

Capacity building, governance and knowledge – rural regional learning

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Murska Sobota, Slovenia

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DERREG - project

- www.derreg.eu
- WP4 – Capacity building, governance and knowledge
 - 6 case study areas; research done in collaboration with respective partners
 - Comparative analysis on well-working arrangements
Deliverable D4.3
 - www.derreg.eu/content/resource-centre/case-study-reports
 - Conceptual framework:
 - Wellbrock and Roep (forthcoming), Governance of place-based learning and innovation in rural areas, [European countryside](#) (open access journal)

Positioning

Various policies {



Interfaces



Different places
shaped by
various practices {

Development strategies:
scope, scale, targets, beneficiaries, etc

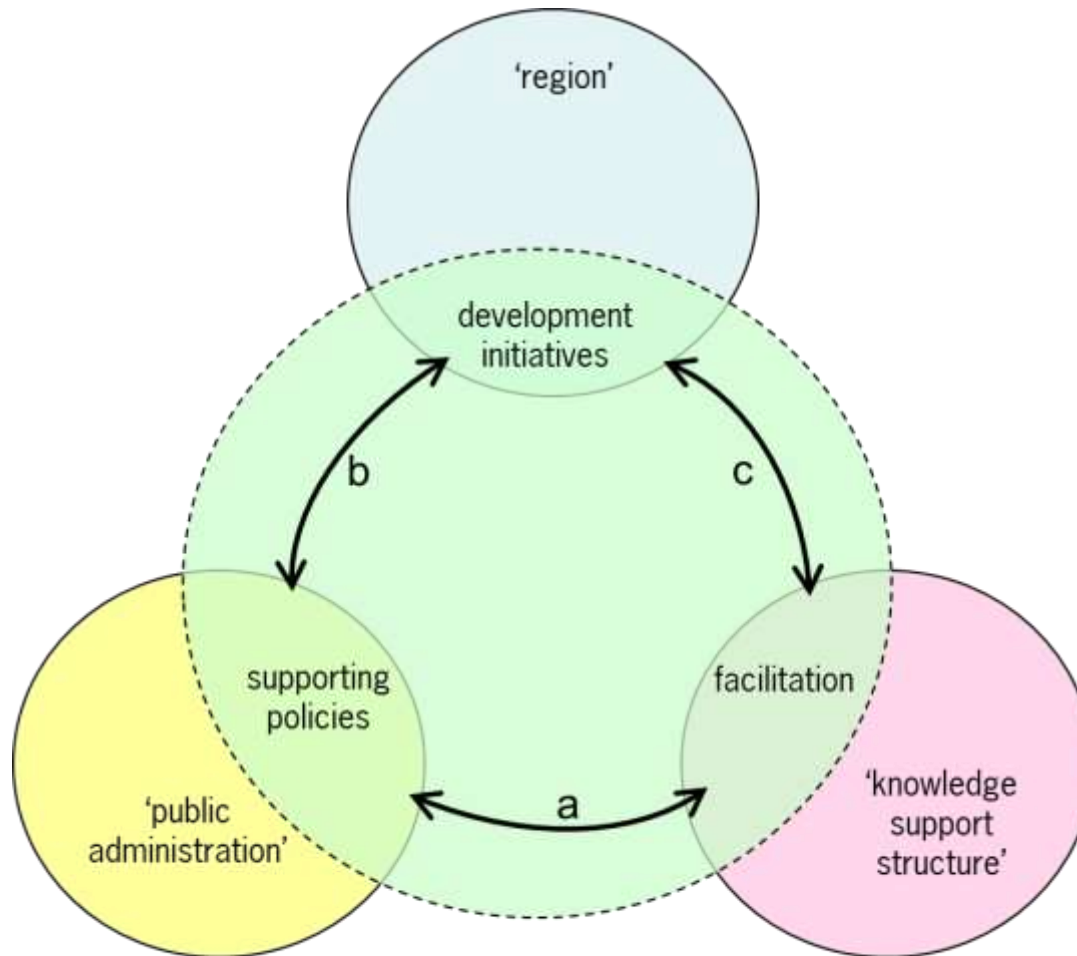
Place-based development

Development activities

WP4 Capacity building, governance & KSS

- Support of capacity building
 - Enhance self-efficacy
 - More resilient, robust, vital regions
- Support to joint learning and innovation in grassroots development activities in various rural places
- How can this support be best arranged?
 - Governance of joint learning and innovation in rural regions
 - Focus – arrangements and working of interfaces

Heuristic framework of learning rural region



What did we do (and did not do)?

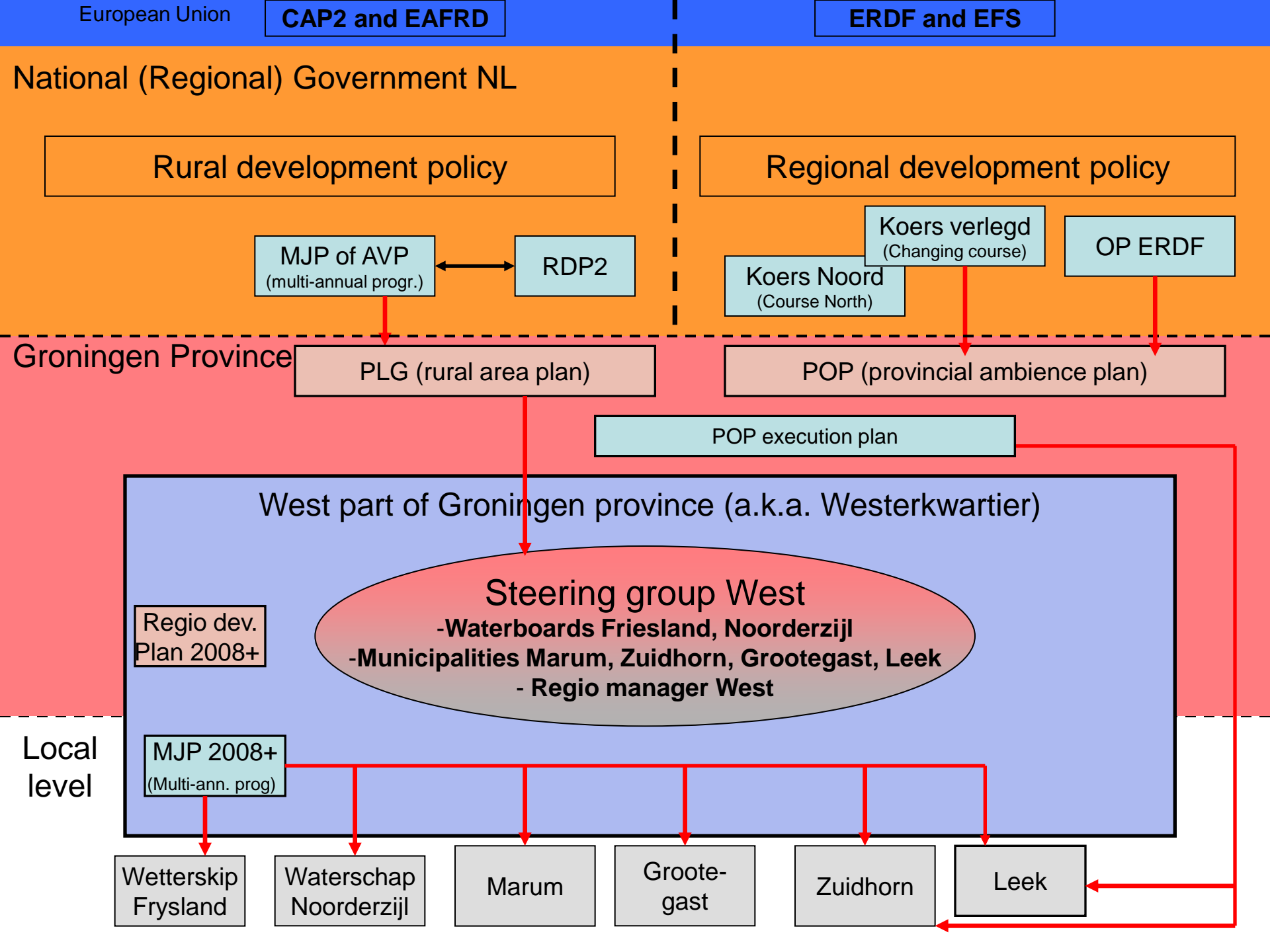
- A) Mapping policies and knowledge support structure
 - complexity – a comprehensive overview is difficult
- B) Inventorizing grassroots development initiatives and their activities
 - Focus on diversity, incomplete
 - Joint learning (and innovation) assumed
- C) Identify type of support for joint L&I:
 - 1) how support is arranged and operationalised
 - 2) how beneficiaries evaluate the support
- D) Select well-working operational arrangements

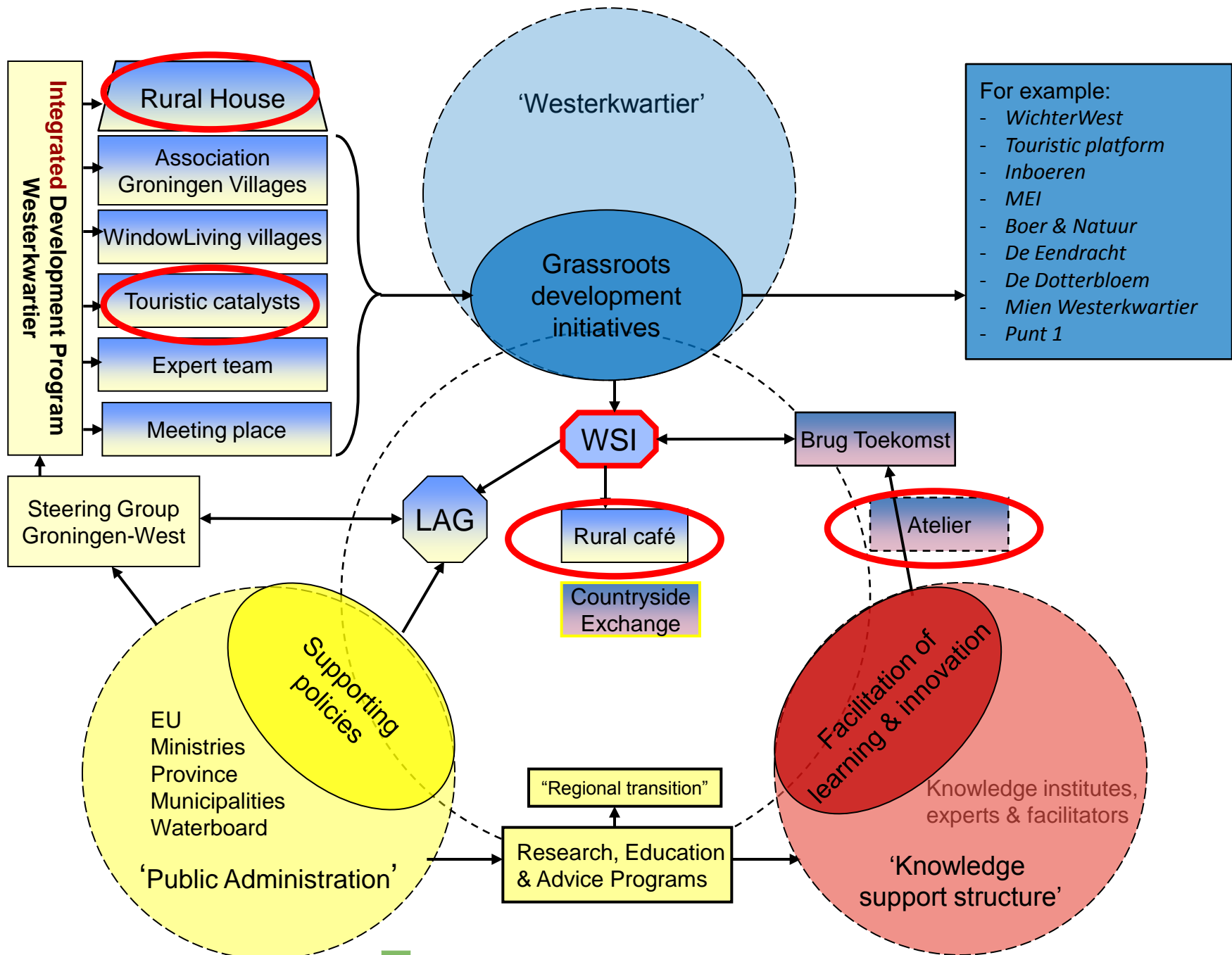
The Westerkwartier: An introduction



WWW.WESTERKWARTIER.COM









Rural house, Westerkwartier NL

Photo: W.Wellbrock



Rural house



- Low-threshold access point: Window to connect with public administration & knowledge agents
 - Various experts brokering between initiators & supporters (WSI, LAG, VGD, Province , Municipality & Knowledge institutes)
 - Financed by LEADER
 - Likely continued as a virtual access point





Touristic Catalysts

Photo: Groningen Province



Touristic Catalysts: Support & Facilitation



- LEADER project to bring tourism to a higher level: collaboration, better facilities, promotion & regional branding
- Main tasks
 - Network incubator
 - Encouraging business plans and investments
 - Collective promotion
- Association of touristic entrepreneurs is now active





Rural Cafés

Photo: Groningen Province

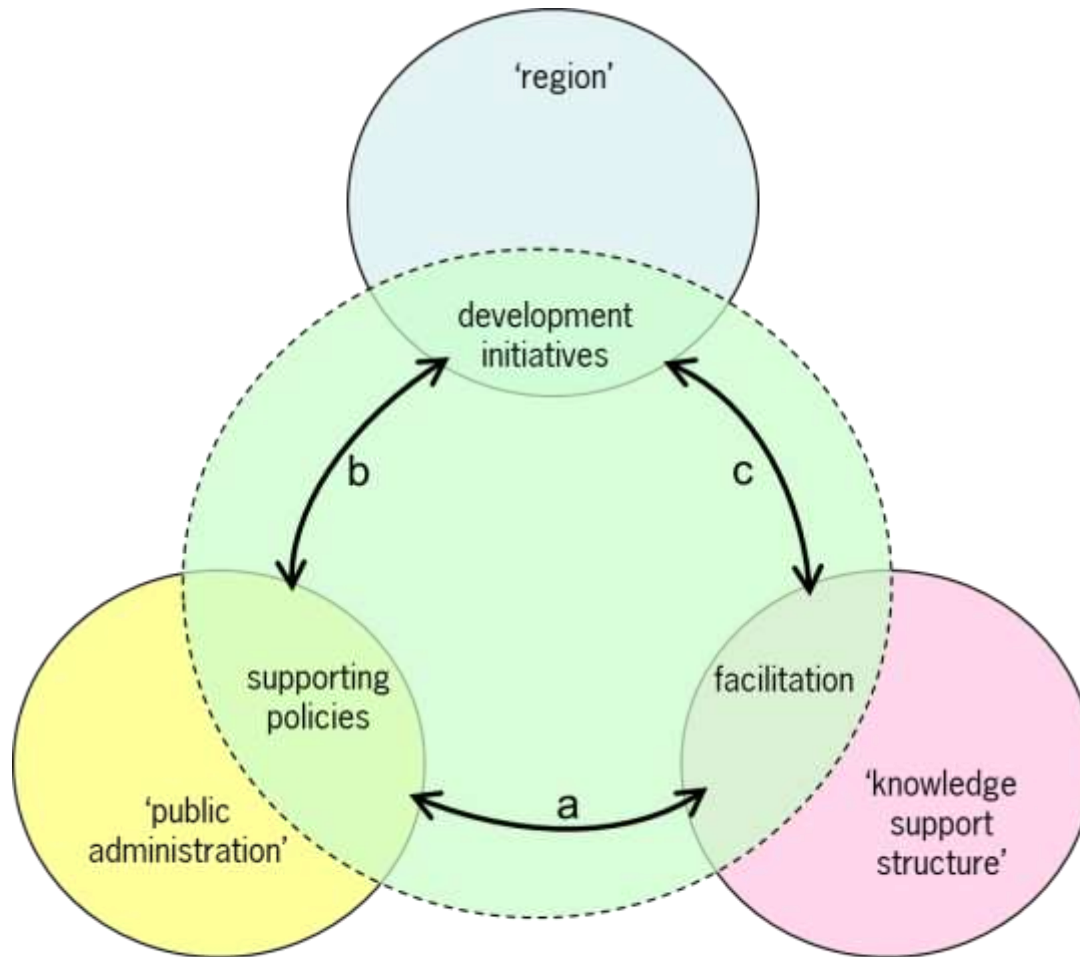
Rural Cafés



- Informal exchange of ideas & networking between initiators, public administration & knowledge agents
- Main objectives:
 - Give citizens possibilities to present their regional development projects/ ideas
 - Exchange development ideas
 - Informal networking in stimulating atmosphere
 - Themed cafés (people with same interest)



Rural regional learning: evaluation & reflection



Evaluation of support & facilitation



Well-working arrangements

- An arrangement is composed of:
 - **shape of operational space** (procedures, rules & regulations) – room for manoeuvre
 - **scale of operation** (region, community, business sector)
 - **delegation of tasks and roles** to operational agents and agencies
- Well-working arrangements are well targeted and a -tuned composure

Delegation of tasks and roles

- Mediating tasks and roles are crucial, e.g.:
 - Network brokering
 - Advice, assistance & process management
 - Lobbying
- Delegation of task and roles to:
 - Regional development networks
 - Public private partnerships
 - Public institutes
 - Professionals

Some lessons learned

- The context (different places) is important, but in general:
 - Operational agents / agencies are crucial to make an interface work well and policies effective
 - Their efficacy depends on the operational space given to fulfill specific tasks and roles, including informal ones
 - Shared leadership is needed to take off
 - Proper scaling (not same as administrative level) towards targeted practices or places is crucial
 - Facilitation by KSS is underdeveloped – regular funded education, research and advice can be more engaged

Discussion

- What does the 'learning region' perspective add?
 - Comprehensive view – will enhance integration
 - Highlights the need for well-working interfaces to make policies more effective
 - Stresses the (public) support of joint L&I in grassroots development activities (place-based development)
 - And makes the facilitation of L&I by the KSS explicit – challenge to have the KSS
 - Reflexive monitoring and evaluation (learning from) as driver of a learning region

Thank you for your attention!

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