

‘Smart Rural Regions’

ENRD Thematic Group Meeting on Smart Villages,
Lormes, 6th June 2019

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- working logo/title -



Bundesministerium
für Ernährung
und Landwirtschaft



Bundesanstalt für
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Pilot Initiative ‘Smart Rural Regions‘ in Germany: Planned Framework

To be implemented by the **Federal Office of Agriculture and Food (BLE)** within the **Federal Rural Development Scheme (BULE)** on behalf of the **German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)**

- Overall funding period: 2019 – 2023 (~5 years)
- 2019 - 2023: Research Project
- 2019: Call and Selection of up to 7 rural districts (pilot regions)
- 2020 – 2023: funding period for the selected rural districts (~4 years)

Pilot Initiative ‘Smart Rural Regions’ in Germany: Background

- Federal Rural Development Scheme (BULE) of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture to..
 - ..maintain rural areas as attractive and vibrant country regions and support structurally disadvantaged areas
 - ..fund, test and support innovative rural development strategies
 - ..foster public outreach for rural development as a critical issue for the future
- Within BULE ‘Countryside.Digital’ (Land.Digital) is a Model and Demonstration Project Initiative currently funding over 60 separate projects in rural areas. The aim is to foster the potential of innovation through digitalization in various thematic areas.
- The Fraunhofer-IESE ‘Digital Villages’ Project and the ‘Feasibility Study and Conceptualization Software Plattform’ (2018) have direct impact on the planning and implementation of Smart Rural Regions.

From ‘Digital Villages’ to ‘Smart Rural Regions’



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‘Feasibility Study and
Conceptualization
Software Plattform’

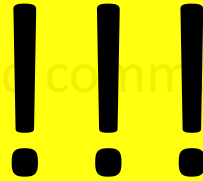
Pilot Initiative ‘Smart Rural Regions’: Scope & Challenges

- Investigate potentials and chances of digitalization in rural areas (German Districts) and hence the implementation of concrete measures (especially digital solutions)
- Smart Rural Regions will focus on:
 - Examination / implementation of digital services/applications in rural districts to improve services of general interest
 - Examination / implementation of an open and standardized service network (digital platform) – foster cohesion, networking effects & adoption
 - Development of a comprehensive digitalization strategy in each of the participating districts
 - Building up competences in the field of digitalization

Process: Development of a Digital Service

- Needs and ideas are developed and communicated through the Rural District
- Experts and facilitators help to conceptualize the digital service and vet the technical and thematical fit within the overall framework
- Specific requirements are gathered together with the stakeholders in the district
- Prototypes are tested and developed in an iterative development cycle (testing > feedback > new iterations > testing)
- Larger scale piloting of the digital solution in the district
- again with an iterative development cycle and refinement of the digital solution
- If the pilot is used and evaluated successfully in one district, it will be available for further pilot use in additional districts within and outside of the original endeavour

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Errr, this process is crystal clear, isn't it..
- Prototypes are tested and developed in an iterative development cycle
(testing > feedback > new iterations > testing)
On this scale for rural areas..
- Larger scale piloting of the digital solution in the district
..it's new, it's complex, it's technical, it's digital – whatever that means
- again with an iterative development and refinement of the digital solution nowadays.
- If the pilot is used and evaluated successfully in one district, it will be available for further pilot use in additional districts within and outside of the original endeavour
Main challenge: **Make ourselves understood, what are the benefits, what do you get!**

Digital Services/Applications to Improve Services of General Interest: Some Thematic Areas

(Co-)Working

Community &
Social Life

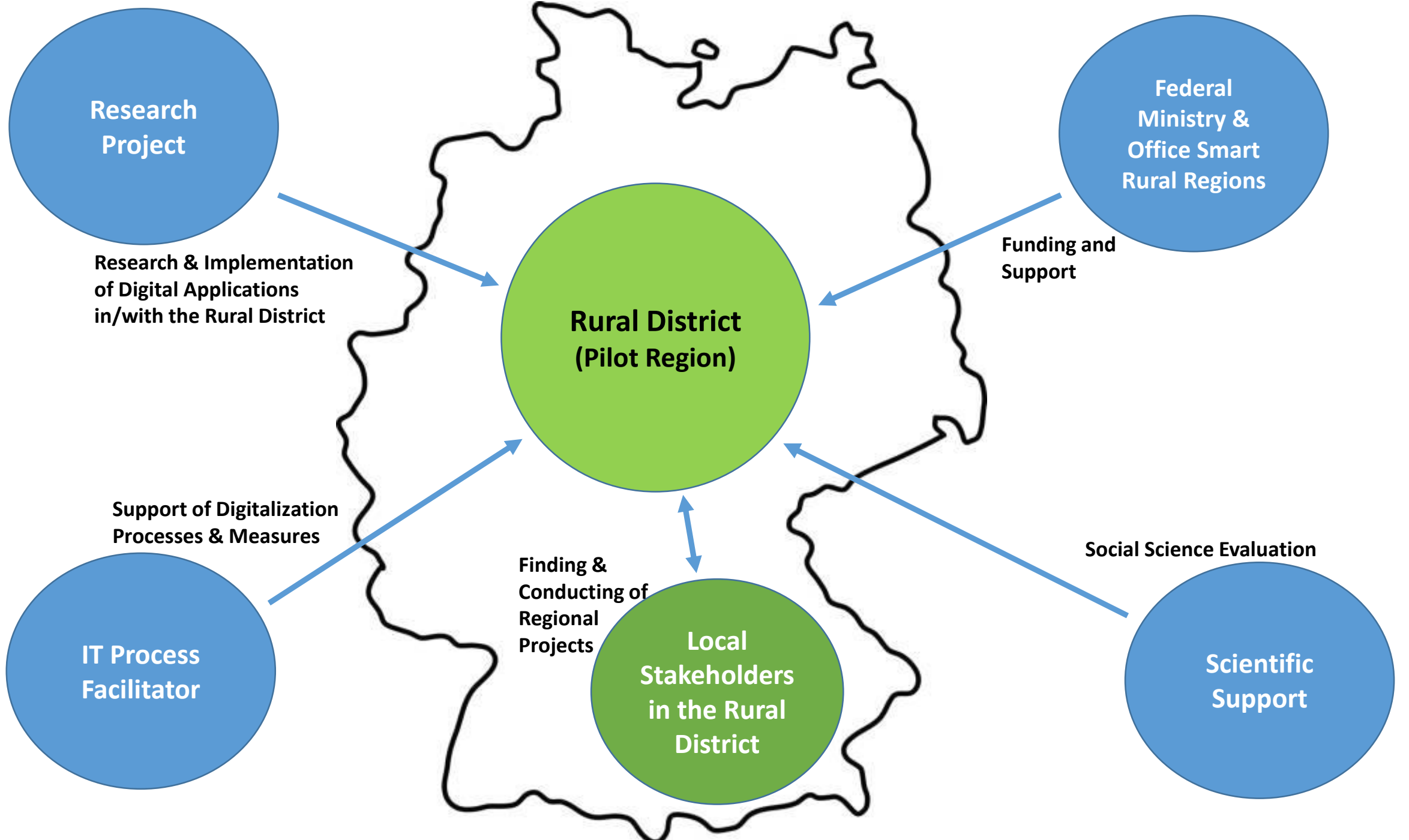
Health &
Medicine

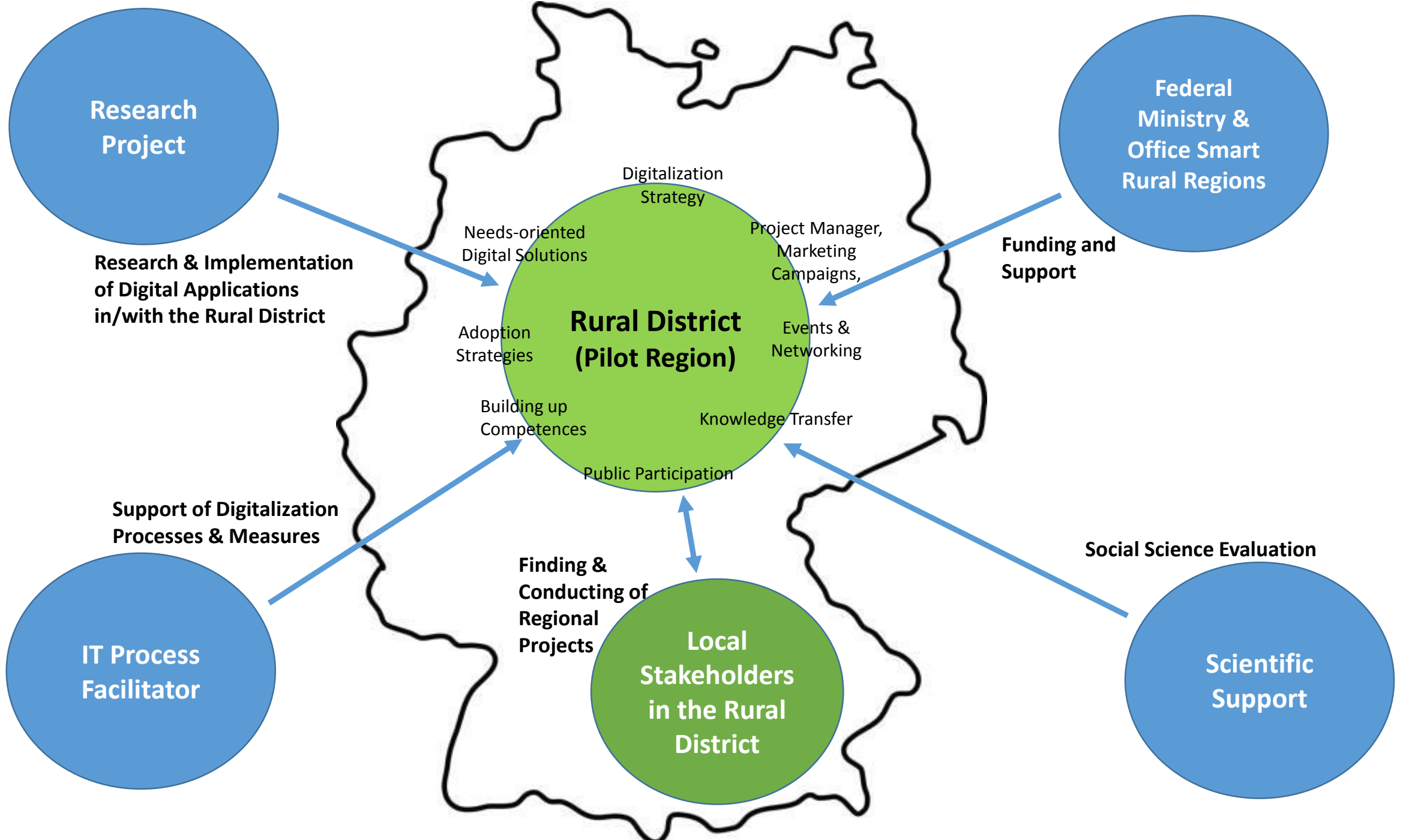
Work & Life
Balance

Mobility

Volunteering
& Active
Citizenship

Wares &
Services





Three Key Challenges / Questions ...

- 1. What are the key ingredients of a successful process of digitalization at local level (communicating benefits, outreach, information and advice...)?**
- 2. How to allow flexibility and creativity at local level while maintaining coherence with wider (national, regional) frameworks?**
- 3. How to select and prioritise territories (target groups and fields of action)?**

Many Thanks!

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On behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL)

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