

COMMON NETWORK STATISTICS (CNS)

2023 summary report

September 2024

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Context

In the previous Programming Period 2014-2020, National Network Support Units (NSUs) agreed to submit Common Network Statistics (CNS) every calendar year.

The main objective of the CNS data collection has been to collect and collate basic qualitative and quantitative information on National Network (NNs) activities across the EU in order to provide an overall picture of their achievements. The aim is to use these data at an EU level for benchmarking and promoting EU-wide networking activities, raising awareness of the achievements of National Networks (NNs), identifying and compiling significant NN activities/examples across Europe, while tracking progress within each individual NNs.

The first data were collected in 2016 for Y1 (2014 data) and Y2 (2015 data). After the simplification and shortening of the CNS survey in 2017, an adjusted structure of the CNS was used until Y7+2 (2022 data). In 2023, the EU CAP Network - CAP Implementation Contact Point together with the NSUs co-designed a new structure for the data collection, emphasising the need for simplification and adding qualitative indicators to better reflect the impact of networking.

The report covers 2023 data and refers to the EU-27, including data from 28 NSUs.

Process and Submissions

The CNS survey for 2023 data, Y1 of the new Programming Period 2023-2027, was distributed to NNs on 21 December 2023, with responses requested by 21 February 2024.

Using direct contact, reminders and consultations, resulted in all 28 NN submissions being collected and finalised by 30 April 2024. However, it should be noted that since the CNS data reporting is not an obligation for NNs but rather a joint benchmarking effort, not all the NNs replied to all the questions included in the CNS excel file.

The excel file to collect the CNS data included several sheets. The first one was dedicated to the submission details and the other sheets referred to the 6 CNS



indicators. There was an additional, optional sheet, where the NNs could fill in the name of the events, serving as a tool to automatically fill in the sheet no.1 'Events'. Out of 28 responses, 9 surveys were completed using the additional optional sheet to list the events.

The 6 indicators included in this process are as follows:

-  1. Events
-  2. Communication activities
-  3. Project examples
-  4. Thematic work
-  5. Networking highlights
-  6. Other activities

In addition, further instructions were inserted in the guidance note accompanying the data collection template. The guidance note was aimed to be used alongside the CNS template for National Networks' quantitative and qualitative data for the given year 2023. Individual indicators described below contain specific explanations/definitions that were refined in cooperation with NNs.

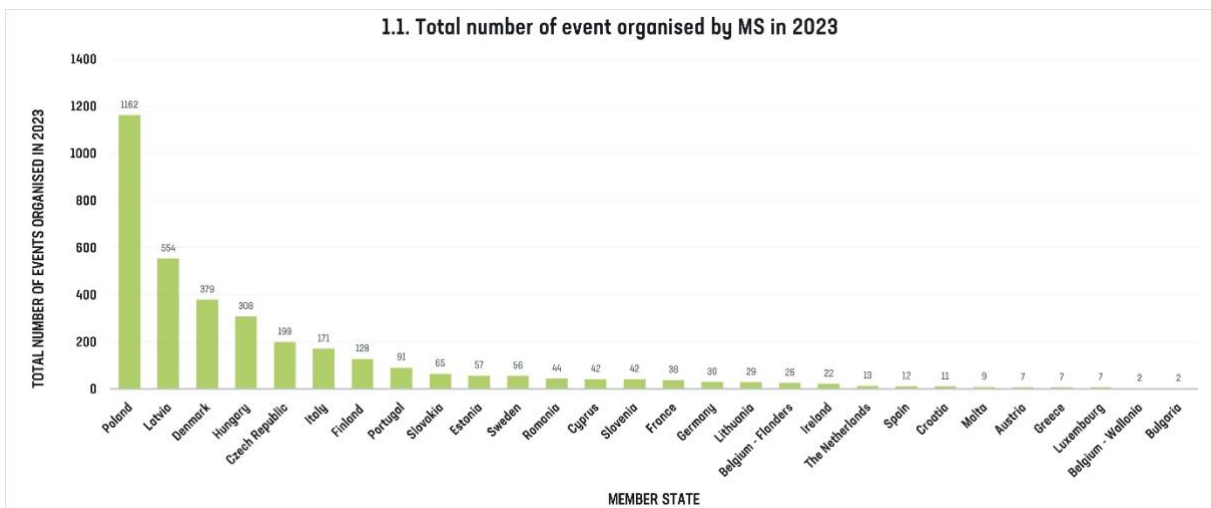


Analysis of Y1 results (2023)

From the 28 submissions received, the analysis across all the categories gave an overview of National Networks' (NN) activities throughout the EU. During the process, the lessons-learned and improvement opportunities have been tracked down, in order to be applied in the future.

1. Events

In 2023, the 28 National Networks' Support Units (NSUs) reported all together 3 513 **events organised by NNs** (*Indicator 1.1.*), slightly fewer than in the previous year 2022¹ (3 907 events). The decrease in the number of events may be derived from it being the first year of the current CAP Programming Period.



Poland² remains the Member State reporting the highest number of events (1 162, which means 33.1% of the total events organised by MS), as well as in the previous year (1 371 events organised in 2022).

¹ Last year of the Previous Programming Period 2014-2020.

² The comparably higher number of events reported by the Polish NN each year arises from the inclusion of further events organised by the regional offices.



Other countries reported the following total number of events:

Latvia 554 (555 in 2022, 634 in 2021 and 529 in 2020), Denmark 379 (89 in 2022, 38 in 2021 and 58 in 2020), Hungary 308 (436 in 2022, 414 in 2021 and 271 in 2020), Czech Republic 199 (188 in 2022, 85 in 2021 and 24 in 2020), Italy 171 (77 in 2022, 52 in 2021 and 24 in 2020), and Finland 128 (130 in 2022, 44 in 2021 and 68 in 2020). The rest of the countries reported a number of events organised lower than 100.

The total number of events in Sweden decreased from the previous year dropping from the 257 events organised in 2022 to 56 in 2023, and a similar situation occurs in Romania, organising 44 events in 2023 down from the 215 events organised in 2022.

It is important to highlight that some Member States have increased the number of events organised, for instance Denmark, from the 89 events organised in 2022 up to 379 events organised in 2023.

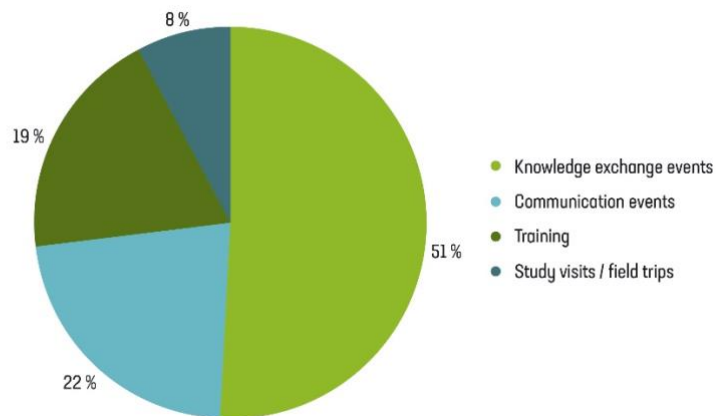
The total number of events reported fall into different categories:

- Communications events organised with the purpose of informing, awareness raising and promotion.
- Knowledge exchange events aiming at knowledge exchange including cooperation events, networking meetings, consultations, workshops, and seminars.
- Training events with a strong capacity-building and skills-development aspect.
- Study visits/field trips, aiming at visiting practical real-life examples. This category was divided into study visit/field trip that were organised within other events or as a stand-alone event.



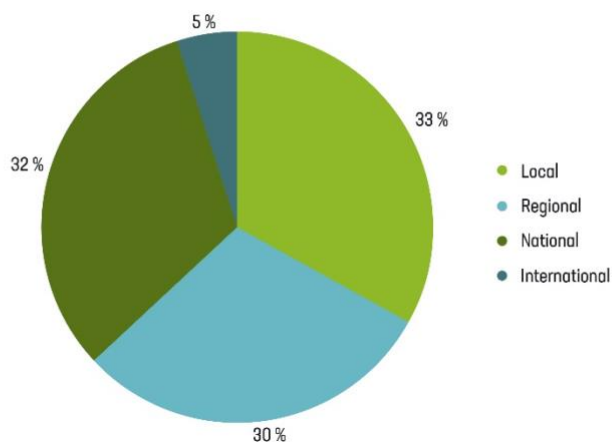
The largest category of events was 'Knowledge-exchange events', reporting 1 789 events (51%), followed by the events under the category 'Communication events', reporting 784 events (22%) and 668 events within the 'Training' category' (19%). The Study visits organised as stand-alone events in 2023 were 272 (8%)

1.1. Total number of events organised by category



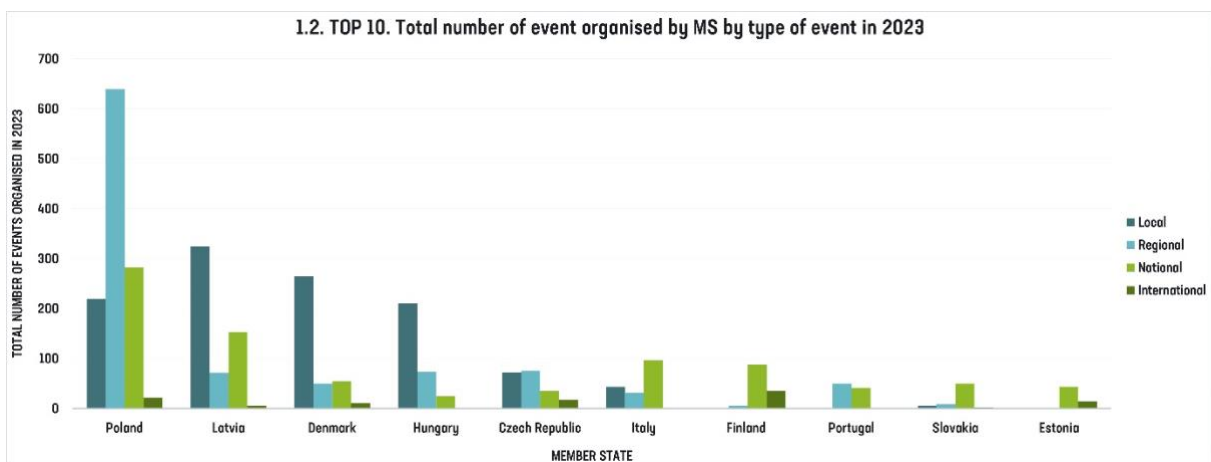
The **number of local, regional, and national events** (*Indicator 1.2.*) organised by the NNs in 2023 was comparable to the previous year, organising 1 163 local events (33%), 1 054 regional events (30%) and 1 127 national events (32%), respectively. However, for international events (those when participants are from another MS, or an event organised abroad, or an event held in a language other than English), the total number is significantly smaller, having 169 international events organised in 2023 (5%). The reason seems to be the aim of the NNs to be focused on the transition period and informing about the upcoming CAP period at local, regional and national level.

1.2. Total number of events by type



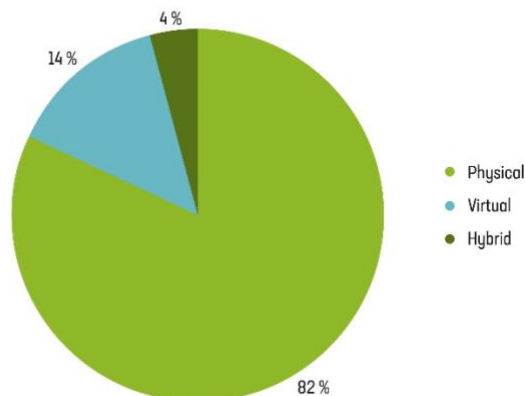
In comparison with the data from the previous year (2 203 local and regional events in 2022), the number of these type of events in 2023 is similar (2 217). The number of national events organised in 2023 (1 127) is slightly lower than those organised in 2022 (1 158).

The following graph shows the type of events organised by NNs in 10 Member States with the highest number of events, on local, regional, national and international level.

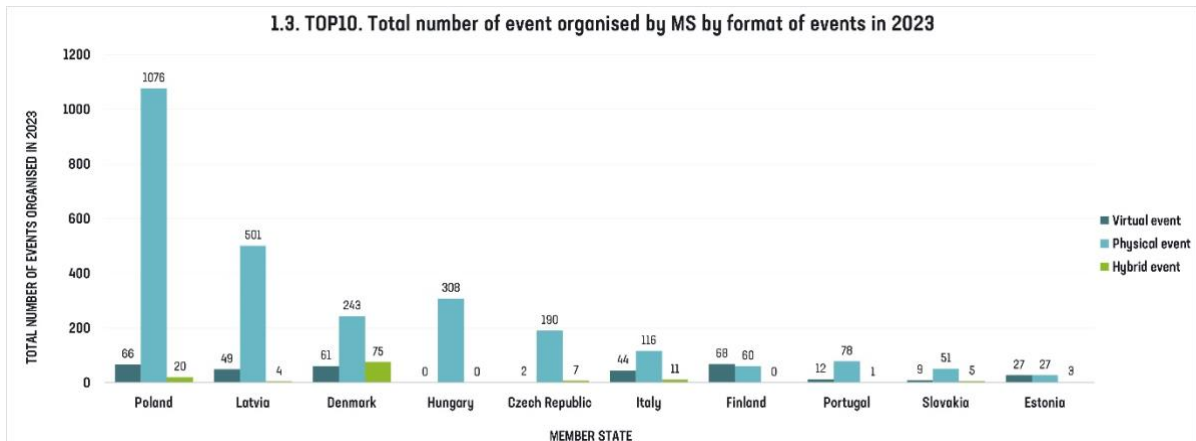


During 2023, the MS organised **physical, virtual and hybrid events** (*Indicator 1.3.*). Most of the events organised in 2023 were physical events (2 888, 82.2%). NNs organised 487 virtual events (13.9%) and 138 hybrid events (138, 3.9%). This data shows that we have clearly moved back to physical events, as well as in the previous year 2022, while maintaining virtual and hybrid environment for some networking activities.

1.3. Total number of events by format



The following graph shows the format of events (virtual, physical or hybrid events) organised by NNs in 10 Member States with the highest number of events. In general, the physical events were the most frequent type of events organised by all the MS, with the exception of Finland.



NNs were asked to group events under a specific **Thematic Focus** (*Indicator 1.4.*), indicating which CAP objectives (9 specific objectives plus 1 crosscutting objective) reflects thematic focus of the event organised. Each event has been allocated at least one lead objective, being possible to have multiple focuses with a maximum of 3 CAP objectives.

When Thematic Focus of an event was not covered by CAP objectives, it has been counted under category 'Other', specifying the focus.

The largest thematic focus of the events organised by NNs has been the specific objective “SO1: Fair income” (680), followed by “SO8: Rural areas” (648) and “CCO: Knowledge & Innovation” (450).

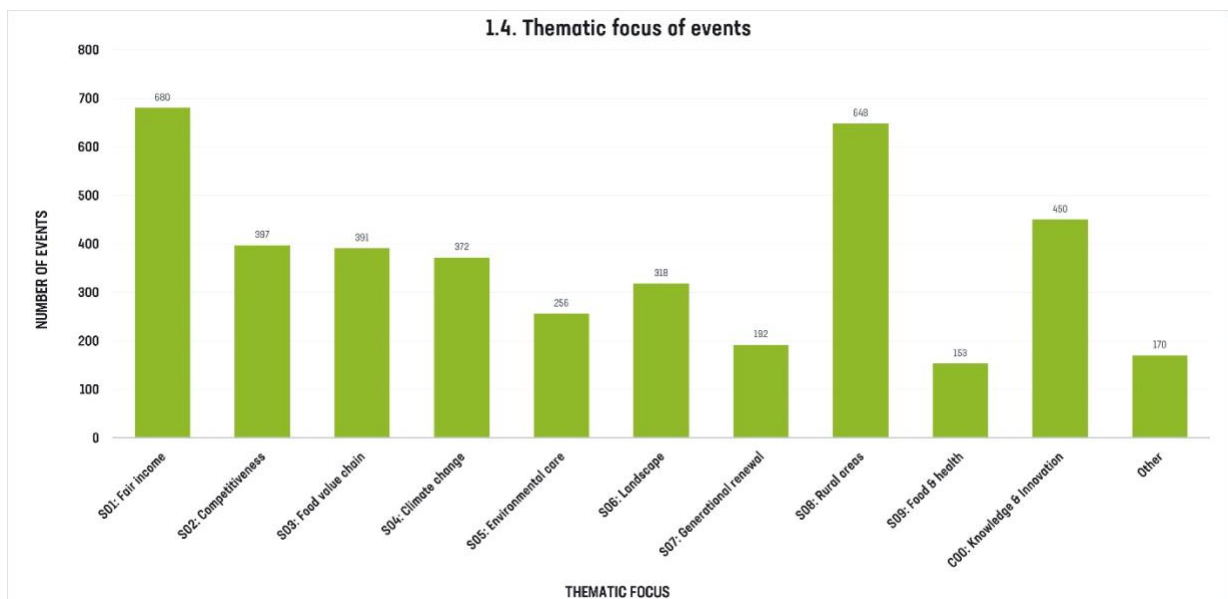
The next specific objectives that reflect thematic focus of the events organised are “SO2: Competitiveness” (397), “SO3: Food value chain” (391), “SO4: Climate change” (372), “SO6: Landscapes” (318) and “SO5: Environmental care” (256).

The CAP objectives with less representation in the thematic focus of the events organised are “SO7: Generational renewal” (192) and “SO9: Food & health” (153).



The NNs provided a total of 270 events under the category “Others”. Some of the examples reported in this category are as follows:

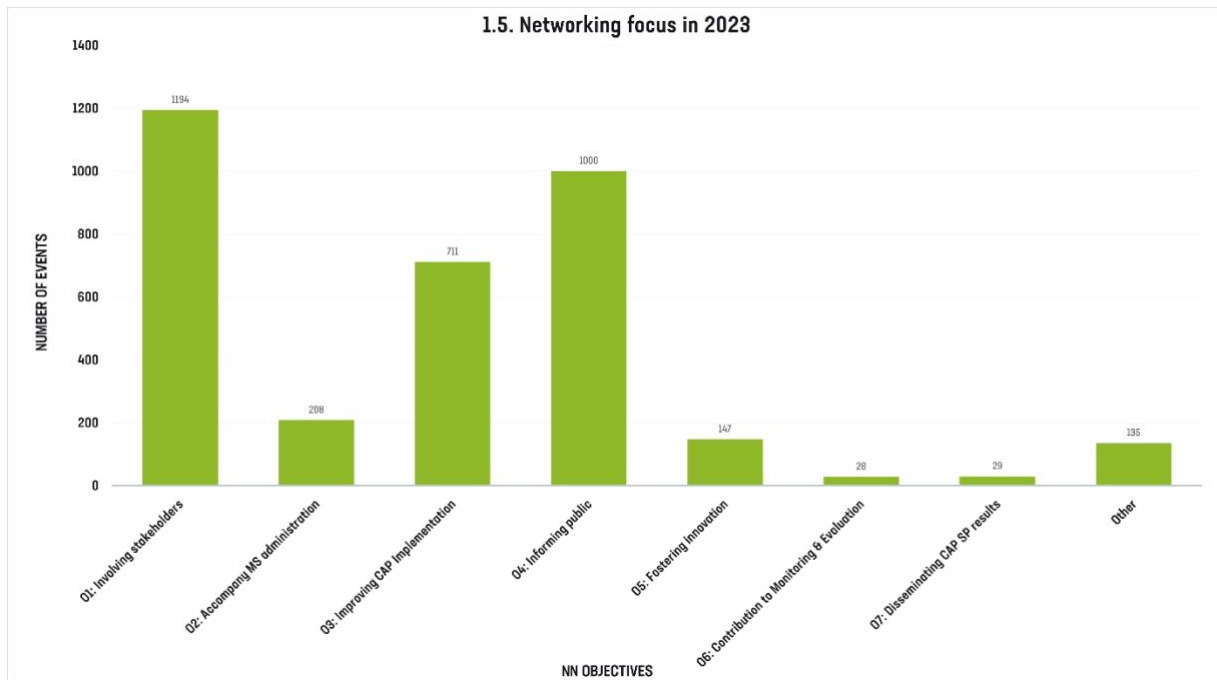
- Thematic events: farmers’ mental health, gender equality, environmental and social conditionality, bioeconomy, capacity building.
- LEADER: local food promotion, dealing with populism and extremism in the LEADER regions.
- Events focus on the CAP in general and other European Funds, including implementation and novelties, monitoring & evaluation, technical assistance.
- Cluster meetings: thematic clusters meetings, geographical cluster meetings.
- Promotion of new regional contact points of National Networks.



Italy is the MS reporting the largest events under the category “Others” (154 events). The reason provided by the Italian NN was that they are still running the former Network, and its monitoring system didn't allow them to classify outputs according to CAP's objectives.



NNs were requested to group events under a specific **Networking Focus** (*Indicator 1.5.*), reflecting networking objectives covered by the events organised. In cases of events with multiple foci, when it was not possible to identify only one lead objective, up to 3 CAP NN objectives could have been selected.



The largest networking focus of the events organised by NNs has been “O1: Involving stakeholders” (1 194), followed by “O4: Informing public” (1 000) and “O3: Improving CAP Implementation” (711).

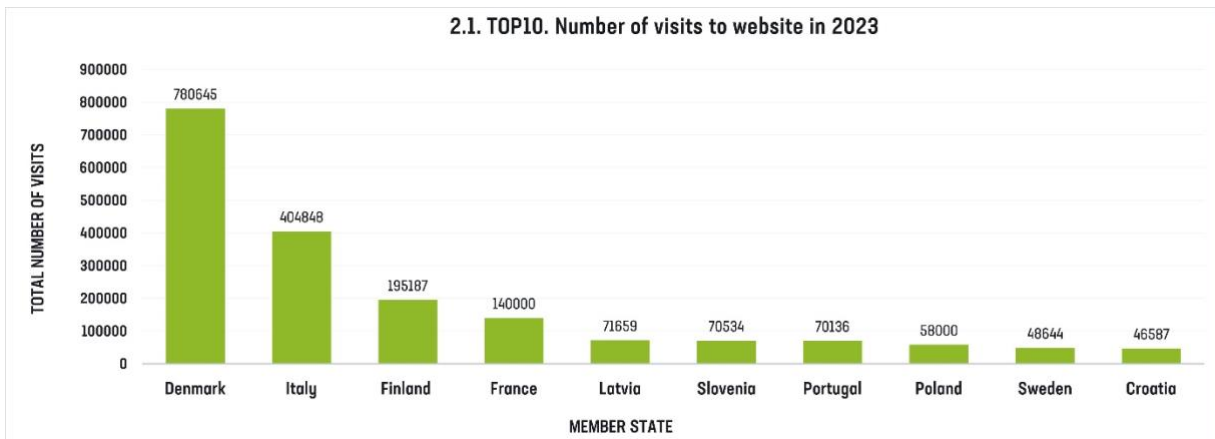
The next networking focus addressed by the NN were “O2: Accompany MS administration” (208), “O5: Fostering innovation” (147), “Others” (136), “O7: Dissemination CAP SP results” (29) and “O6: Contribution to Monitoring & Evaluation” (28).

The events categorised as 'Others' included promotional, networking and cooperation events (135). Similar to the indicator 1.4., Italy reported the largest number of events under the category “Others” (125 events) with the similar reason.



2. Communication activities

The NNs indicated the communication activities carried out during 2023, providing details of number of visits to website, name and number of social media channels used, number of followers for each channel as of the end of the year, number of online forums running³, and number of communication outputs.



The total **number of visits to website** (*Indicator 2.1.*) reported by the NNs in 2023 is 2 103 195. Only 22 Member States reported this data and some of them reported a partial number of website visits, as the website of some NNs were still under construction or for other reasons related to the transition period.

Denmark is the NN reporting the largest number of visits to the website⁴ in 2023, reporting 780 645 visits, which means 37.1% of the total visits to NN websites.

Italy reported 404 848 visits (19.2%), followed by Finland (195 187, 9.3%) and France (140 000, 6.7%). The rest of the NNs reported a number of visits to their website below 100 000.

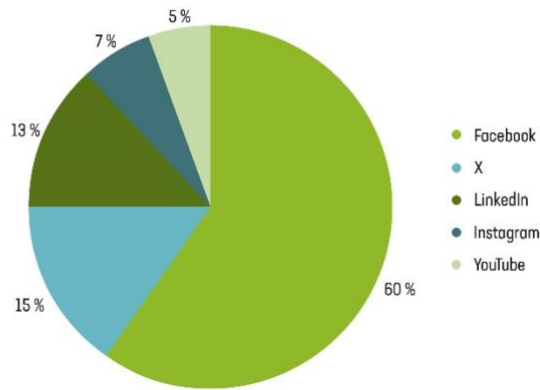
³ Online forums are digital spaces to bring together rural stakeholders (e.g. digital platform, Facebook group, etc.)

⁴ the number is a sum of visits to the two websites of Danish Agricultural Agency and the Danish Agency for Planning and Rural Development



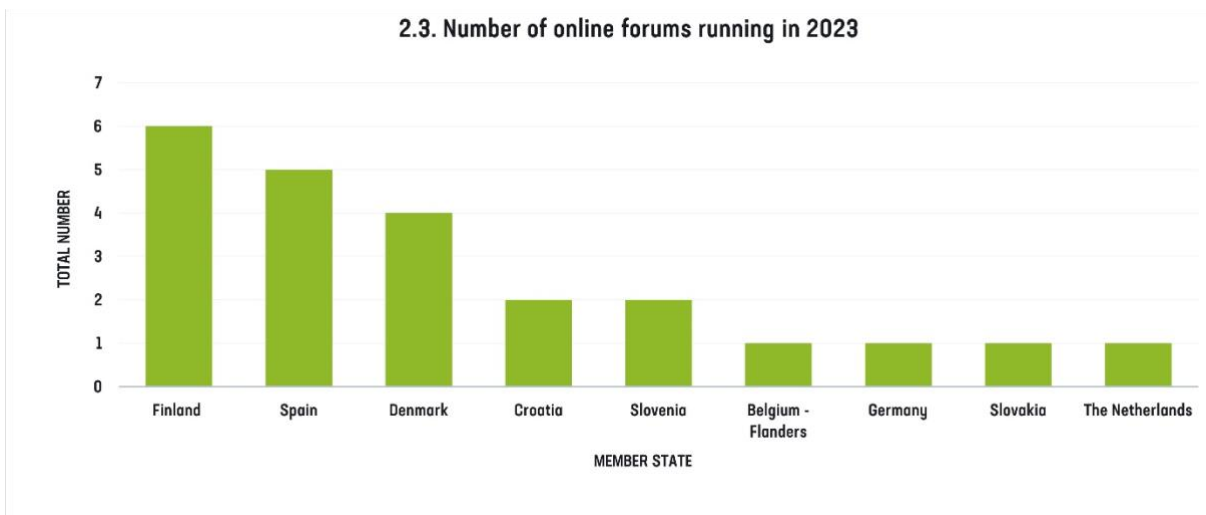
The total **number of followers of the media channels** (*Indicator 2.2.*) used by the NNs, as of the end of 2023, was 241 459. The social media channel with most followers was Facebook, with 144 857 followers (60%), followed by X (36 485, 15%), by LinkedIn (31 323, 13%), by Instagram (15 704, 7%) and by YouTube (13 090, 5%).

2.2. Number of media channels used in 2023



The NNs reported 23 **online forums running in 2023** (*Indicator 2.3.*). Only nine Member States reported this data.

2.3. Number of online forums running in 2023



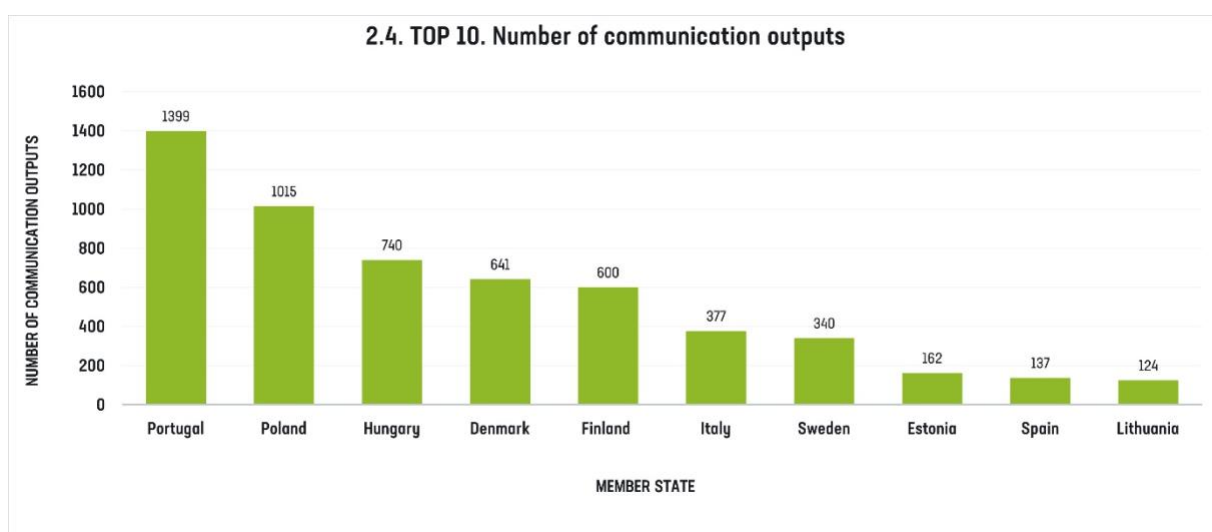
Finland reported the largest number of online forums (6 forums in digital platforms: 3 in Facebook, 1 in Instagram, 1 in X and 1 in LinkedIn), followed by Spain (5 forums in digital platform WhatsApp channel: Rural connections, Innovation, Youth, Young farmers and Environment), Denmark (4 forums in digital platforms: The Danish Agricultural Agency, The Danish Agricultural Agency in LinkedIn, The Danish Agency for Planning and Rural Development – Livogland, The Danish Agency for Planning and Rural Development in LinkedIn), Croatia (2 forums in digital platforms: Platform for National Network Members and Platform for Q&A) and Slovenia (2 forums in digital platforms: webpage CAP and knowledge platform).

Another four NNs (Vlaamsruraalnetwerk in Belgium – Flanders, Facebook group in Germany and Slovakia, and LinkedIn community in The Netherlands) reported one online forum each one running in the previous year.

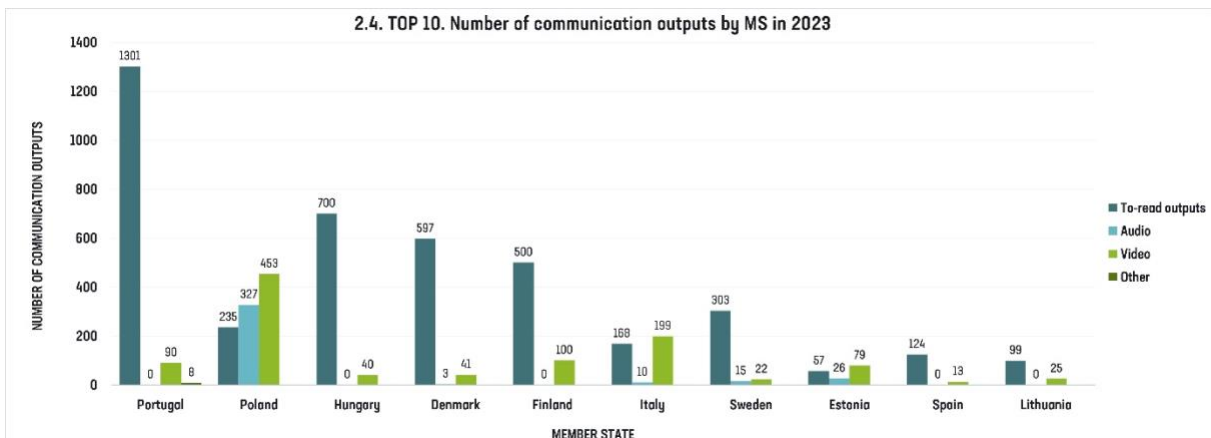
The **number of communication outputs** (*Indicator 2.4.*) includes the total number of all communication outputs including these categories:

- To-read outputs that include e-publications, newsletters, reports, individual articles that are part of a broader output, translations of EU-level or other publications.
- Audio outputs that include podcasts. Every single episode produced in the given year shall be counted.
- Video outputs that include promo videos or webinars, among other.

The total number of communication outputs available in 2023 was 5 909. 25 NNs reported communication outputs during 2023.

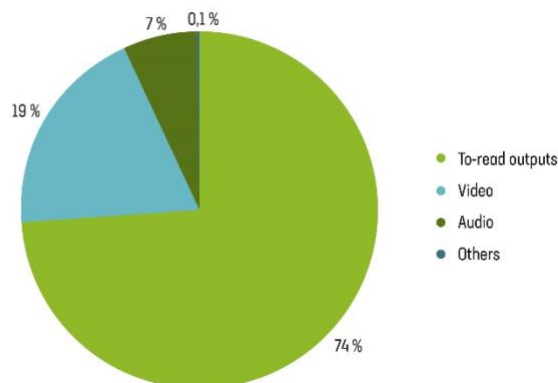


As for cumulative number of communication outputs per NN, Portugal reported the largest number of communication outputs in 2023 (1 399, 23.7%), followed by Poland (1 015, 17.2%), Hungary (740, 12.5%), Denmark (641, 10.8%), Finland (600, 10.2%), Italy (377, 6.4%), Sweden (340, 5.8%), Estonia (162, 2.7%), Spain (137, 2.3%) and Lithuania (124, 2.1%). The rest of the MS reported a number of communication outputs below 100.



The largest communication output in 2023 reported by NNs was To-read outputs (4 374, 74%), followed by Video outputs (1 141, 19%), Audio outputs (383, 7%) and Others (11, 0.1%).

2.4. Number of communication outputs

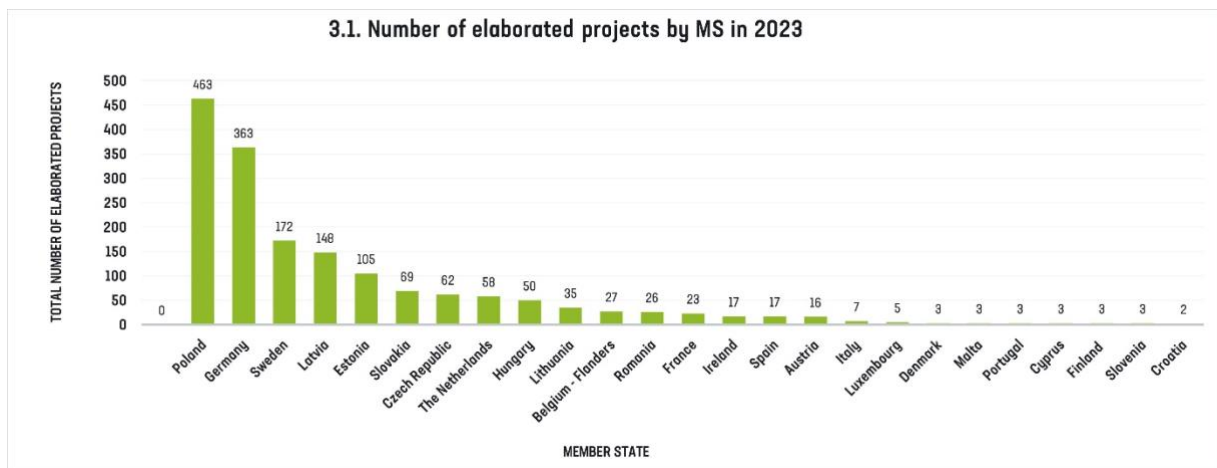


3. Project examples

The total number of **elaborated projects** (*Indicator 3.1.*) reported by the NNs was 1 683, defining 'elaborated projects' as CAP funded projects for which the NSU collected a considerable amount of information, and which were subsequently presented or disseminated or promoted as a good practice through the NN activities (e.g. through a dedicated article, in a newsletter, etc.).

This indicator does not concern project entries with only basic information collected for the purposes of the national data collection tool, i.e. database of all CAP funded projects, which have been reported under Indicator 6 Other Activities.

Poland had the largest number of elaborated projects (463, 27.5%), followed by Germany (363, 22%), Sweden (172, 10%), Latvia (148, 9%) and Estonia (105, 6%). The rest of the NNs reported a number of projects lower than 100.



The NSUs were asked to provide three significant CAP funded projects implemented in the MS that are worth highlighting as best good practices of the year, detailing information on the timeframe, beneficiary, measure, and main achievements. In total, the description of 77 project examples were reported by 24 NNs.



The top 3 projects selected by the NNs have been categorised in the following topics, according to the CAP General Objectives (GO):



Some of the projects reported by the NNs include:

- 'Regional products' (The Netherlands). The aim is to increase the marketing and visibility of agroecological products produced and marketed in the area between Rhenen, Wageningen, Ede and Renkum, promoting short supply chains by professionalising the organisation of StreekWaar, implementing a pilot for collective logistics and processing, organising and strengthening community building, and professionalising communication and marketing tools.
- 'Las Albaidas' (Spain) is a livestock farm in Spain dedicated to raising Merino sheep in an extensive and transhumant system. A tradition of the breeding and grazing system is maintained, combined with the application of new technologies, for the certification of product traceability (lamb and wool) with blockchain methods.
- The project '[Caiac Smile](#)' (Romania) addresses the integration of people with disabilities, as well as educating the youth and society to accept, adapt and integrate less favoured citizens/ inhabitants.



- The project 'Diversification of crop rotations and optimisation of agrotechnologies for the restoration of biodiversity and agroecosystem functions' (Lithuania), established by the Lithuanian Centre for Agricultural and Forestry Sciences is based on demonstrations of innovative crop cultivation technologies based on detailed agronomic, agrochemical and eco-physiological studies which were carried out on farms, proving the benefits of increasing plant diversity in crop rotation.
- The project 'Cultivation as an educational tool' (Sweden) aims to lay the foundation for a growing interest and understanding in farming, for young children as a target group. The strength of the project lies in the educational planning and collaboration between growers, school activities and the local associations that contribute knowledge and experience of growing and producing local produce.

The analysis of the best good practices showed that it is important to highlight the existence of cooperation projects between LEADER LAGs, and innovative projects. These are characterised by the **diversification of activities and the inclusion of cross-cutting topics**, involving for instance agriculture and tourism, or environmental and social issues.

Some of the projects reported by the NNs can be found in the EU CAP Network [good practices database](#).



4. Thematic work

The NNs were requested to provide the total number of **active thematic groups** and their names (*Indicator 4.1.*), defining 'active thematic group' as a thematic group with at least one meeting and/or activity in 2023. They were asked to include those permanent working groups which have some output during 2023.

18 NNs reported 74 active thematic groups during 2023, detailing the topics addressed in this thematic work.

The largest number of thematic groups (TGs) was focused on **agricultural topics**, addressed in the thematic work (12 TGs) of some NNs: Animal welfare (Czech Republic), Agricultural training and professional skills (Hungary and Romania), Wild Mushroom Sector (Portugal), Producers' Organisation and its operational programmes (Portugal), Flowers and aromatic plants (Portugal), Thematic analysis group in sustainable agriculture (Sweden), Thematic group on agricultural businesses (Sweden), Association, cooperation and agricultural chambers (Romania), and Working group of the Federal State and Länder on common good/public welfare (Germany). Latvia carried out three dialogues of interested parties, with the aim of developing the "Organic Agriculture Development Action Plan 2023-2030".

The NNs reported thematic work in 2023 addressing the topic on **LEADER** (11 TG): Learning Network LEADER (Belgium- Flanders), Development of IT-system CAPTAS (Denmark), Assessment of added value of LEADER (Denmark), Thematic group on LEADER and TNC (Denmark), LEADER (Hungary), LEADER and cooperation (Italy), Thematic group on LEADER approach (Poland), LEADER/CLLD (Slovakia), Thematic Leader meeting group (Sweden), Working group LEADER (The Netherlands) and Working Team for the implementation of the Community-Directed Local Development instrument in the Wielkopolska voivodeship (Poland).

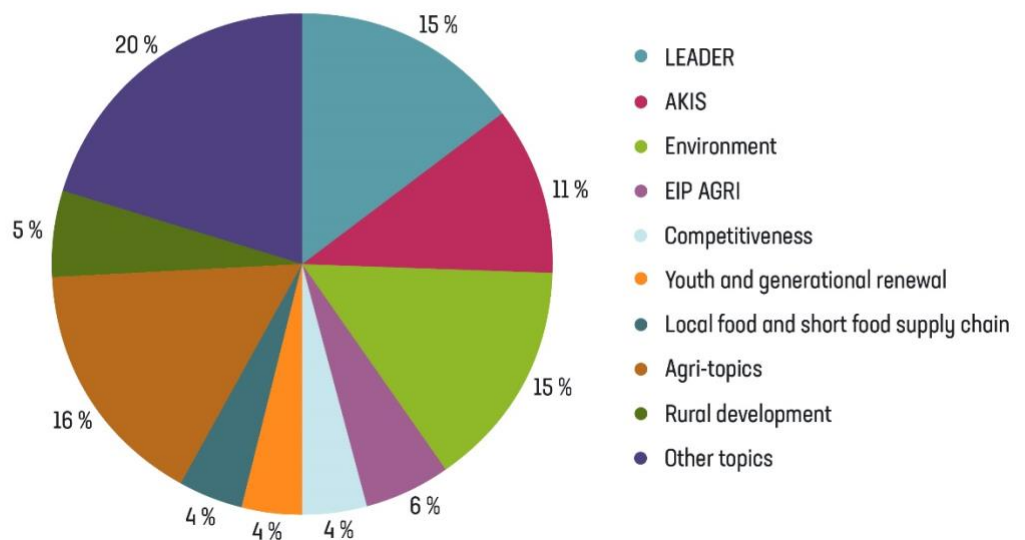
The **environmental topics** have been taken into account in 2023, reporting 11 TG in total: Environmental care (Cyprus), Naturforum (Denmark), Taskforce - Wetland restoration initiatives (Denmark), Expertgroup - Wetland restoration initiatives (Denmark), Climate change actions and environmental care (Italy) and Thematic group Environment and Climate (Sweden). **Eco schemes and Green Architecture** have been addressed by the following MS: Initial meeting for establishing the Thematic Working Group on Green Architecture (Croatia), Design and Implementation of Eco-schemes (Greece), Eco-schemes and green architecture (Italy) and Green-blue architecture online meetings, and Strategic partnership with Green Knowledge Network (The Netherlands).



The 8 thematic groups focused on **AKIS** were reported as follows: AKIS Focus Group "Competitive and resilient mountain regions" (Austria), AKIS fostering knowledge and innovation (Italy), AKIS Steering group (Ireland), Thematic AKIS group with 10 meetings (Sweden). The Netherlands organised the following TG focus on AKIS: Working group support applicants AKIS, AKIS coordination meetings, Modern AKIS National Community of practice - CoP, and Modern AKIS contribution with the General Assembly, Annual project meeting in Lisbon and Training CoP managers.

Operational Groups of the EIP-AGRI and Innovation were another focus area during the NNs thematic work in 2023 (4 TGs): Knowledge & Innovation (Cyprus), Permanent TG in Innovation (Portugal), 7th Workshop Operational Groups (Germany) and EIP Support group, with 10 meetings (Sweden).

4.1. Thematic work topics in 2023



Other broader areas of the NNs thematic work in 2023 included: **Rural Development** (Smart Villages TG in Latvia and Sweden, Rural areas in Cyprus, and Rural Proofing in Sweden) and **Youth and Generational renewal** (Generational renewal TG in Italy, TG with trainings/conferences/meetings for Young Farmers in Slovakia, and TG in Youth inclusion in Sweden).



During the first year of the current period, Cyprus, Italy and Portugal organised thematic groups to approach the topic on **competitiveness**: Competitiveness (Cyprus), Productive investments and increasing farm competitiveness (Italy), and increasing the income of family producers, promoting training actions to improve the presentation of products at fairs and markets (Portugal).

Local food and short food supply value chain were addressed by Czech Republic, Hungary and Portugal.

Other topics addressed in the thematic work during 2023 were as follows (15 TG): gender equality (Austria), inner and disadvantaged Rural Areas (Italy), risk management (Italy), Cultural heritage and national identity (Romania), mountain areas (Romania), Knowledge Hubs and Green Clusters (Sweden), National Competence Platform (Sweden), Thematic group Rural Communicators (Sweden), Working group at national level for RDP 2014-2020 (Poland), Regional NRN working groups (Poland), Working Group on intervention Cooperation for Integrated Area Development (The Netherland), Working group Communication (The Netherlands), Working Group on Monitoring Evaluation and Finance (The Netherlands), Dialogforum (Denmark), and Expert committee on Corporate management and consulting/advice (Germany).



5. Networking highlights

The NNs were asked to provide **the top 3 networking achievements** of the year (*Indicator 5.1.*). This indicator covers the three top networking achievements of the year as selected by the National Network Support Units. 26 NNs provided a total of 72 networking highlights, while 2 NNs (Belgium – Wallonia and Bulgaria) haven't provided networking highlights during 2023.

The networking highlights reported by the NNs include conferences, seminars, symposiums, and other activities of communication and dissemination of different topics of the new CAP, large events for sharing experiences and visiting projects identified as good practices, trip visits to exchange experiences and knowledge, publications, thematic working groups, launch of NNs, call for tenders and NNs meetings, among others. The networking achievements reported by the NNs have been grouped by theme.

The largest number of networking achievements reached in 2023 were **communication and dissemination activities** (16 networking highlights), reported by Cyprus (Workshop meeting of the members of the Thematic Groups of the Cyprus NRN in order to highlight specific topics to take action on), Estonia (Podcast “Rural Talks”), Finland (Spring’23 event), Ireland (Knowledge transfer webinars), Latvia (Forum publishing 384 answers and explanations about CAP, as well as video and visual explanatory materials), Lithuania (workshops about agriculture, etc.), Malta (Festa Għeneb: event promoting the Agri Funds for farmers), Portugal (Publication of the Catalogue of Projects financed by the National Rural Network 2017 – 2022), Romania (Publication of the finalist within ARIA competition 2022 and 2023), Slovakia (International agricultural and food exhibition “Agrokomplex”), Slovenia (Conference to present EIP projects), Spain (making contact with the primary sector, interviews and visualization of good practices in agriculture and livestock), Sweden (“Good News for Everyone”, campaign to inform about the usefulness of EU funds), The Netherlands (meeting focused on various aspects of the theme Liveability and Socio-economic developments, and submission of four projects to the ARIA Awards in 2023).

9 NNs reported networking achievements related to **LEADER**: Belgium – Flanders (“LEADER Learning Networks”), Croatia (“Differences connect us, LAGs inspire us”), Czech Republic (meeting bringing together to LAGs), Denmark (LEADER conference), Estonia (support to LAGs for preparing the LEADER Strategy 2023-2027), Finland (“Innovation camps- demonstrating the added value”), Germany (Nationwide LEADER



meeting 2023), Luxemburg (launch the new LEADER 2023-2029 programming period, with the slogan “People. Shaping. Regions”), and Slovenia (Workshop about implementation of multi-funded CLLD).

The **agriculture activity as well as food chains** has been a key topic addressed by 7 NNs as main networking achievements: Belgium – Flanders organised a networking event on the well-being of farmers and several information sessions during the agricultural fair “Agriflanders”, Cyprus carried out the conference “From Research to Practice” with more than 300 members, Czech Republic organised the event “Into the Orchards of the Pilsen Region” visiting strawberry farm, Hungary prepared a series of events at four locations under the title “Local product” addressing 500 interested parties, Italy promoted the “Networking to improve animal welfare and livestock sustainability”, Latvia promoted the development and cooperation of producers of local products using an electronic catalogue and led the dialogue for food public procurement, and Poland organised a meeting to share experiences and explore activities between the Operation Groups with the subjects of shortening food supply chains.

The **environment** was one of the topics addressed in the networking achievements of the NNs during 2023. The conference “Sustainable rural areas: concepts, ideas and new solutions” and the seminar “Erosion control in arable farming in the CAP” were organised in Austria. Estonian NN achieved various events related to the topics of environment and sustainability (Hybrid seminar “Sustainable communities”, Webinar “International Ecolabel Green Key” and Seminar “Collection of biowaste and on-site composting”), as well as German NN, organising the conference “ELER und Umwelt 2023” which brought together more than 100 representatives from agriculture and nature conservation stakeholders to discuss approaches of cooperative agri-environmental protection.

Greece addressed the **eco-schemes topic** in the OG “Design and Implementation of Eco-schemes in Greece”, Hungarian NN was part of a cooperation agreement to strengthen the professional coordination of domestic nature parks, Polish NN organised a meeting bringing together 180 attendees to explore knowledge on the causes and consequences of climate change approaching other topics as healthy diet or wild herbs into the kitchen, and Swedish NN organised the Conference on successful environmental practice within the framework of the EU’s, which brought together around 80 experts.



On the subject of **AKIS**, the German NN established a “Biodiversity-advice newsletter in 2023” in order to invite the federal coordination offices for an informal information exchange to exchange of information between stakeholders and the development of biodiversity advisory service for farmers. Irish NN organised the 1st AKIS Coordination Group Meeting and held an online webinar as part of the “Bioeconomy Week Ireland” which aims was to investigate the skills required to grow the bioeconomy in Ireland and Europe. Italian NN provided the networking achievement “Creating synergies between the NRN and the Interregional network (IN)”, which became an important reference to collect the regional level needs for the implementation of the innovation measures and to the strengthening of the AKIS. And Portugal launched the AKIS platform in 2023, bringing together all the AKIS stakeholders.

Two NNs reported networking achievements addressing the **Youth** topic. Portuguese NN organised the event for youth “AgriJovem” covering topics such as sustainability, innovation and technology, competitiveness and skills, strategic planning and the organisation of production. The young students were very participative, presenting their questions, suggestions and concerns for the future. Slovak NN organised study trips of young farmers to Germany and Czech Republic with the focus on the latest concepts and approaches of new innovative technologies and digitalisation of technology in agriculture. The “Young farmer’s clubs” were organised by the Slovaks NN in cooperation with Association of young farmers.

Other activities including **trips to exchange experiences** were carried out in Czech Republic (excursion to know Latvian agriculture), Slovenia (visits to good practices in Austria) and The Netherlands (study trip to Brussels).

Gender equality (in Austria and Italy) and **cooperation** (in Cyprus and Finland) were addressed as topics in the networking main achievements reported by the NNs, as well as **Rural Development** (“Hungarian Village Renewal Award” in Hungary and “Rural Week 2023 with Rural Pact Conference Need: Raise awareness regarding rural areas and its role in society in Sweden”) and **Tourism** (Symposium “Institutions and organisations towards rural tourism in Poland - historical and contemporary context”).



Five networking activities below illustrate different categories of Networking Highlights reported by the NNs:

- Podcast “Rural Talks” (Estonia), launched in March 2023. It is a web-based audio (Soundcloud & Spotify) and video (YouTube) broadcast channel, whose aim is to highlight people who live and work in the countryside, to inspire listeners, improve the positive image of rural areas, share stories and introduce the rich possibilities of rural life. The guests of the podcast are farmers, rural activists, entrepreneurs, rural developers, etc.
- “SPRING'23 event” (Finland). SPRING'23 sought to highlight a diverse range of funding instruments and innovation support services, from national and international public funding to private foundations, investors, to hubs and business accelerator programmes. Over two days, there were around thirty presentations on different types of funding, commercialisation experiences and tips, as well as inspiring project and company examples. There was also time for round table discussions, one-to-one meetings, and free networking between the participants.
- “Agrokomplex” (Slovakia). Agricultural and food exhibition to share the results of RDP 2014-2022 and promote current CAP Strategic Plan. One of the main objectives of the activity was to support and present rural regions through local action groups and small local farmers. 54 LAGs were present and have been promoting their activities and region.
- The 2nd Conference Agricultural Development “From Research to Practice” (Greece), attended by more than 300 stakeholders. At the conference, projects were presented relating to rural development and the impact of the advisory service system. The conference was a dual language conference Greek - English with an official guest from each MS.
- Conference “ELER und Umwelt 2023” (Germany) brought together representatives from federal and state governments, and agriculture and nature conservation stakeholders to discuss approaches of cooperative agri-environmental protection. Over 100 participants exchanged views on current topics relating to the implementation of agri-environmental measures. Special attention was brought to cooperative concepts for agri-nature conservation. Farmers and conservationists meet and agree on the best measures at regional level. This makes agri-environmental measures more targeted and better adaptable to the farming practice.



6. Other activities

The indicator 6.1. **Other activities**, was defined as a space to provide any other activities going beyond the indicators collected above, such as:

- collecting data for evaluation purposes,
- running/updating publicly available data collection tools such as databases,
- good practice competitions,
- campaigns,
- translation and dissemination of EU CAP Network products etc) – please provide a list and links (if available),
- any other relevant activities worth highlighting that are not mentioned above.

16 NNs reported a total of 96 activities going beyond the indicators 1-5 defined by the CNS, while 12 NNs (Belgium – Wallonia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Sweden) haven't reported other activities carried out in 2023.

The information provided by the NNs in the indicator 6.1. Other activities have been grouped by theme.

The NNs have carried out activities to **collect data about projects** and **disseminate publications and events**: Projects database (Austria, Italy and The Netherlands); Projects database with good examples and news items shared from other organisations on the website (Belgium – Flanders); Dissemination of EU CAP Network events and NNs activities as the workshop organised by Estonian and Slovenian NNs (Croatia); Running and updating database for EIP projects (Greece); Data collection about LEADER, Direct Payments, RDP Measures 9 and 16, RDP Measures for environment and climate change for evaluation purpose (Greece); Database of good practices, EIP Operational Groups, LAGs 2014-2020, and NN partners (Poland).

Polish NN carried out TV information and promotion campaign of the CAP Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 in Poland, including interventions dedicated to food quality systems and Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 and its effects. They took part in the organisation of the educational campaign "Zero Waste", a national event involving the production and broadcasting in the media of columns and films on preventing food waste and unfavourable climate changes by protecting the environment. Polish NN organised a nationwide information and educational campaign regarding agriculture and organic production, as well as the "WIEŚci z Mazowsza", a promotional campaign to transfer information about the development of rural areas, the activities of the



National Rural Network and the Mazowieckie Voivodeship Local Government, as well as good practices and news of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

Portuguese NN developed two videos with examples of women entrepreneurs in rural areas (“Alentejo regional”). The Spanish NN has compiled and published good practices in the Red PAC website, and recorded a video about the testimony of a grower oranges testifying about the challenges he experiences.

Further activities developed by the Dutch NN were “Good Practices Workshop (GPW) Addressing data gaps”, “EvalPlatform”, “GPW Designing good evaluation plans for the new CAP”, “Capacity building event about the Preparation of evaluation plan”, “Evaluation Peers Event in Finland”, “Denemarken en The Netherland” and “GPW 'how to assess LEADER added value.”

Other activities carried out in 2023 were following: four external events where the Flemish NSU had an information booth on relevant CAP interventions (Belgium – Flanders); Participation on several meetings and in the “Spring International Bjelovar Fair, a popular agricultural fair including dissemination of EU CAP promotion materials (Croatia); Participation on the presentation of the results of the project PERSPIRE (project of the national research institute Ruđer Bošković) and dissemination of project outputs (Croatia), Co-organisation of the 9th Estonian Open Farm Day and support of the smart village approach (Estonia); Webinar series "Network to Innovate", a joint undertaking initiated by the CAP networks from the Nordic-Baltic region with projects and initiatives covering innovative solutions of future EU agriculture, food production and rural development (Estonia); Ongoing of the network of Local Representatives and participation of the HU NN employees in around 1 000 professional events annually (Hungary), Participation in Deltaplan Agrarische Waterbeheer (DAW) day in Lunetten (The Netherland), update of the GO results on the innovation website (Portugal).

The activities related to the development of **websites, social media content and media tools** have been numerous during 2023. Austria performed massive open online courses for LAG-managements and regional managements. Bulgaria created a new web. Estonia published a series of online lectures focused on the researchers' view on rural development and promoted social media contents. Hungary, Italy and Portugal posted and updated information in the website and social media pages.

Italy developed online platforms and other media tools (audio, video, docufilm, e-book). Poland designed a cinema campaign, broadcasting a spot promoting the "Opolski Bifj" Culinary Trail.



Austria established four thematic advisory groups and the AKIS cooperation centre, which strengthens the link between research, education, advice and practice.

The NNs reported the **performance of foreign working missions**, such as trips to Ireland, New Zealand and Romania (Belgium – Flanders); visit province of Utrecht for the meetings to discuss general developments NSP programme and implementation (The Netherlands); Visit province of Zeeland, Flevoland, OverijsselmSouth Holland, North holland, Noord-Brabant, Gelderland, Limburg, Drenthe, Groningen en Friesland (The Netherlands), several visits to the Ministry LNV (The Netherlands), other visits to agrifood sites and farms (The Netherlands).

Several NNs organised awards during 2023: Local good practice competition “Future rural developers 2023” (Lithuania).

Poland NN was very dynamic in the **organisation of competitions**: "Przyjazna wieś" ("Friendly Village") competition promoting initiatives to support the development of Polish agriculture and local communities has been reactivated; national competition "My smart village" carried out by Network partner Institute of Rural and Agricultural Development of the Polish Academy of Sciences aims to identify social and digital innovations in rural areas in the form of a description of the actual state of affairs and a vision for the implementation of this concept in the future; "Agroliga" competition - Implementation by Network partners Agricultural Advisory Services in the Podlaskie, Mazowieckie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Lubelskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeships; "The Olympiad of Agricultural Knowledge and Skills is an educational competition addressed to students of secondary vocational schools; "The most interesting innovative solutions in agriculture" competition as part of the Knowledge and Innovation in Agriculture Forum; photo competition "PROW w obiektywie" ("RDP through the lens") in the Wielkopolskie voivodeship; "Competition for the best organic farm"; Competition "LEADER - leader of changes in rural areas" addressed to Beneficiaries operating in the Mzowieckie Voivodeship. Competition for the most professional cheese maker - organised by the Network Partner Tarnów Regional Development Agency S.A. entitled “Cheese-making as a chance for breeders of native cattle breeds – 2nd edition”.

Polish NN carried out the **translation and publication** of the Polish language version of the document "Making the seven LEADER principles work". And Belgium – Flanders NN was interviewed to talk about the operation of the Flemish CAP Network in the magazine “Ruralités” (Walloon CAP Network).



Other activities reported by the NNs have been following: selection criteria for 28 Regional Coordinators is in place (Bulgaria); selection of 37 activities as part of the Call for proposals for members activities in the implementation of the Action Plan of the National Rural Network 2021-2022 (Croatia); 32 Ad hoc Projects addressed to specific needs (Italy); EuroSheep (Romania); several conversations and interviews with different stakeholders (The Netherland); technical support for CSP implementation (Italy).

7. Conclusions

The analysis of CNS information provides a good overview of Network Support Units (NSUs) activities and thematic focus and objectives. This year, the EU CAP Network - CAP Implementation Contact Point, has developed a new batch of indicators together with NNs, trying to simplify the data collection process and adapt the data to the new CAP programming period 2023-2027, with the aim to collect and collate basic qualitative and quantitative information on National Network (NNs) activities across the EU in order to provide an overall picture of their achievements.

The idea is to collect data each year during the CAP programming period 2023-2027, in order to give a comparative analysis over time, which enables the CP to identify trends and to track progress, in a continuous improvement of the process.

The results of this report demonstrate the added value of the Common Network Statistic, which could be communicated at networking events such as NNs meetings, Governance meetings and/or relevant workshops. The NNs are directly benefitting from the CNS by identifying other NNs that work of the same topic, collective benchmarking and mutual knowledge-sharing.

