

Focus Group results assessment 2016

Final report

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**EIP-AGRI
Service Point**



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International

List of acronyms

AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems
AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BLE	Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (Germany)
BMEL	Federal Ministry in charge of Agriculture (Germany)
DG AGRI	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
EIP	European Innovation Partnership
EIP-AGRI	European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability
EIP-AGRI SP	EIP-AGRI Service Point
ENRD	European Network for Rural Development
ERA-NET	European Research Area Network
DE	Germany
DVS	German Rural Network Unit
ES	Spain
FG	Focus Group
FR	France
H2020	Horizon 2020
HNV	High Nature Value
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISS	Innovation Support Service
IT	Italy
MA	Managing Authority
MS	Member State
NRN	National Rural Network
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OG	Operational Group
RDI	Research, development and innovation
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RRN	Regional Rural Network
TN	Thematic Network
UK	United Kingdom

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. MAIN FINDINGS.....	4
3. CLUSTERING ANALYSIS.....	7
3.1 SCOPE OF THE CLUSTERING	7
3.2 CLUSTERING.....	9
3.3 FOCUS GROUPS	12
3.3.1 <i>Links between FGs topics and OGs topics</i>	12
3.3.2 <i>Coverage of OGs topics by FGs</i>	13
4. DATA COLLECTED	15
4.1 CASE STUDIES	15
4.1.1 <i>General approach and main findings</i>	15
4.1.2 <i>Germany</i>	19
4.1.3 <i>France</i>	21
4.1.4 <i>Spain – Catalonia</i>	22
4.1.5 <i>Austria</i>	23
4.2 TIMELINE BETWEEN FG RESULTS DISSEMINATION AND CALLS	24
4.3 ONLINE SURVEY AMONG OGS.....	26
4.3.1 <i>Description of respondents</i>	26
4.3.2 <i>Awareness on Focus Groups reports</i>	27
4.3.3 <i>Use of FGs results for the OG project</i>	31
4.3.4 <i>Sources of information on FGs</i>	34
4.4 ONLINE SURVEY AMONG FOCUS GROUPS PARTICIPANTS	35
4.4.1 <i>Description of respondents</i>	35
4.4.2 <i>Take up of FGs results</i>	38
4.4.3 <i>Influence of the FGs on their members</i>	40
4.4.4 <i>Dissemination of FGs results by their members</i>	42
4.4.5 <i>Suggestions to improve dissemination</i>	43
4.5 INTERVIEWS WITH RESEARCH PLATFORM MANAGERS (ERA-NET, H2020).....	44
5. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	46

1. Introduction

The present document is the final report of a study started in October 2016 on the assessment of focus groups results. This study aims at assessing the use of FG results by the different stakeholders and at providing recommendations to the EIP-AGRI Service Point and the DG AGRI to expand the use of FGs results.

In the context of this study, “FG results” are understood as the outcomes of FGs and are provided in the final report of the FG. It notably includes recommendations for the implementation of EIP-AGRI projects by OGs.

The methodology of this study is based on:

- a clustering analysis: analysis of the relation between OGs topics and FGs topics,
- an online survey among OGs on their awareness of FGs and their use of FGs results,
- an online survey among FG members (survey led by EIP-AGRI Service Point),
- 10 case studies in AT, DE, ES and FR,
- Interviews with 4 research platforms managers.

A first report, delivered in October 2016, covered the clustering phase and an interim report, delivered in December 2016, presented the data collection and first analyses.

2. Main findings

The following section provides a synthesis of the main findings of the study.

Clustering analysis

- The analysis covered 231 OGs in 7 MS (AT, BE, DE, ES, FR, IT, UK)
- This analysis covered approved projects and did not cover project proposals not selected by MAs
- 16 different clusters have been identified, based on the topics covered by each OG
- The link between the projects covered by the 231 projects selected and themes covered by 23 FGs has been analysed.
- Among the 231 projects from OG analysed:
 - 25% have no strong link with any FG's topic (but only 6% has no strong or medium link with any FG's topic),
 - 59% have strong links with 1 or 2 FGs' topic,
 - 16% have strong links with 3 FGs' topic or more.
- This coverage sounds satisfactory due to the extremely wide scope of potential topics covered by OGs and the timing between OGs selection and topic selection for FGs.

Case studies

- Overall, stakeholders involved in the EIP-AGRI show interest in FGs.
- The level of awareness on FG depends on the organisation of the dissemination of information at regional and national levels.
- There has been a limited use of FGs results by MAs, due to:
 - availability of FGs reports while implementing the first calls,
 - difficulties met by MAs in the implementation of EIP-AGRI, which did not focus on FGs,
- Some MAs perceived a lack of relevance of the top-down approach for FGs compared to the bottom-up approach for OGs (DE). This limited the dissemination of FGs' results.
- OGs could have used FGs results when FGs topics were in line with OGs projects and if results were available when setting up their project.
- The use of FGs should increase in the future, both by MAs and OGs.
- The participation of local experts in FGs has favoured the dissemination of information and use of FGs results.
- The availability of reports in English remains a difficulty for a wide dissemination of FGs.

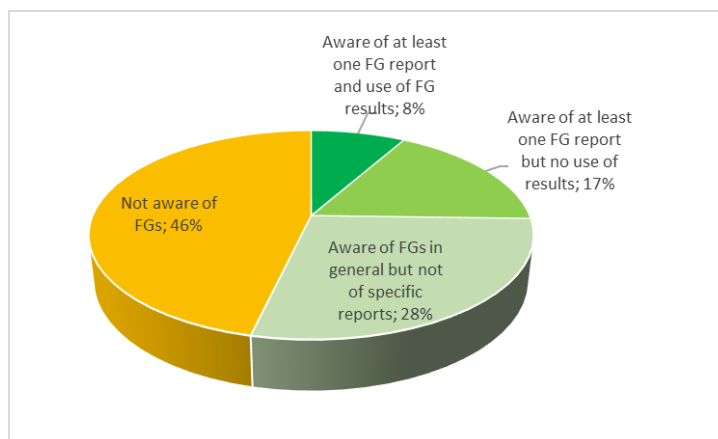
Online survey among FGs' members (75 answers)

- Most of the people who have been involved in FGs shows a great interest in FGs results:
 - 60% of them have evidence of take up of FG results
 - 88% of them indicated that it influenced their work
 - 86% of them indicated they disseminated results from the FG they were involved in

Online survey among OGs (48% answer: 110 answers)

- The survey has been launched in 5 languages among the 231 OGs (DE, EN, ES, FR and IT).
- From an OG point of view, the impact of FGs is more balanced (see figure below):
 - 46% of OGs are not aware of FGs' reports
 - "only" 8% of OGs know FGs and used it for their projects.

Figure 1 - Synthetic results of the online survey among OGs



Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

Interviews among research platforms

- FGs were the pre-development stage of several H2020 Thematic networks, it allowed researchers to identify specific issues for the agricultural sector,
- The links between these platforms and OGs remain limited,
- The emphasize on result dissemination and use of common standards for dissemination between H2020 and OGs is considered as positive.

Recommendations

A number of recommendation is provided in order to increase the awareness and use of FGs. These recommendations cover the following themes:

- Implementation of FGs
 - Continuation of FGs
 - Good practices for the implementation of FGs
 - Selection of FGs members
 - Definition of FGs topics
 - FGs follow-up / update
- Dissemination strategy
 - Dissemination strategy for each FG
 - Dissemination strategy for the different types of actors
 - Adaptation of the dissemination strategy to the context in each MS
 - Strengthening of links with research platforms
 - Translation of FGs reports
 - Structure of FGs reports
- National FGs
 - Implementation of national FGs

3. Clustering analysis

3.1 Scope of the clustering

The clustering analysis has been performed between October and December 2016 with information available on projects selected by MAs in the context of calls for project and supported by RDPs. Thus, this analysis does not cover:

- projects applications to calls not finalised,
- projects not selected by MAs for call finalised.

The clustering exercise was meant to explore any links between the topics covered by EIP-AGRI FGs and the topics taken up by OGs. This does not imply that there is an actual link between the OG and the FG, just that they cover the same topic or theme, and that there could be a potential link. The existence of links between FGs and OGs may depend on many different factors, including the timing of the publication of the FG report and the development of the OG proposal, the themes covered by the calls, the awareness on FGs reports...

The present clustering analysis covers:

- 231 O1Gs
- 21 RDPs (one national RDP and 20 regional RDPs)
- 7 MS (AT, BE, DE, ES, FR, IT, UK)

In terms of sectoral coverage,

- 59% of OGs cover crops,
- 28% animal productions,
- 9% both animal and crop production,
- 2% forestry, wood and trees,
- 2% processed products.

Table 1 - OGs covered by the analysis

MS	Region	Total	Crops	Animal production	Animal production / crops	Forestry, wood, tree	Prepared / Processed products
By RDP							
IT	Emilia-Romagna	52	38	9	4	0	1
ES	Catalunia	23	15	7	0	0	1
FR	Rhône-Alpes	18	3	4	8	1	2
DE	Schleswig-Holstein	17	10	6	0	1	0
DE	Niedersachsen und Bremen	14	8	6	0	0	0
FR	Languedoc-Roussillon	12	12	0	0	0	0
DE	Thüringen	11	2	8	0	1	0
DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	10	5	3	2	0	0
DE	Rheinland-Pfalz	10	7	3	0	0	0
DE	Hessen	8	7	1	0	0	0
DE	Sachsen	8	6	2	0	0	0
AT	AT	7	5	1	1	0	0
FR	Burgundy	6	4	0	1	0	1
DE	Brandenburg und Berlin	6	3	2	0	1	0
FR	Brittany	6	5	0	0	1	0
BE	Flanders	5	2	2	1	0	0
ES	Basque Country	4	1	2	1	0	0
FR	Midi-Pyrénées	5	2	2	1	0	0
UK	Scotland	4	0	3	1	0	0
FR	Mayotte	3	2	1	0	0	0
FR	Pays de la Loire	2	0	2	0	0	0
Total		231	137	64	20	5	5
By Member State							
DE		84	48	31	2	3	0
IT		52	38	9	4	0	1
FR		52	28	9	10	2	3
ES		27	16	9	1	0	1
AT		7	5	1	1	0	0
BE		5	2	2	1	0	0
UK		4	0	3	1	0	0
Total		231	137	64	20	5	5
% total		100%	59%	28%	9%	2%	2%

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

3.2 Clustering

Based on the analysis of the 231 OG's projects, 16 clusters have been identified.

This aims at giving a general picture of the highly diverse themes developed by the 231 OGs. This is based on a qualitative assessment of the main theme covered by OGs and some assessment could be discussed as some OGs can belong to more than one cluster (for instance: some projects deal with organic farming, plant protection and precision farming).

Table 2 - Presentation of the clusters identified

	Number of OG	MS	Description
Plant protection	28	IT, DE, ES, FR, AT	These projects cover plant protection, notably in fruits & vegetable, arable crops, potatoes and vine sectors.
Precision farming / monitoring	25	DE, IT, ES, FR, AT, BE	These projects focus on the monitoring on agricultural activities and decision-making for farmers. They are mainly based on IT and GPS.
Agro environment	21	IT, FR, ES, DE	These projects cover agro-environmental issues not covered by other clusters (fertilisation, plant protection, precision farming), they notably cover herbicides, irrigation management, water quality and emission from cattle.
Development new supply chain / marketing	19	FR, DE, IT, AT, ES	These projects mainly cover the development of new supply chains, from breed selection, definition of production method to marketing. A few projects only focus on the marketing of agricultural and food products.
Organic farming	18	DE, FR, IT, ES, AT, BE	These projects cover technical issues in organic farming. Most of them focus on crop productions: arable crops, potatoes, fruits & vegetable, grassland and vine. Some of this projects may be also related to other clusters, such as plant protection and soil.
Animal feed	17	DE, FR, ES, AT, IT	These projects focus on animal feed: soya and grassland production and assimilation by animals (pig, bovines)
Bovine production	14	IT, DE, BE, ES, UK, FR	These projects focus on bovine farming: PDO supply chains in Italy, emissions from cattle...
Other technic economic	14	IT, DE, BE, ES, UK, FR	This group gathers project with very specific topics: quality of air indoor and outdoor, bee transhumance, milk transport...
Pig production	13	IT, DE, ES, UK, FR	These projects focus on pig farming: animal health notably and to a lesser extent on farming performance. .
Fertilisation	12	DE, IT	These projects are related to fertilisation (efficiency, lowering the impact on water) on arable crops, fruits & vegetable and grassland.
Animal welfare	11	DE	These projects cover technical innovations which intent to improve animal welfare: poultry, pig, bovine, horse and rabbit. Some of these projects may cover organic production. This cluster only covers DE.
Genetic ressources / varietal selection	11	DE, FR, IT	This group covers projects with an important dimension on varietal selection and genetic resources.
Soil	10	DE, FR, IT, AT	These projects focus on soil, notably on its fertility.
Farm benchmark / territorial analysis	8	FR, ES	These projects cover wide scope analysis: farm benchmark and territorial analysis. The objective is a better understanding of economic and social features of farm holding or rural territories.
Bio energy	5	DE, FR	These projects cover bio energy: short rotation forestry and bio gas.
Prepared / Processed products	5	FR; DE, ES	These projects cover prepared / processed products

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

The tables next pages provide the number of OGs per cluster and per RDP or MS.

Table 3 – Number of OG per cluster and per RDP

MS	Region	Total	Plant protection	Precision farming / monitoring	Agro environment	Development new supply chain / marketing	Organic farming	Animal feed	Bovine production	Other technic economic	Pig production	Fertilisation	Animal welfare	Genetic resources / varietal selection	Soil	Farm benchmark / territorial analysis	Bio energy	Prepared / Processed products
IT	Emilia-Romagna	52	8	8	10	3	1	1	6	5	3	1	0	3	3	0	0	0
ES	Catalunio	23	7	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
FR	Rhône-Alpes	18	2	1	2	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	5	0	0
DE	Schleswig-Holstein	17	0	2	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	4	1	2	2	0	1	0
DE	Niedersachsen und Bremen	14	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
FR	Languedoc-Roussillon	12	0	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
DE	Thüringen	11	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0
DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	10	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	1
DE	Rheinland-Pfalz	10	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
DE	Hessen	8	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
DE	Sachsen	8	1	1	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AT	AT	7	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
FR	Bourgogne	6	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
DE	Brandenburg und Berlin	6	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
FR	Bretagne	6	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
BE	Flanders	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FR	Midi-Pyrénées	5	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ES	Basque Country	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
UK	Scotland	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
FR	Mayotte	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
FR	Pays de la Loire	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		231	28	25	21	19	18	17	14	14	13	12	11	11	10	8	5	5

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

Table 4 – Number of OG per cluster and per MS

MS	Total	Plant protection	Precision farming / monitoring	Agro environment	Development new supply chain / marketing	Organic farming	Animal feed	Bovine production	Other technic	Pig production	Fertilisation	Animal welfare	Genetic resources / varietal selection	Soil	Farm benchmark / territorial analysis	Bio energy	Prepared / Processed products
DE	84	7	9	1	5	11	8	3	1	4	11	11	5	3	0	4	1
IT	52	8	8	10	3	1	1	6	5	3	1	0	3	3	0	0	0
FR	52	4	3	8	9	3	5	0	3	1	0	0	3	3	6	1	3
ES	27	7	3	2	1	1	2	2	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
AT	7	2	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
BE	5	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	231	28	25	21	19	18	17	14	14	13	12	11	11	10	8	5	5

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

3.3 Focus groups

3.3.1 Links between FGs topics and OGs topics

The present section provides the results of a desk analysis on the links between FGs topics and OGs topics. The objective is to analyse the coverage of OGs topics by FGs. This does not analyse the real use of FGs results by OGs (which is linked to the awareness on FGs and to the timing of publication of FGs), this is developed in the next section.

To lead this analysis, we scored the link between each FG topic (23 FGs) and each OG topic (231 OGs):

- **no link:** no link between the FG topic and the OG topic;
- **medium link:** the FG report could have been relevant to some extent for the OG project but it does not cover the main issues developed in the OG project;
- **strong link:** the topic of the FG has a direct link with, at least, one of the main themes developed in the OG project.

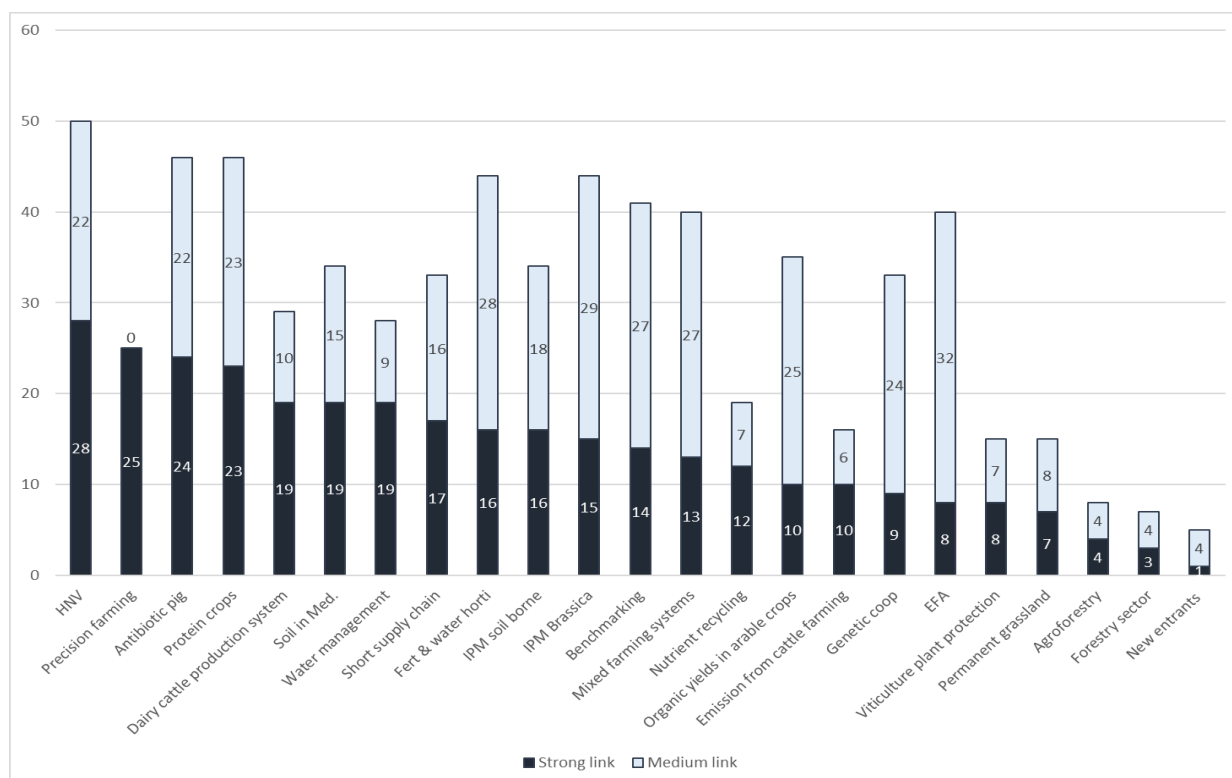
The next figure indicates the number of “strong links” and “medium links” identified between each FG topic and OG topics. Each FG has links (strong or medium) with the topics of at least 5 OGs, and up to the topics of 50 OGs.

Four FGs have strong links with more than 20 OGs, these are:

- HNV, which is a general theme related to agro-environment,
- Precision farming (many OGs focus on this topic, as previously mentioned),
- Antibiotic use in pig farming (many OGs focus on this topic, as previously mentioned),
- Protein crops (focusing both on crops and animal production).

For a few FGs, there are few links identified with OGs’ topics (less than 5 OGs with strong links): agroforestry, forestry sector and new entrants. The topics covered by a few FGs only have limited links with OGs topics (FGs on agroforestry, forestry and new entrants). Only a few OGs focus on agroforestry and forestry, even if this remain an important issue in many rural territories. Generation renewal remains a major issue for the agricultural sector but MAs and OGs did not focus specific calls / projects on this issue.

Figure 2 - Number of OGs with “strong link” or “medium link” with each FG’s topic



Source: AND-international

3.3.2 Coverage of OGs topics by FGs

In terms of coverage of OGs topics by FG:

- The topics developed by **75%** of the OGs are covered with **strong links** by at least one FG;
- The topics developed by **94%** of the OGs are covered with **medium links** by at least one FG.

The share of OGs by class of number of strong links with FGs show that 59% of OGs projects have strong links with 1 or 3 FGs:

- No strong link with FGs’ topic has been identified for 25% of them (57 projects);
- 32% have strong links with 1 FG’s topic (75 projects);
- 27% have strong links with 2 FGs’ topic (62 projects);
- 12% have strong links with 3 FGs’ topic (28 projects);
- 4% of them have strong links with 4 or 5 FGs’ topic (9 projects).

This coverage sounds satisfactory due to the extremely wide scope of potential topics covered by OGs and the timing between OGs selection and the selection of FGs topics (topics defined for FGs while information on topics covered by OGs was not available).

Based on this analysis, one fourth (25%) of the projects have no strong link with any FG and 6% of OGs have no strong or medium link with any FG. These projects with no “strong links” cover a wide range of topics, for instance poultry sector, energy crops, processed products, animal welfare... we can also mention very specific projects such as, for instance, algae production, lamb survival, management of wildlife to limit their impact on crops, aquaculture. The potential scope of topics potentially covered by OGs is extremely wide, the rates of 25% of OGs with no strong link with any FGs and of 6% of OGs with no link (strong or medium) with any FG indicate that some areas remain not covered by FGs and provide some perspectives for future FGs.

Some OGs have strong links with more than two FGs (16% of FGs with strong links with 3, 4 or 5 FGs). These 37 OGs cover topics in line with several FGs, for instance precision farming, animal production, crops, IPM, HNV and organic.

Table 5 - Number of OGs by class of number of strong links with FGs

		Total	Strong links with 5 FGs	Strong links with 4 FGs	Strong links with 3 FGs	Strong links with 2 FGs	Strong links with 1 FG	Strong links with 0 FG
IT	Emilia-Romagna	52	1	1	6	19	13	12
ES	Catalunia	23	0	0	1	4	10	8
FR	Rhône-Alpes	18	0	0	1	4	6	7
DE	Schleswig-Holstein	17	0	2	7	4	2	2
DE	Niedersachsen und Bremen	14	0	0	2	2	7	3
FR	Languedoc-Roussillon	12	0	0	1	5	2	4
DE	Thüringen	11	0	0	1	2	5	3
DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	10	0	0	1	3	4	2
DE	Rheinland-Pfalz	10	0	0	1	4	2	3
DE	Hessen	8	0	0	1	1	3	3
DE	Sachsen	8	0	2	3	1	2	0
AT	AT	7	0	0	0	6	1	0
FR	Burgundy	6	0	0	0	2	1	3
DE	Brandenburg und Berlin	6	0	1	0	2	2	1
FR	Brittany	6	0	0	0	1	5	0
BE	Flanders	5	0	0	2	0	1	2
FR	Midi-Pyrénées	5	0	1	0	1	3	0
ES	Basque Country	4	0	0	0	1	3	0
UK	Scotland	4	0	0	0	0	1	3
FR	Mayotte	3	1	0	1	0	0	1
FR	Pays de la Loire	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Total	231	2	7	28	62	75	57
	% total	100%	1%	3%	12%	27%	32%	25%

Source: AND-international

4. Data collected

4.1 Case studies

4.1.1 General approach and main findings

A total of 10 case studies (on 10 RDPs) has been led in 4 MS. The objectives of the case studies were to collect qualitative information on:

- the dissemination of FGs results: state of play, good practices,
- the awareness on FGs by MAs and OGs,
- the use of FGs by MAs and OGs: state of play, drivers and limits.

The selection of case studies was based on:

- a representativeness of different MS were OGs had already been selected (case studies led in 4 MS: AT, DE, ES and FR),
- the RDPs with the highest number of OGs selected, in order to increase the possible background and opinions on the awareness and use of FGs,
- evidences (from DG AGRI, EIP-AGRI Service Point or research team) on potential use of FGs results by MAs or OGs.

The RDPs selected for case studies are listed in the table below.

Table 6 - Selection of case studies

		Number OGs
DE	Schleswig-Holstein	15
DE	Niedersachsen und Bremen	14
DE	Thüringen	11
DE	Hessen	8
FR	Rhône-Alpes	18
FR	Languedoc-Roussillon	12
FR	Burgundy	6
FR	Brittany	2
ES	Catalonia	23
AT	AT	7
Total		116

Based on these case studies, the level of awareness on FGs at regional / national level depends on the organisation of the dissemination of information and on the potential involvement in FGs by stakeholders (local experts involved in FGs).

In most cases, there has been a limited use of FGs results, both by MAs and OGs. The main reasons were the general awareness on FGs, the relevance with the topics developed by OGs and the timing between the availability of FGs reports and the implementation of the calls. The language barrier also limited the use of FGs (reports only available in English).

The use of FGs results should increase in the future, both by MAs and OGs, mainly thanks to a larger awareness of these works and a better timing between FGs reports and EIP-AGRI calls.

The following table shows the synthesis of the findings for each case study. Synthesis of cases studies are provided in the next section.

Table 7 - Synthesis table on case studies

	Number calls	Number projects	Sources of information	Dissemination	Awareness on FG	Use	Drivers	Limits
Hessen (DE)	2, incl. 1 still in progress	8	Newsletter, website, federal coordination with DVS (database and homepage, events)	Well organised with ISS: newsletter, mailings, homepage	Good level of awareness of MA. OGs are generally aware.	Yes, by the ISS to help a forthcoming OG and to plan an event. Two OGs have also used the results.	- Helpful for the potential leading partners with the provision of ideas and/or topics	- Lack of transparency perceived for the constitution of FGs - Availability of final reports in English only
Niedersachsen und Bremen (DE)	1	14	Newsletter, website, federal coordination with DVS (database and homepage, events)	ISS is expected for January 2017. Up to now, MA in charge of networking (meetings and events)	Good level of awareness of MA. OGs are generally aware.	Results have been used by the MA during calls to favour OGs referring to FGs. They have not been used by OGs	- Referring to topics of FG increases the chances for OG to be selected during the calls	- Lack of transparency perceived on FG: objectives, constitution, benefits for OGs - Top-down approach resulting in non-matching with the interests of OGs - Timing between 1 st OGs set-up and availability of FG reports
Schleswig-Holstein (DE)	1	17	Newsletter, EIP-AGRI website, federal coordination with DVS (database and homepage)	Well organised with ISS (newsletter, mailings, homepage)	Good level of awareness of MA. OGs are generally aware.	Results haven't been used by the MA, but it has been used by one OG with a related project.	- Concrete ideas in annexes of the final reports of FGs	- Lack of farmers as FG participants so as FG are too research orientated - Top-down approach - Availability of final reports in English - A good network of researchers and advisers already exists regionally
Thüringen (DE)	2, incl. 1 still in progress	11	Newsletter, EIP-AGRI website, federal coordination with DVS, meetings at federal level	Well organised through the innovation support service ISS (direct contacts)	Good level of awareness of MA. OGs don't know about FGs.	Results haven't been used by OGs, despite potentially interesting results have been sent by the ISS to OGs with related projects	- Information included in EIP-AGRI Newsletter and homepage of EIP-AGRI Service Point	- The global awareness level on FG from both sides (MA and OG) - The non-correspondence between FG topics and OGs concerns
Brittany (FR)	2	6	Newsletter, website and national coordination.	Dissemination by the NRN Limited dissemination at regional level	General concept of FGs known by many stakeholders	Limited use due to the timing between FG publication and OG creation	- Involvement in FG - Relevance of FGs for the projects - Newsletter from EIP-AGRI SP which indicates the report published and the calls for experts	- Lack of availability from civil servant to read the reports - Lack of dissemination on EIP-AGRI - Language (English reports) - FGs target researchers - Lack of explanation for the composition of FGs - Difficult to use the EIP-AGRI SP website

Burgundy (FR)	1	6	Newsletter, website and national coordination.	Dissemination by the NRN Very limited dissemination at regional level	General concept of FGs known by many stakeholders	One OG has been set-up after a FG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involvement of local experts - Dissemination from national network of Chamber of Agriculture on calls for experts. - Newsletter - High quality of the FGs' meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports available in English only - Difficulties to get the report on internet - Lack of Interest from employers to involve their staff in FGs meetings
Languedoc-Roussillon (FR)	2	12	Newsletter, website, national coordination, participation in focus groups.	Dissemination by the NRN Dissemination by the MA and RDI organisations	FG well-known by the MA and RDI organisations. OGs generally aware.	Yes, by experts having taken part in focus groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong interest from stakeholders (centralised information + partnerships) - Newsletter - Dissemination by the MA and regional organisations - National coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EIP-AGRI bottom-up approach - Topics covered by FGs - Format of reports - Reports only available in English
Rhône-Alpes (FR)	2	18	Newsletter, website and national coordination.	Dissemination by NRN The dissemination is not organised regionally.	Limited. FGs are not known by OGs.	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong interest from stakeholders (centralised information + partnerships) - Newsletter - National coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EIP-AGRI bottom-up approach - Topics covered by FGs - Limited communication towards OGs - Format of reports - Reports only available in English - Availability of OGs partners
Catalonia (ES)	1 (1 on-going)	23	Newsletter, website, national coordination, participation in FGs, EIP-AGRI Service point.	Well organised, using a regional platform on innovation.	Good level of awareness of all actors. Regional experts participated in FGs.	Yes, by experts having taken part in FGs and OGs with related projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principles of FGs considered as very relevant - Newsletter - Well-organised dissemination - National coordination - National focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EIP-AGRI bottom-up approach - Format of reports - Reports only available in English
Austria (AT)	2, incl. 1 still in progress	7	Contacts with EIP-AGRI Service Point, Participation to various EIP-AGRI meetings at the European level.	Well organised through the innovation office of the NRN (targeted information, newsletter, websites, innovation events)	Good level of awareness of MA. OGs are mostly aware. Local expert has been involved.	A few OGs used FG results (expert members of FGs). FG will be taken into account when selecting topics for the next calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information included in EIP-AGRI Newsletter and homepage of EIP-AGRI SP - The FG "promise", i.e. the state of the art on a topic at the EU level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The global awareness level on FG from both sides (MA and OG) - The low availability of farmers for such groups, whereas FGs results are at the end targeted to farmers - Availability of final reports in English - Some topics were too broad to bring added-value (for example on organic)

4.1.2 Germany

Implementation of the EIP-AGRI
<p>At federal level, both the Federal Ministry (BMEL) and NRN are involved in the EIP-AGRI implementation, mostly in terms of networking. NRN is active through its support unit DVS¹ belonging to the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) under the supervision of BMEL. DVS coordinates all institutions involved in EIP-AGRI implementation. It is also the German interface with ENRD and people involved in EIP-AGRI at the European level (EIP-AGRI Service Point, DG AGRI and other contact persons).</p> <p>At regional level, EIP-AGRI has been implemented in 12 out of 13 German RDPs. RRN are not active in agriculture and a dedicated regional innovation support service (ISS) has been set up (or is planned to be) in 11 Länder under the initiative of regional MA. These services are directly in relation with OGs. A total of 8 calls has been launched in the 4 regions covered by a case study (including 2 calls in progress while the present study is led). A total of 50 projects has been selected.</p>
Dissemination of information on EIP-AGRI
<p>The public intervention at federal level mainly provides support to regional MAs and ISS. DVS is the most active regarding the dissemination of information on EIP-AGRI. It developed an online open-access database listing all German OG², shares information on FGs results on its website (with a link to EIP-AGRI webpage) and coordinates diverse activities such as conferences and workshops.</p> <p>At the regional level, ISS are in charge of networking, organisation of events, development of a webpage on EIP-AGRI, support for OGs, initiation of innovative projects, knowledge transfer. The MA is in charge of networking and dissemination of information when no ISS is active in the region.</p>
Awareness on Focus Groups
<p>Federal level authorities are aware of FGs. However, they consider the EU-level to be too far from OGs' interests and not coherent with the bottom-up approach promoted for EIP-AGRI. They also consider that ISS are already well developed and that FGs results are of limited interest for OGs. Other limits on FGs have been pointed: too few meetings to deepen a topic and too large scope of some topics.</p> <p>The awareness on FGs is good among the regional MAs. Several reports or papers from FGs have been read (mainly by ISS). Regarding OGs, A majority of person interviewed knew about FGs, except in Thüringen. The issue regarding the selection of FGs topics and experts was raised by some people interviewed, mentioning a lack of information on the process and the criteria.</p>
Use of focus groups results
<p>Some regional MAs used FGs results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one region included the reference to FGs in their selection criteria for OGs, especially because some of them directly covered the regional priorities (FG on antibiotics in pig farming in Niedersachsen und Bremen),• one MA used FGs results to plan coming events on innovation (Hessen). <p>Some factors limited the potential use of FGs in some regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EU approach of FG is not considered to be consistent with EIP-AGRI bottom-up approach, where ideas come first from the field,• existing networks of researchers and advisers are considered to be strong enough,• FGs topics are considered as being too wide, they may not cover regional concerns and not be operational enough for OGs. <p>Only a few OGs used the results of FGs (3 OGs according to the online survey, 2 in Hessen and 1 in Schleswig-Holstein). However, for the coming calls, some MAs consider that FGs results could be</p>

¹ DVS for *Deutsche Vernetzungsstelle für ländliche Räume*

² Available through the Webpage of DVS <https://www.netzwerk-laendlicher-raum.de/themen/eip-agri/>

relevant for OGs and plan to recommend, among other things, the reading of FGs reports to forthcoming OGs.

Drivers and limits for the use of Focus groups results

Drivers:

- Information included in EIP-AGRI Newsletter and homepage of EIP-AGRI Service Point
- Referring to topics of a FG increases the chances for an OG to be selected during the calls (Niedersachsen und Bremen)
- Concrete recommendations in FG reports increase the use of FG results (for instance OG on population management in Schleswig Holstein with FG named “Genetic resources: cooperation models”)

Limits:

- FGs implementation (EU-level) is not perceived as coherent with the EIP-AGRI bottom-up approach
- Lack of information on FGs objectives and on the selection of topics / members
- Availability of final reports in English only
- Lack of farmers as FG members, so as FGs are too research orientated
- FG results are not illustrative and not considered helpful
- Time gap between the launching of first OGs and the availability of final FG reports
- A good network of researchers and advisers in the field of agriculture already exists in some regions

4.1.3 France

Implementation of the EIP-AGRI
<p>EIP-AGRI is implemented at regional level in France. A total of seven calls has been implemented in the four Regions covered by the case studies and 42 projects have been selected.</p> <p>At national level, a National Committee for EIP-AGRI has been set-up (NRN). It is in charge of the networking and dissemination of information among the actors involved in EIP-AGRI. Specific activities are: Website, meetings and seminars, e-mailing and dissemination on information related to EIP-AGRI.</p>
Dissemination of information on EIP-AGRI
<p>At national level, the National Committee for EIP-AGRI is active to disseminate information on EIP-AGRI. It recently translated FGs synthesis into French (Autumn 2016) these are available online (http://www.reseaurural.fr/PEI/travaux-reseaux-europeens). Stakeholders contacted in the different regions in the context of this study were not already aware of the availability of these documents. Larger dissemination of these documents will be led in the next months.</p> <p>The Committee plans to build up a network of thematic experts at national level (2017) and a national FG on forestry. The Ministry also identified that FGs reports were relevant input and plans a dissemination internally among the Ministry departments.</p> <p>Dissemination of EIP-AGRI related information is also led by national professional organisation, for instance in case of call for experts for FGs.</p> <p>At regional level, dissemination is led by MAs and professional organisations. The main activity is the dissemination of the EIP-AGRI newsletter. No specific dissemination of FGs reports is implemented in any Regions covered by a case study.</p>
Awareness on Focus Groups
<p>Each regional MA is aware of the concept of FGs but a limited number of them read any of the FGs reports. They mainly forward the report when they consider it could be relevant for some local stakeholders.</p> <p>Awareness among OGs is variable. In most cases, when FGs are known by OGs members, this is due to an involvement of this member in a FG.</p>
Use of focus groups results
<p>Few evidences of use of FGs results have been identified in the context of the case studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an OG has been set following to a FG (Burgundy), • a stakeholder used results from a FG for a H2020 call for projects (Brittany), • development of technology transfer with partners in another Member State following to a FG (Languedoc-Roussillon). <p>None of the MA used FGs reports to define their calls, even if some MAs may do so in the future. At OG level, the timing between</p>
Drivers and limits for the use of Focus groups results
<p>Drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter from EIP-AGRI Service point (indicates publications, calls for experts...). • Dissemination of FGs by national (EIP-AGRI Committee, professional organisations) and regional actors. • Involvement of local experts in FGs. <p>Limits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of availability from officers in MAs to read the reports. • Language (availability of the report in English). • Length of the final reports. • Lack of explanation for the composition of FGs. • Topic covered by the FGs.

4.1.4 Spain – Catalonia

Implementation of the EIP-AGRI
<p>In Catalonia, EIP-AGRI is implemented under two separate sub-measures: one for the setting-up of OGs and another one for the development of pilot projects. A total of 2 calls have been implemented in Catalonia, 1 call in 2015 and 1 call in 2016 (the selection is in progress for the second call). As regards the first call, 19 OGs have been set-up and 23 OGs with pilot projects have been selected. No topics have been defined for the calls, with the objective of favouring a bottom-up approach.</p>
Dissemination of information on EIP-AGRI
<p>In Spain, the NRN acts as the support service for the implementation of the EIP-AGRI at the national level. Two research tools have been developed to identify potential partners for OGs and to give information on the on-going OGs and projects. The NRN has also organised two FGs at national level. Their objectives are very close to the objectives of the European FGs: sharing knowledge and experiences on a specific topic, and stimulating innovation. The first one took place in 2015 and the second one started in July 2016.</p> <p>Results of national focus groups, as well as other information on the EIP-AGRI (including information on the European FGs) are transmitted to regional authorities by the NRN. The information is then disseminated by Regional authorities through their own regional networks.</p> <p>At regional level, there are different sources of information for MAs: newsletters, website, contacts with the EIP-AGRI Service point, meetings, information provided by the NRN. The dissemination of information on innovation is well organized. A regional platform (xarxa-i.cat) is dedicated to the promotion of innovation in the agricultural sector. It notably provides information on the EIP-AGRI and FGs.</p>
Awareness on Focus Group
<p>At regional level, there is a good level of awareness on FGs. Information is regularly disseminated to operators through the regional platform on innovation (FGs topics, call for applications, results and list of experts involved). Several regional experts have participated in the FGs (a total of 22 Spanish experts) and play an active role in the dissemination of FGs results. One specific event has been organized, a conference on the results of the FGs dedicated to breeding (July 2016). Based on the online survey among OGs, the awareness of FGs is high in Spain. FGs are known by 88% of OGs.</p>
Use of focus groups results
<p>MA: The managing authority did not use FG results for the selection of the projects, as the bottom-up approach was favored and a lot of projects have applied within the first two calls. Nevertheless, it is considered as a good way to make new ideas emerge and to favor technological transfer at European level.</p> <p>OG: In general, OGs consider that the topics were not fully relevant for their projects and did not use FG results. Nevertheless, some OGs declared that they have used the results of some Focus Groups: organic farming in particular, organic matter in Mediterranean soils and precision farming to a lesser extent.</p>
Drivers and limits for the use of Focus groups results
<p>Drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general principles of the FGs (sharing knowledge, networking) are considered as very relevant for making projects emerge and favouring technological transfer. • The dissemination of information on innovation is well organised regionally. • The communication on FGs is well developed at national level. • National FGs have been established on the same basis as European FGs. <p>Limits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EIP-AGRI is focused on a bottom-up approach which limits the concrete use of FG results for the definition of projects. • Final reports are too extensive and not easy to use. • Availability of final reports in English only

4.1.5 Austria

Implementation of the EIP-AGRI
<p>Two calls for EIP-AGRI have been implemented in Austria and the second call is still in progress while the present study is led. A total of 7 projects have been selected in the context of the 1st call.</p> <p>1st call topics: 1) Animal welfare / animal health / animal husbandry, 2) Biodiversity and management, 3) Strategic development operation and product and current challenges in production, 4) Climate-sensitive approaches in agriculture</p> <p>2nd call topics: 1) Agriculture 4.0 - Networking of information and data, 2) Measures and technologies to reduce emissions in farming practices, 3) Measures to increase the well-being of animal husbandry, 4) Improve risk management in farms, 5) Preservation and improvement of the genetic production base of Austrian forests taking into account aspects of adaptation to climate change</p>
Dissemination of information on EIP-AGRI
<p>EIP-AGRI is implemented at national level in Austria. Both the MA³ and the NRN⁴ are developing coordination and networking activities. The NRN is responsible for the networking between OGs at the national level. It is notably led through a newsletter.</p> <p>There is no specific dissemination of FG results at the national level. They are disseminated in Austria through the EIP-AGRI Newsletter by the EIP-AGRI Service Point.</p>
Awareness on Focus Groups
<p>National authorities are aware of all FGs and read their final reports. They have only been involved at spreading in their network the call of experts from EIP-AGRI Service Point.</p> <p>According to the online survey, 3 OGs out of 5 answers did know about FGs.</p>
Use of focus groups results
<p>Results of EIP-AGRI FGs have not been used yet by the MA, but they will be taken into account when selecting topics for the next calls.</p> <p>Based on the online survey among OGs, one OG among the three OGs that were aware of FGs used FGs results (protein crops).</p>
Drivers and limits for the use of Focus groups results
<p><u>Drivers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information included in EIP-AGRI Newsletter and homepage of EIP-AGRI Service Point• The FG “promise”, i.e. the state of the art on a topic at the European level: it is a high motivation to read the results when one is interested in the topic. <p><u>Limits:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The awareness on FG from OGs,• The low involvement of farmers in FGs, while they are the end users,• Availability of final reports in English only• Some topics were considered as being too broad to bring added-value (for example on organic)

³ Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft

⁴ Netzwerk Zukunftsraum Land

4.2 Timeline between FG results dissemination and calls

The timing between FG publication and EIP-AGRI calls is a key issue for the potential use of FGs by stakeholders.

The timeline between the FG publications and the calls implemented in the different areas covered by a case study is displayed in the table on the next page. It illustrates that:

- most of the calls have been implemented in the second part of 2015 (11 calls)
- only 4 FGs reports were available in June 2015,
- the number of FGs reports increase regularly:
 - 4 other reports were published between June and December 2015
 - 4 other reports were published in 2016.

Thus, the timing between FGs reports publication and EIP-AGRI calls partly explain the low use of FGs reports by OGs. This use may increase while new FGs reports are regularly published.

4.3 Online survey among OGs

4.3.1 Description of respondents

The online survey has been led in November 2016 among 231 OGs. Four languages have been used for this survey in order to increase the rate of answer: German (for Germany and Austria), French (France), English (UK and Belgium/Flanders), Italian (Italy) and Spanish (Spain).

The rate of answer is 48% with 110 answers collected. The rate of answer is particularly high in Austria with 5 answers from the 6 OGs (80%), it is high in Belgium, Spain, France and Germany with a rate ranging between 50% and 60% and it remained low in Italy with only 17% of answers (9 answers).

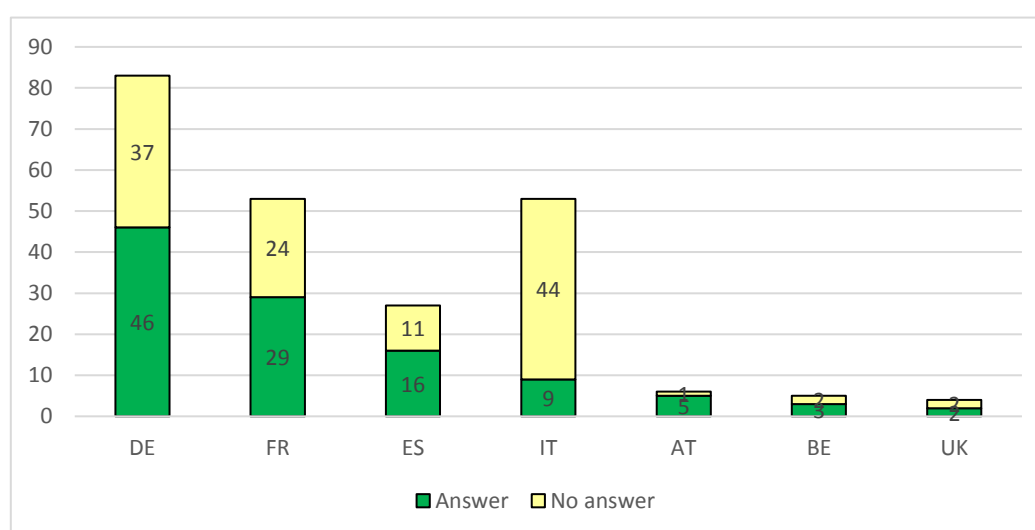
Table 9 - % of answer by MS

	% answers	Number answers	Total number of OGs contacted
DE	55%	46	83
FR	55%	29	53
ES	59%	16	27
IT	17%	9	53
AT	83%	5	6
BE	60%	3	5
UK	50%	2	4
Total	48%	110	231

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

With 75 answers, Germany and France account for 68% of the total number of answers. The following figure displays the number of answers and non-answers by MS.

Figure 3 - Number of answers by MS



Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

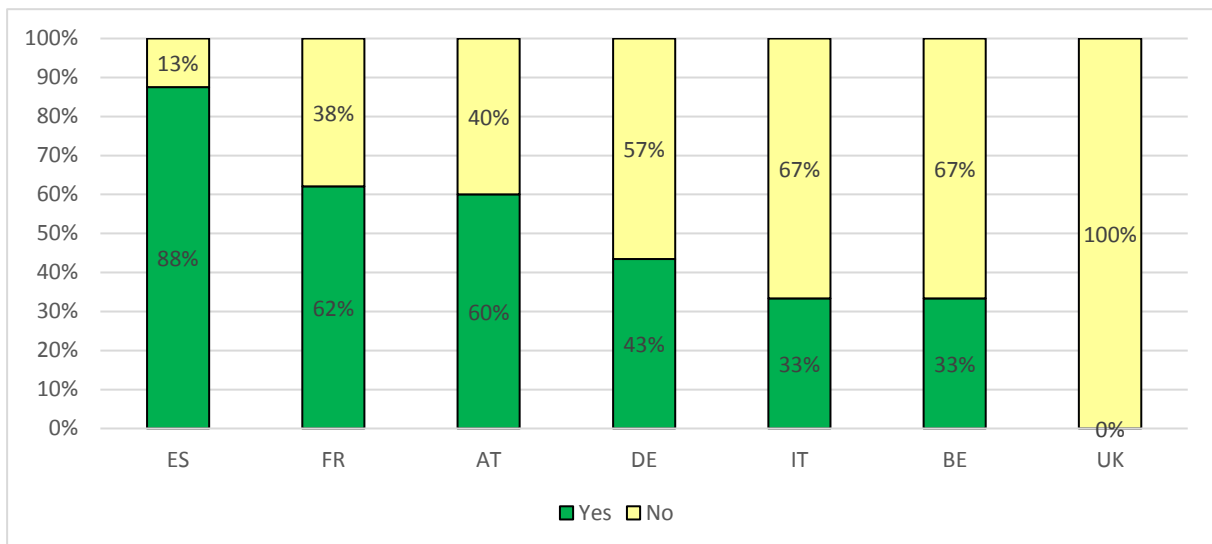
4.3.2 Awareness on Focus Groups reports

More than half (54%) of OGs are aware of EIP-AGRI Focus groups reports. There are high differences among MS:

- Very high in Spain (88%),
- High in France and Austria (respectively 62% and 60%),
- Medium in Germany, Italy and Belgium (respectively 43%, 33% and 33%),
- Very low in the UK (0%).

Based on case studies, the dissemination of FGs is high in Spain (through regional platform on innovation, calls from MAs) and many Spanish experts have been involved in FGs (this foster dissemination and FGs). In France, many actors interviewed were aware of FGs and this awareness should increase in the next month thank to specific actions led by NRN. The Austrian MA is aware of all FGs and is active in dissemination. In Germany, qualitative interviews highlighted a lack of interest at national level in FGs (due to the existence of effective innovation support services). These national actors play an important role in dissemination of information, this explain the low awareness on FGs in Germany.

Figure 4 – Answer to the question “Are you aware of EIP-AGRI Focus Groups reports?”

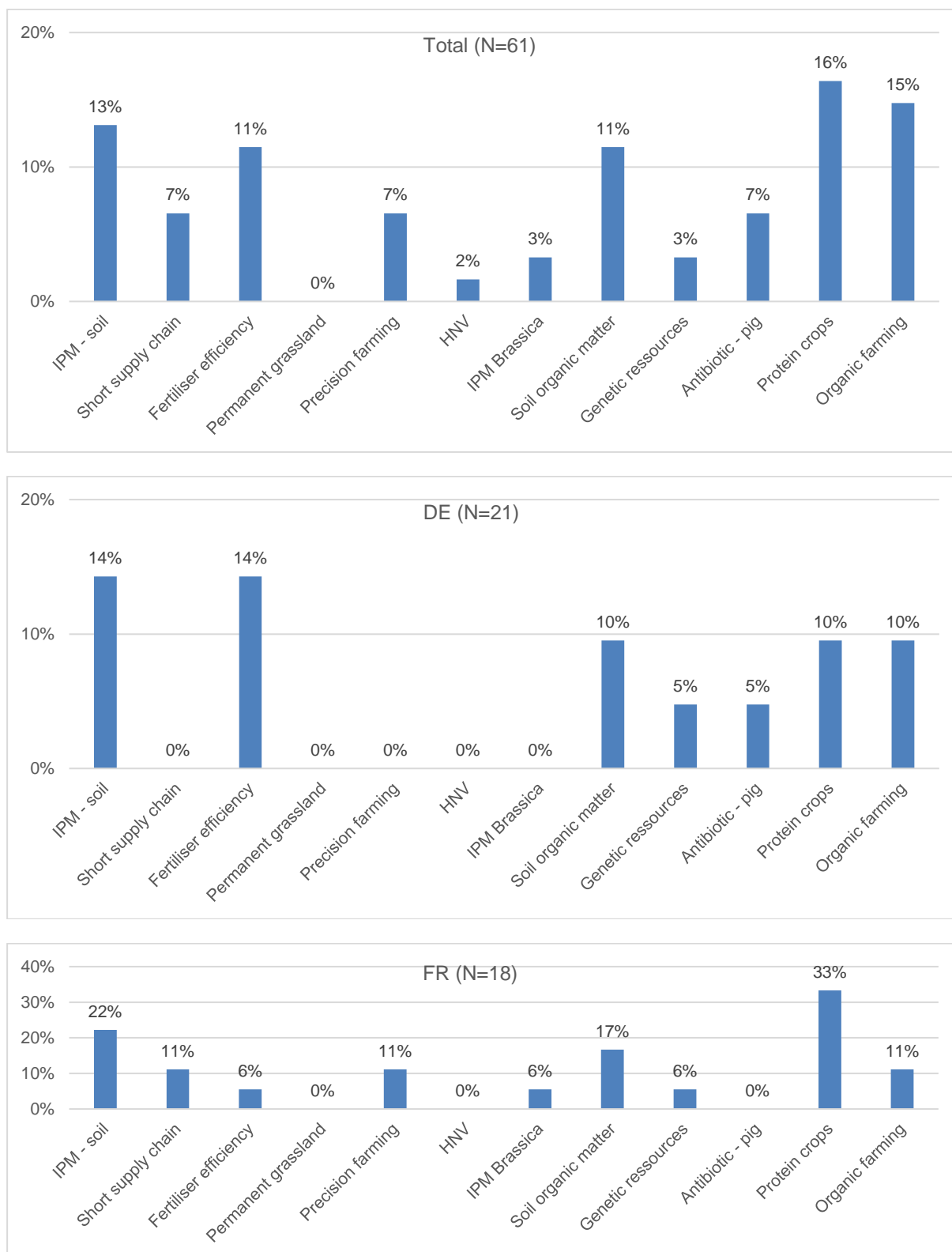


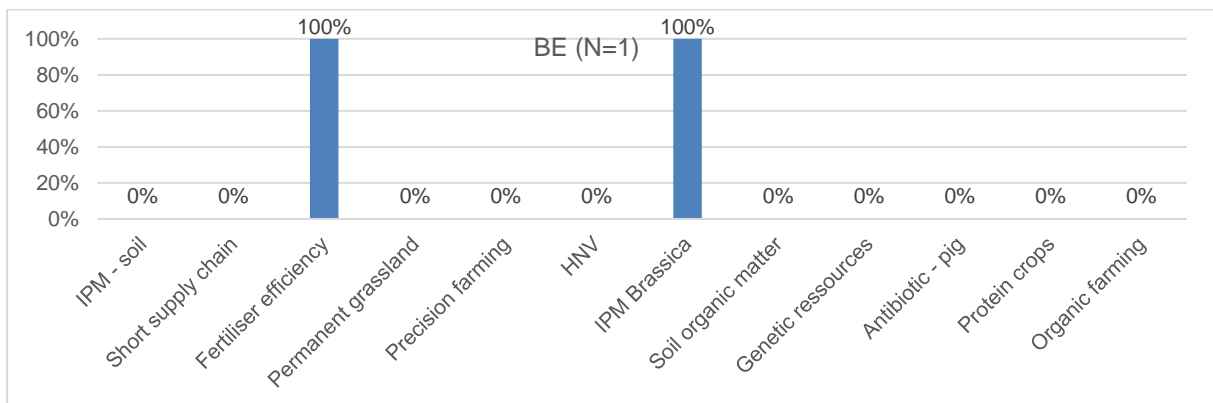
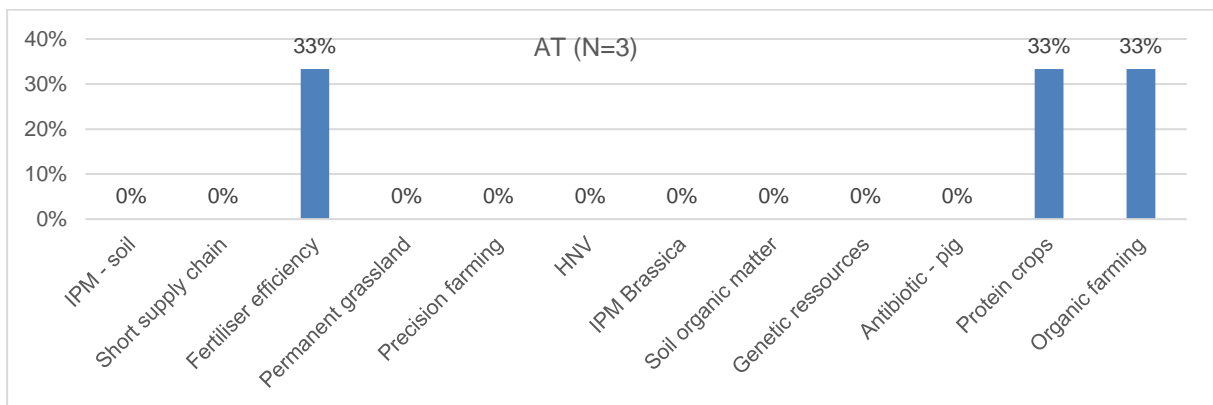
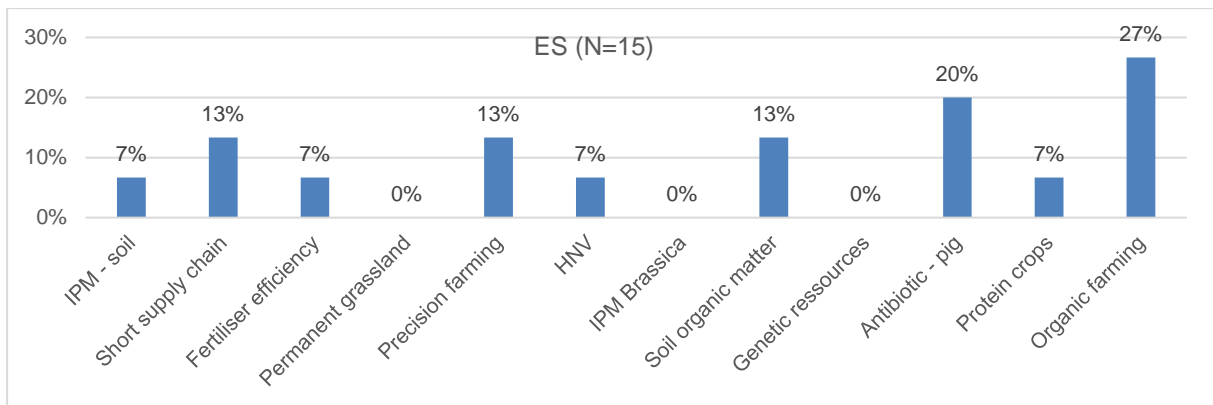
Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

The awareness on specific reports depends on several factors: the dissemination actions implemented, the relevance of the FG for OG (sector, theme, geographical area (for instance soil organic matter in Mediterranean Regions))

- The 5 top best-known FG reports are dealing with following topics:
 - Protein Crops (16%),
 - Organic Farming (15%),
 - IPM soil (13%),
 - Fertiliser efficiency together with Soil organic matter (11%),
- 3 FG reports are close to the average rate with 7% of knowledge:
 - Short supply chain; Precision farming and antibiotic in pig production,
- 3 others FG reports are very little known:
 - IPM Brassica and Genetic Resources with 3%,
 - HNV with 2%,
- The one about permanent grassland is unknown by OGs which answered the survey.

Figure 5 - Awareness of each FG report (% of respondent aware of FGs reports)





Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

There are differences from one MS to another in terms of specific topics knowledge. The following table displays a synthesis per MS of the % of OGs aware of FGs results, considering following colour legendary:

- Green (between 15% and 100%): good knowledge,
- Light green (between 8% and 10%): rather good knowledge,
- Yellow (between 5% and 7%): little knowledge,
- White: no knowledge.

Table 10 - Awareness of each FG report per MS

		IPM - soil	Short supply chain	Fertiliser efficiency	Permanent grassland	Precision farming	HNV	IPM Brassica	Soil organic matter	Genetic resources	Antibiotic - pig	Protein crops	Organic farming
DE	N=21	14%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	5%	5%	10%	10%
FR	N=18	22%	11%	6%	0%	11%	0%	6%	17%	6%	0%	33%	11%
ES	N=15	7%	13%	7%	0%	13%	7%	0%	13%	0%	20%	7%	27%
AT	N=3	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%	33%
BE	N=1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Given the number of answers for each MS, we consider only Germany, France and Spain for this analysis. France and Spain are aware of 9 out of 12 FG reports. Germany is focused on 7 only. It depends on OGs concerns and what are the key issues locally.

4.3.3 Use of FGs results for the OG project

Only a few OGs indicated they used the results from FGs for the OG project (9 OGs):

- 2 OGs in France.
- 3 OGs in Germany, 2 in Hessen and 1 in Schleswig-Holstein.
- 3 OGs in Spain,
- 1 OG in Austria.

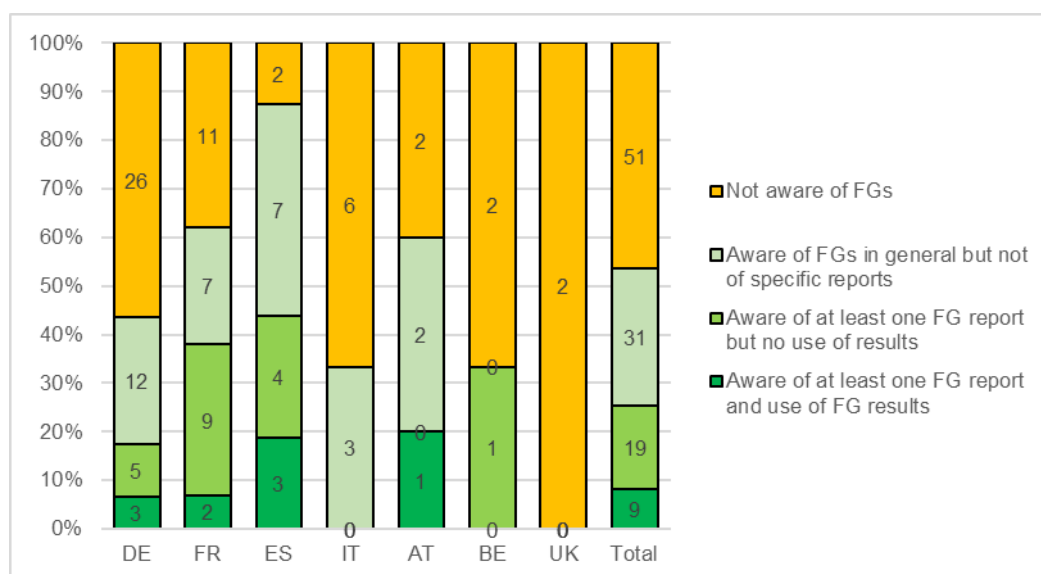
The following table and figure displays the number and % of OGs aware and using FGs results by MS.

Table 11 - Number and % of OGs aware of FGs and using FGs results by MS

		Aware of at least one FG report and use of FG results	Aware of at least one FG report but no use of results	Aware of FGs in general but not of specific reports	Not aware of FGs	Total
Number of answers	DE	3	5	12	26	46
	FR	2	9	7	11	29
	ES	3	4	7	2	16
	IT	0	0	3	6	9
	AT	1	0	2	2	5
	BE	0	1	0	2	3
	UK	0	0	0	2	2
	Total	9	19	31	51	110
% total answers	DE	7%	11%	26%	57%	100%
	FR	7%	31%	24%	38%	100%
	ES	19%	25%	44%	13%	100%
	IT	0%	0%	33%	67%	100%
	AT	20%	0%	40%	40%	100%
	BE	0%	33%	0%	67%	100%
	UK	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
	Total	8%	17%	28%	46%	100%

Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

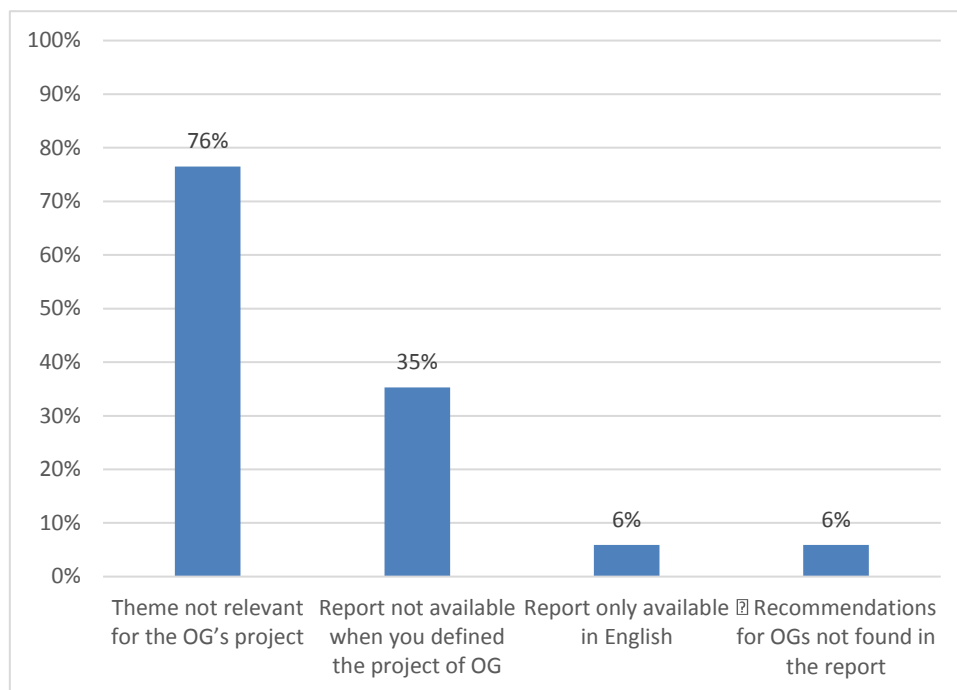
Table 12 - Number of OGs aware of FGs and using FGs results by MS



Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

The main reasons for not using the FG results are displayed below. This covers the OGs who were aware of specific FGs reports but did not use them. The main reason is that FG report was not relevant to the specific project of OG (for 76% of OGS), the bad timing of the publication of the report with the definition of the project is mentioned by 35% of OGs, the language of the report or the fact that recommendations were not found in the report are mentioned by 6% of OGs each.

Table 13 - Reasons for not using FG reports for the OG project

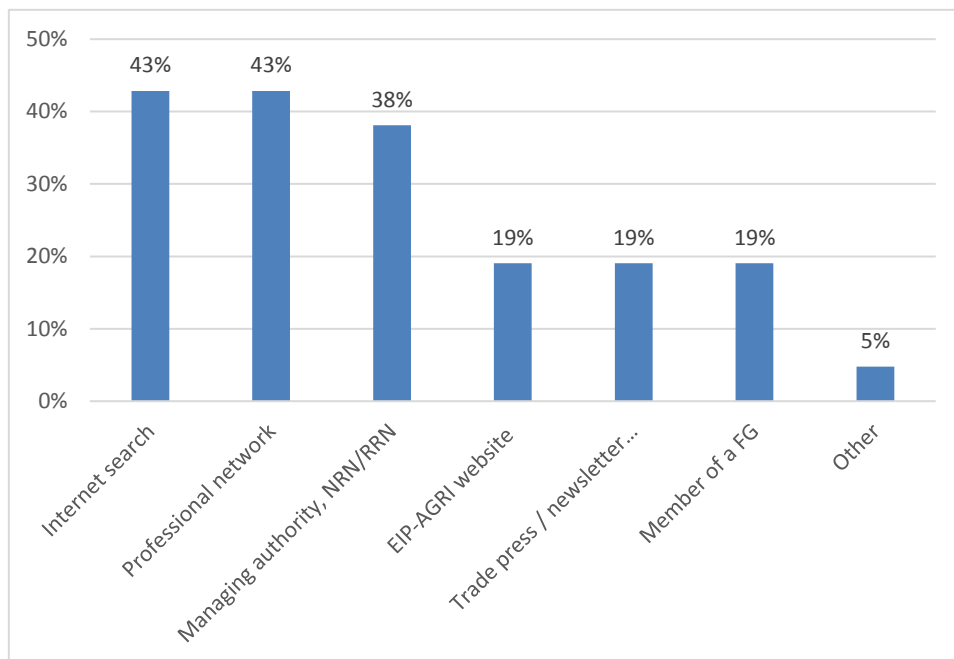


Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

4.3.4 Sources of information on FGs

OGs get information on FGs through several sources:

- By internet search for 43% of them,
- By their professional network for 43% of them,
- By the Managing authority or the National Rural Network / Regional Rural Network for 38% of them,
- By a regular check of EIP-AGRI website for 19% of them,
- By trade press / newsletter for 19% of them,
- By a member of a FG for 19% of them,
- By other mean for 5% of them (presentation of the OG project at a FG meeting),
- None of the respondent indicated he participated to FG.



Source: AND-I study for EIP-AGRI Service Point

4.4 Online survey among Focus groups participants

4.4.1 Description of respondents

This survey was conducted among the participants in the first 10 FGs to publish their report, namely:

- Animal husbandry - Reduction of antibiotic use in the pig sector
- Genetic Resources - Cooperation models
- High Nature Value (HNV) - Farming profitability
- IPM - Focus on Brassica species
- IPM practices for soil-borne diseases suppression in vegetables and arable crops
- Mainstreaming precision farming
- Organic farming - Optimising arable yields
- Protein crops
- Innovative Short Food Supply Chain management
- Soil organic matter content in Mediterranean regions

An online survey has been performed by the EIP-AGRI SP among FGs' participants. A total of 75 answers has been collected, more than half are researchers (55%), 15% are advisors, 11% are representatives of an industry / private sector, 7% are farmers, 3% are representatives of an NGOs or Civil servant and 8% are in more than one category (half of them being farmer).

Table 14 - Type of respondent to the online survey

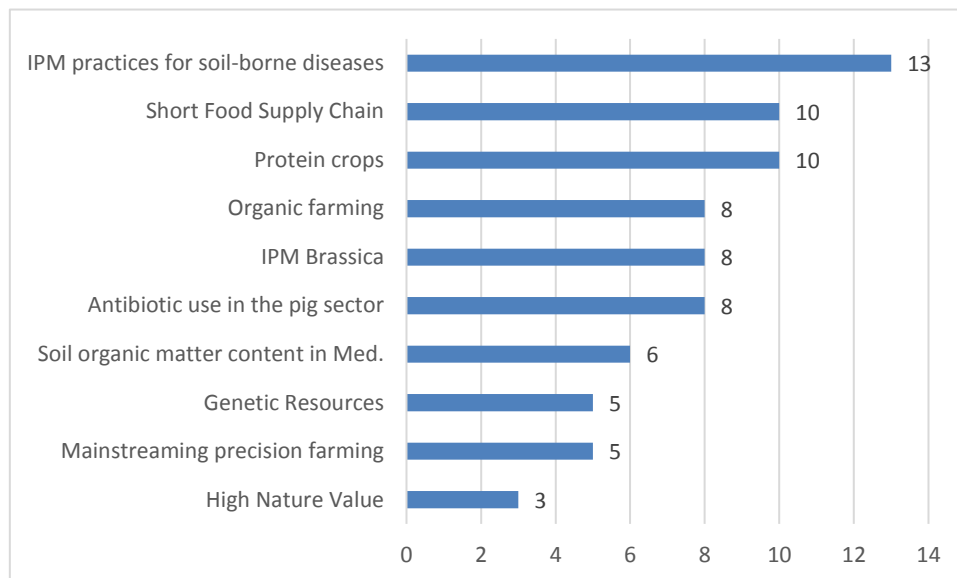
	Number respondents	% total
Researcher	41	55%
Advisor	11	15%
Representative of an industry / private sector	8	11%
Farmer	5	7%
Representative of a NGO	2	3%
Civil servant	2	3%
More than one category	6	8%
Total	75	100%

Source: AND-I based on EIP-AGRI SP survey

There is a total of 78 individual participations to FGs (70 respondents participated to one FG, 4 respondents participated to 2 FGs and 1 respondent did not precise to which FG he participated). The number of participants to each FG ranges between 3 and 13, a total of 10 FGs is represented.

The FGs with the higher number of participants who answered the survey are IPM for soil-borne diseases, innovative supply short supply chain management and organic farming (42% of total number of respondents). For some FGs, only one participant answered: water & agriculture and ecological focus area.

Table 15 - Number of individual participation to each FG



Source: AND-I based on EIP-AGRI SP survey

Type of participants by FG is detailed in the following table. Researchers account for at least half of the number of respondents, except for FG short supply chain (20%), HNV (33%) and precision farming (40%).

This only refers to the FG participants who replied to the questionnaire and does not represent the accurate composition of FGs. For instance, there were more farmers on the FG dealing with Soil organic matter.

Table 16 - Type of participants by FG

	IPM - Soil-borne diseases	Protein crops	Short Food Supply Chain	Reduction of antibiotic use in the pig sector	IPM - Brassica	Organic farming -	Soil organic matter content in Med. regions	Precision farming	Genetic Resources	High Nature Value (HNV)
Researcher	8	7	2	6	5	4	3	2	3	1
Advisor	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
Representative of an industry/private sector	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0
Farmer	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	1
Representative of a NGO	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Civil servant	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
More than one category	1	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	13	10	10	8	8	8	6	5	5	3

Source: AND-I based on EIP-AGRI SP survey

4.4.2 Take up of FGs results

Among the participants, 61% indicated they had evidences on the take up of the FGs results. This rate is:

- very high (between 70% and 80%) for the FG on innovative short food supply chain, organic farming, protein crop,
- high (between 50% and 69%) for FG on IPM on soil-borne disease, HVN, antibiotic use in the pig sector, precision farming and IPM for brassica
- medium or low (between 0% and 33%) for FG on soil organic matter and genetic resources.

Table 17 - Do you have any evidence on the take up of the Focus Group results (managing authority, stakeholders, researchers...)?

	Number « Yes »	Number participants	% number « Yes » / number participants
Short Food Supply Chain	8	10	80%
Organic farming	6	8	75%
Protein crops	7	10	70%
IPM practices for soil-borne diseases	9	13	69%
High Nature Value	2	3	67%
Antibiotic use in the pig sector	5	8	63%
Mainstreaming precision farming	3	5	60%
IPM Brassica	4	8	50%
Soil organic matter content in Med.	2	6	33%
Genetic Resources	0	5	0%
Total	46	76	61%

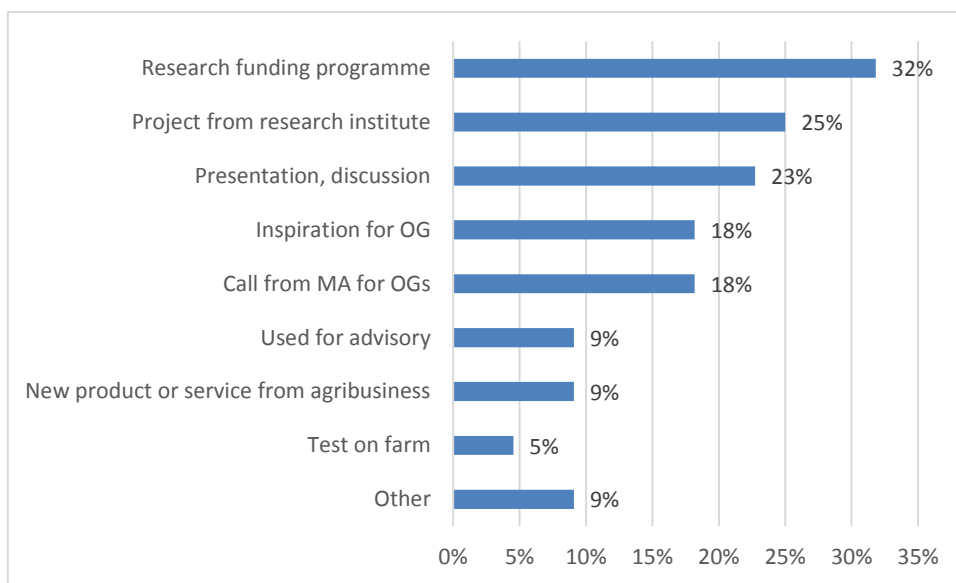
Source: AND-I based on EIP-AGRI SP survey

Based on the survey, the use of FG is mainly linked the answer of call for proposals in the context of Research funding programmes (32% of respondents), followed by the elaboration of project in research institute based on FG results (23%). The importance of these two types of use of the FG is related to large number of researchers in the respondents to the survey. The third type of use is related to presentation or use in workshops (23%), this type of use is mainly linked to research and education institutions.

A third of respondents (32%) indicated that OGs have been used to implement the EIP-AGRI, 18% of respondents indicated that FGs have been used by MA to define a EIP-AGRI calls and 18% indicated that FGs have been used by OGs to define their projects (the total is higher to 32% as some respondents indicated that a same FG had been used by both MAs and OGs).

Other types of use of FGs results are more linked to transfer to farms / agribusiness: advisory (9% of respondents), new products (9%) and test on farms (5%).

Figure 6 - Type of use of FGs results (% of respondents)

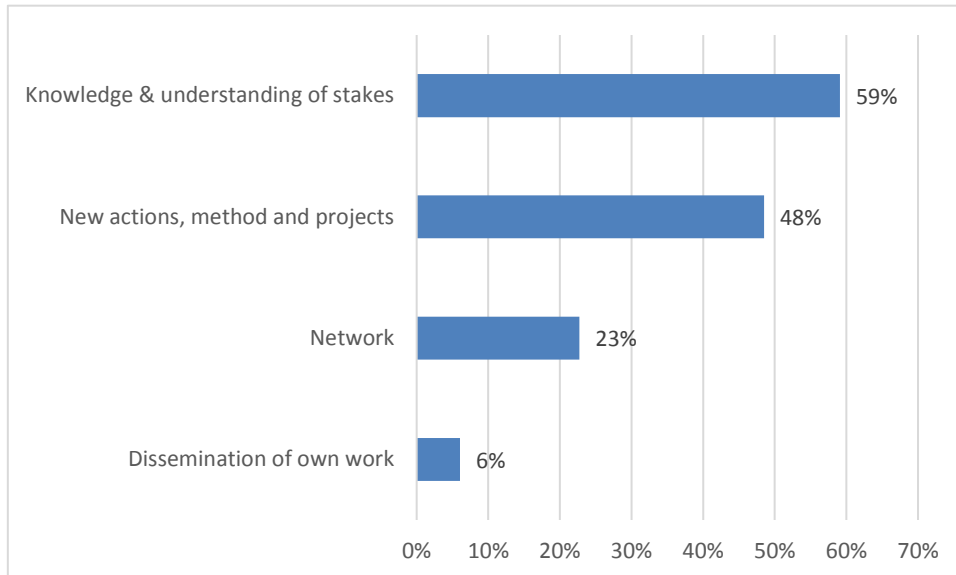


Source: elaboration AND-I based on EIP-AGRI Service Point survey

4.4.3 Influence of the FGs on their members

The participation to FG had an influence impact on the people who participated, 88% of them stated that it influenced their work and 12% indicated that it did not influence their work. The types of impact for FGs members is displayed in the following figure.

Figure 7 - Type of influence for member of FGs



Source: elaboration AND-I based on EIP-AGRI Service Point survey

The main influence is related to “knowledge and understanding of the stakes” for 59% of the respondents who indicated that FG had an impact on their work. FG provided them with new knowledge or point of view of the issue they are dealing with. This is notably related to the involvement of several types of stakeholders (researchers from different academic fields, farmers, NGOs...). The following quotations from the online survey illustrate the benefits provided by FGs:

- *“Taking social aspects (communication, attitude and characters of vets, farmers) more into account dealing with this problem.”*
- *“After participating in the FG I have a complete view of the problems and how to solve them, and I used for call applications”*
- *“Understand relationships and powers at the European HNV ecosystem; working methods, transversality in HNV approaches”*
- *“Better overview on the practical experience in other MS. Concrete ideas and examples from other projects.”*
- *“It gives ideas on the way different stakeholders are involved in IPM”;*
- *“Useful resource of current IPM options and research gaps (brassica pests)”*
- *“Made our research group more conscious about the state of art, the lack of knowledge, the interactions with other soil issues.”*

For almost half of the members, the participation to FG led to the implementation of new actions, method and projects: application to call for proposals, adaptation of the working method in relation

to the information gathered during the FG... The following quotations from the online survey illustrate the benefits provided by FGs:

- *"The FG led to a H2020 project."*
- *"After the work in FG I used the material from different FG as arguments on what are or could be innovative in some areas."*
- *"We have been applying/using recommendations of the Focus Group to scale up the impact & replicability of our local food system."*
- *"Becoming very active in promoting prudent use of antibiotics."*
- *"I used the result of the study in my work and with my colleague."*
- *"It has influenced my research proposals."*
- *"Inspiration for creating consortia/projects with stakeholders from practice to research (not vice-versa)."*

Almost a quarter of respondent indicated that it enlarged their network:

- *"It enabled me to make contacts with relevant stakeholders outside of academia."*
- *"I kept connections with the FG members and I work in collaboration with some of them."*
- *"enlarged my network, identified persons for further collaboration."*
- *"Better contact through networking and availability of different case-studies. Some of them have been visited already with farmer."*
- *"It created networks across Europe to tackle challenges in the industry."*
- *"Good contacts due to the focus group led to collaboration on manuscripts for publication."*
- *"It broadened my insight in this part of EU work and expanded further my network."*

The last impact reported by FG members is the dissemination of their own work or work of the FG (6% of respondents), in the context of the FG or after the FG. This is illustrated by the following quotations:

- *"Pig producing companies have more interest in my research work."*
- *"My presence in the focus group allowed me to disseminate our experience and knowledge in Portugal."*
- *"It was satisfying to tell about my own experiences."*
- *"People know that I was a member of this focus group and now they have someone who can ask for advice or just discuss about that."*

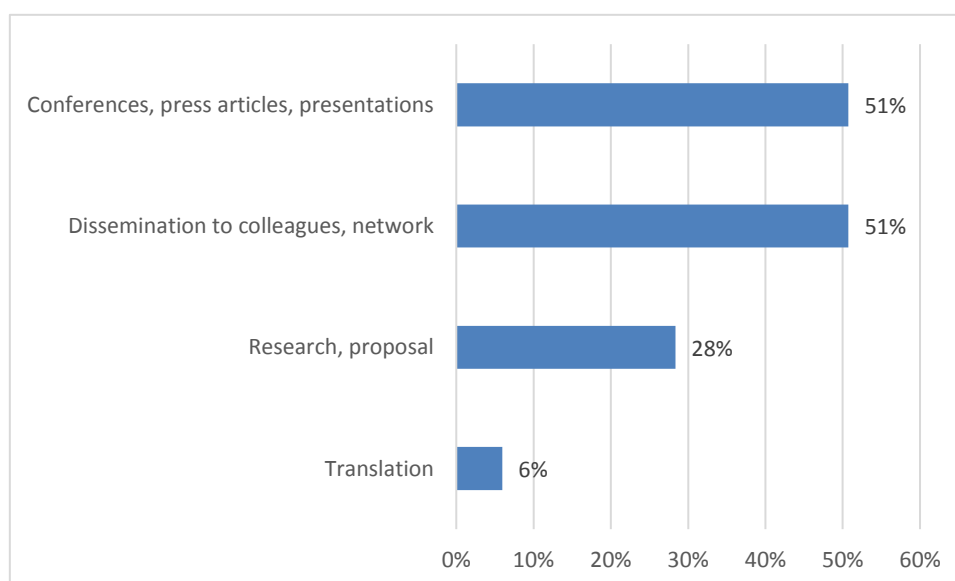
Some feedback from a very limited number of stakeholders also pointed out some limits in the implementation of FGs: composition of the FG and taking into account of the different points of view on sensitive issues.

4.4.4 Dissemination of FGs results by their members

A large majority of respondents (86%) mentioned they disseminated results from the FG. There are several ways for dissemination of FGs results, many respondents may have used more than one:

- Half of respondents (51%) indicated that they mentioned the FGs results in researches and call for proposals
- Half of respondents (51%) indicated they disseminated the FGs results to their colleagues and their professional network, through formal ways (forwarding the reports) or unformal way (discussion with colleagues). Several respondents indicate that they notably forwarded the report to the Ministry in charge of Agriculture in their Member State.
- More than a quarter (28%) of the respondents quoted the FGs in researches and proposals to calls for research projects
- A few respondents (4 respondents, 6% of the total) indicated they translated some documents related of the FG in order to disseminate information with the national language.

Figure 8 - Ways of disseminating the results from FGs



Source: elaboration AND-I based on EIP-AGRI Service Point survey

4.4.5 Suggestions to improve dissemination

Respondents were asked to indicate how FGs' outcome could be better disseminated. Several suggestions have been formulated:

- Actors involved to better disseminate the results:
 - National authorities,
 - national organisations
 - Multipliers in AKIS organisations
 - Focus groups' members: participation to local conferences
 - Authorities in charge of research, development and education, in order to aim to incorporate these findings into policies and strategies,
- Presentation of the results through conferences, seminars and other face-to-face events (national or international), disseminating the results from all or some FGs
- Media for dissemination: existing networks and websites (EU, Ministry websites), social media (Facebook, twitter), videos, newsletters, e-mailing
- Publication of results in several newspapers (scientific, professional, trade press...) through short papers or scientific articles.
- Translation of the outcomes
- Simple brochure or posters targeting advisers and farmers.
- Implementation of the focus group:
 - Definition of a dissemination strategy by the focus group members: key messages, methods, coordination of press releases when the report is published;
 - Share information and best practices among groups for dissemination
 - Ask members of the group to give a list of persons for e-mailing of the final report.
 - Implementation of the focus group on a permanent basis (yearly meetings) in order to update work
 - finish the final report faster to keep the flow/drive of the group
 - Engage and include more often "bridge builders" like consultants in the focus groups as they have a great access to end-users.

4.5 Interviews with research platform managers (ERA-NET, H2020)

The manager from four research platforms (ERA-NET and H2020 thematic networks) have been interviewed in order to assess their interest and use of FGs. The main findings from these interviews:

- FGs are relevant for networking, first discussions on each of the TN covered by the analysed took place in the context of a FG. Researchers shared information, reinforced their links, identified specific gaps and led a H2020 proposal.
- The links between these platforms and OGs remain limited, no formal link is established between any of these platforms and an OG (only unformal links in one case). The lack of flexibility of OGs projects is highlighted by one person interviewed (possibility to modify the OG project in order to collaborate with a TN)
- The emphasize on result dissemination and use of common standards for dissemination between H2020 and OGs is considered as positive.
- Awareness on FGs reports is satisfactory, each person interviewed knew a few reports published in its field of expertise. However, their use and dissemination of FGs reports could still be improved.

Information on each platform covered by this analysis is detailed below.

CORE Organic (ERA-NET)

CORE Organic stands for “Coordination of European Transnational Research in Organic Food and Farming Systems”. CORE Organic cofunds projects on organic farming (through call for projects) and disseminate the results. A first call was launched a first call in 2013 and 12 project have been selected. A second call has been launched in December 2016⁵ (deadline in March 2017). As mentioned in the section on the timing of FGs reports, two FG reports specifically focusing on organic farming have been published: May 2014 and March 2015.

Results from FGs are used as a source of information by CORE organic team, notably to define the calls. Information related to EIP-AGRI and FGs is disseminated by CORE Organic to its partners.

Fertinnowa (H2020 – Thematic network)

This Thematic network involves 23 partners, the objectives are:

- to gather knowledge on innovative technologies and practices for the fertigation of horticultural crops
- to build a knowledge exchange platform to evaluate existing and novel technologies (innovation potential, synergies, gaps, barriers) for fertigated crops
- to ensure wide dissemination to all stakeholders involved of the most promising technologies and best practices.

⁵ Link to the 2nd call from CORE organic (December 2016):

http://www.coreorganic.org/CO_Cofund_2016_Call_Announcement_minus_Bulgaria_.pdf

Among the 23 members of the projects, 4 were members of the FG “Fertiliser efficiency - Focus on horticulture in open field”. The application is partly linked to the discussion led in the context of this FG.

HNV link (H2020 – Thematic network)

This project covers 10 areas within the EU where High nature value (HNV) farming systems are prevalent. The objective is to identify practices which work in specific areas and which could be more applicable in other areas or contexts. This project has been elaborated by a member of the FG on HNV. Specific issues were identified in the context of a brainstorming session in the FG, and members applied for a H2020 project in the continuation of the project.

The FG was published in January 2016 and the project started in spring 2016, for a duration of 3 years. There are some informal links between partners from the H2020 project and OGs and potential OGs in some areas (in ES and IE for instance).

OK Net Arable (H2020 – Thematic network)

This project involves 17 partners from 12 Member States. It started in March 2015 and will end in February 2018. The objective of the TN is to promote exchanges of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers and scientists through a web-based platform.

This TN is based on the work led in the context of EIP-AGRI FG on organic. The same team involved in the FG applied for the H2020 project.

Collaboration with OGs would be relevant for the TN. However, this has not been led until now, notably due to the lack of flexibility for OGs.

5. Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the analysis led in the context of this study. Some of these recommendations may have been implemented already by EIP-AGRI Service Point, DG AGRI, NRNs or MAs; the objective is to provide recommendations which could increase the awareness of FGs and the use of FGs reports.

Topic	Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved	
Implementation of FGs				
Implementation of FGs	1. Continuation of FGs	The feedback from participants to FGs (in most cases) and OGs which used FGs reports is very positive on the outputs of FGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of FGs is relevant to gather and disseminate expertise on innovation and should be continued. 	EIP-AGRI SP
	2. Good practices for the implementation of FGs	<p>The feedback on FGs is very positive in most cases. However, some weaknesses have been reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the transparency for the selection criteria of FGs members; potential conflicting interests between FGs members; the non-consideration of all points of view expressed during the FGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practices for the implementation of FGs should be defined. This would cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The selection of experts (for instance: publication of the selection criteria and of the list of applications); ✓ The identification of potential conflicting interests and the implementation of good practices to allow each participant to express its views; ✓ The consideration of the contribution from all members (for instance publication of the contribution from all experts). 	EIP-AGRI SP

Topic		Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved
	3. Selection of FGs members	<p>Most of FGs members stated that their participation to FGs influenced their work. Most of these members are active in disseminating FGs results.</p> <p>Qualitative interviews showed a significant interest from stakeholders to be involved in FGs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGs implementation should seek to involve a large number of stakeholders, each of them being ambassador of FGs. • Specific attention should be given to the involvement of multipliers and advisors in FGs, this would allow a larger awareness on FGs among stakeholders. 	EIP-AGRI SP
	4. Definition of FGs topics	<p>The definition of FGs topics is a great challenge because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the timing: the objective of FGs is to anticipate the themes of future calls and OGs projects, • the wide scope covered by OGs projects. <p>The clustering analysis showed that 1) some FGs were strongly connected to OGs themes, 2) other FGs had lower links with OGs topics, 3) some topics developed by OGs were not covered at all by FGs.</p> <p>For instance, the following topics / sectors are covered by several OGs but are not covered by FGs: animal welfare, energy crops, poultry sector, methodology for the development of a new supply chain (from R&D to marketing issues), processed products...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bottom-up approach for the definition of topics should be encouraged, for instance through calls for ideas via the EIP newsletter. • A monitoring of the number OGs by RDPs and the themes covered by these OGs could be led on a regular basis (twice a year for instance), through the information provided by MAs and the information available online (FR, DE, IT notably). This information may also be delivered by NRNs to EIP-AGRI SP and DG AGRI. This would allow to identify the themes that are not covered by FGs. 	EIP-AGRI SP DG AGRI NRNs Sub-group for innovation

Topic		Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved
	5. FGs follow-up / update	<p>Each FG consists in two meetings of a maximum of 20 experts.</p> <p>FGs members showed high interest in the work performed in the context of FGs and some respondents to the online survey highlighted the interest in collaboration on a longer period.</p> <p>Collaboration of experts on a longer period would allow to involve a higher number of experts who apply to the calls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content of each FG could be updated on a regular basis, for instance every two years. This would give the opportunity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ to update the scientific knowledge on the theme covered by the FG, ✓ to involve OGs with topics related to the FGs, ✓ to assess the extent to which results have been disseminated and used by OGs and other stakeholders. to involve new experts in the FGs (and increase the number of FGs “ambassadors”). 	EIP-AGRI SP FG members
Dissemination strategy				
Dissemination strategy	6. Dissemination strategy for each FG	<p>Each FG report may interest specific stakeholders, depending on the theme covered: specific sector, geographical area...</p> <p>FGs members are the first ambassadors of FGs reports and play a key role in their dissemination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specific dissemination strategy for each FG should be defined, A guideline for the definition of this strategy should be defined (methodology, best practices identified), This strategy should mainly involve the EIP-AGRI Service Point and FGs members. This strategy should identify the channels of dissemination (web, social media, articles, press...), the document used (final report or abstract) and the role of each member. 	EIP-AGRI SP FG members

Topic	Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved
7. Dissemination strategy for the different types of actors	<p>The potential interest in FGs is different for the different types of actors.</p> <p>The main sources of information on EIP-AGRI for OGs are the EIP-AGRI newsletter and information disseminated by rural networks and MAs. However, all stakeholders did not subscribe to the newsletter and rural networks or MAs don't necessarily disseminate information to all stakeholders involved in EIP-AGRI.</p> <p>Some initiatives were considered as relevant, such as an information day on all FGs related to breeding in Catalonia.</p> <p>Furthermore, while FGs final reports are considered as being long by many stakeholders, FGs abstracts could be used to a larger extent.</p> <p>Three types of targets are identified for information dissemination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRNs: for the dissemination of information, • OGs: for the definition / update of the project, • Other stakeholders: researchers, research platforms, advisors, policy makers, farmers.... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific strategy for the dissemination of FGs related information should be defined for each target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Channel used: web, social media, articles, press, public bodies, rural networks, professional organisation, seminar, information days, calls for projects... ✓ Content disseminated: final report or abstract. • Increase the use of FGs abstract for the dissemination. • The subscription to the EIP-AGRI newsletters should be encouraged for rural networks, MAs and OGs members. • A mailing list of all OGs should be established at EU level, to disseminate information. 	<p>EIP-AGRI SP</p> <p>DG AGRI</p> <p>NRNs (MAs)</p>
8. Adaptation of the dissemination strategy to the context in each MS	<p>The innovation ecosystem is different in each Member State. In Germany, where the innovation support is well developed, the added value of FGs is not necessarily perceived by Rural Networks and MAs. This limits the dissemination of information related to FGs among stakeholders.</p> <p>Information dissemination is led by rural networks and innovation support services implemented at national/regional level. MAs may also play a role in information dissemination even if this is not in their duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dissemination of FGs related information (call for experts, reports...) should take into account the specific context in each MS. • A specific strategy should be defined by DG AGRI, EIP-AGRI Service Point, Rural Networks and MAs for the involvement in FG and dissemination of FGs results. 	<p>EIP-AGRI SP</p> <p>NRNs (MAs)</p>

Topic		Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved
	9. Strengthening of links with research platforms (H2020 thematic networks, ERA-NETs)	Research platforms such as H2020 Thematic networks are aware of EIP-AGRI FGs. However, their use and dissemination of FGs reports could be improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the interaction between EIP-AGRI SP and research platforms in order to increase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use of FGs reports, ✓ Dissemination of FGs reports, ✓ Links with OGs, for instance through the implementation of joined actions between research platforms and OGs. 	EIP-AGRI SP DG AGRI Research Platform
	10. Translation of FGs reports	One of the main barriers for the dissemination of FGs report is their availability in national languages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The translation of FGs reports (or factsheets) in national language should be encouraged. 	EIP-AGRI SP DG AGRI MAs NRNs
	11. Structure of FGs reports	Final reports from FGs follow different structure and layout. This does not facilitate the dissemination of these reports and their results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common structure of the FGs reports should be defined. This would cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The maximum length of the report ✓ The different sections ✓ The way to formulate the recommendations for OGs 	EIP-AGRI SP

Topic		Background and justifications	Recommendations	Actors involved
National FGs				
National FGs	12. Implementation of national FGs	<p>FGs are considered as relevant by experts who participated and by OGs which used the results. However, some limits have been pointed out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Language skills of potential experts to participate to international meetings in English (while researcher use English daily, this is not necessarily the case for advisors and farmers). ✓ Language skills for potential users of FGs reports: reports only available in English (and abstract translated into French recently). ✓ Availability of potential experts to participate to international meetings (time and fees needed). <p>In this context, Spanish authority implemented FG at national level and this is under reflexion in France.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of national FGs should be supported • This would allow to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ focus on national issues, relevant for stakeholders, ✓ tackle the issue of language skills (both for participants and dissemination) and increase the involvement of all type of stakeholders, notably farmers, ✓ increase the number of FGs (and thus increase the amount of knowledge gathered) ✓ increase the number of participants and thus the awareness on the concept of FGs • The implementation of national FGs should be monitored at EU level to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ disseminate the results of national FGs ✓ build bridges between the different FGs (EU/national): share expertise, good practices... • involve international experts, if relevant, in national FGs 	EIP-AGRI SP DG AGRI MAs NRNs