



# How Farm Services support innovation in Ireland

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**Fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy for**  
**Agriculture and Forestry**

# This talk

- What is Teagasc
- How does the Irish AKIS compare in Europe?  
And Why?
- Movement from advising to innovation support
- European Networks e.g. EUFRAS and their role
- EU supporting a better AKIS
- ConnectEd – outreach to rural professionals

# Teagasc - Locations, Functions & Staff

52 Advisory offices  
4 Teagasc colleges  
3 Private colleges  
7 Research Centres



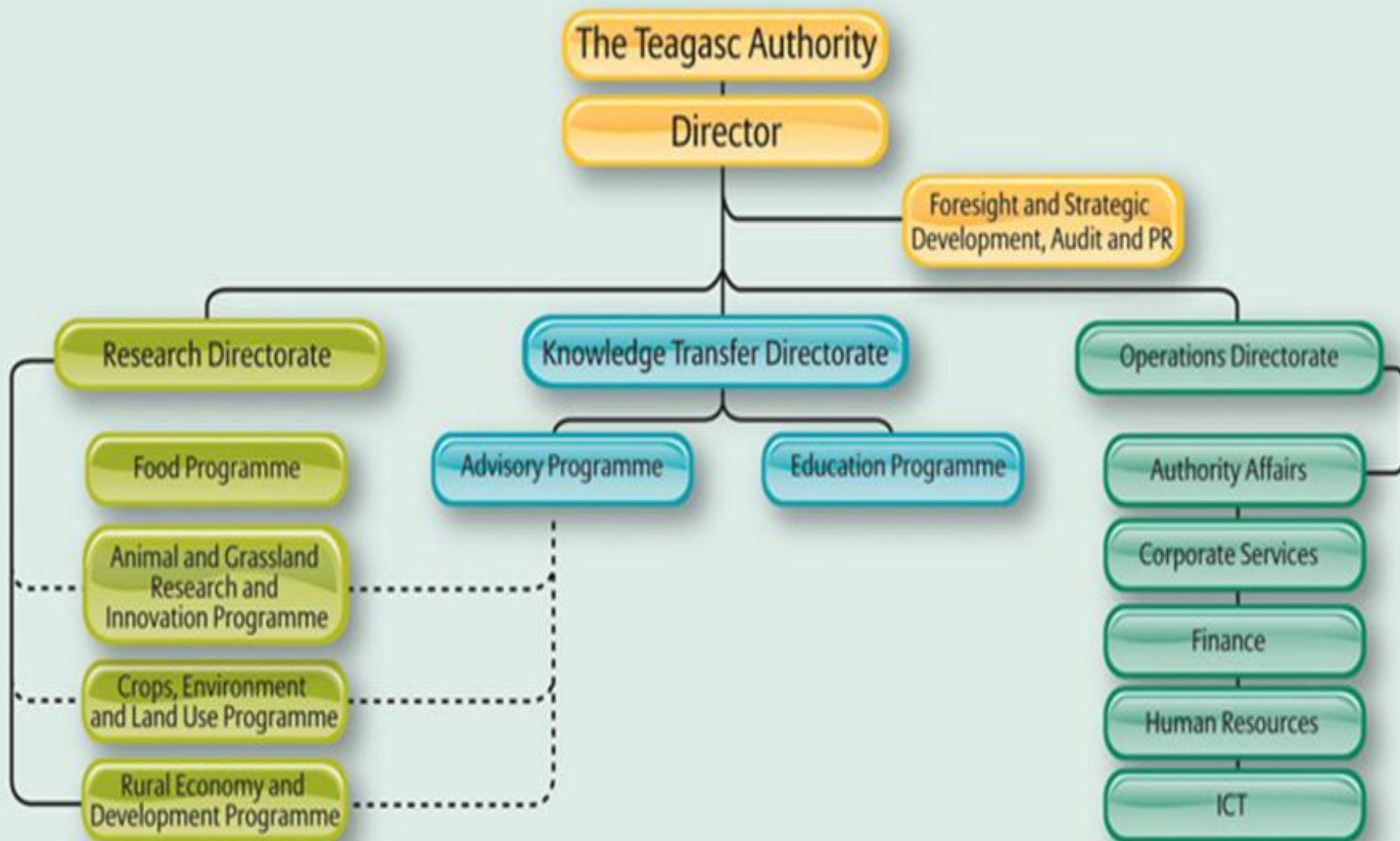
(1,228)	Perm.	Con.	Total
Researchers	115	115	227
Advisors	240	37	277
Education	53	32	85
Specialists	65	0	65



# Teagasc Goals

- **Improve the competitiveness** of agriculture, food and the wider bio-economy
- **Support sustainable** farming and the environment
- **Encourage diversification** of the rural economy and enhance the quality of life in rural areas (**viability**)
- Enhance organisational capability. **Value for money**





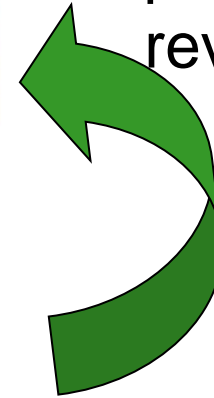


# Integrating Research and Knowledge Transfer

Researchers create new knowledge



Stakeholders participate in programme reviews



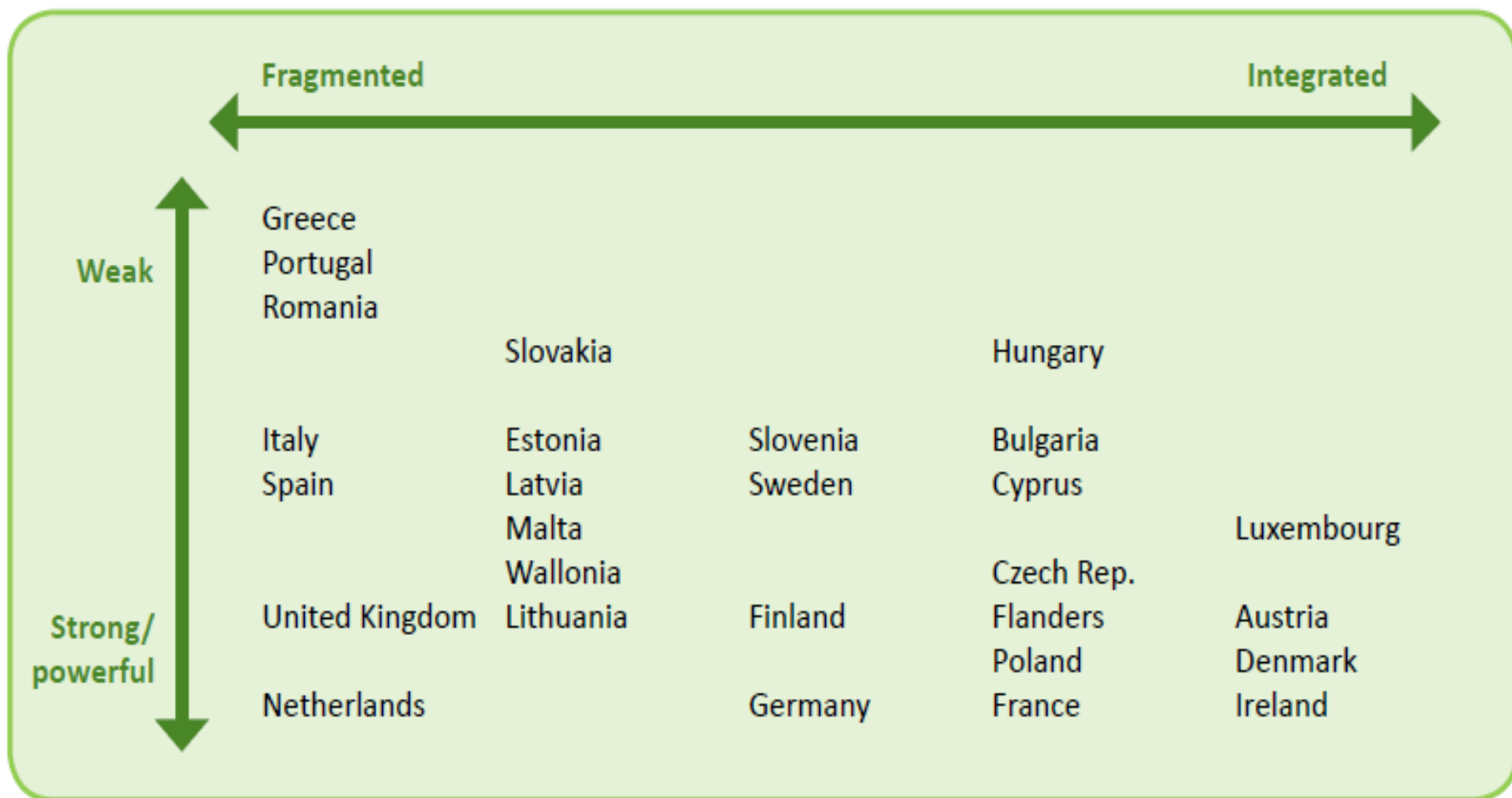
Advisers work with farmers to implement the new technology

Specialists mould this knowledge into information for farmers



# PROAKIS study: 2014

## Characterising EU MS' AKIS



# Research programme from soils to consumer

- Animal and Grassland
- Crops, Environment and Land Use
- Food
- Rural Economy and Development





# Teagasc Education



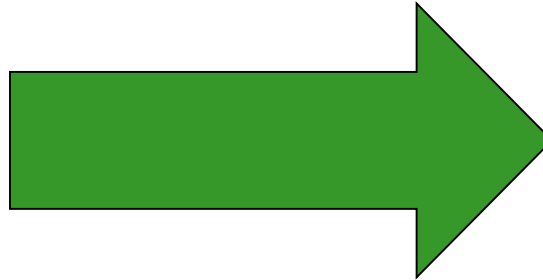
- **Teagasc**
  - **Level 5 and 6 provider (vocational/young farmer focus)**
  - **Partners with ITs and Universities up to level 8 (Honours Degree)**
  - **Unprecedented demand (enrolments up 152% from 2008 to 2017, now reducing)**
- **Teagasc partners with a range of universities and other research organisation for MSc + PhD (Level 9 + 10) ~ 300**

# Stakeholder consultation event



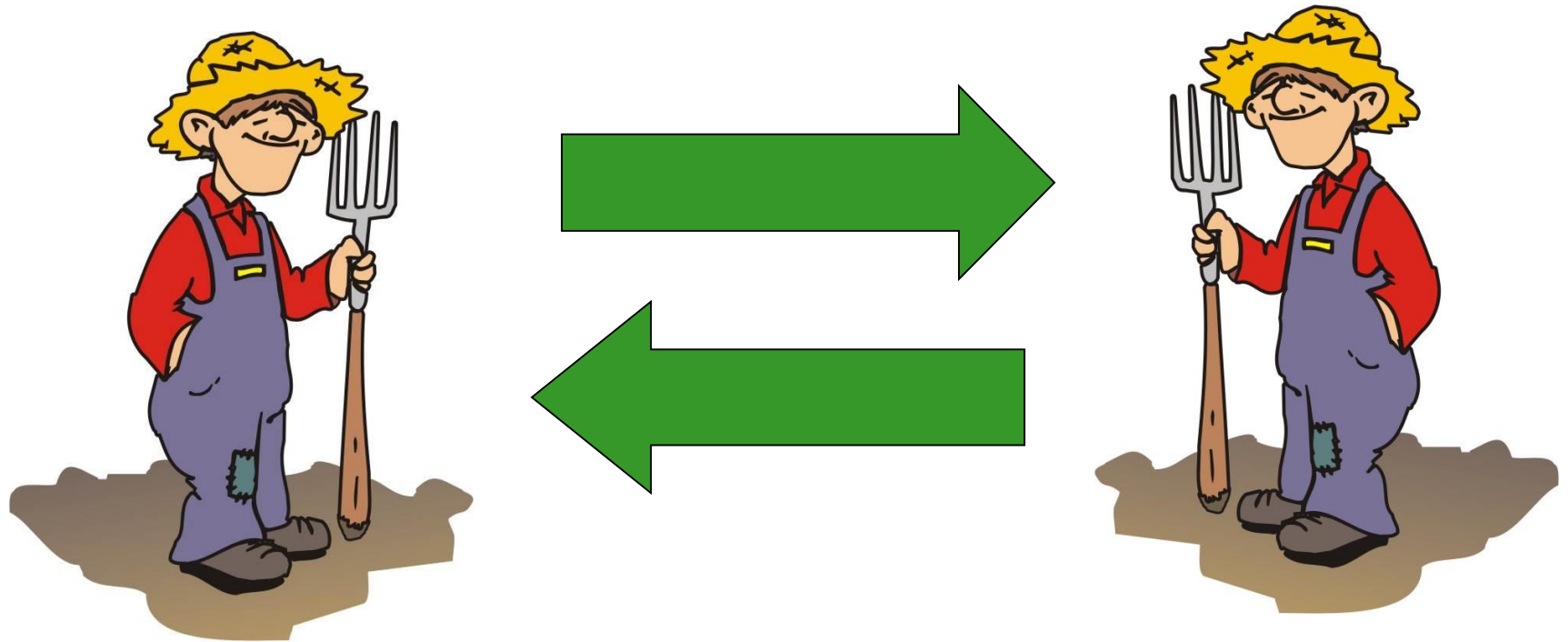
**Stakeholder engagement key to ensuring that we are working on the right topics**

# Transfer of technology





# Transfer of technology



# How Advisory methods can improve effectiveness

## Adviser as Instructor

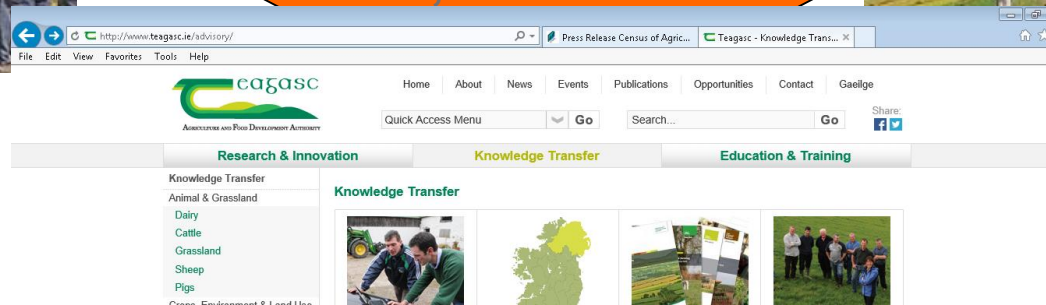
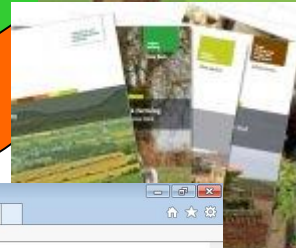
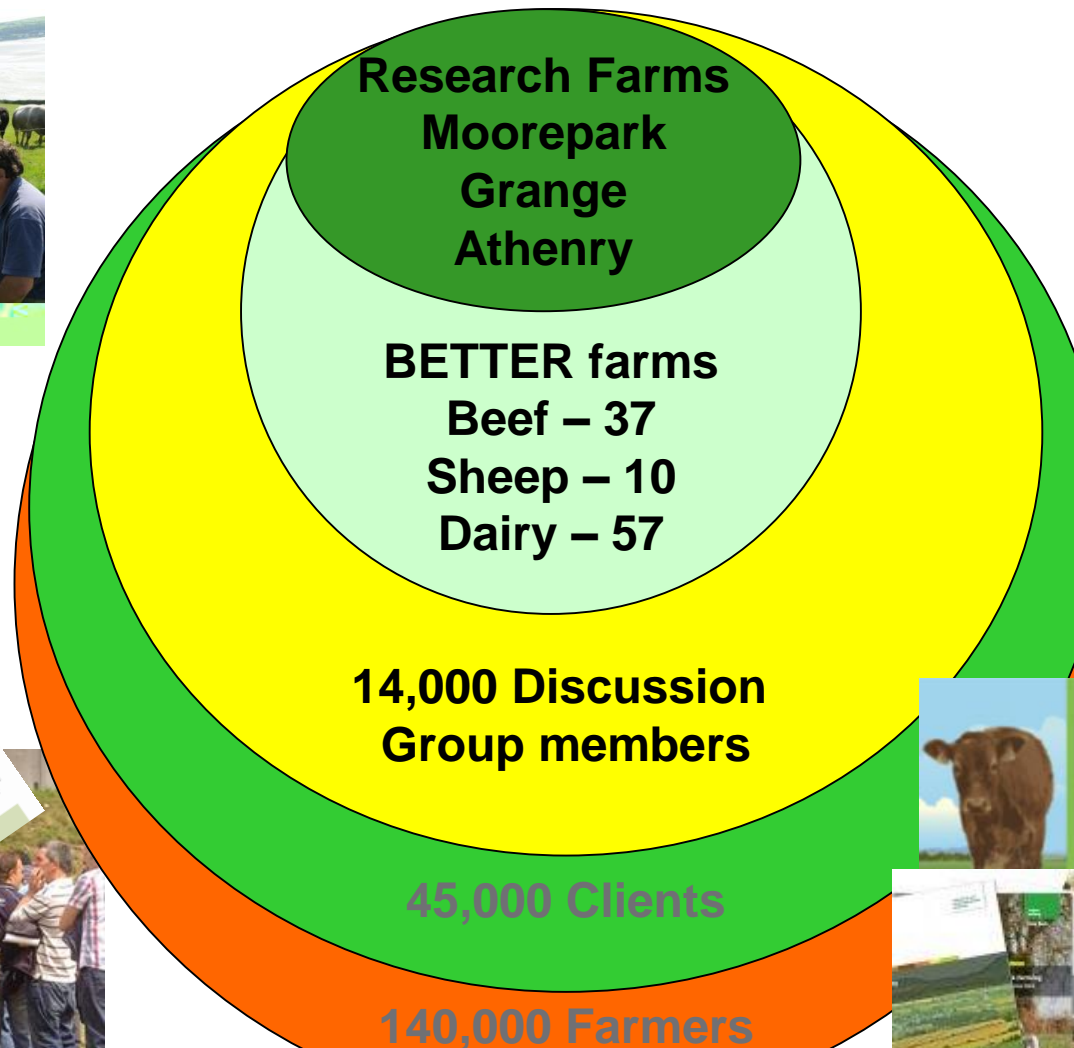


## Adviser as Facilitator





# Advisory model - operational version of Teagasc AKIS



# Service Versus Innovation Support Based Advisory Work

## ■ Service based

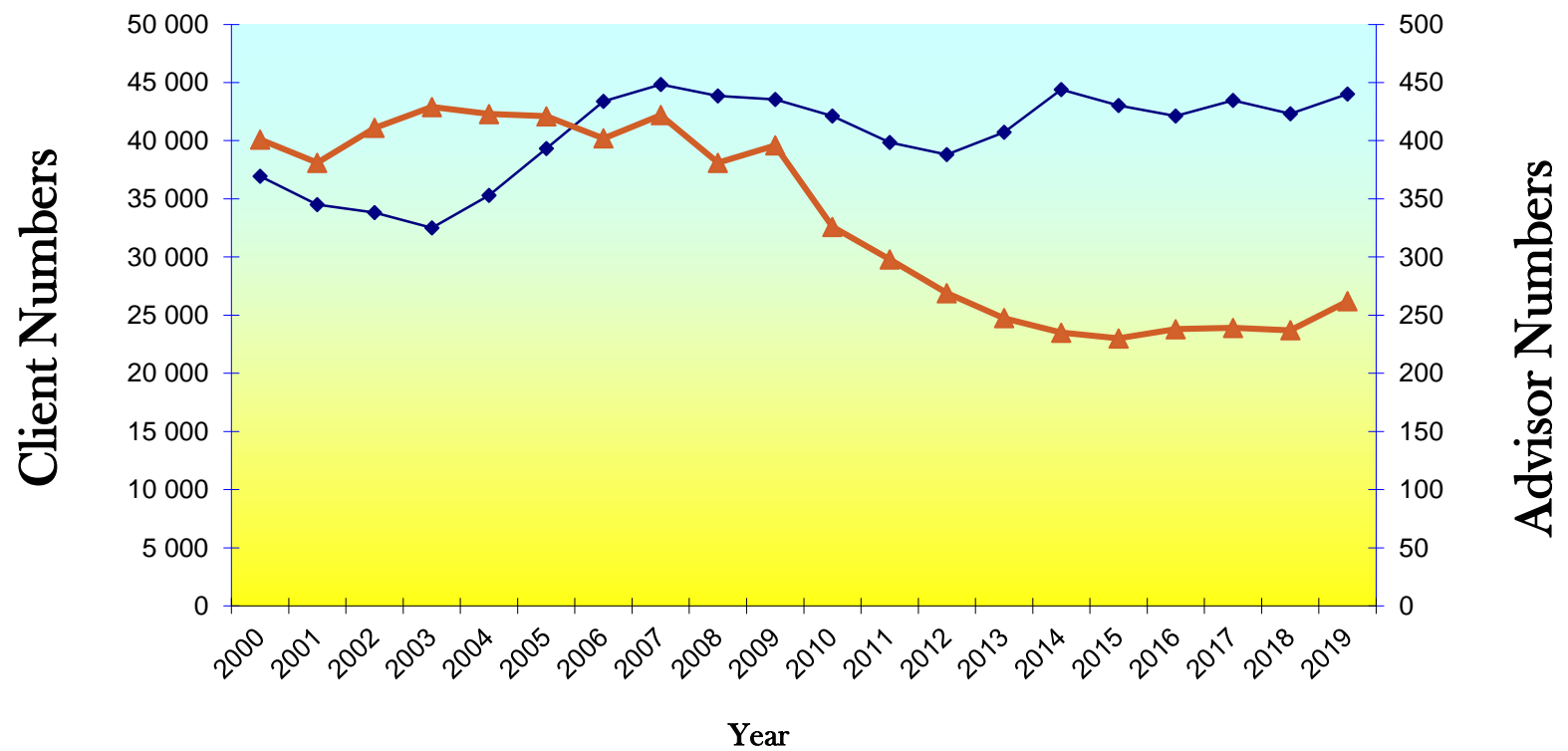
- Easier to be paid for
- Short term or one off
- Based on schemes
- Mainly mandatory
- Easy to build farmer contact
- Trust needed

## ■ Innovation based

- Difficult to get paid for
- Longer term relationship
- Some Scheme support
- Mainly voluntary
- Difficult to build contact
- Trust essential

***The mix of both is important, Teagasc funding (60%) drives innovation based activity client member fees €175 – €300 covers service costs***

# Front Line advisor and client numbers 2000 to 2019



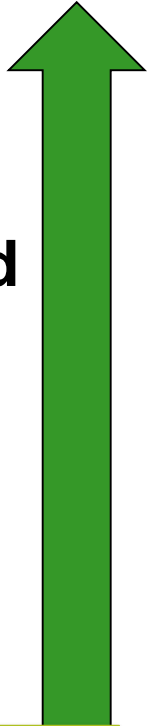
# Three Key developments in Efficient Knowledge Transfer



- Farmer discussion groups (Advisor facilitated)
- Joint Development Programmes with Industry – working with food processors to target combined efforts at key issues
- BETTER Farms and Monitor Farms (demonstration farm network)

# A Hierarchy of Adviser roles

- Leader, Motivator, Mentor, Coach
- Problem Solver, Teacher, Expert, Opinion giver
- Information provider, Source of advice (farm and other)
- Service provider, data compilation and analysis, monitor and benchmark the business
- Service provider, dealing with paperwork.



**In any one day an adviser may do all of these**



# Irish Discussion Groups – Peer to Peer Learning through facilitation of farm networks

- Discussion groups: 15-20 members managed by farmers and facilitated by advisors
- Substantial shift away from ‘one-to-one’ delivery and towards organised discussion groups
  - **Early 1990’s:** Teagasc incorporates discussion groups into advisory programmes
  - **Mid 1990’s:** industry (mainly dairy co-ops) become involved in discussion group programmes
  - **2009 :** state support for formation of discussion groups (Dairy, Beef and Sheep)
  - **2015-2019:** -RDP M1 support for Knowledge Groups
- Now a valued part of CPD in the AKIS



**A new organisation to help improve advisory services in Europe aligned to GFRAS, its 44 member organisations represent 25,000 European extension agents from 27 countries. Sub-networks IALB, SEASN and YoungEUFRAS**

### **■ Objectives**

- The promotion of best practice in advisory methodologies**
- The development of shared information technology services and solutions**
- The sharing of technical expertise**
- The skills training of advisory staff**
- The development of advisory standards and frameworks for evaluation**
- Promoting the activities of its members to key decision makers in the EU and elsewhere**
- Influencing the training of agriculture undergraduates**

## CECRA (Certificate for European Consultants in Rural Areas)

**Delivery of methodology training to advisory staff.  
Accreditation of programmes, trainers and certification to an  
industry standard.**

### **Activities:**

- **Co-ordination and delivery of CECRA skills training and accreditation in different languages**
- **Participation in adviser international exchange programmes**
- **Share expertise and resources**
- **Training of trainers and promotion of training modules**

# EIP-AGRI supports a stronger European AKIS through funding streams:

## CAP / Rural development (regional/national level)



*Funding for:*  
**OG preparation**  
**OG projects**  
**Innovation support services**

## HORIZON 2020 (European projects)

- **Research projects**  
(knowledge base)
- **Multi-actor projects and thematic networks**  
(interactive innovation)



**Involvement of OGs is strongly recommended**



Unique EU knowledge repository  
of **contacts** and **practice abstracts**

**Spread the results**

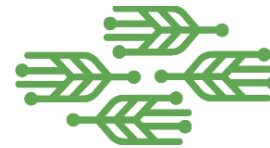


# Ireland's – CAP Rural Development Plan Measures 2014-2020 (50%EU Funded)

Pillar 2 Measures	
1: Knowledge Transfer and Information Actions	
2: Advisory services, Farm Management & Farm Relief	
4: Investment in Physical assets	
7: Basic Services and Village Renewal in Rural Areas	
10: Agri-Environment – Climate	
11: Organic Farming	
13: Payments to areas facing natural or other constraints	
16: Co-Operation	
19: Support for LEADER local development	



# H2020 projects to enhance Interactive innovation and strengthen the AKIS.



**EURAKNOS**



**FAIRshare**

DIGITAL TOOLS FOR FARM ADVISORS

**i2connect**



# Advisory – Joint Programmes

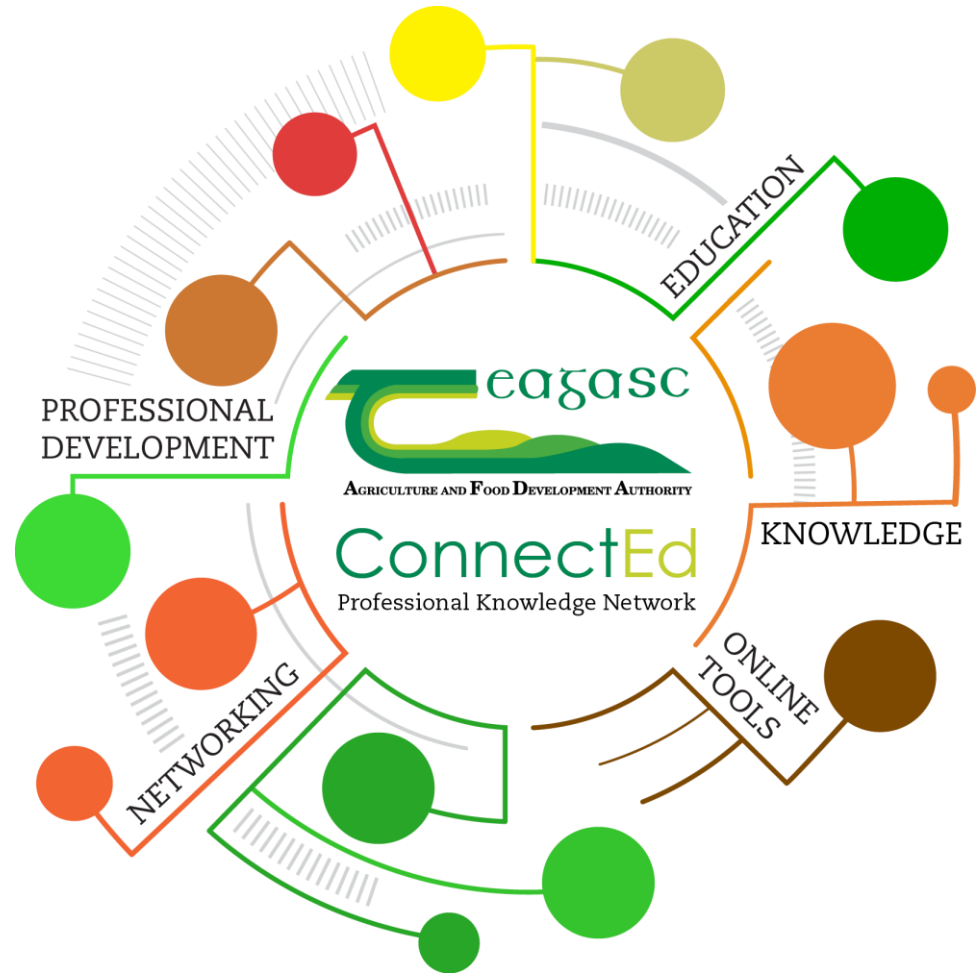
## ■ Success factors for Joint Programmes:

- Agreed objectives, KPI's and reviews
- Financial input (€1m) from industry
- Driver of change in methodology (discussion groups and monitor Farms)
- Additional Teagasc contract staff (12 Dairying + 4 Better Beef)



# Teagasc ConnectEd Programme

Achieving more contact and impact by using all available rural networks and creating new ones



Research and knowledge transfer outreach programmes for rural professionals and businesses supporting the wider Irish AKIS

# Thank You

# Questions?