

# Interactive Approaches to Rural Development

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INTERACTIVE APPROACHES TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT

PhD Series 37.2012



**Copenhagen  
Business School**  
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

# INTERACTIVE APPROACHES TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT

**Kasper Aalling Teilmann**

The PhD School of Economics and Management

PhD Series 37.2012

# **INTERACTIVE APPROACHES TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

PhD Dissertation by  
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## **Acknowledgements**

During the last three and a half years, I have worked on my PhD project concerning rural development and rural restructuring, mainly under Danish conditions. Rural studies have, therefore, been the starting point and the study foundation, and the approaches to an analysis of rural studies are many and diverse.

In the light of my educational background in agriculture and landscape management, my choosing to do a PhD at Copenhagen Business School might not seem the most obvious path; and in some instances, I have been somewhat isolated in my research field. However, in a multi-interdisciplinary research field such as that of rural studies, the benefits have by far outweighed the negative externalities. My studies at CBS have provided me with a novel approach and insight into theoretical and methodological approaches to analyse rural studies. The multidisciplinary approach has led me through a diverse set of theories and methodologies that are novel to the rural study literature. I would, therefore, like to express my gratitude to all colleagues, past and present, at the Centre for Tourism and Culture Management who during my studies have been helpful and offered inspiring new perspectives. Special thanks to my supervisor, Trine Bille, who has offered valuable input and novel and necessary perspectives on my studies and to my co-supervisor Christian Frankel for helping me move on in my studies when most required.

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Frederiksberg, November 2012

Kasper Aalling Teilmann



## **Danish summary**

Afhandlingen 'Interactive Approaches to Rural Development' giver ny teoretisk og empirisk indsigt i hvordan der samarbejdes om udvikling af danske landdistrikter og landskaber. Ud fra en betragtning omkring udviklingen og de udfordringer de danske landdistrikter står overfor, analyseres dels, hvilke funktioner, der efterspørges af det danske landskab samt samarbejdet i og med Lokale Aktionsgrupper (LAGer), der er en EU landdistriktspoliti- finansieret udvikling forening. Det overordnede formål med afhandlingen er dermed at:

### **Analysere og diskutere metoder for udviklingen af de danske landdistrikter.**

Ph.d. afhandlingen er artikelbaseret og består af tre videnskabelige artikler og en indledende ramme, der samlet bidrager til at opfylde ovenstående formål. Med udgangspunkt i forandringerne der har struktureret det danske landskab, analyserer og diskuterer den første artikel, hvordan det danske plansystem kan optimeres til at omfatte en planlægning for og af det multifunktionelle landskab. Blandt de funktioner som de danske landskaber i stigende omfang skal tilgodese er muligheder for at diversificere sine indkomstmuligheder. Artikel to og artikel tre tager udgangspunkt i EU's landdistriktspolitik LEADER der netop yder mulighed for, gennem udviklingsprojekter, at skabe nye indkomstmuligheder for den lokale befolkning.

Samarbejde om udviklingen af landdistrikter er et emne der kræver, at der anlægges et interdisciplinært analysegrundlag. Afhandlingen trækker derfor på flere forskellige teorier og både kvalitative samt kvantitative analysemetoder. Det teoretiske grundlag trækker på generel netværksteori og forskellige teoretiske udløbere heraf. Dette gøres ved at inddrage ideerne fra interorganisationelt samarbejde i en analyse af samarbejdet mellem kommune

og en lokalt forankrede landdistriktsudviklingsforening, samt ved anvendelse af teorien omkring social kapital og dennes egenskaber i at medvirke til lokal udvikling. Yderligere trækkes der på teorien omkring multifunktionelle landskaber som et princip for planlægningen af det åbne land. Det empiriske grundlag trækker på kvalitative interview med kommunale planlæggere og LAG koordinators samt kvantitative spørgeskemaundersøgelser af kommunale landdistriktsudviklings administratorer og projektholdere af lokale udviklingsprojekter. To af de tre artikler tager udgangspunkt i et case studie af LAG-Djursland.

På baggrund af afhandlingen konkluderes det, at en meget væsentlig faktor i udviklingen af landdistrikter og landskaber er, at der foregår et samarbejde mellem væsentlige og relevante aktører. For at sikre en konkret og tilpasset udvikling, er det væsentligt, at de inddragne aktører er forankret i det lokale landskab, idet det er disse, der har det største kendskab til de lokale udviklingsmuligheder og barrierer. Selvom der tages udgangspunkt i danske landdistrikter og landskaber, kan afhandlingens analyser, diskussioner og konklusioner overføres til et internationalt perspektiv. Samarbejdstilgangen og analysen heraf, vil også kunne anvendes i andre sammenhænge end de beskrevne landdistriktsproblemer.

## **Summary**

The dissertation ‘Interactive Approaches to Rural Development’ gives new theoretical and empirical knowledge in the collaboration on development of rural areas and landscapes. From a perspective about the development and the challenges faced, the study analyses which functions that are demanded by the rural areas. Furthermore, the study makes an analysis of the collaboration in an EU financed rural development association; the Local Action Group (LAG). The overall objective is to:

### **Analyse and discuss approaches to rural development under Danish conditions.**

The dissertation is centered around three papers introduced with a frame that contributes to the overall objective. With point of departure in the changes that have structured the Danish landscape, the first paper analyses and discusses how the Danish planning system can be optimized to plan for a multifunctional landscape. Paper two and three builds on the EU rural development policy LEADER that through local project based development supports new income opportunities for the local inhabitants.

Collaboration on the rural development is a subject that requires an interdisciplinary analytical approach. The dissertation therefore builds on different theories and both qualitative and quantitative analytical methods. The theoretical foundation draws on generic network theory and various applications of this. This is conducted by inclusion of ideas from interorganisational interaction in an analysis of the collaboration between municipality and a locally anchored development association. In addition the theory of social capital is applied to analyse whether the partnership formation and collaboration has supported the development of the local area. Furthermore, the concept of

multifunctionality is assessed as a principle to be applied in countryside planning and rural development. The empirical foundation of the dissertation draws on mixed method research approach with interviews and surveys that are studied through qualitative and quantitative data analyses. Two of the three papers take point of departure in a case study of LAG-Djursland.

Based on the dissertation it is concluded, that a crucial factor in the development of rural areas and landscapes is the collaboration among relevant stakeholders—often arranged around a partnership. To secure a concrete and locally attuned development it is important to engage local anchored stakeholders. These stakeholders have the greatest knowledge about the local development opportunities and barriers. Though the dissertation builds on experiences from the Danish rural landscape, the analyses, discussions and conclusions will be relevant in an international perspective. The interactive approach and the analysis hereof will be applicable in other domains than that of rural development.

## **1 Introduction**

Rural areas are challenged with declining traditional occupations due to the intensification and specialisation of the agricultural sector. Parallel to this, an urbanisation process draws inhabitants to the opportunities offered in the city. This restructuring of the rural space has had an immense impact and left the areas a contested territory with a diverse set of challenges. However, not everything is as bad as statistics and general overviews sometimes might suggest. In the wake of this rural restructuring, opportunities have risen; a Chinese proverb says, “when the winds of change blow, some build walls, others build windmills.” Luckily, there are many ‘windmills’ being constructed in the rural areas. The present PhD dissertation delves into these dynamics, analysing the challenges and, not least, the opportunities this restructuring leaves the rural communities.

Arising out of the rural restructuring and the decreased importance of the agricultural sector are other interests and needs, which are becoming increasingly relevant. Though agriculture still is important in many areas, the rural inhabitants are no longer by default farmers or in any way related to farming activities. The ‘new’ rural inhabitants are diversifying their income opportunities into non-agricultural activities—some connected to agriculture and developed at farms and others completely detached from agriculture. This means that rural landscapes are faced with new and diverse needs and demands by their inhabitants. Meanwhile, societal preferences change and new requests are made from aggregated levels. In total, this leaves the rural areas more diverse and consequently more complex in construction. When there was one overarching and dominating sector, these landscapes could be regulated through agricultural

policies; however, the present complexity demands the integration of a whole series of sectors to meet the contemporary challenges.

New policy challenges and problems have emerged with the sectoral integration. They are policy problems that can be termed 'wicked problems' (Webber, Rittel 1973), i.e. problems that cannot easily be defined so that all stakeholders can agree on the problem to solve and, hence, have 'better or worse' solutions rather than 'right or wrong' solutions. The 'wickedness' of problems may vary and it is not possible to identify the exact opposite of a wicked problem. However, rather well-defined problems that involve few dimensions are less complex and thereby less wicked in nature. Wicked problems call for innovative solutions and many attempts and models have been suggested to describe and analyse rural challenges. This has been done by using different theoretical foundations to capture the essence of the rural challenges. These different but interrelated models have been suggested and discussed by leading rural researchers. The change from exogenous through endogenous into a neo-endogenous development approach describes the development of the support mechanisms of rural policies. This trajectory describes a movement from a top-down to an inclusionary and bottom-up approach (Ray 2006, Shucksmith 2010, High, Nemes 2007, Adamski, Gorlach 2007, Lowe, Murdoch & Ward 1995). The notion of 'integrated rural development' has been applied in analysing and describing the integration of various sectors and disciplines that are necessary in dealing with complex rural development problems (Shucksmith 2010, Shortall, Shucksmith 1998, Ruttan 1984, Cawley, Gillmor 2008). The notion of 'multifunctionality' in relation to landscapes and agriculture has been applied in describing the multiple functions that are demanded from and supplied by the rural landscape (McCarthy 2005, Holmes 2006, Selman 2009). The OECD developed a New Rural Paradigm that is applied in describing the shift towards

investment in local, cross-sectoral development initiatives that build on governance principles (OECD 2006).

One theory that is applied in approaching wicked problems and is present, to various extents, in the development models is the theory of governance. The diverse and complex challenges faced by rural areas has led researchers to argue that rural development should take the local rural areas as its point of departure (Svendsen, Sorensen 2007, Healey 2006, Ray 1998), and the public organisations involved in the development need to be engaged in governance rather than functioning as governors. Governance is thereby assessed as a solution to wicked problems where governors facilitate a local understanding of and solution to these problems. Stoker (1998) argues that governance is the framework that organises rather than controls an intervention. This organisation yields self-governed networks that should use the local as the point of departure for dealing with local challenges (Stoker 1998). An inherent element in governance is therefore that interaction happens among a group of persons (Stoker 1998). Interaction can thereby be understood as a neutral form of exchanging ideas and may therefore be perceived as a fundament to the definition of collaboration and partnerships. Collaboration may according to Imperial (2005, p. 286) be defined as “any joint activity, by two or more organizations, intended to create public value by working together rather than separately”. This implies that interaction has to be present in order to collaboration to be established and hence may be defined as a certain type of interaction. Collaboration may therefore be understood as a form of interaction to achieve a common goal which may have been more difficult to achieve without collaboration. This implies that collaboration is found under formalised to un-formalised settings. Without offering any precise definition, formalised collaboration may be found in partnerships (McGuire 2006). When collaboration

is conducted in formalised partnerships, the collaboration tends to become closer to what is known in common organisations with formation of organisational structures, routines, norms and values (McGuire 2006).

A governance approach benefits from partnership collaboration (Stoker 1998) and has been included among the goals and means in EU policies (COM 2001). A tangible outcome of these theoretical advances whose impact has been ongoing is the highly regarded LEADER approach through which local rural areas have received methodological and financial support for development projects initiated at the local level and arranged around a partnership organised as a local action group (LAG). This LEADER approach is receiving increasing attention from researchers and practitioners and is a pervasive element in the present dissertation.

The partnership organisation has been studied by different rural researchers arguing for the benefits of this type of collaboration (Davies 2002, Edwards et al. 2001, Jones, Little 2000, Scott 2003). To grasp the diverse challenges facing the rural areas, a diverse set of stakeholders should be included in the partnership. This leads to new challenges in making the collaboration process work, challenges that have been met as evidenced by an analysis of the interorganisational collaboration process in watershed management (Imperial 2005), urban regeneration projects (Lowndes, Skelcher 1998), sustainable ecosystem management (Manring 2007), and service integration projects in disadvantaged local communities (Keast et al. 2004). Though rural researchers have embraced the governance wave, there is, however, a research gap in relation to interorganisational collaboration on rural development. This dissertation analyses and discusses the interorganisational collaboration between an LAG and two municipalities and, thereby, seeks to reduce the research gap.



The importance and potential of collaboration and interaction through partnership and networks have influenced the research on social capital which has been hailed for its potential to function as a catalyst in economic development (Knack, Keefer 1997, Woolcock 1998). The theory on social capital and its development potential has also fostered significant research attention in relation to rural development (Nardone, Sisto & Lopolito 2010, Lee et al. 2005, Mandarano 2009, Shortall, Warner 2010). Studies also link the LEADER initiative to social capital and have, so far, done so mainly through a qualitative research approach (Shortall 2004, Shortall 2008, Shucksmith 2000). However, recently, an index methodology has been suggested that captures in one single measure the essence of social capital on the basis of the board of directors in the LEADER LAGs (Nardone, Sisto & Lopolito 2010, Lopolito, Nardone & Sisto 2011). With these researchers' initial work towards quantifying social capital outcome, an important step towards measuring the intangible outcome of the LEADER initiative has been taken. Using this approach, they seek to reduce the complex settings and human interactions to a single and comparable measure. The present dissertation seeks to add to this perspective and suggest a different approach to measuring social capital at the project level.

The LEADER approach has received much interest from European researchers. Especially, two scientific journals have been published on the LEADER approach and the LAGs: *Sociologia Ruralis* and *Journal of Rural Studies* and, to a lesser extent, *Journal of Regional Studies*. Both journals have case studies and theoretically oriented discussions, with the first one mainly highlighting studies using qualitative approaches and the second one, more often, studies using quantitative approaches. While researchers from Great Britain have been the forerunners and are still dominating the research literature on the LEADER approach, many studies, often building on case studies, are emerging from all

over Europe. The increased interest from other EU countries and knowledge about the experiences and implementation of the LEADER is a healthy contribution that draws a more exact, though increasingly diverse, picture. In addition, Danish experiences started to find their way into scientific journals, with Thuesen being published during the last year (2010) and (2011). With the present dissertation, I seek to add to the experiences and discussion on the potential and the advantages of the LEADER approach, specifically, and on rural development more generally. Collectively, this contribution should further the understanding of and approaches to the complexities of rural development.

### **1.1 Objective of the dissertation**

Following the brief introduction to this dissertation's field of research, the objective can now be presented. The dissertation contains one general objective which is approached through three articles, each having their own research question. This implies that while the overall development of rural areas is complex and well fitted as a wicked problem, the three papers engage with a more concrete policy problem and, hence, deal with specific aspects. The overall objective is to do as follows:

#### **Analyse and discuss approaches to rural development under Danish conditions**

Analysis and discussion of the complex rural development policy issues require a broad study approach. In achieving this general objective, I will therefore apply different perspectives to the analysis of the national planning system and the challenges of creating livelihood opportunities, and make an in-depth analysis of the LEADER approach. The national planning system is in this context relevant to include due to the framing conditions the planning regulations may play towards a rural development potential. For the analysis in

the present dissertation the national planning system will be analysed according to its development potential into a multifunctional landscape which comprehend a landscape where social and natural development can occur in a parallel trajectory. As a novel and relevant approach that fits into, mainly the social development, of Danish rural landscapes is the LEADER approach. The second and third paper takes a different approach towards analyses of the LEADER approach. In the second paper the interaction between the board of directors in the LEADER LAG and the municipality is analysed. This analytical approach adds a fundament to discussing the interactive approaches to rural development in a local Danish landscape. Whereas the second paper is operating at the interorganisational level, the third paper deals with the operational level at which the rural development projects are being implemented. The theoretical approach applied in the third paper is social capital which gives a sound foundation for assessing the performance of the LEADER approach in developing new social relations in rural areas. In total, the three papers supply a detailed analysis of a certain string of rural development under Danish conditions. The three research questions that are approached in the three papers are therefore:

- Is the Danish regulation and open land planning up-to-date in providing suitable living conditions for the emerging multifunctional landscapes?
- What type of interaction between the municipality and LAG facilitates the objective of delivering rural development to the local area?
- How can social capital be measured, and what are its driving forces in LAG projects?

## **1.2 Reading guidelines**

It is within the field of research described above that the present dissertation situates itself. It does so utilising a diverse set of theories and methods combined in innovative ways. The dissertation is structured as follows. The introduction sets the general frames for the dissertation and presents the research question. This is followed by a historical review of the EU rural development policy and the rural settings, as we know it today. After this, an overview and a brief review of the theories and the methodology applied in answering the research questions are presented. General conclusions and suggestions for further research wrap up this introductory part of the dissertation. This is followed by the main body of the dissertation—the three papers. At the end can be found an appendix with the research questionnaires.

## **2 Background – Setting the scene**

To understand the present state of the rural development policy and countryside planning and to put the three articles into perspective, a historical analysis of the negotiations and discussions leading up to the present state will be presented. The historical analysis does not exclusively deal with rural development, as we know it today, but provides the historical background that shaped the rural development policy to become what it is today. The section, therefore, delivers the story of the inception of the EU to solve a rather well-defined problem with its impacts on a few dimensions related to international trade and the efforts to secure a stable food supply, from which emerged more complex and wicked problems that are connected with rural development. The history of EU rural development is followed by a presentation of the principles of the present EU rural development policy and continues with a discussion on defining ‘the rural’ and how it has been developed in a national Danish context.

### **2.1 The history of EU rural development**

The EU has for more than fifty years delivered direct measures that have affected the development and stimulated the transformation of the social, economic, natural, and structural appearance of the Union (Lowe, Whitby 1997, Lowe et al. 1998). From the inception of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) till today, there has been an increasing homogenisation of rural development policy (RDP) initiatives within the member states (Ray 2006, Buttel 2006).

The overarching business in rural areas has historically been agriculture. With its intensification and modernisation, the role of the agricultural sector has lost much of its importance in terms of employment and the economy for both rural society and the nation as a whole. The decrease in employment in agriculture has led to an income diversification process for the rural inhabitants, a

diversification that is either directly or indirectly connected to agriculture (Murdoch et al. 2003, Bryden, Bollman 2000). EU policy makers have become aware of the new rural needs and demands and are customising policies to fit the new societal challenges. The series of policy reforms to meet the needs of ongoing agricultural and rural development has seen a long and intense development trajectory (O'Connor et al. 2006).

The following three subsections present this interesting and relevant history and explain the driving forces behind the intersectoral place-based rural development policy today.

### **2.1.1 The power of collaboration – 1957–1980**

The EEC/EU project was developed during the turbulent years after WWII with the intention of developing the economic and political interdependency of European countries. In the first years from 1951, the union was based on trade agreements in the coal and steel industry; with the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the scope broadened. The six founders—Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands—signed the Treaty of Rome and thereby established the beginning of the ‘Common Market’, the European Economic Community (EEC). During the period from 1957 to 1980, Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom also acceded to the community.

From the establishment of the EEC, rural development has been equated with supporting traditional rural business, mainly agriculture—and for good reasons. Agriculture was the dominant rural sector and the subsidisation of agriculture provided a higher living standard in rural regions. For this reason, rural development has played a major role in the history of the EEC/EU and in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), especially.

The CAP traces its roots back to the Treaty of Rome (articles 38-47), when the first strategy for a common EU initiative to standardise agricultural policies was formulated. However, it was in the mid-1960s that the policy gained importance and increased financial contributions. Article 39 describes the foci for agriculture as the enhancement of productivity, fair standards of living in rural areas, market stabilisation, food security, and reasonable food prices. The effort to achieve the objectives from article 39 brought along intensification and specialisation that resulted in monocultures and an ongoing phasing out of mixed agriculture with small production units; that began a trend that led to the formation of what has been termed the 'productivist regime' (Lowe, Whitby 1997, Hill 1984). To achieve the objective, large subsidies were introduced for the agricultural sector. Lowe et al. (1998) describe this rural development model as 'development from the outside' and labels it as an exogenous model. The exogenous model became operational through the price support for agricultural commodities paid to the farmer. The support system was based on a 'high price' system that rewarded agriculture for its production (Pearce 1981). The financial support was said to be coupled to production, which meant that more production equalled more financial support. The 'high price' support system was secured through the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) that bought commodities during times of overproduction and sold them during supply shortages. To stabilise further the market, commodities imported into the EEC were encumbered with high tariffs and exports were subsidised during periods of overproduction (Pearce 1981). This system secured a stable income for the farmer that enabled farming to become a secure business (Hill 1984, Pearce 1981).

The importance of the CAP was enhanced by the financial contributions to the policy. From 1965 when funding for the CAP was initiated, the policy accounted

for 8.5% of the total ECC budget (76.6 mill EURO), a share that rose to 86.9% by 1970 (total EEC budget 3385.2 mill EURO). The CAP share of the EEC budget remained close to 70% through to 1980, when the share of the common financing for the CAP started to show a slight decrease (European Commission 2008).

The exogenous rural development model was the overarching model until the late 1970s, when criticisms began to be expressed; the model was criticised for being reliant on continuous subsidies, thereby leading to 'dependent development'. The model was seen as distorting the rural development by boosting single sectors, selected settlements, and certain types of businesses, while neglecting the non-economic aspects of rural life. Apart from the social aspects, the exogenous model had a destructive character in relation to natural and cultural elements that were gradually being degraded. Last but not least, the model had the character of being highly authoritarian and devised by planners and experts (Lowe, Murdoch & Ward 1995).

In the early years, the agricultural support was only a minor issue in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); but with the formation of the EEC, the issues became increasingly important. During the Dillon round (1960–1962) the trade and support issues of agricultural products began to receive attention (Hanrahan, Vogt & Cate 1986); the reason for the emergence and increased interest in negotiating agreements was that the EEC, especially the 'six' (the EEC founding countries), had initiated trade links with the US. During the Dillon round, the US tried to obtain guaranteed access to the EEC market at the existing export level, a request that was refused by the EEC (Hanrahan, Vogt & Cate 1986). The Kennedy round (1964–1967) continued the proposition from the US to lower the trade tariffs on US exports to the EEC market; however, the requests were not in



line with the development of the CAP, and as a consequence, the trade barriers for US exports to the EEC were raised. During the Kennedy round, the US started criticising the level of financial support given to agricultural producers in the EEC. The following GATT round of negotiations, the Tokyo Round (1973–1979), had agriculture on the agenda. Again, the dispute was mainly between the US and the EEC, with the US trying to convince the EEC of the importance of liberalising agricultural trade (Josling, Tangermann & Warley 1996). However, taking refuge behind the CAP, the EEC remained reluctant to enter into agreements on agricultural trade during this round also, and only a few concessions were made (Josling, Tangermann & Warley 1996).

This initial period was thereby characterised by the emergence and suggested solution of a rather well-defined problem of securing a stable food supply and a desire to become less dependent on foreign markets. The history indicates that the mechanisms used in solving these problems were functioning and continuously pursued in spite of unintended side effects (such as butter mountains and wine lakes).

### **2.1.2 Broadening development – 1980-1999**

The opposite of the exogenous development model is the endogenous development model, that is, a development approach from within. This model for rural development grew out of dissatisfaction with the top-down approach of the exogenous development model. Central to the endogenous model is the assumption that local resources are of great importance in reaching a successful development trajectory. Local resources should be utilised as a dynamo for driving the development of local areas (Lowe, Murdoch & Ward 1995, Shucksmith 2000).

The goal from article 39 of ensuring a stable food supply at reasonable prices for the Union was successfully reached, and by the early 1980s, the policy had led to a large overproduction of agricultural products (COM 1985; Wilson et al. 1999). Apart from the huge cost of storing food and unprocessed feedstock, the production methods brought with them increased pressure on the environment, natural, and semi-natural areas (Lowe and Baldock 2000). These concerns led to increased pressure within the EU to change the agricultural policy towards a more sustainable rural development of the countryside, in terms of social and economic as well as environmental sustainability (Wilson et al. 1999).

The internal criticism led to an intense debate about the future of the CAP, and on how to expand the scope of the policy to embrace more socially oriented rural development. In 1985, the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) published a contribution to the discussion of future rural development: *Perspectives for the Common Agricultural Policy* (COM 1985). COM (1985) describes a series of mechanisms that could strengthen the policy under the new settings. The paper argues that reformation of the policy should be made in respect to: a) the price support system and b) the large and increasing rural depopulation the policy had so far engendered. In 1988, the COM (1985) was followed by a more action-oriented green paper: *The Future of Rural Society* (COM 1988). The awaited reformation of the CAP came in 1992 and was coined the MacSharry Reform. This reform is perhaps the most radical change of the CAP in relation to environmental concerns, but it also contained measures the objective of which was to better the social development of rural communities. With the MacSharry Reform, the CAP continued its traditional market control and the direct income support, while gaining a new 'leg' concerning environmental issues, namely, the agri-environmental policy (Wilson, Petersen & Holl 1999, Lowe, Buller & Ward 2002). During the period from 1980 to

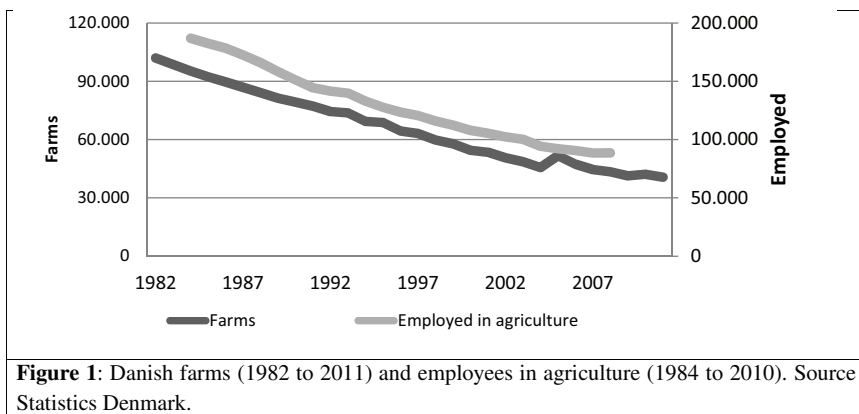
2000, there was a decrease in the proportion of funding for the CAP from 68.6% in 1980 to 44.2% in 2000. This decrease, however, is not an indication of the decreasing subsidisation of agriculture, but rather an indication of the diversification of EU policies.

Outside the EU, increased dissatisfaction grew regarding the high price system and the coupled support for agricultural products. The policy was heavily criticised for distorting world trade, and the EU's tariff and price dumping of its agricultural produce became the leading issue in the GATT Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture (URAA) in 1994 (Josling, Tangermann & Warley 1996, Swinbank 1999). The initial phases of the GATT Uruguay Round (1986–94) were marked by lack of consensus similar to the two previous MTN (Multilateral Trade Negotiations). From the US and the Cairns Group came protests about settling any agreement without the inclusion of an agricultural component; consequently, all MTN were put on hold until an opening in the discussions appeared. Agreements on the agricultural component of the MTN did not occur until the EC decided on a substantial reformation of their agricultural policy: the MacSharry Reform (Josling, Tangermann & Warley 1996). In relation to the future CAP reformation, one particular document played a central role—the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA). This agreement provides significant scope for governments to pursue non-trade concerns in their future policy making. The non-trade concerns mentioned in the AoA are concerns such as food security and environmental protection, and later, concerns regarding structural adjustment, rural development, and poverty alleviation (Dibden, Potter & Cocklin 2009). The EU used these non-trade concerns to bolster its argument for sustaining high subsidies and other support for agriculture; today, this is mostly referred to as multifunctional agriculture and landscapes (Buttel 2006, Wilson 2007). The importance of the GATT for world

trade was formalised at the end of the Uruguay round with the formation of the World Trade Organisation whose objective is to manage and regulate world trade.

This period was marked by success in solving the initial problems that the Union was established to resolve. However, the applied measures and methods had negative externalities that brought with them new, mainly environmental problems. These emerging problems were different in character from the initial one and needed the attention of additional stakeholders for resolution. This implies an increasing complexity of the problems.

Though the period is marked by somewhat differentiated foci away from a sole concentration on the agriculture, the CAP showed its impact on the structure of the rural landscapes around Europe. The agriculture became increasing productive and specialised. This development trajectory was followed in Denmark, where each farm unit became larger and fewer every year. Figure 1 shows the development of Danish farms from 1982 to 2011. From the table it appears that there is a strong decrease in farm units from more than 100.000 farms in 1982 to app. 40.000 farms in 2011; a decrease of app. 60% over the period. The decrease in number of farms follows a steady decline from 1982 to the beginning of the millennium from where the curve starts to flatten. The decrease in agricultural farms also implies a corresponding decrease in persons employed in the agricultural sector. This high decrease in number of Danish farm is a consequence of the CAP and a development which also meant a decrease in rural population that is dependent on the agriculture.



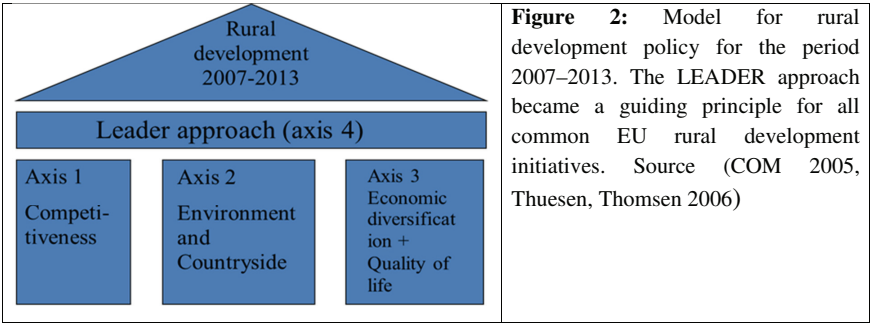
In the period from 1982 to 2011 the total farmed area went down 2.861.467 ha to 2.639.905 indicating a decrease of app. 8 % (Statistics Denmark 2012). The decrease in farmed area can therefore not explain the corresponding decrease in farms and employees in the agricultural sector.

### 2.1.3 Reinventing the local – 1999-2010

With the Agenda 2000 reform in 1999, rural development along with environmental issues was introduced as a second pillar to the CAP (Lowe, Buller & Ward 2002). The objective of the Agenda 2000 reform in relation to the CAP was to increase and provide a holistic approach to rural development. In reaching these objectives, the CAP and the agricultural sector should start to serve purposes beyond ‘only’ food production. The paper, ‘Europe’s Agenda 2000—Strengthening and Widening the European Union’, states that “...*the European model of agriculture is designed to fulfil several functions, including promoting economic and environmental development so as to preserve rural ways of life and countryside landscapes.*” (COM 1999 p. 3). The CAP’s scope was being diversified into what Wilson (2001) argues was multifunctional. Even though there are earlier mentions of multifunctional agriculture, landscapes, and

related terms such as that of non-trade concerns, the Agenda 2000 reform made the term increasingly applicable in explaining EU policy objectives and protecting the European Model of Agriculture (Swinbank 1999, CEC 2002).

The Agenda 2000 reform initiated an increasing emphasis on social aspects of rural development. A central initiative in the reform was the rural development regulation (COM 2005) which required all member states to create Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). While the EU provides the general frameworks, each country at the national level should tailor the RDP to reflect the challenges of its rural areas (COM 2005). The first RDP was made for the budget period 2000–2006 and the second, which is now in place, runs from 2007 to 2013. This means that the EU rural development policy now consists of four axes as depicted in Figure 2.



Axis 1 mainly deals with education, information, and knowledge dissemination through demonstration projects for the benefit of the agricultural and forestry sector. Axis 2 mainly deals with the aforementioned agri-environmental policy. Axes 3 and 4 deal with the LEADER approach and the LAG and comprise the main part of what today is described by the term ‘Rural Development’ (The LEADER approach will be further explained in the following chapter). The rural

development regulation sets out minimum requirements for the financial balance between the axes. In Denmark, this has led to the following allocations: 20% to axis 1, 65% to axis 2, 5% to axis 3, and 10% to axis 4. Under Danish conditions axis 3 and 4 are managed by the LAG, which implies that 12.5% of the total Danish RDP is assigned toward the more social aspects of 'rural development'. The CAP gives the EU member countries to transfer additional parts of the funding from axis 2 to strengthen axis 3 and 4, however, this has not happened for Denmark yet. Whether modulation will transfer additional funds to the social aspects of rural development in the coming Danish RDP is still uncertain and a subject that is being highly discussed.

After having supplied all EU inhabitants with one single and homogeneous policy from the inception of the CAP, the Rural Development Programmes stimulated local place-based rural development. With the 2003 reform, or as often noted, the Fischler reform, this trend was further enhanced. The main objective of the Fischler reform was to decouple the agricultural support into a 'single payment scheme' and thereby remove links between production and subsidies. In this way, farmers receive the same amount of subsidies regardless of the production and, hence, production is linked to demand instead of subsidies. The Fischler reform, Swinbank and Daugbjerg argue (2006), was in response to WTO pressures. Similar to the 1992 reform, the EU was responding to pressures originating in the AoA.

As the previous period was accompanied by environmental problems, the success of the CAP and consequently the intensification of agriculture fostered in this period an increased focus on the social aspects of livelihood in rural areas. This implies that the success of solving a rather well-defined problem with its impact on a few dimensions led to the emergence of a more complex, wicked problem. To mitigate the new rural challenges, the rural development

policy was developed and became an integral part of the CAP. An analysis and discussion of approaches to rural development under Danish conditions must therefore take a multidisciplinary approach that captures the complexity of the policy problems.

## **2.2 LEADER and Local Action Groups**

In response to the emergence of the wicked problem pertaining to the social issues of rural livelihood, a new EU policy took shape. A novel mode of distributing part of the funding to rural development was through the LEADER approach. There were earlier versions of the LEADER approach, LEADER I (1991–1993) and LEADER II (1994–1999); during these periods, the approach was differently structured and not as widespread as today<sup>1</sup>. Since the Rural Development Programmes of 2000–2006 and 2007–2013, the LEADER approach has been developed to its present structure. LEADER is an acronym for the French ‘Liaisons Entre Action de Developpement de l’Economie Rurale’ (links between actions for the development of the rural economy) and is established around seven guiding principles as they appear in Figure 3.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the LEADER I and II, see Ray (1997), Shucksmith et al. (1994), Midmore (1998), and Barke and Newton (1997).



Figure 3: The seven guiding principles that make up the LEADER approach. Source (COM 2005 p. 25)

The Leader approach shall comprise at least the following elements:

- (a) area-based local development strategies intended for well-identified subregional rural territories;
- (b) local public-private partnerships (hereinafter local action groups);
- (c) bottom-up approach with a decision-making power for local action groups concerning the elaboration and implementation of local development strategies;
- (d) multi-sectoral design and implementation of the strategy based on the interaction between actors and projects of different sectors of the local economy;
- (e) implementation of innovative approaches;
- (f) implementation of cooperation projects;
- (g) networking of local partnerships.

These principles have been implemented under Danish conditions solely through the work conducted in the LAGs. The rural development regulation sets out guidelines as to how a LAG should be established and managed. In Denmark, the LAGs are local anchored associations with a board of directors, a coordinator, and a number of members. The LAG is spatially delimited by the municipality borders and typically encompasses one and, in fewer cases, two municipalities. In total, 52 LAGs have been established under the Rural Development Plan 2007–2013.

The LAG crafts a Development Strategy that sets out the direction for the development of the pertinent area. Local inhabitants, associations, SMEs, and public organisations are invited to develop project applications that fit the strategy and it is up to the board of directors to assess whether the project should be recommended for co-finance. Finally, the application is sent to the

administrating organisation, i.e. the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries, for an eligibility check.

## **2.3 Rural development conceptualised**

When talking about rural development, the foci are on the rural areas. However, there is no common agreement on what rural is and it must, therefore, be defined in relation to its use. In addition, development of rural areas is hardly delimited to any spatial scale and can therefore be approached starting from the local level, and moving to the regional, national, supranational, or even global. Hence, it is important to identify and specify on what scale any research operates. The following section will highlight perspectives on defining rural areas. This will be done both with an eye to the research literature and to the implementation and conducting of rural development from a Danish perspective.

### **2.3.1 Defining ‘the rural’**

Rural development obviously deals with developing the ‘rural’. However, this ‘rural’ has been a highly disputed term to define and has consequently received a lot of attention, both from researchers in searching for the ‘true’ definition and from policy makers and development agencies in targeting their support to the right recipients. In writing a dissertation on rural development, it is appropriate to discuss the question: what is ‘rural’?

In research literature, there are many approaches to defining the rural and what makes up rurality, some more operational than others. Halfacree (1993) suggests that defining the rural needs to be approached through a conceptualisation of what people living in rural areas perceive as being rural and thereby common perceptions can be identified that define the rural. Halfacree suggests that the definition of rural can be approached on the basis of social representation theory. This theory, which comes from social psychology, “attempts to outline

how people understand, explain and articulate the complexity of stimuli and experiences emanating from the social and physical environment in which they are immersed” (Halfacree 1993 p. 29). This approach thereby takes a non-tangible approach to defining the rural, implying that the definition will not be based on statistics such as various sociocultural indicators but rather on what represents rurality to those living there. This approach leads to an identification of “‘the rural’ and its synonyms are *words and concepts understood and used by people in everyday talk*” (Halfacree 1993 p. 29). The social representation approach (Halfacree 1995) is applied in seeking to define ‘rural’ through interviews with inhabitants of rural England. This approach leads to the identification of dimensions that are commonly found to describe ‘the rural’ and can, hence, be applied as a designation of rural. The social representation approach thereby yields a dynamic definition that develops over time as new perceptions of rurality emerge and will rely on different perspectives in different places. In addition, the definition is not spatially anchored and Halfacree argues that space is a social product<sup>2</sup> and, hence, produced by the inhabitants of the local area and not by any demarked lines on a map. This means that identifying a common definition is not possible since rurality is differently perceived among different rural inhabitants.

The approach laid out by Halfacree does not leave much room for a definition that is operational for policy makers and development agencies seeking to initiate development in certain, perhaps lagging, areas. Therefore, a large variation of more concrete definitions of rural areas is deemed necessary in

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<sup>2</sup> Following the conception of space by Henry Lefebvre (1991).

establishing the foundation for distributing various kinds of support to lagging areas. Such definitions, it is argued, are descriptive and, hence, take as their point of departure what is already regarded as rural and is often supported with statistics (Halfacree 1993, 1999). One of the first comprehensive attempts to define the rural on the basis of a set of statistical data was the 'index of rurality' (Cloke 1977) that categorised England and Wales into four categories: extreme rural, intermediate rural, intermediate non-rural, and extreme non-rural together with urban areas. The index was calculated on 16 variables reflecting socio-economic characteristics. The rurality index (Cloke 1977) relied on 1971 census data and the index was reproduced based on 1981 (Cloke, Edwards 1986) and 1991 data (Harrington, O'Donoghue 1998), and in both instances the index was found applicable. In addition, the index has been applied to examining land use change (Best 1981) and to illustrate differences among various health problems between rural and urban areas (Yong et al. 2004, Philo, Parr & Burns 2003). The index of rurality is therefore a step towards the development of an operational definition for policy makers and development agencies because the index provides a means of separating areas on the basis of statistics. Taking a more functionalistic approach, Marsden et al. (2003) have differentiated the countryside by separating areas that are functionally different in terms of vicinity to urban areas and the level of prosperity in the different areas<sup>3</sup>.

Policy organisations like the OECD and EU attempt to define what is rural by laying the area out as operational units. The OECD uses population density at the municipality level and the presence of larger urban areas within the

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<sup>3</sup> The differentiated countryside is explained in detail, in paper 1

municipality's borders as its point of departure (OECD 1994). Using a homogeneous definition for a large area as does the OECD will, however, neglect the national and local differences present among the member countries. The EU, in distributing the support for rural development through the rural development programmes, has therefore entrusted the defining of rural areas to its member states. For Denmark, this was approached on the basis of the identification of 14 socio-economic indicators that divided the Danish municipalities into four categories, namely, rural areas, predominantly rural, intermediate areas, and urban areas (Kristensen, Kjeldsen & Dalgaard 2007).

The Danish planning legislation operates under a three-zone differentiation: urban, rural, and summerhouse. This conceptualisation of the rural defines it as areas that are designated as neither urban nor summerhouse zones. In the urban and summerhouse zones, specific development regulations are in force, whereas development in the rural zone is restricted to almost exclusively primary production sectors. Areas in the rural zone can be reassigned to either urban or summerhouse zones by municipal planning intervention<sup>4</sup>.

These approaches based on various indicators and statistics, Halfacree argues, are not dealing with a definition but rather are describing and delineating the fluid term of rural as operational units. Taking the example of the Danish delineation of municipalities, a political decision will determine where the lines are drawn. The division of municipalities into the four categories is decided politically. This means that one municipality might be close to being categorised as a rural municipality, and hence, would receive the most financial support, but

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<sup>4</sup> For a further discussion on this, please see paper 1

then ends up being categorised in the group of predominantly rural areas. This implies that the support is not necessarily delegated to rural areas, but to a division that is politically decided, and support is thereby distributed on the basis of statistics to areas which may or may not be rural.

### **2.3.2 Regional approach**

With a rural development approach based on strictly delineated areas, there is a risk of imposing a division on something that should remain indivisible. There are interactions and interdependencies between and among rural areas but certainly also between and among rural and urban areas. These interactions and linkages between rural and urban include the movement of goods, capital, and people, and it is difficult to imagine rural areas that are not in one way or another dependent on nearby urban areas (Tacoli 1998). This interdependency between rural and urban can be viewed through a network theoretical optic relying on the 'space of place' and 'space of flows' coined by Castells (2000).

Rural communities are dependent on and influenced by the influx and flows of information to and from the outside world; the network extending outside the local area of rural communities is highly reliant on 'space of flows' (Castells 2004) rather than 'space of place'. In other words, the inhabitants largely become aware of, and utilise, the development potential outside the local area (Brunori 2006). The high interaction and interdependencies outside of the local rural area have inspired researchers (Ploeg et al. 2008, Sonnino, Kanemasu and Marsden, 2008) to argue that the rural should be perceived as one link in a larger web of interactions and that it is through the unfolding of this web that development occurs. This unfolding web involves the entire region rather than being solely delimited to either rural or urban conglomerations. The same analogy leads Marsden (2010) to argue for the necessity to assess the rural as a provider of resources that are applied to economic development of the area.

Rural development cannot be seen in isolation from the wider regional context in which it occurs: “It is thus an increasingly embedded and dynamic feature of regionally differentiated development” (Marsden 2010 p. 226). Research that argues for the necessity of integrating rural development into a wider regional perspective (such as the references above) might lead the reader to a perception of this being a new problem. However, the same concerns have been clearly expressed in earlier research:

“We tend to ignore the import of what happens in the total economy and society as it affects the rural sector. We tend to think of the rural sector as a separate entity which can be developed while the nonrural sector is held constant. Our thinking is ensnared by our own words. Whether we like it or not, our policies and programs tend to ignore the potential impact of rural development upon our urban brethren. In point of fact, there can be no rural development that does not have an effect on the total economy and society.” (Copp 1972 p. 519)

### **2.3.3 Development**

Without finding any exact definition of ‘the rural’ and, hence, any common agreement on what specific areas are the focus of rural development initiatives, the following section presents a discussion of the term ‘development’ and identifies Danish approaches to stimulating development in lagging, oft-times rural areas.

Development is the act, process, or result of ‘developing’ and covers a great variety of targets. Rural development can thereby encompass the economy, social aspects of life, environment, nature, etc. in rural areas. The target for

development can, of course, also combine several of these and this is usually the case<sup>5</sup>. Many policy initiatives have been implemented to stimulate such development. In the present dissertation, EU rural development policy is pivotal. However, this is not the only initiative that seeks to initiate development in rural areas. Many of these initiatives have not directly targeted the rural but rather pursued development at the regional level and, thereby, followed the line of arguments put forward above, that rural areas cannot be developed without including the surrounding area with which there is high degree of interaction. However, the rural development policy and funding are nested under the common agricultural policy. According to Lowe and Ward (1998), the reason for this can be ascribed to a traditional view of the rural as an integrated part of agriculture and vice versa. While the importance of agriculture decreases and the desire to integrate rural policy with regional policy grows, there are emerging discussions on whether rural policy should rather be nested under the EU regional policy (Dwyer et al. 2007). Especially, during the run-up to the RDP 2007–2013, the Salzburg conference in 2003 brought up the problem for discussions (Lowe 1998, Papadopoulos 2005) and it remains a recurring discussion point (Mantino 2011).

#### **2.3.4 Regional development in Denmark**

Denmark has traditionally sought to ensure that all parts of the country achieve national economic development equally. Traditionally, this has been done through regional development policies targeted at strengthening the business

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<sup>5</sup> For a discussion on the connection between social capital and economic development, see paper 3 in the present dissertation.



development in lagging areas, which in many cases, tends to be the rural periphery (Halkier 2001). In 1958, the first act on regional development<sup>6</sup> was enforced. The objective of the act was to correct regional imbalances in employment, mainly in the industrial sector. This was done through economic support to private business with the objective of lowering the production price and, hence, increasing the products' competitiveness. In the 1960s, and especially the 1970s, the lagging rural areas started showing positive development trajectories, whereupon the strong political will with regard to those areas and the interest in them started diminishing (Illeris 2010). The state subsidy continued to decrease in the 1980s and, in 1990, the act on regional development was abolished (Illeris 2010). The reason for the abolishment of the development scheme can be found in the neoliberal wave that swept many European states, for which a reduction of the role of the state became a top political priority. In addition, the regional economic differences were so small that these alone could not justify the maintenance of the development scheme. It was further argued that the development focus should be targeted on the Capital region which was witnessing economic and demographic stagnation (Illeris 2010). By the change of the century, there was renewed interest in the lagging rural development that could be traced to the political sphere, and this consequently led to increased municipal equalisation where monetary support was directed from richer to poorer municipalities. From 2007, structural reform altered the geographical structure of the public management system (The Danish Ministry of the Interior and Health 2004). The new regions' growth forums were

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<sup>6</sup> The Danish title 'Lov om egnsudvikling' does not directly correspond with the translation into 'Act on Regional Development'; however, this is the closest translation.

mandated to develop business with a strong focus on rural development that was integrated into the general development. The emerging development perspective was based on a partnership approach, comprising initiatives at the EU, state, and regional level (Larsen 2010). In addition to these general schemes, the Ministry of the Interior administers the Rural Districts Fund<sup>7</sup>. This fund supports pilot projects for the promotion of business development, service, living conditions, settlement, local culture, and leisure activities in rural areas. The fund can also be applied as co-finance to the LEADER LAG projects and thereby increases the integration of different support mechanisms (Indenrigs- og sundhedsministeriet 2011).

As this brief history of Danish development approaches indicates, there is and has been a focus on developing lagging rural areas in various ways and for many years. The LEADER LAG is, therefore, only one additional development initiative and its importance should be assessed in relation to these different schemes and programmes. The present study does not explore whether the LEADER approach, the regional business development initiative, the Rural District Fund, or the municipal equalisation effort delivers the most appropriate and successful development. However, the novel approach laid out by the LEADER is of interest to researchers in public policy and rural development.

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<sup>7</sup> From 2012, it will be managed by the recently established Ministry of Housing, Urban, and Rural Affairs. The rural district fund is in Danish: Landdistriktspuljen

### **3 Methodology**

This section provides an overview of the applied methods, theories, and approaches used to answer the research questions and achieve the overall objective of the dissertation. The section begins with an outline of the research tradition in rural studies, to which tradition the present dissertation belongs. This is followed in section 4.2 by an introduction and consideration of the methods applied in the study (additional considerations and methodological discussions are available in the papers). Lastly, section 4.3 provides discussions and an overview of the theoretical approaches applied in the study.

#### **3.1 The rural studies research tradition**

This study belongs to a rural study tradition that is anchored in a wide spectrum of social science approaches. The dissertation thereby follows the sequence of research done by scholars such as Marsden (1999, 1998), Murdoch, Lowe, Marsden, and Ward (2003) Lowe (1995, 2010), Hodge (1986), Cloke (1985, 2006), Cloke and Goodwin (1992), Shucksmith (2010, 2000), and Shucksmith and Winter (1990). The research tradition of rural studies of human life<sup>8</sup> has a diverse and long history (Marsden 2006) and reflects the historical development of the CAP and rural development policy. Initial rural studies were influenced by the dominance of the agricultural sector and its consequences for rural livelihood. However, as the policy problems started to diversify and become more complex, so did rural studies. This implies that broader and interdisciplinary research approaches were developing. Sociologists have been

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<sup>8</sup> This excludes the more natural sciences approach to the studies of landscape ecology, environmental studies, etc

interested in the sociology of rural areas through livelihood studies in small villages, gender issues, etc. Rural geographers are preoccupied with the development and distribution of rural settlements, rural depopulation, and the causes and consequences of agricultural change (Cloke 1985, Marsden 2006, Panelli 2006). Political scientists studied rural areas due to the historical importance of agriculture; they were mainly occupied with agricultural policy and only recently, have they given more attention to the social policies of rural development (Panelli 2006), in keeping with the historical presentation provided in section 2 xx. Finally, agricultural economists study the value chain from the production of raw materials to the market and agricultural prosperity, and more recently, they have taken an interest in the diversification of rural income activities (Cloke 1985, Marini, Mooney 2006). The tradition of rural studies draws on the ideas and approaches of these disciplines, and is multidisciplinary by nature (Cloke 1985). With the diverse approaches to rural studies, methodological approaches range from anthropological observation studies to statistical and model-oriented approaches, hence building on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

In launching the *Journal of Rural Studies*, the Editor Paul Cloke reviews the rural study research tradition and argues for an increased interest in rural areas from a wide range of disciplines (1985). This multidisciplinary approach is necessary to reach the research goal of rural studies:

- (i) to describe the contemporary status of society;*
- (ii) to develop an environmental perspective from which to examine rural social issues;*
- (iii) to examine the impacts of rural change;*
- (iv) to suggest procedures with which to resolve conflicts and deal with impacts;*

*(v) to consider a future for rural areas in which public policies and procedures can effectively respond to contemporary and emerging social and environmental opportunities. (Cloke 1985 p. 2, citing Carlson et al. (1981))*

This list is by no means exhaustive, but gives an overview of the predominant objectives of rural studies.

Though the research on rural areas has been approached from different angles, there has historically been a structural anchorage that makes rural areas a more or less separate unit in societal perspectives. Rural is, however, no longer conceived of as a closed entity with agriculture as the dominating interest. The influence and interaction with and from urban areas have spurred a differentiated view on rural areas. This consequently led to a debate about *ruralities* and, hence, what makes up the territory studied in rural studies (Halfacree 1993, Marsden 1998).

*The declining importance of agriculture as a means of rural employment, and the consequent increases in non-farm populations [...] have brought turmoil to many rural communities and have demolished the cosy notion that rural events have rural causes (Cloke 1985 p. 3)*

This development of rurality spurred increasing recognition by researchers of the importance of acknowledging and applying new methods to rural studies.

### **3.2 Methods**

Haugen and Lysgård (Haugen 2006 p. 175) argue for a dividing of rural studies into “rural development research, where the main objective is to improve the conditions in rural areas, and rural change studies, which represent a more critical, distanced, and analytical approach”. This distinction is relevant for categorising the three papers in the present study. Paper 1 is based on the rural change studies and takes a critical and analytical approach to the pressures experienced by rural inhabitants and the available regulation and policies to deal with these. Papers 2 and 3 are within the rural development research area and investigate a policy designed to improve the living conditions in rural areas.

This dissertation is driven by a general and thorough knowledge about the rural challenges and by an empirical motive aimed at uncovering one specific opportunity for rural areas. The knowledge development is thus due to both a deductive and an inductive approach (Andersen 2002). Using the rural changes as well as the regulation and planning problems that arose as its point of departure, paper 1 takes mainly the deductive approach that is informed by the field of rural studies, as described above. The inductive approach that empirically investigates single actions is considered appropriate when new theoretical angles are combined and when acknowledged principles and routines are not established (Andersen 2002). Papers 2 and 3 adopt mainly the inductive approach. It is difficult to separate the two types of knowledge development entirely, and there is overlapping and interaction between these two approaches.

Rural studies often draw on the case study research design in order to capture the dynamics and details of a delimited area and yield discussions and conclusions on this foundation. Yin (2003 p. 13) defines the case study as an “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context

are not clearly evident". This implies that for complex social studies, the case study approach gives an in-depth analysis that is necessary to fully understand the dynamics. Furthermore, the case study approach allows for data triangulation and, hence, utilising multiple analytical approaches stemming both from qualitative and quantitative approaches (Yin 2003). The present study in a similar way approaches the field of studies through case studies and utilises both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches. Two of the three papers are thus solidly anchored in case studies. These papers give a detailed and thorough understanding of LAG-Djursland that was chosen as the study area. The selection of a Danish LAG as a study area is reflected in the argument that Denmark has a fairly long and successful tradition of governance (Rhodes 2000), within both practice (Halkier 2001) and research (see e.g. Bogason (2006), Sørensen (2007b, 2007a)). The implementation of the governance and partnership which marked the LEADER initiative thereby has the potential to give interesting and novel insights regarding the interaction examined in the LAG case study. These novel interactions are the focus of the two papers dealing with the LEADER initiative, and lead one to conclude that interaction between the LAG and municipalities, and between and among local project partners is necessary as well as important for the success of the local area.

Though the case study yields a thorough understanding of the dynamics of the selected case, the approach suffers from a decreased ability to generalise the results to more aggregated levels. Having appropriately chosen and studied an area, one should not entirely refrain from drawing general parallels regarding what seem to be similar cases or processes (Flyvbjerg, Sampson 2001).

The data collection is mainly based on interviews and questionnaires. The data collection mainly pertains to paper 2 and 3, as they apply an empirical, inductive case study approach. Firstly, face-to-face interviews were done with

representatives from The Danish Food Industry Agency at The Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries; five LAG coordinators; and two municipal planners. These interviews along with knowledge about the field of studies were used to identify potential respondents that could provide information on achieving the overall research objective (Kvale, Brinkmann 2009). The exploratory interviews were information seeking, and their data not directly applied in the three papers that compile this dissertation; they were, however, essential in understanding and formulating the problems that are explored. Two distinct problems were identified, both of which needed data on different subjects and this necessitated data-gathering from different sources. Therefore, two questionnaires were developed and applied to collect data related to the LEADER approach (the questionnaires are available in appendix 1 and 2). The advantage of data collection through questionnaires is that it is possible to obtain a large sample of comparable answers and, hence, when correctly structured, the data are applicable in quantitative analytical methods while also supplying data that may be applied for qualitative analyses. In order to support the reasoning and analysis the questionnaires were supplemented by semi-structured interviews with two municipal planners, three members of the LAG Board of Directors, and the coordinator from LAG-Djursland. These semi-structured interviews contained questions was used to highlight the perceived interaction in the LEADER LAG and thereby support an analysis and assessment of the success of the operation. In total, this data triangulation enables qualitative and quantitative data analytical methods and thereby utilises the mixed methods approach as suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011).

The methods applied in answering the questions in the three papers utilise a variety of methodological approaches. The data collection process applies both qualitative and quantitative methods from interviews, questionnaires, and



documents. The collected data have been analysed through descriptive and statistical analyses. Table 1 provides an overview of the data collection methods and analytical approaches applied in the three papers.

Table 1: Data collection methods and analytical approaches in the three papers

	Type of study	Data collection		Data analyses	
		Qualitative	Quantitative	Descriptive	Statistical
Paper 1	Explorative and documentary analysis study, mainly deductive approach		Documents Statistical information from databases	Descriptive presentation of statistical information	
Paper 2	Case study, mainly inductive approach	Semi-structured interview with LAG coordinator, three LAG BoDs, and explorative interviews with six LAG project holders	Questionnaire with 51 municipal representatives	In-text quotations from interviews	Ordinal regression analysis of questionnaire results
Paper 3	Case study, mainly inductive approach, methodology development		Questionnaire to 56 project holders Information from documents, i.e. project applications		Correlation, t-test, regression analyses of questionnaire results

As shown in table 1, the three papers utilise a diverse set of methodological approaches ranging from qualitative and descriptive approaches to quantitative and statistical. The broad spectrum of applied methods supports the complex structure of rural development dealt with in rural studies

### 3.3 Theoretical approaches

As rural development policy challenges are complex and can be described as a wicked problem, the theoretical approaches to analysing and discussing these challenges need to be interdisciplinary. This approach to rural studies is also evident in the present dissertation. In answering the research questions of the three papers, different theoretical approaches from the social sciences have been applied. Table 2 provides an overview of the theories.

Table 2: Theories and main literature of the three papers

	Theories	Main literature
Paper 1	Multifunctional landscape theory, planning theory	Tress et al. (2001), Murdoch et al. (2003), Selman (2009)
Paper 2	Interorganisational interaction theory, network theory, governance theory	Mandell and Keast (2009), Agranoff (2006, 2001)
Paper 3	Social capital theory, network theory, network analysis	Lewis (2010), Granovetter (1973), Bourdieu (1986), Lin (2001)

One generic theory is discernible in the theoretical anchorage of the dissertation's three papers and that is the network theory. In general, a network consists of at least two nodes and a tie between them. In social science, these nodes have mainly<sup>9</sup> been considered as individual humans or organisations and

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<sup>9</sup> There is a tradition within the Actor Network Theory to include also connections to non-human subjects and thereby map relations that are material (between things) and semiotic (between concepts) and their human application. This approach has also been applied in rural studies, by, e.g. Murdoch J, 1997. Furthermore, the seminal work done by Castells on the Network Society takes more of an international approach to networks and investigates the build theory on the interaction between national states. However, these theories are not further investigated in the present study.

the tie as any form of interaction. The structure, types, and forms of ties have been pivotal for a whole range of studies. Within the formal sciences and, especially, mathematics and graph theory, the studies have involved imperative and descriptive approaches investigating the structures of networks. This has been done by scholars such as Freeman (1979, 1977), Freeman, Borgatti, and White (1991); and Burt (1980). These scholars have developed a range of impressive metrics and notions that have proved a valuable set of tools and, hence, are applied in a range of studies anchored in many different research domains. A theory of network emerges with the utilisation of network construction and various applications of the available tools. Such application is done through a still rather general application of network terms to social life as in the case of studies by prominent scholars such as Granovetter who coined the idea of *The Strength of Weak Ties* (1973) and the notion of embeddedness that implies that economic relations between individuals and firms are embedded in social networks (1985). Knoke (1982) and Kenis and Knoke (2002) applied the network theories to organisational and interorganisational studies. Furthermore, Knoke together with Yang (Knoke, Yang 2008) contributed to formalising the social network analysis (2008). Finally, the use of network theory has been pivotal for the emergence of social capital literature<sup>10</sup> led by Coleman (1988) as a strategy to build human capital; it is employed by Putnam (1994, 2000) in the analysis of Italian and American decline and incline in social capital and its societal consequences, Bourdieu (1986) in his distinction between different

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<sup>10</sup> Many books compile an overview of the social capital literature. For the purpose of case studies and policy implications, I find Lewis (2010) valuable.

kinds of capital (social, cultural, and symbolic), and Lin (2001) in arguing for the activation of ties in order to build social capital.

Through this established theory of networks, two streams of applied approaches have been used in the present dissertation: 1) the occupation by researchers of public management with analysing the networks in and between organisations and, hence, analysing them at the individual level and aggregated at the organisational level. 2) The study of social interaction for development purposes due to the closer social interactions in communities, nations, work, etc. that has emerged. Both streams of studies draw, in varying degrees, on the same core of literature and network ideas. However, there are differences in the approach to these studies.

The public management stream is occupied with interaction and collaboration in and between organisations and with the outcome of these different kinds of interaction. The network construct is thereby related to a kind of interaction that exists between individuals in single-organisation collaborations as well as between different organisations. With regard to the more general approach of organisational network studies, Agranoff (2006), Agranoff and McGuire (2001), and McGuire (2002, 2006) have contributed reviews of what is known, how this knowledge emerged, and in which direction research should progress in the area of organisational networks. Provan and Kenis (2007), Provan and Milward (2001), and Mandell and Keast (2008) have offered discussions and frameworks on how to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of organisational networks. Contributions from Mandell and Keast (2009) offer a conceptualisation and analysis of interorganisational interaction using a service integration project and water forum project in Australia and US as case studies.

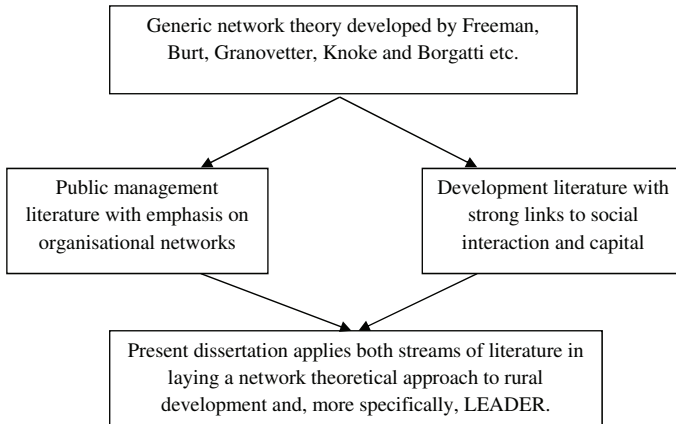
The ideas behind social capital have gained prominence in the stream of literature regarding social interaction in the pursuit of social and economic development. The network construct has been applied to investigating the structure and the intrinsic sentiments embedded in those ties that make up the network. The ties and, therefore, who links to whom is of major importance. These studies thus take the network theory and apply it to the interplay among human individuals in real-life situations. In the present, brief introduction to this literature, I will not account for the massive amount of theoretical approaches to the study of social capital (the second paper in this dissertation contains some aspects and references on this matter) but will only refer to studies that take this approach. Some of the literature dealing with the pursuit of development takes as its point of departure firms and companies and seeks to explain growth by the presence and increase in social capital, which is often connected to knowledge transfer. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) argue for the presence of an organisational advantage due to a dense network and easy access to resources (i.e. individuals) in firms. Maskell (2000) argues, somewhat similarly, that social capital enables fast transactions and thereby offers the possibility for firms to improve their innovative capacity. Within community development, social capital has been hailed as an important driving factor by Woolcock (1998) and Woolcock and Narayan (2000), and in Australian regional development by Woodhouse (2006). Due to its development traits, the notion of social capital has also been investigated and analysed in rural development studies by, e.g. Shortall (2004, 2008), Shucksmith (2000), and Lee, Arnason, Nightingale, and Shucksmith (2005).

The application of network theory and related terms has, according to Murdoch (2006), been neglected in rural studies. The network approach to studies has historically pertained to urban areas and trade between nations. However, the

differentiated countryside needs to be approached from the perspective of its close connection to networks in relation to political, economic, and social structures. The necessity of a network approach to rural studies and rural development led Murdoch (2000 p. 407) to suggest “that rural policy should be recast in network terms”.

The general network theory is the keystone uniting the network approach acquired by public management researchers and the development angle anchored in social capital. This dissertation, therefore, is in response to the request by Murdoch to further investigate rural areas from a network perspective. It does so by combining two streams of literature to study the LEADER initiative through the conduct of the LAGs. An overview of the theoretical divergence from general network theory to public management and development studies and their combination in the present study is illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: The trajectory and approach of the theoretical angle in the dissertation



The discursive and critical approach in paper 1 is solidly anchored in the research tradition of rural studies; whereas the theoretical approaches applied in papers 2 and 3 have received only a little attention. The application of a broad theoretical approach has proved appropriate as a foundation for analysing and discussing the approaches to rural development in Denmark.

With the general application of network theory as their point of departure, a series of studies has added to the description and understanding of the ‘wickedness’ of rural development (Ray 1998, Murdoch 2000, Hinrichs 2000, Murdoch 2009). Retaining this holistic and general perspective of rural development is important to completing the overview of the various aspects that need assessment and future research. However, in breaking down the wicked problems to illuminate the dynamic details, more targeted and specific theories are needed. This is done through maintaining a secure anchorage in network theories; however, the focus is on the practical interaction between individuals or organisations, as is evident in the development literature that deals with social interaction and social capital, and in the public management literature whose emphasis is on organisational networks. In many instances, these targeted and specific theories are applied through understanding and discussion of case studies.

## **4 Summary of the three papers**

The dissertation contains three papers, each with separate methods and theories for establishing a foundation for the analysis and discussion of approaches to rural development in Denmark. The following section contains a brief summary of the three papers.

### **4.1 Paper 1**

*Planning for a multifunctional countryside in Denmark: The need for new planning approaches*

*Authors: Kasper Aalling Teilmann and Lone Søderkvist Kristensen (Forest & Landscape, LIFE, Copenhagen University)*

The first paper looks at the changes the Danish landscape has undergone in terms of decreasing importance of the agricultural sector and an increased demand for additional landscape functions. The paper argues that the increased societal demand for additional functions is not reflected in the current planning legislations. This becomes evident through the location right of the agricultural sector in the open land which implies that farming has a special status above other interests in the legislation. However, the demand for additional and new functions from the countryside is spatially differentiated. Peri-urban landscapes need to provide significantly different functions from those demanded in remote rural areas. The paper identifies different planning needs and demands through a differentiation of the countryside into various spatial spaces. This categorisation is utilised in suggesting a differentiated planning approach that, to a greater extent than the current planning system, includes the different spatiality and demand for multifunctional landscapes.



## **4.2 Paper 2**

### *Collaborating on Rural Development: Analysis of Interaction between Municipalities and Local Action Groups in Denmark*

In this second paper, I seek to give an analysis of the degree of interaction between municipalities and the LEADER Local Action Groups (LAG), in a case study of LAG-Djursland. The paper draws on theories from interorganisational collaboration and develops a framework which is applied to the analysis of the collaboration between municipalities and the LAG. The framework utilises the distinction between coordination, cooperation, and collaboration as proposed by Mandell and Keast and investigates which of these interactive modes are predominant at the board, operational, and implementation level of the LAG and municipality.

There are large differences in the municipal/LAG interaction at the three levels and, hence, a diverse application of the LAG. The analysis concludes that at LAG-Djursland, the board level has the least integrated mode of interaction followed by the operational level and the implementation level, which is the most integrated.

The paper concludes that the municipality is a valuable partner in fulfilling the LAG objectives and that the most important interaction level is at the operational level where continuous streams of information are exchanged between the municipality and LAG. In the discussion of the role of the municipality, the paper argues that it is difficult to define the inflection point at which the municipality becomes too dominant and, hence, might compromise the rationale behind the LEADER approach.

### 4.3 Paper 3

*Measuring Social Capital Accumulation in Rural Development—Suggestion of an Index (published in Journal of Rural Studies in a slightly revised version in Kasper Teilmann, Measuring social capital accumulation in rural development, Journal of Rural Studies, Volume 28, Issue 4, October 2012, Pages 458-465)*

In this third paper, I seek to investigate the social capital contribution of the LEADER initiative. I do so by using a theoretical framework to develop an index that can measure the social capital of local action group (LAG) projects. This implies that the index relegates the measurement unit to the most local level, i.e. the project holder.

The index is founded on four indicators, each of which is relevant dimensions of social capital: number of ties, bridging of social capital, recognition, and diversity. These indicators are aggregated into a total index which gives an indication of the total social capital accumulation of the investigated project.

The index has been used to investigate whether the organisational affiliation, project financing, and LAG co-financing can explain the degree of social capital accumulation. Furthermore, the index has tested if there are connections between motivation for pursuing development projects similar to those implemented previously and the degree of social capital.

The paper concludes on the three uses of the index: (1) There are indications that projects hosted by municipalities tend to stimulate the most social capital; this idea can be supported by the accessibility of potential contact persons possessed by the municipality which consequently ease the social capital accumulation. (2) There is no connection between the amount of project financing and social capital accumulation. This implies that in terms of building social capital, financially heavy projects are not necessarily the way forward. (3) High levels

of motivation lead to increased social capital. This finding implies that not only does the LEADER approach have direct implications for the local area, but it also increases motivation in the wake of a project and, hence, has a future positive impact on the community.

## **5 Concluding remarks and perspectives**

The following section provides a summary of the conclusions that emerge by examining and comparing the three papers and the introduction and discussion above. Hence, the extensive conclusions arrived at from investigating the research topic described in the three papers will not be presented in the present section but are found in the three papers. Lastly, the section suggests gaps in the research pertaining to the dissertation subject and proposes future research ideas.

The present dissertation has analysed different kinds of interactive rural development and has suggested and discussed novel approaches. Whether the interaction is across disciplines at institutional, personal/individual level or between sectors for the purpose of integrated planning, interaction is conceived as beneficial and in some cases essential. Of course, the dissertation and, hence, the three papers do not simplistically accept any kind of interaction as being equally good, and different degrees, types, and characteristics of interactions are investigated. Interaction can vary from the informal to the formal, following a set of documented guidelines, and can even be legally binding with checks and balances. It can be argued that if interaction is highly coordinated and tightly framed according to a set of rules, the room for manoeuvring is compromised. The interaction might therefore hamper the inspiring of new ideas and approaches. In most of the interaction analysed in the present dissertation, the interaction is rather informal and the partners interact because they see benefits from exchanging resources, rather than because they are mandated to do so.

The three papers are separate but interrelated and conclusions emerge from the connections between them. From starting off in paper 1 with an analysis of the multifunctionality of the Danish landscapes and the planning initiatives to deal with lagging areas, papers 2 and 3 then analyse a flexible and place-based policy intervention, and, hence, analyse one way of tackling the social dimension of multifunctional landscapes.

The Danish planning legislation has been exposed to incremental changes when appropriate and suffers a lag in the reformation process. Furthermore, the Danish planning act is general in its structure and does not capture the spatial diversity and necessary multifunctionality of actors and approaches. This tradition, therefore, leads to homogeneous and static planning that is not able to tackle the complexity of the rural landscape. On the other hand, the place-based LEADER initiative is a highly adaptive approach for local inhabitants to influence the development of their local area. To varying degrees, some of the LEADER approaches could be applicable also under physical planning and this tendency is evident around Europe (Hajer, Zonneveld 2000). The collaborative partnerships and network-based elements are becoming increasingly integrated into physical planning, with research initiated by Patsy Healey (2006, 1996) and followed by others (Agger 2007, Innes, Booher 1999, Tewdwr-Jones, Allmendinger 1998). There are ideas that overlap between the collaborative planning theories and the LEADER approach, such as the bottom-top and stakeholder involvement approaches. However, the establishment of partnerships through the LEADER LAGs has proved beneficial in local and to some extent social terms. The economic development due to such partnerships could be applicable to the physical elements of planning. One of the major conclusions from paper 1 is that the Danish landscapes are multifunctional, but there is a lack of political desire to support this development through planning

initiatives. The inclusion of elements from the LEADER approach might be the way forward in this regard. More research on this matter is needed to determine fully which elements are appropriate and which might endanger the entire process.

The thorough analysis in the present dissertation gives an insight into the interaction processes in the LAG. One of the conclusions from paper 2 is that the LAG coordinator is the most important person in controlling the LAG and securing both the strategic as well as the operational implementation. This delegation and leading of the implementation of a national and supra-national (EU) policy assignment at the local level can be referred to as a governance approach, with the responsible ministry<sup>11</sup> being the main meta-governor (Thuesen 2010). This means that there is a delivery of policy intentions from the political to the LAG level, and the LAG thereby becomes a self-governing unit. The last step of delivering the policy objectives to the implementation level, i.e. to the project holders, is indeed crucial to realising the policy intentions in the local landscape. However, the degree to which the LAG coordinator and board of directors secure the LEADER principles at the local level remains uncovered in research. This line of research is therefore linked to one of the contributions from paper 3 that assesses the implementation at the most local level. Through questioning the project holders about their perception of and received management from the LAG, it would be possible to investigate the implementation of the LEADER principles at local level. The questionnaire to the project holders used in paper 3 for investigating social capital accumulation

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<sup>11</sup> In this case, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries and the sub-section, the National Network Unit.

raises some pertinent issues. The questions should uncover whether the project holders have been guided in fulfilling the LEADER principles or whether they simply succeeded in their project idea without having to meet any demands. Using the seven LEADER principles as the point of departure, each of these could be analysed in relation to the implementation of the principle and how the project holders have been encouraged to apply these. As a LAG project holder, it would be difficult to fulfil all the principles, but my impression from working with the present study suggests that more could be done in facilitating implementation of the LEADER approach. How is the idea of networking and partnerships being conveyed to the project holders? Are the projects innovative and what is needed for a project to become innovative? Answers to such questions are complex and more research is needed to illuminate these.

Drawing on the conclusions from the three papers the benefits of utilising a partnership approach to sustainable development of a more multifunctional countryside may be discussed. As one of the negative consequences of social capital may be that the ties that bind persons together may be strong and tying a homogenous group together. If this group makes up the main share of a partnership that ought to develop a more multifunctional countryside there is a risk of not succeeding with this goal. The tight interconnection that a group may develop may therefore represent a group with a similar mind-set and not necessarily drive the landscape in a multifunctional direction.

The main parts of the dissertation and the conclusions of the three papers draws on perspectives from Danish experiences and cases and do in some cases draw parallels and generalisations to broader, mainly Western European development trends. To progress the opportunity to make more generalised conclusion at a more aggregate level the studies need to be broadened and include additional comparative study techniques. Large parts of the conducted studies are

appropriate to unfold to a broader setting including other cases from both Denmark and other Western European countries. There are large differences in the setup of LAGs among EU memberships and studies of interaction between the LAG and key stakeholders may be of high relevance. Such studies would enable a general discussion about the implementation of the LEADER approach and could thereby be an interesting and relevant source for further development and discussion of the rural development policy.

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## **PAPER 1: Planning for a multifunctional countryside in Denmark: The need for new planning approaches**

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## **Planning for a multifunctional countryside in Denmark: The need for new planning approaches**

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### ***Abstract***

*Danish landscapes have faced increased demand for new functions, such as recreation, hobby farming, and natural diversity, and it has been argued that a multifunctional landscape have been developed. The demand for new functions is spatially differentiated, with large differences between peri-urban and rural landscapes. The demand for additional functions is also found in policy documents as a goal of increased integration of functions in the landscape. Through a review and assessment, this paper argues that planning legislation that should steer and control the landscape has not followed this development and hence does not provide sufficient tools for supporting the policy goal of integrating additional functions into the landscape. Drawing on European experiences with planning for multifunctional landscapes, the paper suggests new approaches that may support the policy goals.*

## **1. Introduction**

Multifunctionality is a term that entered the agenda of agri-environment policy and related research in the late 1990s (Potter, Burney 2002, Selman 2009, Mander, Wiggering & Helming 2007). The theory and practice surrounding the term emerged as a response to the monofunctional and intensive production-oriented agriculture developed after World War II and its negative environmental and social impact (Zasada 2011), partially as a demand for new landscape functions as defined by the wider society (Vejre et al. 2007, De Groot 2006). These new functions include habitation in rural areas, recreational opportunities, regional food production, wildlife habitats, and other landscape functions.

No unambiguous definition or conceptualisation of the term multifunctionality exists. However, according to Zasada (2011) in an analysis of western European landscapes argues that at least two perspectives should be distinguished: a broader landscape and ecology approach and a more narrow approach related to multifunctionality in agriculture as an economic activity. The latter refers to the fact that agriculture simultaneous with its production of food produces externalities (positive or negative) (Hasler, Romstad & Schou 2003, OECD 2001), and that agriculture can follow different development paths to cope with changing framework conditions and new demands from society (Wilson 2007,

Knickel, Renting & Ploeg 2004). The broader landscape approach deals with the definition of landscape functions and their relation to values and structures (De Groot 2006, Vejre et al. 2007), and with the linking of place quality and resilience to the underlying functions (Selman 2009). Despite the obvious analytical aspects represented in both approaches, a normative perspective can also be identified where multifunctional agriculture and multifunctional land use are seen as respective models for a more sustainable future.

Within the reformed European Union (EU) Common Agricultural Policy, measures for promotion of multifunctionality in agriculture and landscape have been implemented through rural development programs. With point of departure in British landscape planning, however with tight parallels to EU level, Selman (2009) argues that within the field of spatial and land-use planning, multifunctionality is increasingly declared to be a desirable policy outcome. In Danish planning, these issues have become evident through the national planning reports, which argue for emphasized planning focus on additional functions: 'planning should secure landscapes rich in experiences [...] Landscape and nature should be more easily accessible to everybody [...] Planning should secure a sustainable localization of agricultural buildings and facilities' (Miljøministeriet 2010 p. 13). Though the term has reached core planning documents and the issue of multifunctionality has been central to the Danish planning debate, there has been little discussion of means to achieve

multifunctional landscapes through spatial planning. This indicates that the policy goal of achieving multifunctional landscape has remained within the planning rhetoric and that core principles of the planning legislation have remained unchanged.

According to Selman (2009), a planning perspective encompassing multifunctionality requires not only the coexistence of functions but also their interactivity to create synergistic effects, as the perspective must operate at the landscape scale and permit us to talk about positive and negative interactions of functions from a human perspective. Selman (2009) also claims that such planning must be dynamic (susceptible to new natural and cultural drivers), rely on partnership and joint governance, and offer new settings for social learning and collective action.

In light of Selman's multifunctional planning perspective, the aim of this paper is to discuss the adequateness of Danish planning legislation for supporting the development of multifunctional landscapes. This will enable a foundation for suggestions of new premises for future planning of the rural landscape. In doing this, the study will answer the question: Is planning legislation a barrier to achieving the policy goals of supporting development towards multifunctional landscapes?

The focus of our analysis is mainly the zoning principle of the Danish planning act, which divides the Danish territory into three zones. The zoning principle is one of the main mechanisms regulating the use of the countryside. The principle has been appraised as a simple instrument for regulating urban growth, preventing urban sprawl, and maintaining a strict division between urban and rural (Kristensen, Primdahl 2008). The paper draws on research conducted in different, mainly European countries and seeks to apply these discussions and results in a Danish context.

In answering the above-mentioned question, the paper identifies and assesses five elements from the planning act that may be barriers to the development of a multifunctional landscape. These elements are (1) principles of designation of areas of specific (sectorial) interest, (2) the location appropriate for agriculture in the countryside, (3) the disconnection of the countryside through zoning provisions, (4) the actual spatial differences within the countryside zone compared to the legislation's treatment of the countryside as one homogeneous zone, and (5) liberalisation of the planning legislation.

In section 2, we deepen the landscape approach and discuss the inclusion of multifunctionality in public planning. Additionally, the concept of multifunctionality is linked to the differentiated countryside concept, and based on Danish empirical findings, we show how different rural spaces have



developed and how new combinations of functions are in demand. Section 3 presents the comprehensive planning and zoning provisions and relates these to the demand for multifunctional landscapes. Section 4 provides a discussion of whether comprehensive planning and zoning provisions facilitate the development of multifunctional landscapes and concludes with a proposal for how planning should be changed to accommodate the demand for new functions.

## **2. Approaches to multifunctionality and the differentiated countryside**

The countryside includes different landscape functions, whether this is planned for or not. In the present study, landscape functions are viewed from a broad perspective as ‘the capacity of a landscape to provide goods and services to society’ (Willemen et al. 2010 p. 62). These goods and services provide value, and therefore benefits to human society, so they are sometimes referred to as natural capital (De Groot 2006). This implies that human society benefits from the landscape through utilisation of functions, such as recreation, production, settlement, environment (clean water and air), and biodiversity (De Groot 2006). These functions may overlap in time and space, with multiple functions occurring on the same patch of land, thereby making it multifunctional (Willemen et al. 2010). The notion of multifunctionality is applied in describing the multiple functions of both agricultural production and landscape, and

differentiation between these uses is necessary. Referring to multifunctional agriculture in an analytical sense, the starting point is to view agricultural production as the primary function and other functions provided by the farm, such as environmental effects and biodiversity, as secondary (Selman 2009, Vatn 2002). These secondary functions are interlinked and, in many cases, depend on agricultural production (Vatn 2002). However, secondary functions may also be linked to a kind of income diversification and other 'on-farm' activities, such as a bed and breakfast (Praestholm, Kristensen 2007). In the application of multifunctional landscapes, no function has clear prevalence or domination of others, and the different usages of an area of land make it multifunctional (Tress et al. 2001, Wiggering, Müller 2002).

Not all studies retain a stringent division between a multifunctional approach to agriculture and a multifunctional approach to the landscape, and it can be argued that this is more of a continuum than a dichotomous distinction. Other intermediate terms such as 'multifunctional agricultural landscape' (Bills, Gross 2005, Atwell, Schulte & Westphal 2010) and multifunctional land use (Mander, Wiggering & Helming 2007, Wiggering et al. 2006) have been suggested, whereas some researchers simply use the term multifunctionality to refer to rural areas (Wilson 2007).

### *Planning for multifunctional landscapes*

When using the notion of multifunctional landscapes in a planning context, a breakdown of conceptual meaning may be required. Parris (2004) suggests analysing multifunctional landscapes through a distinction between structures, functions, and values. Structures are understood as natural and human-made land uses and elements, such as habitats, cropping systems, hedges, and farm buildings. Functions include agricultural production, water supply, and a place to live and work (Parris 2004). Values deal with the amenities provided by the functions, and they are understood as recreation values, aesthetic and scenery values, and cultural values (Parris 2004). This interacting chain should be understood as sequential: structures perform functions and these functions are of value to people. This implies that functions are recognised and defined in accordance to social needs: ‘multifunctionality emerges from the interaction of ecological systems and human value systems’ (Selman 2009 p. 48).

The analytical approach applied in viewing the sequence from structures to functions and embedded values indicates that multifunctionality is approached from the supply side. This implies that the landscape in this perspective is viewed and assessed in its present state, including the functions provided. However, in planning for multifunctionality, a normative and proactive stand should be taken. Planning needs to consider societal values as a point of

departure and allow for adequate structures: houses, recreational facilities, roads, etc. (Zasada 2011, Terkenli 2001) and thereby inspect the chain from the demand side. This implies that the chain should be turned around, starting with the values demanded by society and investigating the functions that need to be planned, and consequently determining how the structures should be changed. The reversed logic of the sequence from the demand side is depicted in figure 1.

Figure 1: The chain of planning for various functions. The society demands new functions that lead to changes in landscape structures.



The rural development program, pillar two of the Common Agricultural Policy, appears to be a new type of policy designed to support multifunctional development of the countryside. The program includes mechanisms that support the development of multifunctional landscapes through schemes targeted at both farmers and the wider population living in rural areas. The agri-environmental and organic agricultural schemes mainly target the environmental functions of the landscapes and seek to support development of a diverse natural production landscape. This support for environmental functions in the production landscape accounts for the largest part of the rural development budget by far and has received significant research interest. Mauchline et al. (2011) in a paper

examining seven EU countries and Vesterager et al. (2011) in a paper on Danish agricultural landscapes argue that there is evidence of increased natural and environmental performance by farmers involved in agri-environmental schemes, whereas Kleijn et al. (2001) in a study of from the Netherlands argue that the agri-environmental measures do not sufficiently protect biodiversity in agrarian landscapes. Furthermore, the conversion to organic farming in particular has been conducted for income-diversification purposes, as illustrated by Ilbery and Bowler (1998), and the policy has thereby stimulated a differentiated utilisation of the landscape functions. A minor goal of the rural development pillar is to diversify the income opportunities of the wider rural population through the LEADER approach (for more information and explanation of the LEADER approach see eg. (COM 2006, Ray 2000, Thuesen 2010)) In Denmark, this is conveyed through local action groups (LAGs), which are locally anchored associations supporting bottom-up rural development projects. Diversity among the projects is high, and there are large variations among the projects that influence the utilisation of landscape functions. Some projects highly depend on the landscape and the functions they develop through the projects. Some example of such projects are the development of a ski-lift system to bring people into the hilly landscape at Bornholm, the establishment of a golf course, or museum activities that engage local inhabitants in describing and documenting their perceptions of the local landscape values. The opportunities for income

diversification indicate growing interest in altering the utilisation of the rural landscape, not only from an agricultural perspective, but from a more general societal perspective as well. Although it is not the sole means of diversification of income opportunities and development of a multifunctional landscape, the LEADER approach is a well-established example of a policy that supports a multifunctional countryside (van der Ploeg et al. 2000).

### *Typologies of spatiality of multifunctional landscapes*

Many studies aim to analyse the different landscape functions (De Groot 2006, Willemsen et al. 2010). These studies often use a descriptive angle by identifying existing landscape functions and analysing how they are utilised by rural inhabitants. This is an analytical approach from the supply side, and hence provides discussion of which functions the landscape provides. These results may be applied to indicate the importance of studying the functions in a spatial perspective and thereby analysing how and to what extent different functions appear in different rural spaces.

Building a socioeconomic approach, Marsden et al. (1993) describe the different spatial variation of the British countryside and the differences in structures and mentalities various landscapes offer. The ideas are further developed in Murdoch et al. (2003) and Murdoch (2006), in which the notion of a differentiated countryside is introduced. These authors argue with a point of

departure in the British landscape that the countryside is not a homogenous territory and that different areas provide different functions related to their structures and spatial situations. Thus, the authors argue that four ‘ideal types’ make up the British countryside. The preserved countryside is characterised by economic buoyancy, mainly found adjacent to major cities, and has a large local political influence. The contested countryside lies outside main commuter areas, has attractive living environments, and is dominated by agriculture. The paternalistic countryside is marked by large farm units, some with structural challenges, and a growing need for income diversification. The clientelist countryside, found in remote rural areas, is dependent on state subsidies and dominated by employment concerns and community welfare. Though the notion of the differentiated countryside has emerged from analysing British landscapes, similar landscape segregations has been suggested in a Danish context (Madsen et al. 2010).

Other suggestions building on different approaches to differentiating the countryside appropriately have been offered, including Holmes’ (2006) approach based on the agricultural intensity in an Australian context, and Madsen et al.’s (2010) approach based on a rural-urban continuum under Danish conditions. Based on 22 indicators, Madsen et al. (2010) categorised the 552 parishes in the Mid-Jutland region into five groups: Ex-urban parishes (126) are characterised by high income and a high commuting rate and display urban

employment. Counter-urban parishes (78) are characterised by well-educated urban in-migration, with some level of commuting to urban areas. Peri-urban parishes (118) are influenced by a nearby city or town and often marked by hobby farms, second homes, and easy accessibility to major roads. Remote parishes (90) are slightly influenced by urban areas and characterised by low population density, low education and income levels, and high dependence on primary production. Agricultural parishes (140) are characterised by full-time agriculture, indicating an intensive farming strategy.

The spatial distribution of Madsen et al.'s (2010) analysis shows a high concentration of ex-urban and counter-urban parishes closest to larger urban areas, whereas peri-urban parishes are mainly situated a little further into the rural landscape. The remote rural parishes are mainly situated in areas with marginalised land, where agriculture is only slightly profitable or not profitable at all. Agricultural parishes lie in areas where the land provides a good foundation for profitable agriculture.

### *Framework*

To illustrate the emergence of different landscape functions, we utilise the typology from Madsen et al. (2010). This is applied in highlighting four rural spaces of relevance in a Danish context: (1) agricultural landscapes, equivalent to agricultural parishes; (2) peri-urban landscapes, similar to peri-urban parishes;

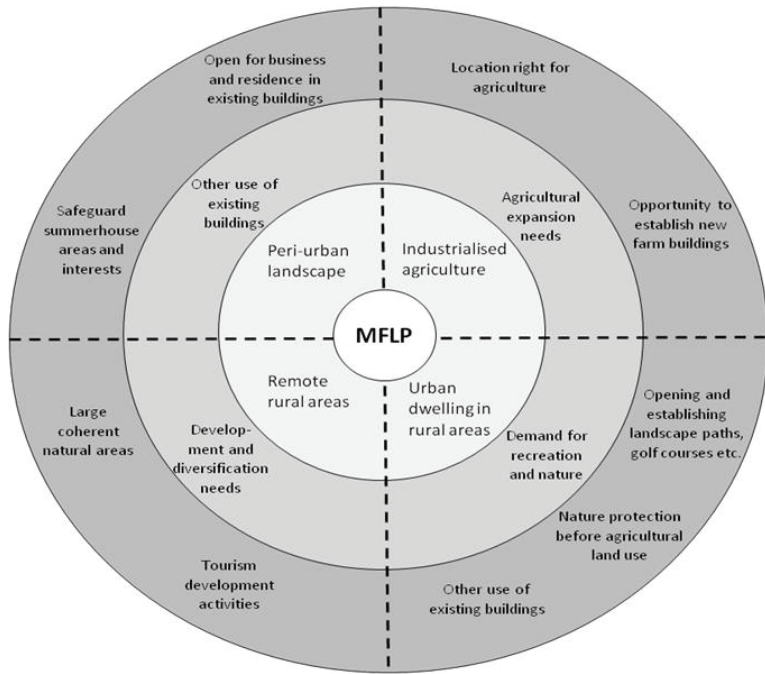


(3) remote rural landscapes, similar to remote parishes; and (4) ‘urban dwelling’ landscapes, an agglomeration of ex-urban parishes and counter-urbanisation parishes with emphasis on the demands of the most urban-influenced areas.

In agricultural landscapes, farmers demand a production function with potential for expanding the production unit. This implies an acceptable location for agriculture in the landscape and the opportunity to establish new farm buildings where appropriate. From a societal perspective, it is required that industrialised agriculture operates in compliance with the function of protecting nature and the environment. Peri-urban landscapes are influenced by demand from urban areas and from the inhabitants. To diversify their income, the inhabitants demand opportunities to create alternate uses for existing buildings, for example, as new non-agricultural businesses, and to sustain small-scale, mainly hobby farming. Other types of farming can also be located here, for example, plant producers and mixed farming. The external planning requirements are related to demands for recreational use of the landscape. The inhabitants in peri-urban areas depend on easy access to urban areas, to which many people commute. Remote rural areas are forced to diversify their income opportunities, because agriculture has only limited profitability in these areas. The marginalised land provides opportunities to develop large, coherent natural areas that inhabitants can use for tourism development activities. ‘Urban dwelling’ landscapes are highly influenced by the nearby urban areas and a demand for recreational activities.

The vicinity to urban areas makes industrialised agriculture problematic; however, agriculture that is more extensive may be demanded in order to maintain natural areas or to supply direct-sale produce to urban inhabitants. Land may also be demanded for urban agriculture (land cultivated by urban inhabitants of the city) and for climate-adaptation purposes. To sum up these various demanded functions, figure 2 presents the different rural spaces and the associated functions and planning needs.

Figure 2: Multifunctional landscape planning (MFLP) in the four rural spaces (inner circle), their main demands (middle circle), and concrete planning needs (outer circle).



It is important to note that the outlined rural spaces and functions should not be perceived as completely spatially separated. Rather, they may be seen as a spectrum of rural spaces with different dominating characteristics, ranging from areas with urban characteristics to areas that show high dependency on agriculture and a remote rural livelihood marked by a diverse set of development challenges. This implies that boundaries between the spaces are porous, and that

there are interactions and variations in and between these landscapes. It is therefore not possible, nor is it the intention, to divide the countryside into a rigid frame of four spaces for the guidance of planning decisions. The differences are highlighted to indicate that the countryside has developed into highly diverse rural spaces demanding different functions. In terms of planning, planning boundaries should be designated based on the specific context (social and physical) and locally defined demands and wishes for the future. A rigid, homogenous, and broad landscape-planning approach may not be able to target the different needs attached to different landscapes.

### **3. Planning for multifunctional landscapes in Denmark and prospects from the Netherlands**

The following section analyses and explains the content and purpose of the comprehensive planning system and the zoning provisions as they are stated in the Danish Planning Act. This is followed by an assessment of the extent to which the zoning regulations cope with multifunctionality and the differentiated development of rural areas. In this assessment, we conceive planning for multifunctionality as a means to promote spatial integration of functions, where the interactivity of functions is positive and dysfunctions are minimised.

The objective of the planning act is to maintain coordinated development that unites the societal interests in land use while contributing to the protection of

nature and the environment, implying that society can undergo sustainable development that respects human beings and wildlife (Miljøministeriet 2009). Three measures in the planning legislation are provided to fulfil these objectives: a comprehensive planning system regulating rural land use, a zoning principle separating urban and rural functions, and a ‘plan-making duty’ in relation to urban development. The latter implies that urban development can only take place when a plan has been prepared for the development. This issue will not be described further.

The comprehensive planning system, the zoning principle, and the plan-making duty were introduced in the period of 1960–1975, when Denmark implemented its first nationwide legislation on planning for urban and rural areas. The legislation included three laws: the Urban and Rural Act (1969), including the zoning principle, the National and Regional Planning Act (1973), and the Municipality Planning Act (1975) (Boeck 2002). Without changing the main principles, the three laws were merged into the law now known as The Danish Planning Act in 1992.

The comprehensive planning system may be seen as the most important measure for coordinating and planning the development of land uses in the countryside. Coordination takes place through a designation of space for the development of the different land use interests, including agricultural, nature and landscape,

water extraction, raw-material extraction, and outdoor recreation. The planning measure functions mainly through a regulatory approach focusing on the activities that can or cannot take place within a designated area. Through this approach, the measure guides the decision making by public authorities regarding activities (urban and infrastructure development and other investments) and the administration that the authorities need to fulfil in accordance with the sectorial legislations.

Throughout the 1990s, this regulative system was supplemented with financial means for investment in nature restorations, afforestation, and improvement of recreational infrastructure in the countryside (Skov- og Naturstyrelsen 1999). In addition, the agri-environmental measures introduced in the same period may be seen as a supplement to the planning system (Primdahl 1996). Only a limited part of these new means and measures is controlled by the comprehensive planning authorities; more control lies in the hands of sectorial planning authorities. This causes the coordination and integration of the measures to be less effective than they could be (Primdahl, Kristensen 2003).

The zoning principle includes two components: (1) zoning dividing the country into three types of zones, and (2) a detailed set of regulations for the use of land and buildings in the countryside (the rural zoning provisions). The latter component of the zoning principle is administrated by the municipalities. The

overall objectives are to control urban development, prevent urban sprawl, and guide land use changes in the countryside zone. The three types of zones created by the principle are (1) zones for urban functions and urban development, (2) zones for summerhouses, and (3) the countryside zone, designated as land outside the other two zones and reserved for the development of primary production (agriculture, forestry, and fishery) (Kristensen, Primdahl 2008, Miljøministeriet 2002).

The main idea of countryside zoning is that all changes necessary for operating a production unit for agriculture or forestry are allowed without permission, as long as the development remains within the existing building plot and complies with building regulations (Boligministeriet 1968). For all other changes, permissions are required (Boeck 2002). From the comments on the original legislation from 1968, it appears that the countryside zone should not be perceived as a completely prohibitive zone. Development is allowed, but authorities must determine whether construction or other change is consistent with the objectives: ensuring successful and economically sound development of the settlement; protecting the recreational, ecosystem, and agricultural interests; avoiding pollution; and ensuring that the infrastructure provides safety and accessibility (Boeck 2002). Within this framework, it is possible to differentiate types of administration for specific protection conditions (high nature and landscape values) and enable municipalities in peri-urban areas (around bigger

cities) to enforce more strict administration of the rules than the more peripheral areas (Miljøministeriet 2002).

Since its introduction, the zoning provision has changed in order to adapt to new demands, mainly resulting from the structural development of agriculture. This implies that rules concerning the use of agricultural buildings have become less restrictive, and redundant farm buildings could be adapted for commercial use and other purposes (Boeck 2002). These changes have been made parallel to changes in the agricultural legislation allowing non-agricultural educated persons to acquire agricultural properties (Boeck 2002). The zoning provisions were further liberalised in 2002 to allow agricultural buildings used for other purposes to be expanded and redundant buildings to be converted into residences (Sørensen 2002). In the most recent amendment, the act is further relaxed. Planning for additional housing and shops outside the city centre, opportunities have been created to develop businesses in former farm buildings, and planning in coastal areas has been relaxed for 29 rural municipalities (Økonomi og erhvervsministeriet 2010). The liberalisation thereby indicates that the legislation is starting to become geographically differentiated, with different prescriptions for various parts of Denmark.

Assessing the comprehensive planning system and the zoning principles in terms of their capability to promote multifunctional landscapes, it appears that the



planning act does not operate as a barrier to spatial integration of functions on a general level. However, a thorough examination of the comprehensive planning system and the zoning provisions shows several problems in relation to the achievement of multifunctional landscapes. First, the comprehensive planning system and the zoning system focus on solving conflicts between interests through their designation of spaces reserved for specific functions (Healey 1998). Thus, zoning and land-use designation, despite the objective of coordinating different land-use interests, contribute to the reinforcement of monofunctional land use (Brandt 2003, Jongman 2002, Healey 1998). In addition, the zoning provisions and comprehensive planning system have a regulative approach that does not actively promote or guide multifunctional landscapes/land-use development.

Second, the zoning provisions clearly indicate that the countryside zone is reserved for primary production and gives agriculture a localisation right over other functions. This implies that negative planning designation which forbids the location of certain types of agriculture cannot be planned for Anker 2008). This reduces the capability of the planning measure to minimise dysfunction related to the coexistence of industrialised agriculture and other functions of the countryside zone.

Third, the zoning provisions disconnect the countryside zone from the urban zone, which has been criticised in several studies (see (Selman 2009, Gallent, Andersson & Biancon 2006, Clemmensen 2011)). These authors claim that separating the rural from the urban is reminiscent of the industrial period, and that today we need to reconnect the two systems in order to acknowledge their social and ecological interconnectedness and reintegrate ecological, hydrological, and climatic processes. In terms of planning, the segregation of the rural and the urban has resulted in a lack of planning in the urban fringe and has left the fringe with undervalued potential (Gallent, Andersson & Biancon 2006, Primdahl, Busck & Lindemann 2006).

Our fourth claim is related to the issue of differentiating. As mentioned above, the planning act identifies the countryside zone as one unit with some possibilities for differentiating the administration of the zoning rules based on the guideline for comprehensive planning or other geographically related criteria. An examination of administration practises from the 1990s, however, shows that there is no significant difference in administration practises between designated and non-designated areas (Anker 1998). Differences in administration practise among public authorities (counties) and geographical locations can, however, be seen on a very general level, indicating that counties/municipalities located on Zealand (close to the Copenhagen area) had more strict administration practises than other parts of the country (Andersen

2001, Bille, Christoffersen & Wulff 2005). The lack of differentiated administration practises on a more local level indicates that the general guidelines and locally and politically approved guidelines for administration are more important in the decision-making process than the spatial designation and related guidelines.

Our fifth and final claim is that the liberalisation of many of the zoning provisions since 1987 has limited the planning authorities' ability to undertake differentiated administration practises based on the specific conditions of the landscape, because many land use changes no longer require permission according to the zoning provision. From a political perspective, liberalisation has been presented as creating more development possibilities, whereas from a planning perspective, it has been argued that liberalisation has left fewer planning possibilities for guiding and controlling multifunctional development.

### *Prospects from the Netherlands*

New planning approaches for coping with the demand for a multifunctional landscape have appeared in various countries (Selman 2009, Zasada 2011). As is often highlighted, a novel planning approach appeared in the Netherlands in the late 1990s. This planning approach is called 'red-green planning' and is based on a market-oriented instrument through which capital generated by selling development rights in specific designated areas in the countryside (a portion of

the profits generated by selling buildings and houses) pays for improvements of other parts of the countryside (Janssen-Jansen 2008). This improvement of the countryside may include changing an agricultural landscape into nature conservation sites or recreational areas, or simply improving the agricultural landscape (Janssen-Jansen 2008, Busck et al. 2008, Busck et al. 2009). This planning approach has been implemented in both peri-urban areas, where a portion of the profits from housing development has been used to finance larger nature-restoration projects (Rij 2009) and in deep rural areas, where development rights have been used as an incentive to encourage farmers to reduce their stock farming and demolish empty stables (Janssen-Jansen 2008). In deep rural areas, housing development in smaller villages has also been used to finance development and enhancement of the surrounding agricultural landscapes (knooperfdevelldboer 2012).

The managerial setup utilised in most of the planning projects is a partnership, where public, private, and voluntary actors (sector organisations as well as individuals and communities) engage in the planning process, reflecting contemporary demands for more deliberated and collaborative planning processes (Selman 2009, Healey 1998, Stockdale, Barker 2009). Two issues related to the approach are of importance and have been heavily debated in the Netherlands. First, new houses in the countryside change the remaining open space and are in conflict with former ideas of a separation between the cities and

the countryside. Second, it has been discussed whether enough funds can be generated from such projects to cover the expenses of improving the spatial quality of the landscapes. The latter issue is partially related to the location of the development and the extent of the landscape-change project. However, experience from the Netherlands shows that, in many cases, the projects cannot gain sufficient money for effective improvement in the quality of the landscape (Rij 2009), implying that additional funds must be provided. Concerning the first issue, the red-green planning concept may be seen as going against former ideals of protecting open space against development; critics claim that investment cannot counterbalance the loss of green space due to development and that the approach may open the door for more development in the countryside (Rij 2009).

#### **4. Multifunctional landscapes through planning: Discussion and concluding remarks**

As indicated through the analysis above, the comprehensive planning system and zoning provisions do not act as barriers to development of multifunctional landscapes per se, as they allow several functions to take place. However, the measures do not actively promote or guide multifunctional landscape development, and the zoning principle's segregation of functions may, in the worst-case scenario, reinforce monofunctional land uses and disconnect

important ecological functions. Additionally, understanding the countryside zone as non-urban space reserved for agriculture and forestry with a few landscape-related interests gives agriculture fundamental rights before other functions, leaving planners with very few instruments to regulate agricultural buildings and land use. Altogether, this implies that even though the zoning provisions have been modified over time to address the multifunctionality of the countryside zone, and comprehensive planning considers ‘balancing the interests’ from the outset, the zoning provisions and comprehensive planning system neither fundamentally copes with the multiple and changing functions of the countryside, nor with differences in spatiality.

The need for differentiated planning has been analysed and discussed in several studies. Primdahl and Agger (2006) and Kristensen and Primdahl (2009) suggest differentiation of the countryside zone into three sub-zones—nature and landscape, peri-urban, and agricultural zones—each having its own set of provisions. Differentiating the present countryside zone further might create the possibility of securing a more targeted planning approach to designated areas. However, it still relies on a regulative approach, lacking the opportunity for flexible and positive guidance of multifunctional development, and maintains the rural-urban dualism.

In our analysis of the development trends in the Danish countryside, we have shown that a spatially differentiated countryside exists and is characterised by a mix of different and overlapping landscape functions with no strict borders between the partialities. An example of overlapping or coexisting functions demanded by society is that settlement may go hand-in-hand with development of recreation areas or certain types of agricultural practices needed to maintain and sustain specific types of habitats or landscape patterns. To promote and guide such development, planning must relate to the specific landscape in question, be accommodated through an assessment of the local resources and multifunctional demands, and include an explicit guide for future development through persuasive strategic framing (Healey 2009). Such an approach could be based on learning from the cities' local/area planning tradition and draw on experiences from 'red-green' planning in the Netherlands. In peri-urban areas, planning could focus on safeguarding room for active and alternative agriculture settlements close to urban areas and reinforcement of the rural-urban interaction in relation, for example, to ecological infrastructure and recreation (Zasada 2011). In remote rural areas, where other coexisting functions are demanded, such a planning approach may enable development through which both agricultural and non-agricultural settlements are included in a parallel and equal process. Planning could, in these cases, provide the framework for a new interaction between protecting nature and settlement supported by extensive

farming approaches, allowing the restoration and development of the natural environment and removal of superfluous agricultural buildings. In this sense, it is the societal demand for new landscape functions that is pivotal to planning, rather than restrictive development in the countryside zone.

Some serious drawbacks of the Dutch red-green process may limit its application. However, the ideas may be used to initiate a discussion about how to revitalise countryside planning and hence regain legitimacy. We believe that a more context-specific and proactive planning approach is needed in certain parts of the countryside zone to solve contemporary rural landscape problems and, more fundamentally, cope with the demand for multifunctional landscapes.

The introduction of such a new planning approach should not be seen as being a complete contradiction of the division into three zones and the rural zoning provisions, or as an abandonment of the control of urban development in general, but should instead be regarded as a supplement. It would give the authorities a new planning approach that could be used to initiate context-specific and proactive planning in specific designated areas (e.g. landscapes with high natural value, coastal, and peri-urban areas) and to promote specific functions in different landscapes. In the remaining countryside zone, regulative control through zoning provisions could still be in effect, but modified to be



flexible enough to accommodate the differences in demanded functions in the countryside.

The rural development program has been highlighted in the present study as one initiative that inspires the development of multifunctional landscapes. This initiative should be integrated into the proposed planning approach so that development of specific functions designated in the countryside zone can be supported by the project based on rural development initiated through LAGs and local inhabitants. This may demand a closer collaboration and attuning of development strategies among the planning authorities—the municipalities—and the LAGs.

The present study has illustrated that multifunctional landscapes will, to some extent, develop from societal demands and certain targeted policies (such as the rural development policy). However, to pursue the policy goals of multifunctional landscapes, planning needs to be proactive and promoted with public intervention. Though the analysis is grounded in a Danish context, the study contributes to the on-going research and practical grounded debate on how to pursue and support development towards sustainable, multifunctional landscapes, and thereby contributes to the discussion initiated by Selman (2009), Zasada (2011), Brandt (2003), and others. At national Danish level, the knowledge and analysis in the present study may be utilised by policy makers as

a novel, analytical view of the present planning system's ability to cope with the spatially differentiated and increased demands for new functions in the landscape. This, in turn, may be perceived as a contribution to the future of the Danish planning system.

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## **PAPER 2: Collaborating on rural development: experiences and lessons from Local Action Groups in Denmark**

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## **Collaborating on rural development: experiences and lessons from Local Action Groups in Denmark**

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper analyses the degree of interaction between Danish municipalities and the EU-funded LEADER Local Action Groups (LAGs), using the case of LAG-Djursland, and draws parallels with the national implementation of the program. The analysis deals with interactions at the board, operational, and implementation levels, and it employs interorganisational theory. The analysis concludes that at LAG-Djursland, the board level has the least integrated mode of interaction and that the operational and implementation levels were most integrated. The operational level is perceived as the most important level. This paper concludes that the municipality is a valuable partner in fulfilling LAG objectives; it is, however, difficult to define the point at which the municipality becomes overly dominant and thus in conflict with the rationale behind the LEADER approach.

### **Introduction**

Increasingly, research on rural development has devoted itself to the importance of involving local inhabitants in developing plans and projects—especially those that utilise a network-based governance approach to development (Lowe, Buller and Ward, 2002; Ray, 1999; Marsden and Sonnino, 2008; O'Connor, Renting, Gorman and Kinsella, 2006; OECD, 2006; Shortall and Shucksmith, 1998). One example of this is the EU LEADER approach, through which local rural areas have received methodological and

financial support in developing projects initiated at the local level and arranged around a partnership. One important component of taking the LEADER approach is working in Local Action Groups (LAGs).

In Denmark, the LEADER approach is not the sole means of undertaking rural development at the local level; the Danish municipalities, after all, are very important stakeholders too. Municipality-initiated rural development runs parallel with the LEADER approach, and whenever synergistic, interaction-based effects can be realised, they should be pursued. At the national level, Danish municipalities are encouraged to formulate a dedicated rural development policy that indicates how the municipality will confront embedded social, natural, and economic challenges (Miljøministeriet, 2006). Danish municipalities also have wide-ranging financial importance and are the main providers of services in the Danish welfare state. The LAG strategy should align with municipal strategies and plans, as the municipalities are considered “central players” and their interaction with LAGs is of special interest. In order that the LEADER principles not be compromised, the municipal influence should be monitored and evaluated so as to preclude its dominance of the public sphere (European Court of Auditors, 2010). From the previous programming period, LEADER+, there has been a series of examples where a LAG has been dominated by public authorities; in one LAG in Greece, for example, nine of 15 members of the Board of Directors (BoD) were representing the local municipalities, and was in principle dominating a LAG’s decision making (European Court of Auditors, 2010). In LAGs in Portugal, Greece, and Spain, there have been examples of LAG projects of a municipal nature, and hence they are not fully aligned with the LEADER approach (European Court of Auditors, 2010). This means that a certain degree of interaction between the LAG and the municipality is desirable,

but there is a risk of a high degree of municipal interference, which can run counter to the rationale behind the LEADER approach.

LEADER has been a focus interest among researchers, from a diversity of topic angles. A recurring research angle relates to governance perspectives and new ways of collaborating in rural development. LEADER is often described as one means of achieving a novel development approach. In Spain, LEADER's implementation process has been investigated with a focus on its potential for delivering integrated rural development through interaction and collaboration (Perez, 2000). Analysis of the experimental approach has involved new ways of interacting and delivering policy, from the EU to the national level (Ray, 1998). In Italy, the development of social capital through interaction at the BoD level has been investigated (Nardone, Sisto and Lopolito, 2010; Lopolito, Nardone and Sisto, 2011). Scott (2004) analyses institutionalisation and partnership governance as products of LEADER implementation. Other studies analyse LEADER by assessing the ability of the governance approach to deliver rural development (Ray, 2000; Shucksmith, 2000); analysis concerning rural governance also highlights the LEADER approach as but one among many in executing several rural-governance initiatives (MacKinnon, 2002). However, there is a knowledge gap vis-à-vis the interaction between LEADER LAGs and municipalities; this paper contributes to the literature by garnering a better understanding of this interaction.

The encouragement to take the LEADER approach suggests that the municipality can be essential to local rural development. To evaluate the importance of this collaborative link, it is necessary to analyse the interaction between LAGs and municipalities; a theoretical framework has been developed, to do so. The framework builds on network

and governance theory that has been applied to interorganisational interaction theories—theories that have been increasingly focused on and applied to the analysis of novel forms of interaction and policy-making (Mandell and Keast, 2009; Imperial, 2005; Agranoff, 2006; Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). The framework allows for the analysis of interorganisational interaction between LAG-Djursland and the two municipalities of Syddjurs and Norddjurs, within the LAG territory. This paper therefore aims to answer the research question: What kinds of interaction between the LAG and municipalities facilitate the delivery of rural development to the local area?

Following the introduction, the paper provides a brief background of the Danish implementation of the LEADER LAG; this is followed by information on the development of a theoretical framework. Building on governance and interorganisational interaction theory, the framework suggests three degrees of interaction that are assessed at three different organisational levels. The methodology section describes the analytical approach used to obtain results, which are in turn discussed in the subsequent section. Finally, the conclusion outlines the main findings of this study.

### **Background of the Danish LEADER LAGs**

The LEADER approach in Denmark is part of the EU co-financed Danish Rural Development Programme 2007–2013 Axis 3 (hereafter, “RDP 2007–2013”), which holds the objective of “improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of the rural economy” (COM, 2005 p. 9). LEADER builds on seven principles: that it be bottom-up in its approach, involve local public-private partnerships, comprise integrated and multisectoral action, and feature innovation, cooperation, networking, and area-based development strategies.

In Denmark, LAGs are organised as associations with BoDs, with the objectives of crafting a development strategy, assessing project applications, and recommending applications for co-financing. The BoD should include representatives from both the local area and the municipal council. No more than 30 per cent of any Danish LAG BoD may comprise public authorities, and for the 2007–2013 program period, the figure is 14 per cent; it is therefore argued, on this basis, that the public authorities are not dominating the BoDs (Thuesen, 2010). Daily coordination, the guidance of project applicants, the facilitation of project partnerships, marketing, website maintenance, ministry liaison, and the like is carried out by a LAG coordinator. There is no legislation that ties the LAG to the municipality; this implies that both partners need to see valuable opportunities in the interaction—something that Huxham (1993) characterises as “collaborative advantages.”

It is in the hands of the LAGs to implement the LEADER principles in a satisfactory manner, at both the national and EU levels. The municipalities may not have the same measurements of success as the LAGs; they may also be more concerned with the results—that is, rural development—than with the means of achieving them.

## **Theoretical framework**

### *Governance*

The governance “wave” that has penetrated many areas of public management has also impacted public rural development. Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan (1999 p. 2) provide a suitable definition of governance as comprising “all kinds of guidance mechanisms which are connected with public policy processes”; they further argue that governance

is not restricted to public actors, stating that “All kinds of actors are involved in governance, if only because government does not perform all the governing itself.” One aspect that has materialised by virtue of the increasing application of governance is the establishment of a governance network where power is distributed among a series of actors. This approach demands that the actors in the governance network become mutually dependent on each other, and that none of them has a majority of power to overrule others (Kickert, Klijn and Koppenjan, 1999; Torfing, 2007). The RDP 2007–2013 utilises such a network governance approach, where public, private, and voluntary local citizens form the network (Ray, 2000), and where mutual interdependence arises through their interactions.

#### *Interorganisational interaction*

Depending on the degree of interaction involved, various terms have been offered to describe interorganisational interaction. Imperial (2005 p. 286) relies on the term “collaboration” and defines it as “any joint activity, by two or more organisations, intended to create public value by working together rather than separately.” Interorganisational interaction should therefore be carried out whenever synergistic effects can be obtained—where results that would otherwise be difficult or impossible can be achieved. Interaction processes can include different actors from different organisations; however, having in common a certain number of rules and norms is fundamental to achieving consensus (Imperial, 2005). Interorganisational interaction differs from single-organisation interaction, that is, interaction within one organisation (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001). For many years, managers have established frameworks for developing single-organisation interaction (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001; McGuire,

2006). With collaboration in public management networks, organisational interaction takes a new form (Agranoff, 2006): the structure becomes flatter, hierarchies are reduced, and the interacting actors tend to operate all at the same level (Mandell and Keast, 2009; Agranoff, 2006). It should however be stressed argues Agranoff (2006) that much of the work conducted in networks may not be so different from what is else being conducted under more traditional settings. This also implies, that much of the interaction being conducted in a network relies on lateral connection which overlay the hierarchies rather than replacing them (Agranoff, 2006). Further, McGuire (2006) argues that many of the same features commonly known from partnership collaboration in formalised organisations are also found under the interorganisational settings; this also includes some level of hierarchical management. However, in addition, the chances of there being larger differences among the actors vis-à-vis the core objective of the interaction will increase. Network actors need to reach consensus; rather than make decisions, a network “reaches agreements” that involve the various objectives among the actors (Agranoff, 2006 p. 59).

Owing to the potentially positive effects of interaction, the process usually has positive connotations. However, interorganisational interaction may prolong the consensus-building process and thus seem more troublesome than single-organisational decision making. Consensus building requires agreement from all engaged actors, in a process that may progress slowly (Agranoff, 2006; McGuire, 2006). Conflict over values, missions, budgetary responsibilities, and knowledge-sharing recourses may impede the interaction process (Imperial, 2005). To measure the success of a network, many variables must be considered, but it has been argued that only a little emphasis has been made on actually evaluating the effectiveness of network interaction (Provan and

Milward, 2001). According to Mandell and Keast (2009), the success of a network can be assessed in terms of the establishment and maintenance of interaction among its actors. This view of success of networks is broadened by Provan and Milward (2001) who argues that evaluations of network activities should also include assessment based on the effectiveness of the network. Setting up performance measures as is often done in business networks may not be as easy when operating in public management networks where the outcome may not be measured directly as a consequence of the network (Provan and Milward, 2001)

### *Degrees of interaction*

Building on studies of interorganisational integration (Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007) and leadership in collaborative networks (Mandell and Keast, 2009), divisions involving three levels of network interaction—the so-called three Cs—have been proposed: cooperative networks, coordinative networks, and collaborative networks. The same divisions can be used to analyse the degree of interaction between LAGs and municipalities. In cooperative networks, the emphasis is merely on information sharing; actors remain independent and communication occurs on an *ad hoc* basis, while the risk—and consequently, the reward—for engaging in cooperative networks is low. In coordinative networks, there is a higher degree of interaction; communication is structured and formalised, and it is often related to a specific project. There, the network actors are semi-independent, but network agreements will alter their service delivery to some extent. In collaborative networks, frequent and systematic communication takes place; participants are interdependent, meaning that actions carried out by one network actor become dependent on the actions carried out by others. In collaborative networks,



actors need to develop new relationship ties and “achieve strategic synergies between participants that will eventually lead to finding innovative solutions” (Mandell and Keast, 2009 p. 165). The achievement of strategic synergies should therefore add focus to the process and institutional arrangements that, consequently, should lead to outcomes. On the other hand, in collaborative networks, the risk—and consequently, the reward—is high. The characteristics of the three Cs are described in terms of eight descriptive dimensions, which are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summarised characteristics of the three Cs (Mandell and Keast, 2009)

Dimension	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Connection	Loose	Medium	Dense and interdependent
Information sharing	<i>Ad hoc</i>	Formalised and project-based	Formalised, project-based, <i>ad hoc</i> , and/or strategic
Goals	Independent/autonomous	Semi-independent	Dense interdependent
Power	Remains with organisation	Remains with organisation	Shared
Resources	Remains with organisation	Shared around project	Pooled, collective
Relational timeframe	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Risk	Low	Medium	High
Reward	Low	Medium	High

The degree of interaction should be understood in terms of a continuum, with cooperation being at the low end of interaction, coordination in the middle, and collaboration at the high end (Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007). Rather than be considered competitive modes of interaction, the three Cs should be seen as complementary and used to tackle different challenges (Keast, Brown and Mandell, 2007). The appropriate degree of interaction—that is, which of the three Cs is most

appropriate—is determined by the objectives one seeks to advance. If the goal is information or expertise sharing, for example, cooperative interaction would suffice, and when an alignment of resources or activities is needed, coordination is a more appropriate interaction mode. On the other hand, when a complete systems change and innovation is needed, cooperation or coordination on its own will no longer suffice, and collaboration will be the appropriate mode.

### *Three levels of interaction*

With the purpose of conceptualising interaction between municipalities and LAGs, this study builds on the “levels of collaborative action framework” developed by Imperial (2005; 2001). This framework distinguishes three levels of interaction (Imperial, 2005), and in this study, it is applied with a single change: the institutional level is substituted with what in this study is called the “implementation level,” which for the present purpose is more descriptive of the processes. The three levels addressed in the current study, then, are the policy-making level, the operational level, and the implementation level. Interaction at the policy-making level takes a steering function, rather than bear a direct impact on the local area. This level mainly involves interactions between municipalities and LAGs in attuning the development strategy with the municipality strategy; it also matches the project applications with the development strategy and will likely be, principally, of a coordinative nature. This level is analysed by examining interaction at the BoD level. Interaction at the operational level consists of coordinating and pairing municipal activities with LAG activities; the level is important in partnership formation, and to some extent in realising the objective of the project application. The operational level will probably be of a collaborative nature, with aspects of coordination;

those involved include the LAG coordinator and the municipal LAG contact persons. Finally, interaction at the implementation level concerns the degree to which the municipalities and the LAGs interact on projects; it is assumed that interaction at this level will be the most integrated of all interactions, and therefore be mainly of a collaborative nature.

The case study will be analysed based on the three degrees of interaction at the three levels—that is, policy-making, operational, and implementation—that together form the interaction matrix seen in Table 2. Different objectives exist at each of the three levels, and the outcome of each level will be different. Each level will be analysed with respect to the degree of interaction, based on the theory behind interorganisational interaction. Given the theoretical assumptions, it is assumed that the degree of interaction may be categorised as seen in the matrix in Table 2.

Table 2: Interaction matrix, with indications of expected degrees of interaction at the three levels

	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Policy-making		X	
Operational			X
Implementation			X

## Methodology

The study examines the case of the LAG that covers the area of Djursland; this case study is based on interviews with representatives from each of the three levels denoted in Table 2. The study relies on a mixed-methods research approach that uses both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Analysis of the interaction between LAG–Djursland and the municipalities relies exclusively on the results of qualitative

interviews, while perceptions of LEADER interactions rely wholly on quantitative questionnaire data.

Data used in the analysis of interactions at Djursland stem from the following:

- At the policy-making level, two municipal representatives from the LAG BoD were interviewed, using a semi-structured interview schedule.
- At the operational level, semi-structured interviews took place with the LAG-Djursland coordinator and the municipal LAG contact persons. Passages from the interviews were transcribed; those presented here were translated into English by the author.
- At the implementation level, in-depth interviews with six project-holders were undertaken to examine interactions among the LAG, the municipality, and other involved partners.

The LAG BoD consists of 14 persons from the LAG territory. Of these there has to be one representative from each of the involved municipalities and they were both interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. The remaining 12 are representatives from local business and business organisations, local inhabitants and local associations. The interviewed thereby represent the municipal administrative entrance to the LAG.

The qualitative approach—which is applied to the analysis of interaction between LAG-Djursland and the two municipalities—was taken because only a few persons were involved, thus precluding the use of quantitative analysis. Furthermore, the current study seeks to undertake a detailed analysis that involves a thorough qualitative research approach.

Data used to analyse the perceptions of LEADER interactions were gathered through the completion, over the phone, of questionnaires by 51 municipality-employed LAG contact

persons.<sup>1</sup> This implies that 51 different municipalities (out of 53 possible) have been contacted and hence making a representative share of the national municipal LAG contact persons. Using ordinal regression and the statistical software package PASW 17, it was investigated whether perceptions of success could be ascribed to different variables related to the three Cs and LAG management. Perception analysis relates to the observations of respondents from the municipality; this tack was taken in order to obtain the LAG viewpoint. (However, it does go without saying that the respondents needed to have some knowledge of the LAG, to make qualified assessments.) Furthermore, this perception provides input for a general discussion through which the LAG–Djursland experiences could be raised to the national level. In summary, the analysis here builds on data culled from the sources listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Data collection at each of the three levels

	Policy	Operational	implementation
Qualitative	Two municipal BoD members	One LAG coordinator, two municipal contact persons in Djursland	Six project-holders
Quantitative		51 municipal contact persons	

The mixed-method approach thus yields the opportunity to reflect on the detailed qualitative analysis of LAG–Djursland, and how it might bear characteristics also found at the national level. In addition to interview data, relevant budgetary figures—as well as information pertaining to the project-holders and partner network behind the project—were considered, in order to yield an overview of the share of co-financing paid by the LAG, municipalities, and others.

## Results

In answering the research question, the following discussion provides an analysis of the interactions between LAG-Djursland and the two municipalities. This is followed by an analysis of the importance of the dimensions inherent in the three Cs, and of the importance of BoD versus that of the LAG coordinator.

### *LAG-Djursland*

LAG-Djursland comprises the territory that covers the two municipalities of Norddjurs and Syddjurs; information pertaining to project proposals, strategies, news, and minutes from BoD meetings can be found on their webpage<sup>2</sup>. The vision of the development strategy of LAG-Djursland is to “support initiatives that secure Djursland as an oasis for inhabitants, tourists, and business enterprises that wish for development opportunities by embracing entrepreneurship, nature, and environmental values in the local community” (LAG Djursland, 2008 p. 7, Translated by author). This means that LAG-Djursland seeks to support projects that, in turn, support the quality of life of its local inhabitants, encourage tourism, and strengthen business enterprises; it is therefore a broad vision that welcomes a wide diversity of project proposals. A fair distribution among the three objectives is secured through the guidance of multiple stakeholders, by paying special attention to projects that target lagging objectives, and, to some degree, by the BoD’s undertaking of project assessment.

### *Policy-making level*

As the main purpose of interaction at the policy-making level is strategic in nature and relates to strategy retention, the partners maintain power within their organisations;

interactions at this level should, according to Mandell and Keast (2009), be of a coordinative nature. The goals of the municipality and the LAG are semi-interdependent, and the risk and reward are at a medium level.

In attuning the LAG development strategy, it needs to align with the strategies of both municipalities, and it was mainly carried out among municipal LAG contact persons, the LAG BoD, and a consultant company hired during the strategy-creation process. The strategy development process is characterised as involving formalised information sharing over a medium timeframe, whereas the project assessment period is carried out throughout the whole of the RDP period and therefore has a long timeframe.

In maintaining the strategic direction, the coordinator, together with the BoD, sets limits for the number of applications within the focal areas; the coordinator also encourages applicants to apply within those that receive relatively little attention. Though decisions are made at this level, the coordinator encourages new projects, while the BoD mainly evaluates applications based on their content, not on their relationship to the overall strategy. A municipal representative from the BoD expressed it thus: “We do have the development strategy and general guidelines, but towards that, I remain quiet. I only relate to the projects and whether the project is good or bad.”

The municipal politicians within the BoD are in positions of trust; the risk inherent in their engagement relates to their opportunity to achieve success by developing the local area. Consequently, the BoD municipal politician representatives do not feel any obligation to favour projects that include their municipality as partner:

“It is the project that we are looking at; it is not for the benefit of the municipality [as an organisation]. There might be some from the municipal council that think that—but I don’t.” (BoD municipal representative)

Though the development strategy is attuned to municipal plans, the BoD municipal representatives see themselves as representatives of the local area, rather than of the municipality:

“I think it is good, that we are representing the city council and are linked to the LAG; through this the circle is complete, because in the city council, we also sit as representatives for the local inhabitants. I think of myself as a citizen rather than as representing a municipal administration.” (BoD municipal representative)

The insinuation is that goals are attuned during the strategy process, and that project assessments are independent of the municipalities’ agendas; thus, the interaction goals are seen as being semi-independent.

The importance of municipal–LAG interaction lies in the access it affords to the large network of valuable resources—that is, local inhabitants—that the municipality has, and which the LAG needs to reach the goals stated in the development strategy. In return, the municipality fulfils some of its goals regarding rural development. This interplay between the LAG and the municipality is possible only as long as they work towards a common goal, or what Mandell (1990) characterises as a “megagoal”, and is coordinated in the LAG development strategy. The coordination of the megagoal is among the most important tasks at the policy level, where municipal politicians and municipal LAG contact persons align the development strategy with municipal strategies.



The strategic position of the BoD gives it the potential to influence the strategic direction of the LAG and impact the success of the LAG at the implementation level. The BoD holds a very broad strategy that welcomes a wide variety of projects; its role is reduced to assessing whether or not a project seems to be a good idea and thus qualify for financing. It does not reject projects on the grounds that it does not fit with the overall strategy.

#### *Operational level*

Coordination, project guidance, and the pairing of projects are the most important tasks at the operational level; close interaction between the LAG and the municipality is important in fulfilling these tasks. Contact occurs more than once a week, and so the municipal contact person and the LAG coordinator have frequent formalised and strategic interaction. According to Mandell and Keast's (2009) typology, these features categorise their interaction as being coordinative, with elements of collaboration.

Within the RDP timeframes, the municipal LAG contact persons and the coordinator have ongoing, formalised information sharing, and so collaboration is characterised as being over the long term.

"I meet with them [municipal LAG contact persons] when we have had an application round. Then we look at the applications and they come up with comments on the projects that I note in the applications. They [municipal LAG contact persons] might say: this or that requires permission, and then the board of directors knows it and can include that in their assessment or not. " (LAG coordinator)

The municipal LAG contact persons and the LAG coordinator, in order to reach a sound and synergistic partnership for the projects, pool their resources. The following is a statement that characterises the main goal of LAG–municipality interaction:

[We] “work in the same direction so that the one [LAG or municipal] doesn’t make anything in one direction, and the other in another direction.” (LAG coordinator)

There is interdependence between the LAG and the municipality at the operational level: the municipality helps disseminate to project applicants information arising from interactions and the LAG depends upon communication with the municipality.

“I think we are [interdependent] because it is often the municipality that has to give permission to do this or that, because if anybody plans to build a house or something, then there is much permission work related to that—planning, legislation, and so on. So it is important to have the municipality in on this, and it is also important that we pull in the same direction.” (LAG coordinator)

The municipality’s awareness of the happenings in local society means that local inhabitants tend to approach the municipality with ideas for local development projects. In many instances, the municipality does not have the finances to support these projects, and so they are forwarded to the LAG. In this sense, the municipality functions as a broker (Burt, 2001) of resources between local society and the LAG. Interaction at the operational level increases opportunities for the LAG to bring about success, because the LAG needs to be contacted by potential project-holders if they are to reach the strategic goals dovetailing from the strategy.

In a close collaboration, as seen at the operational level, it is important to have a high degree of interdependent trust. The development of personal and organisational trust and reciprocity is, according to Mandell (1990), dependent on the presence of “value congruence” between collaborating partners, which is built over a relatively long period of time. Trust is therefore dependent on stability in a network; with respect to the LAG, it is therefore important that personnel replacement and turnover be limited. Especially with interaction at the operational level—where considerable knowledge and information is transferred among only a few persons—stability is of high importance:

“[The coordinator] is extremely crucial: if one imagines a situation where there are changes to the LAG coordinator position during the program period, then one can imagine a clear weakening of implementation, because he is so important in maintaining the LAG strategy and operation.” (Municipal LAG contact person)

The LEADER approach looks to promote rural development; however, this is but one of many objectives of the municipalities, and when interacting for purposes of coordination and collaboration, they work toward the realisation of a common and hence interdependent goal. The interaction between the LAG and municipality, at the operational level, is mainly characterised as being collaborative, with aspects of coordination.

#### *Implementation level*

The LAG is involved in all projects, and it is the level of involvement on the part of the municipality that defines the level of interaction at the implementation level. The municipality engages in projects by virtue of being a project-holder or co-financier. As

project-holders, a municipality initiates a project, defines its objective, and is responsible for project management; hence, it has a direct influence on the outcome. This degree of involvement is the most radical, and yet close collaboration between the LAG and municipality exists.

The two municipalities of Syddjurs and Norddjurs are, in terms of funding and the number of projects therein, the most closely involved partners in LAG projects. Table 4 provides an overview of the number of projects and the total co-financing involved, as provided by the two municipalities (as of May 2010); Table 4 thus gives an indication of their level of interaction at the implementation level.

Table 4: Number of co-financed projects, and total co-finance funding from the two municipalities

	Number of co-financed projects	Co-finance in total (€)
Norddjurs municipality	11	228,000
Syddjurs municipality	16	278,000
Total	27*	422,000

\* Two of the 27 projects are co-financed by both municipalities

Of 69 projects, Table 4 shows that the Norddjurs and Syddjurs municipalities have co-financed 11 and 16 projects, respectively, contributing a total of €422,000. Each municipality is the lead partner of one project, to which they each contribute approximately €22,000. In relation to municipality-initiated projects, this indicates that the municipalities make little use of the potential ability to unilaterally formulate objectives and therefore dictate the direction of rural development.

The two municipalities have initiated one project each, and it is with these projects that the most intense mode of interaction appears. The LAG and municipality are

interdependent, and their resources are pooled; by providing co-financing, the municipality has various degrees of involvement. When municipalities co-finance projects, there is always some degree of risk, but when projects are successful, that co-financing is leveraged and brings forth rewards that exceed that which they could have obtained by acting on their own. Interaction at the implementation level is collaborative, though; it is restricted to the project in question, and hence a project-based collaboration mode is used.

#### *Importance of the dimensions, and coordinator versus BoD*

To investigate the importance of the dimensions stemming from the three Cs in explaining the success of the LAG, variables relating to the questionnaire completed by the 51 municipal LAG contact persons were analysed. Information on the municipal perception of whether or not the LAG is successful is gathered through three questions that are grouped<sup>3</sup> into one variable: SUCCESS. These three questions deals with three different angels of LAG management, but when grouped together, yields a picture of broad perception of success among the interviewees. The three grouped questions deals with A) whether the municipal LAG contact persons thinks that the LAG manages the funds better than would the municipalities, B) whether the interviewee thinks, that investment, that the municipality puts in the LAG co-finance pays off and C) whether the municipality collaborate with the LAG because it sees potential benefits in the collaboration. To test whether there is empirical reasoning in grouping these three questions a correlates test has been made. This correlation test indicates correlation of  $\rho = .356^*$  (between question A and B),  $\rho = .277^*$  (between question A and C) and  $\rho = .500^{**}$  (between question B and C). The grouping of the three questions thereby gives an

approximation of the general perception of success as expressed by the municipal contact persons. The average value of the variable SUCCESS indicates that, in general, the municipalities express a high level of satisfaction with the LAG.

To analyse which dimensions are perceived as being of high importance in the LAG–municipality interaction, a statistical ordinal regression model was tested, wherein SUCCESS was a dependent variable and CONTACT, GOAL, DEPENDENCY, and COMMUNICATION were independent variables. Descriptions of the variables are presented in Table 5; the results, meanwhile, are presented in Table 6.

Table 5: Variables used in ordinal regression

Variable	Description
SUCCESS <sup>4</sup>	Grouping of three questions related to success
BoD_SUCCESS <sup>5</sup>	LAG success attributed to the BoD
COOR_SUCCESS <sup>6</sup>	LAG success attributed to the coordinator
DEPENDENCY <sup>7</sup>	Dependence between municipality and LAG
CONTACT <sup>8</sup>	Frequency of contact between municipality and LAG
GOAL <sup>9</sup>	Perception of the main goal of the LAG–municipality interaction
COMMUNICATION <sup>10</sup>	Formalisation of communication

Table 6: Results from the ordinal regression model of SUCCESS, described by CONTACT, GOAL, DEPENDENCY, and COMMUNICATION. The model is further strengthened by reducing insignificant variables that indicate the robustness of the DEPENDENCY variable.

Threshold	[SUCCESS = 1]	-7.786*** (1.632)
	[SUCCESS = 2]	-5.742*** (1.318)
	[SUCCESS = 3]	-4.840*** (1.250)
	[SUCCESS = 4]	-3.359*** (1.170)
	[SUCCESS = 5]	-1.916*** (1.090)
Location	[CONTACT = 1.00]	-2.483 (1.419)
	[CONTACT = 2.00]	-1.667 (1.075)
	[CONTACT = 3.00]	-1.175 (1.003)
	[GOAL = 1]	-2.146* (1.192)
	[GOAL = 2]	.304 (.624)
	[DEPENDENCY = 1]	-2.892*** (1.066)
	[DEPENDENCY = 2]	-2.059*** (.773)
	[COMMUNICATION=1]	.455 (.734)
	[COMMUNICATION=2]	.600 (.896)
Link function: Logit. Model fit $X^2 = 25.17$ , d.f. = 9, sig = .003.		

From Table 6, it appears that the significant predictors of success are attributed only to DEPENDENCY. This means that a high degree of interdependence is considered crucial to explaining degree of success, as perceived by the 51 municipal LAG contact persons.

To analyse whether the perception of success can be explained by, and hence attributed to, the LAG coordinator or the BoD—and therefore the importance of the operational

versus the policy level of the LAG—a statistical ordinal regression model with SUCCESS as a dependent variable and COOR\_SUCCESS and BoD\_SUCCESS as independent variables was tested. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Results from the ordinal regression model of LAG success. The model is further strengthened by reducing BoD\_SUCCESS, which indicates the robustness of COOR\_SUCCESS.

Threshold	[SUCCESS = 1]	-5.213 (1.261)
	[SUCCESS = 2]	-3.227 (.700)
	[SUCCESS = 3]	-2.423 (.584)
	[SUCCESS = 4]	-1.197 (.486)
	[SUCCESS = 5]	-.007 (.451)
Location	[BoD_SUCCESS = 1]	-.602 (1.860)
	[BoD_SUCCESS = 2]	-.285 (.553)
	[COOR_SUCCESS = 1]	-4.217*** (1.594)
	[COOR_SUCCESS = 2]	-.995* (.572)
Estimated coefficients are given with standard errors in parentheses. Link function: Logit. Model fit $X^2 = 10.86$ , d.f. = 4, sig = 0.028.		

From Table 7, it appears that the more highly the success of the LAG is rated, the higher the perceived importance of the coordinator is, whereas there is no relationship between perception of success and the importance of the BoD. This means that the perceived success can be attributed to the LAG coordinator, rather than to the BoD, and that the operational level is hence perceived as being more essential to the LAG in being successful than the policy level.

*The interaction matrix*



In summary, the degrees of LAG–Djursland–municipality interaction vis-à-vis the relevant dimensions are listed in Table 8.

Table 8: Interaction matrix with indications of prevailing dimensions

	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Policy-making		Medium connection Formalised information Sharing at BoD meetings Semi-independent goals Shared resources around application assessment	Long timeframe
Operational		Power remains with parent organisations	Dense connection Interdependent connection Frequent connection Long timeframe
Implementation		Medium timeframe Pooled resources at project level	Dense connection Power shared among organisations High risk–high reward

From Table 8, it appears that the predominant mode of interaction at the policy-making level is coordination, with aspects of collaboration. At the operational and implementation levels, it is predominantly collaboration, with aspects of coordination.

A high degree of interaction solely at the implementation level relates to the projects in question; making more strategic decisions at the operational and policy-making levels might be more valuable in reaching the overall LAG objective. It is therefore important to view the LAG as a single unit that consists of three levels, where assessing success at only one of them cannot be considered adequate or accurate. As for the number of LAG projects that can be considered products of interaction at the operational level, this too depends on the policy level at work.

As the overall objective for the municipality is to deliver rural development to its inhabitants, it might be less interested in how and through whom it occurs. Though the most direct way of influencing rural development is through interaction at the implementation level, the current case study shows only a limited degree of interaction at this level. One explanation for this could be that the municipality very highly values interaction at the operational level, and considers collaboration at this level to be the most important in reaching their overall objectives. This explanation is very much in line with the national impression of LAGs, where the operational level is considered highly important. At the national level, interdependence appears to be an important factor in realising the success of a LAG; the current case study shows a high degree of interdependence at the operational level.

## **Conclusion**

Based on interorganisational theory as it is applied to a specific case study, the present study analyses the interaction between LAG-Djursland and two municipalities at the policy-making, operational, and implementation levels. The strongest degree of interaction is seen at the implementation level, with the municipalities as project-holders. At this level, there is a strong interdependence, and resources, power, risk, and reward are equally shared among the interacting partners; challenges there require a highly integrated mode of interaction, that is, collaboration. The level perceived to be most important in achieving LAG objectives is the operational level, where there is frequent, formalised interaction and where the pooling of resources occurs in terms of time and knowledge, rather than monetary resources. The mode of interaction is best described as collaboration with elements of coordination. At the policy-making level,

LAG-municipality interaction manifests by aligning strategies and, to some degree, maintaining the strategic direction of the LAG; it can be best characterised as a coordinative interaction mode with collaborative elements.

The municipality is a valuable partner in fulfilling LAG objectives. Its large knowledge base and in-depth contact with the local citizenry are valuable resources for the LAG; in return, the LAG initiative is a welcome contributor to the achievement of the municipality's objective, that is, delivering good service to its citizens. In that sense, interaction between the LAG and the municipality is mutually beneficial. This does not mean, however, that interactions are necessarily dispute-free. At the implementation level, interaction needs to be well defined, so that the LAG does not become a new form of municipality administration and simply implement projects that the municipality ought to implement. On the other hand, the pooling of resources at the implementation level by two influential and resource-prosperous partners can be valuable in creating a thriving local area. It is difficult to define the tipping point at which the municipality becomes too dominant and hence conflicts with the rationale behind the LEADER approach; further research is needed to make conclusions that are more precise on this issue.

LEADER is a new approach for many Danish municipalities, and it features a new mode of interaction. Results from this study shows that a high degree of interaction has developed between the LAG and municipalities. The interaction is voluntary: apart from the policy level, there are no requirements that bind together the municipality and the LAG. Both the LAG and the municipality have seen the valuable aspects of this mode of interaction and have expressed a high level of satisfaction. In the sense of developing

close collaboration in order to reach a common goal, the approach has proved successful. LEADER's high degree of user-driven applied implementation will, together with close collaboration between a relatively autonomous association and the municipality, serve as a model to emulate in tackling other integrated and complex challenges, including rural development.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire had three possible answers and was ordinal in nature; this meant that there was gradation among the answers, but that the distances between them were not equal (e.g., “bad,” “acceptable,” “good”).

<sup>2</sup> See [www.lag-djursland.dk](http://www.lag-djursland.dk).

<sup>3</sup> The grouping of the three questions is done by summing the possible answers (1–3), thus resulting in seven possible classes. The answer combination: 1 + 1 + 1 was not present among the respondents, and the variable therefore resulted in six classes.

<sup>4</sup> The three questions were: A) Would it be: 1) better, 2) equally good, or 3) worse if the municipalities managed the LAG funds?; B) Is the municipal investment in the LAG: 1) bad, 2) acceptable, or 3) really good for the municipality?; and C) Does the municipality collaborate with the LAG because: 1) we are encouraged at the national level to do so; 2) we can obtain small benefits for the rural areas; or 3) it is a unique opportunity for enhancing rural areas?

<sup>5</sup> In relation to the LAG BoD, which of the following do you assess to be most correct: 1) the role of the BoD is not important to the success of the LAG; 2) the role of the BoD bears some importance to the success of the LAG; or 3) the role of the BoD is the main reason for the success of the LAG?

<sup>6</sup> In relation to the LAG coordinator, which of the following do you assess to be most correct: 1) the role of the coordinator is not important to the success of the LAG; 2) the role of the coordinator bears some importance to the success of the LAG; or 3) the role of the coordinator is the main reason for the success of the LAG?

<sup>7</sup> If dependence exists between the municipality and the LAG in relation to realising a common rural-development goal, would you characterise this as: 1) independent, i.e., you are working on your own with only limited collaboration; 2) dependent, i.e., you have some collaboration on reaching a common goal; or 3) very interdependent, i.e., you have a high degree of collaboration and are mutually depending on each other with regard to the exchange of information, resources, etc.

<sup>8</sup> How often are you in contact with the LAG: 1) daily, 2) weekly, 3) monthly 4) more seldom than monthly?

<sup>9</sup> How would you characterise the main goal of collaboration with the LAG? Is it mainly concerned with: 1) exchange of information; 2) coordination of resources to reach a common goal; or 3) obtaining synergy through close collaboration on a common goal?

<sup>10</sup> Which of the following best describes the way you mainly communicate with the LAG: 1) when it is necessary we communicate—not formalised; 2) our communication is formalised and project based; or 3) we have close and formalised communication, but also communicate when necessary.

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## **PAPER 3: Measuring Social Capital Accumulation in Rural Development**

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# **Measuring Social Capital Accumulation in Rural Development**

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## **Abstract**

Using a theoretical framework, the study proposes an index that can measure the social capital of local action group (LAG) projects. The index is founded on four indicators: number of ties, bridging social capital, recognition, and diversity, which are aggregated into one social capital index. The index has been tested in LAG-Djursland, Denmark, and the study further investigates whether the organisational affiliation, project financing, and LAG co-financing can explain the degree of social capital accumulation. Furthermore, the author has tested if there are connections between motivation for pursuing development projects similar to those implemented previously and the degree of social capital. The paper concludes that there are indications that projects hosted by municipalities tend to show the most social capital, there is no connection between the amount of project financing and social capital, and a high level of motivation leads to increased social capital.

**Keywords:** Social Capital, Rural Development, Local Action Groups.

## **1. Introduction**

The LEADER approach consists of a set of guiding principles that support the EU's rural development policy by "Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity" (COM, 2005 p. 9). Though not explicitly mentioned in legislative documents, a core element in achieving the rural development objectives draws on elements from the theory of social capital; a link that has been made by many researchers (Ray, 1998; Ray, 1999; Shortall, 2004; Shortall and Warner, 2010; Shucksmith, 2000; Lee, Arnason, Nightingale and Shucksmith, 2005; Nardone, Sisto and Lopolito, 2010).

Social capital is a multi-faceted concept, and an analysis and measurement should therefore include a multi-faceted approach. Many studies have attempted to capture the essence of social capital in communities and countries and, to a lesser extent, policy interventions. Often, these studies build on indirect indicators that function as proxies for social capital accumulation. In recent years, a methodological approach for measuring the social capital of LEADER was suggested by Nardone et al. (2010) and Lopolito et al. (2011). Based on direct indicators aimed at the boards of directors of LEADER local action groups (LAG), their index represents a step forward in the measuring of social capital accumulation resulting from policy interventions. To refine this index, the present study proposes an index targeted at the measurement of social capital at the implementation level, that is, the level of LAG project holders. In doing so, the study will analyse the different degrees of social capital accumulation of the LAG projects based on four indicators: number of ties, bridging social capital, recognition, and diversity. Furthermore, the study will analyse whether social capital may spur the motivation to pursue similar development work in the future and hence practice a self-perpetuating development.

This paper is structured as follows: after the introduction, the concept of social capital will be established, and a theoretical conceptualisation of the concept according to three guiding principles will follow. These guiding principles will be introduced and used to frame and subsequently present the index. In order to discuss and assess the applicability of the index, the next section presents a case study that seeks to identify the underlying principles, which lead to increases in social capital. A presentation and discussion of the results leads to a more general discussion of the index and the inherent difficulties in measuring social capital. The paper ends with a conclusion.

## **2. Social Capital**

Theories of social capital have received interest from many researchers and the disagreement over wording of definitions and inherent positive connotations attached to theories have led researchers to claim that the concept has been diluted and, hence, become applicable everywhere and nowhere (Woolcock, 1998; Durlauf and Fafchamps, 2004). This does not imply that the concept cannot be used; it simply indicates that

analysis of social capital must be approached with caution and clear definition. Much dispute over defining social capital continues; however, several aspects are commonly acknowledged. A definition that captures the essence of social capital in relation to the present study is proposed by Lin (2001 p. 25): “the resources embedded in social networks accessed and used by actors for action”. According to Lin, social capital refers to the resources that are found in social networks and the ties that connect the individuals in a certain network. These ties become resources when activated “only when the individual is aware of their presence, [ties] and of what resources they possess or can access [...], can the individual capitalise such ties and resources” (Lin, 2001 p. 25). This indicates that understanding and analysing network structure are crucial to understanding and measuring social capital.

Social capital is perceived as a resource that can be used for achieving a variety of goals and has often been the explaining factor in economic growth (Woolcock, 1998; Knack and Keefer, 1997; Woodhouse, 2006). This perception may lead to the view that social capital is always good, and its increase automatically leads to desirable outcomes. However, social capital accumulation may not invariably foster inherent positive consequences, such as economic growth and it has been argued, that social capital has dark sides (Zmerli, 2010; Putzel, 1997). An accumulation of ‘downward’ social ties in a society might endanger an individual’s opportunities. Increased involvement in a criminal group, for instance, might lead to undesired outcomes from a societal perspective and, hence, have negative consequences (Zmerli, 2010; Lewis, 2010). Therefore, social capital stimulation must be conducted with caution and built on well-established foundations (Lewis, 2010). The present study assesses and concludes on the positive sides of social capital and its ability to support development for rural areas.

The economic growth potential of social capital has led the World Bank to embrace the concept and numerous studies have argued for the potential benefits of stimulating social capital (Durlauf and Fafchamps, 2004; Dasgupta, 2000; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). The highly regarded economic potential of social capital has led to a desire to measure its presence and identify which factors lead to its increase in studies between countries (Knack and Keefer, 1997) and at regional (Iyer, Kitson and Toh, 2005) and local levels (Trigilia, 2001).

The positive connotations linked to social capital have fostered a large research interest in developing appropriate measurement tools that capture its essence (Durlauf, 2002). Many of these measurement tools are building on indirect data that happened to be available (Van Der Gaag and Snijders, 2005) and not collected for the purpose of analysis. Such indirect indicators can be the membership of certain associations, crime rate, health rate, and even the amount of TV viewed (Durlauf, 2002; Sabatini, 2009). The use of indirect indicators is faulted for always finding a relationship between social capital and its outcomes (Nardone, Sisto and Lopolito, 2010; Sabatini, 2009). The emphasis on relations and social structure is an entry point to measurement, because this is what policymakers can influence, or as stated by Lewis (2010 p. 64), “unless we know the conditions under which social structures generate beneficial outcomes, we cannot orient policy”.

### **3. Theorising and Conceptualising Social Capital**

The conceptualisation of social capital provided by Lewis (2010 p. 13) addresses social capital and “show[s] how it can not only help us understand public policy but also help us shape policy solutions”. Lewis (2010) thereby introduces a forward-looking approach to social capital, moving away from a focus on its conceptualisation and measurement to suggest how public policy can spur and stimulate social capital. Lewis emphasises the need to include three important principles for analysing and applying social capital in a policy context: (1) levels, (2) form and type of ties, and (3) accumulation and use. These three principles will be the founding framework for the present study and construct the framework for establishing the indicators that make up the index. Table 1 provides an overview of how these three principles are applied in the present study. The principle ‘form and type of tie’ is directly applied in the development of the index and provides the theoretical foundations for selecting the indicators. The first and last principles (level and accumulation and use) are utilized to structure the index and, consequently, to analyse and discuss the application of the index.

Table 1: The three proposed principles and their application in the construction of the index

Principle	Application
Levels	Structuring the index and theories for discussion and analysis
Forms and types of tie	Indicators to establish the index
Accumulation and use	Structuring the index and theories for discussion and analysis

### *3.1 Levels*

Lewis (2010) argues that social capital is best conceived of at the individual level but that benefits can both accrue to individuals and collectives, and social capital should therefore be understood as a multilevel concept that involves interaction between levels. In other words, social capital is best analysed and measured at an individual level, but the benefits can accrue to a larger portion of individuals, such as a local community. In developing policy objectives for stimulating social capital, it is therefore important to target the individual (micro) level, which should lead to an increase in social capital at the project (meso) level and accumulate to affect the societal (macro) level.

The development and testing of the index is conducted at the individual level, where contact with the project holder is established. This implies that social capital is measured at the individual level. The project holder is the unit of analysis, but social capital accumulated based on the project can benefit those at both the aggregated project and community levels. An increase in social capital at the community level might further stimulate capital creation and thus, generate a positive loop for the community. The LAG activities may therefore be perceived as facilitating an animation process of rural development through activation of local resources through individual project activities.

### *3.2 Forms and types of ties*

There are different forms and types of ties, all of which interact with each other, and these ties are in and of themselves resources. Ties are the glue that links networks

together, and without the ties, there is neither a network nor social capital. This also implies that many ties, which together create a large network, can lead to high levels of social capital (Lin, 2001). Not all ties are similar, and a number of concepts have been proposed to explain the differences. In his seminal paper, 'Strength of Weak Ties', Granovetter (1973) distinguishes between strong and weak ties and argues that strong ties are those that connect the closest family and friends, are easily accessible, and do not require much maintenance; they will always be there. However, there is a high chance that individuals tied together strongly possess more or less the same resources and are, hence, a rather homogenous group. In contrast, weak ties are links between individuals that are more distanced from each other in a given network, and these individuals might be the most important for increasing one's resources. Building on Granovetter's theory of weak ties, Putnam (2000) distinguishes between bonding and bridging social capital; bonding capital occurs between likeminded people and, hence, typically among those with strong ties, while bridging capital occurs between less likeminded individuals and, therefore, mainly among those with weak ties. The same analogy lead Lin to argue that, for preserving and maintaining resources, bonding social capital is sufficient, but when additional resources for development are needed, it becomes necessary to stimulate the weak ties through the bridging of social capital: "If individuals need different information, then they may be more likely to find it in a different social circle than their own" (Lin, 2001 p. 67). When network diversity increases among different groups through the bridging of social capital, Woolcock and Narayan (2000) argue that the promise of economic development opportunities also increases.

According to Bourdieu (1986 p. 287), the establishment of a tie should be seen as an investment "aimed at establishing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long run". The usability of the tie is determined by mutual recognition of the supplier and recipient of the tie (Lin, 2001). This implies that recognition accompanies ties that will be usable for future purposes. Ideally, such recognition should be mutual, because "while it takes mutual commitment and cooperation from both parties to build social capital, a defection by only one party will destroy it" (Adler and Kwon, 2002 p. 22).



Following the arguments of Granovetter's (1973), 'strength of weak ties', and Putnam's (2000), differentiation between bonding and bridging social capital, emphasis should be placed on increasing the number of weak ties through bridging social capital and gaining access to additional resources that can consequently spur further development. In analysing the projects, it is crucial to address the extent to which ties to new resources are established, and the potential of these ties to lead to further development. If a project is implemented merely based on close existing social ties, its development potential for the local society is limited. In addition, the number and network diversity of the established ties are considered important to potential development and included in the index. For a tie's potential to be utilized, even after the project is concluded, it is crucial that recognition emerges between the project holder and involved partners. Thus, the level of recognition is also included in the index.

### *3.3 Accumulation and use*

Lewis (2010) argues that it takes time to accumulate social capital whose causes and consequences are separate but interlinked, and that its consequences are neither inherently positive nor negative. Social capital is accumulated by establishing and maintaining social ties. Bourdieu's generic definition posits, "capital is accumulated labor" (1986 p. 241) and social capital also represents accumulated labour. The position of the individual in the network can be detrimental to accumulation and, thus, as is the case of economic and human capital, accumulation is an unequal process. This unequal process leads Lin (2001) to argue that the accumulation of social capital tends to be exponential (with an upper limit plateau); such social capital, gained through accessing additional ties, leads to a larger network of weak ties and enhances potential access to additional resources.

When pursuing growth and maintaining a high level of economic development, the accumulation of social capital with a strong emphasis on developing social ties may be the only way to achieve the desired end (Lewis, 2010). The race between economic and social capital has also been pivotal in Putnam's studies and his conclusions are clear:

"These communities did not become civic simply because they were rich.

The historical record strongly suggests precisely the opposite: They have

become rich because they were civic. The social capital embodied in norms and networks of civic engagement seems to be a precondition for economic development, as well as for effective government. Development economists take note: Civics matters.” (Putnam, 1993 p. 379)

With this quotation, Putnam shows that community development, from his perspective may be assessed along a path-dependency approach. This imply that the direction in which a community develops is highly depending on the status from where it comes (Putzel, 1997; Siisiäinen, 2000) and that what may support the economic development may be the level of local social capital (Iyer, Kitson and Toh, 2005).

Accumulation of social capital is measured at the individual level and the index relates to the project holder as an individual. However, the potential link between social capital accumulation and further engagement in additional development projects may direct a parallel accumulation at the community level. Following the argumentation raised by Putnam (1995), Coleman (1988), Knack and Keefer (1997) and others, trust is of high importance for the success of any interactions between individuals. Whether trust may be perceived as a part of or an outcome of social capital, and hence developed through interaction among individuals, is not a settled matter (Lewis, 2010; Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000). Trust is regarded as an important element in the social capital literature and as a lubricator of social interactions and thereby posses the potential to promote generalized reciprocity and hence enforce interaction among individuals (Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000; Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti, 1993). This implies that while the index is measured with a point of departure in the project holder, the social capital accumulation may have a spin off to the entire community. The objective of increasing social capital is not explicitly expressed in the legislation regarding running and establishing LEADER LAGs, and the causes of accumulation of social capital might be a consequence of the emphasis to increase the diversification of economic activities. At the individual level, social capital accumulates through maintenance and development of new contacts and network ties. The more these are utilized, the more the stock of social capital increases, or as argued by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998 p. 258), “unlike many other forms of capital, social capital increases rather than decreases with use”. Building social capital based on the LEADER approach is thereby a temporal and ongoing process

that unfolds from the development of the project application through its implementation and even after the project's conclusion.

#### **4. Social Capital Index**

The proposed index measures the social capital accumulation at the project holder level. It does so by assessing the characteristics of social capital that have the potential to lead to development of a local community. In addition to LEADER, other forces in the community affect social capital in either a positive or negative direction. For this reason, this method should be perceived as a measurement of social capital accumulation caused by implementation of a policy programme, that is, LEADER.

The index uses interviews with project holders to derive its input data. It thus relies on direct indicators collected for the purpose of the index. Ultimately, four indicators of different dimensions of social capital are revealed and summarised in the index. The index value varies from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating a higher level of social capital.

##### *4.1 Indicators and social capital index*

The interviewed project holders were asked to mention up to five organisations, associations, or companies that have been involved in their projects. This gave an indication of the number of ties established as a result of each project. The indicator thereby gives a measure of the number of contacts that have been involved in the project from the individual project holder's perspective. Identification of established ties thereby yields a roster of connections from which the following three indicators is based on. The indicator is calculated as the number of contacts involved divided by the maximum number of contacts<sup>1</sup>.

$$\text{Number of ties} = \frac{\sum \text{contacts}}{\max(\text{contacts})} \quad (1)$$

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, the maximum number of ties is delimited to five.

Social capital is not only about the number of ties but also about whom the ties link, and the second indicator yields information about the level of bridging social capital, which is deemed important for stimulating development. The indicator is based on the interviewed project holders established ties, which were organised according to the following categories: (1) a close personal or family member, (2) an individual that you previously have collaborated with, (3) contact established only in connection to this project but recommended by an acquaintance, or (4) contact established only in connection to this project. A tie to a (1) close personal or family member is assigned the weight of one, a tie to (2) an individual you have worked with previously is assigned the weight of two, and so on. The actual sum of the weighted ties is divided by the maximum possible sum<sup>2</sup>.

$$\text{Bridging social capital} = \sum \text{weighted ties} / \max(\text{weighted ties}) \quad (2)$$

For a tie to be valuable, it is crucial that recognition of the connection occurs; this increases the chance it will be used again. The third indicator, recognition, gives a measure of the recognition of ties for evaluating the possibility of utilizing the connection again. The calculation corresponds to the bridging social capital indicator in that three categories are weighted as follows: (1) no I would not like to collaborate with the contact again; (2) maybe I will collaborate with the contact again; and (3) yes, I would like to collaborate with the contact again. The indicator is calculated as the sum of the weighted recognition divided by the maximum possible score<sup>3</sup>.

$$\text{Recognition} = \sum \text{weighted recognition ties} / \max(\text{weighted recognition ties}) \quad (3)$$

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<sup>2</sup> The maximum possible score is in this case 20, which can be reached if five ties are established only for this project, that is,  $5 * 4 = 20$ .

<sup>3</sup> The maximum weighted recognition ties are 15 in this case, and this can be reached by answering 'yes, I would like to collaborate with the contact again' for all five indicated contacts, that is,  $5 * 3 = 15$ .

The fourth indicator is diversity, which relates to the network diversity of ties the project holder has established. The diversity of ties is based on the organisational belonging of the recipient of the tie and is divided into four categories: local association, municipality, local business, and external ties (a tie to a connection outside of the LAG territory). The assumption is that each of these four categories has a different nature, and a more diverse composition of ties is positive for the accumulation of social capital. The indicator is calculated as the sum of different kinds of ties divided by the maximum number of potential different kinds.

$$\text{Diversity} = \sum \text{different ties} / \max(\text{different ties}) \quad (4)$$

Upon completion of the interview with the project holder, the form and type of the connection can be summarised in a table. Table 2 shows a fabricated example of a project holder's connection. The table indicates that the interviewed project holder identified four connections that were involved in the project. In relation to the bridging social capital indicator, connection 1 and 3 where 'a close personal or family member', connection 2 was a 'contact established only in connection to this project but recommended by an acquaintance', and connection 4 was a 'contact established only in connection to this project'. In relation to the recognition indicator, the interviewed project holder indicated 'yes, I would like to collaborate with the contact again' and to connection 2 and 3, 'maybe I will collaborate with the contact again'. In relation to the diversity indicator, connection 1 comes from a local association, connection 2, from the municipality, connection 3, from a local business and connection 4 is an external tie.

Table 2: Fabricated example of a project holder's connection, established from the interview

Number of ties	Bridging social capital	Recognition	diversity
Connection 1	1	3	local association
Connection 2	3	2	municipality
Connection 3	1	2	local business
Connection 4	4	3	external tie
...	-	-	-

The social capital index aggregates the four indicators described above and gives a total measure of social capital at project level. The four indicators are based on the same groups of connections and are thereby integrated, and a multiplication of the indicators gives the social capital index.

$$\text{Project index} = \text{Number of ties} \times \text{Bridging social capital} \times \text{Recognition} \times \text{Diversity} \quad (5)$$

The index in its own enables comparisons of different LAG projects and their ability to establish ties to new and activate existing connections. Furthermore, the index can be applied in identification of project characteristics that have a positive impact on social capital accumulation. This latter step requires additional data, than what is applied in the index, to uncover the structure of the assessed projects.

### **5. Case: Applying the Index to LAG-Djursland**

In order to examine its applicability, the index will be applied in one LEADER LAG in Denmark, LAG-Djursland. The reason for selecting the LAG is based on a desire to work with a group that had a fair number of implemented and ongoing projects to enable the analysis. The LAG-Djursland is among the larger groups in Denmark and has a fulltime-employed coordinator to deal with the everyday management, contact to project holders etc. While the management of the LAG may be important for the implementation of projects, the present study takes its point of departure in the project holders and their activation and establishment of social ties in their work with their project. Whether the local social-economic factors, the setup and management of the LAG may influence the index will therefore not be a part of the present study.

In total, 56 out of 68 approved LAG projects (82%) are included in the index. The interviews were conducted in January 2011 and carried out through phone calls that lasted approximately 15 minutes each. The interview consisted of closed as well as open-ended questions. The questions asked to enable the testing of the index follows the description of the indicators as indicated above. In addition, the interview contained questions to illuminate whether the interviewed project holder was motivated to undertake similar development work in the future. This latter part will be applied in investigating whether there is a connection between social capital (assessed through the index) and motivation for doing similar development work. All projects included were

approved between April 2008 and May 2010, which implies that some of the projects are not finalized; interviewees responded based on interim results.

There are large variations in objectives among different projects, ranging from the development of a book describing cultural heritage to strengthening knowledge about the local area, to supporting the start-up of small-scale hotels or hostels. The implementation and hence the direct outcome of the projects are the explicit result of the LEADER approach, and the nature of these projects might lead to various levels of social capital accumulation in the local community. The present study does not analyse these explicit results but, instead, deals with the structural network dimensions behind the projects.

Furthermore, there are large structural variations among projects. The project holders, and hence the anchorage of the projects, have different organisational affiliations. The anchorage and leadership might influence social capital in the sense that being affiliated with an 'organisation' that has a large network of connections might ease the acquisition of new connections and activate their ties. This subsequently leads to an increase in the index score. In terms of received LAG co-financing, there are also large differences among the projects, varying from app. 1,000€ to 120,000€ with an average of app. 31,500€. The structure of the co-financing behind projects also varies; 17 projects received co-financing only from the LAG, 25 from the LAG and one co-financier, and 14 from the LAG and two additional sources. More co-financiers and a resultantly larger network might lead to increases in social capital. The following application of the index will investigate whether these project structural dimensions influence and can explain parts of the index score.

Given the premise that more development projects foster additional rural development for the benefit of the local area, it might be assumed that high index scores lead to increased motivation to pursue similar types of development work. Information regarding this issue has been collected through the interview with the project holder, and the connection between motivation and index scores will be further investigated.

Taking these structural dimensions and the potential connections between motivation and index scores into account, the index is applied to the answering of the following

questions: (1) can the organizational affiliation explain which type of projects accumulate the most social capital? (2) Can the amount of LAG project co-financing explain the accumulation of social capital? Finally, (3) can the degree of motivation for pursuing similar development projects be explained by the accumulation of social capital?

The data for answering the first two questions is derived from the project applications, whereas the last question relies on data from the interview.

## 6. Results and Discussion

### 6.1 Organizational affiliation

When applying for LAG support, the applicant indicates organisational affiliation, implying that the project holder indicates his/her affiliation with members of one of the following groups: (1) private person, (2) association, (3) public organization, (4) SME, or (5) self-governing institution. The distribution of the 56 projects from LAG-Djursland and the corresponding average index score is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The number of projects and total index scores for different organisational affiliations

Organisational affiliation	Number of projects	Average index score
Private person	3	0.144
Association	34	0.063
Public organisation <sup>a</sup>	3	0.568
SME	8	0.018
Self-governing institution	8	0.098
Total	56	0.093

<sup>a</sup>All three are municipally initiated projects

From Table 3, it appears that one group, 'Association', accounts for the majority of the applications, leaving only three applications each to the 'Private person' and 'Public organisation' categories. The table also indicates that one group, 'Public organisation', yields a higher index score, whereas the remaining four categories are rather close in score. The available data is not adequate for statistical testing.



## 6.2 Results and further analysis

The limited data calls for additional sources to establish an analytical foundation. The indication that involvement from public organisations leads to higher index scores can be further investigated by analysing whether co-financing from public organisations increases index scores. The finance sources behind the project are shown by the project application; this information is employed to identify which projects are co-financed by public organisations. To test whether projects with public organisational co-financing have distinct index scores, an independent sample T-test is conducted and the results appear in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent T-test of public organisation co-financing

### Group Statistics

Public_org_Cofinancing		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Index	No co-dimension financier	36	.0520	.09942	.01657
	Co-financier	20	.1670	.23047	.05154

### Independent Samples Test

		Levene's test for equality of variances		T-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% Confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Index	Equal variances assumed	13.859	.000	-2.602	54	.012	-.11496	.04418	-.20353	-.02638
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.124	22.998	.045	-.11496	.05413	-.22694	-.00297

The Levene's test for equality indicates that equal variances are not assumed and that the index scores are significantly different between the options 'No co-financier' ( $M = 0.0520$ ,  $SD = 0.9942$ ) and 'Co-financier' ( $M = 0.1670$ ,  $SD = 0.05154$ ) (eta squared = 0.04 small to moderate effect).

The analysis of organisational affiliation suggests that, when a public organisation is a lead partner or co-financier, the index score is higher than projects lead by partners with other organisational affiliation. There are uncertainties in the results given the limited available data, and additional testing of the index is required to yield more safely grounded answers on this matter. However, the indication of higher index scores in projects lead by public organisations may be supported by an assumption that the large network of local associations and businesses possessed by the municipalities eases the establishing of ties and utilisation of existing ties. The interviewed project holders from the municipalities all had well-established connections in their local areas through colleagues in the municipality, and had a large stock of latent social capital through their connections in advance. The importance of the municipality for pursuing valuable rural development in collaboration with the LAG is made evident in a different study on their collaboration (Teilmann, 2011), which supports the importance of a municipality's partnership for LAG effectiveness.

### *6.3 LAG co-financing as a cause of social capital accumulation*

There is a large variation in the size of funding behind the 56 projects, both in terms of LAG support and in terms of the total project budget. Table 5 provides an overview of the total budget and LAG support both in total for all projects and the average of the 56 projects.

Table 5: Total project budget and LAG financial support for the 56 projects

	Project budget	LAG support
All projects (€)	6.144.000	1.760.000
Project average (€)	110.000	31.400

Using the index score, whether there is a correlation between the amount of LAG co-financing and the accumulation of social capital can be tested. Such a test can also

answer the following question: can the amount of LAG-project funding explain the accumulation of social capital?

The results of the correlations shows no statistical significance  $r=0.001$  which indicate that there is no relation between the amount of LAG co-financing and the accumulation of social capital, and therefore, no evidence that higher LAG co-financing leads to higher accumulation of social capital. From a policymaking point of view, it is therefore not necessary to target economically heavy projects to achieve a corresponding increase in social capital. It can be argued that Social capital follows the network structure of the project rather than the budget of the project or the LAG co-financing. There might be other benefits behind financially larger projects, but results of the present study do not indicate that social capital accumulation is one of them.

#### *6.4 Motivation*

To understand the project holders' motivations for working on similar projects in the future, the interviewed project holders were asked whether the conducted LAG supported project had motivated them to do similar work in the future. Potential answers were (1) no, we do not want to do similar projects; (2) maybe; or (3) yes, we already have a project in the pipeline. These answers were used to examine whether a high social capital index score leads to increased motivation for conducting projects in the future. In this manner, motivation is being regarded as a dependent variable and the index as independent. The correlation (using Spearman's rank) shows significance, as  $p = .567$ .

This connection between motivation and social capital is relevant for future local development and for the success of the LEADER approach. It is a core component of the LEADER approach where project outcomes should have sustainable benefits for the local areas and a greater impact than what could be expected from the limited financial resources available. Ray (2000, p.165, quoting Van Mayer) argues that "LEADER was to deal with rural problems using funds 'at almost homeopathic doses'". Engaging local inhabitants should, according to Ray (2006), lead to increased engagement in the development of the local area; an engagement that should in turn lead to more sustainable socio-economic development (Shucksmith, 2000).

The finding that increased social capital leads to increased motivation to conduct more of the same kinds of projects has the potential to benefit the local community not only because of the direct influence of the LEADER project, but also simply because increased motivation in the wake of a project might in itself have a positive impact on the community. The connection between motivation and index scores supports the frequently made argument that social capital may lead to increased economic growth. Furthermore, the enhanced motivation supports the argumentation that growth in social capital leads to further increased accumulation of social capital and, thereby, becomes a self-perpetuating process following its initiation.

## **7. General Discussion**

The complexity and multidimensional character of social capital leads Woolcock and Narayan to conclude, that "Obtaining a single, true measure of social capital is probably not possible" (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000 p. 239). However, they acknowledge that several studies have identified useful measures for social capital that can be applied to explain the foundation of social capital accumulation. The application of the three principles proposed by Lewis has proven applicable to establishing the index and analysing the results obtained through the case study. Consequently, the present study seeks to include relevant dimensions and identify a useful measure. The four indicators, number of ties, bridging social capital, recognition, and diversity, anchored in the principle of 'form and type of tie' and the technical elements that make up the index need additional attention and are discussed in what follows.

The index measures social capital on the basis of established and utilised ties. If a project 'rests' in itself and does not include outside partners, it will receive a score of zero in the index. It is possible that, in one way or another, the project will have some impact on the accumulation of social capital in a later, more mature phase of its development, but in the context of the current measurement, no connections have been established. Furthermore, the index is a measure of the stock of social capital and does not assess whether increases move toward a desirable end from a social point of view.

The measure of social capital expressed by the index is based on the desire to develop a rural community made up of a LAG territory. To accommodate this objective, the

bridging social capital indicator assigns higher weights to ties that reach new resources to less likeminded connections. This indicates that higher weight has been assigned to bridging social capital than bonding. If the objective was to measure social capital as a means of 'getting by' rather than 'getting ahead' (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000 p. 232), more weight should be awarded to the strong ties of bonding social capital.

The index assesses the recognition of the established tie on the basis of the perception of the project holder. However, according to Adler and Kwon (2002), there must be mutual recognition, and both sides of a tie need to be assessed. In the present study, this has not been possible. However, it can be argued that, when recognition from one party emerges, it increases the possibility of recognition from the other. Further refinement of this aspect could enhance the index.

### *7.1 Suggestions and Limitations*

In studies of different policies, it has been argued that "building social capital has typically been seen as a task for 'second generation' economic reform [...] social capital cannot be so easily created or shaped by public policy" (Fukuyama, 2001 p. 7); researchers argue that the same logic counts for the LEADER approach. Social capital is not an explicit element of any of the official LEADER documents, though in the recently published mid-term evaluation of the Danish rural development programme, the notion of social capital did find its way in to the text, which acknowledges this notion's importance (Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, 2010). However, the evaluation report limits its reference to social capital to a rather general description, but indicates awareness of the concept and acknowledges its positive influence. The emerging wish to evaluate the outcomes of social capital makes it important to understand what fosters social capital accumulation and suggest which dimensions are most important for policymakers. The suggested index provides an entry point for analysing this and identifying the dimensions most vital for stimulating social capital. The index could be utilised in future evaluations of LEADER.

The index is composed of four direct indicators that include relevant dimensions of social capital accumulation with the purpose of fostering economic and social development at the local level. This approach has been selected to include those

dimensions that are of specific relevance to the LEADER approach accompanied through the LAGs. However, it is acknowledged, that inclusion of additional indicators may add additional nuances to the assessment. Further research and testing of the index may illuminate this perspective.

The present study analyses and measures social capital on the basis of the network of connections that contribute to LAG projects, but does not analyse the outcomes of the implemented projects. This implies that not all aspects of social capital related to the project are necessarily included in the index. If the project objective is to enhance the sports facilities at the local sports association, there will also be elements of this project's outcome that can increase social capital. This could be achieved through meeting new acquaintances at the sports association who could be helpful in future activities. Additional social capital that might accumulate once the project is implemented is not assessed here, and further research is needed to determine how to address this.

Although the index is calculated at the micro level—that is, the level of the project holder—it functions as a proxy for evaluating the social capital gain at the meso (project) level and macro (community) level. The index thus enables the aggregating of the index scores at the LAG level and can yield information regarding how the community benefits from LEADER initiative at the macro level (i.e. community level). This potential of aggregation into a single index score for a LEADER territory possesses the possibility of acting as a comparative index. This implies that, through applying the index to examine more LAGs, a comparative study could be conducted. However, understanding this application of the index requires further research.

## **8. Conclusion**

The present study has developed an index that captures the essence of social capital as it accumulates during the implementation of LAG-projects. The index is composed of four indicators: number of ties, bridging social capital, recognition, and diversity. Through application of the index in LAG-Djursland, it has become evident that projects held by municipalities tend to stimulate the most social capital, there are no connections between the size of project financing and social capital, and a high level of motivation

leads to increased social capital. That the findings show a connection between the motivational element and degree of social capital will potentially lead to additional development activities in rural areas. This will consequently bring projects closer to reaching the stated policy objective of “Improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity” (COM, 2005 p. 9).

From a policy-making perspective, the results of the present study shows, that through affecting the individual level i.e. the project holder, it has shown it is possible to stimulate accumulation of new ties based on the LEADER approach. Development of these new ties may consequently lead to accumulation of additional social capital in the local area and hence support a positive self-perpetuating loop through a policy intervention. Furthermore, the study shows that for stimulating social capital accumulation the size of the project in monetary terms shows none importance. This implies that for policy-makers wishing to stimulate social capital through local development projects, the emphasis should be on establishing many smaller projects than fewer larger.

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## **Appendix 1: Questionnaire to municipalities with LAG-projects**

I am calling you from CBS regarding an investigation of the collaboration between Danish municipalities and local action groups. I hope you have 10-15 minutes to answer my questions.

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_

Office: \_\_\_\_\_

LAG: \_\_\_\_\_

Municipal type:

1. Remote rural municipality
2. Rural municipality
3. Mellem

1. Who is mainly in contact with the LAG to which your municipality belongs?

1. Interviewee
2. Colleague in same office
3. Other

2. With whom are you usually in contact with at the LAG?

1. LAG-coordinator
2. Board of directors
3. Other

3. How often are you in contact with the LAG?

1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. More rare

4. Where is your contact person in the LAG, physically situated?
  1. Municipality
  2. Other place
  
5. In instances where the LAG covers more than one municipality, does your contact person (probably the coordinator) sit:
  1. Alternating between both municipalities
  2. Elsewhere
  
6. How many LAG-projects is your municipality involved in, where the municipality is project leader?
  
7. Besides those projects, where the municipality is project leader; how many projects do you think, that your municipality have co-financed?
  
8. How would you characterize the main objective with the collaboration with the LAG? Is it mainly about:
  1. Exchange of information
  2. Coordinating resources to obtain a common goal
  3. To obtain synergy effects through close collaboration on a common goal
  
9. If you can talk about a dependency relationship between municipality and LAG to obtain a common goal about development of rural areas, would you characterize this relationship as:
  1. Independent, i.e. you work on your own without much collaboration
  2. Dependent, i.e. you collaborate to some extent to obtain a common goal
  3. Interdependent, i.e. you are very collaborative and interdependent in relation to exchange of information and resources
  
10. Which of the following statements best describes the way in which you mainly communicate with the LAG:
  1. When necessary we communicate – informal
  2. Our communication is formalized and project based
  3. We have a close and formalized communication but also communicate when necessary
  
11. Which of the following statements do you agree most with:
  1. The funds managed by the LAG would benefit more in the hands of the municipalities

2. The funds managed by the LAG are equally well managed by either the LAG or the municipality
  3. The funds managed by the LAG is managed in a way that the municipalities is not able to and gives therefore added value for the rural areas
12. The investment the municipality puts in the collaboration with the LAG is that a:
1. Bad investment for the municipality
  2. Acceptable investment for the municipality
  3. Good investment for the municipality
13. Which of the following statements do you think best describes the role of the board of directors in the LAG:
1. The BoD is not so good in maintaining and define the strategy of the LAG
  2. The BoD is good at maintaining and define the strategy of the LAG
  3. The BoD is very good at maintaining and define the strategy of the LAG
14. In relation to the LAG BoD which of the following statements do you think is most correct:
1. The role of the BoD is not important for the success of the LAG
  2. The role of the BoD has some influence on the success of the LAG
  3. The role of the BoD is the main reason behind the success of the LAG
15. In relation to the LAG BoD which of the following statements do you think is most correct:
1. The role of the coordinator is not important for the success of the LAG
  2. The role of the coordinator has some influence on the success of the LAG
  3. The role of the coordinator is the main reason behind the success of the LAG
16. Which of the following statements concerning the collaboration between LAG and municipality is most suitable for those projects where the municipality is project leader:
1. There is little collaboration between municipality, LAG and other partners
  2. There is some collaboration between municipality, LAG and other partners but it could be better
  3. The collaboration is well functioning and there is a high degree of interaction between municipality, LAG and other partners

The following questions are open ended and there are no answering opportunities

17. The main objective with the LAG initiative is to create economic growth in rural areas. Do you think that there are any side effects to the LAG initiative?

18. What do you think is the most important result of the LAG initiative? Is it:

1. Economic growth
2. Social coherence in rural areas
3. Equal economic growth and social coherence

19. Besides the LAG, which organizations and associations do you think are important for rural development in your municipality?

20. Do you think that the municipality applies the LAG initiative adequately? Or could you be better at making collaborative projects with the LAG?

Thank you very much for answering my questions.

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire to LAG project holders

My name is ... I am calling you because I can see, that you are contact person on a project that has received financial support through LAG-Djursland. I would like to ask you to participate in a questionnaire regarding your project.

All questions are related to the project that you/your association/organization have received support for and you are asked to answer as representative for this association/organization.

Some questions are concerned with [ORG NAME] and others relate to the project you have received support for.

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_

Association/organization: \_\_\_\_\_

1. First I would like to ask into [ORG NAME] you represent and would like you to briefly tell me the main objective with your [ORG NAME] is:
2. If you should choose one of the following categories which do you think best covers the main objective of [ORG NAME]
  1. [ORG NAME] should accommodate the local inhabitants at and around Djursland
  2. [ORG NAME] should accommodate tourist coming to Djursland
  3. [ORG NAME] accommodates tourists and local inhabitants equally
3. Have [ORG NAME] previously applied for financial support through LAG-Djursland?
  1. Yes
  2. No
4. If yes: what is the name of the projects that you have applied for?
5. Did [ORG NAME] apply for support for similar projects through other foundations, trusts etc.?

1. Yes, we have applied for few similar projects
  2. Yes, we have great experience in applying for external financial support.
  3. No
6. Besides [ORG NAME] are there other partners involved in the project as applicants?
1. Yes
  2. No
7. If yes: Who?
8. Can you briefly explain what the most important results of the project are?
9. If you should choose one of the following categories which do you think best covers the main objective of project you have received financial support for?
1. The project should accommodate the local inhabitants at and around Djursland
  2. The project should accommodate tourist coming to Djursland
  3. The project accommodates tourists and local inhabitants equally
10. Would the project have been realized without the financial support from LAG-Djursland?
1. Yes
  2. Yes, but the project would be different from its present form
  3. No
11. In the following I will ask into whether somebody has supported your project both in the application phase and in the project phase. To begin with, I would like to ask you to mention up till five associations, organizations or companies that in one way or the other have been involved in your project? And I will ask you to begin with those that have been most important and so on.
1. .
  2. .
  3. .
  4. .
  5. .

With point of departure in the mentioned associations, organizations and companies I will in the following ask into how you have collaborated and your relation to them. We therefore need to go through the same questions for each of the contacts you have mentioned.



12. Have any of the mentioned contacts been completely crucial for the project?

1. Yes
2. No

13. Have any of the mentioned given direct financial support to the project

1. Yes
2. No

14. Could you imagine working together with any of the mentioned in the future?

1. Yes, definitely
2. Maybe
3. No

15. I would like to ask you to assess your relation to the mentioned contacts and I have four categories:

1. I have a close personal contact or family member
2. A contact I Previously have collaborated with
3. A contact established only in connection to this project but recommended by an acquaintance
4. A contact established only in connection to this project

[When q. 12 to 15 is collected a table as the one below can be constructed]

Collaboration with	Priority of contact	Decisive for the project	Financial supported	Future collaboration	Relation to contact
Organisation 1	2				
Association 1	1				
Association 2	3				
...					
...					

16. Did the content of the project change according to the original in order to receive financial support from LAG-Djursland?

1. Yes, the project changed little
2. Yes, the project changed a lot

3. No

17. Have you in connection to the preparation of the development of your application been in contact with any of the following organisations?

1. Syddjurs Municipality
2. Norddjurs Municipality
3. Destination Djursland
4. Central Denmark Region

18. Did your collaboration with LAG-Djursland and those partners involved in your project motivated you to further work with initiating projects for the benefit of the inhabitants at Djursland?

1. Yes, we already have a new project in pipeline
2. Maybe
3. No

Lastly I have a few open ended questions, meaning that there are none predetermined answers

19. The main objective of the LAG initiative is to stimulate economic growth in rural areas. But, do you mean, that there are other side effects with the LAG initiative? Which? How etc.

20. Did you work with the project through LAG-Djursland led to contacts that you would otherwise not get in contact with? And whom you even might contact again?

### **Appendix 3: Other dissemination during my Ph.d. period**

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