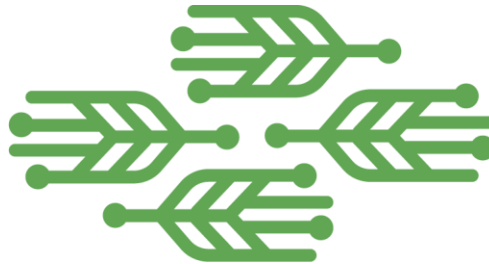


Deliverable 2.3 – WP2
Report on used communication and dissemination tools, and information
channels of TNs



EURAKNOS

***Connecting Thematic Networks as Knowledge Reservoirs towards a European
Agricultural Knowledge Innovation Open Source System***

TASK 2.3

Summary

Task 2.3 aims to map, analyze, and benchmark the best ways to disseminate and communicate according to their impacts on the end-user groups. Task 2.3 will strongly build on the experiences of the current Thematic Networks (TNs) and analyze the used strategies, ways, tools, and channels of dissemination, communication, and information deliveries that have been used to target the end-user group, farmers, foresters, and advisors. Social media will be specially considered and the most important search engines carried out by stakeholders of the different agricultural sectors will be analyzed. Main searchable keywords will be evaluated to find the best way to approach stakeholders in the main communication media. The evaluation will be based on qualitative and quantitative criteria. The most important pathways towards the consultation of Knowledge Reservoirs (KRs) will be also evaluated. This Deliverable is a report on used communication and dissemination (C&D) strategies, tools and information channels of 28 TNs.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ACTA – Association de Coordination Technique Agricole
AGRIDEMO - Project - Building an interactive AgriDemo-Hub community: enhancing farmer to farmer learning
AgriSpin - Project – Space for Agricultural Innovation
AKIS – Agriculture and Knowledge Innovation System
C&D – Communication and Dissemination
CAP – Common Agricultural Policy
CDP – Communication and Dissemination Plan
DAC – Dissemination Activity Catalogue
EC – European Commission
EIP-Agri – Agricultural European Innovation Partnership
FarmDemo – Project - Farm Demonstration
GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation
KPI – Key Performance Indicator
NEFERTITI – Project - Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake through Demonstration
OG – Operational Group
PA – Practice Abstracts
PLAID – Peer-to-Peer Learning: Accessing Innovation through Demonstration
PSKW – Proefstation voor de Groenteteelt vzw – Research Station for Vegetable Production (Belgium)
TN – Thematic Network
WP – Work Package



1. Glossary

Communication¹ on projects is a strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the action and continues throughout its entire lifetime, aimed at promoting the action and its results. It requires strategic and targeted measures for communicating about (i) the action and (ii) its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange. For the beneficiaries, communicating their action and its results is an integral part of the H2020 Grant Agreement (Article 38.1.1). They “must promote the action and its results, by providing targeted information to multiple audiences (including the media and the public), in a strategic and effective manner, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange.”

The purpose of the communication activities is to make the research activities known to multiple audiences (in a way that they can be understood by non-specialists), and the activities must address the public policy perspective of EU research and innovation funding, by considering aspects such as (i) transnational cooperation in a European consortium (i.e. how working together has allowed to achieve more than otherwise possible) or (ii) scientific excellence or (iii) contributing to competitiveness and to solving societal challenges.

Dissemination is a specific term for the H2020 programme. It means to make the results itself of a project public (— by any appropriate means other than protecting or exploiting them, e.g. scientific publications). The public disclosure of the real results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results) to be used, including by scientific publications in any medium.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/glossary>

2. Introduction and objective

This report reflects a desktop analysis of communication and dissemination (C&D) strategies of 28 Thematic Networks (TNs), complemented with semi-structured interviews and written surveys. Results are **based directly on the current experiences** of the TNs and the discussion set up in this report aims to lead to improvement for C&D strategies of future TNs, and hence impact.

Within EURAKNOS not only TNs coordinators and their partners but also external actors involved in participatory project activities and their respective networks engaging a wide range of AKIS actors are connected through C&D activities. This is represented in a schematic overview in Figure 1.

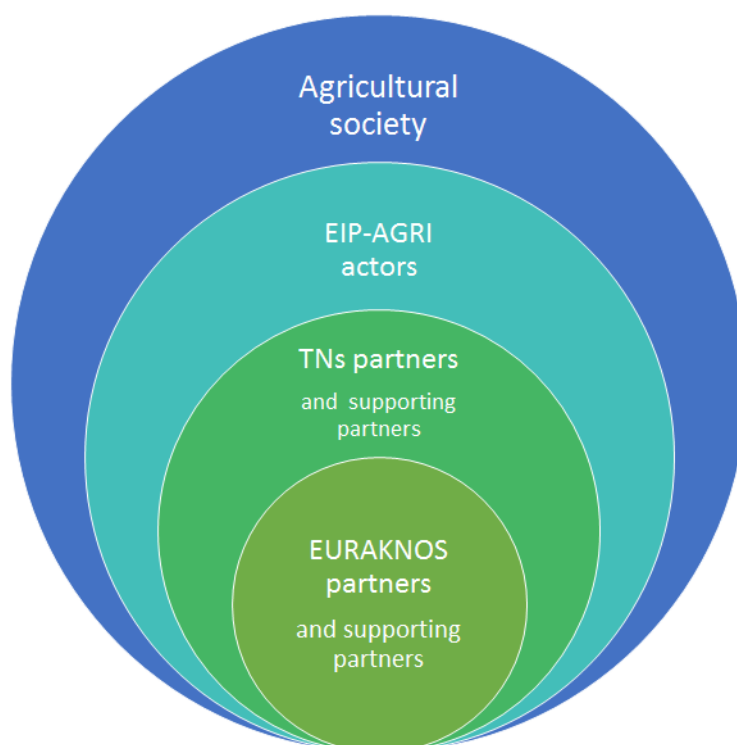


Figure 1. Connection through C&D activities

The main goal of this analysis is to **map the current practices** implemented by the past and current TNs, to measure the success of the strategies, tools, channels, and materials used to communicate about the project and disseminate project results and outcomes to maximize the uptake by the end-users, in particular farmers, foresters and advisors.

A TN C&D strategy is targeted to a level in the circle in a different way with distinct messages to bring the actors within that level to a higher level. The aim is to **analyze C&D practices to reach farmers, foresters, and end-users**, keeping in mind that each TN is dealing with different motivations, agricultural and market contexts, objectives, topics, target groups, and degree of completion.

The results of the analysis are dependent on the degree of completion of each TN. The Figure 1 highlights the degree of completion of the 28 TNs contacted in the framework of the EURAKNOS survey. As shown in the Figure, only 8 TNs were finalized at the date of the interview while 11 TNs were still in the first half of the project run.

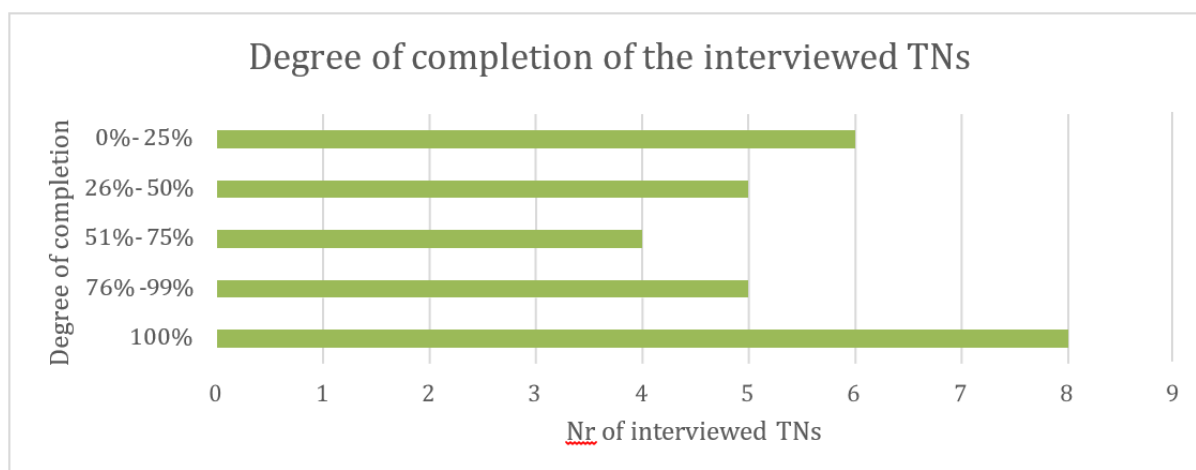


Figure 2. Number of Thematic Network per degree of completion

In general, communication, and mostly the dissemination activities are developed during the second half of the project. The first project half focusses more on data collection based on knowledge exchange. Thus, the results collected don't represent an exact situation of C&D activities.

In Figure 3 below, we can see that based on the delivery date of 15 C&D plans, only 1 TN delivered after 2 months, 4 after 3 months, and 2 after 4 months. The remaining TNs delivered the C&D plan after 6 months (1), after 7 months (3), and even after 9 (1) and 10 months (1).

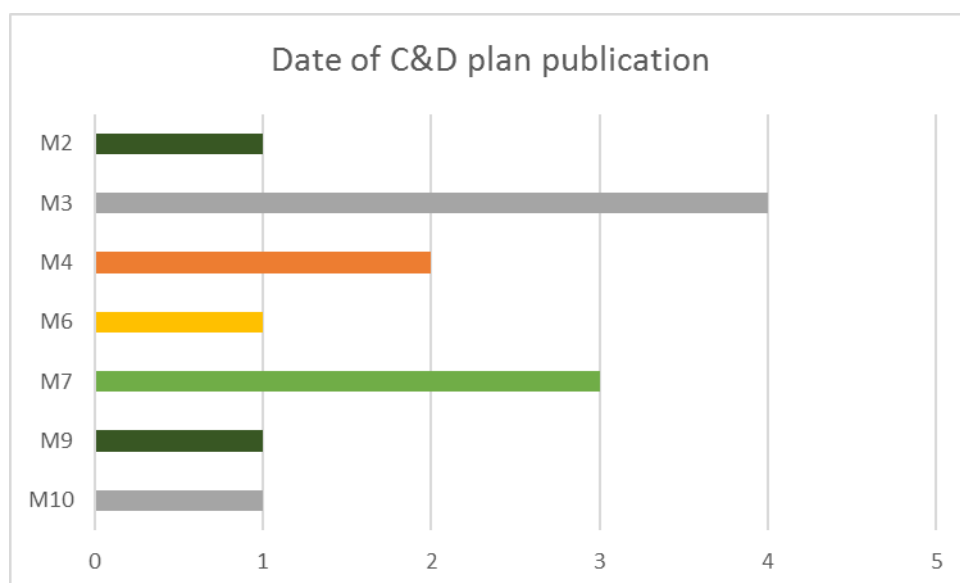


Figure 3. Number of TNs per number of months (M2, M3, M4...) needed for the delivery of the C&D plan

3. Methodology

The **design of the methodology** was based on the research questions that have been formulated in Task 2.3 namely the strategies (materials, ways; tools, and channels) of TNs use to communicate and disseminate to end-user target groups. Special attention should be given to social media and quantitative and qualitative criteria included.

The **hypothesis** for the design of the methodology consisted of several assumptions:

- 1) TNs have many C&D materials published on their website as this is one of their main channels
- 2) TNs have C&D plans that they may share
- 3) Each TN consortium has a partner (WP lead and/or Task lead) responsible for C&D and can be interviewed and surveyed to give additional information

The analysis has been carried out in two phases:

1) Desktop study:

The desktop study focused on the different C&D strategies, tools, channels, and materials implemented by TNs, from a standardized “outsider” perspective. The study was carried out by EURAKNOS partners, extracting data from the material made publicly available by the TN.

2) Online survey and interviews:

In the second phase of this task, the survey was designed to get the “insider” view to understand if and what C&D strategies were put in place by the TNs, their own perceived success stories, and if and how they quantified impact. Key actors who were responsible for designing or delivering the C&D of each TN were interviewed to extract more details, experiences, and reflections on what they did for C&D, how well this worked, and what they would have done differently.

3.1. Desktop study process

3.1.1. Material

The desktop study was based on the associated TNs’ websites, on 15 TNs’ C&D plans, but also CORDIS references and all the TNs social network accounts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube). As a source of inspiration, we extracted some key points of the CASA report on best practices from SWG SCAR AKIS members.

3.1.2. Desktop study design

The desktop study design was, therefore, a co-developed effort between the WP2 tasks, each work package (WP) leaders and coordination team, to create focused and complementary data tables which did not overlap in content, and together provided a holistic overview of each TNs approach to knowledge transfer design, materials, and activities.

To map and identify the best ways to communicate and disseminate outcomes from past and current TNS, during the design phase of the project it was decided to focus on 1) the TNs’ target audiences according to C&D materials used, 2) the type of C&D channels, and 3) the distinction between C&D activity, 4) the expected Impact linked to C&D activities.

3.1.3. Design preparation

To organize and standardize the desktop study across all past and current TNs, an excel spreadsheet was designed, with the different categories of information we were looking for.



Each type of activity was divided into two rows to dissociate C&D. To start with, numerous kinds of tools, materials, and channels have been pre-identified as below, classified per type of activity. Some columns were free to complete with additional elements. The objective was to fill in all quantitative measures we could find for each activity to have an overview of the main C&D activities implemented.

The final aspects of the desktop study for C&D were for the reviewer to identify which target groups TNs wanted to reach for communication or dissemination purposes by the different channels implemented, as well as the number of materials produced, number of followers of the TN output, and the number of events organized for the dissemination of TN results and outcomes.

The categories of information were the following:

- **INTERNET/MAILING:**
 - Website (number of translations, which one, structure, target groups)
 - Practice abstracts (number, target groups)
 - Fact sheets (numbers, target groups)
 - Newsletters (numbers, structure, target groups)
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:**
 - YouTube (number of followers, of videos, the maximal number of views, target groups)
 - Twitter (number of followers and tweets, target groups)
 - LinkedIn (number of followers and posts, target groups)
 - Facebook (number of followers and posts, target groups)
- **EVENTS:**
 - Internal consortium meetings (number of meetings, target groups)
 - Participatory workshops (number of workshops organized, target groups)
 - Open days & Demo's (number organized, target groups)
 - International events (number organized, target groups)
 - National events (number organized, target groups)
 - Regional events (number organized, target groups)
- **JOURNALS**
 - Press releases & articles (numbers, target groups)
 - Scientific papers (number, target groups)
- **Other (the type of activity not mentioned)**
 - Type of material, channel or tool (number, target group)

3.1.4. Desktop study implementation

The desktop study was performed by Task 2.1, Task 2.2, Task 2.3, and Task 2.4 members. A guideline was developed to standardize the approach and methodology to be taken (Annex I).

In total 28 desktop studies were carried out, with on average 3 TNs studied per consortium partner participating in the above-mentioned tasks.

3.1.5. Data processing

As the data extracted from the TNs' websites was publicly available (open access), no consent or application of the GDPR was needed.



As a task leader, ACTA collected all TNs excel spreadsheets and compiled answers per category: social networks, events, press, and internet (see Annex II). Consolidation of the complete dataset by the task leader facilitated a comparison of different strategies, materials, tools, and channels used by the past and current TNs.

3.2. Face to face interview process

3.2.1. Material

To facilitate the interview process, we separated the qualitative and quantitative questions into two sections:

- 1) Online survey to identify target groups, types and numbers of C&D material and activity produced (see Annex III),
- 2) Oral questionnaire (face to face semi-structured interviews) to capture the detail of C&D strategies, feedback, learnings, and reflection on best practices (see Annex IV).

Interviews were recorded when possible; to capture comments verbatim and extract quotes as evidence that supported themes that emerged from the data.

Informed consent was given by each interviewee permitting EURAKNOS to use their data and words anonymously.

3.2.2. Online survey design and implementation

When the persons responsible for C&D within TNs were contacted to find a date for the interview, EURAKNOS partners sent a link to the dedicated online survey. They were asked to complete the survey before or after the interview.

For T2.3 on C&D, the objective was to collect complementary answers to the interview with a focus on quantitative information. The respondents were asked to select some answers (pre-proposition), as well as to enter figures about materials and translations for examples, and percentages for the involvement of stakeholders in different C&D activities.

The survey was hosted by “SurveyMonkey” and data stored by PSKW.

3.2.3. Interview design

The semi-structured interview was designed to capture the following categories highlighted during the desktop study process: (1) the TN’ C&D strategy, (2) the C&D channels and materials, (3) the type of end-users and (4) their engagement measurement (implication, reaction, uptake).

As this questionnaire was one for four within WP2, the list of questions was devised to create an interview of no more than one hour long, consisting of 11 closed and open questions.

To achieve standardized data and have harmonized answers from the oral interviews, a Likert- type scale was used, see below:

Table 1. Likert-type scale

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

3.2.4. Interview implementation

In the framework of WP2, the coordinators of the past, ongoing, and newly approved TNs (28 in total) were contacted to request their participation. All TNs responded positively (100%), and TN coordinators put us in contact with the person(s) in charge of C&D activities to take part in the interview. The face to face interviews were conducted between June and September 2019.

To facilitate face-to-face interviews, the EURAKNOS consortium member responsible for conducting the interview were chosen based on their geographical location to TN interviewees.

If however, a face-to-face interview was not possible, the interview was conducted via skype. 15 interviews were conducted face-to-face and 13 interviews were conducted via skype.

3.2.5. Data processing

Interviews for the C&D aspects of WP2 were completed by all TNs approached, but only 26 out of the 28 TNs were ready in time for analysis during July and August 2019. When possible, the interviews were recorded in mp4 format and transcribed verbatim into Word document. Data was then extracted into an excel spreadsheet ready for analysis. Open and Likert-type scale questions were treated differently with a codification set up for open questions.

26 Face-to-face interviews were successfully conducted, and 17 online surveys were completed (and not all at 100%). On reflection, the lower response rate was due to the tool not working well and the online survey being too long and too complicated to answer. We used data when we had at least 15 answers per question; and we didn't analyze the result when this number wasn't reached because it wouldn't be significant.

Data subject to GDPR were processed following the "Data management Plan" of the EURAKNOS project (D1.3 and D1.6) and a consent agreement was signed by each interviewee. USC exported the dataset by excel spreadsheets and sent results to the task leader (ACTA).

3.3. Quality check of the questionnaires of the interviews and surveys

Different quality checks were carried out at different stages of the preparation for the questionnaires for the interviews and surveys, and the analysis

1. Surveys/Interview preparation

Both the questions in the survey and the interviews were pre-tested by all WP2 members and all EURAKNOS partners through mailings and skypes respectively. As most of the EURAKNOS partners were or are TN coordinators and/or involved in a TN as a consortium partner, they belong to the first category of target end-user groups defined by the EURAKNOS project, who will benefit of the results of the project in current or future TNs and spread the EURAKNOS results amongst their networks. The results of WP2 were validated as part of the EURAKNOS workshop organized within the Task 2.5 activities in Budapest (11-13 September 2019), through the engagement of the Knowledge Innovation Panel (KIP). The KIP consists of different actors, including representatives of TNs that are not included in the EURAKNOS consortium and end-user groups such as farmers, foresters, and advisors. WP3 will build further on these results to formulate guidelines for TNs to achieve more impact in terms of uptake of results in the field fostering innovation in agriculture and forestry.

2. Running the surveys/interviews

Appropriate running of the survey was based on the development of a survey/interview set of recommendations that were given and shown in a meeting to all interviewers where interactions were developed to fine-tune any suggestion/comment to improve the survey/interview set of

recommendations. Finally, all task leaders, WP leader, and finally the coordination team was available for all the questions appeared when the interviews/surveys were carried out.

The first one was to include an “others” option, as part of the answers in the online-surveys, to be sure that all possibilities were included as part of the closed answers. In most questions, the “others” option as an answer was not chosen, which validated the questions on itself. No further extension of the obtained surveys/interviews will be conducted due to the insistency of the EURAKNOS teams to get the questions answered as they were approached several times. Moreover, we waited until the very last minute to carry out all the analysis to be further used in the successive tasks of EURAKNOS.

3. Surveys/Interview analysis

Before the survey/interview analysis was carried out, data was introduced in a database. When close questions were carried out the categorization was transformed in dichotomic variables due to the low number of the existing TN projects, when open questions were carried out a categorization to dichotomic variables was also developed. As all surveys/interviews were not anonymous, when a question appeared in the answer, the interviewee was asked for further clarification.

We analyzed if key factors that were inherent to the different TN and the responses obtained from the different questions were correlated. Specially we tested how the degree of completion of the TN affected the different answers. Whenever relevant these correlations are shown in this report.

3.4. Overview of the limitations and validation of the methodology

The methodology used may suffer from some limitations. It is assumed that the use of the different methods used will correct the shortcomings or limitations of each method (desktop study, F2F interviews, and survey). An overview of the methods used to analyze the TNs (WP2) is presented in Table 2. Moreover, for this particular Task 2.3, the results desk top study from the TN website was completed with the analysis of the C&D plans, and social media accounts of the respective TNs to the extent possible.

Table 2. Overview of the limitations and strengths of the methods used for the TN analysis

Method	Limitations	Strengths
Desk top study: -TN website -C&D plans	Information missing Not all TN plans available	Facts and figures
F2F Interview	-Qualitative data -TN coordinators not always available -Time-consuming	-Sharing of experiences of TN coordinator and/or partner -Detailed answers
Surveys	-Incomplete answers -Questions not or not completely filled in	-Internal validation (questions and other as an option) -Time-saving -Results easy to process

The methodology was developed in different stages, starting from the desktop study on the respective TN websites. Based on the outcome the first set of questions has been formulated by all Task leads involved. These were prioritized by all WP2 members after which they were validated by the end-user group. The interview questions were then divided for F2F interviews (physical or skype) and online surveys (Survey Monkey). An overview of the different steps in the development and validation of the methodology used to analyze the TNs (WP2) is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Overview of the different steps in the development and validation of the Task 2.1 methodology in chronological order

Project Month	Methodology Steps	Validation steps
M1	Desk top study launched	First insights validated by all WP members
M2	First interview questions set up by Task Leads	Prioritization of the questions by all WP2 members
M3	The second set of interview questions	Validation by end-users: SMART AKIS ² , Hennovation ³ , OK Arable ⁴ and Inno4Grass ⁵ TN coordinators
M4	Interview questions validated	List of EURAKNOS partners to interview TNs
M5	Qualitative questions F2F from validated interview questions	Validation by consortium members
M5	Quantitative questions Monkey Survey from validated interview questions	Validation by WP2 members

3.5. Maintenance and update of data

The data will be stored and maintained in the EURAKNOS Sharepoint, managed by UGent, and according to the Data Management Plan (DMP) as described in D1.6. Data will be updated in the course of the project for TNs that were not completed yet at the time of the release of this deliverable, for publication purposes.

The data will also serve as a basis for the development of a common EU knowledge reservoir for agriculture and forestry, of which a pilot will be developed in WP4, as a basis for the EUREKA⁶ project.

² <https://www.smart-akis.com/>

³ <http://hennovation.eu/>

⁴ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/652654>

⁵ <https://www.inno4grass.eu/en/>

⁶ <https://www.h2020eureka.eu/>

4. Results from interviews and surveys

4.1. Communication and dissemination strategies

As the Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) stated in its 4th report (*Preparing the future AKIS for Europe*), C&D strategies have a strong impact on the success of the project and visibility of actors:

“Strategic communication can lead to several positive effects (direct effects and side effects), acting as a virtuous cycle on the project and its environment. It can help publicize one’s work in such a way that it is profitable for the project. It can also help to increase the success rate of a project proposal by providing a good communication and dissemination plan. It can raise the attention of national governments, regional authorities and other public and private funding sources to the needs for ultimate benefits of research. It may also attract the interest of potential partners and encourage talented students and scientists to join partner institutes and enterprises. It is likely to enhance the project reputation and visibility at local, national and international level”. – (SCAR SWG AKIS group, European Commission, 2019)⁷

Based on the outcomes of the 26 interviews, we can draw the conclusion that for now 84% of the interviewed TNs had developed a dedicated strategy for Communication, for Dissemination, or both for C&D with a formal plan delivered at the time of the interview. **The other 16% of the interviewed TN’s declared that they did not have it ready at that time.**

Structured and detailed plans had been delivered by TNs at the beginning of their project, and **54% of the 26 interviewed TNs [14] having a C&D plan are making a distinction between C&D strategies.** 31% of the interviewees indicated not having a clear distinction between the C&D strategy towards end-users. When asking the respondents to explain in more detail the difference in both C&D strategies, they answered:

- 8 TNs see no difference between both types of activity;
- 6 TNs consider that communication should address the general project (partners, organization, events) and that dissemination is dedicated to the project results (technical/scientific knowledge);
- 6 TNs differentiate between C&D, but are mixing both activities during the implementation phase, one TN even says that “By accident, we agree there is a difference between C&D”;
- 5 TNs separate C&D according to the target audience, with some explanation as “communication is for the consortium, and dissemination for the external public”;
- 1 TN completes this dissociation with the use of channels: “Dedicated channels are implemented for communication”.

⁷ European Commission, PREPARING FOR FUTURE AKIS IN EUROPE, Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR), 4th Report of the Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) - https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/report-preparing-future-akis-europe_en

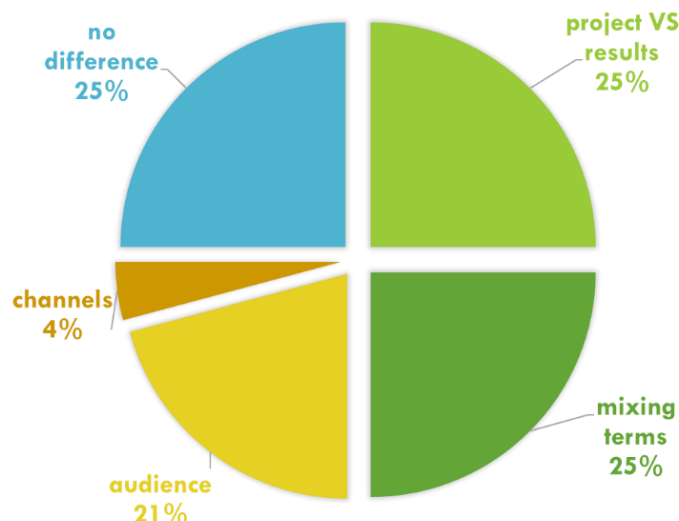


Figure 4. Explanation of C&D difference (in percentage of criteria used by TNs)

TNs that are not making a difference between C&D created a single document mixing both terms to develop one strategy to deliver messages to their target groups.

Some confusions had also been analyzed in some TNs plans received with for example a document called “communication plan” but dealing with the dissemination and vice et versa. This phenomenon highlights the lack of clarity between both activities.

Creating two different documents or combined into one has pros and cons; two separated documents can:

- Reduce confusion between C&D
- Define clear and different messages for C&D, for specific end users
- Develop adapted material and channels according to the activities

On the other hand, you may duplicate the document by repeating the objectives and the timeline of the project. It creates also more work for partners to develop and follow the plans.

One TN declares “A communication and a dissemination strategy/plan were provided but, in the end, there was no difference while carrying out the dissemination and communication activities.”

4.1.1. TN’s communication and dissemination plans

The online survey asked TNs respondents to rank the target audiences per type of material. The following Figures 5, 6, 7 and 8 highlight the type of actors that were targeted by these tools according to 15 TNs respondents. **According to the TNs, the main actors targeted by TNs through newsletters, practice abstracts, press releases, and videos were researchers and farmers/farmers associations.** Interestingly the main actors with practice abstracts are the farmers/associations for 9 TNs, compared to researchers (7TNs) and advisors (6TNs) while the main actors targeted with newsletters are the researchers according to the majority of the TNs (10), compared to farmers/associations (8), and advisors (7). Apart from the farmers/associations (8) press releases are also mainly aimed at advisors (5) and policymakers (3). The main audience for videos is farmers/associations (9), and to lesser extent consumers (5) and advisors (5).

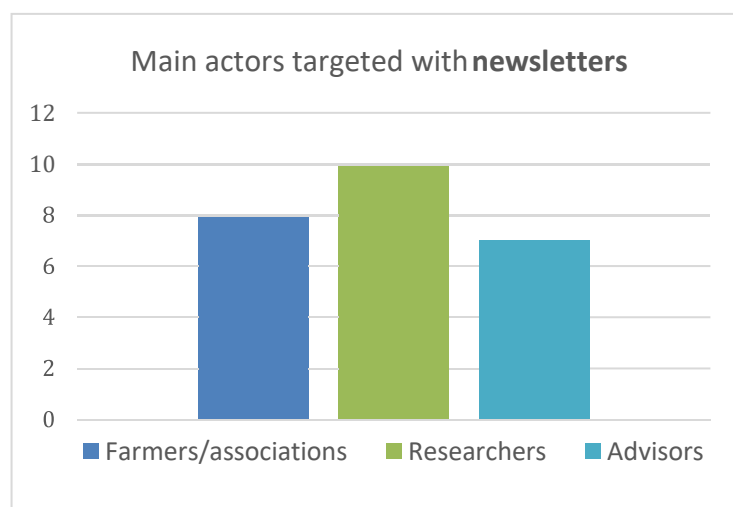


Figure 6. Number of TNs designing newsletter to reach farmers and their associations, researchers, and advisors (based on a survey of 15 TNs)

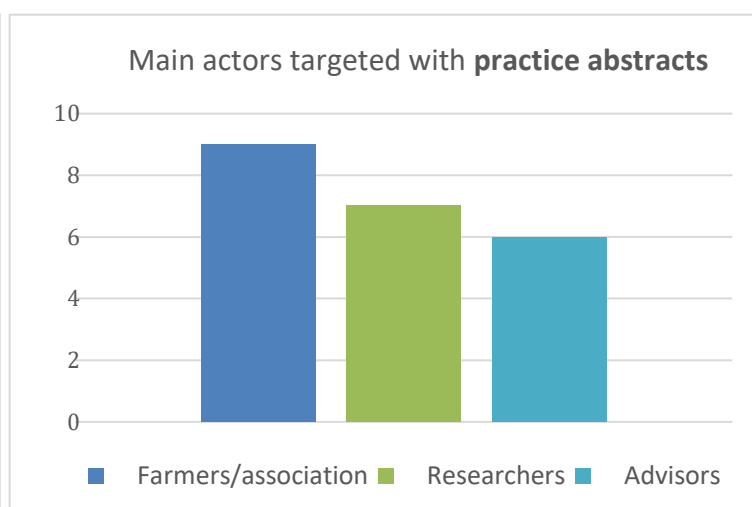


Figure 5. Number of TNs designing practice abstracts to reach farmers and their associations, researchers, and advisors (based on a survey of 15 TNs)

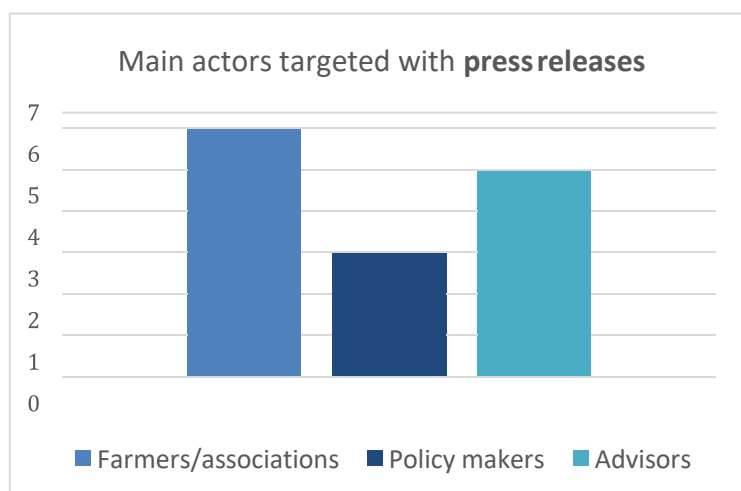


Figure 7. Number of TNs designing press releases to reach farmers and their associations, policymakers, and advisors (based on a survey of 15 TNs)

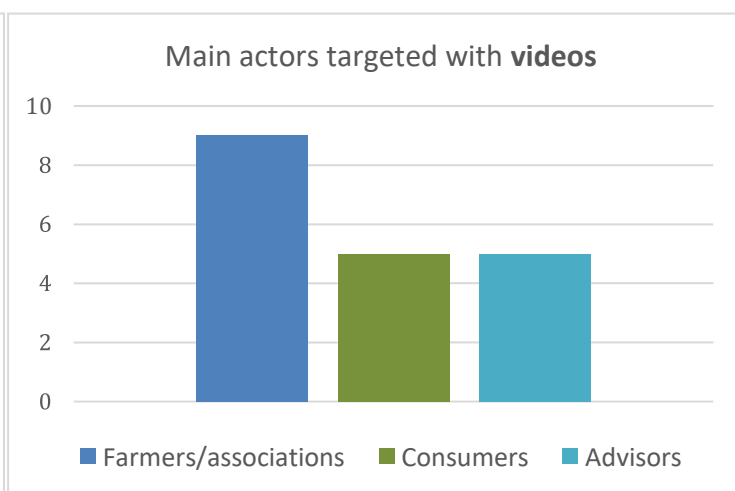


Figure 8. Number of TNs designing videos to reach farmers and their associations, consumers, and advisors (based on a survey of 15 TNs)

We can complete this C&D strategy analysis thanks to the interview process where the main barriers of C&D activities have been underlined (Figure 9).

- The main barrier identified for C&D implementation was how to deal with **translations (9 TNs)**. **Language issues** concern local languages as well as a too technical or scientific one.
 - One of the solutions used by TNs is the automatic translations provided by social networks or online tools: translation isn't perfect, but it saves time and budget.
 - Once it comes to dissemination to practice, end-users can provide some help to translate the technical knowledge into easily understandable communication.
- The second barrier, which has also been strongly highlighted during the workshop session in Budapest (11-13th of September 2019) is **how to reach end-users**, especially farmers through channels, materials, and activities: *"farmers get a lot of information from everywhere, so it is challenging to catch their interest"*.
- Besides, reaching people isn't enough: "the point isn't to have the numbers, but to engage people".
 - C&D plans help to define the TN audience, a first decisive step in the transfer of results. This must be foreseen to include all relevant target groups, related to the TN objectives. Considering the characteristics of the audience, suitable C&D channels, and materials can be decided. This was also the case for several TNs, for example, one TN explained that *"Tools were adapted to the target group for the dissemination of results: videos, fact sheets, and flyers for growers, technical sheets and seminars for technicians, library synthesis for scientific..."*.
 - **Monitoring tools must be developed to estimate end-users engaged by TNs' outputs.**
- The next constraints expressed spontaneously by 4TNs were **time and budget** dedicated to C&D. A TN explained "Weighting of the time was a barrier – a lot of time was put in at the beginning to consolidate the vision and then in the middle of the project to accumulate the knowledge which meant we don't have as much time to focus on dissemination."
 - One TN developed in its plan some new strategies to face this brake, as an appointment of "communication officer" for one partner per organization to reduce workload for maintaining active communication (especially in social networks).

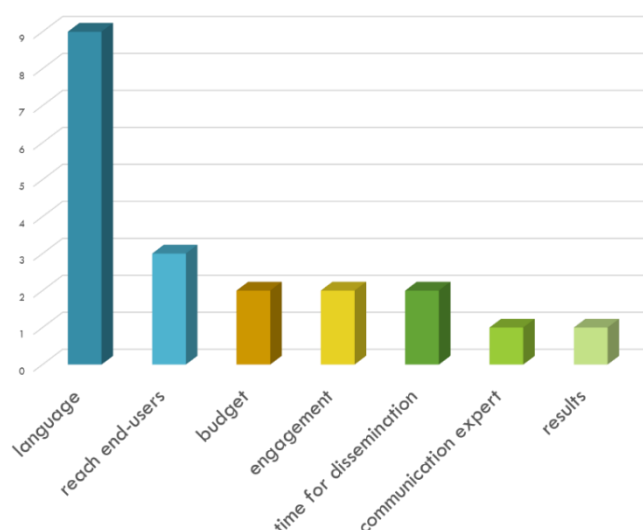


Figure 9. Barriers faced by several TNs in their C&D activities (based on interviews with 26 TNs)

4.1.2. Internal communication

5 TN C&D plans, out of 15, include a specific part on internal communication between partners within the consortium. In general, TNs consist of multiple partners who need to collaborate strongly. The

desktop study allowed us to identify the precise number of partners for each TN, and the average is 15,8 with a median at 15. The number of people actively involved in the elaboration of the TN activities will even be a multiple of the number of beneficiaries. Therefore, TN's seem to pay a lot of attention to internal communication as:

- Proper internal communication avoids internal problems/misunderstandings.
- How to communicate information if we're not aware of the news internally?
- It is important to have a common vision to share a single message.
- If the consortium partners are exchanging their activities and results regularly, there are more content and ideas generated.

One important barrier lies in building a **common spirit and trust** between different actors coming from different organizations with different cultures. Working for a common objective in a 2- or 3-years project isn't so natural as sometimes it is needed to know people and to establish an efficient organization among the consortium. Internal communication and management of TNs are essential for the well-functioning, efficiency, and the success of the project in terms of outcomes and results and hence impact.

Some **recommendations** we can propose to overcome this would be first to use ice-breaking and informal moments during the kick-off of the project to create sympathy and trust. Secondly, in the initiation or implementation phase, it is important to organize regular online conference calls or skype, or even a system with a 'chat' function, or at least frequent emails. It is essential to identify individuals conducting work for partner organization and to update in case of any changes. And above all, the communication from the Executive Committee meeting/management board should be well transferred to consortium partners who can easily feel left out of the project without frequent communication.

4.2. Main successful communication and dissemination channels

What is success? According to some definition (Business Dictionary), it's an *"achievement of an action within a specified period of time or within a specified parameter"*. The next step in our analysis is to understand how TNs are measuring impact. When and how are they concluding their project communication was successful and dissemination activities had an impact on the end-user.

For example, one of our interviewees specified that *"A TN final goal is that best practices are implemented, that end-users receive the information in a positive spirit and promote the project results/platform to their peers."*

To analyze the success of TNs C&D activities, we must include their exploitation strategies to understand to what extent the results are taken up as a consequence, amongst others, of efficient and well-targeted C&D activities. The exploitation phase considers the use of project results for other purposes like other research, projects, or tools. For example, the AgriSpin (Space for Innovations in Agriculture) TN developed a methodology for cross-visits⁸ that is reused in other national or European projects as NEFERTITI⁹ (Networking European Farms to Enhance Cross Fertilisation and Innovation Uptake Through demonstration).

In terms of illustration, the European Commission (EC) categorized different channels in a scale between communication to exploitation, passing by dissemination.

⁸ <https://agrispin.eu/cross-visits/>

⁹ <https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/>



Figure 10. different channels in a scale between communication to exploitation, passing by dissemination

Captured from EC report:

https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/other/events/2017-03-01/8_result-dissemination-exploitation.pdf

In case of the TNs, the facilitation of the further use of the results is more oriented on active/stakeholder user engagement and innovation management as such as the TNs are focused on exchanging existing knowledge, best practices, methodologies and innovative solutions rather than on the (co-)creation of new knowledge. Likewise making use of these results will most probably lead to making use of a product, new service, and influence societal activity and policy changes through speeding up agricultural innovation.

4.2.1. Measuring success

We asked the interviewees on what criteria they based their analysis of success and 17 of the interviewed TNs answered basing their measure of C&D success on their **key performance indicators** (KPIs), which are also a common request from the EC.

The TNs' KPIs for C&D include all types of quantitative proxy indicators, such as the number of followers, views, shares, visits, and downloads for digital channels, as well as the number of participation in events for physical meetings. These numbers are proof in terms of the number of people reached, but also a good tool to get an idea of the success of implemented activities.

However, it is superficial to base a TN success on these figures only, as they do not capture the real engagement of their targeted audience with the project. **The notion of engagement rate** is mainly used in the field of social networks where each platform offers its engagement rate (Facebook Twitter, LinkedIn). The engagement rate can also be used for blogs, articles, videos, slideshows, etc. In general, a commitment rate is calculated by dividing the total number of interactions related to a publication by the number of individuals exposed to that publication. The interactions considered are generally

likes or favorites, sharing, the comments, the clicks, etc. But engagement rates can be distorted by the many robots or bots operating on social networks.

Despite the difficulties in obtaining accurate engagement rates and data for KPIs in terms of quantitative measures, TNs consider different social media channels to fulfill different functions and complement other C&D activities.

Figure 11 shows **the channels used by the TNs and the rating of the success for each of these according to the TNs interviewed** (26). Next to other C&D channels Twitter, (10 strongly agree, 7 agree), Facebook (6 strongly agree, 10 agree), mailing (3 strongly agree, 10 agree, the website (12 agree, 9 strongly agree), group meetings (23 strongly agree, 3 agree) and most face to face meetings (20 agree, 4 strongly agree) are considered to be most successful. Newsletters were also considered as successful C&D material by most of the TNs (7 strongly agree, 13 agree).

From this it is important to highlight that social media and newsletter are mostly used for communication while the website is used both for communication and dissemination; on the contrary group meetings and face to face meetings are used for dissemination.

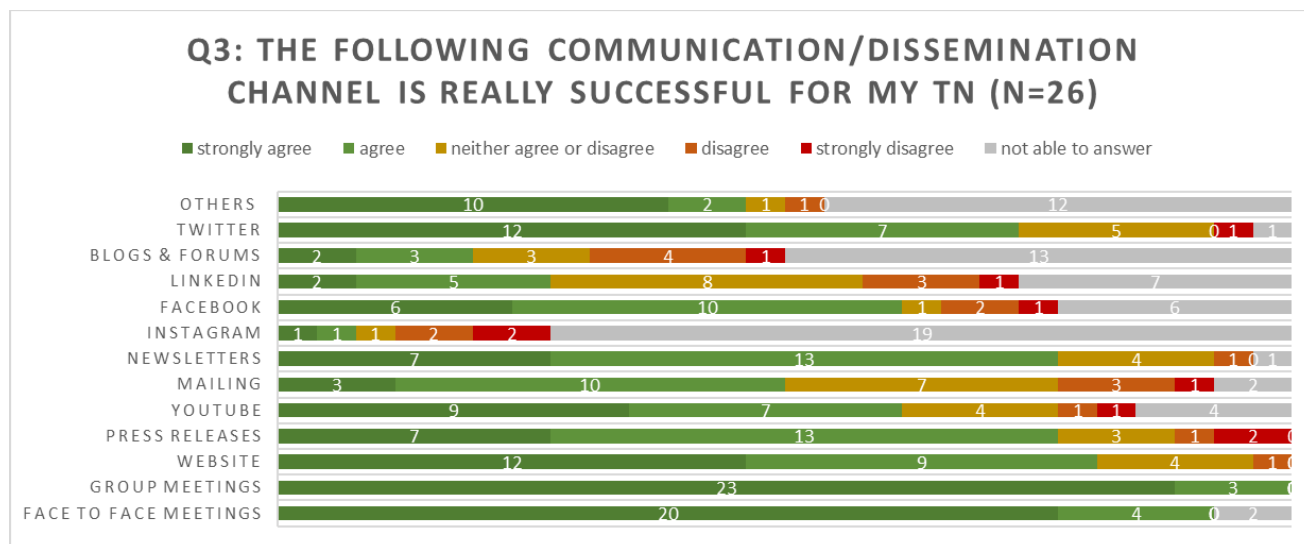


Figure 11. Channels success according to 26 interviewed TNs (in numbers of rating, strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, or not able to answer)

The interviewees were also asked about the **preference of TN end users of the different channels for C&D purposes**. Figure 12 and 13 show the responses of these interviewees (26). According to them the best communication channels (Figure 12) are Twitter (8 strongly agree, 8 agree), Facebook (3 strongly agree, 9 agree), mailing (1 strongly agree, 13 agree), the website (7 strongly agree, 10 agree), group meetings (14 strongly agree, and 6 agree) and face to face meetings (12 strongly agree, agree).

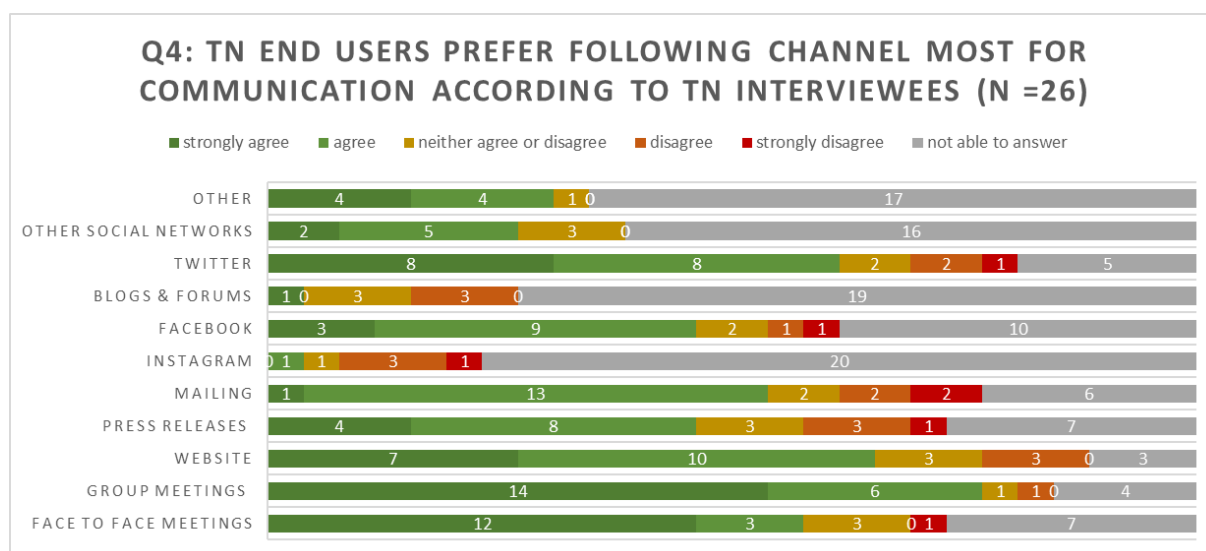


Figure 12. Communication channels preferred by end users according to 26 interviewed TNs (in numbers of rating, strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, or not able to answer)

According to the interviewees the best dissemination channels (Figure 13) are Twitter (7 strongly agree, 9 agree), Facebook (16 strongly agree, 5 agree), mailing (3 strongly agree, 13 agree), the website (7 strongly agree, 11 agree), group meetings (18 strongly agree, and 5 agree) and to a lesser extent face to face meetings (3 strongly agree, 7 agree).

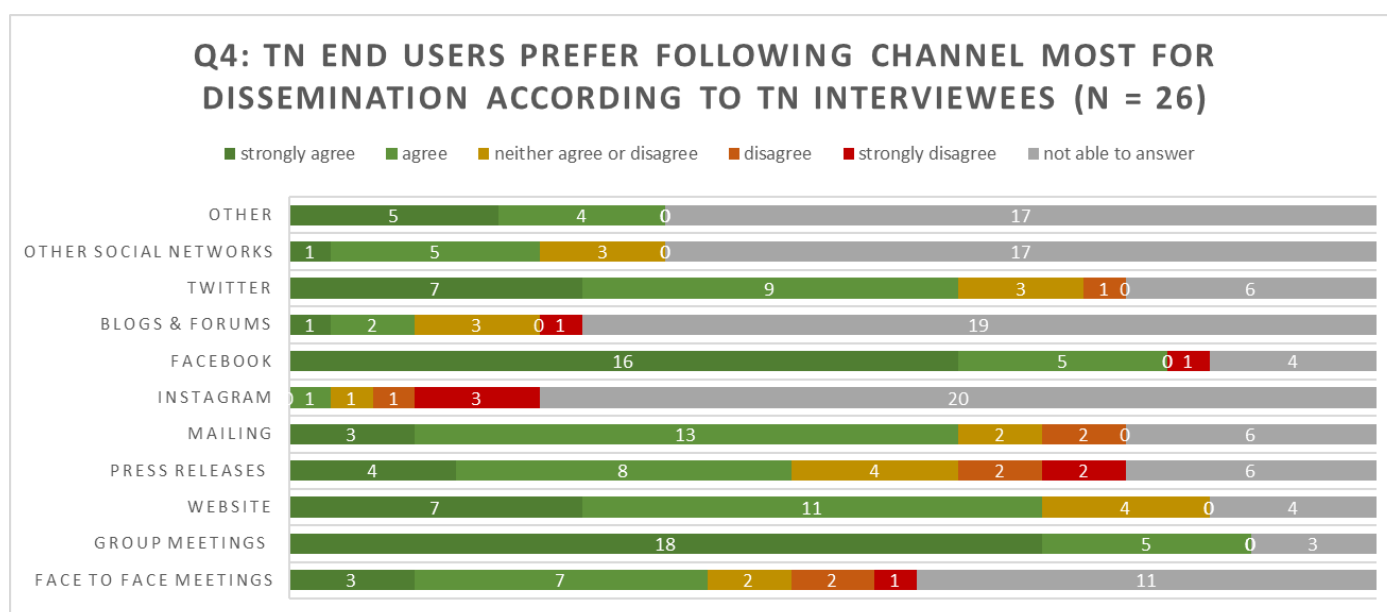


Figure 13. Dissemination channels preferred by end users according to 26 interviewed TNs (in number of rating, strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, or not able to answer)

Following C&D channels will be discussed in more detail in the two next sections: physical meetings and digital tools.

4.2.2. Group & face to face meetings

During the interview process, we gathered different types of events under the title of “group meetings”. In general, group meetings refer to bigger events, involving a larger audience. Direct interaction is more limited compared to face to face meetings (study days, workshops).

As shown in Figure 14, the 26 TNs interviewees consider **face to face and group meetings as the most successful channels for C&D activities** (100% global success). When these interviewees were asked about their end-users' preference in general (their main target group), it showed they consider **end-users prefer group meetings (88%)**, including dissemination activities like **conferences, study days and workshops**, rather than face-to-face meetings (80%) for both C&D purposes.

When we asked the TNs to consider C&D separately, the results revealed that TNs think **face-to-face and group meetings are more successful for dissemination (80% and 88%)** than communication as they consider this kind of event as the best way to address local farmers.

To conclude, a slight difference is made between C&D for face-to-face and group meetings and only face-to-face meetings are not seen so efficiently when the TN wants to communicate to end-users (58% of agreement).

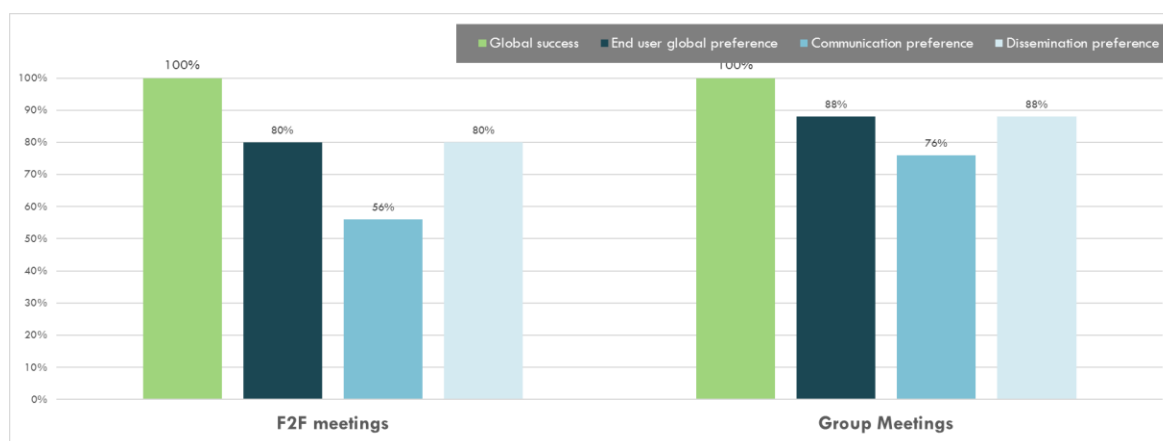


Figure 14. Most successful C&D channels for TNs (in the percentage of agreement according to the rating scale “totally agree, agree, neither agree or disagree”)

a) Events as ways to communicate and disseminate

The desktop study identified a broad format of **group meetings organized by each TN** that we can distinguish between internal and external events:

- **Internal events:**
 - consortium meetings,
 - management board meetings.
- **External events:**
 - workshops,
 - conferences (both at local, national and European scale),
 - participation in national and international fairs,
 - demonstration events on the field, enterprise or farm that are based on peer-to-peer effects (PLAID¹⁰, AGRIDEMO¹¹, and NEFERTITI¹² projects developed a FarmDemo¹³ toolkit to support demonstration that can be used by TNs)
 - field visits and open days

¹⁰ <https://www.plaid-h2020.eu/>

¹¹ <https://agridemo-h2020.eu/>

¹² https://nefertiti-h2020.eu/?page_id=827&lang=fr

¹³ <https://farmdemo.eu/>

- cross-visits (especially in AgriSpin project¹⁴) - the CAP proposal for enhancing AKIS in the member states, offers momentum to encourage more cross border cooperation in interactive innovation¹⁵.

The desktop study did not allow strict classification of the events according to their scale, their content, and participants as TNs mostly announce coming events but are not reporting on the main outputs. It was also complicated to compile via the online survey as only a limited number of responding TNs provided exact figures (Figure 15).

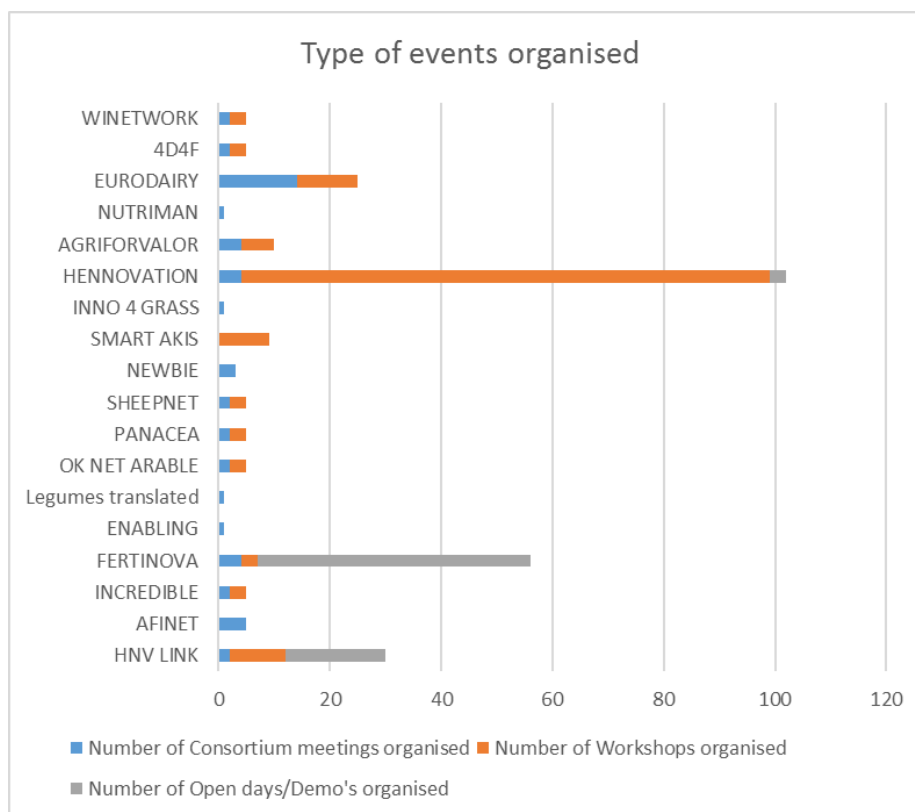


Figure 15. Type of events organized by TNs in amount

¹⁴ <https://agrispin.eu/>

¹⁵ European Commission, PREPARING FOR FUTURE AKIS IN EUROPE, Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR), 4th Report of the Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS)

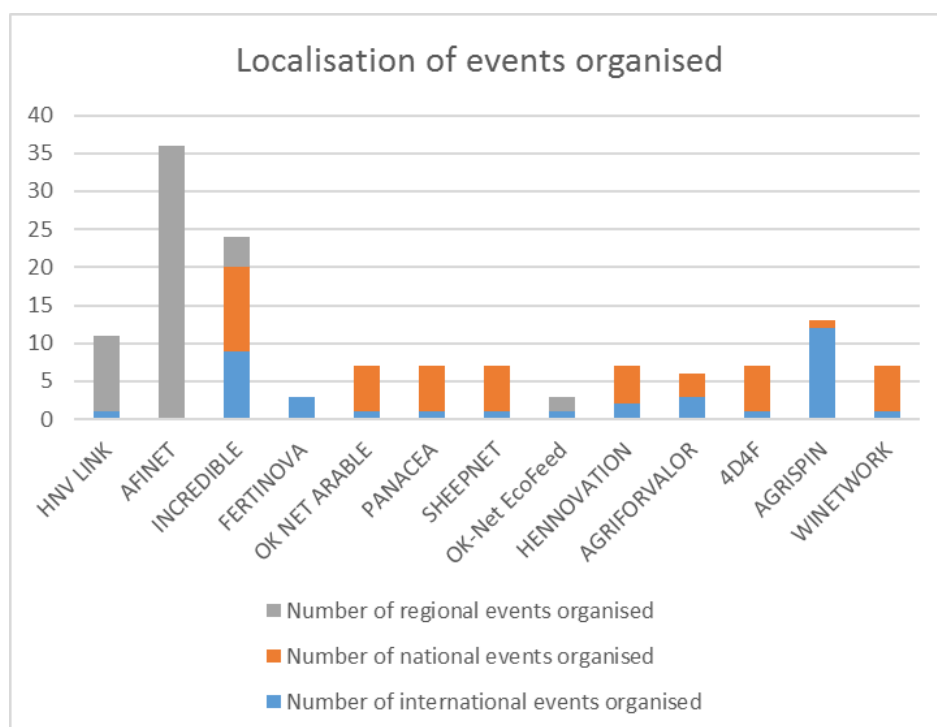


Figure 16. Number of regional, national and international events organized by the different TNs (13) based on a desktop study (TN websites)

A key strength of events is the solution they provide for communicating and disseminating in **local languages** to reach more farmers and local end-users. A TN explained they are “organizing more meetings to exchange more in local language”. Local facilitating partners such as farmers associations or advisors can organize events in the local language or translate messages simultaneously.

The 4th report of SCAR AKIS group1 also confirms that “on-field events are valued very much for their strong outreach while at the same time providing a means for further connections between diverse actors”. The big advantage of events is that they serve multiple purposes as local languages, but also networking activities that may encourage stakeholders/actors to further discuss/develop ideas. TNs may provide space to progress from simple dissemination activity to exploitation activity.

Furthermore, we distinguish “Face to Face meetings”. This type of meeting refers to meetings in which all the participants meet each other in person in the same meeting room. All of them come well prepared for the meeting room to participate in the meeting, regardless of its location. Compared to “group meetings” these meetings are more acting on an individual/small group level with a 2-fold interaction as study event, small workshop, coaching, and training, ...

4.2.3. Digital channels

In general, digital channels are considered having an essential value for the TN, however, their importance for the TN is rated slightly lower compared to the face to face and group meetings.

a) Project website

The TNs identified the **website as a central tool for C&D** (Figure 17). Over 75% of the TNs reported great success and acceptance by end-users for the website and twitter (even if some TNs in the early stages of development have yet to establish their webpage and social media accounts). However, TNs do not differentiate between C&D activities via their digital channels as they find it difficult to create different messages and content for both purposes.

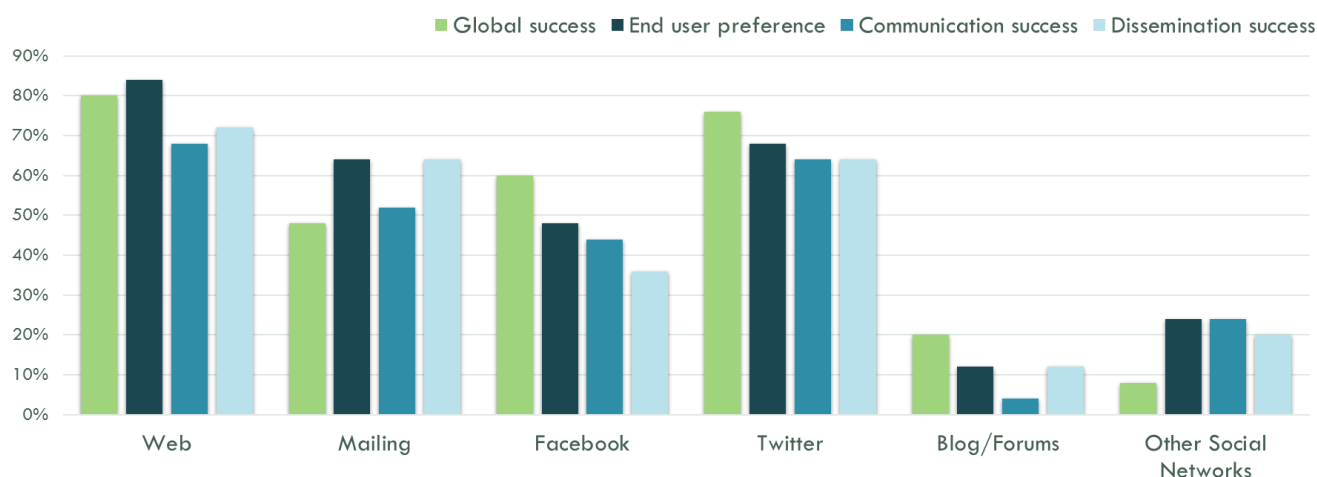


Figure 17. Estimation of digital channels' success according to TNs (in the percentage of agreement according to the rating scale "totally agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, strongly disagree")

b) Successful websites

We investigated why the **website** appears as the central digital channel of success as well for communication as dissemination. The TNs website success bases on:

- 1- Unique content: 100% of the TNs interviewed (26) agreed on the fact that the main success of the websites is that they are sharing unique content. The specificity of a TN is to work on a particular theme. Most of TNs agreed that the website is successful thanks to the TN activities and the communication strategy developed (Figure 18).

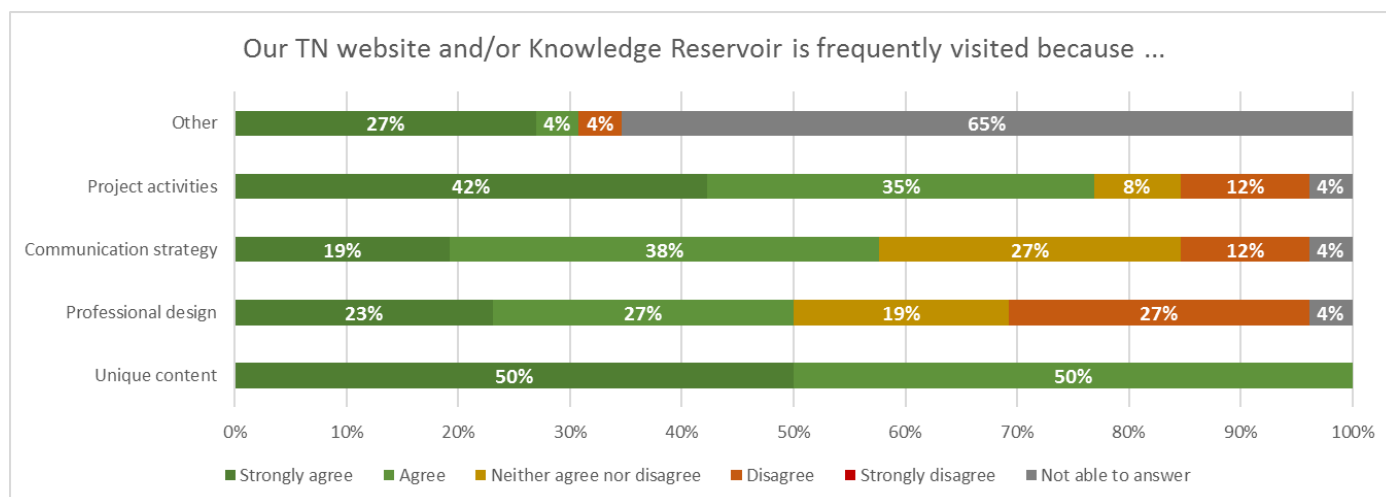


Figure 18. Main reasons for the website's success of 26 TNs (in the percentage of agreement)

- 2- Project activities: Figure 18 reflects that interviewees consider that "Project activities" contribute more to the visiting rate of their website, more compared to the "communication strategy". Which type of project activities contributed most to this was not specified in the interviews.
- 3- Communication strategies: Another reason for the website success could also be the effort put on **the traffic increase**: some TNs developed strategies to make the website visited, using search engine optimization and relays with other channels (Figure 19) such as other EU, national or local projects and platforms, but also social networks and events. One strategy

mentioned by 7 TNs was to guide visitors to the TN website through social media and/or newsletters. One TN explained that they had set up a **“Cascade communication strategy”**: whenever news was uploaded on the website, shorter news items were fed to social medias containing links to websites.

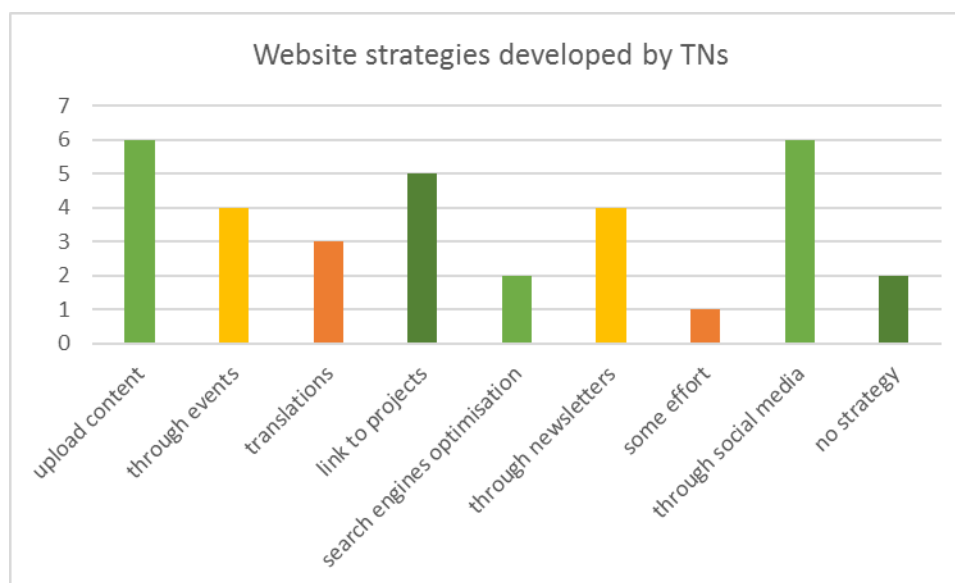


Figure 19. Website strategies developed by 26 TNs (in number)

TNs highlighted the translation of websites to reach end-users, maximizing the spread of knowledge, but we cannot confirm the real impact as we didn't collect the visiting rate. Website translations were the consequence of the communication strategy and priority as it is time-consuming, some TNs made this voice as shown in Figure 20.

- 4- Professional design: A professionally designed website or knowledge reservoir was only considered contributing significantly to the rate of visitors by half of the interviewed TNS.
- 5- Other reasons: 32% of the interviewed TNs considered that “other” criteria led to the visitor rate of their website. These “other” actors were not specified further during the interviews.

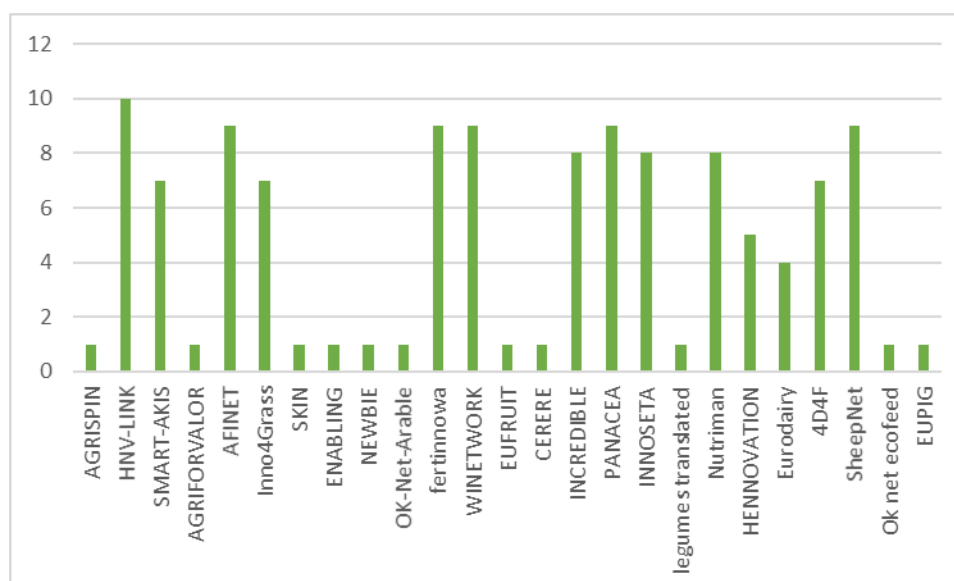


Figure 20. Number of websites translation per TNs

c) Social networks

According to our desktop study and in-depth interviews, we identified that 75% of TNs are using **Twitter** to communicate; and if we exclude TNs that have just started their activities, it's almost 100% of TNs interviewed. This outcome could be explained by the fact that different types of users are present on this social network, especially for the EIP-AGRI and AKIS community. Stakeholders and TNs understood a lot of information is circulating each day on Twitter such as events, delivering reports, new projects, project results, local and international collaboration, etc; so that's an advantage for people looking for information as well as people aiming to communicate specific content. The community of TNs with the coordinators and partners is visible on Twitter and the number of accounts is still increasing.

It must be kept in mind that the extent to which a social media platform is used will differ culturally and depends on which EU countries the TNs are targeting end-users within.¹¹ That's why most TNs decided to open different social network accounts (Figure 21) to reach widely all EU countries.

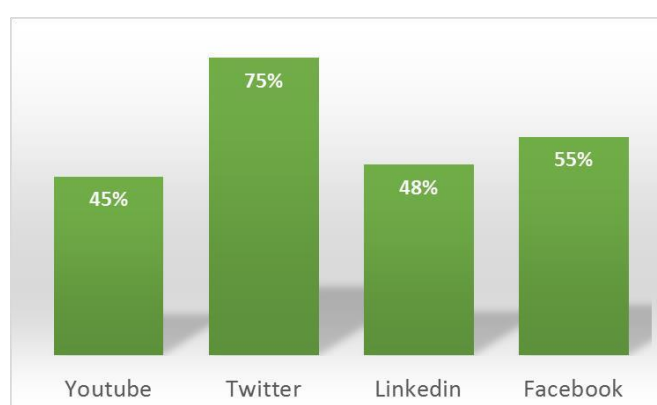


Figure 21. Percentage of TNs using social networks on the 28 TNs considered (numbers updated in March 2019)

The Figures 21, 22, and 23 are a visual representation of the difference of use between social networks found during this study. We can scrutinize the gap of activities between Twitter and the rest of the channels. Ultimately, TNs are using Twitter because they think it is used by a large number of diverse actors, and also quite easy to create flows and make talk about their activities.

To engage followers through a social network and create added value for the communication of the project, a TN should have a **regular/daily activity** (posts, shares, likes) **to reach at least 500 followers¹⁶ and a good engagement rate**. As illustrated in Figure 22 and 23 coming from our desktop analysis, we can link the success of Twitter in comparison to LinkedIn or Facebook: the more you create activities and posts through the social network, the more you gain followers and so impacted end users.

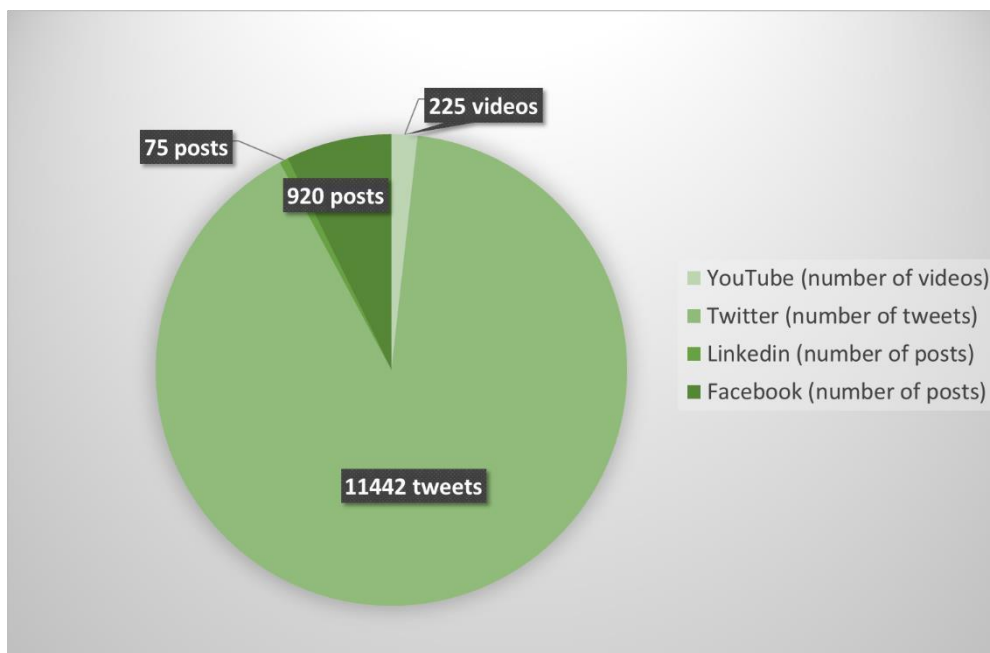


Figure 22. Total amount of TNs posts per social network (numbers updated in March 2019)

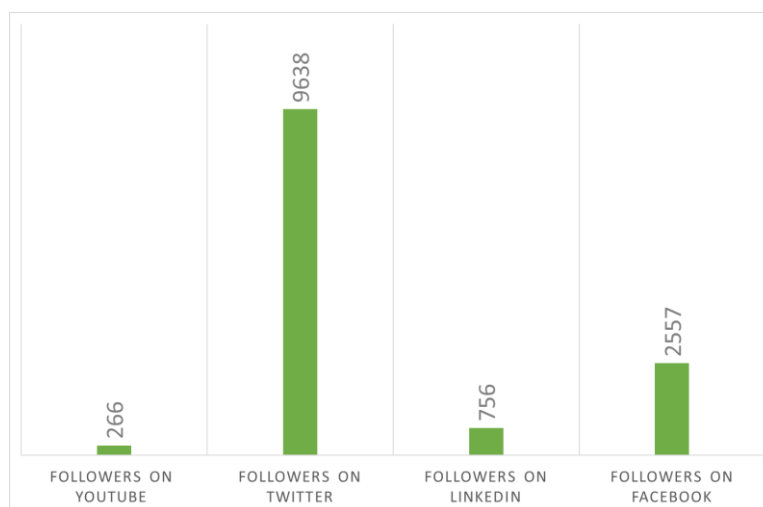


Figure 23. Total amount of TNs followers per social network (numbers updated in March 2019)

This difference in activity and followers can also be explained because of **a vicious/virtuous cycle of sharing posts**. When a post is made on Twitter or Facebook, you can tag and mention different partner organizations and persons. This increases the impact of the post. In contrast, YouTube and LinkedIn accounts are often harder to find or even do not exist.

Relating to this point, thanks to the online survey, we aimed to identify which kind of actors/end users were using different digital channels. At first sight, we asked TNs on which type of social media users they were focused on for each social network developed; and on the second step, we asked with which

¹⁶ A usual but informal indicator in social media

one they successfully connected. You can see below the comparison for Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube (Figure 24 to 27).

What we can conclude is that researchers and students are more connected than foreseen by all social networks, maybe because TNs partners and organizations are mostly researchers and universities. On the contrary, policymakers appear less reached by social networks than expected. Farmers have a good rate of connection with all type of social networks expected LinkedIn so that lead to the conclusion of the social network's success in term of delivering messages to end-users.

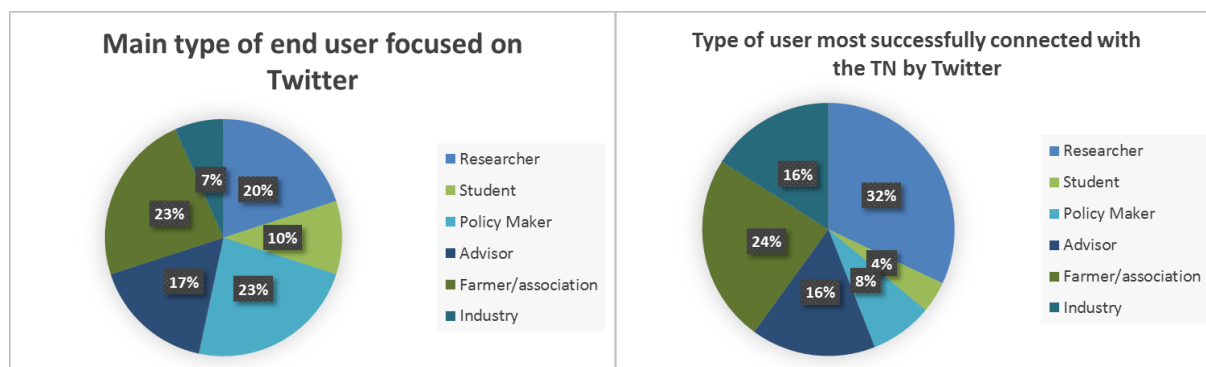


Figure 24. Social media users focused on and successfully connected by Twitter for 11 TNs respondents

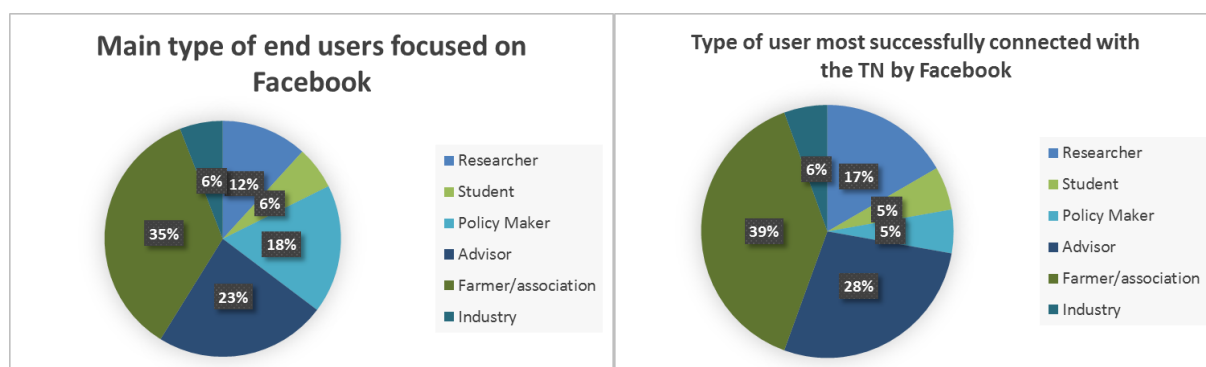


Figure 25. Social media users focused on and successfully connected by Facebook for 11 TNs respondents

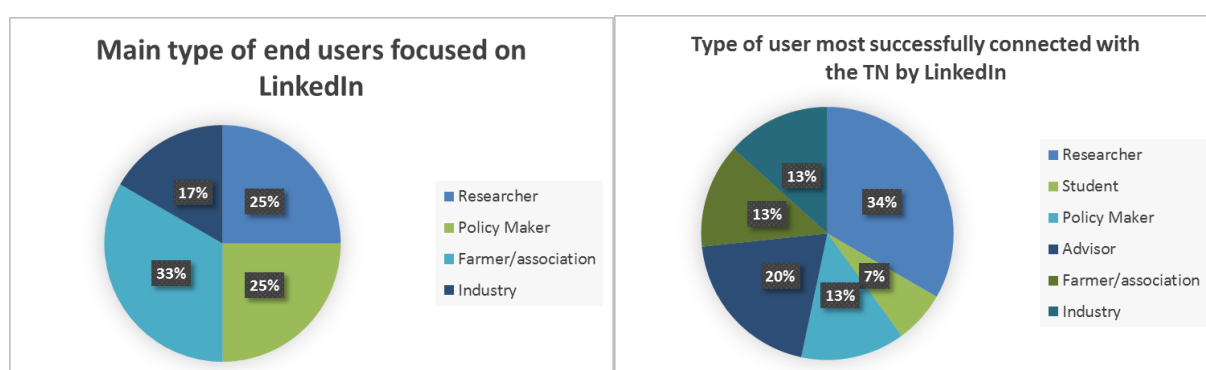


Figure 26. Social media users focused on and successfully connected by LinkedIn for 11 TNs respondents

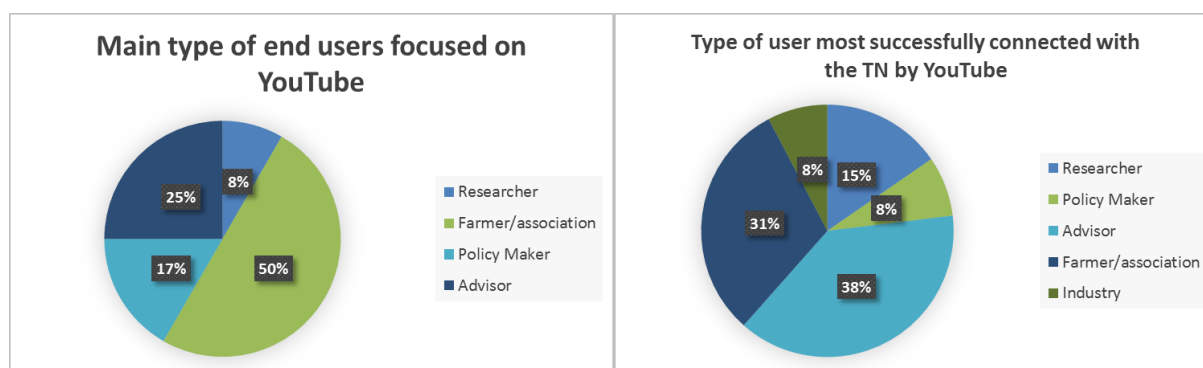


Figure 27. Social media users focused on and successfully connected by YouTube for 11 TNs respondents

Our **conclusion** is that project partners and stakeholders should be stimulated more to spread messages about project results to their peers and on social media when possible, as it is a reactive and interactive channel for C&D. However, an in-depth study would be needed to investigate if social media are efficient C&D channels towards farmers, forester and advisors as their use and application may strongly depend on other factors such as broadband connectivity, digital skills and social and cultural background that varies from region to region (and/or country to country) within Europe.

4.2.4. Other impactful and promising channels

Other channels have been highlighted by TNs as already successful or as promising up and coming channels of C&D. In fact, instead of making use of social media for communication in general, it is also advised to utilize specific media such as existing tools, education programs, professional or specialist journals, successful online platforms, etc. which a lot of stakeholders often use.

The success of these channels depends on the countries and habits in local regions, TNs must have some practitioners who know the most used and accepted channels by end-users. Operational Groups (OGs) for example are already proactive in dissemination activities by using their usual C&D channels (websites, mailing of e.g. newsletters) and networks to make the project results available.

The first example through the **EIP-AGRI channel** and its practice abstracts as dissemination material towards end-users in a standardized format, to reach the managing authorities, the regions, multi-actor projects, TNs, and OGs. Being mandatory by the EC for TNs, the EIP-AGRI practice abstracts are now well known as a dedicated material (format) and tool to disseminate knowledge, best practices, and methodologies, into understandable language for farmers and foresters. The reason for their existence and their potential value is largely accepted by the AKIS community, but our interview process with TNs underlined some issues as **the format and design of EIP-AGRI practice abstracts are not satisfactory for the majority of TNs** (Figure 28).

From the desktop study, we identified that **practice abstracts** are rarely available/findable on the TN's website (only 6 under 28). This can be explained because practice abstracts are usually delivered at the end of the project; when available, a high number of them are online (average of 60 on the 6 TNs considered). This raises the question of their added value for project partners and their consideration as an efficient dissemination tool in the frame of the project. Additionally, the main feedback from the TNs relates to concerns on the use of practice abstracts toward potential end-users. They were asked about different elements such as the content of PA, the format, the design, and other elements they might have to comment on. It appears that 68% of TNs interviewed are satisfied with the content of practice abstracts even if they would like to include links for more information (due to limited text allowed) and to make the technical language more understandable. The rest of the criteria were not so positive as more than 68% of TNs interviewed think the format and design aren't adapted for the dissemination of results: **the table spreadsheet is not attractive, there is no pictures or appealing design that can attract end-users (and other types of actors)**. These factors make TNs think that

creating practice abstracts is a lot of work for a few uptakes by end-users, they have the impression that practice abstracts are not used as it should be and that the EIP-AGRI is not putting in a lot of effort to valorize them. TNs would appreciate reconsidering the format and content of practice abstracts as well as their dissemination strategy through EIP-AGRI but also Rural National Networks or local channels.

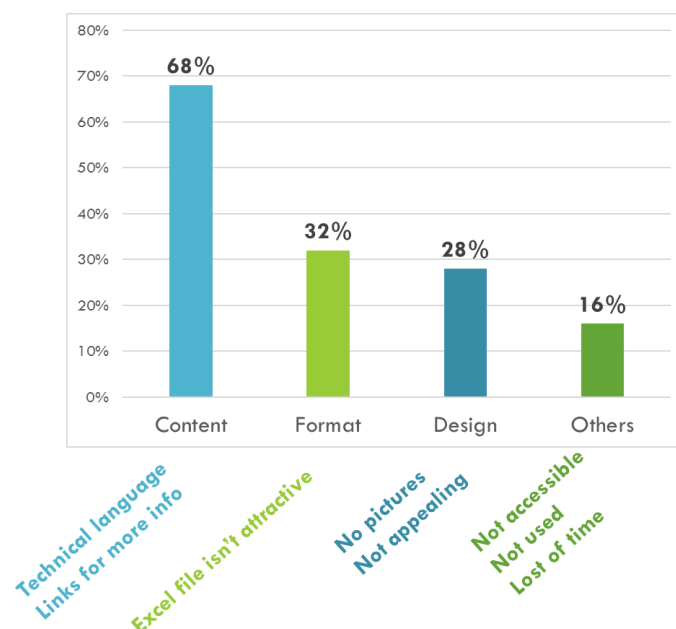


Figure 28. Different aspects of practice abstracts, content, format, design, and other aspects, contributing to success as viewed by 26 TNs (in percentage, based on interviews)

The second promising channel developed by half of the TNs were **educational programs, or training courses**, directed towards students, farmers/foresters or advisors. Following the EU regulations, they are all published in open access (Figure 29). These types of programs are part of a key solution for the sustainability of the TNs as it can be accessible in the long term and re-used by stakeholders to disseminate the knowledge and increase impact.

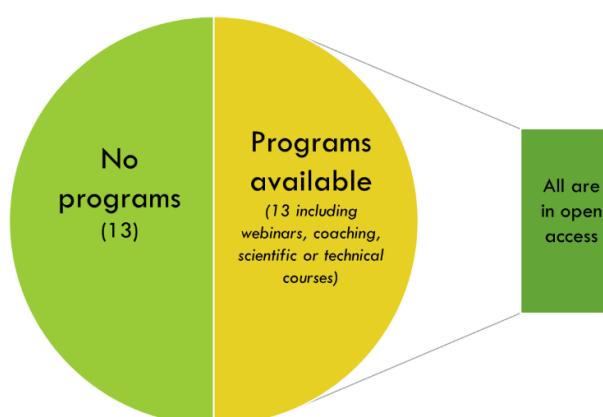


Figure 29. Number of TNs with educational programs available online (out of 26 TNs, based on the interviews)

4.3. Development of dedicated materials

It is one thing to use adapted channels and successful ones, but to communicate & disseminate, you need first **to create the content and material**. It was reported that this was not the easiest part for TNs, who is mainly a consortium of researchers with no experience on the way to translate into “public/common language” (VS technical/scientific). Besides, we realize during the desktop study process that materials were hardly accessible online (see Annex II).

According to the TNs, the best material to communicate and disseminate to the maximum amount of end-users is a **graphic** one: picture, video, infographic... The less time you need to understand your material, the most efficient will be your C&D. That's why videos and images are more impactful to capture interest than only texts. Videos and YouTube channels are becoming more and more important for dissemination because movies attract attention more easily and farmers can compare themselves to their peers on a video for example.

We asked the best way to make an **impactful and successful video** to spread knowledge and 100% of TNs answer that it must be a short and quick message, with practical content (94%) of a field demonstration (92%) for example. Other TNs (68%) think it's also important to have scientific content. On the format, 65% would prefer an interview recording included in the video: and 65% would agree to engage professional movie makers to create these.

Some material needs to have a lot of content to disseminate knowledge, so in that case, it should be accompanied with infographics, abstracts, and fact sheets to sum-up and not discourage people to read it, especially farmers who don't have a lot of time dedicated to that and need practical inputs. Paper or hard copy (like factsheets) is still considered to be important material next to digital output.

The message must be adapted to target the audience foreseen, but to be able to do that, some time and knowledge should be dedicated to defining the profile of each targeted end-user group to understand end user's need, but also their cultural and socio-economic background, what they're looking for, when/where are they searching for information, what equipment and/or infrastructure they have and the language they speak.

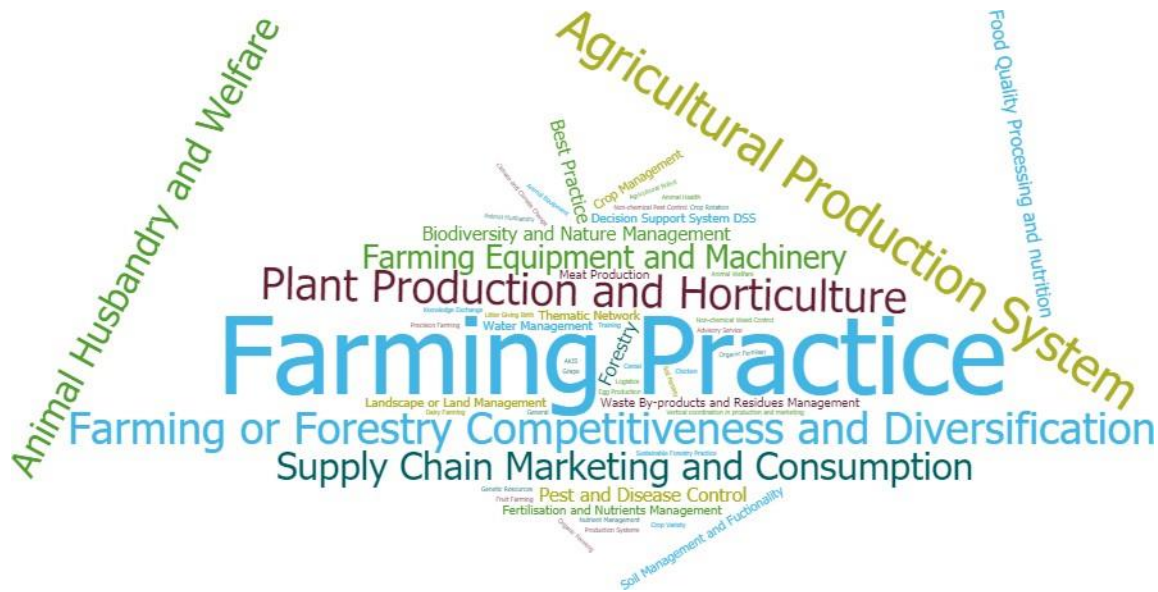
4.4. End-users engagement

4.4.1. TNs accessibility for end-users

Main Searchable Keywords

○ EIP-AGRI

From the project pages hosted on the EIP-AGRI website, 25/29 TNs listed keywords associated with their project. A total of 121 keywords (or phrases) were identified, with an average of 4 keywords per project (range 1-12 keywords). These are represented in Figure 32 which shows that general project areas were most frequently used – e.g. 'Farming Practice' (used by 17 projects), 'Agricultural Production System' (used by 8 projects), 'Farming / Forestry Competitiveness and Diversification' (used by 7 projects), 'Plant Production and Horticulture' (used by 7 projects) and 'Animal Husbandry and Welfare' (used by 6 projects). Very few projects included the industry or sector which they worked within in their keywords. Adding more specificity to project keywords could be very useful in helping users to obtain relevant search results.



○ **Google**

Most TN project websites were the first result in the Google search for the TN Abbreviation, however, 6 TNs whose name abbreviations are used in common language were lost in later pages of the Google search. Four TNs were not included in the first 100 results on Google from their abbreviation alone, 1 TN was the 50th result and another the 18th result, by adding 'EU' to the search term all of these TNs were brought to the top of the search results. This means that when looking specifically for a particular TN project that their project website should be relatively easy to find using a search engine.

- Update the website regularly with relevant, quality content
- Decide on a single specific keyword phrase for each page of the website.
 - o Think about using this phrase in page URL, page title, and headings and subheadings
 - o Use the specific phrase in the main text of the content.

The core objective of a TN is to enhance agricultural innovation by the uptake of innovative knowledge and best practices by farmers and foresters. Delivering the right message to the right target groups for this purpose is an important challenge.

To increase their chance to address messages to the right persons, some TNs asked their target groups about their favorite channels of C&D at the beginning of the project, to be sure to use the best tools (Figure 31).

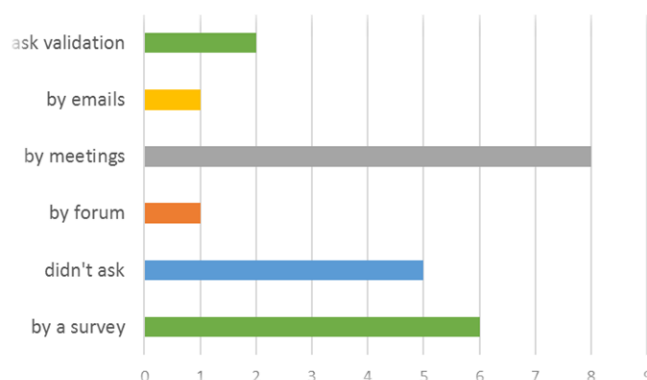


Figure 31. TN asking for C&D preference to their end-users

« We did a survey and an online questionnaire with farmers and asked them which channel they preferred. We also established this during our TN meetings. We also asked farmers advisors since they have daily contact with farmers. » - quotes from an interviewee

The online surveys enabled us to **analyze the end-user engagement according to the type of material** (based on the TNs respondent's data). We can see on Figure 32 there is not such a big difference between types of actors. But the content should be different for the same material as target groups do not have the same expectations and do not speak the same language (different kind of format, language, technical details, etc). In practice, it is hard to check on TNs content/messages as they're not addressing different strategies between types of actors as it is expected by their C&D plans and objectives.

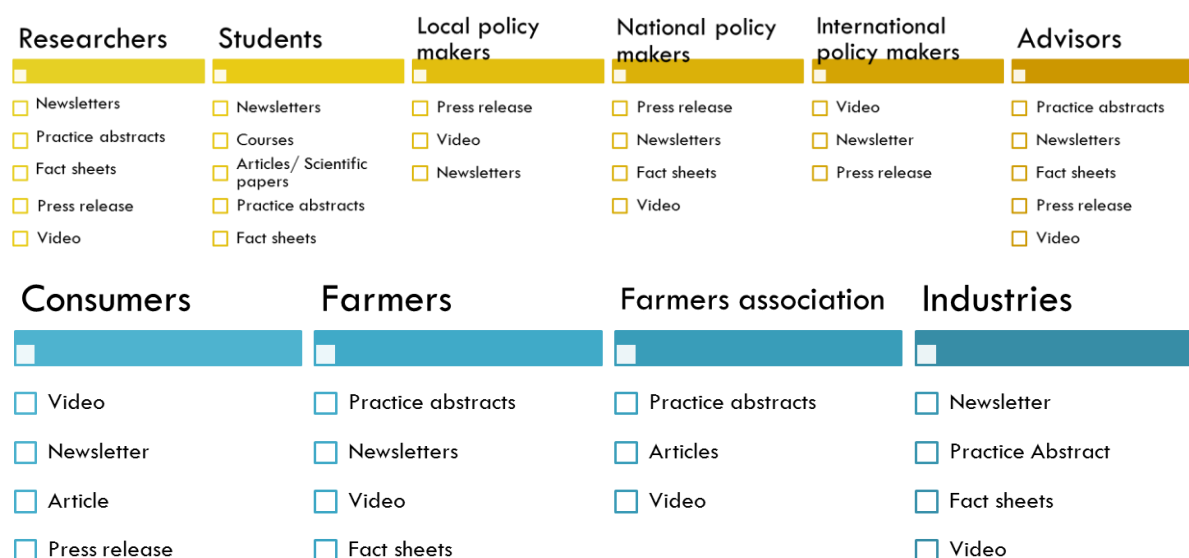


Figure 32. Type of material adapted to end users according to TNs

5. Communication and dissemination plan analyses

In the framework of task 2.3, TN coordinators sent their 15 C&D plans before and after the interview process. These detailed documents allowed us to go further in the analysis of C&D strategies. To compare the plans, we focused on their structure and content. For that, we highlighted the difference and similarities in the keywords, priorities, target groups, channels, material, and engagement strategies.

5.1. The distinction between dissemination and communication

The analysis revealed that TNs C&D plans are structured with the following sections:

- C&D objectives
- C&D strategies
- C&D target groups & key messages
- C&D channels
- C&D materials
- C&D tools
- C&D activities implementation/work plan
- C&D monitoring/reporting
- Internal communication

The majority of TNs don't make the difference between the communication and the dissemination (Also refer to section 5.1 and Figure 33). Indeed, from a list of 15 TNs, 4 made a clear distinction between these two concepts. This matter of vocabulary is a challenge for the development of future C&D plans as a clear definition of Communication and Dissemination should be well known and shared among all projects: it would help to better define and distinguish these activities. The lack of clarification provokes a “cascading effect”: the initial confusion in the definition of the C&D generates mistakes in the implementation of the CDPs and therefore affects the relevance, accuracy, and sometimes the quality of the related deliverables. The confusion between the C&D concerns mainly the projects which gather both activities in a common plan. According to the TNs studied, the communication concerns the activities of the project and its results while the dissemination concerns the effective transfer of the results. Therefore, dissemination is often included in the communication.

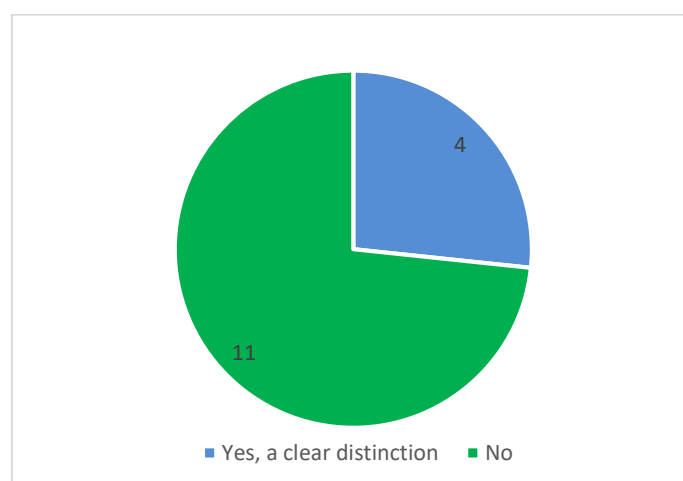


Figure 33. Difference between Communication and Dissemination in the CDPs

To clarify the distinction, we must notice the particularities of these terms:

The communication refers first to the objectives and activities of the project, mostly during the lifetime of the project. The communication activities need regular production during the whole project. The

tools developed are temporary and serve to transmit the advancements of the project, and the availability of the results at each step.

The dissemination can refer first to the outputs of the project, mainly in the second part, at the end or after the project. The dissemination activities need to prepare tools that compile the results of the project all the time even when the project ends. In this case, the tools need time to be developed like a knowledge reservoir, a web documentary, or a book.

Some tools can be used for both activities, but it is important to develop specific tools for each C&D activity. We can notice that communication channels (such as social media, newsletter, websites) are often more developed than dissemination channels (Webinar, training, field visits). Indeed, it's easier and less time consuming to communicate about the project's progress and events than efficiently transfer practical results to end-users through tailored training sessions or filed events. The lack of clarity in the definition of the dissemination substantially affects its efficient implementation and the impact of the project (cascading effect).

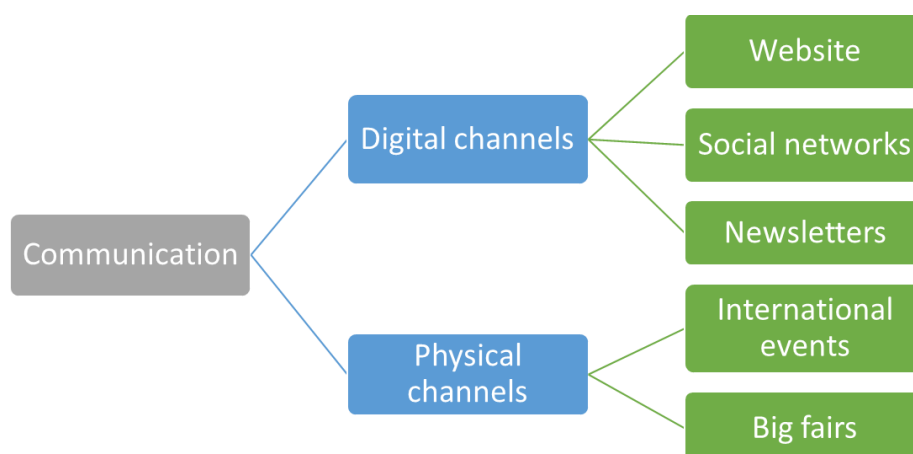
Across these 15 TNs C&D plans, the targeted end-users include farmers, researchers, advisors, policymakers, industries, consumers, and media. On the other hand, NGOs, local authorities, investors, and specific actors according to the topic are defined as minor target groups (less present in C&D plans). We can nevertheless notice a distinction between C&D through the target groups with activities of communication towards policymakers, the general public, consumers, NGOs, and the dissemination of results (technical language) towards industries, advisors, researchers, and farmers.

As CDPs constitute mandatory deliverables in the TNs, they are systematically produced in the first months of the projects. However, it appears that their implementation doesn't systematically follow the initial plan as there's somehow "less pressure" for the implementation of a plan than for their initial production (i.e. mandatory deliverable that must be submit on time). Last, with regards to the structure and the content, most of the CDPs are quite similar and could reflect a certain lack of professionalism in C&D activities.

In summary, add a summary in each section

5.2. Dissemination and communication channels and tools

Considering the **type of channels** used by TNs, C&D plans revealed two different priorities with mainly digital channels for communication and physical channels for dissemination.



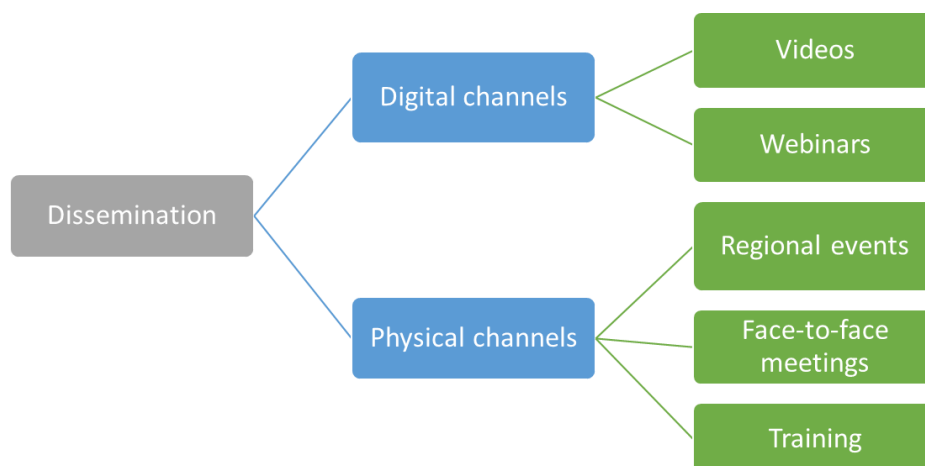


Figure 34. Type of channels

Regarding the main materials developed for Communication TNs usually plan to produce printed roll-up, posters, flyers, and newsletters whereas for Dissemination they usually produce videos, scientific papers, practice abstracts, infographics, and training/education material.

In the 15 C&D plans, there are two main types of C&D **channels**:

First, the digital channels reaching a large public:

- Website: a platform that gathers all project data.
- Social media: Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Youtube, etc. It allows us to follow the project daily or weekly.
- E-newsletter: The partners write a paper on the advancements of the project. It allows us to follow the project monthly.

For now, these channels are the first developed to create a community of followers. However, this audience is unknown for the project partners, because there are no or few direct exchanges.

Secondly, the physical channels to exchange more in-depth about the project and its results:

- Participation & organization of national and international events: during these events, a presentation of the project is a good way to impact agricultural actors, specifically for the target audience concerned by the thematic.
- Workshops: these face to face meetings gathers specialists on the project's thematic. It allows most of the time to receive external feedback on the project activities and results.

These channels are common for all projects. The first category allows impacting a larger public than the second category. At the opposite, face to face on-field meetings allows explaining deeply the project's results. To reach the expected impact, it's key to define the target audience and the content exchanged for any C&D activity.

However, some D&C channels and tools are renewed innovatively by some of the projects.

- **Some Innovative channels and tools identified**

Each project develops common channels and tools. Some projects develop an original program to improve its impact. We can list below specific activities developed:

- Create a database or catalogue of Best Practices.
- Create a web documentary explaining the project and its results, besides a printed book.

- Create a “competition” on a thematic of the project to gather the target audience on one specific livestock sector for example.

Concerning the **database**, several projects develop a knowledge reservoir on their website, gathering all technical production of the project, as explained in D2.2. This is a good way to put all findings at the disposal of the targets and to keep a look at the entire project. This multiplication of knowledge reservoir is at the origin of the EURAKNOS project, by creating a High Impact Knowledge Reservoir (HIKR) to gather all data from all TNs. However, the challenge will be the visibility and accessibility of this Knowledge for the target audience.

Secondly, a **web documentary** and a printed book require specific communication and valorization skills that most of the scientific and technical partners do not have. Therefore, it’s worthwhile to integrate a partner who has specific and significant expertise in C&D. This example is replicable under the condition to have relevant skills in the project.

Finally, a ‘**competition**’ on communication and dissemination cannot be envisaged for all projects and all partners as it depends on the topic of the project (sector- challenge) and the cultural habits of the given community.

We notice that these innovative practices concern mainly the dissemination activities. Some of the projects analyzed seem to give a lack of importance in this field.

- **Analysis of the channels and tools in the CDPs**

The dynamics of social media don’t allow targeting a specific public and so is not suited for dissemination activities. In all cases, it targets a large public, because of the short posts in time. A TN enlarges its community and makes his advertisement on social media, but it cannot be used to target a specific group. However, these recent tools are very useful for communication activities and become a necessary tool for the visibility of the project and the relationship with the targeted community.

Few projects go towards very clear and targeted Communication as well as Dissemination plans with dedicated messages and activities as well as dedicated tools for each activity. However, most of the projects have not a clear C&D plan and don’t make a clear distinction between communication and dissemination and the tolls and channels to be used for each activity. Their plan is generally limited to be a presentation and not a precise analysis of what their C&D future actions should be to generate the expected impact. To improve the implementation of the C&D, it is necessary to build these activities around a professional partner on C&D to better engage all technical and scientific project partners in these activities along the project lifetime. The use of accurate channels and tools for communication or dissemination and adapted to the target audience must improve the quality of these activities and R&I EU projects.

5.3. Expected impacts

The main aim of a Communication and Dissemination Plans are respectively to inform and explain the science behind a project, how it is relevant for the civil society, as well as to ensure the uptake of results by the large community of the end-users, allowing the development of novel solutions to needs or problems identified.

To do so, it is important to clearly state the objectives of a CDP and its expected impacts. As described in section 5.2, impacts can be measured and assessed through the project lifetime thanks to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), it is mostly quantitative aspects. To have a qualitative assessment, interviews of end-users and evaluation of results used on the field is the best way to proceed.



Common impacts, indicators, and target audiences have been extracted to highlight their importance. The commonly expected impact from CDPs are listed below:

- Provide farmers, advisors, suppliers with a route to access validated information on innovation and best practice to generate management information to support decision making;
- Provide researchers and research funders with a network through which they can receive direct feedback from the field, and promote this network
- Help the public and civil society to understand how techniques, new solutions, and research results can be used to improve activities and finally contribute to help decision making, improve performances of farms, and raise awareness

Common quantitative proxy indicators used to assess the impact are listed below:

- Number of participants to events
- The number of events
- Number of visits and followers on social media
- Number of publications
- Etc...

Common target audiences to be reached are listed below:

- Research community
- Farmers
- Advisors
- Teachers
- Civil society
- Industries
- Policymakers are mentioned sometimes
- Etc...

Impacts, indicators, and target audiences are specific for each project, each sector and each domain of activity (target audience, specific channels, cultural behavior etc..). As such the expected impacts and specific project indicators cannot be replicated from one project to another. Each project must tailor its communication as well as dissemination plan and strategy to reach the expected impacts related to its specificities.

KPIs are thought during the setting up phase of the project and presented in the impact section. However, they are rarely or at least not systematically mentioned in CDPs. It could be an easy way to improve CDPs to assess the dissemination and communication actions put in place in TNs.

Most of the CDPs analyzed from TNs are presenting proxy indicators but they are not very specific to their project neither hardly quantified. Besides, the measurement of the impact needs qualitative components that lack in most of the projects. TNs are never making the distinction between economic and commercial aspects, societal, environmental, technical, educational, or scientific aspects of the impact.

The analysis of the CDPs usually reveals the lack of distinction between objectives, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. More specifically, some TNs are defining objectives in their CDPs without dedicating enough importance to their related impacts. Besides, CDPs are usually planning to disseminate about outputs from the project and outcomes but real impacts based on qualitative indicators are disregarded even knowing their importance in the view of the EC.

The SCAR AKIS highlighted all those issues in the report “Preparing for future AKIS in Europe” which is based on the Policy Brief Programming Research and Innovation for Improved Impact, written by representatives of the three SCAR Strategic Working Groups AKIS, ARCH and FOOD SYSTEMS with



support from the Common Agricultural and wider bio-economy research Agenda (CASA) project (H2020 Programme under Grant Agreement no. 727486)

Below is an extraction of the report that shows the importance of taking impact into account:

“Impact must be taken into account by researchers when designing projects so that, while producing knowledge, they can work with others on **codesigning and co-delivery of outputs and outcomes**. To make all this happen, incentives to encourage researchers’ engagement in interactive research and innovation processes, should be improved. Success in using and **achieving impact indicators** by researchers should be used in a novel way to provide incentives. It is also necessary to build or strengthen relevant capacities at all stakeholder levels as new competencies are required. This could be supported by **fostering closer collaboration with knowledge transfer organizations as well as innovation support services and innovation brokering to create an environment for supporting impact generation.**”

Difficulties and mistakes, as well as best practices, are developed in the next sections that link the key message from the SCAR AKIS in bold above.

5.4. Major and common difficulties and mistakes

The analysis of CDPs from TNs allowed us to highlight failures and difficulties. Failures and difficulties can be separated into two organizational aspects and a lack of understanding of communication and dissemination utility.

Mistakes and difficulties due to the organizational aspect:

- Language barriers
- Online based communication can fail, as internet access is not properly ensured in many areas
- Time and economic resources available in the project
- Insufficient positioning of specific strategies within organizations
- Competition between researchers
- Different perspectives within Universities and between organizations on regards to the valorization of research and technical results
- Difficulty to reach important end-users
- Not enough cooperation with the EIP-Agri service point and National Rural networks who have the role of a multiplier in Europe and the Member States.

Mistakes and difficulties due to a lack of understanding of C&D utility:

- A mixture of objectives both for C&D
- Farmers hardly involved in the EU project or even hardly aware of existing EU project because those end-users are working locally
- List of all channels and materials with no distinction between communication or dissemination.
- No focus on the internal communication within the consortium
- Planning of activities not clear leading to a lack of strategy behind
- Difficulty to explain how end-users will be reached and which material(s) would be most relevant/interesting/targeted for them.
- Key messages and materials/media/channels often presented together as communication and dissemination activities.
- Failure in identifying target audiences and key messages in the conceptualization phase of the project and in linking them together
- No KPIs or impact targets/proxy indicators provided → deliverables cannot be shown as indicators

5.5. Best practices

The analysis of CDPs from TNs allowed us to highlight best practices and the identification of common failures and challenges are leading to solutions that can be listed as best practices.

Overall best practices:

- Make use of efficient channels for a given target – it has been identified by the EC and indicated in the last call RUR-15-2018-2019-2020 (which is an evolution of ISIB-2-2014/2015 and RUR-10-2016-2017) “The result of the project should be an extensive range of useful, applicable and appealing end-user material for farmers and foresters. This information should be easy to access and understand and feed into the existing dissemination channels most consulted by farmers and foresters at the national or regional level.”
- Develop two separate documents or two different sections within a Communication and Dissemination Plans
- Define the objectives of the CDP to lead the plan and distinguish dissemination objectives and communication objectives
- Analyze the identified gaps in real practice and filling it (pull strategy) rather than a push strategy
- Acknowledges the limitations of a traditional top-down approach, leading to a focus on effective stakeholder cooperation to co-generate knowledge and innovation
- Identify suitable channels and materials for each target
- Develop an internal communication plan to have partners involved in external communication and dissemination
- Adapt the format and languages for farmers
- Focus on message and results to be disseminated
- Attend and participate actively in international events on TN specific thematic.
- Propose a ‘living document’, define it, and add specificity to the term ‘living document’.
- Involve students as future end-users
- Make the link with other relevant projects and OGs to reach audiences beyond the immediate scope of the project.
- Use “meta-targets” or “multipliers” (associations, unions, clusters, technology platforms, etc.) for achieving a multiplier effect of the communication activities
- Propose training schedules dedicated to farmers, to students, to agronomists. One training per audience.

Operational best practices:

- 1 Communication officer per consortium partner to engage individually
- Plan for maximum one year at a time. Systematically state date for the next version of the plan to be revised for the next year of the project and by which partner to assign responsibilities. Clearly outline what would be involved in the current, and future version(s) to manage reader expectations.
- Propose to write summaries of key challenges farmers identified by the project listed alongside exploitable results to help address those areas.
- Although it doubles the length of the document, the addition of very specific, detailed appendices with further detail on how to produce outputs (style, content, examples) should provide all necessary guidance to project partners.
- Have a pro-active approach towards innovators and early adopters, by pinpointing and involving them early in the Network for them to act as ambassadors for the promotion of the project among their neighbors and colleagues

Examples of best practices on dissemination:

- A Dissemination Activity Catalogue (DAC) reporting all dissemination activities with a summary



- Creation of a documentary and/or a book on the project and its results; this would give a more detailed overview of what the project has achieved to a wider audience.
- Marketing end-user material, such as handbooks with practical guidelines, can enhance the impact.
- End-user engagement practices; e.g. Pig Grand Prix competition: a great way to engage pig producers and share innovative best practices.
- Developing strong networking activities to create a community of end-users/practice at different geographical levels (from local to EU scales) to maximize the impact of all dissemination activities.

Measuring impact using standard quantitative data (number of attendees at workshops, events, digital analytics) AND qualitative feedback - forum feedback on webinars and testimony from pilot farmers on their experiences and value derived from the project.

6. Main outcomes and recommendations

The analysis done in the previous sections led to the main conclusions and recommendations presented hereafter. We organized the following section upon the 5 main topics that need to be addressed to improve the outreach of the EU TNs and to increase the efficiency of the C&D activities through optimal use of the tools and the channels. Major conclusions of the analysis are immediately followed by the key recommendations that need to be put into practice to increase TNs 'impact on the long term.

6.1. Improving the structural organization of the TNs towards more efficient C&D

- H2020 TNs are new project paradigms for all participants. Indeed, on the one hand, it's quite new to work on a multi-actor setting at the European level for most of the partners; on the other hand, partners are not very familiar with this new paradigm that must take stock of existing knowledge to adapt it for wider dissemination. Besides, partners are usually more focused on the adaptation and translation of the knowledge rather than on dissemination and communication. Last, the topics also slightly evolved in terms of wording along the year (ISIB-2-2014/2015; RUR-10-2016-2017; RUR-15-2018-2019-2020) and it takes time for the Research and Innovation community working on Agricultural challenges to adapt their practices to these new projects paradigms.
 - All TNs are communicating and disseminating, but the impact isn't as successful as expected. Even with elaborated C&D plans, the activities are time-consuming for a low vision of end-user engagement and uptake of results. The plans don't seem to be read or taken up by all TNs partners as C&D is not the first objective for all partners.
 - C&D appears as a constraint for TN partners, and the partner responsible must find some motivational strategies to involve people. Efficiency should be more stimulated and can be improved by internal communication and by sharing projects and network solutions, strategies, and tools.
 - Languages and translations remain the main barrier to C&D activities. TNs are trying to translate at the maximum but it usually comes to a lack of resources in terms of budget and time.
- *Future calls on EU TNs should mention that dissemination of projects results should be as important as the collection, adaptation, and translation of knowledge*
- *Consortia must allocate more budget and personal time to C&D.*



- *All partners should be committed to these activities from the very beginning of the project and be aware that it's the most important task of the project instead of a constraint.*
- *Internal communication and efficient partner management is key to better stimulate project partners for dissemination activities;*
- *Considering the language barrier for knowledge sharing and innovation uptake, national and regional C&D plans must be foreseen to directly reach the target with the project outputs.*

6.2. Enhancing the impact of TNs through professional communication skills and partners

- Even if the TNs aim to disseminate technical knowledge to end-users, partners are not often professionals of C&D. Indeed, most of the partners are researchers, agricultural engineers, or rural and agricultural advisors: they don't have all the necessary skills for C&D, they are not always familiar with operational C&D strategies and practices, etc....
 - The distinction between C&D is not that simple and clear for most of the projects: even if the strategy differs, it ends most of the time with common practice for both activities. Although messages, materials, channels, and tools are separated according to target groups and TN objectives, it is challenging to apply it in practice, mostly because of the identification of end-user and the key messages to address.
 - Even if the TNs made their best to be as accurate as possible in the production of outcomes, end-user languages (i.e. farmers, advisors, policymakers, consumers) remain an important barrier to properly reach the expected targets with the relevant tools.
 - Measure the engagement and uptake of end-users in C&D activities is highly complicated, as well as the success of the channels, tools, and materials. There is currently no effective tool to measure impact, and TNs are wondering how to evaluate their practices and how can it be adapted in the future.
- *Future TNs should recruit professional communication and dissemination partners for C&D activities.*
 - *Professional 'communication partners will considerably help TNs to improve their C&D activities on the following aspects:*
 - *the distinction between C&D and clear and professional C&D strategy;*
 - *better use and adaptation of D&C channels and tools with regards to the targets;*
 - *adaptation of the material to the right language for the right targets;*
 - *better management of the project 'partner for C&D activities and to adapt their strategy to their national and regional area;*
 - *use of the professional tools for measurement of the C&D activities and their impacts.*

6.3. Using the right channels & tools for the right target audience

- Target audiences are usually properly identified in the C&D Plans (i.e. farmers, advisors, researchers, consumers, Policy Makers, NGOs) and some specific actions and tools are targeted to these respective targets. Although, the behavior of the target (how they get knowledge) can differ a lot according to the agricultural sector, gender, age, culture, country, political framework, etc...



- According to TNs' experiences, the most successful channel of communication is the website. However, the project's websites are per definition temporary and not targeted by the end-user as an instinct source of knowledge. Also, EU project websites are not systematically translated in other languages than English which may discourage end-users and especially farmers to search for new knowledge.
 - As for dissemination channels, face to face meetings (workshops, field visits, field demonstration, conferences) with end-users, especially farmers and foresters seems to be the most efficient way to reach the targets and to maximize farmers adoption. Peer-to-peer learning/ knowledge exchange remains the most efficient to get knowledge for end-users and especially farmers. Nevertheless, face to face meetings to disseminate knowledge and technical best-practices are more time-consuming and more challenging to organize than uploading a factsheet on the website.
 - Cross-border exchange visits in a multi-actor setting have been highlighted as a very efficient way to exchange knowledge between different actors from different countries and areas, but also as a good way to incentivize cross-border peer-to-peer learning leading to a better acceptance of new knowledge.
 - Even if the website is useful and appreciated by TNs, it seems that all dissemination materials with technical content and best practices are not easily accessible on the platforms. The mix of project presentations and results doesn't allow us to have a simple and clear message from the TNs. A lot of materials are produced, but end users may struggle to identify which information and materials are specifically dedicated to them.
 - Social networks are promising communication channels but also time-consuming ones. Partners are not using them enough, slowing down the development of the digital community. TN partners and other actors should be stimulated more to use social media and to spread messages about TN results to their peers.
- *The identification of the audience may not be restricted to the type of actors, but also their common practices, age, and preference in term of the channel (for example a young farmer belonging to a digital community (Twitter group, etc.) in comparison to an old farmer who doesn't have any computer or smartphone, but is proactive in farmer associations).*
 - *There is a need for decision making support tools on how to select a blend of multiple channels and a portfolio or tools/materials that will lead to high impact communication to the specific audiences (including end-users of project results).*
 - *The access to ready to use technical & practical material for end-users on the project websites must be improved. The constitution of easy to identify and to access repositories of end-user material must be a priority for future TNs and all EU Research and Innovation projects.*
 - *C&D activities should be organized in a complementary way to efficiently reach both objectives:*
 - *Social networks posts, newsletters, and videos must be mainly used for communication and inform the targets about project life, progress, and activities.*
 - *Physical meetings as seminars, workshops, and field demonstration must be mainly used for dissemination of results*
 - *The Farm Demo projects¹⁷ stated the recommendation bellow that must be followed for more efficient dissemination to practitioners: "On-farm demonstration – in the case, it brings*

¹⁷ AgriDemo F2F : <https://farmdemo.eu>

PLAID: <https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/peer-peer-learningaccessing-innovation-through>

NEFERTITI : <https://nefertiti-h2020.eu>



benefits (which are understood as such) to end-users/farmers - should be an essential part of the dissemination activities of EIP AGRI projects, TNs, OGs and other European project programs such as Horizon Europe and Interreg, in particular when aiming at innovation". (EU SCAR AKIS (2019), Preparing for Future AKIS in Europe. Brussels, EC).

- *Social Media must be used for communication purposes as a strong vector to stimulate access to the project website and the related outcomes (factsheet, videos, studies) of the project but also as a vector to grow the community of people and targets around the project.*
- *Some C&D channels such as WhatsApp, radio media, podcasts, and the local press must be most broadly by TNs because of their high-potential good relays of C&D to reach farmers/foresters*

6.4. Setting partnership and complementarities to boost the outreach of the TNs

- It's more difficult to reach the targeted end-users through European projects than through domestic and local projects. Indeed, as mentioned in the previous section, the best way to reach a farmer is through his peers. Farmers need time and confidence to believe and the other local farmers and their related information, C&D channels are the favorite sources of knowledge for them.
 - On the other hand, in the last decade, we noticed a multiplication of projects in the field of agriculture, either through national funding but also through European and regional funding. This multiplication of projects and related C&D channels needs to be channeled and put in synergies through anticipated common strategies for more clarity and impact of the messages.
 - The Horizon 2020 call on TNs from 2014 to 2020 (ISIB-2-2014/2015; RUR-10-2016-2017; RUR-15-2018-2019-2020) mentioned the necessity to liaise with OGs to boost the dissemination and the impact of the projects. Indeed, as EIP-AGRI OGs are local groups dedicated to co-creation, demonstration, dissemination, and transfer of knowledge, a close partnership with TN is paramount to improve the outreach.
 - Although, the wording of the Horizon 2020 call on TNs evolves in the last 3 years, in comparison with the 4 previous years. RUR-15-2018-2019-2020 it's clearly stated: "this information should be easy to access and understand and feed into the existing dissemination channels most consulted by farmers and foresters at the national or regional level". The analysis of the appearance of this sentence shows that the EC realizes the importance to use other channels than the projects' ones.
 - Educators and students are unfortunately not targeted as a priority for dissemination and communication in most of the TNs whereas there's a huge potential to maximize dissemination through educating and training the next generation of farmers, advisors, and researchers, or through life-long learning programs
 - Most of the TNs expressed the lack of time to efficiently disseminate results during the project lifetime as a substantial part of the results comes in the very last months of the project. This time gap between the dissemination strategy and the availability of the results often hinder the capacity of the consortium to properly run their C&D strategy.
- *As required in the last version of the H2020 Call (RUR-15-2018-2019-2020), TNs must use the most used and existing C&D channels for farmers and foresters in their country, regions, or sector to boost the outreach of the project. To maximize the impact of this action, TNs must define a clear synergy strategy between their channels and the other channels they're going to use.*

- *TNs must (at a very early stage) identify and connect with other H2020 projects, national and local projects as well as OGs or any relevant networks in their area, to set-up common and synergistic communication activities and organize common dissemination events. Indeed, TNs must particularly connect with OGs or any similar projects that have a local embedment, and which aim is to deliver practical oriented solutions/materials to achieve their C&D objectives.*
- *In continuation, and to assure the sustainability and long-term availability and application of TNs results, links with long term local initiatives and education programs are highly recommended.*
- *The difficulty to find time and budget for C&D raises the question to manage independently these activities (as well for demonstration and networking) by other programs or complementary funding. This can assure that C&D will be implemented by experts and that partners keep time to focus on the knowledge results. This recommendation is also highlighted in the last EU SCAR AKIS report (2019), Preparing for Future AKIS in Europe. Brussels, EC, page 205.*

6.5. Maximizing the Impact of C&D activities

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are thought during the setting up phase of the project and presented in the impact section. However, they are rarely or at least not systematically mentioned in CDPs and linked to the C&D channels of the project. Systematically matching the KPIs mention in the proposal to the C&D channels could be an easy way to better assess the dissemination and communication actions put in place in TNs.
- There's a wide range of tools to monitor and assess the activity of C&D channels (i.e. google analytics, etc..). Even if these tools are broadly used by the TNs for quantitative analysis to monitor how far people had access to the project information and outputs (how many people reach a given website page, download a fact sheet or saw a Social Media post), we notice a lack of concern and tools to monitor the outreach of the TNS through qualitative analysis (i.e. was the knowledge relevant? Did you implement it in practice? etc..).
- The main aim of TNs is to disseminate to end-users and ready to use techniques and best practices in agriculture. However, we notice a lack of impact 'culture within the Research and Innovation community composing most of the TNs. During the project lifetime, there are still a few differences between outputs, outcomes, and impact. Some important efforts have been made in the European Research and Innovation organizations across the past 10 years to teach this impact 'culture in the scientific community, but there's still a lot to do to change mindsets and behaviors.
- *TNs must systematically and carefully link the KPIs mentioned in the proposal to their C&D plan. This action will provide efficient monitoring tools for C&D activities throughout the projects. 7*
- *TNs should not only use quantitative tools to monitor their impact, but also a set of tools allowing to measure the qualitative impact of their activities. Surveys and interviews toward the targeted end-user community should be performed along the project to evaluate the relevance and applicability of the knowledge produced.*
- *TNs which aim is to deliver operational solutions to end-users must improve their impact 'culture straight from the beginning of the project. This impact's culture must be taught and pushed by the coordinator and the responsible for C&D so that all partners are more committed to efficient C&D activities.*

7. Annex I – Desktop study guideline

How to fill in Table 2.3?

Each row can be divided into communication and dissemination aspects.

Please, insert only one word per cell, and one table per network.

PLEASE, HAVE A LOOK on project website but also social media and knowledge platform (if existing)

CHANNELS

- Specify the target group for each channel of communication/dissemination used.
- The differentiation seems hard to make, but keep in mind that communication is about the general project, and dissemination is for the uptake of the results
 - ex: social media account are more relevant for communication
 - ex2: scientific papers are more relevant for dissemination aspect

INTERNET

- **WEBSITE**
 - Number of website languages: in figures
 - List of languages: name them
 - Website structure: specify the different website sections (*home, partners, events...*)
 - Website target groups: what are the target groups of the website?
- **PRACTICE ABSTRACTS**
 - Number of Practice abstracts online: in figures
 - Practice abstracts target groups: what are the target groups of the practice abstracts
- **FACT SHEETS**
 - Number of Fact sheets online: in figures
 - Fact sheets target groups: what are the target groups of the fact sheets?
- **NEWSLETTERS**
 - Number of Newsletters online: in figures
 - Newsletters structure: specify the different newsletter sections (*fact sheets, article, events...*)
 - Newsletters target groups: what are the target groups of the newsletters?

MULTIMEDIA

- **YOUTUBE**
 - Number of YouTube followers: in figures
 - Number of YouTube videos: in figures
 - Maximal number of videos viewed: in figures
 - Youtube videos target groups: what are the target groups of the videos?
- **TWITTER**
 - Number of Twitter followers: in figures
 - Number of Tweets posted: in figures
 - Tweets target groups: what are the target groups of Twitter?
- **LINKEDIN**
 - Number of LinkedIn followers: in figures
 - Number of LinkedIn posts: in figures (if possible)
 - LinkedIn target group: what are the target groups of LinkedIn?
- **FACEBOOK**
 - Number of Facebook followers: in figures
 - Number of Facebook posts: in figures (if possible)
 - Facebook target group: what are the target groups of Facebook?

EVENTS

Events seem more complicated to find out, so please also check on social media wherein in most cases some posts with events have been made.

Please, consider the 3 first categories below as type of meeting (consortium meetings, workshops, and open days), and the 3 others as a scale of events (international, national, regional). So, one event can be in two different categories.

- **CONSORTIUM MEETINGS**
 - Number of Consortium meetings organized: in figures
 - Consortium meetings target groups: what are the target groups of the consortium meetings?
- **WORKSHOPS**
 - Number of workshops organized: in figures
 - Workshops target groups: what are the target groups of the workshops?
- **OPEN DAYS & DEMO'S**
 - Number of Open days & Demo's organised: in figures
 - Open days & Demo's target groups: what are the target groups of the open days & demo's?
- **INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**
 - Number of international events organized: in figures
 - International events target group: what are the target groups of international events?

- **NATIONAL EVENTS**
 - Number of national events organized: in figures
 - National events target group: what are the target groups of national events
- **REGIONAL EVENTS**
 - Number of regional events organized: in figures
 - Regional events target group: what are the target groups of national events

PRESS

- **PRESS RELEASES & ARTICLES**
 - Number of press releases & articles online: in figures
 - Press releases & articles target groups: what are the target groups of press releases & articles?
- **SCIENTIFIC PAPERS**
 - Number of scientific papers produced and online: in figures
 - Scientific papers target groups: what are the target groups of scientific papers?

OTHER: all other material used by the TN for communication and dissemination should be listed here

8. Annex II – Desktop study results

Social network figures (March 2019)

	YOUTUBE CHANNEL	FOLLOWER YT	NUMBER VIDEO YT	MAXIMAL VIEW	TWITTER ACCOUNT	NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS	NUMBER TWEET POSTED	LINKEDIN ACCOUNT	NUMBER FOLLOWERS	NUMBER POST	FACEBOOK ACCOUNT	NUMBER FOLLOWER	NUMBER POST
Agrispin	1	78	35	29174	1	243	97	1	218	1	1	279	90
HNV	1	19	9	379	1	718	894	0	0	0	0	0	0
Smart-AKIS	1	11	7	800	1	1963	4132	0	0	0	1	10	10
AGRIFORVALOR	0	0	0	0	1	801	864	1	0	0	1	139	155
AFINET	1	20	12	668	1	971	699	0	49	17	1	767	153
INNO4GRASS	1	27	5	624	1	140	42	1	0	0	1	0	0
SKIN	1	4	9	1001	1	608	376	1	21	0	0	0	0
ENABLING	0	0	0	0	1	152	76	1	59	20	0	0	0
NEWBIE	1	16	4	42	1	67	34	0	0	0	1	131	46
OK-NET	1	27	12	349	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FERTINNOVA	1	26	107	306	1	568	979	1	48	5	0	0	0
WINETWORK	0	0	0	0	1	418	824	1	53	0	1	88	88
EUFRUIT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CERERE	1	25	4	258	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	511	231
INCREDIBLE	0	0	0	0	1	279	201	1	16	2	0	0	0
PANACEA	0	0	0	0	1	418	624	1	55	0	1	88	0
INNOSETA	0	0	0	0	1	179	101	1	69	26	1	131	0
BEST4SOIL	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEGUMES TRANSLATED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUWANU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	8
NUTRIMAN	0	0	0	0	1	48	8	1	10	1	1	4	0
HENNOVATION	1	6	4	987	1	224	64	0	0	0	1	129	73
EURODAIRY	1	7	17	689	1	42	66	0	0	0	1	21	18
4D4F	0	0	0	0	1	418	824	1	53	0	0	88	0
SHEEPNET	0	0	0	0	1	418	84	1	53	0	1	88	0
OKNET ECOFEED	0	0	0	0	1	294	94	0	0	0	0	76	40
EURAKNOS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DISARM	0	0	0	0	1	253	34	1	12	3	1	7	8
EUPIG	0	0	0	0	1	416	325	0	0	0	0	0	0
use of social networks as a percentage	0,448275862	266	225	35277	0,75862069	9638	11442	0,482758621	716	75	0,551724138	2564	920

Target groups, number, and type of events (March 2019)

	Consortium meetings		Workshops		Open days & Demo's		International events		National events		Regional events	
	Number of Consortium meetings organised	Consortium meetings target groups	Number of Workshops organised	Workshops target groups	Number of Open days/Demo's	Open days/Demo's target group	Number of international events organised	International events target group	Number of national events organised	National events target group	Number of regional events organised	Regional events target group
HNV LINK	2	Project partners	10		18		1				10	
AFINET	5	Partners			0						36	
INCREDIBLE	2		3		0		9		11		4	
FERTINNOVA	4	Policy makers	3	Policy makers	49	Policy makers	3	Policy makers		Policy makers		Policy makers
ENABLING	1	policy makers										
INNOSETA		policy makers										
Legumes translated	1	policy makers										
OK NET ARABLE	2		3				1		6			
PANACEA	2		3				1		6			
SHEEPNET	2		3				1		6			
SKIN												
EUFRUIT												
EURAKNOS	1	Project partners										
OK-Net EcoFeed	3	Project partners					1	farmers			2	farmers
NEWBIE		farmers	9	farmers				farmers		farmers		
SMART AKIS												
SUWANU												
INNO 4 GRASS	1	project partners		project partners				project partners		project partners		
HENNOVATION	4	project partners	95	multi actors	3	facilitators (researchers)	2	policy makers	5	policy makers		
BEST4SOIL												
EUPIG												
AGRIFORVALOR	4		6	farmers	0		3	farmers	3	farmers	0	
NUTRIMAN	1											-
EURODAIRY	14	policy makers	11	policy makers								
4D4F	2		3				1		6			
AGRISPIN							12	policy makers	1	policy makers		
WINETWORK	2		3				1	0	6			
TOTAL	53		152		70		36		50		52	

Number and target groups of press release & articles (March 2019)

	Press releases & articles		Scientific papers	
	Number of press releases & articles online	Press releases & articles target groups	Number of scientific papers produced and online	Scientific papers target groups
HNV LINK	2	Farmers		
AFINET	28	Farmers		
INCREDIBLE	1			-
FERTINOVA	87	Policy makers	5	Policy makers
ENABLING	2	policy makers	10	
INOSSETA	14			
Legumes translated	1	policy makers	0	
OK NET ARABLE	22	policy makers		
PANACEA	22	policy makers		
SHEEPNET	22	policy makers		
SKIN	1		1	farmers
EUFRUIT			4	farmers
EURAKNOS				
OK-Net EcoFeed	8	farmers	0	
NEWBIE	1	Farmers		
SMART AKIS	4	farmers	1	farmers
SUWANU				
INNO 4 GRASS		policy makers		
HENNOVATION	21	policy makers	2	policy makers
BEST4SOIL	0	0	0	
EUPIG				
AGRIFORVALOR	70	farmers	0	-
NUTRIMAN	0	-	0	
EURODAIRY	1	Press releases	0	policy makers
4D4F	22	policy makers		
AGRISPIN	1	policy makers	2	policy makers
WINETWORK	22	policy makers		
CERRERE	2		4	
	354		29	

Website figures (March 2019)

Thematic networks	Number language web site	Number Practice-Abstract	Fact sheets online	Newsletters online	others
AGRISPIN	1	0	0	0	35 videos
HNV-LINK	10	0	0	5	
SMART-AKIS	7	71	748	5	1 map
AGRIFORVALOR	1	0	0	13	10 videos
AFINET	9	0	0	6	8 radio/tv
Inno4Grass	7	0	1	1	
SKIN	1	0	0	0	
ENABLING	1	0	1	2	1 webinar
NEWBIE	1	0	0	16	
OK-Net-Arable	1	89	0	0	
fertInnowa	9	98	24	11	1 bible
WINETWORK	9	0	0	1	
EUFRUIT	1	54	0	0	
CERERE	1	13	1	0	1 videos
INCREDIBLE	8	0	0	0	
PANACEA	9	0	0	1	
INNOSETA	8	0	0	1	
Best4soil	0	0	0	0	
legumes translated	1	0	0	0	
Suwanu	0	0	0	0	
Nutrیمان	8	0	0	0	
HENNOVATION	5	38	5	2	1 webinar
Eurodairy	4	0	28	0	19 videos
4D4F	7	0	0	1	
SheepNet	9	0	0	1	
Ok net ecofeed	1	0	0	0	
DISARM	0	0	0	0	
EURAKNOS	0	0	0	0	
EUPIG	1	0	0	7	

9. Annex III – Online survey

The questions were not in this format, but in an online survey with clickable answers.

- Which communication and dissemination channel (distinctly) have been mostly more successful? (choose below one main channel)
- Did you choose for a specific design of material targeting a specific target group? If yes, what were these materials? Complete the table below, vertically, with a priority order (1,2,3) Can you estimate the percentage or amount (the importance) of actors that have been reached by each type of channel and material?
- What is the main type of social media user you have focused on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube? Complete with prioritization (1 (the best), 2, 3)
- What was the type of user most successfully connected with the TN on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube? Complete the matrix below with prioritization
- The number of translations of newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics?
- What was the release frequency of newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics?
- Who were the actors/ stakeholders involved in the preparation of newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics?
- Number of People Reached by newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics?
- Do the following materials have open access to the website or Knowledge Reservoirs? (newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics)
- Who was the responsible partner for the newsletters, practice abstracts, factsheets, press releases, articles, scientific papers, technical articles, video, pictures, courses, infographics? (Coordinator, WP-Leader, Partner, Professional subcontractor, Specific board)
- What number of events have been organized in different categories? (workshops, conferences, field visits)
- What number of attendees were in different categories? (workshops, conferences, field visits)
- Were the following categories exclusive or joint ventures with other partners? (workshops, conferences, field visits)
- Were the following categories organized as open access events to the public? (workshops, conferences, field visits)



- In what languages were the events in the following categories organized? (workshops, conferences, field visits)
- Are the events recorded for online use? (workshops, conferences, field visits)
- What was the share of actors attending the different events? (in percentage between farmer, researcher, policymaker, industry, university, other). Complete with the number in the table below.
- What part of EIP-AGRI did you use for the dissemination or communication of your TN? (Web, Summit, Practice Abstract, Newsletter, Workshop)



10. Annex IV – Oral interview

Question 1. Can we have a copy of your communication and/or dissemination plan to study?

Question 2. Is there an essential difference between communication and dissemination in the strategy towards end-users of my TN?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain the different strategies between communication and dissemination. Explain if applicable different strategies between different types of end-users.

Question 3. The following communication/dissemination channel is successful for my TN (in current TN strategy).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
website (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
mailing (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Facebook	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Instagram	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Twitter	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network LinkedIn	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social medium YouTube	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Blogs/Forums	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Other (specify)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Face to Face meetings (dissemination/communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Group meetings (study day, workshop, ...)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Press releases	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Newsletters	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Other (specify)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answers (What does successful communication and dissemination means according to you? How do you measure success?)

Question 4. **TN end-users** prefer following communication or dissemination channel most (specify the type of end-users if possible).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
Website (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Website (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Mailing (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Mailing (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Facebook (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Facebook (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Instagram (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Instagram (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Twitter (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Twitter (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Blogs/Forums (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Blogs/Forums (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Other (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Social network Other (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Face to Face meetings (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Face to Face meetings (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Group meetings (study day, the workshop, ...) (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Group meetings (study day, workshop, ...) (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Press releases (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Press releases (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Other (specify) (communication)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Other (dissemination)	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answers (Did you gather your end-users suggestions? (interview, survey, discussion, literature, other)

Question 4. My TN can reach targeted end-users.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain the answer (give an example of what were difficulties, how did you solve it)

Question 5. Visuals are an important tool to communicate/disseminate output of a TN.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain the answer (what are according to you the best visuals)

Question 5 bis. A video has to be made based on...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
scientific based content	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
practical content	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
an interview	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
a field demonstration	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
a short and quick message	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
on interaction with professional movie makers	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answer (How are the stakeholders informed about the release of new videos?)

Question 6. Your TN spent a lot of time and effort to develop specific education/stewardship programs.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
Programs are available	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Access is open	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answer (conditions of access to the end-user, what type of content/ materials was produced for these programs)

Question 7. How did your project build up a database of contacts? (How did you solve the GDPR issues with regard to this database?) (open)

Question 8. EIP-AGRI channel & practice abstracts contribute well to the dissemination of your TN outputs. This is due to...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
Content	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Format	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Design	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Other	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answer

Question 9. Our TN website and/or Knowledge Reservoir is frequently visited because...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
The unique content	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
The professional design	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Communication strategy	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
The project activities	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Other	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answer (Did you have a specific strategy to increase website traffic?)

Question 10. Our TN communication and dissemination...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not able to answer
COMMUNICATION						
Is time consuming	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Need experts	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Will stop at the end of the TN	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Should have been done in a different way	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Should use different tools and materials to increase the impact	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
DISSEMINATION						
Is time consuming	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ ⌚
Need experts	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Will stop at the end of the TN	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Should have been done in a different way	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6
Should use different tools and materials to increase the impact	→ 1	→ 2	→ 3	→ 4	→ 5	→ 6

Explain answer (How much time was dedicated to the Communication & Dissemination activities? (% of the total person-months spent in the project))

Question 11. Do you have any other remarks? Did you face some other barriers to your communication and dissemination of outputs?