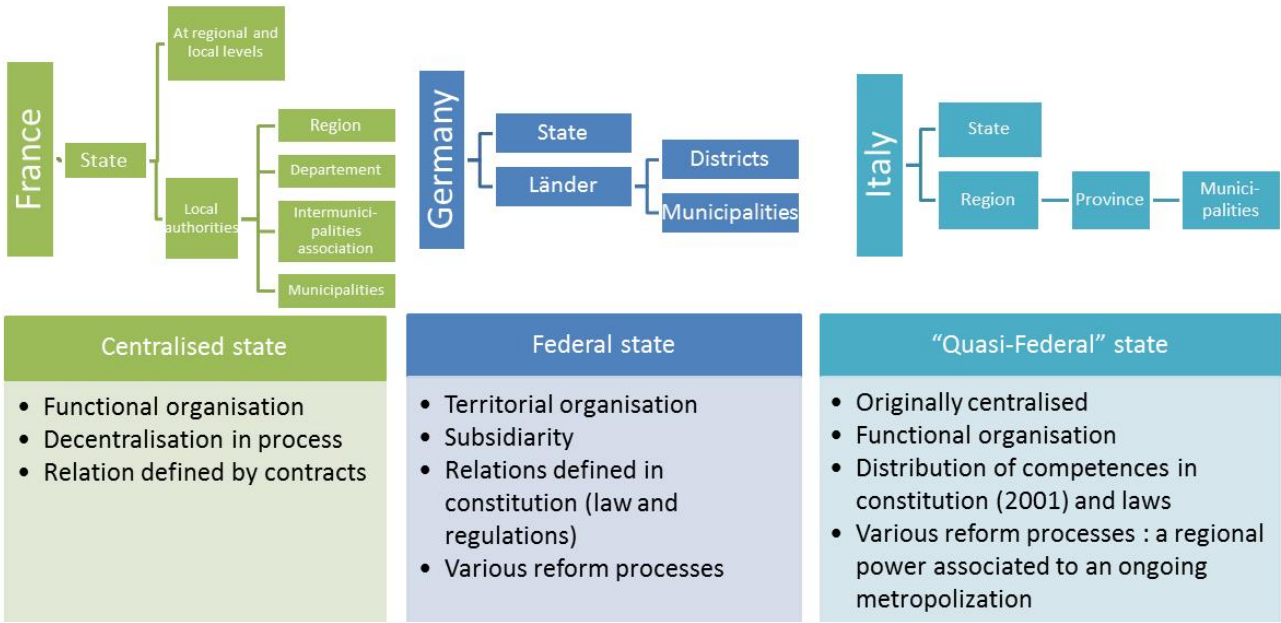
Since the adoption of the Bassanini laws in the 1990’s, Italy has developed into a quasi-federal state with 4 levels (state, region, “*provincia*” and municipality). Italian regions received a lot of jurisdictions from the state and particularly were given legislative power (Rivières, 2004). Each region has its own organization and could decide which jurisdictions “Provinces” and municipalities can take over, in addition to the existing national set of laws. The Italian state has just kept regal power, such as foreign policies and military affairs. Italy has fewer municipalities than France but they are still numerous, and their number has been increasing during the last years. Inter-municipalities exist but they are neither compulsory nor well-developed.

France has four levels of administrative organization: the national level (State) and three regional/local levels (Region, “*Département*” and Municipality) without hierarchy and authority one to another. If there is a distribution of competences between each territorial government, each one has a partial autonomy to decide its policy commitments (“*clause de compétence générale*”). This rule has been canceled for regional and departemental level by an administrative reform in 2015 (Loi NOTRe August 7th 2015). Thereby French Regions must contend with an increasing transfer of tasks and competences from the State, even if this latter doesn’t share its legislative power. The State has its own administration at the departmental and regional levels: so-called “*services déconcentrés de l’Etat*”. The process of representation of the State at a territorial level is called “*déconcentration*”, as a counterpart to “decentralization”, meaning that all state responsibilities had to be performed locally by the state field services (*services*

déconcentrés)¹² under the authority of the “*préfet*”. “*Services decentralizes*” mean local public services in the responsibility of the local authorities (*collectivités territoriales: Communes, Départements, Régions*). For example each Region has its own organization and could have a “*Direction de l’agriculture et du Développement Rural*” (Rhône-alpes) or a “*Direction de l’aménagement des Territoires*” (Aquitaine) that manage both rural and urban territories. So there are two kinds of public services that have to work together in each Department and Region, and to negotiate together for local funding and projects. Since the first French laws of decentralization (1982-83), this negotiation is formalized in specific contracts (*Contrat de Projet Etat-Region, CPER*) between the State (*Préfecture, deconcentrated unit of the state*) and each Region (decentralised unit) with precise regional responsibilities at each level to ensure consistency between regional and national interventions.

In France there is a multitude of small municipalities and the many attempts to reduce them failed. As an alternative strategy, the government tried to stimulate intercommunal cooperation. This led to a big variety of co-operations (“*syndicats*”) with overlapping and doubling of functions and a manifold subnational network of actors. In the 1990s, a new kind of intercommunal cooperation was introduced by law, trying to reduce the organizational proliferation. Three different types of intercommunal cooperative institutions (*Établissements publics de coopération intercommunale, EPCI*) were established, having the right to raise their own tax. Important tasks are spatial planning and promoting economic development.

Figure 10 : summarises the different administrative structures and territorial levels of the three states.



Source: own composition

¹² These are local state public services, for example, DDDT (Direction Départementale des Territoires) or DRAAF (Direction Régionale pour l’Alimentation, l’agriculture et la Forêt).

With regard to rural development policy implementation in general, and especially for LEADER, the following aspects are especially relevant: The relationship between the State and subnational level (*Länder*, regions) as well as the relationship between the subnational and local level are defined by constitution in Germany and Italy, whereas this is regulated by contracts in France.

The analysis of the administrative organization in these three countries highlights that in the multi-level governance setting the state has given up some of its control functions in favor of a greater co-ordination role (Bache and Flinders, 2004, Buller, 2000, Mantino et al., 2009) or “gouvernance à distance” (Epstein, 2005). This process can be illustrated by the implementation of rural development programs.

4.2.2 RDR Implementation in the nine selected regions of the three countries

First we analyze the implementation at the national level and then at the sub-national level.

a) At national level

In Germany, the *Länder* have the responsibilities for agriculture and rural development as well as for regional economic development. The “*Bund*” (national level) basically has a co-ordinating role (between the *Länder* and between *Länder* and EU). As a national instrument, there are so called « joint tasks » (“*Gemeinschaftsaufgaben*”):

- for agricultural structure and coastal protection (GAK, managed by the National Ministry of Agriculture)
- for regional economic structure (GRW, managed by the National Ministry of Economy)

The financial contribution is shared by the national and the *Länder*-level (60%, 40%). The guidelines (as basic funding rules) are up-dated regularly in joint agreements. The Role of the GAK has more and more turned into an instrument securing national co-financing for RDP-measures, which means that GAK-guidelines try to follow the measure portfolio offered by the EAFRD. To facilitate program planning and approval, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture has also elaborated a so-called National Framework Regulation, summarizing the guidelines of the GAK and basic rules of other measures, included in all the RDPs. Concerning EAFRD, only the National Rural Network has been implemented by the “*Bund*” based on an own programme. The national strategic plan required by the EU for 2007-2013 was basically elaborated by the national ministry summarizing the contents of the *Länder*-Programs. It had no strategic relevance.

Besides that, the federal ministry has been executing so-called pilot schemes, quite similar to the LEADER approach. One was called “*RegionAktiv*” (2000 until 2007), where 18 Regions selected nationwide received funding for their development strategies. Some of them were identical to LEADER-Regions. The subsequent pilot scheme was “*LandZukunft*”, focussing more on marginalised districts, started in 2011. Out of 17 districts invited to apply, four were selected and funded, three of them more or less covered the same area as the respective LEADER-regions.

At least in Germany in the funding period 2007 – 2013, LEADER was linked to a certain extent to the mainstream measures. For example in Hesse the LEADER-LAGs could only fund the measures 311 (diversification), 312 (small enterprises), 313 (rural tourism), 321 (basic

services), 323 (cultural heritage) and 331 (training) with LEADER-money whereas in North Rhine-Westphalia the LEADER-money could only be used for innovative projects and projects fundable under mainstream measures had to apply for that measure. This somehow created restrictions for the LAGs in following their local development strategy.

In France, initially there was a single National Rural Development Program (PDRN) for the mainland in the funding periods before 2007¹³. For the 2007 – 2013 period, there was still a national program (called Hexagonal Program of Rural Development PDRH) but it is composed of two parts. A national part ("*Socle national*") concerns certain measures of Axes 1 and 2 and corresponds to main national issues (young farmers, compensatory allowance for permanent natural handicaps, some agri-environmental measures and forestry measures). It represents 62% of EU funds. A regional part (38% of EU funds) is elaborated by each Region with all or part of all other measures. So the PDRH is completed by 26 regional rural development documents (DRDR) elaborated by Regions and mobilizing all measures from Axes 3 and 4, but also some of measures of Axes 1 and 2 that can be adapted to the regional context and the specific local challenges. The importance of the national part of PDRH has been negotiated at the national level between agricultural organizations, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Committee of Regions (a representation of the 26 French Regions). The most important argument in this negotiation was that funding came from CAP and was intended for the agricultural sector and not for rural development.

For RDP 2007-2013, the state is still the main managing authority for Brussels for the RDR program (including regional part of French RDR¹⁴), knowing that 62% of EU funds are allocated to measures of the "*socle national*".

The European LEADER program was seen as a tool to implement the national policies of "pays" develop in 1999 by the French government. "*Pays*" are subregional areas regrouping some intercommunality associations, based on existing interactions at the local level and to traditional or historical links among the population, propinquity areas ("*bassins de vie*") and this the aim to define a territorial development strategy. In this context, LEADER became a tool of territorial policies managed at regional level and implemented at the level of the "Pays" (80% of French LEADER program are led by Pays).

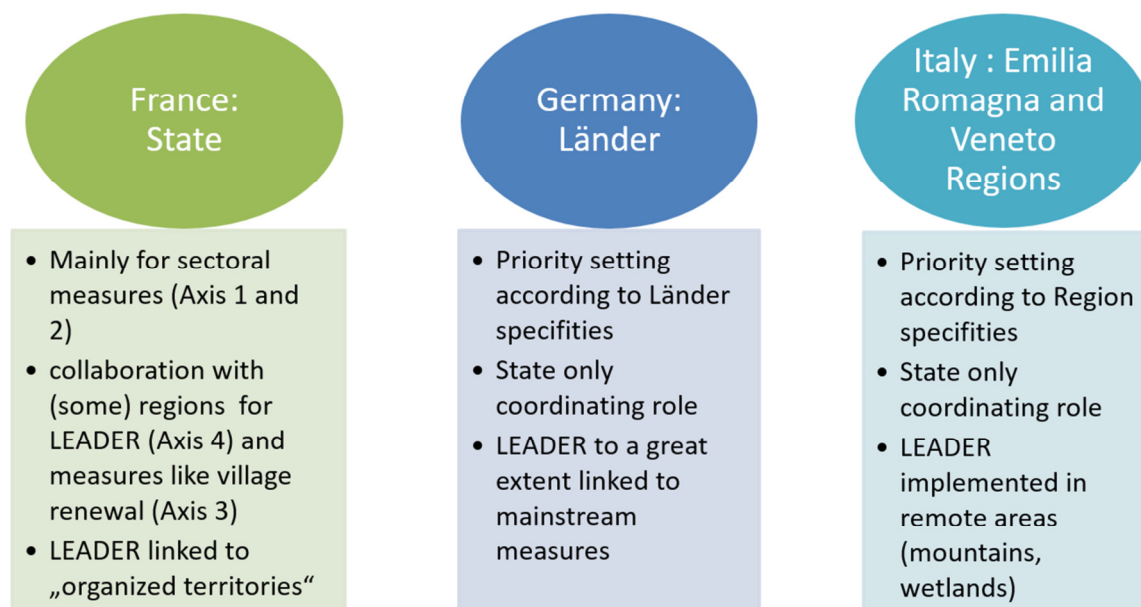
In Italy, like in Germany, the regions are responsible for the planning and implementation of RDPs and the State, and its agricultural ministry, has no constitutional legitimacy to take action in Regional policy orientations (Cobacho et al., 2011). This led to basic differences in programs, for example, concerning the criteria for the definition of rural areas, thus generating disparities between regions and potential beneficiaries in earlier funding periods. As for the funding period 2007-2013 member states had to elaborate a national strategic plan, the Agriculture Ministry worked with the Regional State Consultation, called "*Conferenza Stato Regioni*" to elaborate this plan and to harmonize the implementation of the rural development planning, notably the definition of rural areas. The design of RDP is quite diverse according to the Regions, some with

¹³ For Overseas-territories there were separate programs.

¹⁴ Except one region – Alsace - that experienced the decentralization of RDR management in the period 2007-2013

European funding under competitiveness and employment objective (Northern Italy), others with European funding under convergence objective (Southern Italy). Here we focus on two regions, Emilia Romagna and Veneto, in North-East Italy.

Figure 11 : summarises the differences regarding RDP organisation in the three states



Source: own composition

b) Rural development policy at the sub national level (Länder/ Regions)

The differences in the structure of RDPs can be shown looking at the **financial distribution** between priorities. Figure 3 gives an example for some of the RDPs concerned in this study.

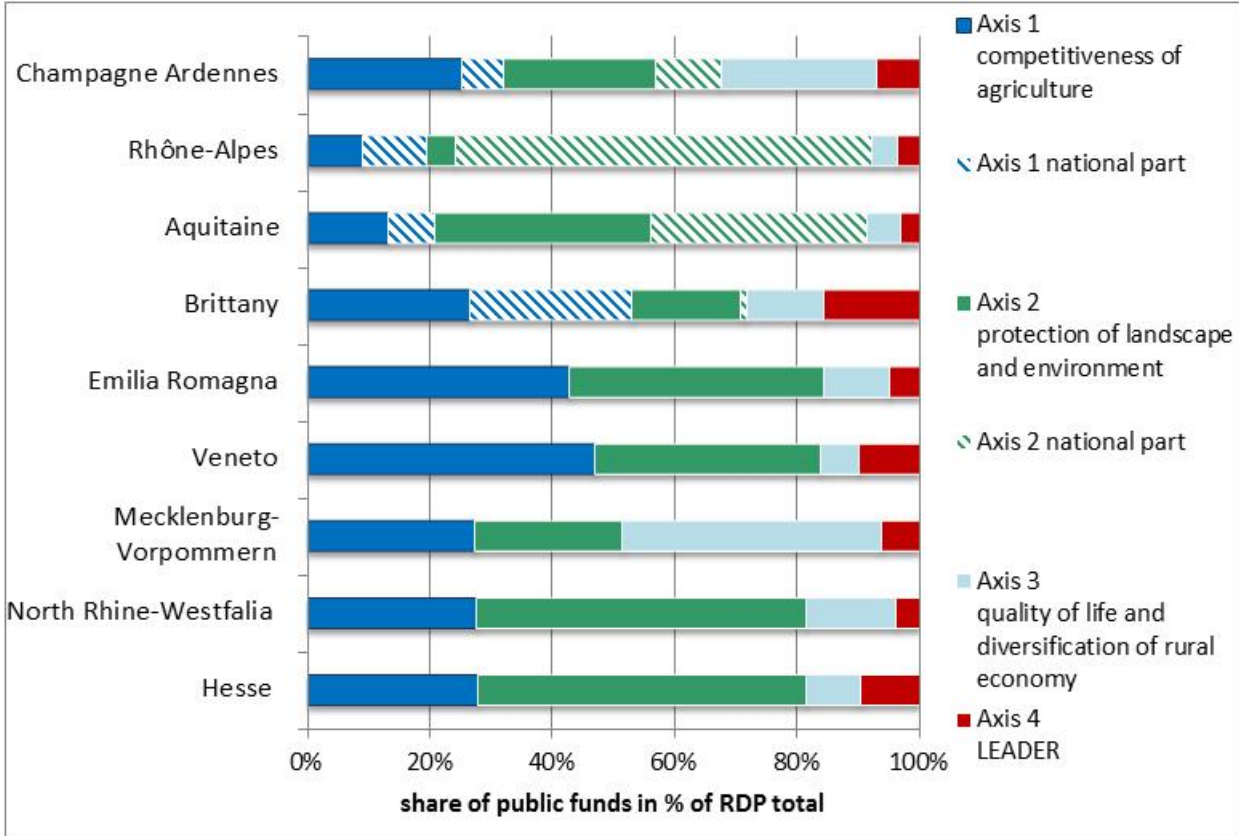
Fig. 12 shows an emphasis on sectoral measures benefiting farmers (Axis 1) in both Italian regions as well as in agricultural French region, such as Brittany. In the German programs, in Hesse and NRW Axis 2 is very important due to the relevance of agri-environmental measures in NRW and the less-favored areas subsidies in Hesse. In both French regions, Rhône-Alpes and Aquitaine with important mountain areas, Axis 2 is very important as well, because of payments for farmers in mountains areas. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the program reflects the need to develop the rural infrastructure and economy in general, allocating the biggest share to Axis 3. There are also clear differences in the weight the regions/Länder give to the LEADER axis (with 21% of public funds in Brittany and only about 5% in North Rhine-Westfalia and Emilia Romagna).

Another distinguishing feature can be the kind of projects which are eligible for LEADER. In France, Regions are free to define relevant territories and strategic priorities for LEADER, mobilizing all measures included in the respective regional programs¹⁵. Under these conditions,

¹⁵ In accordance with RDR agreement, project leader can also mobilize measures available in national program and not selected in a regional program.

we observed that LEADER is more oriented to measures of Axis 3 and measures of axes 1 and 2 are used only rarely and less intensively. The relative homogeneity of regional strategies for the LEADER program is explained by the definition, at national level, certain principles for the implementation such as the definition of LEADER territories in reference to organized territories and the indication of the size of the project in terms financial amount.

Figure 12 : Financial RDP distribution per axis (2007-13)¹⁶



Source: RDPs and annual implementation reports, see <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en/country>.

In Italy the Regions offer different measures to LEADER. Some use only the Axis 3, others combine Axis 3, with Axes 2 or 1 and others use all three axes (Di Rienzo and al., 2012, 18). Emilia Romagna and Veneto have chosen the latter.

In Germany this varies in general between the Länder and also the three Länder concerned in this study have chosen different ways: while in Hesse only the standard Axis 3 measures are possible and in NRW all projects have to be so-called innovative measures, in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern all measures from Axes 1, 2 and 3 have been fundable through LEADER. Because this restriction leads to too narrow conditions, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern already widened the possibilities during the funding period with an option called LEADERalternative, which made it easier to fund innovative projects, which sometimes do not fit in the standard measure funding conditions.

¹⁶ In France, RDP budget contain two parts, one national part in axis 1 and 2 (crosshatched in the figure) and one regional part for axis 3 and 4 and some additional measures in axis 1 and 2.

Regarding the history of **LEADER-implementation in France**, there have for a long time been tensions between the will of the state to maintain equity and national consistency between territories and regional claims to control their own development path. These tensions are illustrated by Méasson (2007) who speaks about the “recentralisation” of LEADER+ compared with LEADER II which was more decentralized. Nevertheless we can underline some specificity in each Region under study:

- In Brittany, even if the regional program is focused on the agricultural competitiveness (LEADER Axis 4 represents 14% of the Breton DRDR in 2007-13, whereas Axis 1 represents 37%), there has nevertheless been a long tradition of local development based on “Pays” since the 1960’s. LEADER 2007-13, focused on quality of life and landscapes, is still closely linked to “Pays”. The Region even wanted to recognize all the 22 “Pays” as LEADER-areas. Regional services of State did not accepted this non-selective strategy and only 15 LAGs were selected without the support of Regional council.
- In Aquitaine there has been a good cooperation between the state and the region since LEADER I. The Aquitaine Region has a specific urban and rural policy (Pays et Quartiers d’Aquitaine) that is closely linked to LEADER programs and is, as such, a major source of co-funding of LEADER.
- Rhône-Alpes is an economically powerful region that has for a long time recognized Natural Parks and “Pays” as LEADER-areas and implement LEADER with its own development areas called “Contrats de Développement Rhône-Alpes” CDRA and later CDDRA meaning “Contrats de Développement Durable Rhône-Alpes”. So LEADER is used as a political lever to implement and promote the region’s own development strategy.
- Champagne-Ardennes failed to get LEADER I funding. That’s why local actors, convinced that LEADER could be a great opportunity to help the Region to fight unemployment and regional social difficulties, received a specific training to design LEADER. In this context, the Haute-Marne Department (the poorest department in Champagne-Ardennes) was successful in obtaining LEADER II support for its LAG designed by civil society and local economic and public actors. This LAG even became emblematic of LEADER programs in Champagne-Ardennes.

Regarding the history of **LEADER-implementation in Italy**, we can highlight some differences between Emilia-Romagna and Veneto:

- In Veneto, even if the 2007—2013 RDP was focused on competitiveness of agriculture (Axis 1 represents 57%, Axis 4 11%) which was the same in 2000-2006 for the place and importance of LEADER +, there is a long rural tradition of local development. Since LEADER+, the LEADER Program in Veneto is focused on measures including improving the quality of life.
- Emilia-Romagna, one of the richest regions in Italy, is considered by the EU Commission as the “textbook case-study” for LEADER, regarding innovations and involvement of private actors (Fargion et al., 2006) It was recognized as an “excellence-region-system”, pursuing in its policies both objectives of development and social cohesion. The LAGs Antico-Frignano

and Delta 2000 illustrate the two dimensions of the regional LEADER strategy : first one with a strong agricultural part, represented in Antico-Frignano by the place of agricultural cooperatives in LEADER design and management, and second with a strong part dedicated to environmental issues, represented in Delta 2000 by the Po Delta classified as a Natura 2000 and UNESCO area. This LAG wants to become a European reference for slow tourism and bird watching.

Regarding the history of **LEADER-implementation in Germany** there are some differences in the three Länder:

- In Hesse: The promotion of endogenous rural development was already firmly rooted in Hessian rural development policy before LEADER I and an association for autonomous regional development was already set up in 1984 with the first rural regional program. This led to a certain openness to decentralised and regional approaches among political authorities when the LEADER I program was introduced (Thelen, 1999). In LEADER I, two LAGs (which are still LEADER groups) evolved. Based on the LEADER I experience, a Hessian state program for rural regional development was set up in 1993 and also spread the LEADER-principles outside the 5b-area. So by the end of LEADER II ten so-called regional development groups existed, six of them being LEADER II-LAGs. In LEADER+ the number of LAGs increased to eight, complemented by three non-LEADER-regional development groups and in 2007-2013 there were 20 LAGs and five non-LEADER-regional development groups
- In North Rhine-Westphalia: The relevance of LEADER has quite increased through mainstreaming as the number of LAGs has quadrupled from three to twelve. In former funding periods NRW was one of the federal states not that open to LEADER. In LEADER II there were two funding areas, one in the southwest (parts of three districts) and one in the east (one and a half district). The “district business development agencies” of these regions were established as collective bodies coordinating project funding. The first LEADER-LAGs were only established with LEADER +, where three out of five LEADER-applications were selected. Overall one can conclude that continuity of Local Action groups did not exist in NRW before mainstreaming.
- Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, as a newly formed Bundesland, did not participate in LEADER I, but then for LEADER II 12 areas were approved (the delimitation of the LEADER regions was equal to districts and all districts in MV participated). In LEADER+, the shape of the LAG-region was reviewed. While again 12 LAGs were selected, the delimitations changed and differed from district borders in most cases. For 2007-2013 again the whole surface of rural areas is covered with LAGs (mainly oriented on district borders, there were 13 LAGs because part of two districts merged to an additional LAG in connection with a biosphere reserve).

So one aspect to be taken into account for further elaborations is: while the Länder in Germany and the regions in Italy accumulated experience in handling EU-funded Rural Development programs over several funding periods, the regions in France only recently (since 2007) got part of responsibilities for the planning and implementation of RDPs. In 2007-2013, national part of RDP is quite important, especially in mountains areas.

It is also important to keep in mind that communes are multipurpose administrations in Germany executing a vast range of tasks, whereas communes in France and Italy are overall self-government units and other administrative tasks are organized sectorally. With regard to LEADER, communes in Germany might have more resources and technical capacities for project planning and implementation. Intermunicipality associations in France have probably more power to support their interests against the upper levels of the state.

5. CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

This section presents results of second step of research focused on case studies at LAG level. It proposes some models of LAG design governance in three different institutional contexts that was showed in section 4. We try to explore some internal and external explanatory factors of these model. Finally, we try to identify which effects produce these models.

The first section summarise main results for each LAG. The second section proposes a comparative analysis.

At this stage, this analysis is still on going. Only analytic results per case studies and first cross-analysis are presented below.

5.1. Analytical results per LAG

5.1.1. France

5.1.1.1 LAG Arcachon Val de l'Eyre

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The LAG Pays d'Arcachon Val de l'Eyre is situated in Aquitaine Region and Gironde Department and covers 1,494 km², 17 municipalities. This is a coastal area with a strong touristic attractiveness in Arcachon Basin and a residential area for people working in Bordeaux or in the suburbia.

As a result of its proximity to Bordeaux, the Pays d'Arcachon val de l'Eyre has had socio-economic trends as urban centre, such as aging population and positive net migration.

The population has been ever-expanding for 20 years: 110,000 inhabitants in 1999, 130,000 inhabitants in 2006, 140,000 inhabitants in 2014. This strong population growth with an increasingly space-intensive urbanization in an ecological fragility area has created escalating tensions. Land pressure and public services needs have imposed new policies to support local population and sustainable tourism.

In 2007, there is an important diversity of population densities according to the inter-municipalities associations: 182 inhab/km² on the coast and around Arcachon, 91 inhab/km² on the Northern coast and 29 inhab/km² in the inland inter-municipalities association.

The attractiveness of the area is different also according to the municipalities: coastal municipalities are very attractive for people over 60 years of age and better-off households;

municipalities with railway station and on the coast are attractive for households aged 40-59; inland municipalities are attractive for families, because of the lower land price. In these municipalities, there is a large part of unemployed people, especially spouses.

Because of that, it's quite difficult for young people or low-income households to live on the coast.

The Pays d'Arcachon val de l'Eyre is a major tourist destination on the Atlantic coast with very famous spots: Arcachon, Dune du Pilat, Cap Ferret. Residential economy and tourism development are the two pillars of the local economy, even if in rural areas, there are an environmental heritage and an important forestry production. Agriculture is not important, less than 7% of the land. Fisheries and aquaculture represent 5% of local businesses.

Furthermore, there are two important activities on the most rural area of the LAG, the "Val de l'Eyre", the Laser Mégajoule, an important military French programme about nuclear research and a business park based on forestry and the timber industry, the "Sylva 21".

History of local development and place of LEADER programme

Pays d'Arcachon Val de l'Eyre is a "Pays" is constituted in 2003, without any legal structure. It gathers intermunicipalities association, related to 17 municipalities. Each intermunicipality association manages projects implemented for the Pays. The idea was that the "Pays" would be the beginning of the merging of the 3 inter-municipality associations. So there was no need to create a new structure.

The Pays is the area of the "Schéma de coherence territorial", a very important local territorial planning document.

10 municipalities belong to the Parc Naturel Régional des Landes de Gascogne.

The Pays Arcachon Val de l'Eyre has been involved in LEADER since 2007. Prior to this, a large number of municipalities of the territory (10), belonging to the "Parc Naturel Régional des Landes de Gascogne" were involved in the LAG "PNR Landes de Gascogne" with LEADER I, II, +. The latter LAG was no more a LAG in 2007-2013 and was divided in 2 LAG's, the LAG "Pays d'Arcachon val de l'Eyre" and the LAG "Pays Landes de Gascogne".

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial programmes

The LAG is supported by the Communauté de communes du Val de l'Eyre, on behalf of the Pays d'Arcachon Val de l'Eyre. The LAG is composed by 2 kinds of members, from the Public sector and from the private sector.

Table 5 : Composition of the LAG Arcachon Val de l'Eyre

Public sector	Civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-municipality associations (6) - PNR Landes de Gascogne (1) - Caisse d'allocations familiales (family allowances fund) (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chamber of Commerce (1) - Chamber of Trades and Crafts (1) - Chamber of agriculture (1) - Business club (1) - Small business association (1) - Environmental association (1) - Tourism association (1) - Free Time University (1) - Timber industry federation (1)

One third of the assembly is composed by women since the last municipality elections (2014). No young people are represented.

Process of decision-making

Decision-making opted for a two-stage procedure: firstly, a reasoned opinion in a technical committee, secondly, a decision in the Programmation Committee.

- **A technical committee** has been implemented to explore the ins and outs of all propositions from project leaders. It delivered a reasoned opinion for each project presented in Programmation Committee. This technical committee is scheduled to meet before each Programmation Committee. During LEADER 2007-2013, the technical committee brought in average 7 members.

It is composed by people from the staffs of inter-municipality associations, of Parc naturel des Landes de Gascogne, of others inter-municipality associations (SIBA which manages the Arcachon Basin, SYBARVAL which manages the planning documents), of chamber of Agriculture, of chamber of Trades and Crafts, of chamber of Commerce and cofinanciers as relevant.

- The **programmation Committee** is the deciding authority. It attributes the EARDF grants. It manages the local development strategy, including the evolution of the strategy or the financial model. At each meeting, are presented for each project: a note with main features of the project, a multi-criteria selection grid, filled collectively during the meeting.

The types of relations LAG instances with other entities:

- As the LAG is a Pays, it works close with the three inter-municipalities associations, but also with the important public partners: SIBA (which manages the Arcachon Basin), the SYBARBAL (which manages the planning documents) and the PNR Landes de Gascogne (10 municipalities belonging to this natural regional Park).
- The LAG has straight relationships with the Aquitaine region which had a partnership with the Management authority at the regional level (DRAAF Aquitaine).
- The LAG is involved in the rural regional network, chaired by Pays and Quartiers d'Aquitaine, the Aquitaine LAGs network in LEADER II and LEADER+.
- The LAG Arcachon Val de l'Eyre has been selected by a national process implicated the regional service of the Ministry of agriculture and the Aquitaine Region. The partnership had continued along the programmation, so the LAG had straight relationships with Aquitaine

Region and the state services (DRAAF) at regional level. But only the latter has had the control of the implementation of LEADER. Furthermore, the state service at departmental level (DDTM) is the instructor for the beneficiaries and their projects and checked administrative legality of all the projects.

c) Strategy of LEADER programme, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

A part of the territory has been involved in LEADER program since LEADER I. Few information about LEADER I, II and + are available. The first strategies were to settle a local development strategy based on improvement of life quality in rural areas. It benefited from the presence of a previous local development group.

During LEADER+, the national policy for rural area investments, the “Pole d’excellence rurale” and of course the policy about Natural Regional Park. But no links were settled with other European policies: objective 2, objective 3, RDP, Equal, Interreg.

Since 2007, the strategy is implemented in the whole territory of the Pays d’Arcachon Val de l’Eyre, with a focus on the policies implementation for a sustainable welcoming of the population, an enhancement and preservation of natural heritage and the development of the sustainability of tourism and economic activities. In the background, at that time, LEADER and other programs have been managed to contribute a political project, that is to build a territorial institution, joining the three intercommunality associations in just one.

What links with other territorial policies?

The Pays d’Arcachon Val de l’Eyre is the level for Regional territorial policies. There is also coordination with the inter-municipalities association in charge of planning document (SCOT). During LEADER 4, the LAG Pays d’Arcachon Val de l’Eyre was also a FLAG. Because of different regulations, the both programmes were managed separately. But one project was supported by LEADER and Flag, the implementation of collective restauration with local organic food supply chain.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

For a part of the territory, LEADER was new in 2007. Technical assistance of the Pays d’Arcachon Val de l’Eyre participated to the empowerment of local actors to get access to European territorial approaches like Local action group (EARDF) or Fishery local action group (FEF). Therefore, public or private beneficiaries received an overwhelming support from the building of the project applying for EARDF with LEADER to LEADER until the report of the project when finished.

As the motivation of LAG Arcachon Val de l’Eyre is to build a territorial institution, the most important cooperation in 2007-2013 was with supra-territorial institutions: regional council, departmental council. To face important inequalities between inhabitants, the LAG was involved in child and youth services, with a reinforced cooperation between family allowances fund (Caisse d’allocations familiales ou Mutalité sociale agricole), nurseries, recreational centers for children and young people. The LAG has played an important role for networking cultural local

actors but it did not succeed with environmental actors, which faced financial difficulties to find cofunding.

5.1.1.2 LAG Ouest Cornouaille

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The LAG Ouest Cornouaille is situated in Brittany Region and Finistère Department and covers 664 km², 39 municipalities and 86 500 inhabitants (INSEE, 1999). This is a coastal area at the limits of North West of France, with 3 LAG's borders with the Atlantic Ocean. So the LAG main constraints are the remoteness and the maintenance of local economic activities.

For a long time, the demographic trend in Ouest Cornouaille has remained a concern but since the beginning of the 2000's, a population growth has been recorded due to a positive migratory balance. The main social features of the inhabitants are a modest income population, with a low education level and an overrepresentation of the workers. The share of seniors (more than 60) is growing and represents a third of the population.

Housing is typical of coastal areas: an important share of secondary home (22%), a renting offer in favour of tourism, so unfavourable for local communities, especially for single people and/or young people.

Ouest Cornouaille has an exceptional natural heritage, with beautiful bays (Douarnenez, Audierne), the Pointe du Raz promontory, a popular tourist destination, beaches, cliffs, estuaries, or ports.

The economy is dominated by the tertiary sector even if agriculture and fishery are still important (12% of the labour force). There are many smaller companies, especially in the cap sizun (at the East). Tourism is less developed than in the rest of the Cornouaille. A lot of inhabitants worked in the conurbation of Quimper, outside the perimeter of the LAG territory because of the loss of local jobs.

Agriculture employed 3290 people, with 924 farms in 2000. Their difficulties concern land pressure, especially along the coastline, and the evolution of diary production, the mainstay of local agriculture.

Tourism faces several difficulties, strong seasonality of the activity, remoteness of the territory with consequences on accessibility, a lot of nonprofessional touristic offers and difficulties to housing seasonal workers.

Ouest Cornouaille has a strong and dynamic culture, with a lot of heritage but also new artists.

History of local development and place of LEADER program

The LAG ouest Cornouaille, named AOCD meaning Ouest Cornouaille development agency is a private association of 4 inter-municipality associations. It was created in 1986 as a "pays d'accueil touristique", a touristic label for local place based area with a legal structure, an

involvement of touristic professionals, a touristic local development strategy and local government funding.

AOCD gathers 4 « communautés de communes », inter-municipality associations, represented. It is also the area for the “Schéma de coherence territoriale”, a very important local territorial planning document.

LAG ouest Cornouaille is involved in LEADER since 1994 (LEADER 2, +, 4). But the next programmation managed by Brittany region provides to select only LAG as Pays. So it's the end of ouest Cornouaille involved in LEADER as a LAG.

Since AOCD has been involved in LEADER, its status has provided private actors in the governance, but financial resources come from inter-municipality associations.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial programmes

The organization of the LAG didn't change between LEADER + or LEADER 4. The LAG is a development agency with an annual assembly meeting and regular boards of directors. The Agency board of directors constituted the Programming Committee for LEADER 4, composed by members of the board of directors.

Table 6 : Composition of the Programing Committee

Public sector	Civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional council (2) - Departemental council (5) - Intermunicipalities associations (15) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chamber of Commerce (1) - Chamber of Trades and Crafts (1) - Chamber of agriculture (1) - Fishery representatives (2) - Tourism professionals (3) - Tourist offices (4) - Environmental representatives (4) - Cultural representatives (4) - Business representative (1) - Co-opted experts (5)

Few women are involved in the LAG (10). And young people are not represented. This was also observed in LEADER+ evaluation.

The agency works with different sub-committees: environmental and natural resources committee (31 members), tourism committee (29 members), cultural committee (43 members), prospective committee (20 members). In case of need are held these committees, but especially to elaborate the local development strategy.

Process of decision-making

Sub-committees and Programming Committee play a strategic and political role and don't have a major influence in the process of selection of the projects.

The process of selection of beneficiaries is before the meeting of the programming committee. Only eligible projects are presented in the Programming committees. Non eligible projects are

eliminated during the compiling of the application file, the looking for cofinancing grants. Because of that, rejected beneficiaries or LEADER projects are not known.

Types of relations LAG instances with other entities

- LAG instances are the same as these of the local development Agency, AOCD. Because of that, links are straight between LAG and planning document (Schéma de coherence territoriale), integrated coastal zone management strategy or tourism strategy, all unfold at the same scale, Ouest Cornouaille and implemented by the Agency.
- LAG has had relationships with the Pays de Cornouaille, contracts for sustainable development at local place-based area.
- LAG is constituted of 4 intermunicipalities associations, so it worked a lot with these associations. French management authority decided that LAG 2007-2013 would be presented only by Pays and Parc naturel regional and unusually previous LAG's. So LAG ouest Cornouaille (LEADER 2 and +) had worked with Pays de Cornouaille to implement a local development strategy at the "Pays" scale. But as the population was too large for a LEADER territory (around 220 000 inhabitants in rural areas), two applications were written, one by LAG ouest Cornouaille, the other one by the Pays of Cornouaille for the remaining part of the Pays. But the application of Pays de Cornouaille was not selected. LEADER was implemented only at the West of the territory.
- There was no specific relation between the Agency/LAG and the Department of Finistère. This latter has developed its relationships solely with intermunicipalities associations.
- The LAG Ouest Cornouaille has been selected by a national process implicated the Ministry of agriculture and its regional service. The Bretagne Region disagreed with the principle of selection imposed by LEADER and applied by the national agency. The state services (DRAAF) at regional level controlled the implementation of LEADER. The state service (DDTM) at departmental level is the instructor for the beneficiaries and their projects and checked administrative legality.

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

LAG ouest Cornouaille had implemented a local development strategy based on the enhancement of local resources, cultural and natural heritage and tourism. At the beginning, LEADER II strategy was implemented with the investment in the following topics: tourism, culture, local products, human services and local development. LEADER + was built around the theme of "valorisation of natural and cultural resources" with four objectives: the local stakeholders mobilization, the enhancement of the attractiveness of the territory, the development of the tourist attraction and the strengthening of the development of economic value. The leader 4 focused priority was to enhance local resources with a view to sustainable development with 3 strategic objectives, the sustainable management, the enhancement of resources, the network of local stakeholders.

The local development strategy benefited from the achievement of previous involvements in planning document (The diagnosis of territory for the SCOT ended in 2006) and in integrated coastal zone management (national call for projects).

AOCD, the local development agency involved since 1986 in a bottom-up approach, created strong links between local inter-municipality associations. The agency unfolded diverse policies such as support of diverse tourism projects, planning management with the realization of an important document (SCOT), the implementation of an integrated coastal zone management project to put in place sustainable development on coastal zones, a “pole d'excellence rurale” which was a national territorial policy to support rural areas. The links with Pays de Cornouaille were weak until LEADER 5.

What links with other territorial policies?

Until 2007, no links were settled with other European policies objective 2, objective 3, RDP, Equal or Interreg but links were established with FLAG Cornouaille during the last programming 2007-2013.

The LAG ouest Cornouaille, supported by AOCD, disappeared with the current programming. The Region Brittany, the new management authority at regional level decided to implement CLDD only at “Pays” level, which is also the level for regional territorial policies. AOCD is now a subcontractor of the LAG Cornouaille for the west part of the territory.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

LEADER participated to the empowerment of local actors, because the multi-sectoral territorial approach was quite new at the beginning. AOCD succeeded to involve diverse and numerous local actors of the territory when building the local development strategy or when consulting the population for other policies. According to our interviews, extraterritorial actors recognized the participation culture of Ouest Cornouaille, very useful for solving territorial problems and finding solutions.

LEADER financed technical assistance, recognized in project management and participatory process. This empowerment of the technicians and representatives of the LAG allowed to candidates to diverse call for proposals from the State and from the Region.

The cooperation is diverse according to the programming. Until LEADER +, the cooperation between private actors, mainly associations, was quite important. With LEADER 4, two important federations of cultural associations, widespread all over the territory, were created to improve their cultural programming. The difficulty for private actors to find the co-financing, stronger with LEADER 4 than before, selected the beneficiaries and there was a loss of cooperation between private actors.

But at the same time, the cooperation between public actors, at the beginning between municipalities, decreased and the cooperation between inter-municipalities associations increased. The future could be the merge of the four inter-municipalities associations.

5.1.1.3 GAL Pays de Langres

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The GAL Pays de Langres is located in the south of Region Champagne-Ardennes with is a rural region with a low population density (half of the national average) with remote areas that are losing population. The territory of actual LAG includes 6 community associations (Communautés de communes) representing 172 communes around the small city of Langres in the south west of Region Champagne-Ardennes (departement of Haute-Marne) and far from a large city. It counts 49 000 inhabitants and a low density of population (21 inhabitants per km²). The territory takes place in a limestone plateau at 400 m above sea level with a landscape of valleys. Langres has a nationwide history and its citadel that has been continuously occupied since the Gallic then Roman period. The territory is crossed by a highway with high European traffic (north-south).

History of local development and place of LEADER programme

The mobilisation of actors in Langres territory begin in the beginning of 80s around employment concerns at the initiative of the four largest companies in the territory. Actors of social sector working for young workers home, created by business owners to accommodate employees whose industry needed, begin to work on population needs and local development strategy. It leads to the creation of several structures on social, cultural and economic sectors during 80s and 90s.

On this mobilization of these actors of socio-economic sector, a first reflection on territorial development was initiated with LEADER I in 1991, without leading to the validation of a project leader. It was during this period that the area began to organize. Three development associations are created (ADRL, ADECAPLAN, Synergy 4) respectively covering Langres and its immediate periphery, the west and east of the Langres region. The coexistence of three entities reflects the fact that three local socio-economic realities stand out: i) Langres which industrial enterprises and administrative functions, ii) the west, rural but relatively dynamic demographically because proximity of Dijon, iii) the east with unfavorable demographic situation.

It was the intervention of a militant local development expert (geographer), as part of the training on local development, that both parts of the country moved closer and led to candidate for the first time to LEADER I, without success and LEADER II program, with one in each of three parts of the territory of Langres. LEADER I and II Program was an important learning period on this new approach of local development. Local actors had not experiences and no skilled personal to do that. At the end of 90s the national policy for regional planning and territorial development (Loi Voynet, 1999), establishing "les pays" (see deliverable 1) has favored the constitution of the territory of Pays de Langres by replacing existing three structures and three perimeters. The development council installed with the Pays, brings together a wide representation of local actors and define, with local representatives, a middle term development strategy (10 years). It serves as a reference for developing the multi-year contracts with Region

and state (2003-2006 and 2007-2013), and to elaborate LEADER+ and LEADER 2007-2013 projects.

Pays de Langres has a long experience with LEADER. The actual territory perimeter of LEADER is quite stable since 2003 and counts around 170 municipalities, but it results of progressive enlargement of territory scale jugged relevant for territorial development strategy. The main evolution is in internal structure of municipalities association. First, all municipalities take place in one municipality association. Second, municipality associations were restructured with fusion. Pays of Langres count 6 municipality associations in 2015, there were 12 in 2007.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial programmes

From 2000, the establishment of Pays de Langres become the structural organisation for territorial policies. Pays of Langres supported administratively LEADER+ and LEADER 2007-2013. Programming committee (PC) is the only specific instance of the GAL. It compose by 31 persons with a high majority of civil society and professional.

Table 7 : Composition of the Programing Committee LAG Pays de Langres

Public sector	civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President association Pays de Langres - 6 elected representatives of each of 6 municipality associations (intercommunalités) - 1 elected representatives of Langres city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President development committee of Pays de Langres • 13 sectorial actors (11 after 2013) : Agriculture and forestry, craft, commerce, industry, tourism, services, culture, babyhood, training, association (+environment, mobility/housing after 2013) • 1 individual
<p>+ members without voting right</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Founders (State, Departement and Region) - Local State administration (DDT) 	

Members of Pays de Langres assume to give significantly more place to private actor than 50% regulatory. It was already the case in GAL LEADER+ which is composed of 70% of private actors. Size of committee was very small for LEADER + (10 people). It has been greatly expanded in LEADER 2007-2013 (23 people) before being readjusted downwards to facilitate how it works.

Process of decision

Process of implementation of LEADER operation that LEADER finance, follow 4 main steps :

1. Technicians of Pays and LEADER analyse and advice project's holder to orient towards relevant funding
2. Technicians assist project's holder to complete and improve the project to be the most consistent as possible with LEADER strategy,
3. Presentation of project to programming committee by project's holder and discussion with members
4. CP's decision by secret ballot

During LEADER +, there was 1 step more. A monitoring committee, composed of technicians, gave notice on project before programming. This step has been removed to simplify the process and give more power to programming committee.

CP's decision is based on a selection grid comprising mandatory criteria (i. Impact on welcoming and keeping of population, ii. sustainability without funding) and recommended criteria (iii. Innovation, iv. intermunicipality and multisectorial project, v. equal opportunities (women, young people), vi. impact on sustainability développement, vii. Public/private partnership, viii. Using ICT, ix. External cooperation)

Process of decision has been progressively simplified between LEADER II and LEADER 2007-2013. During LEADER +, there was 1 step more. A monitoring committee, composed of technicians, gave notice on project before programming. Few reasons seem explicated this evolution :

- Competences of technicians have been improved and quality of projects proposed for LEADER is better
- The experience in programming committees developed the project selection skills of members and increased confidence for considering the direct exchange between the project leader and members

Project logic introduced by LEADER leads to take more attention to quality of projects and to their expected impacts. Reference to a grid, even if it is not used very strictly, shows that impact and sustainability are important criteria.

The types of relations LAG instances with other entities:

LAG instances, but also LAG perimeter and strategy are strongly articulated with Pays as presented above :

- Perimeters are the same
- LEADER staff is integrated in Pays' staff

Concerning governance, Pays de Langres Pays of Langres is managed by two instances (similar for all Pays in France) :

- Association of Pays de Langres composed of representatives : it is the decisional organ of the Pays
- Local development committee composed of civil society (economic actors, non governmental organisation, professional organisation, individuals) : it is consultative organ who formulates proposals and recommendations.

Those instances concern also LEADER management, but it exists a specific decision-making instance, named Programming Committee, partly composed of Pays instances members.

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

Elaboration of LEADER 2007-2013 strategy was a real participative process with public meetings, workshops which mobilised 160 people in which, 60% of private actors and 25% of people from economic sectors. Elaboration process became more and more participative with

more diversified participative methods that allows more representative view of population needs.

LEADER 2007-2013 strategy was focused on human Resources: Key to success territory attractiveness. Three axis was define to implement this strategy (+ technical assistance and cooperation) :

Axe 1 : heritage as a vector of attractiveness of the territory and mobilization in favor of human resources

Axe 2 : enhance economic development by the welcome and retention of human resources

Axe 3 : Services in favor of rooted human resources

After a strategy of LEADER + focused on valorisation of heritage by financing material investment, LEADER 2007-2013 move on more collective action and immaterial investments.

89 LEADER projects (for axes 1 to 3) were financed (14 were proposed but rejected by CP) corresponding to a total cost of 3 515K€ and 1 600 K€ of FEADER found. In coherence with strategy, 90% of projects was immaterial. These concern very predominantly private actors (70%), but it almost exclusively associations. Only 1 professional has been beneficiary of LEADER programme.

What links with other territorial policies?

Concerning local policy, LEADER program is articulated with Pays agreement (2003-2007 and 2007-2013) defined in response to issues identified in the development charter (2003-2013). Pays agreement clearly focuses a strategy of spatial planning, infrastructure, organization of local services using material investments. LEADER program contributes to this strategy by activating a transversal lever (human resources in this case) and a mode of action privileging the collective and immaterial action (project engineering, communication, cultural production).

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

Effects on empowerment at territorial level

- LEADER program appear in a strategic period of territorial development path. Beginning of 90's is a turning point between 2 decades of development in a sectorial approach to a wider and more transversal vision of development. Local stakeholders mobilize external expertise and training to do that. The launch of LEADER program by european union was identified as an opportunity to practice this new vision. Local actors have gradually appropriate the principles of partnership, innovation and bottom-up approach,
- LEADER program was one element of a comprehensive policy in favour of territorial development. The affirmation of the national policy of "Pays" has undoubtedly consolidated appropriation and facilitate the implementation of LEADER. Also, it is difficult to dissociate the specific contribution LEADER considering the strong articulation between both devices.
- Crucial role of time: Langres case study shows clearly how long-term process is the elaboration of territorial vision. Three period of LEADER show a progressive enlargement of the involvement of wider diversity of socio-economic groups (LEADER II were elaborate in a

short time from an inventory of possible projects ; LEADER 4 strategy was build with implication of more than 160 people.

- The evolution of LEADER strategy between LEADER + and LEADER 4 show a positive effect on capacity to focus LEADER on transversal and immaterial project. We can conclude that there is a better complementary between LEADER and Pays contract, more focus on investments and sectorial projects.

Effects on local cooperation, particular between public and private actors

The obligation imposed by LEADER to establish a decision-making instance involving elected and private stakeholders strongly rushed to the usual procedures of public decisions.

- In the GAL of Pays de Langres, this new instance decision (programming committee) has initially been closely supervised by the establishment of a prior technical committee that was quickly removed to allow more direct exchanges between public and private members of programming committee and the project holder.
- The principle of public-private cooperation for evaluation of project relevance and for decision-making, that introduce LEADER, was partially transfered to Pays management. Indeed, at national level, principle of participation of population has led to establishment of development council which give consultative opinions. At local level, development council in Pays de Langres work well and had a real contribution on elaboration of LEADER + and LEADER 4 strategy. It is also considered as a representative actor in programming committee. Public/private committee ha been extend to instruct projects financed by Pays

5.1.1.4 GAL PNR des Monts d'Ardèche

On going

5.1.2. Germany

5.1.2.1 LAG Stettiner Haff

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The LAG Stettiner Haff (SPL) is situated in the north-east of the federal state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. So this region is belonging to Eastern Germany (former German Democratic Republic, GDR). The location is next to the border with Poland. It covers the old district Uecker-Randow. Since the reform of districts in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in 2011 it covers the southern part of the district of Vorpommern-Greifswald. It includes 47 municipalities (administrated by four administration units (Ämter)) and 3 towns with a total area of 1630 km² with 73.000 inhabitants at the start of the funding period 2007-2013 (Landkreis Uecker-Randow 2007).

The northern part is a coastal area at the Stettiner Haff as a separated part of the Baltic Sea. The landscape is various with a high share of forests and characteristical lakes as well as low moors and heathlands (50% of land is covered by agriculture, 31% by forest, 12% by water, 7% by settlements/transport). Following the rich natural beauty of the area there is a high share of protected areas. As especially important to connect nature conservation and regional development is seen the Nature park "Am Stettiner Haff", which covers around a third of the surface of the LAG-area (Landkreis Uecker-Randow 2007).

After German reunification a severe structural change with negative population dynamics took place (1990: number of inhabitants 96.600; 2005: 77.150; 2013: 67.400) with a high outmigration. The population structure has been changing with an increasing aging population as well as a reduction in the young population.

The LAG area is characterised as an economic-weak region, with low population density and a high unemployment rate, which is one of the highest among all German districts. The highest rate was in the year 2004 with 31,4% for the old district. The current number (1/2016) for the new district is still 14,3%. The main economic activities of the territory are various from metalworking industry, businesses in agricultural and food sector as well as tourism. There are 220 agricultural farms, whereby there is a very high rate of ecological farming (covering 22% of arable land, which is more than double than the average in the whole federal state (around 10%)).

History of local development and place of LEADER program

As the region was part of the GDR there was a comprehensive tradition of state-driven top down acting for local development until 1989.

The start for LEADER-local development was already in LEADER II with the constitution of the LAG Stettiner Haff (initiated from civil society and district administration) and the appreciation from the federal state in 1995. The regions delimitation at his time was based on the old district Uecker-Randow. The region participated also in LEADER+ but with a different delimitation:

together with the neighbour-LAG in the district Ostvorpommern they builded one larger area called "Odermündung" (whereby some areas of the old LAG UeckerRandow dropped out, because through funding regulations the area otherwise become to big regarding total allowed number of inhabitants which was 150,000 due to general EU-settings). For LEADER 2007-2013 the LAG was separated again in two LAGs (Ostvorpommern and Stettiner Haff) now again including the whole district of Uecker-Randow (LK 2014). This decision was clearly supported by LAG-members and was used again for LEADER 2014+ (Interviews G-STH)

Also other funding schemes promoting local development like the RegionenAktiv (2002-2005) a funding scheme from federal ministry for agriculture) have been relevant (with the same delimitation than the LAG Odermündung). The foundation of the Nature park "Am Stettiner Haff" in 2005 was partly initiated and supported through LAG-activities and both work together closely.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial program

The staff employed for LAG management had a high continuity (starting from LEADER II the main manager it is still the same person). The workforce capacity was one FTE and was extended for LEADER 2014+.

The office for LAG is located in the district administration in the town of Pasewalk. The LAG-manager is also member of the LAG (which is quite rare in German LAGs, this underpins a quite strong role of the LAG-management). The evaluation report shows a high to very high satisfaction of LAG-members with the organisation of work and with the LAG-management (Landgesellschaft MV 2013).

The whole LAG is the decision making body. The LAG don't have a formal legal status, this is typical in the federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern whereby in other federal states in Germany it is a must to have a legal status. Thus the LAG Stettiner Haff can't make project applications on its own.

The LAG is composed of eight members from public sector and nine members from civil society / economy¹⁷. There are no further working groups for a durable participation of further stakeholders established, they tested this during LEADER+, but want to work and decide in an effective group (Interviews G-STH-2014).

¹⁷ The substitutes are not listed.

Table 8 : Composition of the LAG Stettiner Haff

Public sector	civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District (vice chairman of district) - LAG-manager (office at district administration) - Office for agriculture - Nature park - Municipalities (2) - Forest agency of federal state - Member of parliament (federal state) 	<p>Linked to agriculture/forestry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local farmers representative <p>Tourism / economic development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tourism association • association for one historical site/ tourist attraction • job service agency • society for support- and development agency of district • Chamber of industry and commerce <p>Civil society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association for mentally challenged persons • Rural women association • Nature protection association

Source: Landkreis Uecker-Randow (2007)

The share of women in the LAG was 47% which is high above the average of German LAGs, but in the federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern this value is quite typical because of GDR-history with a higher participation of women in working life compared to western Germany. No young people were represented.

Process of decision

Already during the writing of the local development strategy (2007-2013) there have been 300 ideas for projects, for some of these ideas there was a further elaboration to specified project proposals. The most important/promising projects have been included in the strategy as six leading projects (four of them related to tourism/transportation, one centre for healthcare and one multifunctional community centre).

During the funding period decision-making about projects is conducted in a two-stage procedure after the elaboration of a project proposal (with a initial consulting for the applicant from the LAG-management) firstly the LAG-manager sends the project description to the single LAG-members, which use then a project selection matrix to give points for certain criteria, secondly after the LAG-management merged the single assessments a final decision is made during a LAG-meeting.

The feed-back of the LAG in some cases leads to changes in the project proposals (for example a better inter-municipal cooperation was fostered as they could get more points on the project selection matrix).

Altogether the decision making was described as very fair and based on facts and targets - also party politics doesn't play a role at all. Die LAG-chairman/vice-chairman (three persons of the LAG-members) had no specific role in decision making, they only take part in public relation activities (Interviews G-STH 2014). The origin from LAG-chairman is from district administration.

The types of relations LAG instances with other entities:

- Working together with the Nature Park “Am Stettiner Haff” and several touristic and cultural organisations in the region,
- Working together with district and municipalities in the LAG-area (but not all of the towns and offices sending a member in the LAG (to avoid public domination in LAG)),
- Exchange with other LAGs (with a regular exchange with LAG Ostvorpommern and a common working with the LAG Mecklenburg-Strelitz on a concept for nature tourism at one lake), contacts to two neighboured LAGs in Poland,
- Participation in the LEADER working group (regular meetings with the other twelve LAG-managements in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) (Landgesellschaft MV 2014).

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

As the LAG has been involved in LEADER since LEADER II there is a long history of LEADER strategies, which are all affected by the severe economic and demographic challenges, a common element in all strategies was “accessibility for people with a disability” (also as a segment in tourism).

In LEADER+ and LEADER 4 the local development strategies both can be translated as “Nature and Culture as partner of economic development“. As the superordinated goal a sustainable, future-viable Development is named, with social, environmental and economic subgoals. This was specified with different fields of action. For 2007-2013 theses have been: education/qualification, public relation, job opportunities, infrastructure and attractiveness of cultural landscape / resource protection. Over 90% of the budget was used for the last two fields. There have been much more projects ideas than funding budget.

The LEADER 4 local development strategy set four goals in the fields of: jobs/income opportunities, adapting infrastructure to demographic change, protection and usage of cultural and natural resources, strengthening as barrier-free region (improving accessibility for handicapped persons. So overall the main objectives had a great continuity over the last 20 years of LEADER history. One relevant adaption was to drop education/qualification, because suitable projects have been very rare and difficult to develop for funding.

What links with other territorial policies?

It is part of the local development strategies to list other relevant plannings and there are a lot of links to concepts regional planning on different layers of plannings. So the LAG-area is part of the Regional Planning Association Vorpommern. But there is a clear divide in formal spatial plannings and soft concepts like LEADER. Thereby the influence of the formal planning system is quite low on the small project orientated LEADER. However there is a close working together with planning activities of the district administration (also because the chairman and the LAG-manager are part of district administration). Another process with linkage to the LAG activities was the Euroregion POMERANIA, but this region is much bigger (2,4 Million inhabitants) so tasks are quite different (main aim is cooperation with Poland). Other important local strategies

are from tourism and the nature park, , so there is also an integrated nature park plan from the year 2007.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

LEADER participated to the empowerment of local actors, because the multi-sectoral territorial approach was quite new at the beginning (especially against the background of GDR-history). Regarding the direct working together in the LAG it is evidently, that only a relative small group was included, because no broad participation of inhabitants took place in the long run. Also no direct participation of young people happened.

On the other hand this enables an effective cooperation in the decision-making body with a high contribution to capacity building. In addition through collaboration in projects and networking activities a broad network of local actors was originated. By the targeted selection of LAG-members by LAG-management, they don't seek for stakeholders to give an overall representation, but look for actors with a sense for the region to create a broad expertise in different topics. The LAG-members includes actors from different layers of local development: mayors, municipality as well as district administration. Politicians of the district as well as from federal state level (members of parliament). The LEADER-funds enables a lot of projects from local actors and through the LAG-management it was also possible to enter further financial support via other funds (for example INTERREG, European social fund). Therefore, public or private beneficiaries received an important support for project application procedures, especially for private actors this is important. LEADER was seen as a possibility to fund also innovative projects, which were sometimes not eligible through other funding programs. During LEADER 4 the difficulty for private actors to find the co-financing was a crucial problem to establish their projects (this problem was solved through the financial engagement of the federal state for the LEADER 2014+ period).

Through memberships in LAG and further meetings and public relation work, the LEADER funding created cooperation between private and public actors, whereby there arised linkages between different topics like nature conservation, culture, tourism, integration of handicapped persons. The participation in the LAG has played an important role for networking local actors and build linkages to actors outside LAG-area as well.

Although not many local mayors in person participated in LAG, the LAG-management enables good communication channels to them and through different projects local mayors had stronger cooperations among different public actors. The smaller region size of Stettiner Haff (compared to the bigger region during LEADER+) was more favourable for networking and strengthening of a common sense of place. So this delimitation then also was used for LEADER 2014+.

The influence of LEADER to the formal planning system was low, but the LEADER-structures build a useful tool for promoting local governance. There was a high sense for cooperation, so the local actors named it as an advantages that public administration and private actors work together: both sides have their specific strengthens and weaknesses. Depending from topic and task it is different who should mainly conduct the project and they see benefits from a mixture to work together.

5.1.2.2.LAG Südliches Paderborner Land

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The LAG Südliches Paderborner Land (SPL) is situated in the east of North-Rhine Westphalia (western Germany) and covers the southern part of the district of Paderborn. It includes 5 municipalities with 47 villages and 2 towns and a total area of 711 km². The LAG area is quite diverse in socio-economic terms as well as concerning landscape and land use patterns. It is strongly influenced by the city of Paderborn¹⁸ situated north of the LAG area. .

Since the late 1970s there was a positive economic development in the district of Paderborn in the sector of IT-technology. Also the foundation of the University in 1972 and improvements in access through the construction of two highways and the local airport contributed to a positive development of employment and economy. Within the LEADER area, the municipalities benefited from the settlement of small and medium enterprises of different sectors attracted inter alia by the airport. In the area there is also one of the biggest inland wind parks of Europe not only contributing to economic development but also creating tensions within the population.

Nevertheless agriculture has still a relatively strong position in local economy compared to other parts of North-Rhine Westphalia.

The population dynamics have also been influenced by the positive economic development. Net migration gains, a younger population and a fertility rate above German average have led to population growth in the last decades.

History of local development and place of LEADER program

The start for LEADER-local development was the constitution of the regional development association “Bürener Land” and its selection as one of three LAGs selected in LEADER+ in North-Rhine Westphalia in 2002. The regions delimitation was based on the so-called “Altkreis” meaning the former district before the North-Rhine Westphalian territorial reform in 1975. Most of the territory of the Altkreis was included in the district of Paderborn except three villages in the south-east. In the following funding period (2007-2013) the delimitations of the LAG-area changed, partially in recognition of administrative borders and the association turned into the association “Regionalforum Südliches Paderborner Land” which had about 80 members in 2014. The municipality representing the three villages left the LAG and two new municipalities joined the LAG. The LAG-Management also coordinated the participation of the LEADER-region in other funding schemes promoting local development like the NRW-program “sustainable land use management” and the national funding scheme “smaller towns and municipalities” both improving especially cooperation between municipalities.

¹⁸ With overall 149.834 inhabitants and 83.591 Inhabitants in the central city.

The staff employed for LAG management is also responsible for promoting economic development in general. At the beginning of the funding period staff was 2.5 FTE (one woman and one man for Management and one woman part time for administration). By 2015 it was decreased to 1.75 FTE and consisted of two men partly financed via LEADER (with EU- and municipality-contributions) and partly by the local municipalities only.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial programs

The Regionalforum selects the extended board which is the LAG decision making body and the executive board. The LAG has an office where the two LAG-managers are based in the town of Bad Wünnenberg. The LAG is composed of eleven members from public sector and 13 members from civil society and economy¹⁹. The executive board is composed of three members, in the last funding period all of them have been mayors. The extended board is advised by different working groups that work for special fields of action.

Table 9 : Composition of the LAG Südliches Paderborner Land

Public sector	civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities (6) - Chamber of agriculture - Chamber of industry and trading - District Forestry office - purpose association for tourism - joint venture for work 	<p>Linked to agriculture/forestry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local farmers representative <p>Culture/civil society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation education and craft • Cultural association • community foundations (2) • Rural women association • Welfare center – ambulatory care <p>Tourism/town development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tourist association <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary school development club • Nature protection association • Individual persons (3)

Source: LAG SPL (2012)

One quarter of the LAG was composed by women. No young people were represented.

Process of decision-making

Before the decision making body has to decide about the acceptance or the denial of the project, there is an extensive participation process and taskforces spring into action. The LAG-manager attends this process and gives his or her advice. After the concrete concept is ready, the decision making body decides about it. They meet about 4 times a year. Even village renewal projects have to be decided by the LAG, but those are discussed less controversially and the LAG often decides about them between the meetings via e-mail.

¹⁹ The substitutes are not listed.

The types of relations LAG instances with other entities:

- The LAG management was enlarged to cover also the area of promoting economic development in general, the additional staff costs have been paid by the municipalities. This means close collaboration with stakeholders from the private sector like the chamber of industry and commerce and from district administration as well as close cooperation with the respective municipality departments.
- The municipalities of the LAG act jointly towards the district of Paderborn, thus being stronger in promoting the interests of the Southern Paderborner Land.
- There is intensive cooperation with and counselling for village communities in the LAG area

As the LAG is one of the most experienced in NRW it has strong linkages with the ministry department responsible for LEADER implementation and is presented in different occasions as good practice example of LEADER

- Cooperation with the other LAGs in NRW in their network called "Regionalforum NRW"
- Exchange with other LAGs within the national rural network

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

The LAG has been involved in LEADER since LEADER+, where it was one of only three LAGs in NRW.

The local development strategy in LEADER+ focussed on: Sustainable use, protection and development of regional resources. It had the slogan: „protect, use and experience nature and culture“. Its sub-goals were to increase the region's value creation through sustainable use of natural resources, to protect and develop the grown cultural landscape and its biological diversity and the protection and development of cultural and human resources.

In LEADER 2007-2013 the main objective and slogan was: "Together ahead – robust development through thinking and acting across the generations". The sub-goals at that time were the improvement of life quality for all generations as well as the strengthening of social cohesion and identification with the region. Improving the career opportunities for the young and the old was another goal which went along with strengthening the regional value creation and economic development. The European cohesion and exchange was a topic that should be enhanced as well.

In 2014 the development strategy had the slogan: "Valuable plans for the future – the active community is the fertile soil for our region." The goals were to bring forward the participation culture of young people in favour of their regional identification. Therefore knowledge transfer across the generations and exchange of experiences should be organized. Voluntary services and non-profit initiatives shall be connected and pushed forward as supportive efforts for the basic services.

Another goal is to communicate tangible career perspectives and support at the same time the supply of employees for small and middle-sized companies. Regarding the climate change the

awareness towards an ecologically and economically balanced use of the cultural landscape shall be raised.

What links with other territorial policies?

The integrated rural development concept ILEK Bürener Land (2005) was the basis for the integrated regional development concept GIEK Südliches Paderborner Land. It links with a concept for nature protection through wildlife corridors. Furthermore there is a land use concept that gives priority for agricultural use of special areas. There is a strategic framework plan called EFRE of the region Ostwestfalen-Lippe, which is placed in the south of the Paderborner Land, whose Strategies influenced the common guideline of economic development.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

When applying for LEADER 1000 Inhabitants, local actors and employees of the municipalities went to the “Grüne Woche” (agricultural fair) in Berlin to present their LEADER-Region. That created a strong bond between the members of the LEADER region. Through the good network of the region the mayors and administration employees of the region work together more closely. Two examples:

- The close cooperation of the mayors led also to a better standing of the sub-region Southern Paderborner Land towards the district administration and the richer municipalities in the north of the district.
- Other units of the municipalities not involved directly in LEADER started cooperation f. ex. IT-departments.

For stakeholders from civil society to come to know each other more in depth has enabled to learn from each other, to develop new ideas and create new linkages. For example has the creation of a rural box with local products from the different municipalities and villages like honey, jam, sausage and apple juice also helped to overcome parochial thinking and see the touristic potential of the LEADER region as a whole.

Overall the people in the region became more connected with each other.

The experience with LEADER-funding in several funding periods led to a strong capacity development in public administration and stakeholders from civil society in dealing with project application, implementation and accounting on expenditure of funds as well as elaborating more complex concepts or development strategies to apply for funding. Together with the well-established networks this leads to competitive advantages compared to other regions in applying to funding schemes.

5.1.2.3. LAG Kellerwald-Edersee

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

The LAG Kellerwald-Edersee is situated in the north-west of the federal state Hesse. The location is in the middle of Germany (part of former Western Germany). It covers parts of the administrative district Schwalm-Eder-Kreis and Waldeck-Frankenberg. It includes 10 municipalities with a total area of 846,44 km² with 60.670 inhabitants (reporting date: 31.12.2005). With nearly 18.000 inhabitants, the city Bad Wildungen represents the cultural centre of the region (LAG Region Kellerwald-Edersee 2007).

The areas main characteristics are the thickly wooded low mountain range of the north-hessian mountainous country and the Edersee that offers a variety of water sports to its visitors. The landscape is marked by varied valleys and elevations. Big parts of the region have been declared "Nature Park Kellerwald-Edersee" in 2001 (410 km²) und "Buchenwald-National Park Kellerwald Edersee" in 2004 (57 km²). More than half of the region is subject to nature protection projects.

The LAG area has an insufficient supra-regional connection to public transport. The only railway goes 7 km into the area to Bad Wildungen. The region has a low population density of 70 persons/km² and an unemployment rate of 9.8% in 2006 that was slightly under the national average of 10.8%. Many young people between 18 and 30 years leave the region Kellerwald-Edersee for education purposes. Between 2000 und 2004 there has been an increase of GDP of 9.7% in Waldeck-Frankenberg and 8.6% in Schwalm-Eder-Kreis. In total Hesse has a higher GDP but a clearly lower increase of the GDP. The main economic activities of Waldeck-Frankenberg are various from manufacturing companies (31.6 % of gross product), public and private services (26.1%) and financing, renting and business services(22.5%). In Schwalm-Eder-Kreis the sector Trade, Catering und Transport is higher (17.7%) while the manufacturing companies are a lower (23.9%).

History of local development and place of LEADER program

The start for LEADER-local development was LEADER II from 1994 to 1999. Between 2000 and 2006 the region was supported through LEADER+. Through LEADER-II and LEADER+ the region nearly got 5.9 million Euros for its 198 projects.

Besides LEADER+ there have been several other infrastructure projects funded by the European Fond for regional development (ERDF), agricultural investment program, village renewal program and important single projects (e.g. "Wandelhalle Bad Wildungen" (event location) or different projects at the Edersee). In total die region Kellerwald-Edersee used 42,939,999.00 Euros (LAG Region Kellerwald-Edersee 2007: 48).

During the funding period 2007-13 the city Lichtenfels with 3000 inhabitants got included in the LEADER-region. It is situated in the north east of the region Kellerwald-Edersee. Fritzlar joined

in 2014 and became another important city (about 14.500 inhabitants) in the region. The admission of Fritzlar has been discussed controversially before because Fritzlar was no full member of the nature-park association and

administrative complications were expected.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial program

The staff employed for LAG management and had a high continuity; the main manager is the same person since 2000. The workforce capacity is one FTE and one half-time position.

The office for LAG is located in the district administration in the town of Bad Wildungen.

The decision making body is the board that consists of 14 Persons with voting rights who represent either cities of the region or associations like e.g. regional professional associations, the rural women association, nature conservation associations and the labour union. They meet every two or three month. In addition to that there are three representatives of the remaining districts and cities in the region, one for the nature park und one for the national park. They support the board in an advisory capacity. The LAG itself has a formal legal status, as it is typical in most federal states in Germany. Its name is Region Kellerwald-Edersee e.V. That status enables them to make project applications on its own.

The Region Kellerwald-Edersee e.V. has about 200 members from different sectors, most of them are represented in the association board, but there are also interested citizens without function. They all participate in the general assembly to elect the association board and approve the budget. There are further working groups who deliberate and give advice to the board.

Table 90: Composition of the board of Region Kellerwald-Edersee e.V. (LEADER 2007-2013)

Public sector	civil society and economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mayor of the city of Jesberg - Mayor of the city of Bad Wildungen - Mayor of the city of Frankenau - Director of the districts forest ownership "Waldeckische Domonialverwaltung" 	<p>Linked to agriculture/forestry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • districts farmers representative <p>Tourism / economic development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • association for support of national park (1) • non-profit tourism and development association (2) • hotel and catering association • district craft association <p>Civil society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private person • education institute • Labor union • Rural women association • Nature protection association

The share of women in the decision making body is 7 percent, so included is one woman (the representative of the rural women association) and 14 men. The associations aim is to have a share of women that is 30% in 2020.

Process of decision-making

Already during the writing of the local development strategy (2007-2013) there has been an enormous amount of ideas for projects. The projects that were the most promising to reach the development objectives have been included in the strategy as four leading projects (related to nature protection, national park, eco-friendly energy production and health).

During the funding period decision-making about projects is conducted as follows: After writing the project proposal (with an initial consulting for the applicant from the LAG-management) the eligible projects are presented to the LAG board by the manager together with the project selection matrix, filled out by the manager. When the board gives a positive vote for the project, the applicant is informed via letter. He can then apply for support from approval agency.

The feed-back of the LAG in some cases leads to changes in the project proposals (for example a better inter-municipal cooperation was fostered as they could get more points on the project selection matrix)

Altogether the decision making was described as very fair and based on facts and targets. But there was little displeasure about the instructions made by the federal state government concerning the selection matrix of the projects. Die LAG-chairman takes part in the decision making process, the regional manager doesn't. The origin from LAG-chairman is from the administration of the largest municipality Bad Wildungen.

The types of relations LAG instances with other entities:

- Working together with the Nature Park Kellerwald-Edersee und the National Park Kellerwald-Edersee and several touristic and cultural organisations in the region,
- Working together with district and municipalities in the LAG-area
- Exchange with other LAGs
- Participation in the LEADER regional forum (regular meetings with all other LAG managements in Hesse).

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

The LAG has been involved in LEADER since LEADER II and there is a long history of LEADER strategies, which are all affected by the poor accessibility and severe demographic challenges. A big focus of the strategies is the establishment and marketing of an attractive region for adventure and health tourism.

In LEADER+ and LEADER 2007-2013 the local development strategies both can be translated as "Nature and health and as partner of economic development". The superordinate goals were making the Region Kellerwald-Edersee a touristic destination, protect the unique selling points, increase life quality and support regional economy circles. This was specified with different fields of action. For 2007-2013 some of these have been: using existing potentials, climate protection/energy, creating a regional brand, optimisation of traffic flow, making the villages more attractive, widen the range of products, service, and secure supply in rural regions. The most supported fields of action were measures to diversify the rural economy (25%) and the establishment of basic services for the rural economy and population (22%).

The LEADER 4 local development strategy set four goals in the fields of: profiling of the region as touristic destination, development and protection of natural unique selling points, support of life quality and culture in the region, support of local economy cycle. Overall the region managed to put its plans into practice. An example for this is the planning and the begun implementation of the nature protection area Kellerwald or the approval of the national park as UNESCO world natural heritage.

What links with other territorial policies?

Once launched by the regional management, the nature park and the national park are firmly connected to the LAG. One point of connection is the exchange of board members between the nature park and the LAG. Furthermore the regional management is employed by the association of the nature park. In addition to that, several other cooperations on a regional, supra-regional, hessian and international level are set as goal in the Regional Development Plan. As main partners the districts, municipalities and local LEADER-regions are stated. Furthermore the region takes part in support programs for village development, urban restructuring and active core areas.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

Through LEADER the municipalities started to cooperate more closely because like this, they were able to realise more projects. With the positive synergies generated through the LEADER program different types of cooperation between private and public actors could be used to get out more of single projects. But the influence of the LAG Kellerwald on the local government is restricted as the municipalities' administrations avoid taking advice from such associations like a LAG that are no public agencies.

Since the financial resources of the municipalities have declined, the amount of the realised projects reduced because they cannot generate a sufficient amount of own resources to get public financial support. As a consequence private projects became more important. There was a high amount of persons (=28) who founded their own business. They got 30 percent support through LEADER and had to take the remainder themselves. The high private participation in LEADER is probably due to the regular press releases the regional manager published after the board meetings. They give information about the decisions of the board which projects will be supported. That encourages other people to apply themselves with their business ideas.

5.1.3. Italy

5.1.3.1. LAG Delta 2000

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

Situated in North-Est of the Emilia Romagna Region and part of two Province Ravenna and Ferrara, Delta 2000 is composed by 19 municipalities in the Emilia-Romagnolo Po Delta. The LAG covers 1,8821 km² and 190.743 inhabitants. Two important rivers, the Po and the Reno, and smaller rivers from the Apennines had participated to build the landscapes. Preserving the natural resources is a major challenge for the territory, which has to face the urbanization of the line coast and the draining of marshes.

The whole area of the Delta Po Regional Park belongs to the LAG area, giving a strong environmental direction of the local development strategy of the territory. Indeed, in the protected area, landscape has great interests with regard to wetlands and coastal areas. The park contributed to the recognition of protected areas, using different conventions or regulations: Ramsar convention on wetlands of international significance mainly as water fowl biotopes, the EU Birds Directive or the EU Habitats Directive, the Natura 2000 network.

Even if the population has been growing, net inflows were from migrations, while natural growth was still negative. The population structure has been changing with an increasing ageing population as well as a reduction in the young population.

The unemployment rate has reduced due to the demographic aging, but a big difference was observed according to gender: 9.3% for women and 3.8% for men²⁰. Local job market concentrated in the tertiary sector (37% of local jobs), especially in touristic services, industry (22% of local jobs) and agriculture (14% of local jobs)²¹. But agriculture and gardening, fish and aquaculture, food industry (sugar and seafood) and services, especially in tourism, are the main economic activities of the territory. LAG area received 1.5 million tourists in 2006, which 20% were foreign people²². Agriculture represented 20% of local businesses and up to 25% in the Ferrarese Delta. Farm sizes are quite small and agriculture is specialized, fruits and wines in Ravennate Delta, cereals and vegetables in Ferrarese Delta, with a lot of official indications of quality and origin such as green asparaguses of Mesola, Burson wine, honey, pinewood products. The presence of Delta Po Park is a great opportunity to develop ecotourism. Besides environmental resources, a great number of assets could contribute to that, such as and rural hostels and typical restaurants, farmhouses and educational farms, historical and cultural places. History of local development and place of LEADER program DELTA 2000 was created in 1994, as a non-profit association, by several municipalities, all beneficiaries of European Fund Objective 2 (Berra, Codigoro, Comacchio, Goro, Lagosanto, Mesola, Ostellato) and local economic actors.

The LAG is born from the concertation table put in place by the Emilia Romagna Region with the municipalities of Bassa Romagna, to find solutions to the problem of unemployment and the

²⁰ DELTA 2000, *Piano di azione locale per il Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo*, op. cit., p. 81.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 141.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 69.

isolation of the area. The concertation table had the objective of the implementation of an integrated development programme, based on enhancement of natural assess of the Delta Po Regional Park. Delta 2000 “works to enhance local resources and economic activities in an organic way”. Its aim is “an integrated system of natural, environmental, social, economic and cultural resources generating a complete product of excellent quality”²³.

The LAG Delta 2000 was built to implement LEADER program. In 2006, Delta 2000 has become an enterprise (“società consortile a responsabilità limitata”), with a bigger registered capital (120 333 euros in 2008) and a major role as a local development agency. Thus, it has been involved in diverse European programmes.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial programmes

The management of LEADER has been important for the last 20 years. It started with LEADER II (1996-2000) only for the Bassa Ferrarese area. Since 2001, the area has been extended to other rural municipalities of the two Province, Ravenna and Ferrara, to take over all the Po Delta in Emilia-Romagna and develop close partnerships with the Delta Po Park. The extension of area has corresponded to an increase of the number of the members of Delta 2000, until 90.

Table 11 : Compostion of the LAG Delta 2000

Public actors	Private actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - municipalities (22 then 20)* - Provincia of Ravenna and Ferrara (2) - Chamber of commerce of Ferrara and Ravenna (2) - Delta Po Regional Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture and forestry: trade unions, cooperatives (17) - Tourism (13) - Craft and industry (6) - Culture (1) - Services (4) - Trade unions (9) - Diverse (15) - Vocational training (1)

* 3 municipalities became 1 municipality during LEADER 4

Source : Delta 2000, 2008²⁴

- The local development agency is composed by 93 members, local public and private actors. All members constitute the general assembly (“assemblea dei soci”). A board of directors (“Consiglio di amministrazione”) has been elected for 4 years, which itself elected a president. To carry out LEADER, two instances have been implemented: A strategic body, divided in two components:
 - o A coordination committee composed by representatives of the Province of Ravenna and Ferrara, of the Park Delta Po, of the two chambers of commerce from Ravenna and Ferrara, called CCIAA. It defined the design of the local development strategy
 - o A steering committee, composed by institutional representatives and staff, involved in tourism, from the Province of Ravenna and Ferrara, of the Delta Po Park, of the chambers of commerce of the both Province, of touristic municipalities, of touristic

²³ Delta 2000 website consulted 2015/12/04.

²⁴ DELTA 2000, *Piano di azione locale per il Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo*, Ostellato, 2008, p. 9-10.

trade unions or associations. It focused on the design of the local development strategy, regards to the tourism, and particularly on touristic marketing.

- A technical body , divided into 3 parts :
 - o The LAG office (“Ufficio di Piano”), composed by the staff of Delta 2000, in charge of carrying out the local development strategy
 - o The assessment committee composed by technical experts, staff from the Province of Ferrara and Ravenna, referrers of the implementation of the EARDF, Axes 1, 2, 3. They were involved in the instruction, the assessment and the checking of the projects.
 - o The participative work groups, composed by technicians from the chambers of commerce, experts on economic activities. They have been in charge of the implementation of integrated and collective projects.
- Process of decision : Written in the Rural regional Programme, the process of decision might be different according to each Italian region. In Emilia-Romagna Region, since the last programming, beneficiaries have had 3 ways to receive public funds in the frame of LEADER programme : “A bandi”: Call for proposals were published by the LAG to carry out the local development strategy. The call for proposals gave information about the action and the beneficiaries targeted, the potential supported projects, the assessment criteria and the rating. The Programming committee (“Consiglio d’amministrazione”) approved the call for proposals before the publication. Candidates proposed project. Delta 2000 selected the projects, with experts from the Province and the chambers of commerce.
- “Procedura a convenzione” : The GAL has had a mutual agreements with an organization, about a specific project. That is the case for example, with the Delta Po park.
- “Procedura a regia diretta GAL”: The LAG has put in place the project, following the public procurement contracts. That means Delta 2000 proposed public trends to buy external provision, then selected the provider and made a contract with him. That was used, for example, for cooperation project.

Types of relations LAG instances with other entities

The Delta Po park has been created for the preservation of the biodiversity and the landscape. But this regional park, focused on environmental, is not a tool for local development. That is the reason why, the local actors have been involved for creation of Delta 2000 and then in LEADER programmes. Furthermore, it allowed implementing a local development strategy with natural areas and agricultural areas. Since the beginning, the Delta Po Park and Delta 2000 have been very close. The Region Emilia Romagna has had a decentralized organization where the Province and the LAGs’ have been delegated to implement the regional rural development program. The Province have been considered as a closeness administration of the Region and the LAGs’ a closeness administration for remote areas like mountains or the Delta Po. Finally, Emilia region have continued the European action for disadvantaged regions of the latter European Programmes. Of course, Delta 2000 has worked close with the both Province because some measures of the RDP were put in place by the Province, other by the LAG as it is resumed below:

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

Delta 2000 has been involved in LEADER since 1996 (LEADER 2, + and 4). Implemented in Basso Ferrarese area from 1996- to 2001, LEADER II objective was to enhance local resources of the Bassa Ferrarese to prevent abandonment of the territory particularly from young people who did not find conditions to live there. The local development strategy focused on the combination of agriculture and tourism in the Po Delta Park, with the enhancement of local products and the setting up of ecotouristic products. With LEADER +, the area of the LAG increased until 19 municipalities, 13 from the Provincia of Ferrara, 6 from the Provincia of Ravenna. The strategy concerned the enhancement of the environment, touristic promotion, vocational training for local businesses and enhancement of local food products. Influenced by the RDP, the LEADER 4 local development strategy had focused the enhancement of the competitiveness of the territory, with three strategic directions : i the improvement of the competitiveness of local food products, ii the improvement of landscape and environment to increase the biodiversity and iii the networking of environmental, historical and cultural heritage, to improve the quality of life and the diversification of economic activities, particularly to foster the multifunctional role of agriculture. What links with other territorial policies? Since the integration of LEADER in EARDF, the local development strategy is linked to the declination of the rural development programme of the Emilia-Romagna Region at level provincial, called PRIP Programma rurale integrato provincial. So Delta 2000 has worked close to the both Province Ravenna and Ferrara. Since 1996, LAG delta 2000 has been dedicated in European funds and call for proposals, objective 2, Equal, Interreg, Life Program.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

According to Di Napoli and Di Renzo (2013), Delta 2000 is a LAG with full ability to make decisions and take action, from the design to the management of the local development strategy. Delta 2000 is recognized for its dual capability of creating relationships between local actors and administrative and financial skills necessary to manage European projects as required by the European and Italian regulations. That is the reason why a lot of European projects have been implemented there. LAG Delta Po defined itself as a “technical mediator” with a “key role”, between economic, social and cultural local actors and between different interests of the territory²⁵.

Delta 2000 supports the networking of local actors. Even beneficiaries are private and public actors but some public actors played a key role, such as the most important municipalities, the park Delta Po and the two province. An educational environmental cooperative is involved in the LAG and succeeded to build diverse projects with local actors to contribute to put in place the strategy.

²⁵ DELTA 2000, *Piano di azione locale per il Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo*, op. cit., p. 136.

5.1.3.2 LAG VEGAL

a) Territory: general characteristics and history of local development and place of LEADER program

General characteristics of the territory

Situated in Veneto Region and Venezia Provincia, the Venezia orientale is composed by 22 municipalities between the river Tagliamento and the North Lagoon of Venezia. Near Venezia a very famous city (25 million of tourists in the city and around per year), the territory has also big important seaside resorts (7 million of tourists), Cavallino (6 million of tourists), Jesolo (8 million of tourists), Eraclea, Caorle and Bibione (6 million of tourists). Just a part of Venezia Orientale was involved in LEADER, but the other municipalities (in yellow) had their own policy, declination of EARDF for a local development strategy, in coherence with the LEADER local development strategy of LEADER area. LEADER area of VEGAL covers 933.5 km², 16 municipalities and 147 144 inhabitants, that means 157.6 inhab/km². This a coastal area with drained marshes, rivers and channels.

The territory of VEGAL has been involved since the 90's in the enhancement of natural, historical, archeological, cultural and gastronomic heritage to implement a local development, alternative of tourism mass. All municipalities of the LAG belong to the Italian classification B1, which means urbanized rural area with an intensive specialized agriculture. As many places in Italy, the territory has a lot of cultural resources, with strong historical architectural interest as Concordia Sagittaria, Caorle, Portogruaro. The draining of the marshes at the XXth century lets diverse points of interests too, Eraclea, Jesole, Torro di Mosto and Ceggia. Landscape is dominated by water: coastal line, rivers, wetlands and marshes with a strong biodiversity and remarkable places.

Population growth has been important in the 90's, but in the 2000's it has slowed down. The population has become gradually older, with an important share of 15-64 years old. Unemployment rate is quite low 5.47%, but within the range of the average rates in Veneto and 3rd Italy. In 2001, two third of men had a job and one third of women. Agriculture played a significant role in the territory of the LAG, 77% of the municipality surface area were land for farming in 2000, but a decrease has begun. Most of the farms were small to medium : 81% of farms had less than 5 ha. The plots are small which means difficulties for rationalization and mechanization. In this area the trend has been the diminution of farms and the increase of farm size. Diverse local products are typical: fruits and vegetables, Montagio cheese (PDO), wines (PDOs')...

In Venezia orientale, tourism is largely beach-based, with a strictly limited emphasis on cultural and natural potential. But not seaside municipalities could be week-end destination with numerous assesses, gastronomic, musico-cultural, natural and artistic tourism. Agritourism is underdeveloped (only 40). History of local development and place of LEADER program In 1993, "Conferenza dei sindaci del Veneto orientale", forum for discussion and decision and political coordination body of all the mayors of Venezia orientale is recognized by a Regional Law (LR n16/93). That was a decentralization process from the Region Veneto to local communities of Venezia Orientale.

The VEGAL is constituted in 1995 as a local development agency, to manage the first LEADER

programme of the area. It was the first cross-sectoral plan of the territory. The Veneto orientale had for the first time the opportunity to put in place a bottom-up approach based on local needs and local partnerships. VEGAL was created as a non-profit organization with the judicial personality of private law. VEGAL mission is to encourage the improvement of local supply, the recovery of the local identity, and the dissemination of experiences and good practices for the innovation. VEGAL has been involved in local development and has supported local projects using European, national, regional and local fundings.

VEGAL is involved in LEADER since 1994 (LEADER 2, + and 4). It has been dedicated in European funds and call for proposals, objective 2, Equal, Interreg, Life Program.

b) Governance of LEADER program and other territorial program

The LAG is organized as an association bounding public and private members, which are public and private institutions (46). The *general assembly* (“assemblea dei soci”), composed by the delegates from each member has met each year. The local development strategy is designed and approved by the general assembly. Thus, VEGAL has a *board* (Consiglio di Amministrazione), composed of elected delegates (9 in 2008 but 5 in 2014 to reduce the costs of compensation) from general assembly. The board has met more or less each two months. The board is the Programming committee. It is in charge to implement the local development strategy. A *president* is chosen among the board. VEGAL has also a *board of auditors* (“collegio dei Revisori) to assess that the program is well managed.

Table 12 : The composition of the LAG VEGAL

	Public sector	Private actors
2008-2010	- Municipalities (3) - Provincia di Venezia(1)	- Agricultural trade unions (3) - Craft trade union (1) - Business trade union (1)
2010-2014	- Municipalities (2)	- Agricultural trade union (1) - Craft trade union (1) - Business trade union (1)

Source: VEGAL²⁶

- Written in the Rural regional Programme, the process of decision might be different according to each Italian region. In Veneto, since the last programming, beneficiaries have had 3 ways to receive public funds in the frame of LEADER programme : “A bandi”: Call for proposals were published by the LAG to carry out the local development strategy. The call for proposals gave information about the action and the beneficiaries targeted, the potential supported projects, the assessment criteria and the rating. The Programming committee (“Consiglio d’amministrazione”) approved the call for proposals before the publication. Candidates proposed project. The Payment agency (AVEPA) assessed the proposals according to the selection grid, described in the call for proposals. VEGAL was invited to this selection to give its point of view but the Payment Agency is responsible.

²⁶ *Ibid.* ; VEGAL, *Itinerary, paesaggi e prodotti della terra, Programma di sviluppo locale, op. cit.*

- “Procedura a regia” The GAL has had a mutual agreements with an organization, about a specific project
- “Procedura a gestione diretta” : The LAG has put in place the project, following the public procurement contracts. That means VEGAL proposed public trends to buy external provision

Types of relations LAG instances with other entities VEGAL is the operative agency of the local public power, the “Conferenza dei sindaci”. The Region Veneto as Management authority decided which territory could be a LAG and which local strategy could be implemented. Even if the Veneto LAGs’ had designed the local development strategy, the action and the selection criteria, the Region retained overall responsibility for the implementation. Since 1994, VEGAL has been dedicated in European funds and call for proposals, as presented below

c) Strategy of LEADER program, articulation of LEADER strategy with other local strategies

13 municipalities were involved in LEADER II, in area 5b. The local development strategy focused on the rural innovation in Venezia orientale with three objectives: to improve local supply, to support tourism, trades and crafts, small businesses and to recover the local identity. With LEADER +, the local development plan “from the Sile to the Tagliamento” was involved in the creation of soft mobility itineraries along the rivers of the area. The local development strategy focused on (i) structural actions on cultural heritage, on the preservation of natural resources and the creation of soft mobility itineraries, (ii) actions for local business involved in services or agriculture and (iii) actions to support methodological experimentation, culture, technical assistance, and communication The LEADER 4 local development strategy was based on “Itineraries, landscape and agricultural products”.

The main objective was to create itineraries between the coast and the hinterland which enhance environmental, agricultural, historical, cultural resources. Five strategic guidelines were planned: life quality, diversification, landscape and environment, short supply and local products, governance. The development model for Venezia orientale is the cultural district, a translation of the the famous Italian district model, as local productive system. What links with other territorial policies?

Since the creation of the local development agency, VEGAL has provided the secretariat to the “Conferenza dei sindaci del Veneto orientale”, forum for discussion and decision and political coordination body of all the mayors of Venezia orientale.

VEGAL has been a LAG since 1995 with LEADER II, LEADER+, LEADER 4.

VEGAL is committed in the secretariat of diverse forums or contracts, “Conferenza dei sindaci della Sanità”, an health forum discussion, the “Intensa Programmatica d’Area della Venezia Orientale”, the territorial approach between the Veneto Region and subregional areas, the “Associazione forestale del Veneto Orientale”, a local forestry association, the “osservatorio del paesaggio della bonifica del Veneto orientale”, Landscape Observatory of draining marshes.

As mentioned above, VEGAL was involved in diverse European programmes. In 2007-2013 it was the lead partner for the FLAG “Costiera Veneziano”. It participated in several INTERREG projects.

d) Effects on local governance: empowerment of local actors, intensity and form of cooperation between actors (private-private, private-public)

LEADER has provided a local development agency, based on a great European Programme expertise. According to Di Napoli and Di Renzo (2013), VEGAL matches as a strategic competence center for local actors, under influence of the regional power. Local actors concern especially public actors. LEADER support concerned mainly public actors. The cooperation is strong between the most important municipalities of the territory. VEGAL would like to carry on focusing its attention on private actors, small businesses.

5.1.3.3 LAG Antico Frignano: On Going

5.2. First results of comparative analysis

5.2.1. Design of LEADER governance

Our first findings highlight the diversity of administrative structures and the relative importance of territorial levels to implement rural programs. What are the consequences on the implementation of LEADER?

In Germany, as LEADER-territories were relatively free in deciding on their delimitations, they do not always go together with administrative or other existing units. Relevant units are (as members, supporting structure or base of delimitation) inter alia Municipalities, districts, nature parks or former districts. LAG members from the public sector are usually local mayors or from the administration of municipalities and districts, but not from higher state levels. In some Länder it is obligatory that representatives of the government authorities, which are responsible for the eligibility check, are consulting members in every LAG.

In France, territorial structures relevant for LEADER are “*Territoires organisés*”. These are not new local government levels, but other types of defined territories between municipalities without regard to existing administrative borders. Most common territorial structures are “*Pays*” or Regional natural Parks (PNR) ²⁷. LAG members from the public sector are elected representatives of the municipalities, intermunicipality associations²⁸, other public structures as Pays or natural parks, or public professional structures as chambers of agriculture, commerce or crafts.

In Italy, the LEADER territories are defined according to specific national criteria. But in each Region the LAGs have a legal status that gives them independence. However, each LAG has to respect regional RDP priorities. For example, in Veneto, there is a traditional rural governance model and LAGs in LEADER focused on matters of Axis 3: local services and rural tourism, quality of life and landscapes. Main actors vary according to the local development strategy. In Emilia-Romagna, in the LAG Antico-Frignano, the priority is the development of local products supported by Axis 1, which is also illustrated by the bigger share of Axis 1 measures in the

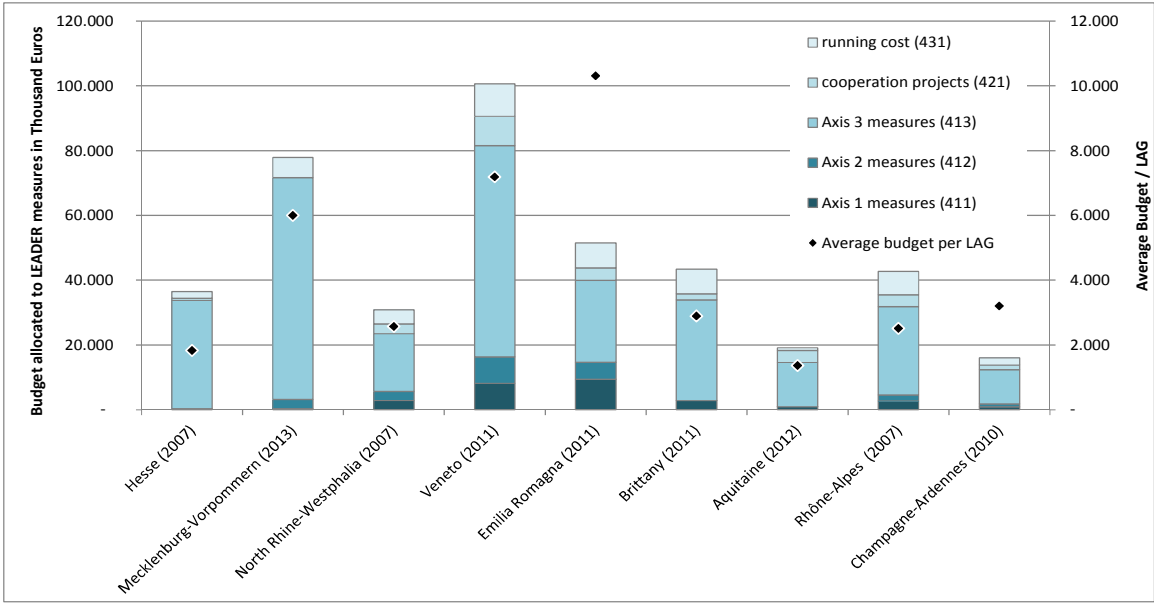
²⁷ Natural regional parks have been constituted in France to combine the setting up of sustainable local development in the area and the protection of the scenery and heritage.

²⁸ When LAG's are « Pays », public members are intermunicipality associations and not municipalities.

LEADER budget (Fig. 13). In that case, the main actors here are agricultural cooperatives and private agri-food enterprises. In contrast, in LAG Delta 2000, with a local development strategy based on the enhancement of local products and wetlands, agricultural trade unions and tourism actors are well represented. In both case, LAG members from the public sector are the municipalities, and when present, actors from parks and “*Unione di communi*” (association of municipalities).

As Fig. 13 shows, the financial importance of LEADER varies significantly between the regions/Länder concerned and, what is more important, there are strong differences in the budget of public funds available for each LAG. The highest budget is available to LAGs in the economically well-off Italian regions and the more lagging behind east-German Bundesland, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. The differences between the other French regions and German Bundesländer are smaller, showing the highest budget/LAG in this group in an economically poor region (Champagne-Ardeche).

Figure 13 : Budget (public funds) allocated to LEADER measures by Region/Land



Source: RDPs and annual implementation reports, see <http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en/country>.

5.2.2. Factors influencing territorial governance

a) External factors

In terms of **general characteristics**, size of LAG territories varied from 1 to 4 whatever country in terms of surface (1500 km² on average) and 1 to 5 for population (120 000 inhabitants on average) (Table 13). If size of LAG is very heterogeneous in each country, smaller LAG are located in Germany while Italian’s LAG are more large with a higher level of population density.

LAG areas are often located it in intermediate context than in rural context. But it is in France where we find the most rural context, far from big cities and with a the lower population density.

Table 13 : Size of LAG territories and spatial location

	Surface (km ²) LAG	Pop [2010-2012] (2)	Pop density (inh./km ²)	Distance city > 200K inhab. (km)	Natura 2000 area (2012, except D, 2011) % surface	Land use CLC (2012, except D, 2010) % surface	
						Woodland	Grassland
PNR Monts d'Ardèche	1834	89761	49	163	6	57	9
Ouest Cornouaille	662	90349	137	212	6	4	7
Bassin d'Arcachon-Val de l'Eyre	1470	141433	96	57	14	58	1
Pays de Langres	2310	47017	20	199	13	34	34
Südliches Paderborner Land	712	84266	118	52	16	29	12
Kellerwald-Edersee	935	70462	74	45	28	41	13
Stettiner Haff	1624	73027	47	41	67	30	15
Veneto Ovezia Orientale	930	157028	169	52	13	1	<1
Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo	2535	342993	135	69	33	2	<1
Antico Frignano	2184	112614	52	88	19	47	<1

Germany : 2010 ; Italy : 2011 ; France : 2012

Sources : France (INSEE), Italie (ISTAT), Germany (Regionaldatenbank D).

In term of physical characteristics, land use is highly contrasted. Woodland is much present in French (except Cornouaille) and German territories and almost absent in Italy (except Antico Frignano). Natural resources and environmental value, observed by part of grassland and Natura 2000 areas, is very high in German territories and in Pays de Langres in France. In Italy, grassland is rare but Natura 2000 significantly present.

Most of LAG area have a positive demographic dynamic in recent period, which had improved compare to previous decade (Table 14), except in Germany where 2 of 3 LAG lose population and in most remote rural area in France (Pays de Langres). Positive net migration balance explains positive dynamics which more than offset the generally found natural balance deficit.

The social structure characteristics are poor due to difficulties to have comparable data about socio-professionnal structure and income. If we considere the age structure of population, we note strong differences between German LAG concerning part of young and old people but a high proportion of working age population. French LAG have a lower rate of working age population and more retired population, than Italian LAG seem to have low part of young people.

Table 104 : Population dynamics in LAG areas

	Variation population [1999-2001] to [1999-2012] (1)				Population age [2010-2012] (1)		
	Annual rate of pop change	natural balance rate	net migration balance rate	net migration rate in 2010	% pop 0-19 years	% pop 20-64 years	% pop 65+ years
PNR Monts d'Ardèche	0,61	-0,29	0,9		21	54	25
Ouest Cornouaille	0,38	-0,63	1,01		20	54	26
Bassin d'Arcachon - Val de l'Eyre	2,1	0	2,1		22	55	23
Pays de Langres	-0,3	-0,14	-0,16		21	55	23
Südliches Paderborner Land (2)	0,38			+0,14	22	62	17
Kellerwald-Edersee (2)	-0,48			-0,23	19	59	22
Stettiner Haff (2)	-1,67			-0,69	14	62	23
Veneto Ovezia Orientale	0,65	0	0,65		17	61	21
Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo	0,81	-0,35	1,16		16	59	25
Antico Frignano	1,07	-0,84	1,91		17	58	25

(1) Germany : [2000 – 2010], Nuts 3 level ; Italy : [2001-2011] ; France : [1999-2012]

(2) Data calculated at nuts 3level (Nuts 3 area where LAG are located)

Sources : France (INSEE), Italie (ISTAT), Germany (INKAR)

All LAG territories have positive evolution of employment even in territories which are losing population in Germany and in France (Pays de Langres) (Table 15). Tertiary sector explain these evolution everywhere witch offsets general negative rate of change for agricultural and industry sectors. Employment structure show some significant national and local specificities :

- Agriculture and forestry sector is very low in Germany, tends to be higher Italy and is much variable in France.
- Industry occupied 3 workers of 10 in Germany (except Stettiner Haff) and Italy and generally less than 2 of 10 in France (except in Pays de Langres)

Despite age structure, German LAG tend to have a lower level of active population rate. French territories are more concerned with unemployment which consistently exceeds 10% and continue to increase during last decade. Unemployment rate is lower in Italy and much lower in Germany (except in Stettiner Haff region) and unemployment rate decrease strongly during 2000's.

Table 115 : Employment and labour market dynamics

	Employment [2010-2012] (1)	Annual rate of change employment [1999-2000] - [2010-2012]	Sectorial structure in [2010-2012]			Active population [2010-2012]	Unemployment [2010-2012] (2) Rate %
			Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	Industry	Tertiary		
PNR Monts d'Ardèche	35590	0,8	3,8	19,7	76,5	70	14,6
Ouest Cornouaille	26501	0,48	7,7	18,8	73,5	70	11,8
Bassin d'Arcachon - Val de l'Eyre	43910	2,78	3	16,3	80,8	73	11,9
Pays de Langres	17920	0,04	7,9	29,2	62,9	73	10,7
Südliches Paderborner Land (2)	102079	0,95	0,7	28,3	71	69	5,6
Kellerwald-Edersee (2)	59084	0,27	1	30,8	68,2	65	4,6
Stettiner Haff (2)	21865	Na	2,8	14,9	82,4	66	12,3
Veneto Ovenezia Orientale	66458	Na	5	31,9	63,1	75	8,1
Delta Emiliano-Romagnolo	147333	Na	10,6	28,9	60,5	72	6,8
Antico Frignano	49366	Na	7,5	38,8	53,7	71	18,3

(1) Germany : 2010 ; Italy : 2011 ; France : 2012

(2) Germany : 2010 (15-65 years) ; Italy : 2011 (15-64 years) ; France : 2012 (15-64 years). Definition : Employed population at place of residence + unemployment

Sources : France (INSEE), Italie (ISTAT), Germany (INKAR)

b) Impacts from administrative framework on LAG-composition:²⁹ especially if there are deteriorations in funding conditions some groups become dissatisfied and don't engage anymore (Examples: Some stakeholders from forestry in Paderborner Land left the processes as a result of changes in funding rules from LEADER+ to mainstreamed LEADER 2007-2013, but came back for 2014+ because they expect improvements in funding conditions; in the Stettiner Haff new actors will be integrated 2014+ because of demands from the Land to include topics like energy/climate protection. In Brittany, the Region disagreed with the state-dominated 2007-2013 LEADER selection process and left the state and its "*services déconcentrés*" to manage the program. As in 2014-20 the Region become the managing authority, all "Pays" are now involved in LEADER.

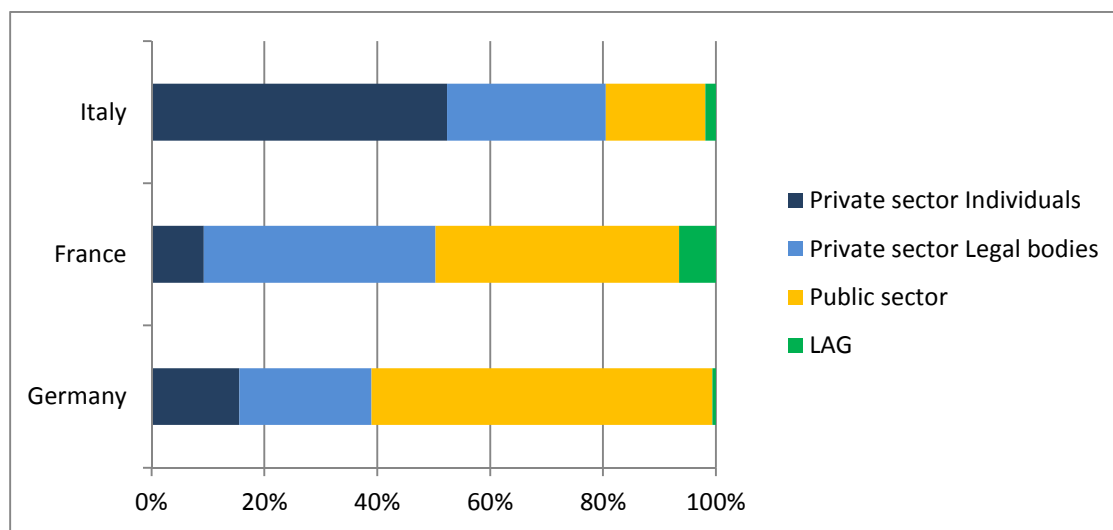
c) Changes of LAG-delimitations in connection with administrative borders: To meet the needs of local stakeholders, it is important that the size of the region is not too large (Example: In the funding period 2007-2013 Stettiner Haff switched back to the smaller area, it already covered in LEADER II. This change clearly supported the need of local stakeholders to act in the region they really know well). The opposite example was found in Rhône-Alpes with the LAG of Ardèche: for reasons of local political balance, the area proposed in 2014-2020 is enlarged to correspond to the whole Department with the risk of getting away from the local actors.

²⁹ Navarro et al. (2015) present an international comparison about the extent and impact of participation over the different LEADER-periods in Wales and Spain. Teilmann and Thusen (2014) analyse types of LAG-municipality interactions in Denmark.

5.2.3. LEADER governance effects

Regarding the type of beneficiaries there are some obvious differences between the three states which reflect to a certain extent the differences identified in the comparative analysis (s. Fig. 14). The high share of public sector as project operators in Germany follows higher capacities and the strong role of municipalities in LEADER processes, whereas the high share of private sector individuals in Italy shows, that it is probably not only Emilia Romagna where economic actors, agricultural cooperatives and trade-unions, agri-food enterprises or tourism enterprises play an important role.

Figure 14 : Public funds spent for LEADER projects by type of beneficiary



Source: Output Indicators: realised 2007-2012 (<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/>)

a) **Impacts of the LAG status on the private actors' participation in LEADER:** the participation of private actors evolves quite differently in our case studies according to the LAG status and the independence from the administrative structures. For example in Delta 2000 or Ardèche the LAG is closely linked to a Natural Park. In Ardèche, the LEADER strategy is quite similar to the Park's strategy and private actors have difficulties becoming involved in the LAG. In contrast, in Delta 2000, created to give a local development strategy to the natural regional park, private actors are numerous and concerned environmental educational actors, sustainable tourism enterprises and local food enterprises. In this case, LEADER contributes to reinforce the partnerships between public and private actors and the cohesion of local actors.

b) **Impacts of territorial engineering on local actors involved in LEADER:** Engineering provided by institutional structures (Land, State, Region, territorial development institutions ...) could have an impact on local actors in terms of social learning and empowerment. For example, in the remote area "pays de Langres", LEADER II local actors were trained to improve their practices in terms of project management or information dissemination. LEADER created an area of "publicisation" of local issues and brought a relevant lever for a local development that includes weakest actors in a common project and an active citizenship. In Langres, LEADER II highlight the famous Denis Diderot (who is a native of the region) to design a LEADER program

based on cultural heritage: the objective is to develop the pride and self-confidence of local actors.

First assumptions are that especially in France, but sometimes in Germany as well, the importance of territorial control games by national authorities tends to reproduce a territorial order where public policy is taking shape in confined spaces defined a priori. In these situations, the defence of institutional territory (Pays, Parks, regional project territory, districts ...) becomes the dominant logic of action and may inhibit local initiatives. In Italy, the same situation could be observed but played by regional authorities.

Nevertheless, in the nine regions under study and in remote areas in particular, LEADER, as a rural development tool, participates in reinforcing local empowerment thanks to territorial engineering.

6. FIRST CONCLUSIONS

Our findings highlight the diversity of LEADER implementations in the three countries under study and the influence of institutional factors. Each program reflects specific socio-economic structures and different conceptions of local and/or rural development. The design of the programs influence, for example, via the setting of funding conditions or demands on institutional settings at the local level, the extent to which local actors from different spheres get involved in local development via LEADER. Further analysis of our case studies is required to trace the path between these differences induced by the framework and the effect LEADER has on local governance and development.

Further discussions of our empirical results are intended for future publications.

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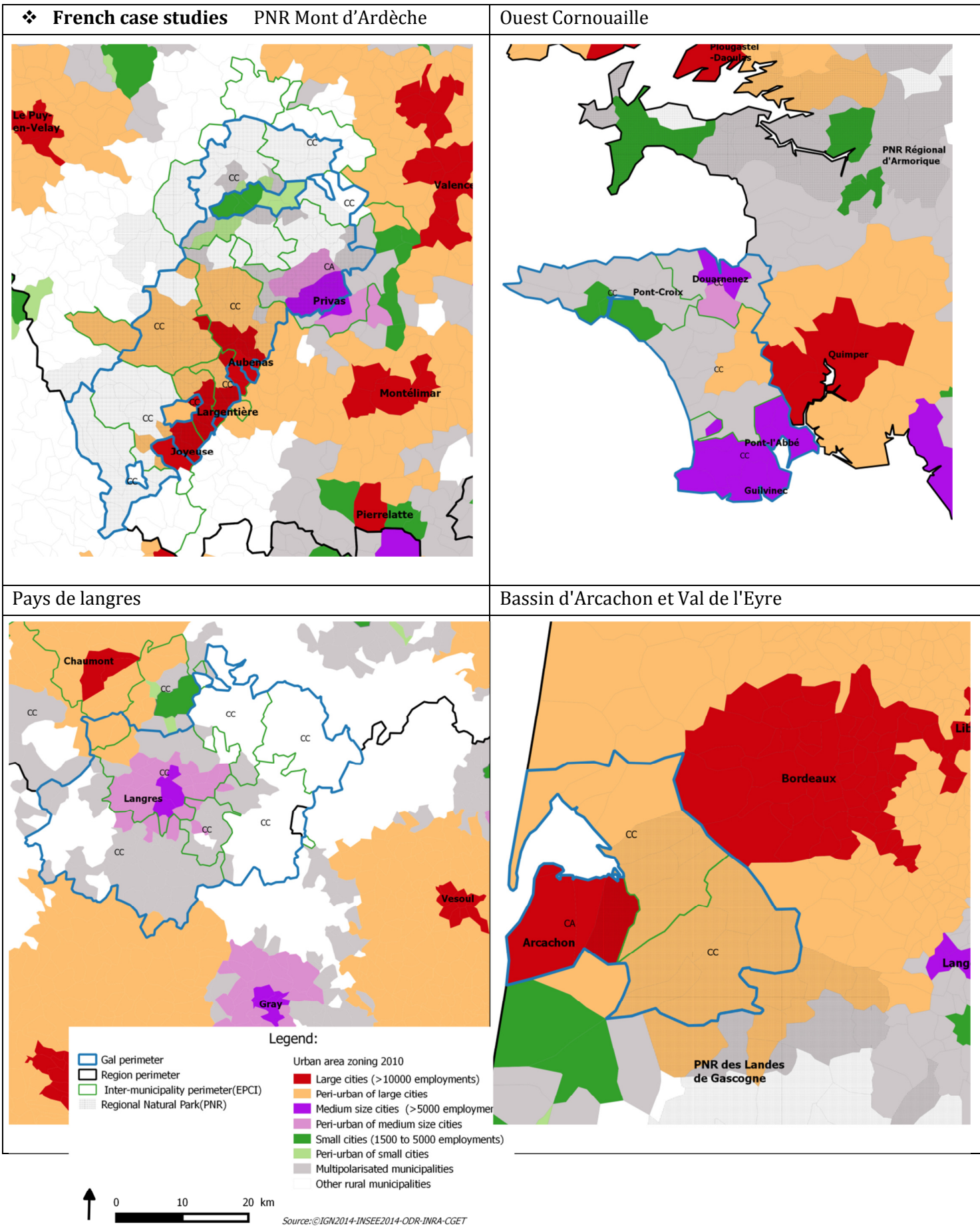
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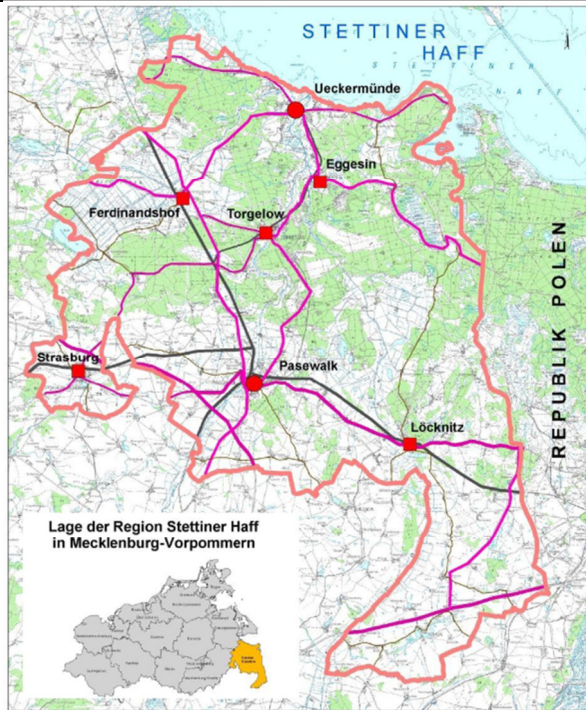
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ANNEX : CASE STUDIES MAPS



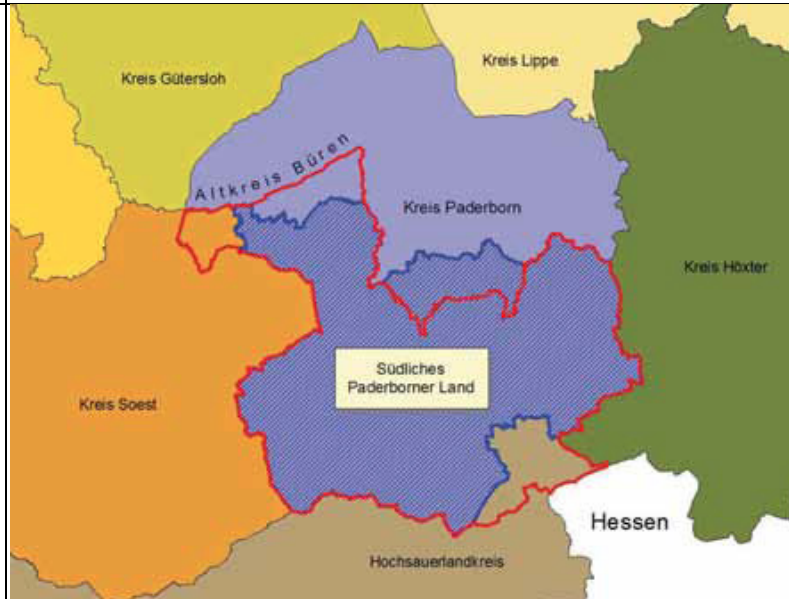
❖ German case studies

Stettiner Haff



Source : Gebietsbezogene lokale Entwicklungsstrategie zur Umsetzung des Schwerpunktes 4 - LEADER - des Entwicklungsprogramms für den ländlichen Raum Mecklenburg - Vorpommern 2007 - 2013

Südliches Paderborner Land



Source: Extract from the document "Gebietsbezogenes Integriertes Entwicklungskonzept LAG Südliches Paderborner Land"

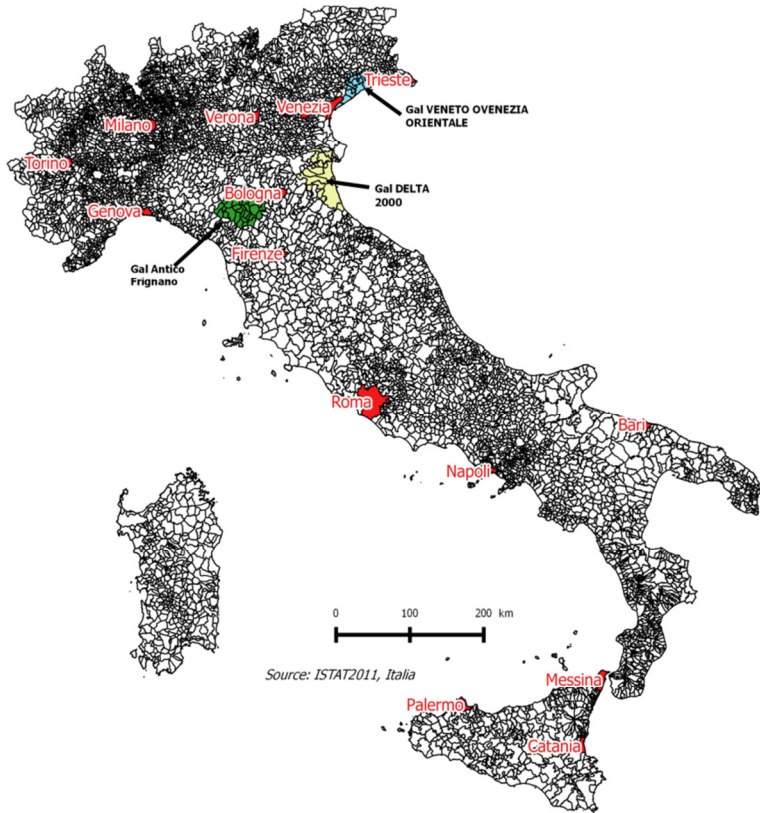
Kellerwald-Edersee



Source :

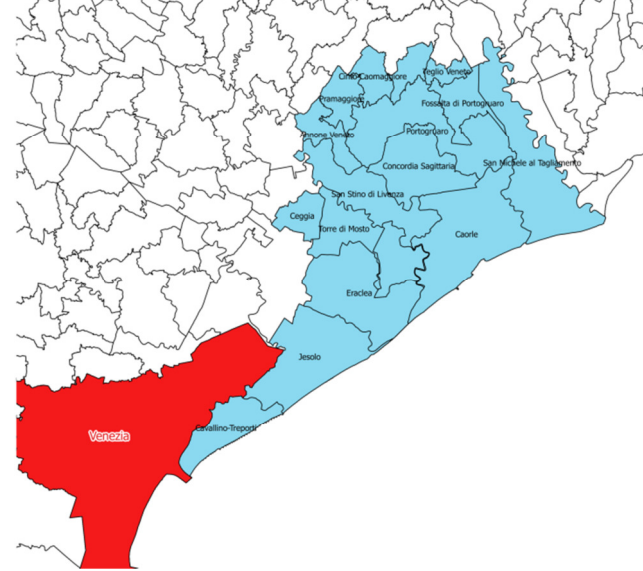
❖ Italian case studies

Spatial position Map

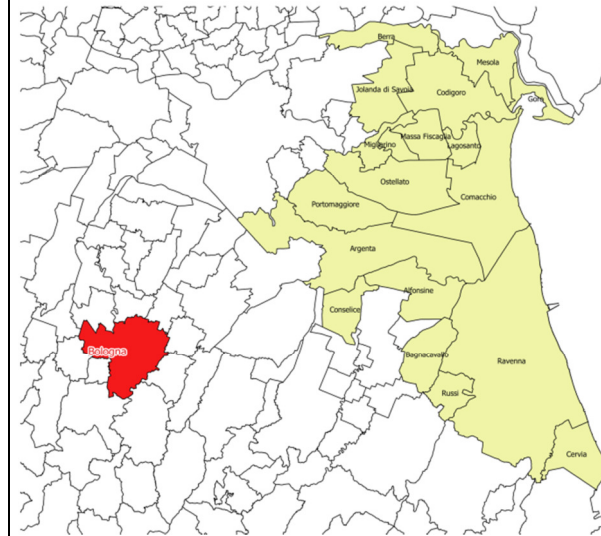


Source: ISTAT 2011, Italia

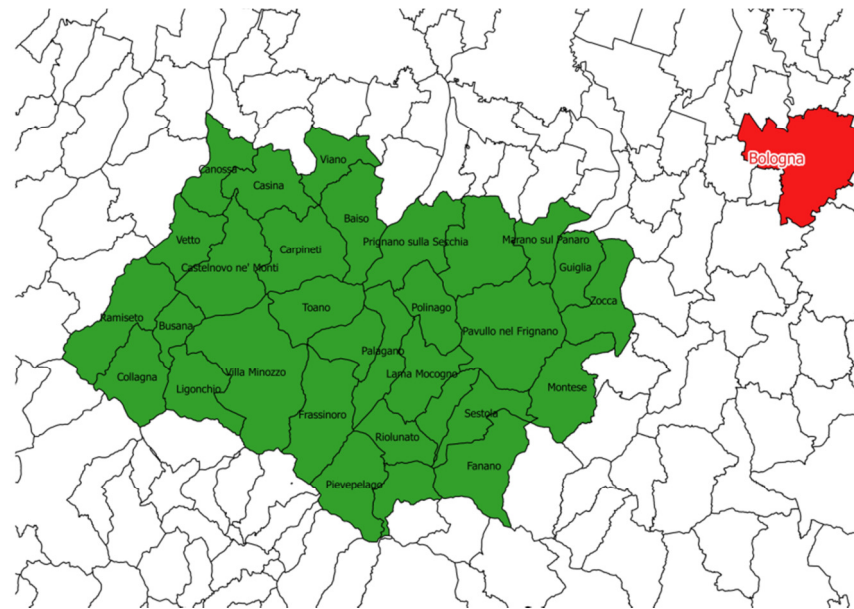
Veneto Ovezia Orientale



Delta 2000



Antico



Frignano





Towards **R**ural **S**ynergies and **T**rade-offs between
Economic Development and **E**cosystem Services

The TRUSTEE project in a nutshell

Title	Towards Rural Synergies and Trade-offs between Economic Development and Ecosystem Services
Project coordinator	Cécile Détang-Dessendre, INRA UMR Cesaer (Dijon, France)
Grant Agreement	235175 RURAGRI (ANR- 13-RURA-0001-01) And support from Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF), Förderkennzeichen 033RA04A
Funding Scheme	RURAGRI ERA-NET, European Commission 7 th Framework Programme
Total cost	2,6 M€
Duration	2013 – 2016 (36 months)
Short description	<p>The trade-off/synergy dilemma between economic development and ecosystem services is one of the major issues of sustainable rural development.</p> <p>The main research objective of TRUSTEE is to disentangle the complex relationships between economic development and ecosystem services at different spatial scales using an interdisciplinary approach that involve scientists, experts, and stakeholders. The sub-objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyse the multi-scaled determinants of economic development and ecosystem services on a large European gradient of rural and rural/urban areas.- Increase our understanding of how to achieve mutual benefits for economic development in rural areas and ecosystem services.- Identify and assess the governance mechanisms and policy instruments that enhance sustainable rural vitality in very diverse contexts.- Produce synergies among international researchers of varied disciplines and between researchers and various stakeholders at different governance scales.
Consortium	16 partners from 8 European countries
Read more	http://www.trustee-project.eu/