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Guidelines for data on European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Operational Groups

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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⁽¹⁾ The EU CAP Network website is in transition and some web links may need to be fine-tuned later in time.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND LEGAL BASIS FOR EUROPEAN INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP OPERATIONAL GROUPS ⁽²⁾

The objective of this document is to provide guidance to Member States or any entity(ies) authorised by the Member States for reporting on the Operational Group (OG) innovative projects of the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI ⁽³⁾). This guidance document is based on the text of CAP Plan Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 and the implementing act supplementing this Regulation (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/1475). This document also provides deeper insight in the rationale behind OG projects, which are meant to speed up innovation creation and uptake as well as knowledge exchange, and thus are a key element of the AKIS ⁽⁴⁾ Strategic Approach.

This is also why reporting on the OG projects to **end-users, in a language they can easily understand**, is extremely important in order to accelerate the spreading of innovative knowledge and thus the impact of the invested budget in the projects. **This reporting should be done as from the beginning of the project**, to enable all project actors to find each other and share their insights. ⁽⁵⁾

Each EIP operational group shall draw up a project plan for its project to be developed or implemented. Such projects may relate to new and innovative approaches on each of the nine CAP's specific objectives (Art 6(1)) or to the Cross-cutting objective (CCO, Art 6(2)). The OG project shall be based on the **"interactive innovation model"**, as opposed to the linear innovation model, where it is expected that scientists develop innovations who pass on to end-users through intermediaries, and that the end-users are happy to implement such innovation. More than 15 years ago, the understanding started growing that this linear model is not functioning well and that its impact is lacking or severely delayed.

The interactive innovation model is explained in Article 127(3) of the CAP Plan Regulation and has the following key principles:

⁽²⁾ Article 8 of Implementing Act R. 2022/1475: Scope of the data to be provided by Member States. *"In accordance with Articles 9 to 18, Member States shall report to the Commission the following information, necessary to enable it to perform the monitoring and evaluation of the CAP: ... (d) data on EIP operational groups referred to in Article 127(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115".* Article 13: *"Data on EIP operational groups: "(1) The data on EIP operational groups referred to in Article 8, point (d), of this Regulation shall include information on projects of EIP operational groups referred to in Article 127(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115. (2) Detailed rules on the content of data on EIP operational groups are laid down in Annex VI."*

⁽³⁾ EIP-AGRI is often shortened to EIP, as it is the only EIP still active.

⁽⁴⁾ See R2021/2115 (Art 3) - The **Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS)** is the organisation and interaction of persons, organisations and institutions who use and produce knowledge and innovation for agriculture and interrelated fields. farmers/foresters, advisors, researchers, (farmer) organisations, NGOs, networks, retailers, media, services, various ministries...: they all produce and need knowledge. The aim is to create a regional/national innovation ecosystem by enhancing knowledge flows between the AKIS players as well as strengthening links between research and practice. The AKIS Strategic Approach (Art 114) is a key element of the CAP Cross-cutting objective (Art 6(2), **focusing on knowledge and innovation and includes whatever farming and rural activities automatically relate to, such as environment, climate, biodiversity, landscape, consumers and citizens, food and non-food systems including processing and distribution chains.**

⁽⁵⁾ Article 15(4) of R.2022/1475: Date and frequency of data transmission: "Member States shall report data on EIP operational groups referred to in Article 8, point (d), as soon as the operational group project is approved, starting from 2023."

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“(a) developing innovative solutions focusing on farmers’ or foresters’ needs while also tackling the interactions across the whole supply chain where useful;

(b) bringing together partners with complementary knowledge such as farmers, advisors, researchers, enterprises or non-governmental organisations in a targeted combination as best suited to achieve the project objectives; and

(c) co-deciding and co-creating all along the project.

EIP operational groups may act at transnational, including cross-border, level ⁽⁶⁾.

The envisaged innovation may be based on new practices, but also on traditional practices in a new geographical or environmental context.”

Building blocks for the OG project proposal are expected to come from any type of expertise, from practice as well as from experts/scientists: it is a ‘co-creation’ process. Practitioners and end-users are to be involved, not as a study-object, but to use their practical and local knowledge and/or entrepreneurial skills to develop solutions and create ‘co-ownership’ of results for end-users and practitioners. This co-ownership will contribute to and speed up the acceptability and uptake of new ideas, approaches and solutions developed in the project.

A few elements good to know about OG projects: Thanks to the fact that EIP OG projects share their outcomes broadly as explained in this document, they are exempted from State Aid notification ⁽⁷⁾ up to 500.000 Euro per project. Furthermore, to incentivise bottom-up ideas to be tested in innovative OG projects, they can receive advanced payments up to 50% ⁽⁸⁾. Each Member State must provide innovation support services ⁽⁹⁾ according to the CAP plan regulation to help develop a bottom-up innovative idea into an OG innovative project: these advisory services for emerging innovation projects may profit up to 100% CAP support ⁽¹⁰⁾. The preparation of an EIP OG project can be funded under the CAP ⁽¹¹⁾ up to 100%. Last but not least, OG projects are very useful to test out and prepare other CAP interventions, such as ecoschemes ⁽¹²⁾ or environmental-climate related and other management commitments ⁽¹³⁾.

⁽⁶⁾ Transnational and cross-border means: between Member States as well as within the regions of one Member State

⁽⁷⁾ Agricultural Block Exemption Regulation R.2022/2472

⁽⁸⁾ Article 44(3) of R. 2021/2116

⁽⁹⁾ Article 15(4)(e) and recital 50 of R.2021/2115: obligation to provide innovation support services to develop individual grassroots ideas

⁽¹⁰⁾ Article 78 of R.2021/2115 can support innovation advice, output indicator O.2.

⁽¹¹⁾ Article 77(1)(a) of R.2021/2115

⁽¹²⁾ Article 31 of R.2021/2115

⁽¹³⁾ Article 70 of R.2021/2115

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2. RATIONALE: WHY USE THE INTERACTIVE INNOVATION MODEL?

Innovation is often described as a new idea that proves successful in practice. Innovation may be technological, but also non-technological, organisational or social. The new idea can be a new product, practice, service, production process or a new way of organising things, etc. **Such a new idea turns into an innovation only if it is widely adopted, and proves its usefulness in practice**, this is why reporting and sharing of OG outcomes is so important.

Becoming mainstream will not only depend on the solidity of a creative idea, it also depends on the market possibilities, the willingness of the sector to take it up, cost-effectiveness, knowledge and perceptions, accidental external factors etc. It is impossible to predict how these factors work together to turn a new idea into an innovation. Therefore, **one cannot “define innovation” and only determine afterwards whether a new idea has led to a real innovation**. Here again, reporting on and sharing OG project outcomes in an early stage may lead to scale effects and reduce the price of the new product/practice/method by making it more mainstream.

Given the impossibility of defining "innovation" ex-ante, Managing Authorities cannot programme a measure by declaring operations eligible under the condition that they are "innovative". Consequently, the regulation can only offer interventions supporting operations that may be innovative, without making the innovative character of an operation an eligibility criterion. For this reason, Article 77(3) refers to eligible costs of actions that are related to all aspects of the “cooperation”, not to eligible costs of “innovative” actions. In particular, because it is impossible to measure or prove the innovation potential of a project, where a rural development intervention is intended to stimulate innovation, the measure design should include elements that help the project results to become widely implemented (see section 3 on criteria for OG projects).

In short, **innovation is: "an idea put into practice with success"**. Therefore it is important to have practitioners involved, not as a study-object, but in view of using their entrepreneurial skills and practical knowledge for developing the solution or opportunity and creating co-ownership.

Which key partners are relevant to join the OG project depends on the objective of the proposal. They are essentially the end-users of the project results who are backed up by any other useful intermediaries and actors who can contribute with their expertise and innovative ideas relevant to the project objectives, and can support communication and dissemination.

The genuine and **sufficient interaction of such actors should take place all over the whole course of the project**: from the very start and participation in development of the project idea, to planning and experiments during implementation, as well as continuous communication and dissemination of outcomes and demonstration activities. It is important that the **practice actors are prominent** in such events, to strengthen the peer-to-peer effects and acceptance of the newly tested methods/tools etc.

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3. USEFUL CRITERIA FOR EIP OPERATIONAL GROUPS

As a result of the above mentioned rationale, **a good OG project proposal should be based on the key elements, which are also useful for choosing the right selection criteria:**

1. It must demonstrate how the proposed objectives and planning are targeting the needs/problems/challenges of and opportunities for the end-users of the project results;
2. It must demonstrate how the description of the project concept and in particular the composition of the consortium reflects a balanced choice of relevant key actors who have complementary types of knowledge (practical and other types of expertise, for instance scientific), and must ensure that project results which should be ready for practice are broadly implemented;
3. It must demonstrate how the project intends to use existing practices and tacit knowledge. This should be illustrated in the proposal with a sufficient number of high-quality knowledge exchange activities outlining the precise and active roles of the different actors in the work. The cross-fertilisation of skills, competencies and ideas between actors should generate innovative findings and solutions that are more likely to be applied on a wide scale;
4. It must demonstrate how the project will facilitate the multi-actor engagement process by making use of the most appropriate expertise and methods;
5. It must demonstrate the project's added value: how it will complement existing knowledge and best practices;
6. It must demonstrate how the project will result in practical and ready to use knowledge, approaches, tools or products, that are easily understandable and freely accessible;
7. It must demonstrate how these ready-for-practice outputs will feed into the existing dissemination channels most consulted by the end- users of the project results to guarantee that the new knowledge is preserved on the long term beyond the project period and broadly shared with end-users. Therefore, this knowledge must also be summarised in an appropriate number of 'practice abstracts' in the common EIP-AGRI format (see section 5 "how to report on EIP OG projects);
8. In addition, to ensure EU-wide communication ⁽¹⁴⁾, the outcomes and practice abstracts should be shared across Europe through the EU CAP network website under the section on "innovation and knowledge exchange".

⁽¹⁴⁾ Communication is to be done in all areas related to the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) and the common agricultural policy (CAP) specific objectives. Commission Communication 2012(79) final, section 8, explains how wide reaching the areas the EIP covers are: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0079&from=EN>

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4. DATA USE

The EU CAP network website part dedicated to innovation and knowledge exchange provides one single database in which all outcomes of EIP projects, CAP OGs as well as those from the Horizon multi-actor projects are listed ⁽¹⁵⁾. This database is **aiming to share all new and innovative knowledge to all potential end-users as soon as possible**. Essential is that this database also strongly **helps connecting all actors involved in the EIP projects. It is a key pathway for interaction within and beyond the national Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)**.

The key aim of the AKIS Strategic Approach ⁽¹⁶⁾ is to enhance knowledge flows and thus contribute to the cross-cutting objective on knowledge and innovation. **Reporting helps OG projects' visibility as soon as the project kicks off**. This will help the interaction with other OG projects and with Horizon 2020/Europe projects, in particular Horizon Thematic Networks which must be built on OGs, and all other **Horizon Europe multi-actor projects and advisory networks**, where **involvement of EIP OGs is "strongly recommended"** ⁽¹⁷⁾.

In the 2023-2027 CAP period it will furthermore **also specifically support the collaboration between OGs** (Art 126(4)(e)) – a new task for the CAP networks ⁽¹⁸⁾ - **and the building of cross-border and transnational OGs** (a new element in this CAP period - Art 127(3)).

The **common format** ⁽¹⁹⁾ **for OG reporting** also **contributes to the visibility and rewarding of researchers' work in practice-oriented interactive projects** (e.g. CAP OG projects, CAP or Horizon Europe funded thematic networks, Horizon Europe multi-actor projects, etc.), similar to the research abstracts in peer reviewed journals. An excel template to ease collection of the data before they are put into SFC/the CAP network websites ⁽²⁰⁾ are available on the EU CAP network website.

The OG data collected (including a **short summary of objectives and outcomes, called "practice abstract"**) are public and available for all potential EIP project partners and AKIS actors, and projects that wish to connect with the CAP network and apply the interactive innovation model. This visibility will reach out to all potential project partners, including those using other funding sources than CAP rural development and H2020/Horizon Europe projects, e.g. national/ regional funding, other ESI funds, LIFE projects etc.

⁽¹⁵⁾ <https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/projects/about-eip-agri-projects>

⁽¹⁶⁾ Article 114 of R.2021/2115 is the main legal base for AKIS, other articles bring additional elements. The AKIS Strategic Approach of each Member State is described in section 8 of their CAP Strategic Plan

⁽¹⁷⁾ See for instance Horizon Europe Work programme 2022 page 21-23: [wp-9-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment horizon-2023-2024 en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/horizon/wp9-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment-horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf)

⁽¹⁸⁾ Art 126(4)(e) : The **tasks of the national and European CAP networks** for the achievement of the objectives shall be: (e) **support for cooperation projects between EIP operational groups**

⁽¹⁹⁾ See section 5

⁽²⁰⁾ National and EU CAP network websites

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The info and partners of all Operational Groups projects are at disposal under the EIP-AGRI project database on the EU CAP network website ⁽²¹⁾.

5. HOW TO REPORT ON EIP OPERATIONAL GROUP PROJECTS?

A **common format for communicating the information on practice-oriented EIP projects to end-users** ⁽²²⁾ has been developed at EU level already for the period 2014-2020, and used for OGs as well as for Horizon Multi-actor projects. The common format for the period 2023-2027 is mostly similar, with a few exceptions, highlighted in section 5.1 below with an asterix.

The common format is useful both for **dissemination of results** after the project and for **communication on a project while it is running**, since it supports retrieval of projects on specific themes and thus facilitates the interaction of actors in projects on similar themes within and beyond the Member State. The fact to have such a common system for communication helps connections with Horizon Multi-actor projects, any AKIS actor or OG partner to build projects themselves.

The common format is **fully integrated in SFC2021** ⁽²³⁾. In the new CAP period, **providing this info on OG projects is obligatory as from the very start of the project** (Art 127(3) ⁽²⁴⁾). This is new, compared with the former period and will help early contacting among OG and Horizon multi-actor projects, CAP networks and AKIS actors, while the project is still active and running.

The responsibilities of the Commission and the Member States are set out in Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2289 ⁽²⁵⁾. It is up to the Managing Authority to appoint a liaison officer, who **can grant access to the SFC2021 system to specific persons to upload the OG information** ⁽²⁶⁾. **Since OG project information is not politically sensitive and should be spread widely quickly and as soon as possible**, the number of persons in the hierarchical line to validate the OG information should be held as limited as possible, in order to avoid unnecessary administrative burden which may damage the attractiveness of the OG intervention.

⁽²¹⁾ https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/support/innovation-knowledge-exchange-eip-agri_en

⁽²²⁾ An “**end-user**” of project results is a person who is him/herself putting the project results into practice

⁽²³⁾ Article 15 of R.2022/1475: Data transfer: “(1) The data referred to in Article 8, points (a), (b), (d) and (e), shall be transferred to the Commission by means of the electronic system for the secure exchange of information called ‘SFC2021’, for which the responsibilities of the Commission and the Member States are set out in Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2289”

⁽²⁴⁾ Art 127(3): EIP operational groups shall disseminate a summary of their **plans** and of the **results** of their projects, in particular **through the national and European CAP networks**.

⁽²⁵⁾ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/2289 laying down rules for the application of Regulation

(EU) 2021/2115 on the presentation of the content of the CAP Strategic Plans and on the electronic system for the secure exchange of information.

⁽²⁶⁾ Article 16(4) of Regulation 2022/1475: “Fordata on EIP operational groups to be communicated pursuant to Article 8, point (d), the data may be transferred by Member States or any entity(ies) authorised by the Member States”

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A way **to reduce the efforts for sending the data on EIP OGs**, all helping to ensure the effectiveness of the OG intervention in the CAP plan while also supporting the activities of the CAP Network, **could be for instance:**

- 1) **The data to be filled in SFC2021 can be fully prepared by the OGs themselves**, using a specific Excel sheet with prefixed boxes for all the needed data. This excel sheet is available on the EU CAP network website ⁽²⁷⁾.
- 2) **A person in the CAP network could fill in the data in SFC** while validating ⁽²⁸⁾ them on their correctness and clarity. This helps the national CAP network to be aware about the activities of the OGs, because one of the CAP network's tasks ⁽²⁹⁾ is to organise events to share the OG project results, to help the various OGs interact and collaborate, and to promote OG project outcomes to any other AKIS actor to ensure knowledge flows and connections.
- 3) **A second person situated in the Managing Authority** could be in charge of **accepting the data and sending them to the Commission**. This would ideally be the person who is responsible for the EIP OG intervention, who in this way receives feedback on the intervention and - if need be – can ask for the needed modifications to the CAP plan or national legislation if the OG intervention is not delivering what is expected, or if new inspiration or challenges come.

The **“practice abstracts”** must be clear and concise as well as be attractive and relevant for practice. They should be drafted from the view to make them well understandable to the end-user and focus on those elements that most interest him/her. Typical scientific language is to be avoided. **The focus should be on the needs/objectives of the project and its practical outcomes/recommendations.** Details on the precise activities/measurements are less important than the final practical results and recommendations. Links to audio-visual material (videos, photos, etc), further concise and useful practice guidance (e.g. 2 page fiches on specific thematic areas) and to the project website/social media are very much welcomed, and can give more detail than the practice abstract allows. It is up to the OG to decide on all kind of extra material to share in the EIP database. The mandatory and recommended elements can be found in section 5.1 and 5.2 of this guidance document.

Below you find the elements to be reported according to Annex VI of R.2022/1475. They are mainly the same as in the period 2014-2022. The changes compared to the former period are listed in the Annex I and in the sections below, they are marked with an asterisk in section 5.1 below.

⁽²⁷⁾ <https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/projects/about-eip-agri-projects>

⁽²⁸⁾ Article 17 of R.2022/1475 : Duly completed data: “*Member States shall ensure that the data for monitoring and evaluation referred to in Article 8 are complete and self-consistent, as well as that their content is recorded and presented in accordance with the requirements set out in Annexes IV to VII...*”

⁽²⁹⁾ Article 126(4) of R.2021/2115, in particular points (a) until (j)

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5.1 Obligatory elements

All the fields in this section are mandatory for all the EIP OG projects.

(a) Title of the project in native language

The title of the project in native language shall be short (one key sentence, max 200 characters, characters with spaces) and easy to understand. It shall be explanatory and provide an overall information on the project. It is recommended not to use acronyms, unless of the common domain (e.g. “CAP”).

(b) Title of the project in English

The title of the project in English shall be short and easy to understand. It shall be as close as possible to the title in native language and should not contain acronyms, unless of the common domain. Machine translation to English language will be automatically provided for by SFC2021, but please modify the automated translation where it is not clear or correct.

(c) Editor of the text

This field provides the name of the person or organisation responsible for delivering the text and drafting the information encoded in SFC2021.

(d) Project coordinator

This field provides the name and the contacts (address, e-mail, telephone number) of the person responsible for the project management, according to the cooperation agreement or project description. The project coordinator is part of the organisation which is the lead partner in the consortium.

(e) Project partners*

This field provides the name and the contact (address, e-mail, telephone number) of all the partners involved in the project, according to their typology. These are the end-users of the project results, as well as any other partner with a useful intermediary role and partners with the needed practical expertise, such as actors who can contribute with scientific information and/or innovative ideas relevant to the project objectives, as well as partners supporting communication and dissemination.

Format required: the types of partners are to be provided following the categories in Table 1 below (combinations of options for a single person are possible e.g. 1. farmer and 3. advisor).

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Table 1

Code	Label
1	Farmer and farm workers
2	Farmers' organisation/association
3	Forester and forester worker
4	Foresters' organisation/association
5	Advisor, advisory organisation or agricultural chamber
6	Researcher or research organisation
7	Educational or continued professional development organisation (including vocational trainers)
8	Climate/environment/nature organisation or agency
9	Service providers other than advisors
10	Processor or retailer
11	Consumer/consumer organisation
12	Public Authority
13	Leader group
14	Business in rural areas
15	Business outside rural areas
16	Others

Service providers other than advisors (category 9) include e.g. input suppliers contract workers, facilitators if they are not advisors, veterinarians, social workers, delivery/services for machinery, IT experts/IT company, technology developers, lawyers, financial experts, communication experts, specific consultants, etc. If you choose "others", please specify what other type of partner. The category 'Others' can be used to list any other type of partner not listed in Table 1 (max 100 characters with spaces).

(f) 'Practice abstract' in native language

The practice abstract shall provide concise information (1500 characters, word count – no spaces for (i) and (ii)) on the main features of the project, which are defined as:

- (i) the objective of the project describing the problems and/or opportunities the project addresses (around 300-500 characters, word count – no spaces));
- (ii) a short summary on the findings (expected or final) (around 800-1000 characters, word count – no spaces). This summary should be as interesting as possible for farmers/end-users, using a direct and easy understandable language and pointing out entrepreneurial elements, which are particularly relevant for practitioners (e.g. related to cost, productivity etc). Research oriented aspects which do not help the understanding of the practice itself should be avoided. This summary

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should at least contain the following information, in an easy to understand language oriented to practitioners and end-users of project results:

(1) main findings of the project (expected or final);

(2) main practical recommendation(s): what would be the main added value/benefit/opportunities to the end-user if the generated knowledge is implemented? How can the practitioner make use of the results? Any important practical details?

Several practice abstracts may be needed for one project, depending on the size of the project and the number of outcomes/recommendations that are ready for practice.

(g) ‘Practice abstract’ in English

The ‘Practice Abstract’ in English language will be automatically provided by the machine translation based on the native language ‘Practice Abstract’, but please modify where needed.

(h) Keywords category*

This field provides the keywords applicable to the OG project selected. The keywords should be indicating the main focus(es) of the project and are to be chosen from a pre-defined list of categories set out in SFC2021.

Format required: the keywords are to be provided following the categories in Table 2 below (combination of options are possible, please indicate them wherever applicable).

Table 2

Code	Label
1	Animal husbandry
2	Animal welfare
3	Fodder and feed
4	Arable crops
5	Outdoor horticulture and woody crops (incl. viticulture, olives, fruit, ornamentals)
6	Greenhouse crops
7	Forestry
8	Aquaculture
9	Genetic resources
10	Pest/disease control in plants
11	Pest/disease control in animals
12	Plant nutrients
13	Soil

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14	Water
15	Energy
16	Climate change (incl. GHG reduction, adaptation and mitigation, and other air related issues)
17	Organic farming
18	Agro-ecology
19	Crop rotation/crop diversification/dual-purpose or mixed cropping
20	Biodiversity and nature
21	Landscape/land management
22	Circular economy, incl. waste, by-products and residues
23	Equipment and machinery
24	Competitiveness/new business models
25	Farm diversification
26	Supply chain, marketing and consumption
27	Food security, safety, quality, processing and nutrition
28	Digitalisation, incl. data and data technologies
29	AKIS, incl. advice, training, on-farm demo, interactive innovation projects
30	Rural issues
31	Social innovation

(i) Project status

This field provides information on the status of project, whether still ‘ongoing’ or ‘completed’. A project is considered ongoing as from its starting date until its completion. A project may also need to be ‘cancelled’ due to unforeseeable circumstances that prevent finalisation, while it still has delivered some useful outcomes.

Format required: 1: ongoing; 2: completed 3: cancelled

(j) Additional funding source(s) *

This field provides information on the sources of additional funding besides EIP CAP support.

Format required: the types of additional funding sources are to be provided following the categories in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Code	Label
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1	Horizon 2020 ⁽³⁰⁾
2	Horizon Europe ⁽³¹⁾
3	Private funding
4	Other
5	No additional funding source

The category ‘Other’ can be used to list any other type of additional funding source(s) besides option 1, 2 and 3 as listed in Table 3. Please specify what other type of additional funding source(s) (max 100 characters with spaces).

(k) Project period

This field provides the start and end date of a project. Start date is the date the project is officially and effectively starting its activities. End date is the foreseen ending date of the project, as in the project proposal was agreed. If need be, this can be adapted along the project according to potential modifications agreed with the Managing Authority.

(l) Geographical location

This field provides the location of the project at NUTS 3 level (NUTS – Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics). The geographical location is the place where the main project activities take place.

Format required: Eurostat format, according to NUTS 2021 classification ⁽³²⁾

(m) Project contribution to CAP specific objectives*

This field provides information of the project contribution to the CAP specific objective(s) as referred to in Article 6(1) and 6(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115.

Format required: the specific objectives that apply to the OG project are to be provided following the categories in Table 4 below (combination of options are possible).

Table 4

Code	Label
1	Ensuring a viable income (SO1)

⁽³⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) No 1291/2013 establishing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)

⁽³¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027)

⁽³²⁾ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/345175/629341/NUTS2021.xlsx>

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2	Increasing competitiveness (SO2)
3	Rebalancing power in the food chain (SO3)
4	Climate change actions (SO4)
5	Environmental care (SO5)
6	Preserving landscapes and biodiversity (SO6)
7	Supporting generational renewal (SO7)
8	Vibrant rural areas (SO8)
9	Responding to citizens' concerns in terms of food and health quality (SO9)
10	Cross-cutting objective on innovation and knowledge exchange (CCO/XCO)

(n) Cross-border/transnational OGs*

This field provides information on cross-border/transnational OGs. The following information is required for each project:

- (i) whether the project is cross-border and/or transnational
- **cross-border projects** are projects within one Member State, where one or more different regions work together
 - **transnational projects** are projects between different MS, where one or more regions from one Member State may work together with another Member State

Format required: the specific categories are provided in Table 5 below (no combination of options are possible)

Table 5

Code	Label
0	National
1	Cross-border
2	Transnational

- (ii) Which Member State/region coordinates and encodes the project in SFC2021
Format required: Eurostat format, according to NUTS 2021 classification
- (iii) Which other Member State(s)/region(s) form part of the OG project (using the NUTS3 code for the geographical location of those other regions)

Format required: Eurostat format, according to NUTS 2021 classification

	Guidelines on data on EIP Operational Groups	
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- (iv) Budget per Member State(s)/region(s) which form part of the project, in public expenditure (all contributions: EAFRD contribution, national co-financing, additional national financing and other financing if applicable)

Format required: the information are to be provided following Table 6 format:

Table 6

Member State/region (NUTS 2021 classification)	Type of project contribution	Amount in Euro
MS X	a. Total contributions (sum of points b, c, d and e)	
	b. EAFRD contribution	
	c. National co-financing	
	d. Additional national financing	
	e. Other	
Region α	a. Total contributions (sum of points b, c, d and e)	
	b. EAFRD contribution	
	c. National co-financing	
	d. Additional national financing	
	e. Other	

The category ‘Other’ can be used to list any other type of project contribution(s) besides option b, c and d as listed in Table 6. Please specify what other type of project contribution(s) (max 100 characters with spaces).

(o) Final report

This field is where the person responsible for the project uploads a comprehensive description of the project outcomes after its completion, according to the instructions of the Member State.

Format required: in Word to improve intelligent search functions, further specifics to be defined in MS’ guidance.

(p) Total budget*

This field provides information on the total budget of the project.

Format required: the information to be provided can be found in following Table 7

	Guidelines on data on EIP Operational Groups	
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Table 7

Type of project contribution	Amount in Euro
a. Total contributions (sum of points b, c, d and e)	
b. EAFRD contribution	
c. National co-financing	
d. Additional national financing	
e. Other	

The category ‘Other’ can be used to list other type(s) of project contributions besides option b, c and d as listed in Table 7. Please specify what other type of project contributions (max 100 characters with spaces).

(q) Project contribution to Union strategies*

This field provides information of the project contribution to the objective(s) of the European Green Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy ⁽³³⁾, the EU Biodiversity strategy ⁽³⁴⁾, the Forestry strategy ⁽³⁵⁾ and the EU strategy on carbon removals ⁽³⁶⁾ to which the project is likely to contribute.

Format required: Format required: the specific objectives that apply to the OG project are to be provided following the categories in Table 8 below (combination of options are possible).

Table 8

Code	Label
1	Achieving climate neutrality
2	Reducing the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides and/or use of more hazardous pesticides
3	Fostering organic farming and/or organic aquaculture, with the aim of increased uptake

⁽³³⁾ Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled ‘A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system’

⁽³⁴⁾ Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled ‘EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives’

⁽³⁵⁾ Commission communication of 16 July 2021 entitled ‘New EU Forest Strategy for 2030’

⁽³⁶⁾ Commission communication of 15 December 2021 entitled ‘Sustainable Carbon Cycles’

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4	Reducing the use of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture
5	Reducing nutrient losses and the use of fertilisers, while maintaining soil fertility
6	Improving management of natural resources used by agriculture, such as water, soil and air
7	Protecting and/or restoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services within agrarian and forest systems
8	Bringing back agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features
9	Facilitating access to fast broadband internet in rural areas
10	Improving animal welfare
11	Fostering biodiversity friendly afforestation and reforestation

5.2 Recommended elements

The following elements are considered important to facilitate knowledge exchange.

(a) Audio-visual material

This field provides the opportunity to share any audio-visual and further material, which the project developed for practitioner and end-users. This can include: links to audio-visual material (videos, photos, podcasts etc) and social media, which are generally very appreciated. Also further concise and practice guidance are very useful, for instance a 2 page illustrated fiche on specific thematic areas, including more detail than the concise practice abstract allows.

(b) Website of the project

This field provides the URL of the website(s) of the project. If more than one link is provided, a short description of each of the link is recommended.

(c) Other website(s)

This field provides the URL of the website(s) of the project, which will host the information on the project results also after the project's end, by preference using the existing local/regional/national communication channels that practitioners (end-users) most often use.

(d) Description of project activities in native language

This field provides a further space for information on the project. A short summary highlighting the main project activities can be provided (max 1500 characters, word count – no spaces).

(e) Description of project activities in English

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This field provides a further space for information on the project in English. A short summary highlighting the main project activities can be provided. Machine translation to English language will be automatically provided by SFC2021, but may need to be corrected.

5.3 Optional elements

The following elements are considered optional. Further elements may be defined by each Member State.

- (a) **additional fields for additional practice abstracts in native language:** short summary according to the guidance in the text above (max. 1500 characters, word count – no spaces)
- (b) **additional fields for additional practice abstracts in English:** short summary according to the guidance in the text above. Translation to English language will be automatically retrieved by SFC2021, but please modify the translation where needed.
- (c) **description of the context of the project: free text** to describe e.g. drivers in legislation/ markets or other causes that were at the origin of the project, etc. (max. 2000 characters, with spaces)
- (d) **additional information on the project: free text** providing details as required by specific guidance at national/regional level, such as for monitoring purposes (max. 2000 characters, with spaces)]
- (e) **additional comments: free text** to list enabling elements or obstacles in project implementation, suggestions for future actions/operational groups/research, messages to consumers, etc. (max. 2000 characters, with spaces).

6. FREQUENCY, UPDATING AND DELIVERY OF DATA

First data are to be delivered as soon as the operational group project starts (*objectives and short summary of project plans*).

The reporting can be **updated at any moment** when new info is available (*interim* outcomes, partner changes, etc.), according to Member States' instructions.

At the end of the project, it is obligatory to report the **final** outcomes.

Be aware that **at each update, the same unique project ID needs to be used**.

ANNEX I: DETAILS ON SPECIFIC SFC ELEMENTS ADJUSTED IN THE NEW CAP 2023-2027

1) Type of OG partners (combinations for one partner are possible but to be avoided):

Please choose from the options below:

1. *Farmer or farm worker*
2. *Farmers' organisation/association*
3. *Forester or forester worker*
4. *Foresters' organisation/association*
5. *Advisor, advisory organisation or agricultural chamber*
6. *Researcher or research organisation*
7. *Educational or continued professional development organisation (including vocational trainers)*
8. *Climate/environment/nature organisation or agency*
9. *Service providers other than advisors: this could include e.g. input suppliers contract workers, facilitators if they are not advisors, veterinarians, social workers, delivery/services for machinery, IT experts/IT company, technology developers, lawyers, financial experts, communication experts, specific consultants etc.]*
10. *Processor or retailer*
11. *Consumer/consumer organization*
12. *Public Authority*
13. *Leader group*
14. *Business in rural areas*
15. *Business outside rural areas*
16. *Other*

2) The OG project contributes to achieving the following relevant Green Deal, Farm to Fork, Biodiversity and Forestry Strategy targets:

Please choose from the options below the one(s) that apply to the OG project (if any). More than one option can be applicable:

1. *Achieving climate neutrality*
2. *Reducing the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides and/or use of more hazardous pesticides*
3. *Fostering organic farming and/or organic aquaculture, with the aim of increased uptake*
4. *Reducing the use of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture*
5. *Reducing nutrient losses and the use of fertilisers, while maintaining soil fertility*
6. *Improving management of natural resources used by agriculture, such as water, soil and air*
7. *Protecting and/or restoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services within agrarian and forest systems*
8. *Bringing back agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features*
9. *Facilitating access to fast broadband internet in rural areas*
10. *Improving animal welfare*
11. *Fostering biodiversity friendly afforestation and reforestation*

3) The OG project contributed to increased knowledge on the following CAP specific objectives

Please choose from the options below the one(s) that apply to the OG project (if any). More than one option can be applicable:

1. *Ensuring a viable income*
2. *Increasing competitiveness*
3. *Rebalancing power in the food chain*
4. *Climate change actions*
5. *Environmental care*
6. *Preserving landscapes and biodiversity*
7. *Supporting generational renewal*
8. *Vibrant rural areas*
9. *Responding to citizens' concerns in terms of food and health quality*
10. *Cross-cutting objective on innovation and knowledge exchange (CCO/XCO)*

4) Keyword categories, describing the type (aim) of the innovative project:

Please chose from the options below the one(s) that apply to the OG project (if any). More than one option can be applicable:

1. *Animal husbandry*
2. *Animal welfare*
3. *Fodder and feed*
4. *Arable crops*
5. *Outdoor horticulture and woody crops (incl. viticulture, olives, fruit, ornamentals)*
6. *Greenhouse crops*
7. *Forestry*
8. *Aquaculture*
9. *Genetic resources*
10. *Pest/disease control in plants*
11. *Pest/disease control in animals*
12. *Plant nutrients*
13. *Soil*
14. *Water*
15. *Energy*
16. *Climate change (incl. GHG reduction, adaptation and mitigation, and other air related issues)*
17. *Organic farming*
18. *Agro-ecology*
19. *Crop rotation/crop diversification/dual-purpose or mixed cropping*
20. *Biodiversity and nature*
21. *Landscape/land management*
22. *Circular economy, incl. waste, by-products and residues*
23. *Equipment and machinery*
24. *Competitiveness/new business models*
25. *Farm diversification*
26. *Supply chain, marketing and consumption*
27. *Food security, safety, quality, processing and nutrition*
28. *Digitalisation, incl. data and data technologies*
29. *AKIS, incl. advice, training, on-farm demo, interactive innovation projects*
30. *Rural issues*
31. *Social innovation*

5) In the case of cross-border/transnational OGs*:

1. *Is the project is cross-border/transnational? Yes/No*
2. *Which Member State/region coordinates and encodes the project in SFC2021?*
3. *Which other Member State(s)/region(s) form part of the OG project (using the NUTS3 code for the geographical location of those other regions)*
4. *Budget per Member State(s)/region(s) which form part of the project, in public expenditure (all contributions: EAFRD contribution, national co-financing, additional national financing and other financing if applicable)*

6) Additional funding source (if applicable):

Please choose if the project has additional funding besides EIP support.

1. *Horizon 2020*
2. *Horizon Europe*
3. *Private funding*
4. *Other*
5. *No additional funding source*

7) Total budget:

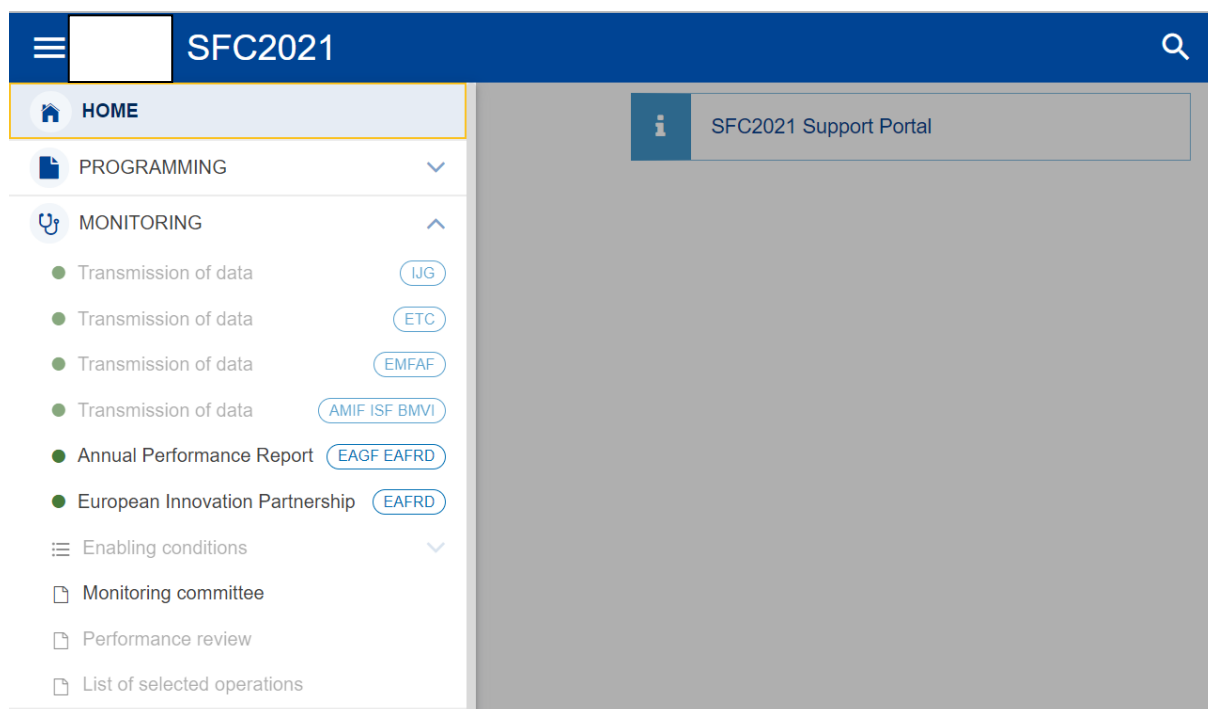
Please encode the project contribution in EUR (EAFRD, national co-financing, additional national financing and other financing if applicable). Fill 0 if non-applicable.

1. *Total budget*
2. *Out of which EAFRD contribution*
3. *Out of which national co-financing*
4. *Out of which additional national financing*
5. *Out of which other financing*

ANNEX II: WHERE TO REPORT ON OG PROJECTS IN SFC?

The URL of SFC2021 is: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/sfc2021/sfc-fo/home>

The EIP module is available from the menu ‘MONITORING - European Innovation Partnership’.



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For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1952 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.