

Endogenous Rural Development within the South West of England: A Governance Narrative of LEADER+

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PhD Thesis

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Abstract

The global political system forms the backdrop to the changing function of the state and the emergence of new governing systems. This thesis develops a particular governance narrative in relation to endogenous rural development within the South West of England through the European Union's (EU) LEADER+ rural development programme. This programme is important because it sits firmly within a wider set of discourses on the 'new governance'. This discourse spans wider debates over emerging forms of deliberative democracy, European governance and globalisation. The LEADER programmes approach to governance is framed as a means to facilitate enhanced deliberative practice through 'partnership' arrangements at the local level, and in turn ensure 'local people' and their 'communities' develop in line with their strengths. This approach to governance, developed through the regional studies literature, is seen as a means to meet those challenges presented by the global economic epoch. There is a strong rhetoric on the potential of the LEADER approach, but this rhetoric does not result in effective deliberative processes and outputs. The LEADER programme fails to break free from its wider political contexts and the governmentalities of the state. These enable powerful actors to manipulate the political system and its objectives. This is possible through the even wider context of global governance, which helps us understand that relations of power no longer follow linear channels, that gateways once closed are now open (and vice versa), and that policy networks now stretch both horizontally and vertically beyond the traditional confines of state power.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAPS	Arable Area Payments Scheme
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
COPA	Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DG Agri	Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development
EAGGF	European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
LEADER	Liason Entre Actions pour le Developpenment de L'Economie Rurale
LAG	Local Action Group
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food
RDA's	Rural Development Agency's
RDP	Rural Development Plan
RDS	Rural Development Service
RDR	Rural Development Regulation
RegCo	North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company
SPS	Single Payment Scheme
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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