

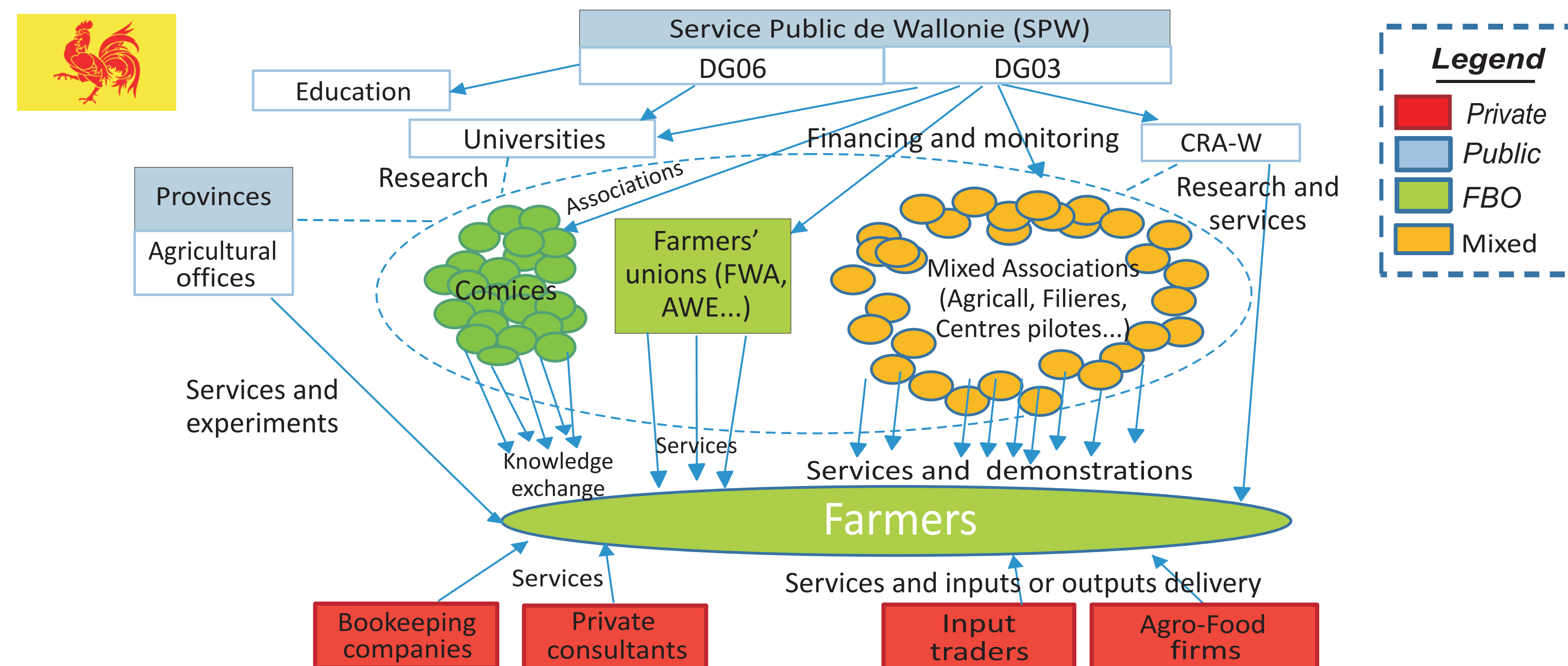
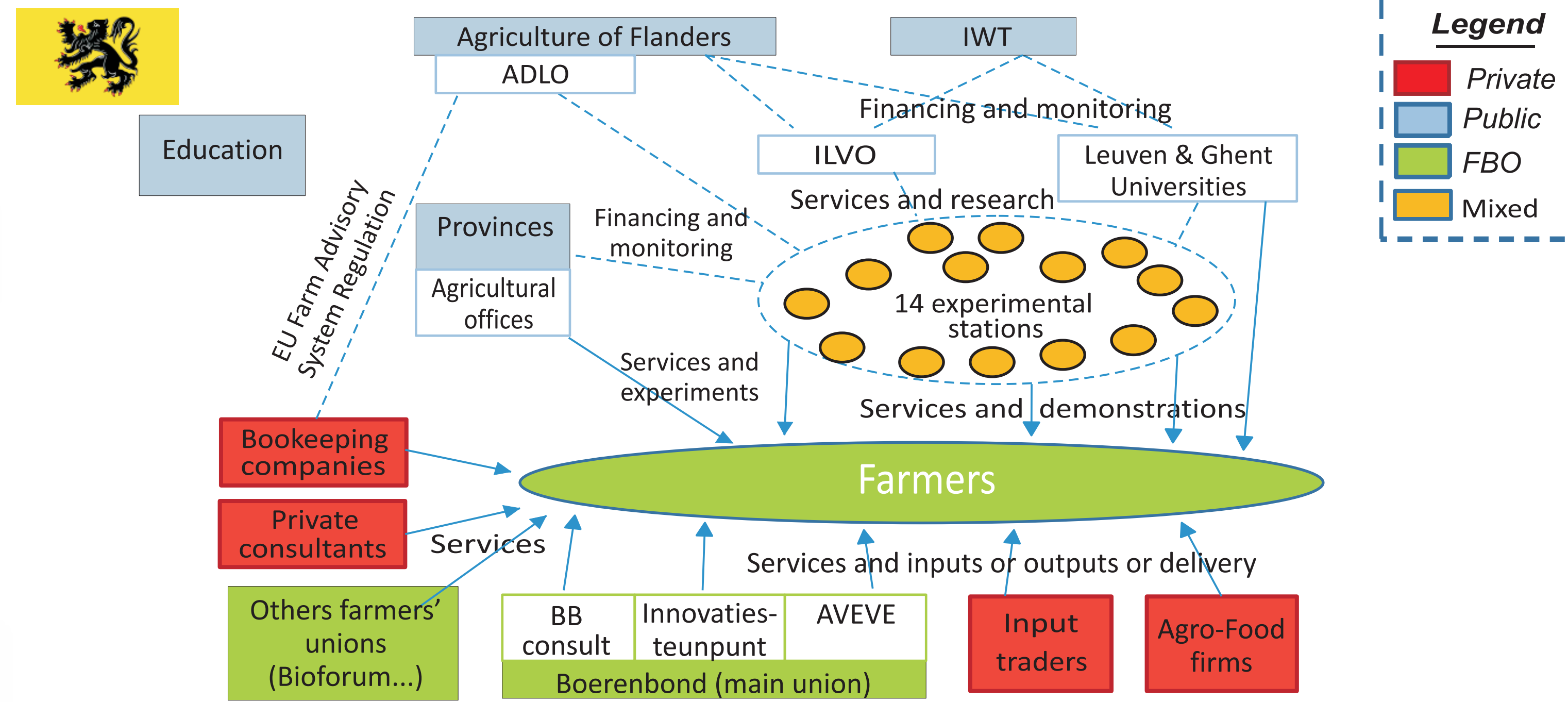


Prospects for Farmers' Support: Advisory Services in European AKIS (PRO AKIS)



BELGIUM

AKIS DIAGRAM



Main supplier(s) of advisory services:

- farm-based organisation and private organisation are key actors;
- growing importance of upstream and downstream industries

Main clients:

- a lack of data about who benefits from the advisory services;
- according to the PRO AKIS questionnaire, large and medium commercial farms = targeted clientele for most of suppliers in both regions;
- in Flanders, the farms that receive more subsidies are the first beneficiaries of FAS services

Main topics of advice:

- depends on client and service providers;
- a segmentation of topics according to supply chains and regulations (standards...);
- alternative views about how to integrate environmental issues;
- a competitive sector emerges at the intersection of environmental issues and technologies (renewable energy, sustainable farm buildings...) and financial issues (tax refund and fiscal optimisation, compliance with standards and quotas...)

Main methods:

diverse methods according to situations and providers

Main actors of AKIS:

- Full regionalisation of AKIS, presenting some similarities in the actors involved in the 2 regions:
- (a) **Public administration** – Walloon and Flemish administrations;
- (b) **Education** – Universities and agricultural colleges, agricultural vocational schools;
- (b) **Regional research organisations** – Walloon Agricultural Research Center (CRA-W), Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research (ILVO);
- (d) **Experimental stations** – Associations play a key role for demonstrations, training;
- (e) **Professional advisory services** – Associations, private consultants, bookkeeping companies;
- (f) **FBOs** – Farmers cooperatives, associations, unions, circles;
- (g) **Support organisations** – Input companies (serving also advisory services), downstream industries

Cooperation between AKIS actors:

- a long history of collaboration between universities, extension, applied research institutes and the Ministry;
- experimental stations (association) are really important in bridging science & practice;
- implementation of new programmes (innovation focus);
- some debates about technological lock-in

Main sources of funding the advisory services:

- important institutional support to AKIS sector (e.g. research institutes ILVO, CRA-W);
- delegation of services and contractualisation with several advisory organisations;
- introduction of competitive calls;
- mixed funding for most of advisory organisations



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