



Dr. Kristina Zumbusch

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Multilevel policy efforts for regional knowledge management



The challenges for regional development are complex and shaped by different policy levels.

bottom-up

Cities and communities transfer obligations to an upper level (i) to assure a greater congruency between the space of problem and the space of action, and (ii) to attain productivity gains.

top-down

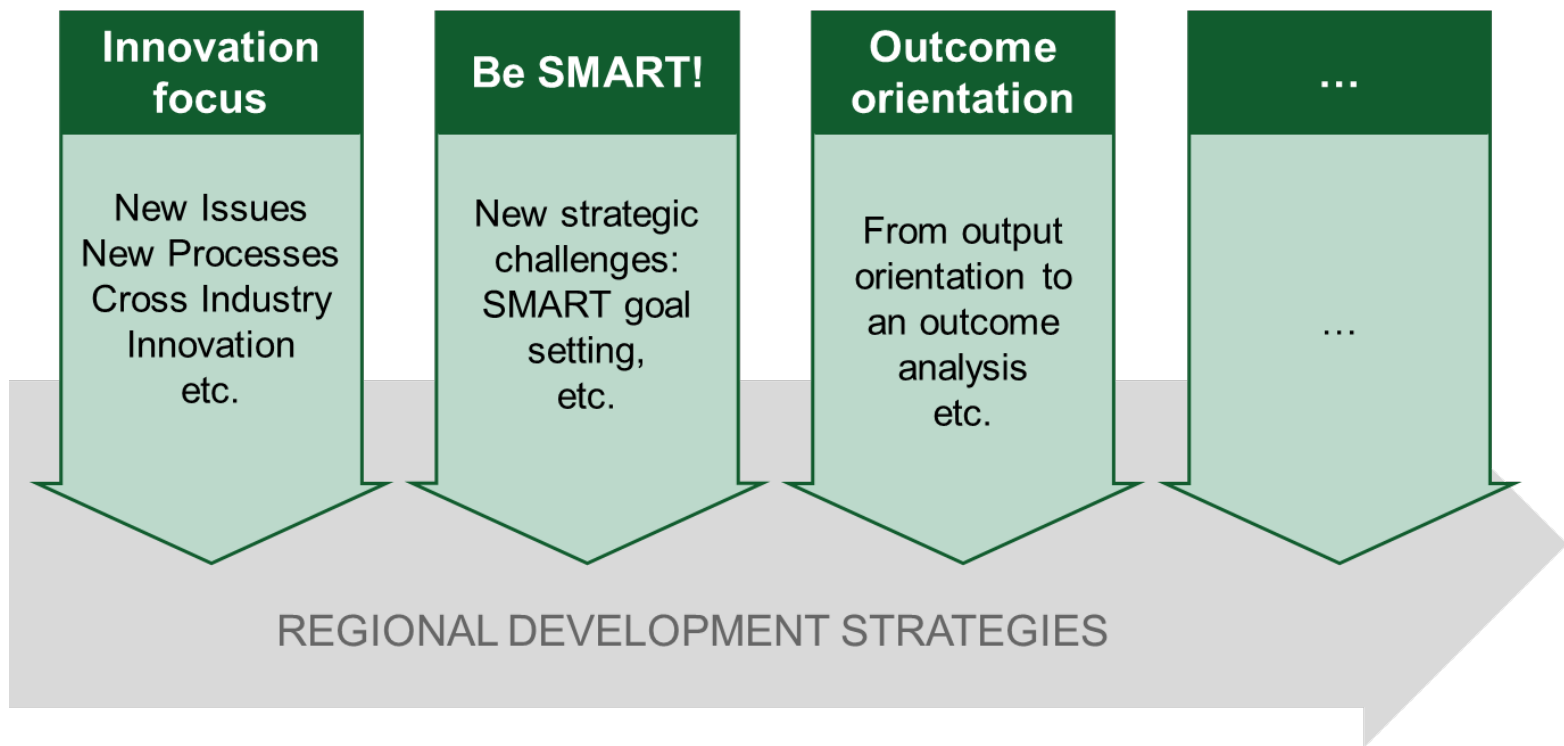
EU, federal/ national levels and superordinate regions

- (i) are increasingly delegating the implementation of political programs to inferior levels;
- (ii) are initiating different programs to which the regions shall contribute and to which they shall adapt their development strategies;

→ Various (sectoral) initiatives, programs, funding schemes and requirements are condensing at the regional level.



In addition, these challenges are constantly changing and increasing.





How can we assume ...

- ... that «regions» are able to manage these challenges alone?
- ... that they are able to continuously adapt to their complex environment?
- ... that they are able to deal efficiently and professionally with all kind of emerging issues?

Support in form of systematic knowledge management for regional development remains largely scattered between different nations, institutions and policy levels.



Agenda

1. **Main drivers** for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management for regional development
2. **Main elements** of a systematic and multilevel knowledge management for regional development
3. **Some chances and limits** for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management for regional development



Based on findings and discussions in the framework of the evaluation of “**regiosuisse**” in **Switzerland**, which can be regarded as a systematic and multilevel network and knowledge management unit for regional development in Switzerland.

Main drivers for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management system



Main drivers for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management system for regional development

1. The number of **actors involved in regional development** with their different backgrounds and from different policy levels is rising.
2. The number of **different issues** which have to be addressed by regional development strategies is rising as well.
3. Regional development strategies have to consider **different scales** and perimeters which specific challenges (local, regional, interregional, etc.).
4. The complexity of the regional environment is continuously increasing, whereas regional decision makers and regional entities are often limited in their resources and capacities.
5. But knowledge management support remains so far fragmented and limited to isolated initiatives.
 - some focussed initiatives from the EU mainly for knowledge exchange and knowledge generation
 - far less systematic initiatives at the national levels

Elements for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management system

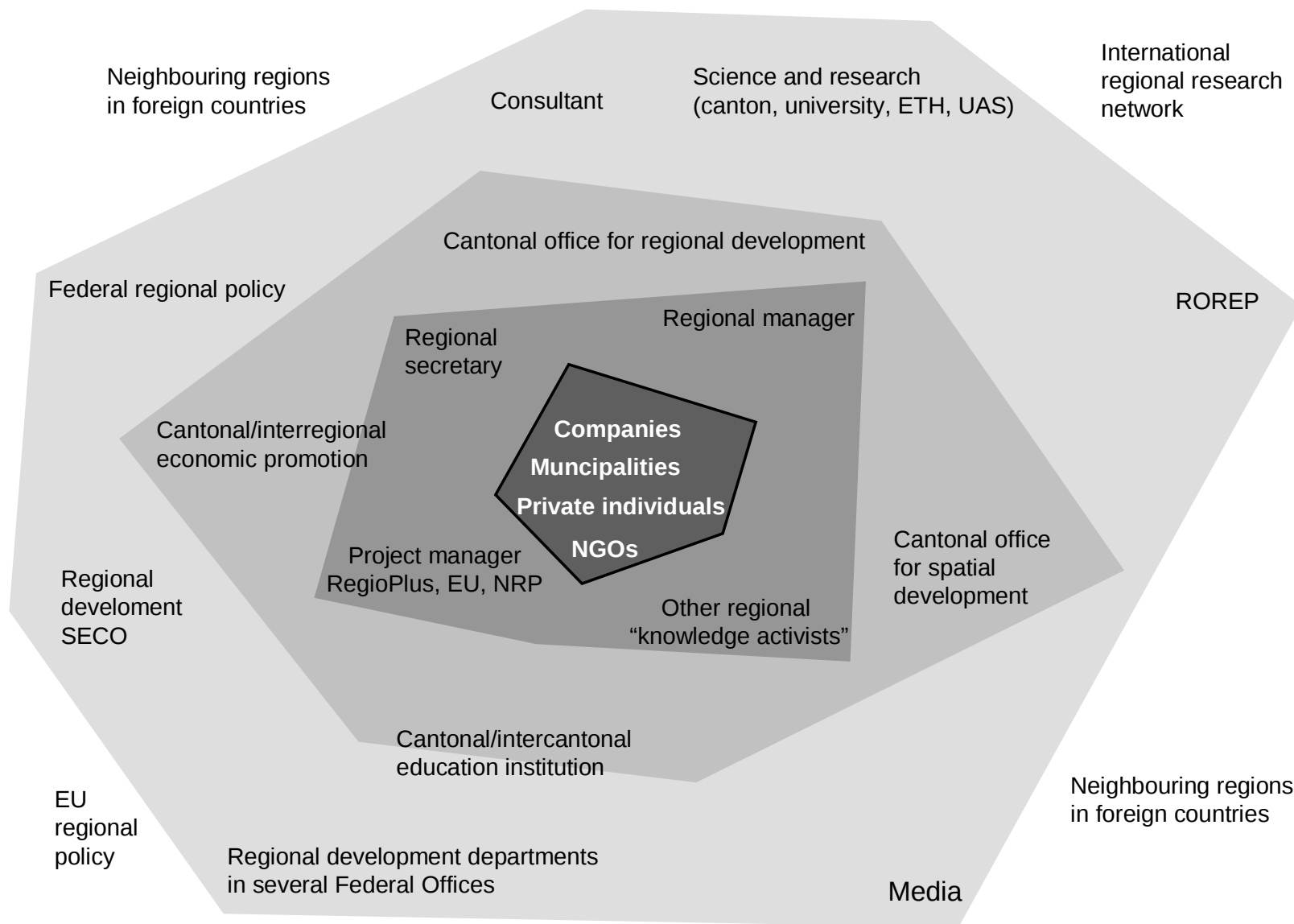


The example of regiosuisse in Switzerland

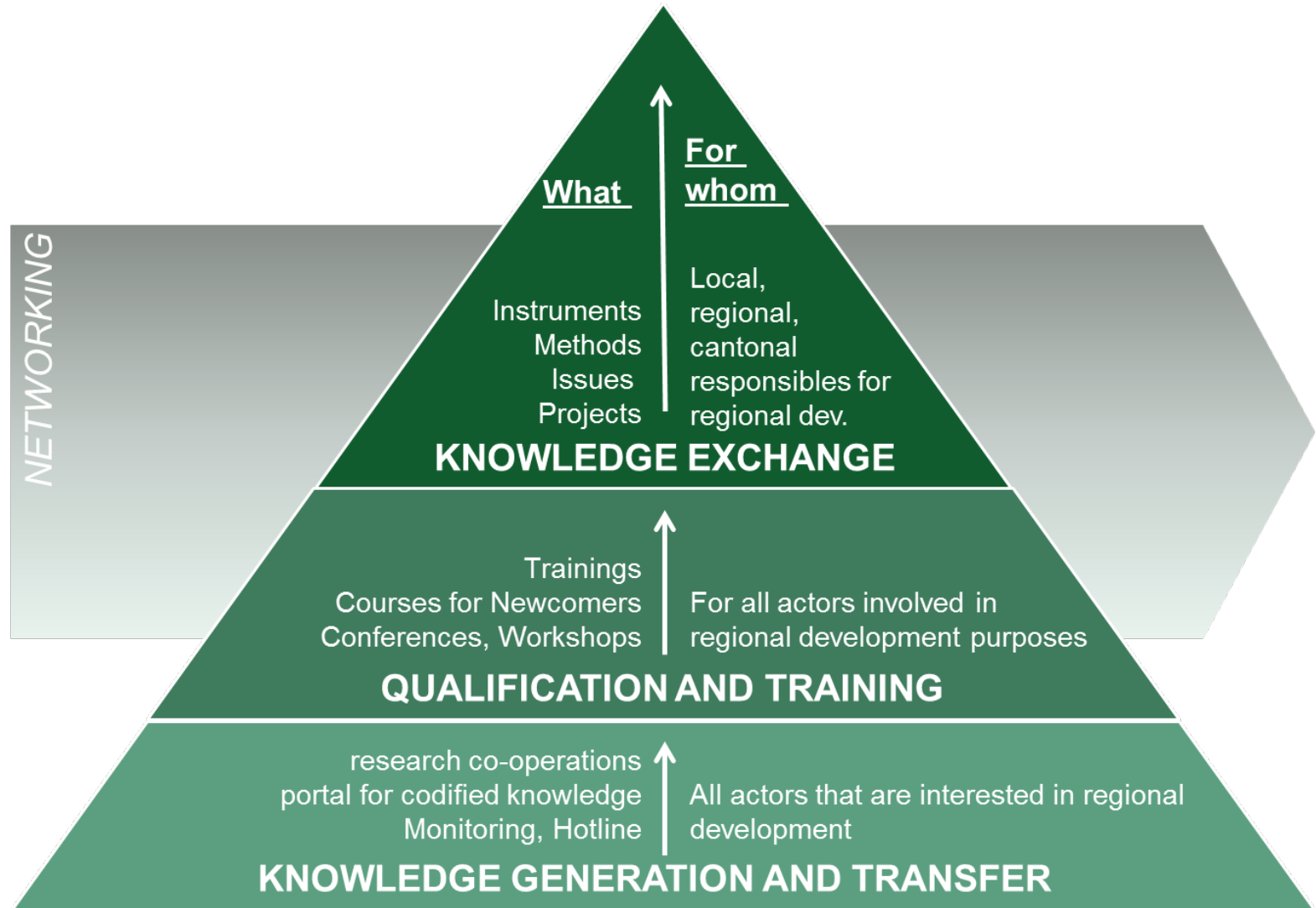
- regiosuisse is the network and knowledge management unit for regional development in Switzerland.
- It was launched in 2008 by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs together with the cantons, considerable amounts of public funding are invested in this scheme.
- The main task of regiosuisse is to build up a systematic knowledge management for regional development supporting all actors involved to stay adaptive, creative and innovative.
- regiosuisse understands knowledge management as a broad process with elements of (i) networking and exchange, (ii) further education and training and (iii) knowledge generation and transfer activities.



Addressed actors by regionsuisse



Elements and addressed actors

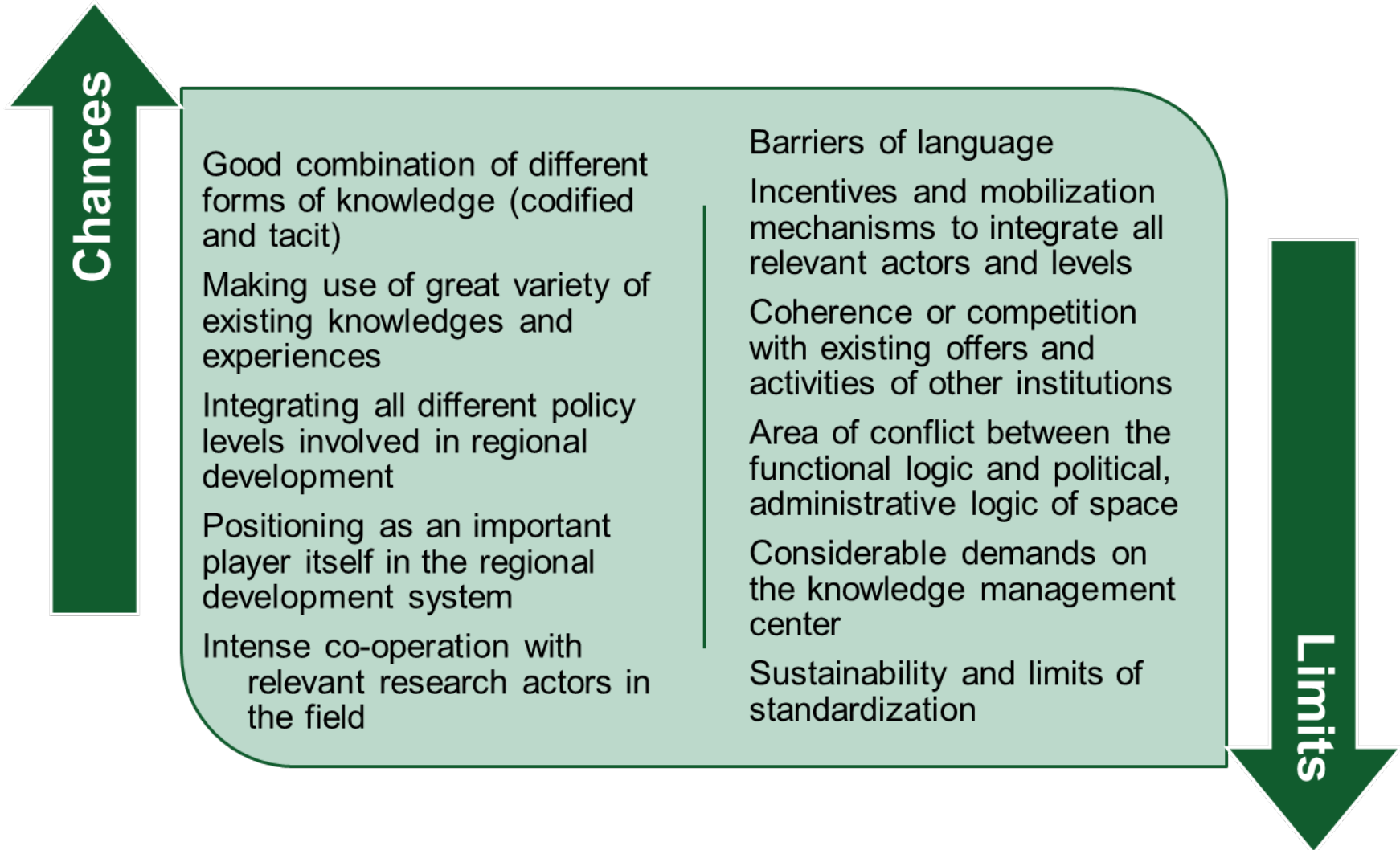




Innovative Elements

- Good combination of bottom-up and top-down elements, partners and users of all policy levels
- Decision maker in regional development use regionsuisse very frequently and see a great positive impact for their daily work
- Optimization, professionalization and a greater coherence of regional process managements
- Actors concerned with questions of regional development got in contact, the community has become stronger.
- Strategic and functional networking of involved and responsible actors of different regions, institutions, and different policy levels.
- Linking up the regional action system with the innovation oriented knowledge system.

Chances and limits for a systematic and multilevel knowledge management system



A systematic and multilevel knowledge management may support a clear-sighted, strategic and adaptive regional development – if it takes into consideration some limiting factors (incentives, competition, etc.).

