

NATIOONS

Deliverable 3.3 – Review of events



Data sheet

Project Name	National engagement activities to support the launch of the Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe' 100 Living Labs and Lighthouses
Project Acronym	NATIOONS
GA Number	101090738
Type of Action	HORIZON-CSA
Topic	HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-07
Starting date of Project	1 November 2022
Duration of the project	24 months
Website	www.nati00ns.eu
Work Package	WP3 National Engagement Event
Task	T3.3 Innovation Potential Thematic Events
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Peer reviewers	Ulliana Bertelsen (AU DCA)
Version	V1.0
Due Date	30/09/2024
Submission Date	30/09/2024

Dissemination level

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PU: Public
<input type="checkbox"/>	CO: Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission)
<input type="checkbox"/>	EU-RES. Classified Information: RESTREINT UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)
<input type="checkbox"/>	EU-CON. Classified Information: CONFIDENTIEL UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)
<input type="checkbox"/>	EU-SEC. Classified Information: SECRET UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)

Version history

Revision	Date	Editors	Comments
0.1	29/08/2024	Anita De Franco (POLIMI), Eugenio Morello (POLIMI), Gabriele Quattrocchi (TRUST-IT)	Table of Contents and Introduction
0.2	12/09/2024	Fabiana De Carlo (TRUST-IT)	Section 1.2, Section 2.1 and Section 2.2
0.3	16/09/2024	Anita De Franco (POLIMI), Farah Makki (POLIMI), Eugenio Morello (POLIMI)	Section 3, Section 5, Section 6
0.4	20/09/2024	Gabriela Rogowska, Gabriele Quattrocchi, Fabiana De Carlo (TRUST-IT)	Introduction, Section 1.1 Background and Objectives, Section 1.3 Relations with other tasks and deliverables, Section 2.3 Evaluation Framework, Section 2.4 Performance of the NEE round #2, Section 2.5 Synthesis and comparison of the results from Round#1 and #2, Executive Summary
0.5	27/09/2024	Ulliana Bertelsen (AU DCA)	Review
1.0	30/09/2024	Gabriela Rogowska, Gabriele Quattrocchi, Fabiana De Carlo (TRUST-IT); Farah Makki, Eugenio Morello (POLIMI)	Adjustments and formatting

List of Abbreviations/Glossary of terms

Term	Description
AC	Associated Country
D	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HSLL	Soil Healthy Soil Living Lab
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAG	Local Action Group
LH	Lighthouse
LL	Living Lab
Mission Soil	EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe'
MS	Member State
N.A.	Not applicable
NCP	National Contact Point
NEE	National Engagement Event
REA	Research Executive Agency
SH	Soil Health
T	Task
TE	Thematic Event
WP	Work Package
Q&A	Questions and answers

Keywords

Soil Health, Living Labs, Lighthouses, EU Mission Soil, National Engagement Events, Thematic Events, Event Organisation, Event Performance, Stakeholder Engagement, Multi-stakeholder Partnerships.

Disclaimer

NATIOONS has received funding from the European Commission's Horizon Europe funding programme for research and innovation action under Grant Agreement no. 101090738. The content of this document does not represent the opinion of the European Commission, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that might be made of such content.

Executive Summary

This deliverable reflects on the activities revolving around the second round of National Engagement Events, which built upon the achievements of the initial round in 2023, and Thematic Events. These events aimed to inform key stakeholders - land managers, researchers, public authorities, and businesses - about the opportunities and support available for applying to two topics in the Mission Soil call for proposals related to the establishment of Soil Health Living Labs. The call, published on April 17, 2024, invited the stakeholders to apply for two key topics: co-creating solutions for soil health in living labs and establishing living labs in urban areas to promote healthy soils.

Running from mid-April to mid-July 2024 and spanning 44 EU Member States and Associated Countries, the National Engagement Events attracted nearly 2,600 participants. These events effectively raised awareness of Mission Soil and provided crucial information about the available funding opportunities. By offering insights into proposal preparation and facilitating networking, matchmaking, and pitching opportunities, the National Engagement Events and the Thematic Events played a pivotal role in supporting the potential applicants.

The organisation of the second round of events incorporated recommendations from the partners, the Executive Board, the Mission Secretariat, the European Research Executive Agency (REA), the Mission Board and applicants of the 2023 Living Lab topics based on insights from the first round. Specifically, efforts were made to better engage Northern European and Baltic countries by organising two dedicated events to connect stakeholders and potential applicants from these regions.

The feedback collected from participants will be vital for the SOILL-Startup project, which aims to build upon the legacy of NATIOONS by extending support to both applicants and the broader network of Mission Soil Living Labs and Lighthouses. The achievements of the events, combined with the established support system, underscore the growing momentum behind the Mission Soil. Stakeholders are encouraged to leverage these resources as they contribute to the advancement of sustainable soil management across Europe and beyond.

The document is made up of three main parts, which focus on the analysis of the National Engagement events Round #2, analysis of the Thematic Events, a synthesis with the key messages, recommendations and lessons learnt.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Objectives

Deliverable (D) 3.3 is the final reporting document of the Work Package (WP) 3 – National Engagement Events. It provides an overview of the activities revolving around the organisation and implementation of the National Engagement Events (NEEs) and the Thematic Events (TEs), including their results, according to the monitoring plan set up in Tasks (T) 3.1 and 3.3. Specifically, D3.3 completes the NATIOONS’ two-year event implementation process supporting the ambitious goals of the EU Mission ‘A Soil Deal for Europe’ (hereafter, Mission Soil), which aims at establishing one hundred Soil Health Living Labs (SHLLs) and Lighthouses (LHs) across Europe by 2030. NATIOONS supported the Mission in its early stages by acting as an ambassador and conveying the main awareness raising messages to national and regional stakeholders. The project provided access to capacity building materials and information and fostered early matchmaking for cross-regional LL clusters addressing land uses: agriculture, nature, forestry, urban, and (post) industrial. D3.3 provides information about the results and outcomes of the second round of NEEs - taking place in the period 10 April – 8 July 2024, and the six TEs organised in M14-M16 (December 2023 - February 2024). The document complements the information in D3.2 - Review of National engagement events, round #1, providing a comprehensive overview of the event implementation, participant feedback, and the effectiveness of the engagement strategies employed. It also highlights the challenges encountered, and recommendations for future improvements. The report also compares the results of NEE round #1 and #2.

WP3 has been specifically designed to successfully organise and execute two rounds of NEEs and the TEs to prepare stakeholders for the call topics supporting the implementation of the LLs and LHs across Europe. WP3 is made of three tasks: (1) T3.1 Overarching event organisation and supervision; (2) T3.2 Implementation and evaluation of National engagement events; (3) T3.3 Innovation potential thematic events. Each of them covers specific phases of the projects. The deliverable D3.3 is part of the work carried out in T3.2 and T3.3. It reports on the lessons learnt from the two rounds of NEEs and the six TEs to enhance the optimisation of the entire organisation process for the handover to the SOILL project. All the takeaways in this document are capitalised in the creation of capacity-building materials as part of the project’s knowledge exploitation activities in T2.3. Furthermore, they are also to be shared with the Mission Secretariat, the PREPSOIL project (GA 101070045) and the SOILL-Startup project (GA 101145592), and the Mission Support Platform.

1.2 Task Participants

TRUST-IT (Trust-IT Services srl) led and coordinated the activities of task 3.2, while POLIMI (Politecnico di Milano) led and coordinated the activities of task 3.3. TRUST-IT also organised the NEEs in Italy, Armenia and Georgia under T3.2. The other partners supporting the implementation of the activities are reported in the following tables, which also remarks on their roles within the task.

Table 1. Participants and roles in task 3.2

Short name	Legal name	Role in the task 3.2
AU	AARHUS UNIVERSITET	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Denmark. Liaising, in the role of coordinator, with REA and the Mission Secretariat
ENoLL	EUROPEAN NETWORK OF LIVING LABS IVZW	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Belgium, Luxembourg and Ireland.
EIT-FOOD	EIT FOOD CLC SOUTH S.L.	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Cyprus, Israel, Turkey.
FUNDECYT-PCTEX	FUNDACION FUNDECYT – PARQUE CIENTIFICO Y TECNOLOGICO DE EXTREMADURA	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in France, Greece, Austria-Germany, Netherland, Portugal, Spain and UK
COMMpla	COMMPLA SRL	ICT support to the management of the events on the project website.
BIONSENSE	BIONSENSE INSTITUTE – RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN BIOSYSTEMS	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia.
IUNG	INSTYTUT UPRAWY NAWOZENIA I GLEBOZNAWSTWA, PANSTWOWY INSTYTUT BADAWCZY	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia.
NIU	NEMZETI INNOVÁCIÓS ÜGYNÖKSÉG - NIU	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia.
LAAS	VIESOJI ISTAIGA LIETUVOS ZEMES UKIO KONSULTAVIMO TARNYBA	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania.
IRCEM	ASOCIATIA INSTITUTUL PENTRU CERCETARE IN ECONOMIE CIRCULARA SI MEDIU EERNEST LUPAN IRCEM	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine.

Short name	Legal name	Role in the task 3.2
BUSINESS MED	UNION MEDITERRANEENNE DES CONFEDERATIONS D'ENTREPRISES	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Malta, Morocco, Tunisia.
SLU	SVERIGES LANTBRUKSUNIVERSITET	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the National Engagement Event in Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden.

Table 2. Participants and roles in task 3.3

Short name	Legal name	Role in the task 3.3
POLIMI	POLITECNICO DI MILANO	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Breaking ground together: Solutions for urban and post-industrial soil de-sealing” about Urban, Post-Industrial Soil. Liaising with REA and the Mission Secretariat
EIT-FOOD	EIT FOOD CLC SOUTH S.L.	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Beyond gender barriers in the agrifood system: Innovative women improving food & soil health” about gender dimension in soil management.
BUSINESSMED	UNION MEDITERRANEENNE DES CONFEDERATIONS D'ENTREPRISES	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Industry engagement for sustainable soil health: Joining living labs” about Industry Engagement in Soil Health Living Labs.
FUNDECYT	FUNDACION FUNDECYT – PARQUE CIENTIFICO Y TECNOLOGICO DE EXTREMADURA	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Smart Soils: Smart Specialization meets EU Soil Mission” about smart specialisation and soil management.
SLU	SVERIGES LANTBRUKSUNIVERSITET	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Soil health from a forestry perspective” about forestry soil.
IUNG	IUNG	Setting-up, holding, following-up on the Thematic Event: “Soil decontamination” about soil decontamination.

1.3 Relations with other tasks and deliverables

D3.3 follows up on and complements the content of D3.1 and D3.2. Other deliverables are connected to D3.3. Deliverable 1.3, the update of the content generation plan (D1.2), outlines the detailed materials produced for WP3 and WP4 activities. While this deliverable is publicly available, it serves as a reference for D3.3 to align the event materials and outputs with the overall project objectives. The update of the content generation plan, as captured in D1.3, introduced modifications and additions to the initial plan. The activities reported in D3.3 aligned with the dissemination, exploitation, and communication (DEC) plan outlined in D2.1 and its updated version – D2.2.

The overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers, as described in D3.1, provided a framework for the smooth completion of the NEEs. An Annex to the overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers has been produced and handed out to the event organisers in M16 in order to update the original plan and give a consistent guidance to the event organisation activity, based on the feedback and recommendations resulting from year 1. T3.2 and T3.3 built upon that plan and the annex, ensuring consistency and adherence to the guidelines during the implementation and evaluation of the events.

D3.3 offers additional insights and perspectives on the NEEs, providing a comprehensive evaluation of their outcomes, successes, challenges, and recommendations for future improvements. The coaching and capacity-building report of round one (D4.1), evaluates the effectiveness of the capacity-building efforts in enhancing stakeholder engagement during the first round of national engagement events. The capacity-building materials produced in T4.2 expand the information that are conveyed in the NEEs, especially on how to support the SHLLs before and within the application process to the open calls, as well as on expanding their knowledge on soil health. These materials have been developed and updated in 2024 as e-factsheets and are publicly available on the project's website, on the NATIOONS' Zenodo Community¹ and posted on PREPSOIL's one-stop shop. D3.3 references D4.1 to assess the impact of capacity-building activities and incorporate any lessons learned into future event planning. Lastly, D4.4 (M11 – September 2023), the helpdesk performance report for the first round of events, provided performance metrics for the helpdesk operation during the project. D3.3 leverages insights, analyses, plans, and reports from these deliverables, and feeds some of them with a comprehensive overview of the event implementation, participant feedback, effectiveness of engagement strategies, challenges encountered, and recommendations for future improvements.

¹ Community of NATIOONS in Zenodo: <https://zenodo.org/communities/natio0ons/> .

2 Implementation of the National Engagement Events Round#2

2.1 Overview of T3.2 Activities

Task T3.2 “Implementation and Evaluation of National Engagement Events (M4 – M18)” centres on the execution and evaluation of the two rounds of National Engagement Events (NEEs). Led by TRUST-IT, with participation of COMMpla, AU, FUNDECYT-PCTEX, IUNG, NIU, LAAS, IRCEM, BIOSENSE, EIT-FOOD, BUSINESSMED, ENOLL, SLU, this task was critical in organising and assessing the impact of these events across EU Member States and Associated Countries.

As with the first round, the second round of events was meticulously scheduled to align with the launch of the call for proposal, ensuring an overall three-month period to inform stakeholders and potential applicants about the available funding opportunities. This timing allowed for the dissemination of timely, relevant information, facilitating greater engagement with the calls and enabling participants to effectively prepare their proposals for setting up SHLLs.

Each partner played a vital role in organising and hosting the events, leveraging their local expertise and networks to ensure the events were tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of their respective countries or regions. This localised approach facilitated more targeted engagement with stakeholders—land managers, researchers, public authorities, and businesses—maximizing the impact of the events by ensuring that the information and support provided resonated with local contexts. The collaboration of regional partners also ensured the events reached a diverse audience and addressed region-specific challenges related to soil health.

To measure the performance of the second round of national engagement events, the same key performance indicators (KPIs) defined for round #1 were used. These KPIs included metrics such as event attendance, participant feedback, level of satisfaction, and the parts that generated more interest. The task partners closely monitored these KPIs and contributed to compile event statistics, which captured the outcomes, successes, challenges for each event.

2.1.1 Learning material - Factsheets

Throughout the entire round of events, materials developed over the preceding months—featuring insights from the first round of national engagement events—were promoted and shared with participants. For in-person events, printed versions of these materials were disseminated, while during online events, digital versions were actively promoted and made available to participants. The materials included a series of five factsheets produced by NATIOONS, providing clear and concise information on the role of Living Labs and Lighthouses in driving sustainable practices and supporting the EU Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe'. One factsheet, titled "Funding Opportunities," outlines various types of Living Labs and the criteria for identifying Lighthouses, while the remaining four focus on specific types of Living Labs based on land use: Agricultural, Forestry, (Post)Industrial, and Urban. These factsheets offer valuable insights and practical tips for stakeholders, consolidating

knowledge from the events. They remain accessible for broader dissemination via the open repository Zenodo, with the link available on the NATIOONS website. This set of factsheets were produced for the first round of events in 2023 and updated in 2024 to provide fresh content and updated information to the potential applicants. This activity has been carried out within the framework of T4.2 “Preparing e-Learning materials”.

Under T1.4 “Generating content for the National Engagement Events in WP3”, the slide deck and the script of the presentation template to be translated in local language were updated according to the most recent developments and recommendations from round #1. New slides were included to better explain the functioning of the living labs, the need to justify the reasons why the proposed living labs come together in a consortium, the definition of a baseline to monitor the progress and impacts. A new chapter of slides was also added to provide a step-by-step guide to write a competitive application, which resonated with the content in the tailor-made website page [Pathway to a competitive proposal](#). Here, a four-phase infographic features the most important steps to follow to prepare a proposal and the main resources a user can leverage from the NATIOONS website.

2.1.2 Major changes from Round #2

In accordance with the comments, remarks and feedback received from the attendees, the national organisers and the Mission Secretariat after round #1, T3.1 released an annex to D3.1, “the overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers”. This document aimed at reinforcing and consolidating the activities of carrying out and supervising the second round of NEEs in 2024. The “**overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers**”, the comprehensive manual issued in the first phase of the project, remained the key document to refer to, where an all-encompassing list of best practices and guidelines was provided to the national event’s organisers. To reinforce and enhance event activities, recommendations have been formulated based on data analysis and feedback from various stakeholders, which were briefly reported during two consortium meetings [in Serbia (M12) and online (M15)]. The annex also provided additional guidance and resources for organising the second round of NEEs, including an updated registration form, email templates for event invitations, and a reference to a refreshed content material. These resources aimed to streamline event organisation processes and ensure the effective dissemination of information to stakeholders.

The lessons learnt and recommendations listed in the above-mentioned annex resulted from the analysis of four sources:

- A. Data coming from the registration forms of the first round of NEEs;
- B. Data coming from the feedback surveys of the NEE attendees;
- C. Data coming from the feedback survey of the NEE organisers;
- D. Data coming from the survey for applicants which was spread out via the project communication channels and closed on 31 October 2023.

The overall evaluation allowed the consortium to draw some recommendations and ways of improving the second round of national engagement events. The NEE organisers were invited to consider a list of recommendations and follow them whenever possible and in relation to the specificities of each Country or region. The major recommendations included:

1. **Practical Living Labs Examples:** Share practical examples of Living Labs for better understanding but acknowledging that those examples are not Soil Health Living Labs funded under [horizon-miss-2023-soil-01-08](#) and [horizon-miss-2023-soil-01-09](#). At the time of the events taking place, none of the projects establishing the Soil Health Living Labs had started or was operational.
2. **Land use Representation:** Include a reference to various soil types and land uses in events and avoid highly scientific presentations. The consideration of already existent good practices would be recommended. Encourage a stronger focus on non-agriculture land use types.
3. **Co-location:** Explore opportunities to co-locate NATIOONS events with existing national events, whenever possible and without prejudice to the provision of the "core NATIOONS sessions", i.e., dedicated sessions to present the EU Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe", the concept of living labs and lighthouses, the specific funding opportunities and an engagement session with the audience. This might prevent overlaps and low attendance.
4. **City Selection:** Select a different city for second-round events to diversify geographical coverage.
5. **Event clustering:** Group events based on language or region, e.g., Germany-Austria or Romania-Moldova, Belgium-Luxembourg, to optimise resources and add thematic or matchmaking sessions.
6. **Add-ons:** Consider adding activities to the events, such as pitching or networking sessions.
7. **Local Organisational Partnership:** Strengthen partnerships with local organisations, institutions, and authorities in host countries. Leverage their networks to increase event attendance.
8. **Addressing potential challenging aspects of the proposals:** It was advised to focus part of the event on potential challenging aspects of drafting an application. Invite applicants to:
 - a. Provide clear references to specific Mission Soil objectives, and focus more on a limited number of issues;
 - b. Provide a rationale for why the specific soil health living labs come together in a consortium, detailing the drivers behind the consortium;
 - c. Clearly define the roles of partners and other stakeholders in the proposals vis-à-vis the issues the living lab will deal with;
 - d. Define a baseline to benchmark the situation in the identified areas vis-à-vis the focus and challenges of the proposals;

- e. Present what knowledge and solutions may already exist vis-à-vis the specific soil health challenges identified and give rationale for the need for the participatory research necessary (e.g. if no solutions are known to test in practice).
9. **Analysis of the data regarding each NEE in round #1:** All the NEE organisers were invited to identify strengths and areas for improvement at national or regional level and carefully allocate resources to maximise impact while staying within budget constraints. It was recommended to go through the collated data related to NEEs carried out in round #1 and carefully read the slides which have been presented during the consortium meeting on 30 January 2024.

Along with the recommendations, an updated version of the registration form template was made available for the national partners to translate. The new three-page version of the form was designed to make the user experience smoother and accessible and included a card on the possibility to participate in a networking or pitching session during the NEE.

The invitation letter template was also updated with links to all the resources created by the consortium in the period M1-M15.

In M17 (March 2024), after the reception of the preliminary findings of the analysis of the data on the applications to Mission 2023 topics on SHLLs, elaborated by REA, the consortium partners discussed, agreed and iteratively adjusted ideas on potentially effective actions to complement the organisation of NEEs, which was already underway. These actions were meant to support the development of additional webinars targeting countries in Eastern parts of Europe (under T4.3 - Capacity Building Webinar Series), and improve engagement efforts in Northern and Eastern countries, as well as Malta and Luxembourg, where no entity took part in applying consortia in 2023. Two geographical regional networking events were organised: one involving the stakeholders located in the Scandinavian Countries, and the other one engaging the entities and individuals located in the Baltic Sea region. These two extra events were specifically dedicated to connecting stakeholders and potential applicants from these regions have been organised by SLU and LAAS. Two matchmaking events were organised in cooperation with T4.4 - Matchmaking sessions at project events in M20 (June 2024). A wrapping-up final event providing last-minute practical tips to the potential applicants was organised in hybrid format in Romania in M23 (September 2024).

2.2 National Co-organisers and Supporting Local Third-Party Entities

In the second round of national engagement events, TRUST-IT coordinated the overall organisation with active support from task partners (national organisers) and local third-party entities. Serving as the main point of contact for national organisers, TRUST-IT facilitated the implementation of in-person, hybrid, and online events. To ensure consistent and effective execution, TRUST-IT utilised the same centralised digital support mechanism as in the first round, harmonising input from national organisers. NATIOONS partners managed events within their own countries while also

providing significant support to national co-organisers in regions where NATIOONS was not directly represented.

The co-organisers and local third-party entities – such as local innovation agency, Ministry or university department, National Contact Points (NCPs) and national offices for research and development - were pivotal in ensuring the implementation of these events by providing essential support across several areas. They managed logistical aspects such as securing venues for in-person gatherings, identifying and liaising with potential speakers and enhanced promotional efforts by leveraging local networks to increase event visibility. Furthermore, they contributed to content creation by developing and translating materials, including social media posts, slides, and promotional materials, to effectively engage a broader audience.

The support from national co-organisers was crucial in extending the reach and elevating the quality of the events. Their local expertise and networks facilitated more effective stakeholder engagement and ensured a more inclusive impact across regions not directly covered by NATIOONS partners. A detailed list of the organisers and co-organisers involved is provided below.

Table 3. List of NEE organisers and co-organisers

Country/Region	NATIOONS liaison	National co-organiser
Albania	BIOSENSE	SCiDEV
Armenia	TRUST-IT	SIPAC
Austria/ Germany	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	University of Hohenheim
Belgium	ENOLL	N.A.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	BIOSENSE	Poljoprivredno-prehrambeni fakultet Univerziteta u Sarajevu, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology
Bulgaria	IRCEM	No-Till Bulgaria, Embassy of Romania in the Republic of Bulgaria
Croatia	NIU	Sveučilištem u Zagrebu Agronomskim fakultetom
Cyprus	EIT FOOD	Cyprus - Department of Agriculture, National Rural Network, Agricultural Research Institute, Cyprus University of Technology
Czech Republic	IUNG	Technology Centre Prague

Country/Region	NATIOONS liaison	National co-organiser
Denmark	AU	N.A.
Estonia	LAAS	N.A.
Finland	SLU	AgriHubi, Suomen Akatemia
France	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	Vegepolys Valley
Georgia	TRUST-IT	Ministry of Education, Science and Youth of Georgia
Greece	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	American Farm School
Hungary	NIU	N.A.
Iceland	SLU	Rannís, Háskólinn á Hólum, Háskólinn á Íslandi
Ireland	ENoLL	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)
Israel	EIT FOOD	EIT Hub Israel, GrowingIL
Italy	TRUST-IT	POLIMI
Kosovo	BIOSENSE	Innovation Centre Kosovo
Latvia	LAAS	N.A.
Lithuania	LAAS	N.A.
Luxembourg	ENoLL	
Malta	BUSINESSMED	Xjenza Malta
Moldova	IRCEM	Academiei de Științe a Moldovei
Montenegro	BIOSENSE	University of Donja Gorica
Netherlands	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	RVO (Netherlands Enterprise Agency), Soil Valley, Climate-KIC, Deltares
North Macedonia	BIOSENSE	Yes for Less, Agricultural Institute-Skopje
Norway	SLU	Forskningsrådet

Country/Region	NATIOONS liaison	National co-organiser
Poland	IUNG	N.A.
Portugal	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	Portuguese National Innovation Agency and Centre Region Co-ordination and Development Commission, Direcao-Geral De Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural, Escola Superior Agraria-Politécnico de Coimbra
Romania	IRCEM	Governmental Department for Sustainable Development - Departamentul pentru Dezvoltare Durabilă
Serbia	BIOSENSE	N.A.
Slovakia	IUNG	NCP Slovakia, Slovak Liaison Office for Research and Development ·
Slovenia	NIU	Tit Neubauer, NKT za Misije EU
Spain	FUNDECYT-PCTEX & EIT FOOD	CDTI, Horizonte Europa, Ministerio de ciencia innovación y universidades
Sweden	SLU	N.A.
Tunisia	BUSINESSMED	N.A.
Turkey	EIT FOOD	YASAR University, AGRIEU
Ukraine	IRCEM	Izmail State University of Humanities
United Kingdom	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	UK Research and Innovation

2.3 Evaluation framework

The evaluation framework for the second round of NEEs is designed to align with the structure implemented during the first round as it is described in the D3.2 - Review of National engagement events, round #1 - and D3.1 - Overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers, where a set of indicators to measure event success was listed, offering value ranges in each country and procedures for internal KPI review. By maintaining consistency in the evaluation criteria and methodology, this approach allows for a meaningful comparison between the two rounds, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of outcomes, improvements, and trends over time.

The main KPI is the number of attendees. The objective was to target at least 60 combined online and physical attendees in each event on average. The project consortium has been able to align with that threshold. Additionally, an integral part of the evaluation framework has been the design and release of tailored registration forms and post-event surveys that allowed to measure: the gender distribution among attendees (targeting >40% women; reached value 45.1%), balanced representation of all type of land use stakeholders (targeting at least 10% for non-agriculture land uses; 20.8% of stakeholders ticked non-agriculture land use type as first choice), as well as successful awareness raised and clear view of the LL application process (the average response to the post-event feedback surveys on content, organisation and involvement was >4 out of 5).

The evaluation methodology for NEEs revolves around two pillars: registration form and feedback survey analyses and assessment of the feedback of the national organisers.

Registration form and feedback survey analysis

The collected and analysed data is organised into the same nine categories used in D3.2, ensuring an accurate comparison between the two rounds.

The registration form and feedback survey analyses focus on participant demographics, assessing the representation of stakeholders across different organisation types and land use types to capture diversity. They also evaluate the event attendance, distinguish between in-person and online participation, it assesses accessibility and explore participant motivations, satisfaction with the event format, duration and content quality. Also, the level of awareness and involvement in the Mission Soil is examined, alongside participants' interests and their perceptions of its relevance to their region. The feedback survey collected insights on barriers or challenges to initiating Living Labs in participant's regions. Lastly, the study highlights event outcomes, good practices related to soil health, and participant interest in future events, while gathering contact details for further engagement.

Assessment of the feedback of National Organisers

The second pillar of this evaluation methodology focuses on a comprehensive assessment of direct feedback from the national (co-)organisers. This feedback was collected through both a detailed post-event reporting and a final reflection workshop. Insights from those directly involved in organising the events provide a crucial, on-the-ground perspective, offering valuable input for assessing the execution and identifying areas for improvement.

To facilitate meaningful contributions, a dedicated Sli.do session was held during the reflection workshop on 11 September 2024, inviting national co-organisers to share their perspectives and recommendations. This session encouraged in-depth feedback and fostered a collaborative environment for discussing enhancements, particularly aimed at refining the SOILL-Startup projects next actions.

2.4 Performance of the NEE round#2

The performance monitoring was designed from the very beginning of the organisation of the NEE (see Chapter 4. Monitoring and evaluation in the D3.1 Overarching event plan with guidelines for event organisers). Capitalising on the analysis of the first round of the National Engagement Events (D3.2 Review of National engagement events, round #1), some improvements have been made also in this aspect.

The monitoring covers both preparation phase and performance and execution, organiser evaluation, and participant feedback as well as year to year comparison. This analysis helps identify strengths, areas for improvement, and informs decisions for future actions. Our analysis combines numerical data, such as registration figures, with qualitative insights gathered from participant feedback and post-event reports submitted by event organisers.

Analysis of Registrants in Round#2

The event registration figures represent a crucial indicator of initial interest and reach. All the registrations both for in person and hybrid events were run via the NATIOONS official website. We received 2,590 registrations across all 44 EU Member States and Associated Countries. Through the second round of events, against a target KPI of at least 60 participants on average, each NEE counted 60.6 registrants and 58.9 attendees on average [range: 4 (Ukraine) to 210 (Italy)].



Figure 1. Registrants by country

The analysis of the performance shows clearly that there are countries with confirmed interest in the topics and other underperforming. Italy, Spain, Israel, and Portugal have consistently outperformed, with Italy showing a particularly strong rise.

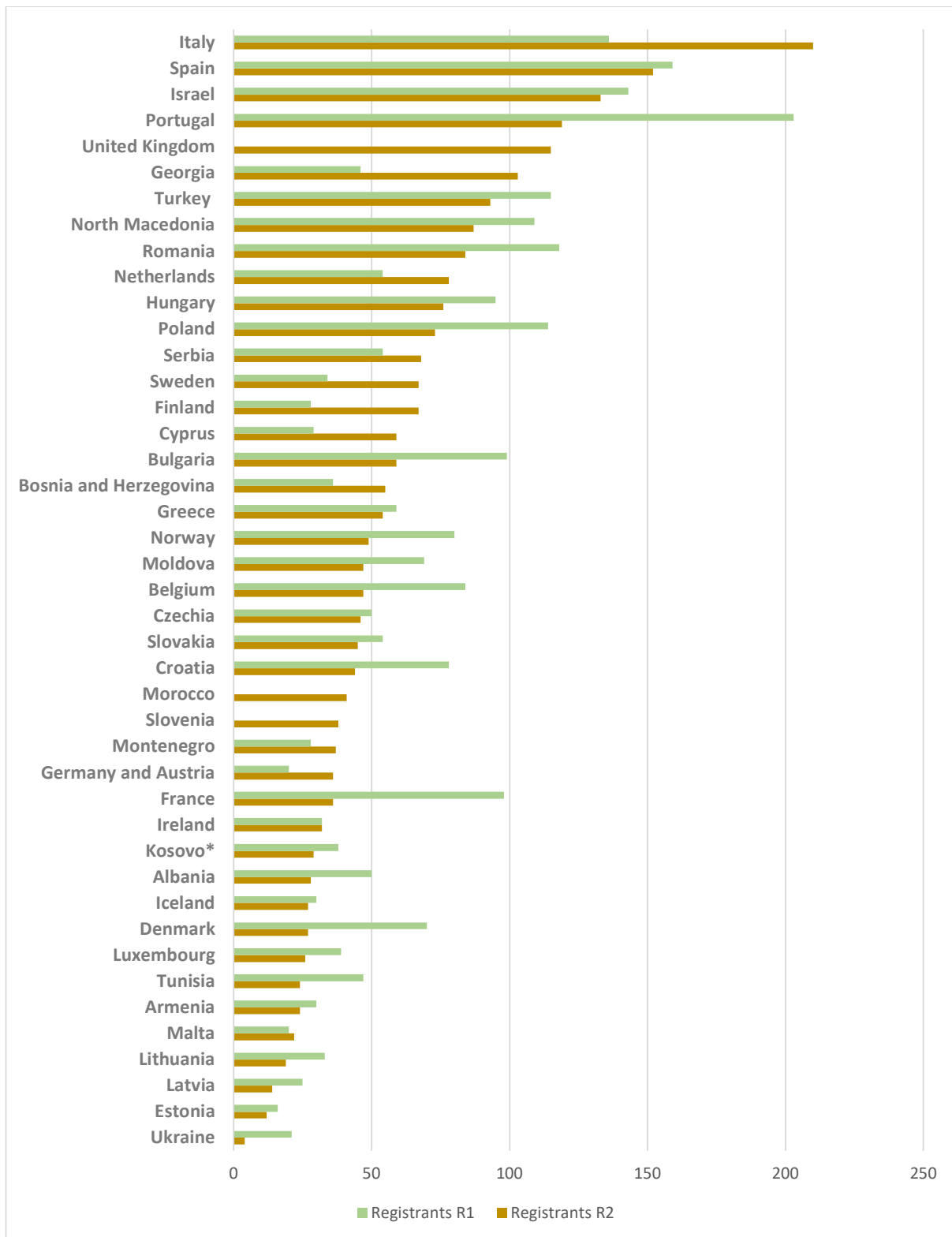


Figure 2. Registrants 2023 (R1) and 2024 (R2)

Countries like Georgia, Netherlands, Sweden and Finland, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Malta showed the most significant improvements in registrant numbers, with Georgia tripling its participation compared to the previous round. Ukraine and Estonia are the lowest in terms of engagement, consistently falling short of the KPI. Lithuania remains particularly weak. The comparison of the performance by country between the first round (2023) and the second round (2024) follows in the Section 2.5.

The publication of the Horizon Europe Work Programme on April 17, 2024, meant that countries with events before this date were likely less informed about the full scope and details of the funding opportunities available. This would have affected the perceived relevance of the events and may explain why countries hosting events before April 17 underperformed in comparison to those hosting later.

What we can notice is that the events organised in the second half of April (after the work programme publication) and the first half of May (open call opening date) were those performing better in terms of registrants.

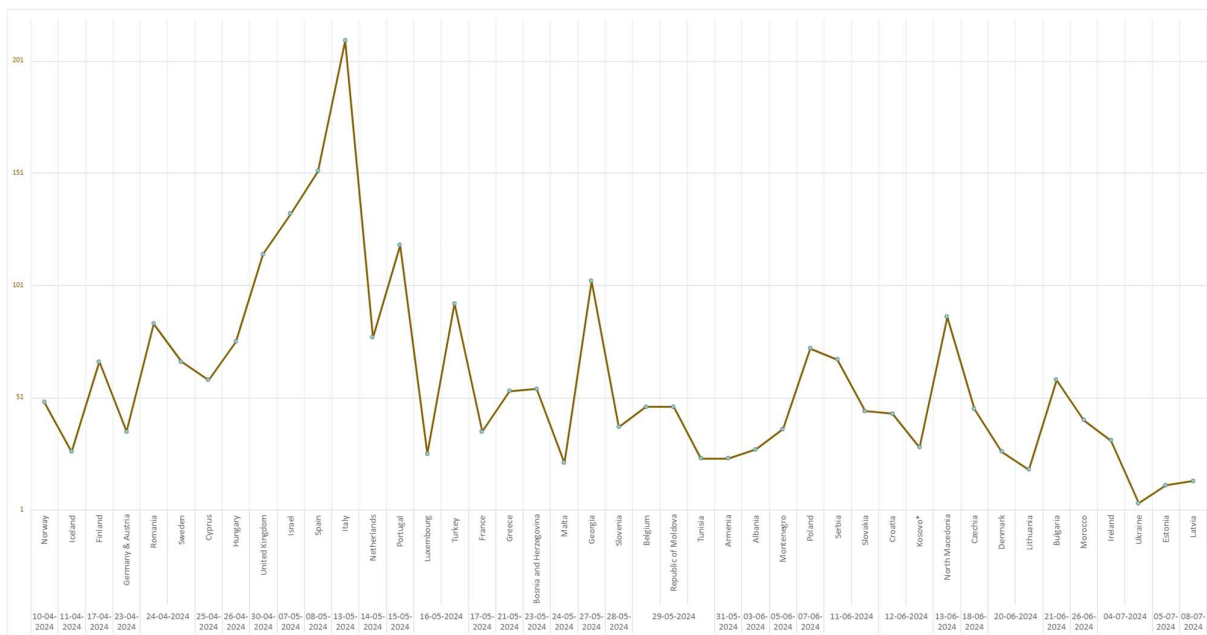


Figure 3. Registrants by date of the event

Overall NATI0ONS consortium partners have organised 43 events in 44 EU Member States and Associated Countries. In terms of modality there were: 29 hybrid (66%), 11 online only (27%) and 3 in person only events (7%). Hybrid events dominate, allowing for both in-person and online participation.

Table 3. Event by type

Event type	Number of events	Average number of registrants per event
Hybrid	29	70
In-person-only	11	51
Online-only	3	32

In terms of registrants, 1206 people registered for in person participation while 1384 wanted to participate remotely.

While in terms of performance, hybrid events still have the highest average number of registrants (69.8), followed by in-person-only events (51), and online-only events (with an average of 32.4).

The dominance of hybrid events (65.9%) indicates a strategy to maximise accessibility and participation. This approach seems effective, as hybrid events often show good participation rates both in-person and online.

With an average of 70 registrants, hybrid events attract the largest number of participants, benefiting from the flexibility of both online and in-person participation. In regions with logistical challenges or smaller research community online events assure associability.

In terms of gender we have registered 1274 women, 969 men, 2 non-binary registrants, 345 preferred not to disclose their gender.

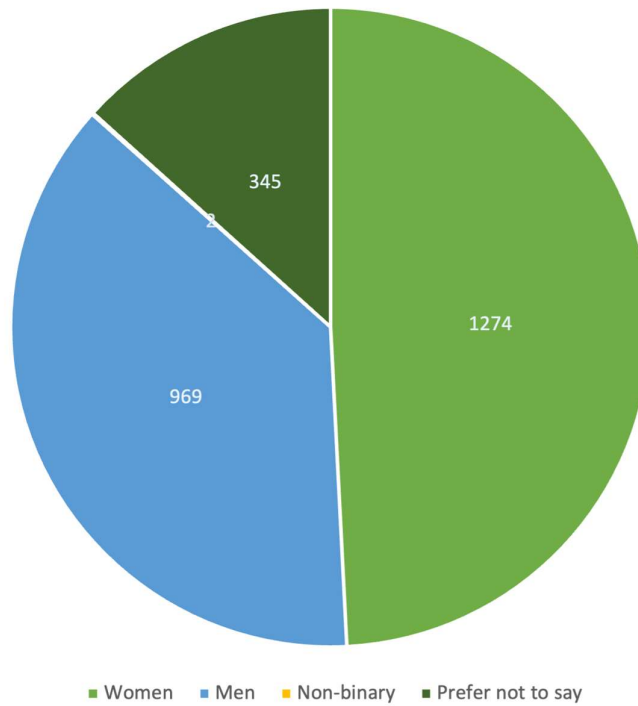


Figure 4. Registrants by gender

In terms of organisation type the registrants were mainly from Academia/research (1163), National authorities (158), Industry (143), Category associations (131), thematic organisations (110), Crop and Soil advisors (62), Farmer organisations (58), Local Authority (56). The detailed breakout in the Figure 5 below.

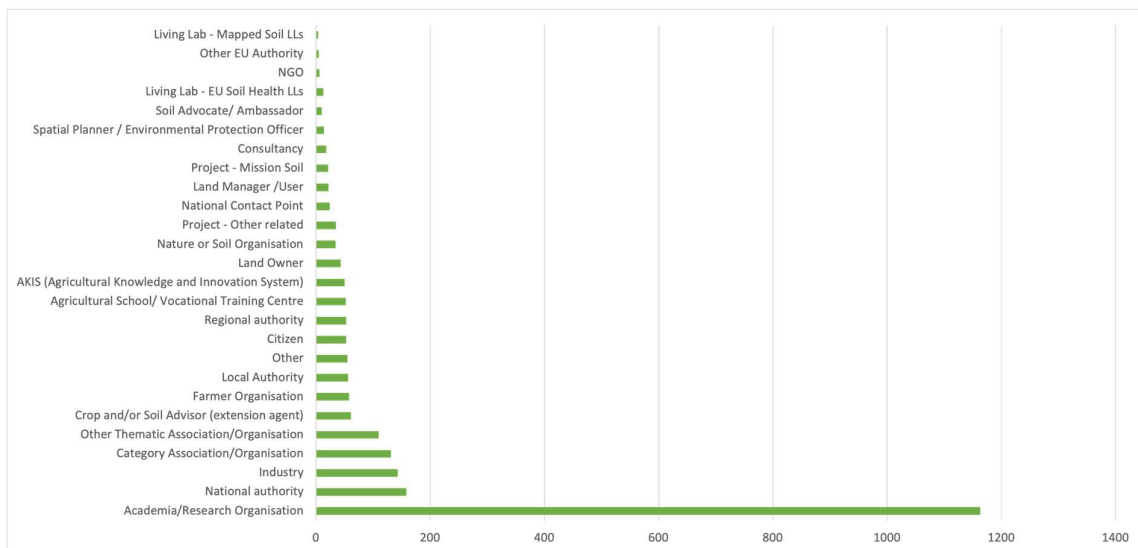


Figure 5. Registrants by organisation type

It is important to stress that a shared working document was made available to the consortium on SharePoint, where to keep track of statistics through the second round. Also, each national organiser had access to the lists of registrants updated routinely, to know for example which land use type stakeholders needed more support in terms of promotion. The continuous monitoring of the event registrations allowed organisers to implement actions to boost the number of registrants, such as increasing the direct messages at local level, leverage existing local networks and increasing the activities on social media accounts.

In order to meet the needs of the soil health community, recorded events were made available via the NATIOONS YouTube channel and collected in a playlist National Engagement Events 2024 allowing people to watch or rewatch them after the event had taken place. As of the date of submission of this document, all uploaded registration has been viewed a total of 30,293 times.

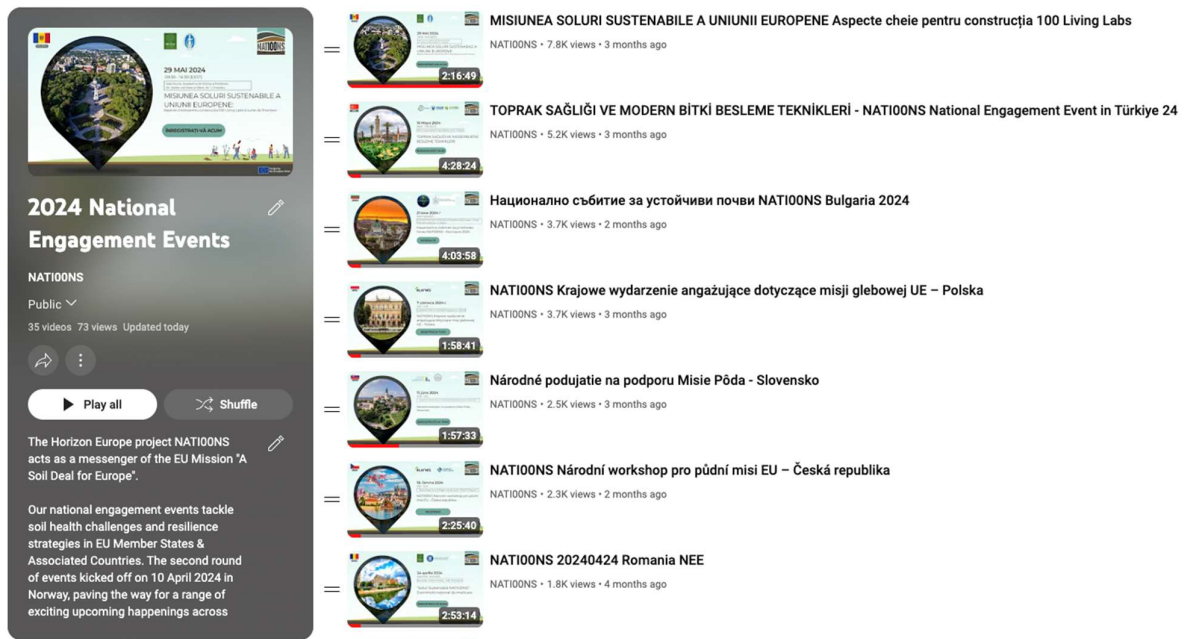


Figure 6. Snapshot of NATIOONS' YouTube playlist

Feedback surveys

Following each event, organisers distributed digital feedback surveys to participants. The survey link was shared during the event's conclusion, in the chat, and sent via email in a follow-up communication. Despite these distribution efforts, completion rates remained low, as is common with post-event surveys. Out of nearly 2,600 registered participants across all events, only 4% (120 participants) completed the feedback form. While this small sample size limits the statistical significance of our findings, it still allows for a qualitative analysis of perceived event quality and provides valuable individual comments and suggestions.

The decision to maintain the feedback survey in the same form as the previous round, despite its complexity, enables year-to-year comparison. This choice was made to preserve continuity and to capture in-depth information, providing nuanced insights into participant experiences and needs.

TRUST-IT collected and analysed responses to provide an overview of the entire round of events. To ensure accessibility, the surveys were translated into national languages and distributed after each event's conclusion, encouraging participants to evaluate the current round and offer ideas for future iterations. The national organisers translated the survey and examined data specific to their individual events for targeted evaluations.

As outlined in D3.1, these feedback surveys were designed as an additional channel to gather participant input, complementing the discussions and engagement that occurred during the events themselves.

Despite the low response rate, the insights gleaned from these surveys offer a useful complement to our quantitative data and national organiser reports. They contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of event effectiveness and participant satisfaction, helping to guide improvements for future engagement events to be organised by SOILL-Startup.

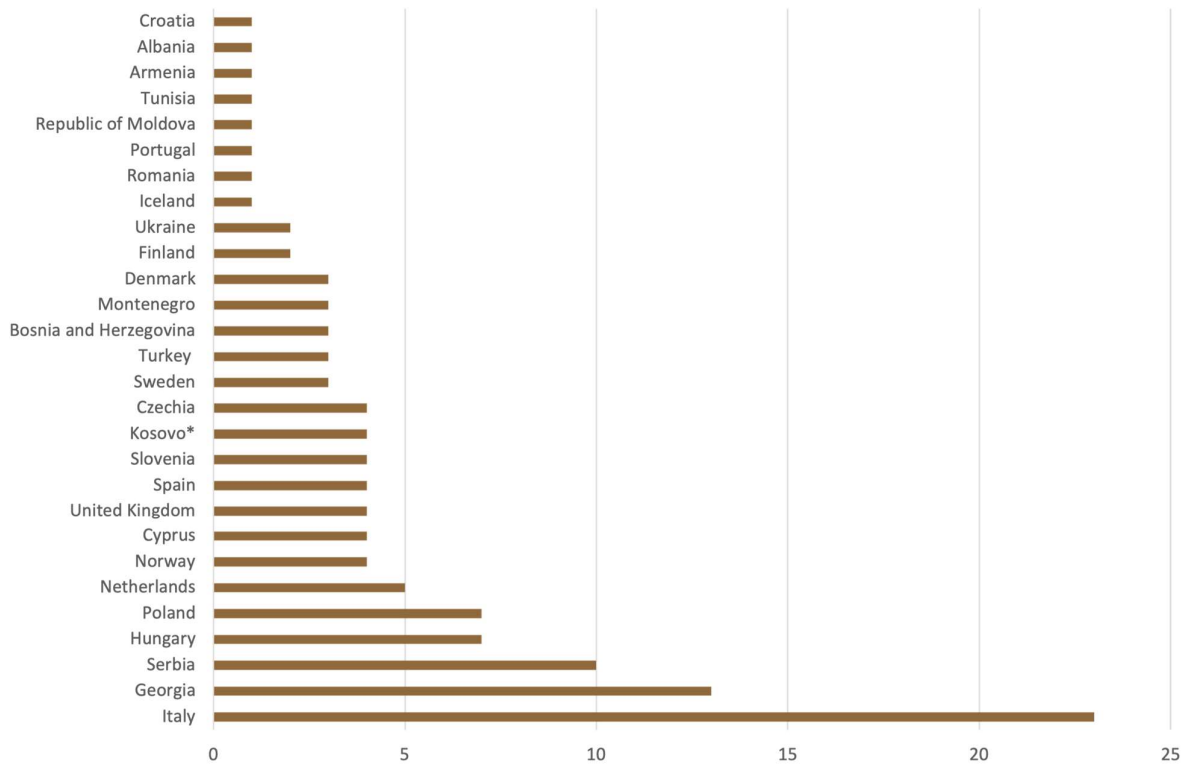


Figure 7. Feedback surveys received by country

The available data indicates a generally positive reception of the second round of the national engagement events, particularly in terms of content quality and organisational efficiency. Content emerged as the standout feature, with an overwhelming 71% of attendees rating it as “excellent”, and further 21% as “good”, suggesting that the subject matter and presentation were exceptionally valuable and engaging. The event's organisation also garnered significant praise, with 93% giving it top marks, reflecting smooth logistics and thoughtful planning. While still very positive, involvement received slightly more varied feedback, with 52% rating it as “excellent”, 37% “good”. This suggests that most attendees felt highly engaged. The remarkably low percentages of negative ratings across all categories underscore the event's overall success. However, the small variation in scores, particularly for involvement, could provide insights for targeted improvements in future iterations, potentially focusing on increasing attendee participation or engagement strategies.

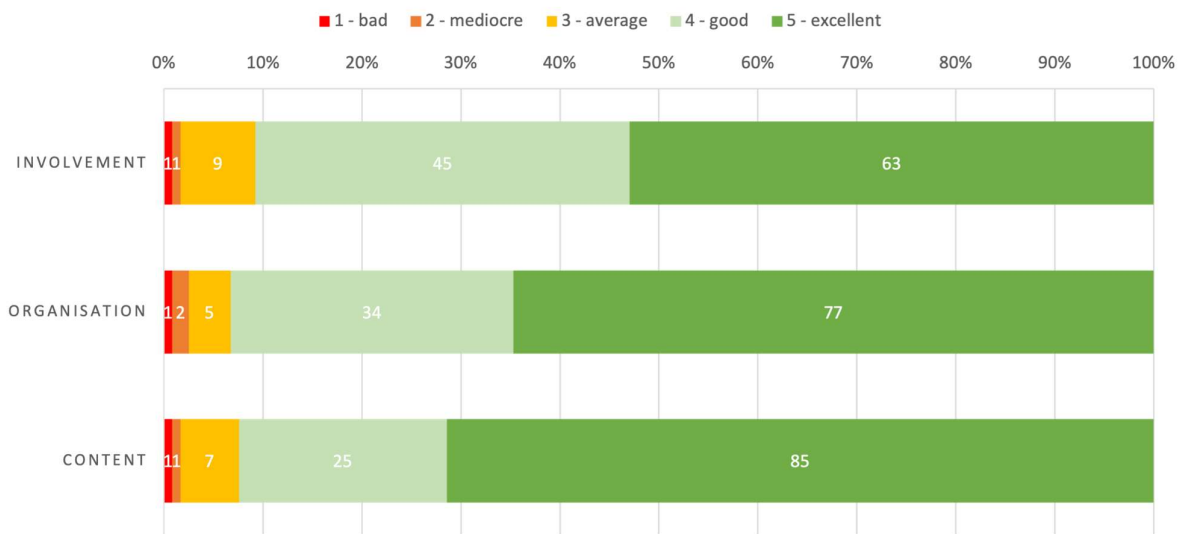


Figure 8. User evaluation of the national engagement events

The feedback survey highlights that most respondents found the events highly beneficial, with many reporting an increased understanding of the Mission Soil and the Living Labs concept. Key benefits included improved comprehension of the Mission Soil, learning about Living Labs methodologies, identifying relevant regional soil challenges, and gaining inspiration to establish their own Living Labs.

However, several areas for improvement were noted, including requests for more networking time, better pre-event communication, the inclusion of more practical Living Labs examples, and a stronger focus on interdisciplinary and inter-institutional collaboration, as well as knowledge exchange and partnership-building.

Respondents expressed strong interest in future events focusing on topics such as urban soil health challenges, soil health in forests and natural environments, the role of agri-food innovators,

business models for soil health, industrial land stewardship, and Smart Specialisation Strategies for regional soil health action.

Evaluation from event organisers and co-organisers

Direct feedback from event organisers is invaluable, as they are directly involved in the execution of events and possess the most accurate sense of what works on the ground. In the second round of National Engagement Events, feedback was gathered through two independent instruments. First, post-event reports were submitted by each national event organiser, providing detailed reflections on their respective events. Second, additional feedback was collected during an online workshop held on 11th September 2024, where organisers had the opportunity to share their experiences and discuss them collectively.

NEE post-event reports

The post-event reports offer a good overview of the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from this second round of NEEs. These reports provide a deeper understanding of how the NEEs were tailored to meet the needs of local audiences, foster engagement, and promote the mission of the NATIOONS project.

The analysis of post-event reports reveals a concerted effort across different countries to enhance engagement and address audience needs during events. Most organisers employed targeted communication strategies, such as direct email outreach to stakeholders and leveraging social media platforms like LinkedIn to promote events. Collaboration with national contact points and relevant institutions helped extend reach, and several countries updated and expanded their stakeholder lists from the previous year. The incorporation of Q&A sessions emerged as a common strategy to encourage interaction, facilitating real-time feedback and discussion.

Content-wise, events were closely aligned with audience expectations, often addressing specific local challenges in soil health and the introduction of new funding calls. For example, Cyprus and Romania engaged with governmental bodies to attract relevant stakeholders, enhancing the relevance of discussions. Many organisers reported satisfaction from participants regarding the clarity and applicability of the content, particularly in relation to the concept of Living Labs, which was emphasised, i.e. in Malta and Morocco.

Challenges encountered were primarily logistical, often related to timing and communication difficulties. There were initial expectations that the Open Call publication date would be earlier. This was cited as a challenge by several organisers, for example in Hungary, where event postponements were necessary due to the anticipated organisation. Similar situations arose in other countries, including Ireland and Cyprus, where event dates were adjusted to align with external factors. However, proactive measures, such as partnering with local entities and adapting event formats (hybrid or in-person), proved effective in mitigating these challenges.

Overall, the feedback indicates that organisers prioritised the dissemination of critical information and that they adapted their strategies based on previous experiences to foster greater engagement and ensure the successful execution of events. This adaptability was crucial in addressing the varying needs of diverse audiences while navigating the complexities of event organisation across different contexts.

The reflection workshop

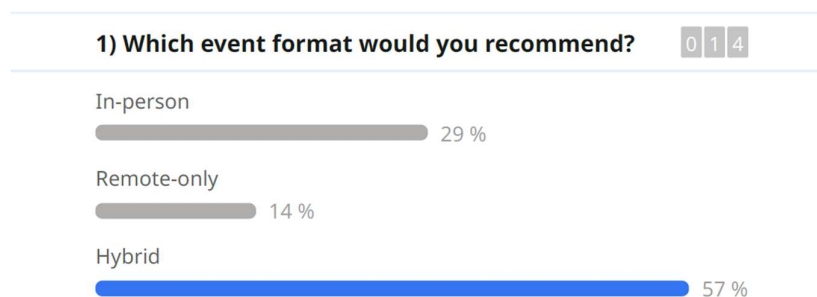
On 11 September 2024, an online reflection workshop was organised, bringing together national co-organisers to discuss the event outcomes and future directions. Moderated by TRUST-IT, the workshop proved instrumental in capturing feedback from national co-organisers. Approximately 20 participants engaged in this interactive session, who provided valuable insights into event formats, organisational practices, participant engagement strategies, and future recommendations.

To facilitate this reflection process, a set of targeted poll questions through the Sli.do platform was used as a support to drive the conversation and to evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the events, from event format preference to organisational efficiency, to strategies for engaging participants. The insights gathered from these questions are essential for shaping future engagement activities and to understand the overall impact of the national engagement events. An evaluation of the questions from the poll is outlined in the following section, providing insights into the strengths and potential areas of improvement.

Evaluation of poll questions

Event Format Preferences

The first three poll questions were based on the evaluation of which event format they would recommend for future events: in-person, remote-only, or hybrid. The participants also had to list the benefits and downsides of their choice.



Hybrid format was the most recommended, with 57% of respondents in favour. According to the organisers, this format allows a balance between in-person networking opportunities and the inclusiveness of remote participation. The hybrid model also offers organisers the ability to record events for future use, allowing greater dissemination of key discussions. However, the downsides

were also noted, particularly the challenge of maintaining engagement with online participants and the potential for technical issues. The hybrid format often requires more coordination and resources due to the need for managing both physical and virtual audiences simultaneously.

In-person events were supported by 29% of organisers, primarily for their ability to foster direct engagement of participants. Remote-only events were the least favoured, with 14%, though they were acknowledged for their cost-effectiveness and convenience.

The analysis of the preferred event formats clearly highlights the hybrid approach as the most viable option for future engagements, given its balance between flexibility and inclusivity. However, to fully capitalise on the advantages of hybrid events, organisers will need to address the challenges of coordinating both physical and virtual components effectively. This includes improving technical infrastructure and fostering stronger interaction among remote participants. By doing so, the hybrid format can serve as a powerful tool for enhancing engagement and ensuring successful outcomes in future events.

Organisational Aspect

When reflecting on the organisational aspects of their events, organisers highlighted several areas that contributed to their success. The poll questions focused on what worked well and on which where the most challenging aspect. The most effective elements of event organisation included communication with the NATI00NS team (86%), which was praised for clarity and responsiveness. Promotion efforts (64%) were also recognised as contributing to the success of events, ensuring a solid turnout. Additionally, the preparation and distribution of materials (50%) provided a solid foundation for participants, ensuring they were well-informed before and during the event.

Several challenges were identified in organising the events. Inviting participants and promoting the event was identified as the most challenging task (71%). Organisers found it difficult to attract a diverse and committed audience, especially those outside of their existing networks. Following up after the event (50%) also proved difficult and continuing communication post-event requires additional time and resources. Carrying out the engagement session has been considered a challenge from the 36% of event organisers.

Engagement Strategies: Increasing participation

Organisers were asked about the strategies they employed to increase engagement during the National Engagement Events (NEEs) and whether they made any changes compared to the first round of events. Many organisers leverage on the previous existing networks from the first round of National Engagement Events, including last year participants and local contacts. Categories of stakeholders and professionals were used as multiplier to increase the outreach through their network. Allowing participants to pitch their projects before or during the event was another strategy that successfully increased engagement and facilitated networking. Introducing breakout

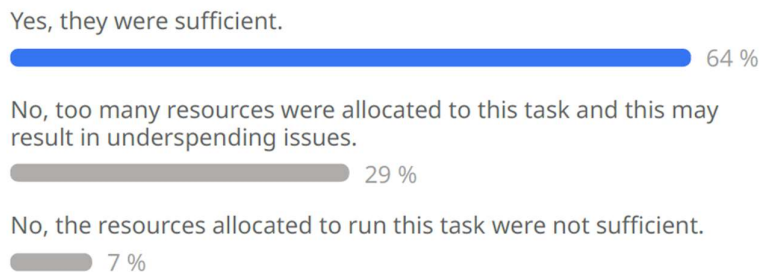
rooms in virtual events to focus on specific topics, like soil types - which were of particular interest to attendees - was also a common strategy.

While these strategies were generally effective, some challenges persisted, particularly in hybrid and remote settings, where it was more difficult to create spontaneous interactions and maintain active the attention of online participants.

Resource Allocation

To assess the adequacy of resources allocated for the organisation of the NEEs, workshop participants were asked to evaluate whether they felt the resources were sufficient.

7) Do you think the resources allocated to your entity for the organisation of the NEE were appropriate? 0 1 4



Most participants (64%) found the resources allocated for the NEEs to be sufficient. However, 29%, primarily those who organised online-only or hybrid events, found that too many resources were allocated, which may result in underspending, and 7% identified deficiencies, highlighting areas for improvement despite the overall positive assessment.

Recommendations for the SOILL-Startup Consortium

As the activities transition to the SOILL-Startup consortium, participants provided several practical recommendations for improving future initiatives. Some of these suggestions built on existing activities, while others introduced new ideas for consideration.

- **Showcase tangible case studies:** participants emphasised the importance of continuing to feature real-life examples of successful Living Labs, particularly in soil management. These case studies provide practical guidance and inspiration for potential applicants. While this is something NATIOONS has already been doing, the feedback suggests that we can enhance these showcases by making them even more detailed and interactive, offering more in-depth insights into the success stories and lessons learned.
- **Enhance matchmaking opportunities:** this is an area where NATIOONS has already made significant progress, but feedback highlights the need to expand these opportunities. Moving

forward, SOILL-Startup Consortium should focus on increasing the reach and effectiveness of these matchmaking events, ensuring that participants can form meaningful connections that lead to tangible outcomes.

- **Training for NCPs:** a new and valuable suggestion that emerged from the workshop was the introduction of training sessions for NCPs. Participants recommended that NCPs be given the tools and knowledge to adapt existing materials and knowledge from the NATIOONS National engagement events. This would allow Mission Soil to improve its outreach efforts and ensure that they are better equipped to engage local stakeholders. Implementing this recommendation could significantly enhance the national-level coordination and impact of Living Lab initiatives.
- **Involving key national stakeholders and networking:** participants suggested a stronger emphasis on involving key national stakeholders from various fields, including academia, public institutions, and Local Action Groups (LAGs). These groups are essential for establishing effective national-level networks and for fostering collaboration across different sectors. We already engage with some of these stakeholders, but the feedback highlights the need to deepen these connections and ensure that we are proactively mapping and reaching out to diverse networks. By taking the time to identify the right networks and stakeholders at national level, we can become more proactive and targeted in our outreach efforts.

The recommendations provided by organisers offer a blend of new ideas and enhancements to existing practices. As the NATIOONS Consortium, we recognise the importance of continuing to showcase tangible case studies and organising matchmaking events — both of which have been central to our engagement strategy. Moving forward, we recommend that the SOILL-Startup consortium builds upon these efforts by adding more depth to the case studies, offering detailed insights, and expanding the matchmaking events to ensure a broader reach and greater networking opportunities.

Thematic Focus for Future Events

When asked to suggest thematic topics for potential applicants after the second round of NEEs, participants proposed several key focus areas:

- **Urban soil management and urban-rural soil interdependencies** emerged as important themes, particularly given the challenges posed by urban regeneration processes and the resulting soil consumption.
- There was a strong interest in **showcasing Living Lab success stories**, with a focus on specific types of soils, such as forest soils, and sharing best practices from existing labs.
- Participants also suggested events that explore **business models for Living Labs**, highlighting financial sustainability and strategies for keeping stakeholders engaged over the long term.

2.5 Synthesis and comparison of the results from Round #1 & #2

The two rounds of the National Engagement Events held in 2023 and 2024 demonstrate both consistent success and areas for improvement in raising awareness about the Mission Soil and its open calls. In 2023, 43 events were organised across EU Member States and Associated Countries, attracting over 2,400 participants. The average attendance of 62 participants per event surpassed the target KPI of 60.

The events in 2023 showed strong gender diversity with 53% female participants, and 21% of attendees indicating non-agricultural land use as their primary focus, exceeding the 10% target. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with average ratings above 4 out of 5 for content, organisation, and involvement.

The 2024 round saw a slight increase in total registrations, reaching 2,590 across 44 countries. However, the average attendance per event decreased slightly to 58.9, just missing the 60-participant target. The events in 2024 maintained a strong focus on inclusivity, offering a mix of hybrid (66%), online-only (27%), and in-person-only (7%) formats. This approach proved effective, with hybrid events attracting the highest average number of registrants at 69.8. Gender diversity remained strong, with 1,274 women and 969 men registering, alongside a small number of non-binary individuals and those preferring not to disclose.

The analysis clearly highlights disparities in engagement across countries. Italy, Spain, Israel, and Portugal consistently outperformed, with Italy showing a particularly strong increase in participation. Georgia, the Netherlands, and Finland demonstrated the most significant improvements, with Georgia tripling its participation numbers. On the other hand, Ukraine and Estonia had the lowest engagement, consistently failing to meet the KPI, while Lithuania also remained notably weak. Additionally, there was a significant drop in participation in Romania, Portugal, and Bulgaria, despite remaining above the KPI, which requires further investigation.

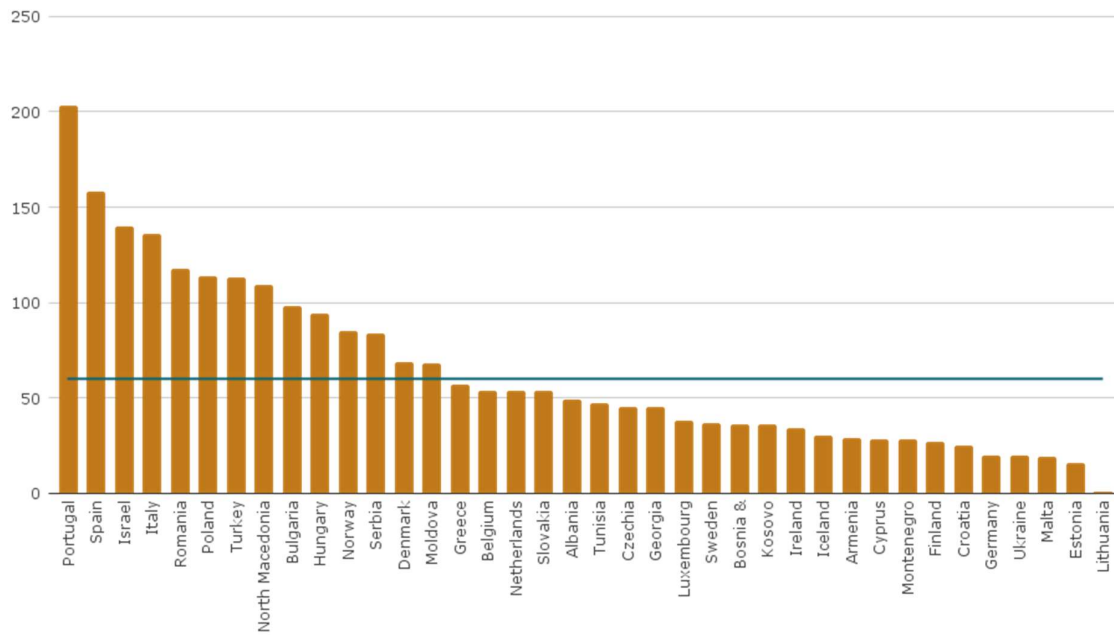


Figure 9. NEE 2023 registrants by country

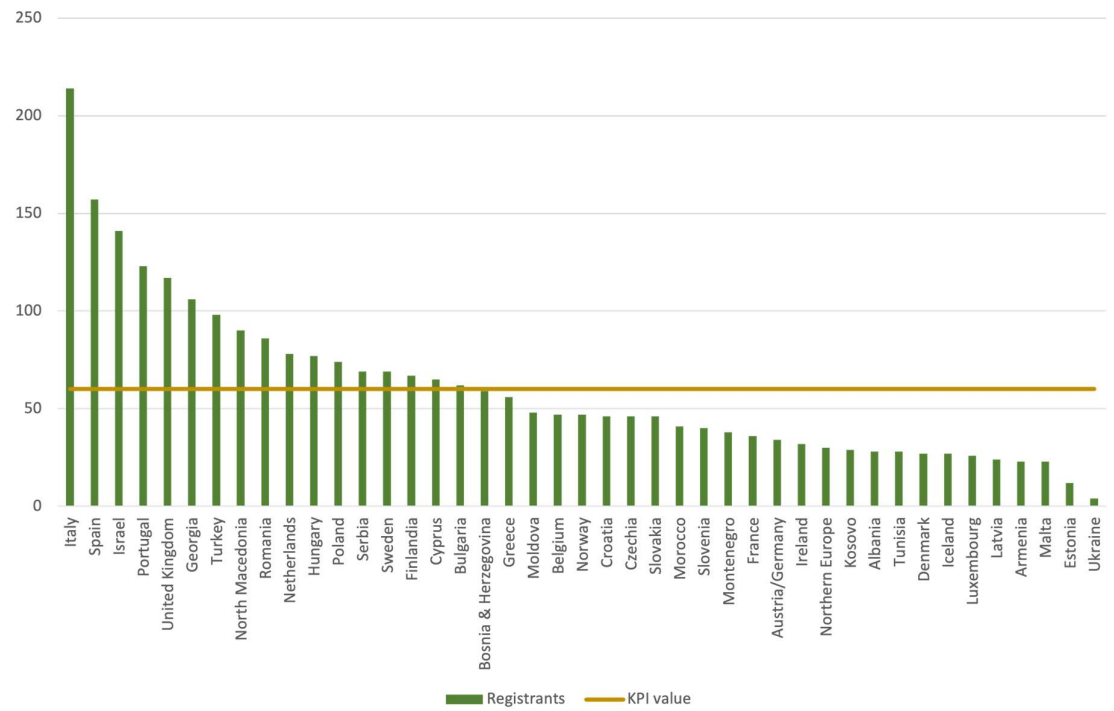


Figure 10. NEE 2024 registrants by country

Both rounds demonstrated the events' effectiveness in engaging diverse stakeholders, with academia/research, national authorities, industry, and various agricultural and environmental organizations well-represented. The 2024 events saw particularly strong participation from academic and research institutions, with 1,163 registrants from this sector.

Between 2023 and 2024, the registrations for different land-use types showed consistent growth. Agriculture remained the most popular category, with 1,963 registrants in 2024, up from 1,762 in 2023, reflecting an 11.4% increase. Forestry and Nature also saw an increase in registrants, from 821 in 2023 to 869 in 2024, although the growth was more modest at 5.8%. Urban land use experienced a stronger rise, with registrations increasing by 12.4%, from 566 in 2023 to 636 in 2024. This growth in the urban category is likely linked to the call HORIZON-MISS-2024-SOIL-01-02, which targets urban land use with its focus on "Living Labs in urban areas for healthy soils," making the increase in this sector a natural progression. The (Post) Industrial category, while the smallest, showed the highest percentage growth, with a 14.9% increase, rising from 377 in 2023 to 433 in 2024. Overall, all categories saw increases in registrants, with Agriculture maintaining the largest share, though the other categories are catching up slightly, particularly (Post) Industrial.

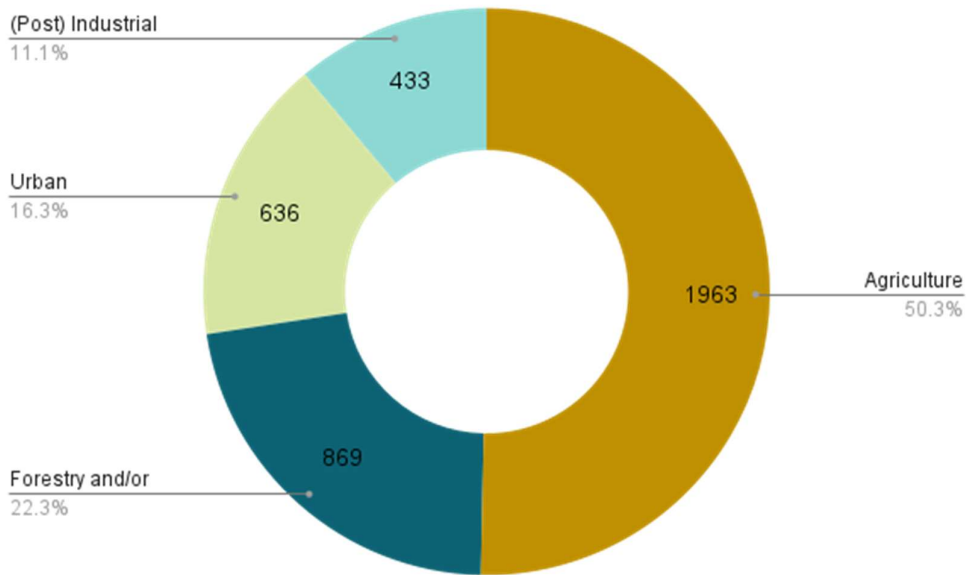


Figure 11. Land use type indicated by the registrants in 2024 (multiple choice)

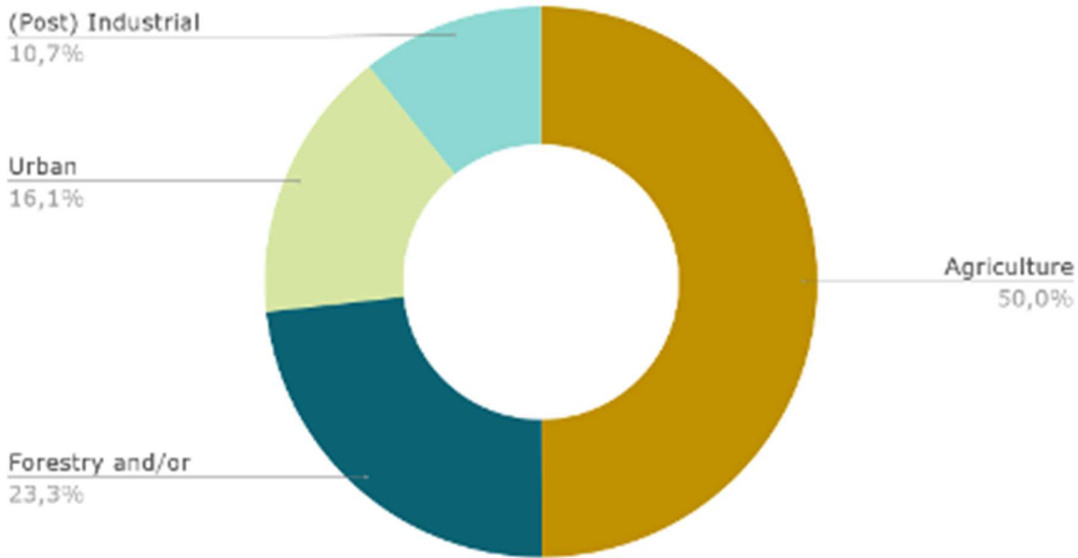


Figure 12. Land use type indicated by the registrants in 2023 (multiple choice)

Feedback quality remained consistently high across both years, with the 2024 events receiving excellent ratings for content (92% rating it as "excellent" or "good") and organisation (93% positive ratings). While involvement scores were slightly lower, they remained very positive, with 89% rating it as "excellent" or "good".

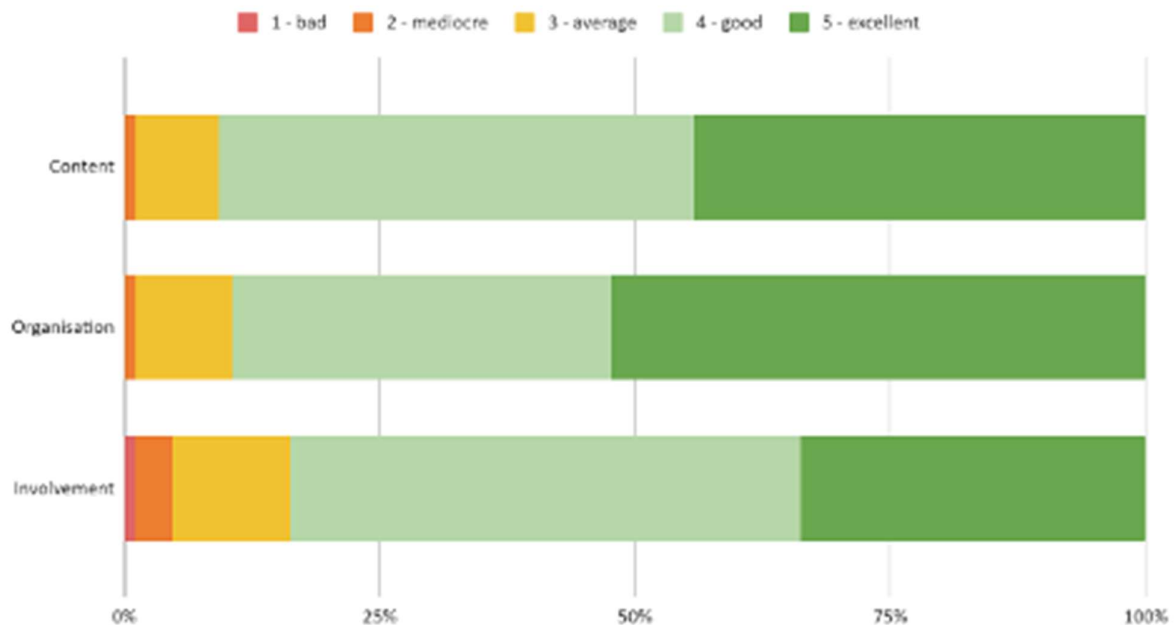


Figure 13. Participants evaluation of the NEE 2023 (Content, Organisation, Involvement)



Figure 14. Participants evaluation of the NEE 2024 (Involvement, Organisation, Content)

Key improvements noted in the 2024 round include better engagement from countries like Georgia, Netherlands, and Finland, which showed significant increases in participation. The timing of events in relation to the publication of the Horizon Europe Work Programme also emerged as a crucial factor influencing attendance and perceived relevance.

Areas for future improvement, based on participant feedback from both years, include providing more networking opportunities, offering more practical examples of Living Labs, and focusing on interdisciplinary collaboration.

Overall, the comparison between the 2023 and 2024 rounds of National Engagement Events shows a consistent ability to attract and engage a diverse audience interested in soil health across Europe. While some metrics showed slight declines, the events continue to effectively raise awareness and foster collaboration in support of the Mission Soil objectives.

3 Implementation of the Thematic Events

3.1 Overview of T3.3 Activities and Contributors

Objectives

The primary objectives of the thematic events were threefold:

1. Leveraging insights from National Engagement Events, these thematic sessions aimed to **refine and customize Mission Soil messages for diverse audiences** across different countries.
2. With a focus on cross-country collaboration, these events sought to **cluster stakeholder groups, stimulating their involvement in Soil Health Living Labs**. The goal was to encourage **networking and collaboration on a transnational scale**.
3. **Mobilizing specific knowledge** resources efficiently, the events introduced challenges, showcased best practices, and inspired innovative approaches for future Living Labs engaged in the Mission.

By leveraging collective knowledge and resources, NATI00NS endeavoured to develop sustainable practices for soil remediation and restoration, safeguarding soil health and ecosystem integrity. With a commitment to cultivating partnerships that yield mutual benefits across diverse areas of expertise, the thematic events aimed to mobilize collective efforts in tackling soil-related challenges effectively.

Planning and preparation of the Thematic Events

As leader of Task 3.3, POLIMI, set the ground for the organisation of six transnational thematic events, aiming to convey Mission Soil messages to diverse audiences, support matchmaking activities, and mobilise knowledge efficiently. These events focused on a variety of themes around soil health and were initially defined by task partners during the project proposal preparation.

The plan was updated in the Summer 2023, after the Mission Soil Secretariat and REA invited the consortium to carefully consider the topics based on the experience gained and the data collected through the first round of NEEs. For instance, in order to better respond to the needs of the Mission and after having processed the events' data, the task participants decided to promote events that help breaking silos among land use types and stakeholders, increase the variety of types of potential applicants and involve stakeholders that today are distant from the Mission. This change represented a refinement of our initial plan, where the topics of the six events were already established based on the partners' expertise.

In M8-M9, POLIMI carried out the analysis of the NEEs attendees and the Matchmaking Platform (MMP) registrants for Task 3.2, to get an overall picture on the eventual shortcomings of NATI00NS' reach out in the first year. This was a relevant information to help us focusing on how thematic events could better reach stakeholders and soil use types that had been less engaged at that time, but anyway represented a significant basin of interest for the Mission Soil. In particular,

underrepresented stakeholders in our first-year events were public authorities, businesses (companies and professionals), forestry experts, and landowners. Industrial, urban and forestry soils were also underrepresented.

After discussing this issue with REA and the Mission Soil Secretariat in July and September 2023, and after a discussion with our partners in September and October 2023 (M10-M11), we agreed on the final content for the thematic events. The final agenda for the events was released in late October 2023 (M12). The established topics and leaderships are summarised as follows:

1. De-sealing urban and post-industrial soils (POLIMI)
2. Innovative women improving food & soil health (EIT-FOOD)
3. Industry engagement for sustainable soil health (BUSINESSMED)
4. Regional Smart Strategies for soil health (FUNDECYT-PCTEX)
5. Soil health from a forestry perspective (SLU)
6. Soil de-contamination (IUNG)

During the kick-off meeting in Aarhus, January 2023, the partners (i.e. SLU, IRCEM, EIT-FOOD, BUSINESSMED, POLIMI, FUNDECUT, IUNG) expressed their opinions and suggestions to accomplish Task 3.3, focusing on 4 main questions shared through our [Miro board](#). A detailed explanation of the main phases is reported below.

Phase 1: preparation

- Kick-off meeting (April 17 and 19) and collective/collaborative discussions (June 12, July 5, September 12).
- Bilateral meetings with specific partners (October 16, 24 and 30).
- Preparation of events' format and templates (mapping relevant contributors e.g. main stakeholders, keynote speakers, moderators). First version from June 2023, second version from October to November 2023.
- Setting of repository modalities.

Phase 2: invitations of speakers

- Contacting scholars, experts, policy makers.
- Inviting specific stakeholders and potential applicants to the calls and LLs.
- Bilateral meetings with specific partners were fixed up on 8 and 14 November 2023.

Phase 3: implementation of 6 digital events

The results of the discussions with partners to identify the thematic events' topics and modalities of execution can be synthesised as follows:

Q#1: what do we want to achieve with these (transnational thematic) events?

- Get people from different countries, consider the differences of soil health challenges in the EU and bring actors that are not yet aware of Soil Health Living Labs.

- Highlight economic benefits of Living Labs.
- Include reflections on the different regulations, skills and institutions involved in soil health matters, to support stakeholders' strategies and decisions on their contexts.

Q#2: How do we envision these events to be successful?

- Try to “break silos”: going beyond land-use related themes.
- Avoid “redundancies”: considering the running of Living Labs webinars.
- Be “time-effective”: design relatively short events and well targeted to enhance the results.

Therefore, useful strategies identified were:

- anticipate contents to the participants before the event;
- having short presentations (e.g. 10/15 minutes slides presentation for keynotes; pitches for other speakers);
- encouraging sub-themes discussions with breakout rooms.

These aspects are set to be included in the events' dedicated online webpages accompanying the registration form (elaborated by TRUST-IT with the support of the task participants), in order to better prepare the scheduling and contents of the events. It was crucial to keep the registration form as simple as possible. The materials to present during the sessions will be of different nature. They will be slides and collaborative walls (e.g. Miro), but a crucial point will be that participants will be given the possibility to know other participants' information, to network and use the match-making platform. In this regard, it would be necessary to find ways to appropriately map and allocate partners and their respected topics/challenges as the event runs.

Q#3: What is the value added by Task 3.3 events? How to enhance innovation?

- B2B presentation of the partners.
- Distinguish soil challenges from advanced practices and specific knowledge on Living Labs.
- Partners to facilitate discussions in the breakout rooms to support match-making activities.
- Registration form: think ahead what we want to get.
- Stakeholders/participant mapping through quadruple helix model.

Q#4 When should the events take place? Any synergy to other events?

- Various synergies have been identified, although partners agreed on avoiding too many overlapping with other public events to retain more audience.
- For the specific dates, partners expressed their preferences through templates, the task leader has helped to fine-tune the different needs through bilateral meetings.

Phase 4: reflection and repository

Mainly devoted to the discussion and post-processing of the events' materials (e.g. resources, recording, reports), to be made available to the public (D.3.3 and Zenodo repository). Two reflection workshops have been organised, one on February 26th right at the end of the cycle of events, another one on September 11th to conclude the task, also in the presence of the WP Leader.

Table 4. List of the main meetings, and workshops with partners organized in preparation of the events

Date	Typology of meeting	Description
10/01/23	Workshop in person at Kick-off meeting at AU	Workshop to identify the objectives of thematic events
17/04/23	Opening meeting of Task 3.3	Presentation of the main aims and activities of thematic events and discussion with a first group of partners
19/04/23	Opening meeting of Task 3.3	Presentation of the main aims and activities of thematic events and discussion with a second group of partners
22/06/23	User workshop	Workshop to evaluate contents and structure of NATIOONS website, predisposition of webpages collecting information on past and future events (including thematic events)
05/07/23	Online Workshop	Workshop to plan the contents of the thematic events (pre-summer break)
12/09/23	Online Workshop	Workshop to plan the contents of the thematic events (post-summer break)
16/10/23	Bilateral meeting	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by EIT-FOOD
18/10/23	Consortium meeting at BioSense	Data analysis of participation in NATIOONS events and Match Making platform
19/10/23	Consortium meeting at BioSense	Thematic events planning
24/10/23	Bilateral meeting	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by POLIMI (task leader)
30/10/23	Bilateral meeting	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by BMED
30/10/23	Bilateral meeting	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by SLU
08/11/23	Bilateral meeting (scheduled)	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by IUNG
14/11/23	Bilateral meeting (scheduled)	Discussing details of the thematic event managed by FUNDECYT

Events' descriptions

General information and calendar of the events

The events were conducted entirely online, featuring impactful introductions to specific topics by esteemed keynote speakers and real-world practitioners. Beyond informative sessions, the format was designed to stimulate interactive discussions, providing a platform for networking among European stakeholders addressing similar soil challenges.

To further facilitate collaboration, the events unveil matchmaking opportunities through our dedicated Matchmaking Platform during these events. This initiative aims to connect like-minded individuals, organisations, and experts, fostering partnerships that contribute to the collective mission of nurturing healthy soils across Europe.

All the events ran between 10 – 12:00 a.m. (CET), with the technical support of TRUST-IT.

Table 5. Thematic events' calendars and main resources

Day	Title	Organisers	Resources
14/12/2023	Breaking ground together: Solutions for urban and post-industrial soil de-sealing	POLIMI	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbiime5zjiY Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10391033 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVNG4RpiM=/
11/01/2024	Beyond gender barriers in the agrifood system: Innovative women improving food & soil health	EIT-Food	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvLi3Vk4jE0 Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10495815 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVN7T-izk=/
18/01/2024	Industry engagement for sustainable soil health: Joining living labs	BUSINESSMED	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFGNlko5sck Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10528386 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVN4uqTHs=/
24/01/2024	Smart Soils: Smart Specialization meets EU Soil Mission	FUNDECYT-PCTEX	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-geCJs7UzA Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10560144 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVN2ilbcA=/
25/01/2024	Soil health from a forest land-use perspective	SLU	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCVDzNlnD-k Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10566220 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVN3cAyfM=/
15/02/2024	Soil decontamination	IUNG	Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDaZmsKaM2k Slides: https://zenodo.org/records/10664437 Miro: https://miro.com/app/board/uXiVNvGC_6U=/

Specific descriptions and contents of the TEs

TE #1 - General description

The Mission Soil led a transformative initiative aimed at addressing one of the most pressing ecological challenges of its time – "soil sealing." A thematic digital event was organized to explore the multifaceted aspects of soil sealing, particularly in urban and post-industrial contexts, and to examine innovative practices aimed at its reversal. The event thoroughly explored the issue of soil sealing, a phenomenon where natural soil surfaces were covered with impervious materials such as concrete or asphalt, leading to reduced soil health and biodiversity. Furthermore, the event showcased exemplary endeavours in "de-sealing" efforts emphasizing multi-stakeholder practices

and highlighting the necessity of collaboration among governments, businesses, communities, and civil society to effectively tackle soil sealing and foster healthier urban ecosystems. Through this collaborative spirit, the event sought to inspire, inform, and empower participants to contribute to the Mission Soil and shape the future of sustainable urban and post-industrial soils.

Table 6. TE1 agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to the event and the theme	Eugenio Morello, Associate Professor, POLIMI	Presenter, moderator, event coordinator
	Anita De Franco Research Fellow, POLIMI	Moderator, event assistant
Keynote speech 1: “Addressing soil de-sealing at the EU level”	Luca Montanarella, Scientific Officer, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, ESDAC	Representative of transnational organizations, data-driven discussion and introduction on the theme
Keynote speech 2: “Green with Gray”	Federico Brogгинi, Member, Latitude Platform, Brussels	Representative of professional organizations, practice-focused discussion on desealing activities
Presentation 1: “De-sealing and healthy soils”	Chiara Ferrè Research Fellow, UNIMIB	Representative of academic organizations, engaged in consultancy for urban regeneration projects
Presentation 2: “Living labs for soil de-sealing”	Dolinda Cavallo, Project Manager, ENOLL	Representative of international networks, engaged in establishing and promoting LLs

Thematic event #2 - General description

Numerous social and environmental challenges confront us, including gender equality and climate change. For years, it was believed that these challenges were separate, but it is evident that they are interconnected. One notable illustration can be found in the agrifood system, where numerous women experts in the sector have addressed gender disparities and developed innovative solutions to enhance food and soil health, among other issues. The objective of the event was to convene and engage with women entrepreneurs and experts in the agrifood sector whose endeavours contribute to the mission of transitioning to healthy soils by 2030. Throughout the event, discussions revolved around topics such as regenerative agriculture, biodiversity, soil health, and other pertinent subjects.

Table 7. TE2 Agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to NATI00NS	Nestor Etxaleku, Regional Project Manager, EIT Food	Presenter, moderator, event coordinator
Keynote speech 1: ‘Agriwoman: The female presence in the agrifood system’	Amparo de San José, Regional Business Creation Portfolio Manager, EIT Food	Representative of EIT Food and woman investors in the agrifood sector

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Keynote speech 2: 'The role of agrifood in soil and healthy eating'	Damien Jourdan, Director of Open Innovation, Danone	Representative of professional organizations, focused on soil health and food quality
Presentation 1: 'EWA Programme'	Lara Rodríguez, Senior Regional Project Manager, EIT Food	Representative of EIT Food and woman entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector
Success Story 1: " 'GILL (Gendered Innovation Living Lab)	Francesca Spagnoli, Head of Capacity Building and Research, ENOLL	Representative of international networks, engaged in establishing and promoting LLs
Success Story 2: 'EWA winner, a female-led agrifood company'	Sultan Gül, Entrepreneur, Microhobist	Representative of agrifood startup centred in soil health and bacterias
Wrap-up and End of session	Paula Hafner, Key Account Manager, EIT Food	Moderator, event coordinator

Thematic event #3 - General description

Living Labs represent dynamic innovation ecosystems facilitating collaborative, user-driven solutions in real-life settings. The active engagement of the private sector unlocks benefits such as access to a unique testbed, opportunities for co-creation, and accelerated innovation cycles. This event underscored the crucial role of private sector participation in Living Labs, encompassing aspects like resource allocation, market validation, and user-centric innovation. Private sector involvement is deemed essential for the success of these ecosystems, providing crucial resources, expertise, and investment. Attendees gained valuable insights into how this collaboration leads to accelerated growth, enhanced market competitiveness, and the development of innovative solutions meeting real-world needs.

Table 8. TE3 Agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to the event and the theme	Mahdi Khomsi, International relations coordinator, BUSINESSMED	Presenter, moderator, event coordinator
	Eugenio Morello, Associate professor, POLIMI	Presenting Mission Soil, NATI00NS project and setting the Scene of the Webinars
	Anita De Franco, Research fellow, POLIMI	Event assistant & coordinator
Panel Discussion: Industry Perspectives on Soil Health (50min)	Monika Machowska, Deputy director of the technology park department, Krakow Technology Park	Presentation of Krakow Technology Park and Krakow Living Lab than to show some examples of solutions coming from startups that have been implemented in industrial companies from ecosystem.
	Ricardo Chagas, Technical and Scientific Director, Food4Sustainability CoLAB	Showcasing the work of food4sustainability in providing regenerative and circular systems in this path to carbon neutrality in food production and highlighting the role of companies and Connexion between business and academia in promoting living labs.
	Aymen Frija, Agricultural Economist,	Sharing with us your experience in Tunisia in the implementation of the living labs and the development of

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
	The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)	innovative solutions that address real- world needs in the field of Agriculture and agri-food.
Matchmaking Platform Training	Mahdi Khomsi, International relations coordinator, BUSINESSMED	Tutorial and Demo of the B2match Platform

Thematic event #4 - General description

A Europe-wide discussion was held in a virtual session focusing on the relationship, at the regional level, between Smart Specialization Research and Innovation Strategies (RIS3) and the Mission Soil, as part of one of the NATI00NS thematic events. The session integrated policy makers, experts, technicians, and citizens involved in regional policy making and the implementation of innovation programs, addressing challenges such as identifying existing, anticipated, or potential connections between RIS3 and Mission Soil objectives. The aim was to explore possibilities for implementing strategies to address soil issues and to draw conclusions on policy good practices guiding the alignment of RIS3 with the mission and vice versa. Since 2013, RIS3 has been demonstrating its utility at the local level in fostering transformative changes through innovation.

Table 9. TE4 Agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to the event and the theme	Cristina Gallardo, Project Manager, FUNDECYT-PCTEXI	Presenter, moderator, event coordinator
	Concha Civantos, Project Advisor, FUNDECYT-PCTEX	Moderator, event assistant
Keynote speech 1: “Mission-oriented innovation policy, and novel forms of Smart Specialisation”	Matthijs Janssen, Assistant Professor, UTRECHT UNIVERSITY	Keynote Speech: Scientific production on the interaction between missions and regional specialization
Keynote speech 2: “Introduction to the Soil Mission and its linkage to the Smart Specialisation Strategies”	Luis Sánchez Álvarez, European Commission, Head of Sector R&I, DG for Agriculture and Rural Development	Keynote Speech: Mission soil perspective
Keynote speech 3: “The Smart Specialisation Strategies and its impact on the Missions”	Susana Elena Pérez, Senior Researcher, EFIS Centre, S3 Community of Practice	Keynote Speech 3: Regional perspective
Presentation 1: “Regional Good Practice Agro”	Lucila Castro Rovillard, Project Manager, FUNDECYT-PCTEX	Good Practice in a use case from a regional approach
Presentation 2: “Regional Good Practice Forestry”	Eva Skagestad, Administrative Director,	Good Practice in a use case from a regional approach

	Forestry and Wood Dpt. County Governor of Innlandet (Norway)	
Presentation 2: “Regional Good Practice Post-industrial”	Sophie Patrício, Head of Division for Promotion, Innovation and Regional Competitiveness CCDRC Edgar Carvalho, Member of the Board of Directors, EDM - Mining Development Company (Centro - Portugal)	Good Practice in a use case from a regional approach

Thematic event #5 - General description

Forestry, a vital economic activity for many nations, is highly reliant on soils, which play a crucial role in regulating ecosystem processes. The event focused on understanding the interactions between forestry and soil properties, both directly and indirectly, as part of the soil awareness campaign. Discussions were initiated on how the concepts of soil health and living labs could be understood and applied within forestry and across forested landscapes. Specifically, the event addressed: (i) the intensified impacts of forestry on soils across geographical locations, where soils become more susceptible to issues like soil erosion, especially in semi-arid and dry areas; and (ii) strategies to address the monitoring of soil indicators considering different rotation periods (short 20-23 years vs long 50-70 years) and variations in forest management practices (mixed vegetation vs monocultures).

Table 10. TE5 Agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to theme and NATIOONS	Hjalmar Laudon, Head of department for Forest Ecology and Management, Professor, SLU Johan Stendahl, Associate Professor, SLU	Professor and moderator Associate Professor
Keynote: Soil health and forest climate change mitigation potential	Raisa Mäkiöää, Research Professor, LUKE	Keynote speaker, Research Professor
Panel discussion	Liisa Pietola, Board member of mission soil, SITRA José Ramón Olarieta, Lecturer of Forest Soils and Land Evaluation, Universidad de Lleida	Board member of mission soil Lecturer of Forest Soils and Land Evaluation Research Professor Moderator

	Raisa Mäkipää, Research Professor, LUKE Hjalmar Laudon, Head of department for Forest Ecology and Management, SLU	
Wrap-up and matchmaking	Hjalmar Laudon, Head of department for Forest Ecology and Management, SLU	Moderator

Thematic event #6 - General description

Recognizing the critical importance of soil as a singular and invaluable resource, this event embarked on a mission to address the pervasive issue of soil contamination. Soil contamination poses significant threats to environmental and human health, necessitating urgent action and innovative solutions. By harnessing the wealth of experience cultivated in various sectors, this event sought to promote collaboration and cross-fertilization among stakeholders, integrating novel strategies and methodologies to mitigate the impacts of soil pollution. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, the event aimed to unlock new insights and solutions to combat soil contamination, addressing issues such as chemical pollutants, heavy metals, and industrial waste. This concerted effort underscored the importance of adopting holistic and sustainable approaches to soil management, emphasizing the need for proactive measures to prevent further contamination and preserve soil quality for future generations.

Table 11. TE6 Agenda and speakers

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
Welcome and introduction to the event and NATIOONSs project	Grzegorz Siebielec, Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation – State Research Institute, Pulawy (IUNG)	Presenter, moderator, event coordinator
Phytoremediation of metal contaminated soil – success stories and research gaps	Markus Puschenreiter (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna – BOKU)	The speaker, Markus Puschenreiter, is affiliated with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna, where he works at the Institute of Soil Research. The presentation he delivered focused on phytoremediation of metal-contaminated soils, discussing both success stories and research gaps. He showcased various

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
		<p>phytoremediation methods such as phytoextraction and phytostabilization, as well as examples of metal hyperaccumulating plants like <i>Noccaea caerulescens</i> and <i>Pycnandra acuminata</i>.</p>
<p>Bioavailability of organic pollutants and sustainable soil remediation</p>	<p>Jose Julio Ortega Calvo (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Sevilla)</p>	<p>José Julio Ortega Calvo discussed processes of bioavailability in soil and their importance for remediation practices during the presentation on the bioavailability of organic pollutants and sustainable soil remediation. He emphasized the role of bioavailability in assessing the risk of soil contamination and suggested integrating biotransformation strategies into low-risk approaches. Ortega Calvo's presentation provided valuable insights into soil contamination and sustainable remediation practices.</p>
<p>The Mission Soil ISLANDR project</p>	<p>Marianne Valkama (Geological Survey of Finland, Espoo)</p>	<p>The ISLANDR project (Information-based Strategies for LAND Remediation project - ISLANDR), in which Marianne Valkama is involved, is a multidisciplinary initiative aimed at supporting the implementation of the EU mission: A Soil Deal for Europe. Its aim is to promote the implementation of the Green Deal, in particular aiming to achieve zero pollution by reducing soil contamination, increasing the importance of remediation. This project, funded by the Horizon Europe program, focuses on reducing soil pollution and enhancing restoration processes. Running from May 1, 2023, to April 30,</p>

Schedule	Name & Affiliation	Role/scope in the event
		2026, it involves 14 partners from 13 countries.
Contaminated sites management in Saxony	Ingo Müller (Saxon State Office for Environment, Agriculture and Geology)	Ingo Müller, from the Saxon State Office for Environment, discussed the management of contaminated sites in Saxony, focusing on assessment, remediation, and risk assessment. He emphasized the importance of geochemical surveys, remediation measures, and progress in managing contaminated brownfields and large-scale contamination in the region.
Best practice examples - Chorzów remediation site	Tomasz Stuczyński (Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation – State Research Institute)	The speaker Tomasz Stuczyński (IUNG), who presented best practices in land reclamation in Chorzów. His role involved conveying information about the history of the site, the type of contamination, the remediation methods employed, and the expected outcomes.
Living labs for soil remediation	Mar Ylla (ENOLL) Sabina de Lange (Blauwe Hotspot Dordrecht LL)	Mar Ylla serves as a Junior Project Manager at the event focusing on Living Labs & Lighthouses for Soil remediation. Her role includes project coordination, support for the concept of Living Labs, and promotion of the Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe'. In the presentation, Mar Ylla discusses the role of Living Labs in soil health research and innovation, as well as synergies with EU initiatives such as the Climate-neutral and smart cities Mission and Cancer Mission. She also presents the support structure for Soil Health Living Labs and national engagement activities related to Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe'.

3.2 Evaluation framework and Reflection workshop

The evaluation of the thematic events was based on two key approaches: first, the collection of participants' feedback; and second, a reflective analysis by the event organizers. POLIMI, as the task leader, utilized these evaluations throughout the event cycle to address any mistakes or shortcomings and to offer recommendations for the ongoing online events in the series. A comprehensive reflection involving all partners was conducted both immediately after each event and at the conclusion of the task activities (See Table 12). This aimed to generate key insights for the Mission Soil Secretariat and future projects - particularly SOILL-Startup - that focus on fostering transnational cooperation on the discussed topics. Details on the feedback surveys and the reflection workshops are reported in the next sections of this deliverable.

Table 12. Thematic Events' reflection workshops

Date	Typology of meeting	Description
26/02/24	Online Workshop	Workshop among Task 3.3 partners to reflect on the experience of the thematic events right after the conclusion of the palimpsest
11/09/24	Online Workshop	Workshop among Task 3.3 partners to reflect on the experience of the thematic events after more than 6 months and with the aim of giving input to future projects (SOILL in primis) and to the Mission Soil

3.3 Performance of the Thematic Events

Analysis of Registrants

Where not indicated, the total numbers refer to the total registrants including NATI00NS' partners and Task 3.3 partners, that is attributable to either the anonymity of the data or its relatively lesser significance. For total numbers showing the distinction between registrants and partners, see Table 13 and Table 14.

Table 13. TEs Participants

Thematic Event	Registrants on the online form, by the day of the event (n° without T3.3 partners)	Participants during the event	Respondents to the feedback survey	New registrants (who did not attend National Engagement Events)
#1	179 (166)	89	11	139
#2	129 (122)	80	15	92
#3	73 (66)	44	8	56
#4	167 (162)	119	18	129
#5	136 (129)	97	10	120
#6	258 (244)	151	32	216
Tot	942 (889)	580	94	752

Table 14. TEs Stakeholders (based on quadruple helix)

Event	Research / Academia	Industry / company /SMEs	Association / NGOs / Citizens / Landowner	Authority / Government	Total
#1	115	15	19	17	166
#2	63	18	26	15	122
#3	32	20	6	8	66
#4	73	16	13	60	162
#5	78	10	12	29	129
#6	138	17	29	70	254
Total	499	96	105	199	899

The calculation has excluded the partners of Task 3.3 project from the count (i.e. POLIMI, EIT-FOOD, BUSINESSMED, FUNDECYT, SLU, IUNG, TRUST-IT), that account 53 entries on the total. Task 3.3 partners have registered to multiple events, therefore of the 53 entries, 21 are unique entries.

For the specific geographical breakdown of Table 15, see below.

Table 15. TEs Transnationality of registrants

Thematic Event	Total countries represented	Total registrants
#1	42	179
#2	39	129
#3	26	73
#4	32	167
#5	40	135
#6	43	258
Tot	/	941

Table 16 on networking needs among registrants, highlights participant engagement across the six thematic events, specifically focusing on the registrants who were actively seeking collaborations. It tracks three main categories:

- Consortium representatives looking for coordinators
- Coordinators seeking partners
- Single partners looking to join consortia

Key Insights are as follows:

- **Collaboration Search Consistency.** Across all six events, an average of 33% of total registrants were actively searching for collaborations. This indicates that roughly one-third of participants across the events were involved in collaboration-building, showing a strong

- demand for network formation and partnerships. TE3 saw the highest percentage (41%) of registrants looking for collaboration, while TE5 had the lowest (30%).
- **Single Partners Dominating the Search.** The largest group consistently represented across all events was single partners looking for consortia. TE6 saw the highest number of single participants seeking consortia (74), while TE3 had the lowest (23). This suggests that individuals or smaller organizations, rather than established consortia, are the most active in networking, likely seeking opportunities to join larger projects.
 - **Lower Representation of Consortium Representatives and Coordinators.** The number of consortium representatives seeking coordinators and coordinators looking for partners was notably lower across all events, ranging between 1-11 and 2-10 respectively. This shows that although a significant portion of attendees are actively seeking partnerships, the number of established consortia or coordinators available is relatively small. For example, TE1 had 5 consortium representatives and 11 coordinators looking for partners, which contrasts sharply with the 45 single participants seeking consortia. Again, the reason for this condition is due to the timeframe when the events were scheduled, with no open calls.
 - **Event-Specific Engagement.** TE6 stands out with the highest number of overall participants (87) searching for collaboration, particularly in the "single partner" category. Meanwhile, TE5 had the lowest percentage of registrants looking for collaboration (30%). Interestingly, despite varying levels of collaboration-seeking, each event still maintained a steady interest, indicating the topic of each event likely played a role in attracting different types of stakeholders.

In conclusion, the table highlights the strong interest from individual stakeholders seeking to join consortia, yet there appears to be a gap between this interest and the availability of established consortia or coordinators. This is also due to the specific timeframe where the event cycle took place, i.e. in-between open calls, in a time when no one was actively involved in building consortia.

Events that include focused networking or matchmaking opportunities could help balance this mismatch, encouraging more consortium representatives to participate and foster new partnerships. The Matchmaking Platform is one the most effective tools and was highly promoted during the events. Additionally, improving data collection across all categories is important for future event planning to ensure a comprehensive understanding of collaboration dynamics.

Table 16. TEs Networking needs

Thematic Event	Registrants searching for collaborations (% of the total registrants)	Consortium representatives looking for coordinators	Coordinators looking for partners	Single partner looking for consortium
#1	61 (34%)	5	11	45
#2	45 (35%)	2	3	40
#3	30 (41%)	2	5	23

#4	58 (32%)	0	6	52
#5	40 (30%)	1	6	33
#6	87 (34%)	3	10	74
Tot	313 (33%)			

Feedback surveys

Feedback surveys were distributed to attendees at the end of each event, both during the call and via email. A total of 94 participants responded, with 27 providing additional comments (see Table 17).

Table 17. TEs evaluations: usefulness

Evaluations	Knowledge on the topic addressed during the event	Actual opportunities of getting to know and connecting with other active participants on this issue	Understanding of how to address healthy soil challenges through the EU Mission Soil
Improved very significantly	14	22	17
Improved significantly	32	27	23
Improved moderately	25	25	31
Improved a little	16	10	18
Remained the same	7	10	5
Tot	94	94	94

The overall evaluations of the TEs achieve an average 8,38 points (maximum 10, minimum 4, median 9, mode 10).

Table 18. TEs evaluations of the offered format

Evaluations	Event format
It was optimal duration and time distribution between the sessions was appropriate.	62
It was optimal duration but the collaborative session was too short. Time distribution could be improved.	24
The event was too short; it would be useful if we had more time to discuss/ask questions/network	7
Tot	93

Table 19. TEs' evaluations: comments

Thematic Event	What do you think could be improved?
#1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To give the contact info of the speakers in the chat, not just in the slide (if they want to) 2. For those who work on the desealing subject, general concepts were already known, so what could be improved is to have more feedback on actual de-sealing experiments or projects, more technical description and feedback. But for those who were not familiar with this concept, the format was likely appropriate. 3. The description of living lab was important and informative, but a little too long maybe.
#2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Preparing the slide sharing in advance - this is not a harsh criticism, but the delay in getting going meant we had less time to hear about the interesting projects. I think I was also interested in examples of how the methods discussed operated on the ground with more case studies. It was however useful to hear about all the collaborative projects that are available to address this issue. I learned a lot about the topic. 5. Debate 6. Technical problems are standard for this type of meeting. Thanks to the discipline the organisers imposed, the meeting finished on time and all the necessary information was provided, which is not always achievable. Thank you. 7. I have no idea, as I had to step out too early because of another commitment. 8. Everything was Fantastic
#3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Everything OK. Interesting thematics. I'm a builder and soil contamination and hydrogeological hazard is strictly connected to the modern knowledge about end of waste and soil respect. I hope to meet You again in step n.6. 10. Nothing 11. Going more depth in topics that helps create new paths for thinking. 12. Clean focus on soil health related examples, and presentations held by companies involved in relevant Living Lab. 13. Slower pace. Remember that English is not our first language.
#4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Good Practices: for me this argument is very interesting. Thanks 15. The session has provided relevant and clarifying information about EU Soi Missions and the Nati00ns initiative. I think it has been very useful in that sense. Perhaps I have missed progress in achievements and concrete actions aimed at improving the Health of European soils. In this sense, Portugal's experience in the recovery of areas affected by mining has been a good example. I think that perhaps we should take steps forward from the conceptual aspects and delve deeper into the applied aspects. An important point would be to achieve much greater involvement than the current one, on the part of the Ministry of the Environment in the soil problem in our country. 16. Time management and more active participation of the attendees.
#5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. The breakout session did not work as I expected and that made me get out of the session. Sorry for that. 18. Allow a bit more of interaction among participants and shorter presentations / panel time. 19. Great Stuff, Keep up the Good Work :) 20. Kindly issue a certificate of participation also, as it gives motivation to participant's
#6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. More networking 22. Uważam że tego typu spotkania powinny być choć częściowo tłumaczone na język polski. Tematyka ciekawa, a slajdy zawierały dużo zagadnień i nie zawsze można było je szybko przetłumaczyć. Materiały (prezentacje) po sesji powinny być dostępne on-line na stronie

	<p>wydarzenia(tematu). [translated by the authors of the report: I think that meetings of this type should be at least partially translated into Polish. The subject matter was interesting, and the slides contained many issues, and it was not always possible to translate them quickly. Materials (presentations) after the session should be available online on the event (subject) website].</p> <p>23. A short time for discussion or to answer questions needed after each session may be required.</p> <p>24. The interaction between participants can be improved.</p> <p>25. I think the event was useful as a scientific event, because of some of the presentations, which were good, but, if the objective was to stimulate partnerships, it does not work. At least from my point of view. I did know how to interact with the MIRO board, and, if I spent time learning during the event, I would not see the presentations. Therefore, for me that was not useful.</p> <p>26. On the previous question, I answered the 3rd option, "It was optimal duration but the collaborative session was too short. Time distribution could be improved.", since it was the best fitting my opinion, and which I would like to give more detail here.</p> <p>27. I believe it was quite challenging to have all those presentations (all of which were of course very helpful, don't get me wrong). I think a 2-hour event is appropriate, but maybe trying to have fewer slides per presentation (which almost always get delayed) and therefore leave some space for discussion with the audience. There are of course ways to continue discussing after the event, but with such tight schedule as was the case, it does not leave an option to listen/watch the content and at the same time communicate via chat, or match-making platform. You either do one or the other, otherwise you don't get anything from both. I hope my opinion is a constructive one, and I hope to help improve these sessions. All the best, great event!</p>
Tot	27 comments in the form of free text

Impact of the Thematic Events

Beyond tracking event attendance, it was crucial to assess the impact of these events. To measure this, we focused on the dissemination of the materials produced. We monitored the downloads of the event recordings and slides at two different points: first at the end of February, once the event cycle had concluded, and again after seven months (see Table 20). The initial check was influenced by the proximity to the event dates, with earlier events showing higher download numbers than those held later in the cycle. However, the second review after seven months provided a more balanced view of the long-term impact. Notably, downloads of the slides almost doubled during this period, while views of the video recordings showed minimal growth.

Table 20. TEs evaluations: post-event online views

Thematic Event	Number of events' recording views		Number of slides' views	
	As of 25/02/2024	As of 25/09/2024	As of 25/02/2024	As of 25/09/2024
#1 14/12/2023	80	116	186	290
#2 11/01/2024	68	85	113	192

Thematic Event	Number of events' recording views		Number of slides' views	
	As of 25/02/2024	As of 25/09/2024	As of 25/02/2024	As of 25/09/2024
#3 18/01/2024	139	158	51	131
#4 24/01/2024	140	172	100	200
#5 25/01/2024	108	139	47	110
#6 15/02/2024	17	104	64	249

Post-event reports

Partners, coordinated by POLIMI, produced concise post-event reports, which were compiled into a single document and published on the online repository Zenodo (<https://zenodo.org/records/13863575>).

This document provides event summaries along with inspirational ideas and best practices for applicants. The post-events reports served as the basis for discussion during the Reflection workshops (held online in February and September 2024), during which partners elaborated on key messages for the Mission Soil, as reported in Section 5 of this deliverable.

4 Lessons Learnt and Recommendations for Mission Secretariat, Mission Implementation Platform and SOILL-Startup (Identifying Countries/Regions with Support Needs)

The key messages to be communicated to the Mission Soil Secretariat are divided into two primary areas: events' logistics and the emerging content on healthy soil concept and challenges, with a focus on living labs as the main strategy to achieve the mission's objectives. Each of these areas is further elaborated for both national and thematic events.

Post-events reflection originated from content discussed.

4.1 Logistics of events

Key messages for improving the format of Thematic Events' format

Overall, the feedback from attendees (94 responses collected) showed a highly positive reception of the events. Participants appreciated the format, including the duration, agenda, and interaction opportunities, as well as the quality of the content delivered (expert interventions and knowledge gained). A detailed overview of the event format, after discussion among Task 3.3 partners, is provided below in Table 21.

Transnational Cooperation: The events successfully fostered transnational dialogue on soil-related topics, with broad representation from 32 to 43 countries attending each session. Hosting the events fully online proved to be the most efficient and cost-effective way to facilitate international cooperation, making it both accessible and timely.

Interaction Opportunities: As the seminar series progressed, we enhanced the opportunities for participant interaction. Initially, a shared digital board on Miro was used, allowing participants to share their contact information and areas of interest. To protect privacy, these details were not publicly displayed during the event but were available for attendees to view and engage with, facilitating networking among EU-level entities interested in the topic. Participants also had the option to use the chat feature to showcase their expertise, interests, and needs related to soil.

Starting from the second event, we introduced dedicated time for participant interventions, which significantly boosted engagement and exchange. The pitching sessions, where participants could introduce themselves in just a few minutes, were especially well-received, offering valuable EU-wide visibility to a highly targeted audience at no cost.

To better organize these pitching sessions in future events, it would be beneficial for organizers to follow up with participants who express interest in presenting, as indicated in the registration form, and curate a list of speakers in advance. While the registration form already included this option,

time constraints made it difficult to predict how many pitches could be accommodated. As a result, pitch presentations were determined live during the event. Moving forward, with more time between registration and the event itself, a dedicated networking session with pre-scheduled pitch presentations should be considered to optimize participation and interaction.

Table 21. What worked and what did not in the Thematic Events

Format-related aspect	What worked	What did not work
<p>Format and duration of the event The events lasted between 1.5 to 2 hours. Some sessions were more presentation-focused, featuring expert-led talks, while others allowed for greater interaction. In the more interactive sessions, up to half of the time was dedicated to participants, providing opportunities for introductions and networking.</p>	<p>62 out of 93 respondents declared that the duration of the event was optimal. Only 7 stated that the event was too short. Pitching sessions were well-received and very informative.</p>	<p>More time for discussions and interaction among participants was requested by 24 out of 93 respondents to the evaluation survey. <i>Correction measure:</i> T3.3 partners agreed that during online events, a proper space for dialogue among participants is a good option, and that this should be as long as the presentations. Enhancing the pitching sessions duration is a good strategy. One participant suggested to release participation certificates to attendees. This could be a way to increase the number of participants. Nevertheless, issues related to the legal validity of certifications of this kind remain, and could be addressed by partner universities or educational bodies that offer this service.</p>
<p>Participation: number of attendees</p>	<p>Participation exceeded expectations, surpassing the initial threshold of 45 attendees set by the T3.3 partners. Given that the series took place between open calls—when potential partners are typically less active in building consortia—this represents a strong outcome.</p>	<p>There is typically a drop-off between the number of registrants and actual attendees at the event. For the first event, a technical issue with the reminder email, which included the event link, resulted in reduced participation. <i>Correction measure:</i> Ensuring post-registration communication with attendees; sending reminder emails and calendar invitations can help minimize this gap. Some target audience was more difficult to reach (business) <i>Correction measure:</i> this point goes beyond organizational tasks and refers more to a higher-level engagement of specific target audience on soil (see next Section 5.2). For instance, working on business models around soil regeneration/management, and “imposing” new standards and indicators on soil (also in connection to ESG and sustainability impact reporting) could help in getting more attention on soil.</p>
<p>Target audience reach and engagement In all the events we reached out all the categories of stakeholders (research/academia,</p>	<p>In general, the attendees to the events (our stakeholders) reflect the nature of the partner organizing the event and the topic proposed.</p>	<p>Attendees from the research and academic sectors were predominant across all events. Research has proven to be a key driver in forming consortia for this Mission, given its strong international connections. However, engaging other stakeholders—such as businesses, governments,</p>

<i>Format-related aspect</i>	<i>What worked</i>	<i>What did not work</i>
industry, NGOs, public authorities/governments).		<p>NGOs, and smaller local actors—remained more challenging.</p> <p><i>Correction measure:</i> This issue goes beyond organizational efforts and calls for higher-level engagement of specific target audiences in the soil sector (see Section 5.2). Increasing soil literacy will be essential to involving a broader range of participants, including citizens and non-experts. Nevertheless, events tailored to specific audiences helped to rebalance stakeholder participation. For example, Event #4 saw strong interest from government representatives, driven by their focus on policy needs and responsibilities.</p> <p>A few participants expressed concerns about language barriers, which can limit participation for certain target groups.</p> <p>To address this, greater efforts could be made to involve media and journalists in all events. Their participation could help disseminate key messages to a broader audience, enhancing the visibility and impact of the discussions.</p> <p><i>Further Correction Measures:</i> Future events could feature a slower pace, more textual material, subtitles, or even translation options to accommodate a wider audience and reduce language barriers.</p>
Networking opportunities	Only 10 respondents out of 94 declared that their opportunities to connect to other stakeholders active on the topic remained the same.	More active participation of attendees and generation of networking opportunities was expressed by some respondents to the survey. T3.3 partners agreed that during online events, a proper space for dialogue among participants is a good option, and that this should be as long as the presentations. Enhancing the pitching sessions duration is a good strategy.
Content and knowledge acquisition	Only 7 respondents out of 94 declared that their knowledge was not increased after the event, and only 5 did not get a better understanding on how to address healthy soil challenges through the Mission Soil.	

4.2 Content on healthy soil concept and associated living labs

The main reflections collected from event organizers during the series of thematic events and two reflection workshops are summarized below. These insights may provide valuable lessons for the Mission Soil to improve its actions in the future.

- **Tailored Engagement for Different Stakeholders.** The concept of **SHLLs** must be communicated differently depending on the stakeholder group being targeted. Customizing events to suit the needs and interests of specific audiences fosters meaningful dialogue and helps address the unique barriers to their involvement. For example, **TE4**, focused on **Smart Specialization of Regions**, successfully engaged regional authorities by discussing practical methods for integrating soil health into local policies and strategies.

- **Addressing Diverse Interests and Priorities.** Stakeholders possess varying levels of familiarity and interest in the living lab concept, which can influence their willingness to engage. For instance, landowners and businesses may be hesitant to adopt living lab practices due to a lack of immediate benefits or long-term monitoring difficulties. This was particularly evident during **TE3**, which aimed to engage private businesses but faced challenges in gaining traction. A targeted approach is required to engage these groups, making soil management an integral part of **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)** standards, particularly for industries with large land footprints (e.g., forestry, agriculture, and landowners managing contaminated soil).

In sectors like **forestry**, where soil health has not been prioritized due to long-term cycles (e.g., 60-year spans in forestry), efforts to monitor soil health have been minimal. **TE5** underscored that without regulation or incentives, businesses in such sectors are unlikely to prioritize soil management, as the return on investment is difficult to capture within traditional business cycles.

Similarly, **soil contamination** and long-term decontamination processes, such as those in post-industrial lands, often discourage businesses from taking ownership of the issue. Effective soil management will require new policies that impose stricter requirements on businesses regarding land rehabilitation and remediation. A greater emphasis on **collaborative living lab models**, which include public-private partnerships, could help address this.

To engage **regional public authorities**, healthy soil should be seen as a critical element of **smart specialization strategies**, as demonstrated in **TE4**. **Local Action Groups (LAGs)**, already experienced in mobilizing local actors, could serve as hubs for living labs, ensuring long-term sustainability and legacy. **LAGs** have strong connections with landowners and regional stakeholders, providing an opportunity to integrate soil health into ongoing initiatives.

- **Gender as a Driver for Soil Health.** The role of **gender** in advancing soil health was highlighted in **T2**, where female entrepreneurship emerged as a significant factor in land stewardship and environmental advocacy. Women's propensity for community involvement and their deep connection to land and environmental care positions them as pivotal actors in the **HSLL** framework. Policies should support female-led businesses and encourage greater

participation of women in sectors like agri-food and land management, thereby reinforcing the **agro-ecology perspective**.

- **Challenges in Addressing Urban and Industrial Soils:** Urban soils face unique challenges, often overlooked by stakeholders who perceive the **Mission Soil** as primarily relevant to the agri-food sector. However, urban environments also suffer from issues like soil impermeability, contamination, and compaction, which were explored during **TE1 and TE6**. Healthy soil should be seen as vital not just for agriculture but for overall ecosystem health, climate resilience, and urban planning. There is significant potential for **urban and regional planners** to play a crucial role in designing land-use strategies based on soil health assessments, especially in highly polluted or industrial areas. Collaborative approaches that involve citizens in **living lab discussions** can help design transition schemes for soil recovery.

Depaving and de-impermeabilizing urban spaces is another critical issue in many EU countries. As discussed in the events, this process faces administrative and technical barriers, such as handling materials classified as waste or uncovering pollutants during depaving.

- **Improving Soil Literacy and Citizen Engagement.** Effective communication regarding soil contamination is vital for public trust and transparency, especially when engaging citizens in **land reclamation processes**. Public authorities and environmental agencies should focus on improving **soil literacy**, offering clear, factual information about contamination risks and land use. This can help avoid alarmism while fostering a shared understanding of soil health and its implications.
- **Land Use Optimization and Soil Health.** Not all soil should be reclaimed for agricultural purposes. Urban soils have distinct roles, such as contributing to **climate change mitigation** through **sustainable urban drainage systems** and **sponge city solutions**. Land use optimization should take into account the varying functions soils serve, from permeability in urban areas to ecosystem services like water management and climate resilience.
- **The Role of Different Stakeholders**
 - o **Research and academic stakeholders** played a prominent role in these events, leveraging their strong international connections to initiate project proposals and form consortia. Their transnational orientation makes them ideal intermediaries for cross-border collaborations, but they often struggle to engage with **local actors**, particularly landowners and land managers, who lack familiarity with EU-level projects.
 - o **Public authorities** are essential for fostering partnerships at the regional level, where they manage funding and have direct contact with agricultural stakeholders. **LAGs** should be explored as potential venues for establishing **permanent living labs**.
 - o **Landowners** and **land managers** are more difficult to engage, particularly in the context of opening their land for **living lab initiatives**. New engagement strategies are needed, perhaps mediated by **national and regional authorities**, to encourage their participation in EU projects.

- **Businesses**, particularly those not directly connected to agriculture, tend to disregard soil health as a priority. Future policy development should focus on integrating soil management into mandatory environmental regulations, ensuring that businesses see soil health as an essential component of sustainability.
- **Enhancing Inclusivity and Engagement Mechanisms.** To address the challenges of engaging new and smaller actors, more flexible **funding mechanisms** are needed within EU projects, such as allowing for the **inclusion of local partners** in subsequent phases of project development. The current short timeframes for project proposal preparation often limit the diversity of actors involved, favouring already empowered stakeholders. Offering opportunities for **cascade funding** or staggered partner engagement could enhance inclusivity.
- **Retaining Living Labs as Permanent Infrastructure.** The long-term success of the **Healthy Soil Living Labs** depends on their ability to become permanent fixtures in the regions they serve. This will require the development of business models that combine public and private support, such as **public-private-people partnerships (4P)**. Platforms to facilitate funding opportunities for soil-related projects should be reinforced, and **National Contact Points** should play a more active role as intermediaries, helping to connect local stakeholders with funding mechanisms.
- **Tailored Approaches for Regional Challenges.** Soil-related challenges vary significantly across Europe, with factors like **forestry industry practices, erosion, wildfires, and biodiversity loss** differing by region. **Tailored policies** that address these regional nuances are essential for the success of soil-related projects and the **Mission Soil** as a whole.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Key messages to the Mission Soil

Drawing from two years of hosting transnational events (both NEEs and TEs), several key structural insights have emerged for the Mission Soil:

- **Soil as a New Keyword.** Soil is increasingly recognized as a central theme for engaging a diverse range of stakeholders. It presents opportunities for research collaborations and funding beyond traditional sectors. Leveraging ‘soil’ as a unifying concept can attract more actors to the Mission Soil, fostering broader partnerships across different industries and disciplines.
- **Interpreting “Soil as a Common”.** Framing soil as a shared resource (a "common") has the potential to expand stakeholder engagement beyond traditional sectoral boundaries like agri-food and hard sciences. Currently, social sciences are underrepresented, and there is room to involve a wider array of stakeholders, including those in land use, policy, and environmental governance.

- **Enhancing Soil Literacy.** Soil literacy remains niche, primarily driving interest within hard sciences and the agri-food sector. To broaden its reach, there needs to be more education and training that engages a wider range of stakeholders—from landowners and industries dealing with land reclamation to everyday citizens. This cross-generational, cross-disciplinary education is essential for promoting long-term recognition of soil's importance. Initiatives should also focus on embedding soil literacy in curricula at all levels, particularly in higher education, while fostering interdisciplinary collaboration (see Task 2.3).
- **Relevance of Living Labs in Mobilizing Society.** Living labs have proven to be an effective approach for mobilizing communities around soil health and sustainability. However, for these labs to succeed, they must be officially recognized by society and local governments, well-established, and closely connected to ongoing local activities and businesses. Integrating living labs into existing community structures ensures they can serve as dynamic spaces for experimentation and innovation, helping to engage citizens, local governments, and businesses in developing solutions that address soil challenges at the local level.
- **Differentiating Soil Types and Uses.** Discussions around soil should extend beyond the agri-food sector to include other types of soils, such as urban, industrial, and forestry soils. Urban and regional planners play a vital role in envisioning different land uses and functions based on soil health or pollution levels. Engaging citizens in discussions to design transition schemes for soil recovery and sustainable land use planning is crucial. Such involvement would allow communities to actively participate in decision-making processes related to soil management, fostering a stronger connection to the local environment and its recovery.

5.2 Future Perspectives and Governance challenges for Healthy Soils

- **Collaborative Governance for Healthy Soils.** Looking beyond the lessons learned through NATIOONS events, future efforts should focus on governance mechanisms for living labs at both regional and local levels. Strengthening local networks, such as Local Action Groups (LAGs), could further mobilize local actors and resources, enhancing grassroots engagement with the Mission Soil.
- **The Role of NCPs.** The NCPs can play a critical role in promoting soil-related research and initiatives. Their focus could shift toward enhancing awareness of soil's importance and fostering stakeholder involvement across different sectors.
- **New regulations and Standards for Industry.** Today, only the agri-food industry is sensitive and directly involved in healthy soils challenges. Integrating soil into environmental, social, and governance (ESG) frameworks, along with sustainability reporting, is a crucial next step. Establishing clear regulations and industry standards with measurable indicators will ensure a stronger commitment to soil preservation and restoration, making it a priority for businesses.





In conclusion, these insights highlight the importance of widening engagement, improving education, and enhancing governance in addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with soil. The path forward requires a multi-faceted approach, uniting diverse stakeholders around a shared commitment to soil health, sustainability, and recovery across different types of soil and land use.





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