

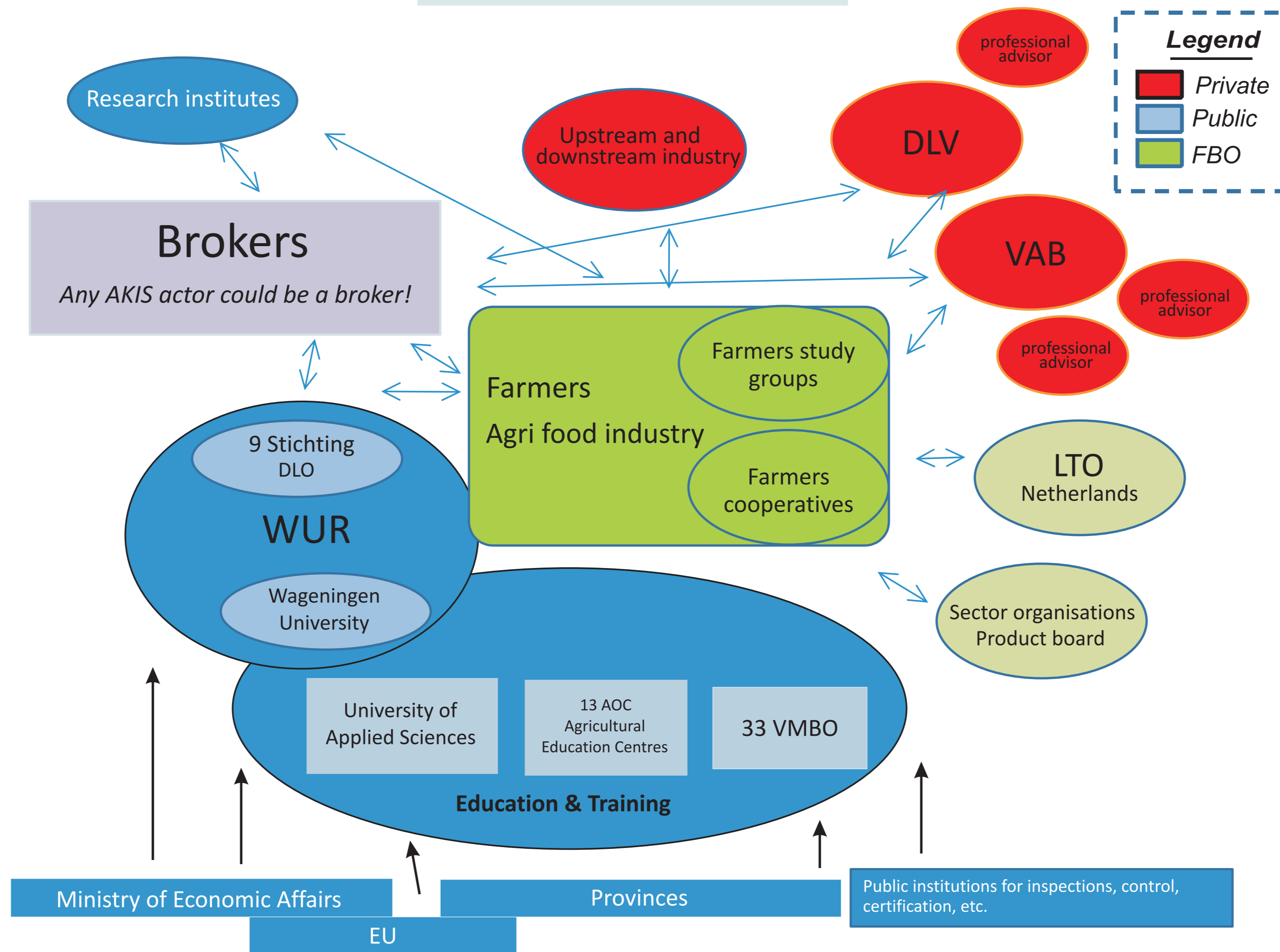


Prospects for Farmers' Support: Advisory Services in European AKIS (PRO AKIS)



THE NETHERLANDS

AKIS DIAGRAM



Main actors of AKIS:

Highly dynamic system with great hybridity of actions and functions concerning all the following main actors:

- **Education and research institutes** - Wageningen University and Research Centre, Universities of applied sciences, Agricultural Education Centres, Practical Training Centre, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, etc.;
- **Farmers based organization**- cooperatives (FrieslandCampina, Environmental co-ops), Unions (LTO Netherlands) and study groups;
- **Private advisors** (DLV, VAB, HVA, ILEIA);
- **Agri food industry;**
- **Innovation networks and knowledge brokers** (Green Knowledge Cooperative, Bioconnect)

Cooperation between AKIS actors:

- Together with the end of the so-called OVO-triptych, Education ("Onderwijs"), Extension ("Voorlichting") and Research ("Onderzoek"), all the institutionalized mechanisms before devoted to the AKIS governance collapsed. This resulted in a highly fragmented AKIS;
- Innovation networks and knowledge facilitators have emerged (partly supported by the government) to rebuild the ties between the several actors and to promote knowledge creation and transmission within the system;
- Their effectiveness is a debated topic

Main supplier(s) of advisory services:

- Several private consultancy firms mainly small and specialized in different sectors and/or target groups:
- DLV Advisory Group is the largest one (about 500 employees);
 - Individual professional advisors, 500 are associated in VAB (Ambitious Agricultural Consultants);
 - LTO Netherlands;
 - Farmers study groups

Main clients:

- advisory clients are private firms, public institutions and NGOs, including all the agribusiness chain;
- the characteristics of main clients depend on advisory provider: for DLV: large and medium commercial farms and subsistence farms

Main topics of advice:

- Increasing specialization;
- Growing offer of non strictly technical advice (e.g. construction, nature management, rural recreational activities, real state, etc.) and economic advice (including tactic and strategic planning);
- Focus on the entire production chain

Main methods:

the importance of *one to one* and *tailor made* advisory is increasing, however their role depends on the nature of provider (for instance in DLV it accounts for 50% of all business)

Main sources of funding the advisory services:

- the Dutch AKIS is a very dynamic system, presenting private extension services with direct payments from farmers, coupled with state funding for research and with different forms of *Public Private Partnership* and actors networking;
- growing importance of market mechanisms also in public organizations, such as WUR;
- public investments in knowledge infrastructure decrease and they are more and more focused on key sectors (as evident in the "Top sectors policy")



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