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AgriLink

Agricultural Knowledge:
linking farmers, advisors and researchers to boost
innovation

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Outlines of the presentation

1. **Project consortium**
2. **Context, rationale and objectives of the project**
3. **First results**
4. **Interactions with SCAR-AKIS-SWG**

Project consortium

16 partners from 13 countries

- universities (AUA, UTAD)
- research institutes (HUTT, INRA, RURALIS, WR, BSC)
- advisors and consultants from public organisations combining advice and applied research (UZEI, INTIA, AACB)
- private SMEs (VIN, HCC, EKOT)
- a farmer-based organisation (ISP)
- a communication and distance learning specialist (OU)
- and a project management specialist (IT)



ΓΕΩΠΟΝΙΚΟ ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ
AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS



Context & Objectives

Context: advisory services back on agenda

▶ Strong expectations within policy frameworks

- EU regulation: CAP, FAS, EIP, Rural development, Pesticide reduction
- National and regional planning...

▶ A reinvestment of research on advisory services

- EU projects (FP7&H2020): Insight, Solinsa, PRO AKIS...
- Academic communities: ESEE, AIAEE, IFSA

▶ New networks of practitioners

- Practitioners: EU-FRAS & G-FRAS, IALB, national associations
- Policy makers: SCAR-AKIS-WG-1-2-3-4

▶ BUT...

Knowledge gaps

▶ Knowledge gaps about farmers

- What are their sources of services and information?
- Sharp farm structural change & heterogeneity

▶ Knowledge gaps about advisory services

- Who are they?
- New entrants and business models in the sectors

▶ Knowledge gaps about innovation in services

- How do advisory organisations innovate?
- New modes of open innovation

▶ Knowledge gaps about the effectiveness of public policy

- What are the new mode of governance of farm advice?
- Transformation of back-office (PPP, ICTs, regionalisation...)

Goal of AgriLink

The goal of AgriLink is to stimulate transitions towards more sustainable European agricultures by

- i) furthering the understanding of the roles played by a wide range of advisory organisations in farmer decision-making
- ii) enhancing their contribution to learning and innovation.

3 core ideas with major methodological implications

1. No straightforward relations between innovation and sustainable development

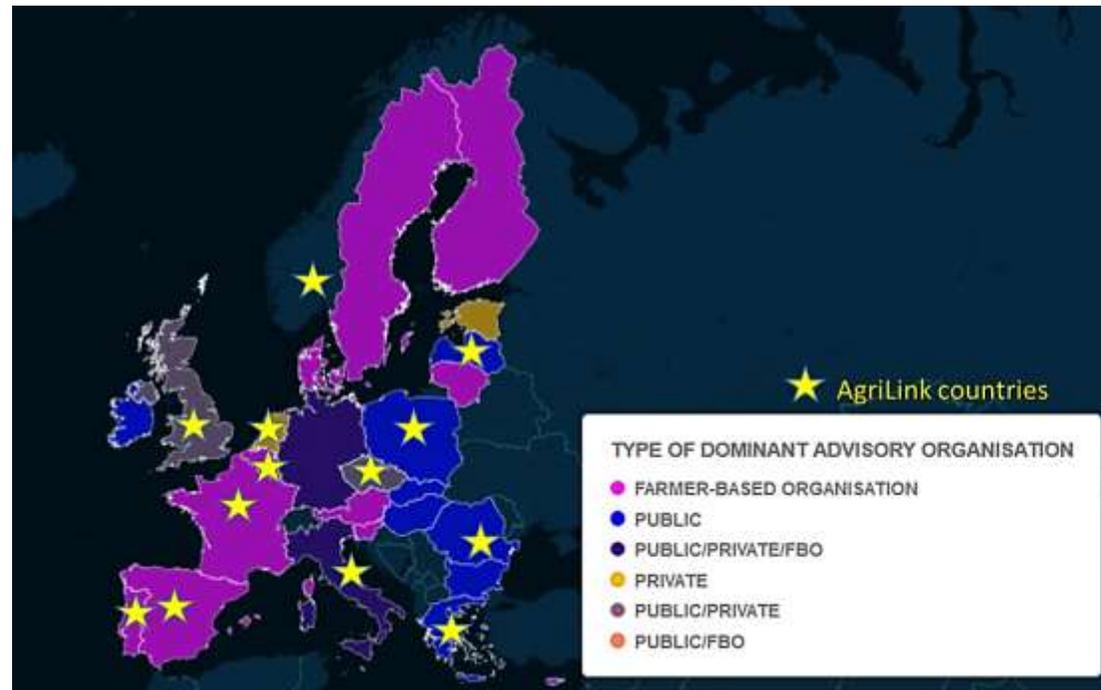
- ▶ Which role for advisory services in arbitrating trade-offs?
- ▶ Interviews with adopters and non adopters
- ▶ Clusters work on various innovation areas

Innovations	Innovation clusters	Sustainability Challenges		
	Description (9 INNOVATION CLUSTERS)	Environment, Climate, Resilience to pest &diseases	Growth and Jobs	Food Security
Technological	TECH –Autonomous vehicles, robots, drones, intelligent sensors and Precision Farming	✓	✓	✓
Process – agro-ecological practices	BIOP – Biological Pest Control	✓		✓
	SOIL – Soil Improving cropping systems	✓		✓
Marketing and financial	RETR – Retro-innovation		✓	
	NCRO – Introducing new crops		✓	
	DMAR – Direct marketing		✓	
	NACT – Developing new activities	✓	✓	
Social and organisational – collaborative	COMM – Natural resources common management	✓	✓	
	LABO – Labor Innovative arrangements	✓	✓	

3 core ideas with major methodological implications

2. Accounting for diversity of rural contexts

- ▶ 34 focus regions



3. Integrating the diversity of advisory suppliers

3 major contributions

1. New concepts for a multi-level analysis of the contribution of advice to innovation

- MicroAkis
- Farm advisory regimes

2. Strong effort of empirical data collection

- > 1000 farmers' interviews
- Better understanding the supply of services

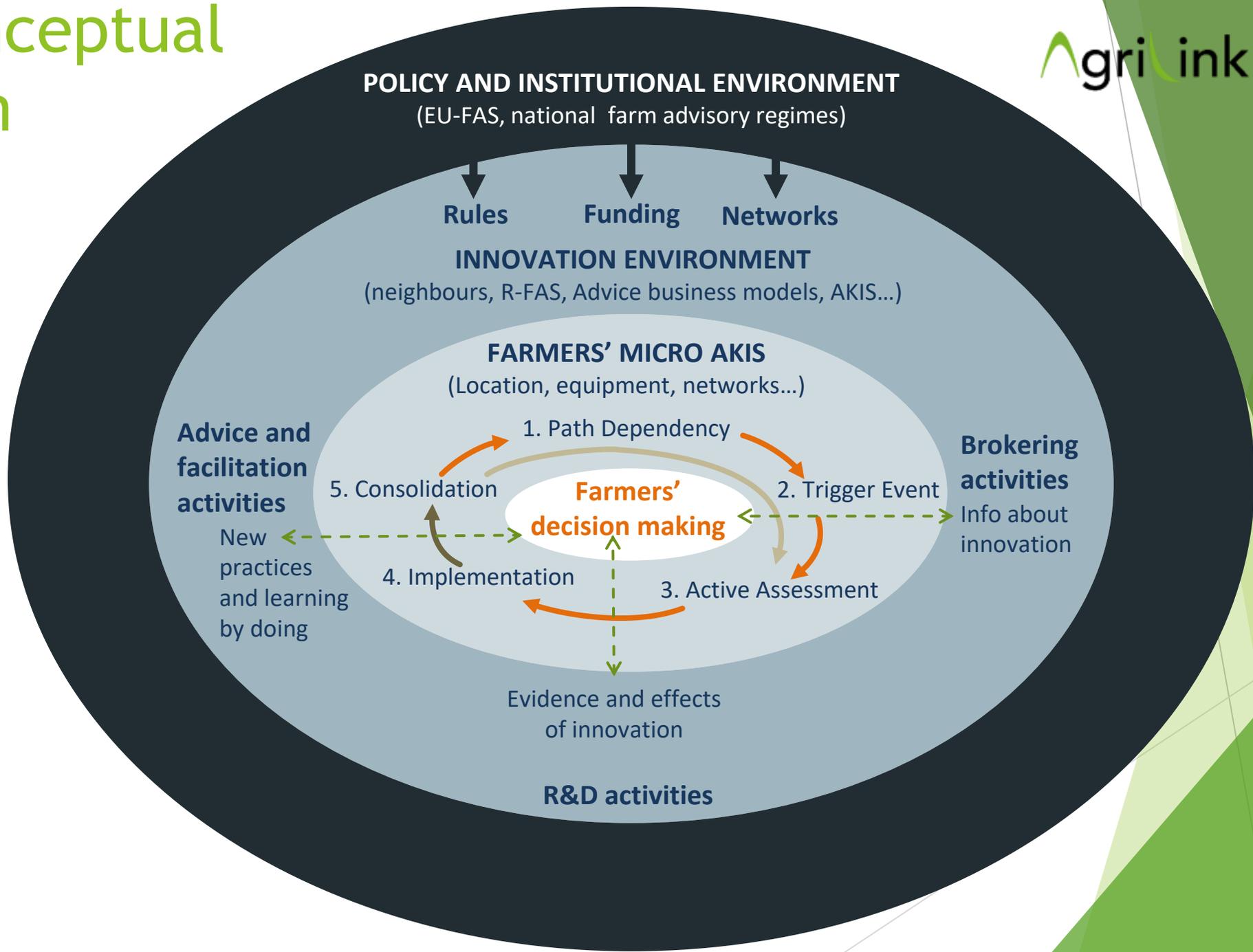
3. Original approaches to foster interactive innovation

- 6 Living Labs for co-design of service innovation
- Sustainable Transition Scenarios

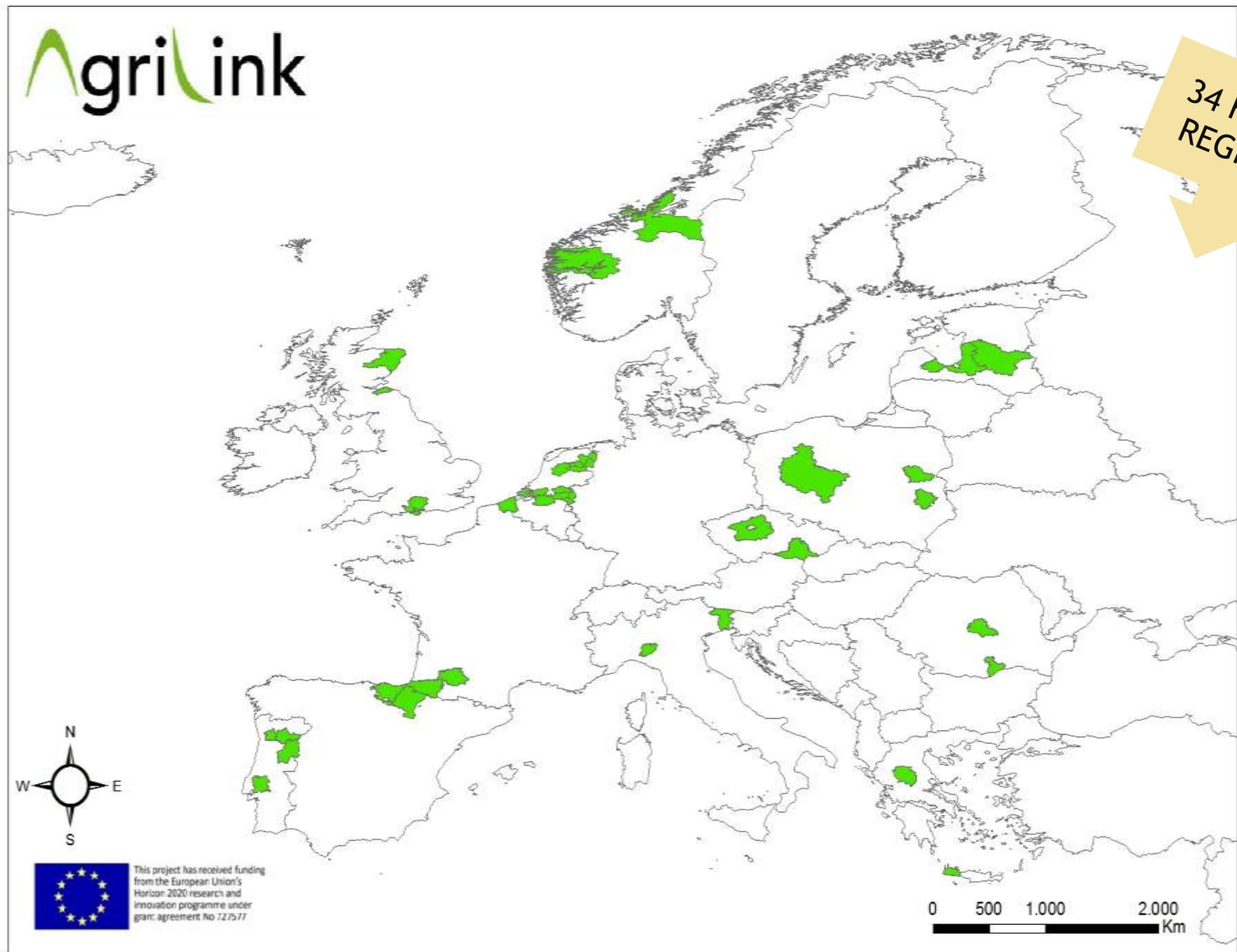
First achievements

Our conceptual diagram

[WP1]



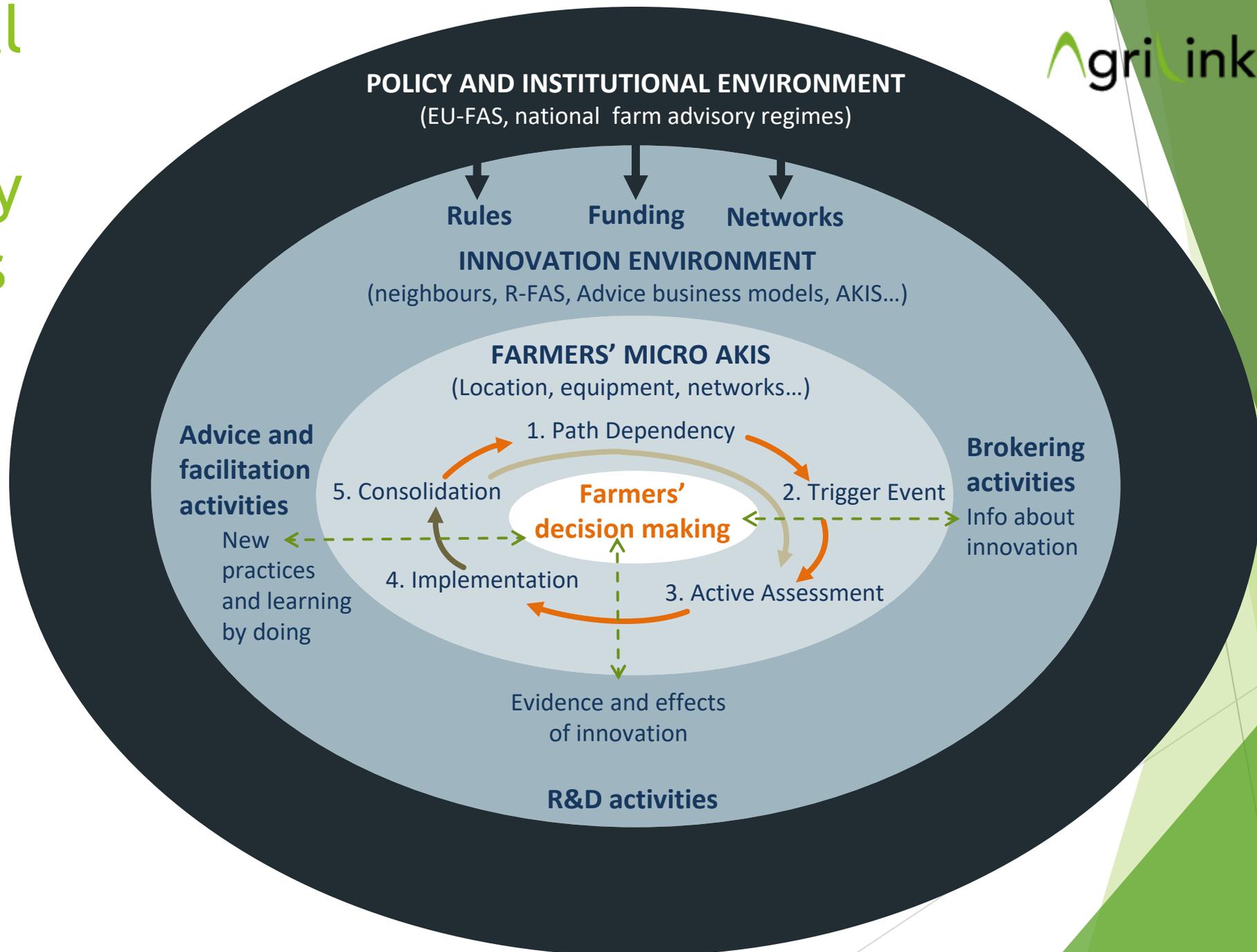
More than
1000
farmers'
interviews
in 34 focus
regions
[WP2]



Preliminary results

- **About AgriLink's theoretical model of farmers' decision**
 - Predominance of external trigger event
 - Key role for advisory organisations in awareness building
 - Overlapping of assessment and implementation phases
- **About the advisory landscape**
 - New players, new knowledge needs, new roles for conventional advisors
 - Lack or limited presence of impartial advisory services in several cases
- **Farmers dropping innovation**
 - linked to lack of support in assessment/implementation stage
- **Farm structure matters**

National Farm Advisory regimes [WP4]

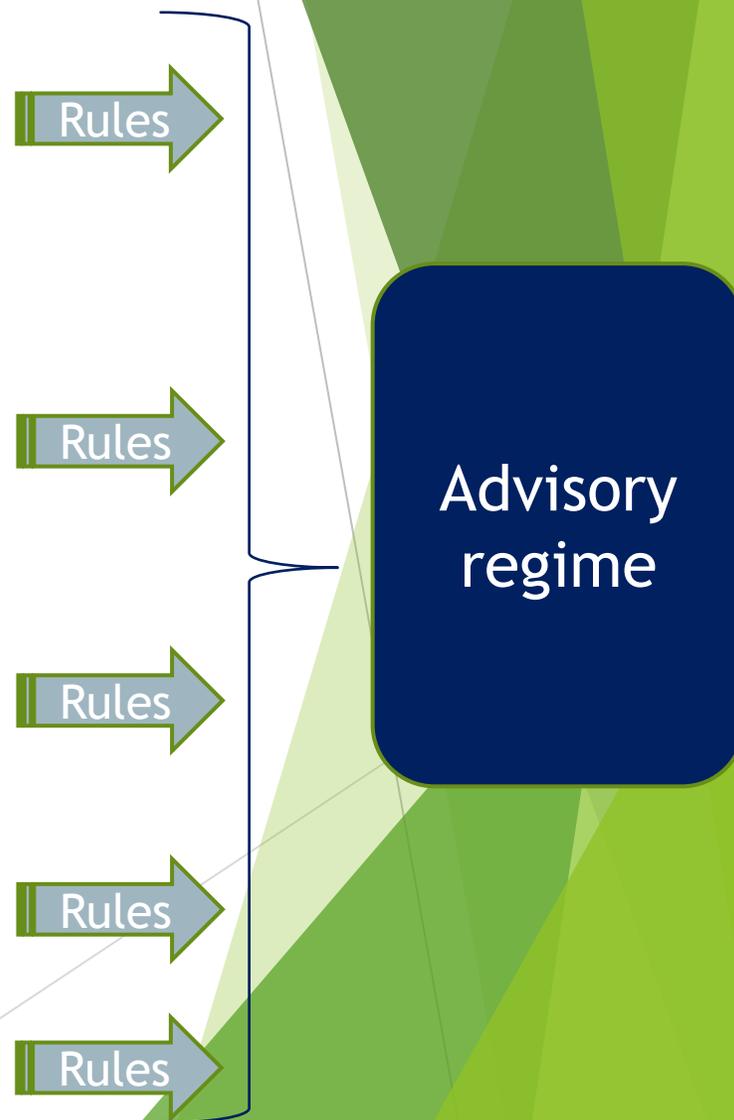


The need to understand national farm advisory regimes

- **PRO AKIS enabled to describe the structure of AKIS & advisory system**
- **One step beyond: understanding the dynamics and ‘fabric’ of farm advisory services**
- **→ “We need to understand the institutions (rules, norms) playing on**
 - Advisory activity and quality (certification, standards, accreditation...)
 - Access to and price of services (subsidies...)
 - Renewal of advisors’ knowledge and investments (focus on back-office)
 - Training schemes
 - Support to networks
 - Funding of R&D investments”

The dimensions of advisory regimes

<u>Identity of the suppliers</u>	- Who is accredited, listed as supplier?
<u>Attributes of the advice (content, form)</u>	- Requirement in terms of type of services (one-to-one, group advice, ICT based...) - Support to the renewal of advisors' knowledge and investments <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Training schemes○ Support to networks○ Funding of R&D investments
<u>Financing</u>	- Funding schemes facilitating access to the services (subsidies...) - Market regulation
<u>Boundaries of the service</u>	- National vs. regional competence - Role of farmers' associations
<u>Control of the service' quality</u>	- Control of advice quality (certification, standards, accreditation...)



Two Steps methodology

▶ 1. Characterising Advisory Regimes

- There are different national advisory regimes
- They are determined by the degree of state involvement
- They depend upon the investments and roles of a variety of actors (farmers' representatives, private actors...)

▶ 2. Analysing the dynamics of Advisory Regimes

- A role of the European Union (convergence?)
 - Analysis of the role of EU-FAS
 - Debate about the effects of the concept of interactive innovation
- A role of innovation areas (divergence?)
 - Analysing sub-regimes

Two comparative surveys

▶ **Assessment of the EU-FAS regulation**

- Comparison between 12 countries
- Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom

▶ **In-depth analysis of advisory regimes**

- Comparison between 7 countries
- Czech Republic, France, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom

Enhancing the interaction
between
SCAR-AKIS-SWG
&
AgriLink

Potential interactions with the SCAR-AKIS

- ▶ **Reviewing/discussing our outputs**
 - Practice abstracts ([direct interactions](#))
 - Testing material to support facilitators of LL ([webinars](#))
- ▶ **Participating to AgriLink's events**
 - Presenting the results of our field work ([workshops & e-conferences](#))
 - Co-designing transition pathways for advisory systems ([Socio-technical Transitions Scenarios](#))
- ▶ **A joint study is planned in AgriLink**
 - Proposition: Contrasting AgriLink WP4's work on advisory regimes and a synthesis of CAP AKIS plans?

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Thank you for your attention!



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