

# The evolution of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups – current challenges and opportunities

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**Online event ‘The future of EIP-AGRI Operational Groups: challenges, opportunities and existing support services’**  
14 May 2025



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## Structure of the presentation

- › The EU CAP Network - Support Facility for Innovation & Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI
- › EIP-AGRI and Operational Group projects in the CAP
- › Current challenges and opportunities

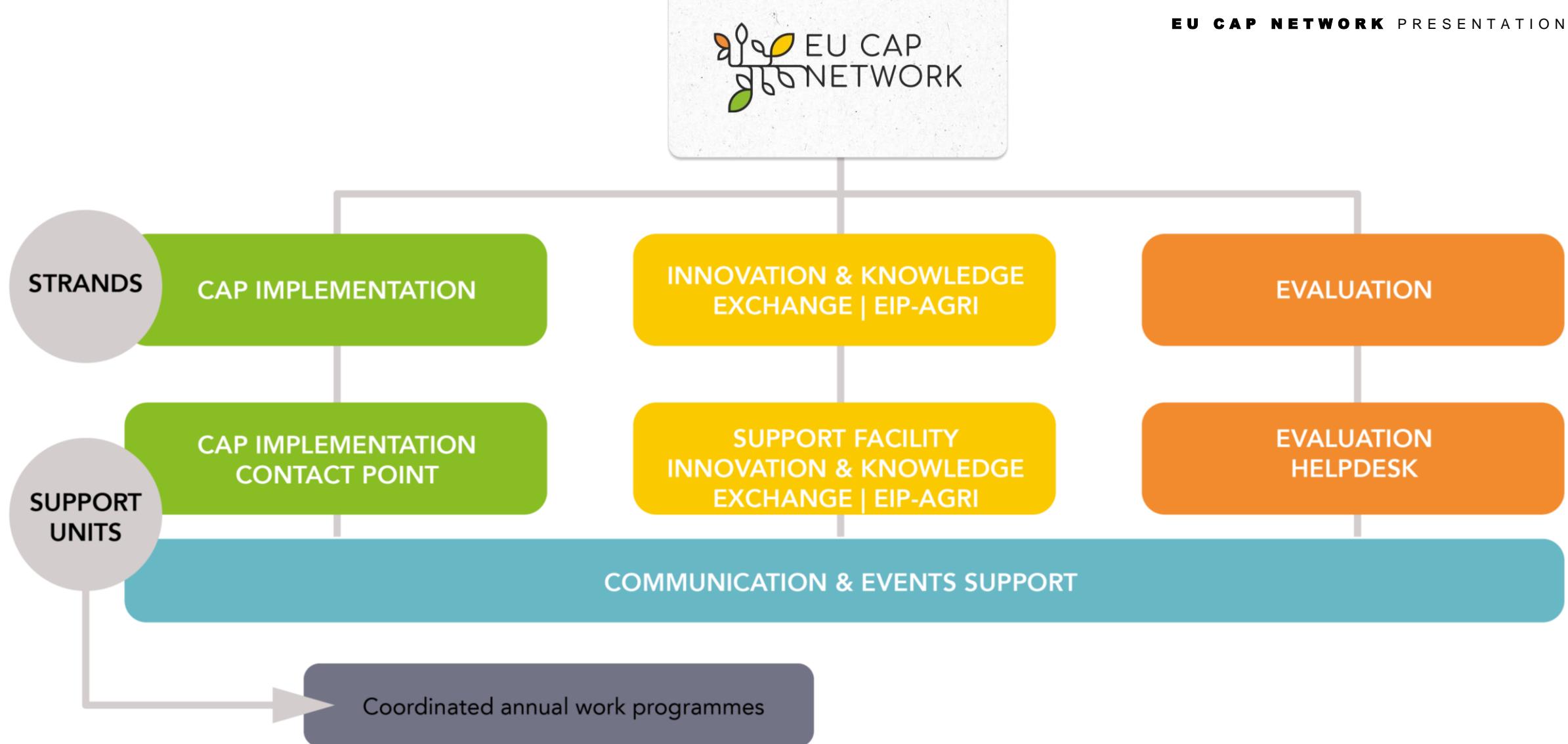




# EU CAP Network - Support Facility for Innovation & Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI



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Innovation & Knowledge  
exchange – EIP-AGRI

*Support Facility for Innovation &  
Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI*

Evaluation

*Evaluation Helpdesk*

Communication  
& Event Support

CAP Implementation

*CAP Implementation Contact Point*





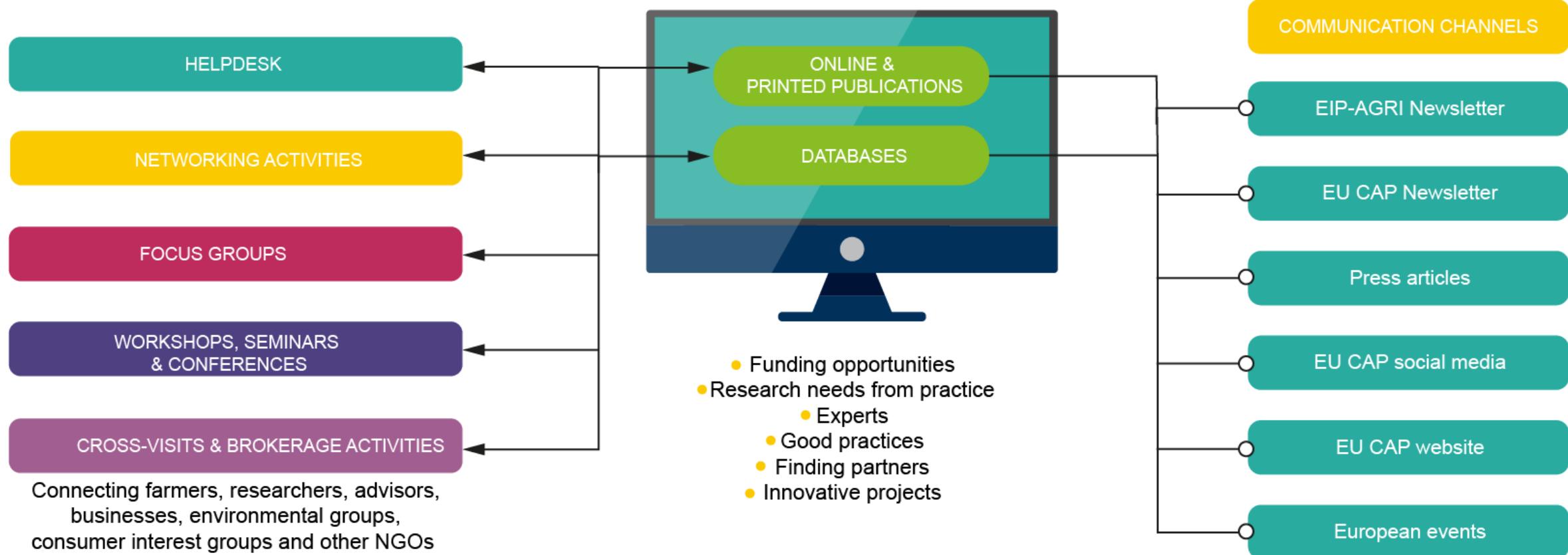
# Support Facility for Innovation and Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI

## NETWORKING OBJECTIVES (Regulation (EU) No 2021/2115 of 2 December 2021, Art. 126, 3.):

- › Involving
- › Accompanying
- › Improvement
- › Information
- › **Foster innovation in agriculture and rural development, support peer-to-peer learning and the inclusion of, and the interaction between, all stakeholders in the knowledge-exchange and knowledge building process**
- › Monitoring and evaluation
- › Dissemination



# Support Facility Innovation and Knowledge exchange | EIP-AGRI: services





A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a branch of olives. The hands are positioned to showcase the olives and leaves. The lighting is warm, creating a golden glow on the left side of the image. The background is blurred, focusing on the hands and the branch.

# EIP-AGRI and Operational Group projects



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## EIP-AGRI basic principles (as before)

- › EIP-AGRI was launched by the European Commission in 2012
- › Aim: stimulate innovation and improve the exchange of knowledge
- › Approach: closing the gap between research and practice by using the interactive innovation model
- › EIP-AGRI brings together the CAP and Horizon Programmes
- › EIP-AGRI is based on the **interactive innovation model** – key principles:
  - › Develop innovative solutions focusing on the needs of farmers, foresters and rural entrepreneurs (bottom-up)
  - › Bring together partners with complementary knowledge
  - › Project partners co-decide and co-create all along the project



# Current CAP Regulation

REGULATION (EU) 2021/2115 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, of 2 December 2021

- › Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System - AKIS
- › Strong focus on farm advisory services – support, requirements and new roles in particular for innovation support (preparing and implementing OGs)  
Key for the uptake of innovative solutions by farmers, foresters and other practice actors in rural areas
- › Objectives and tasks of EU and National CAP Networks
  - › Tasks include the collection of information and facilitation of its dissemination as well as networking of funded projects, as well as the support for cooperation projects between OGs, including transnational cooperation
- › Simplification strongly encouraged – it should be subject to specific attention in CAP Strategic Plans





# EIP-AGRI in the current CAP Regulation

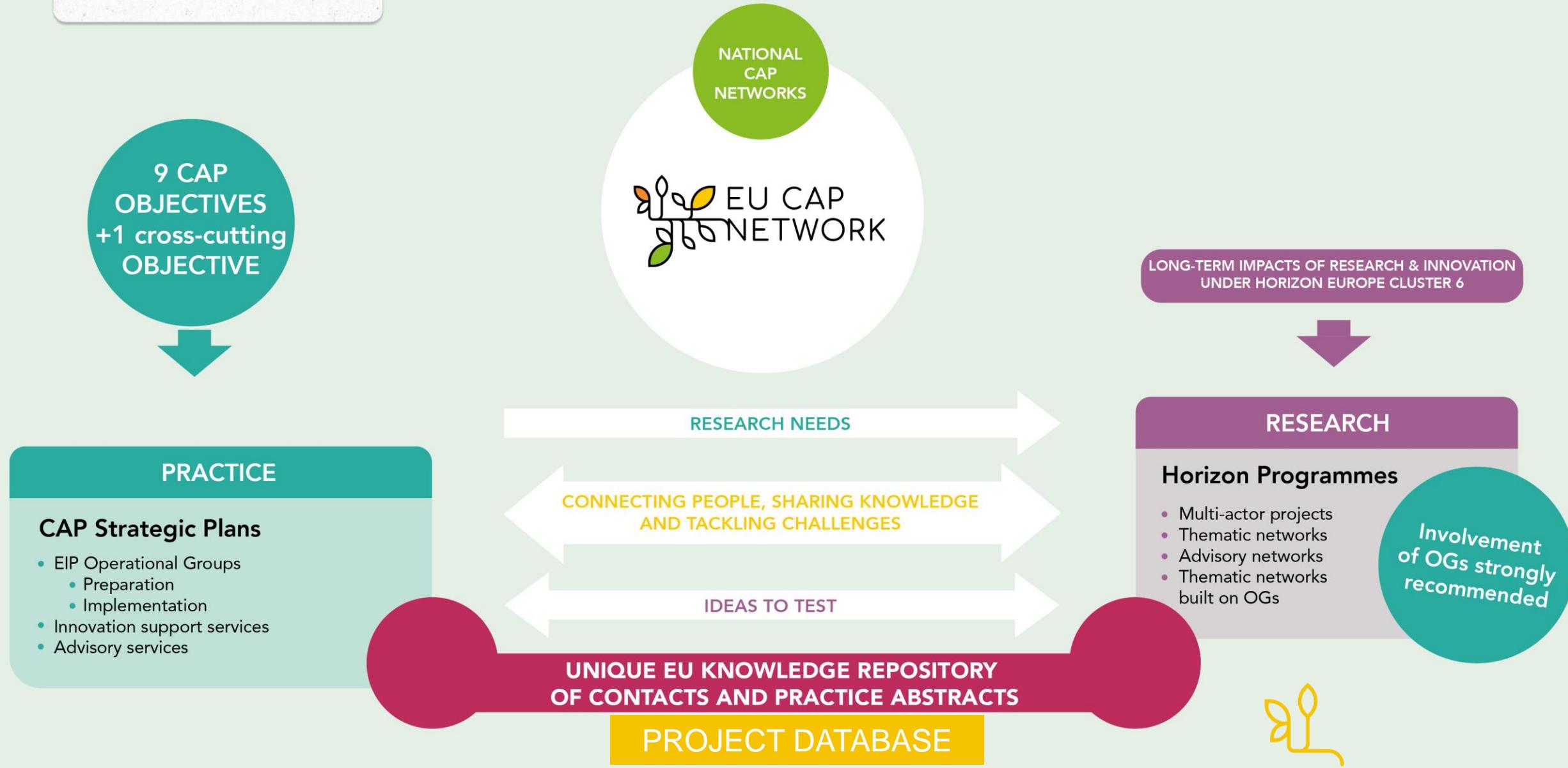
REGULATION (EU) 2021/2115 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, of 2 December 2021

## Article 127 - European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability

- › EIP-AGRI supports the AKIS
- › EIP-AGRI contributes to achieving all CAP specific and cross-cutting objectives
- › EIP-AGRI shall in particular:
  - › create added value by better linking research and farming practice and encouraging the wider use of available innovation measures;
  - › connect innovation actors and projects;
  - › promote the faster and wider transposition of innovative solutions into practice, including farmer-to-farmer exchange;
  - › inform the scientific community about the research needs of farming practice.



# EIP-AGRI bridging practice and research



# EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects (OGs) in the current CAP Regulation

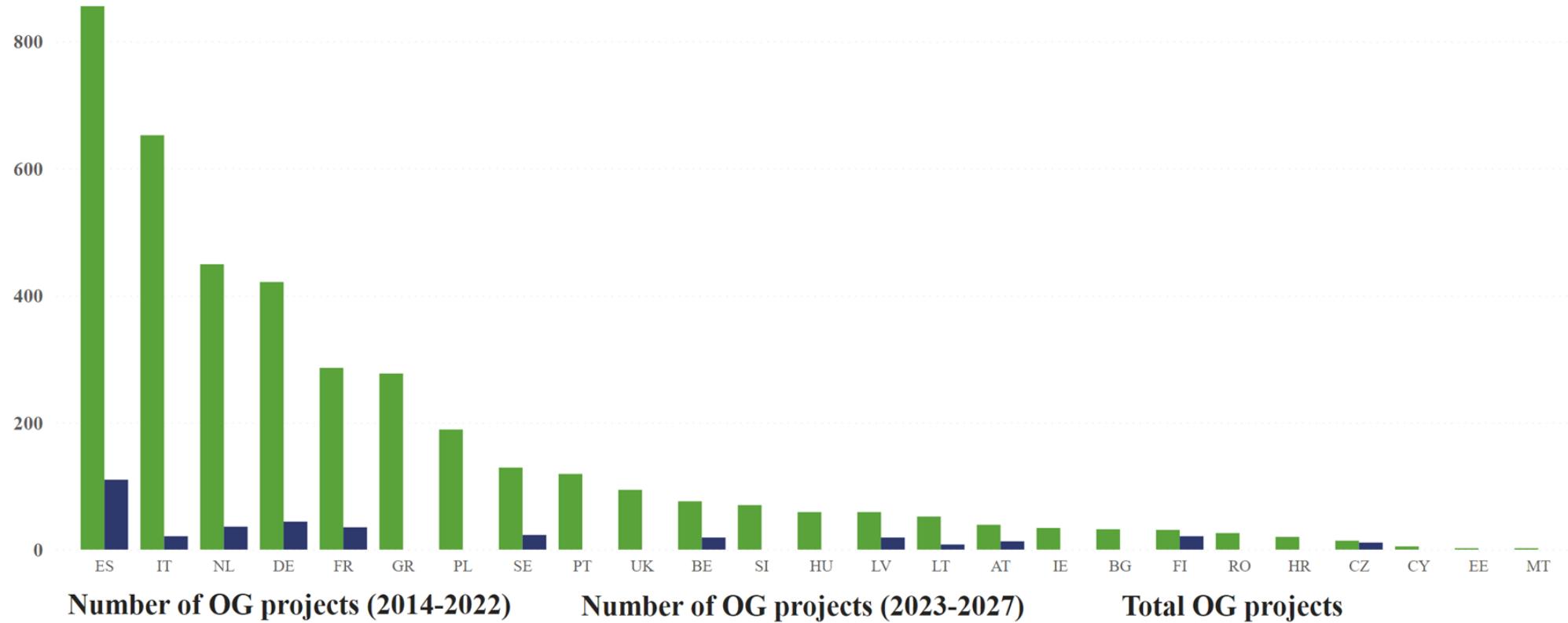
## Article 127 - European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability

- › EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects (OGs) are part of the EIP-AGRI and so they are based on the interactive innovation model
- › OGs may act at transnational, including cross-border, level
- › Innovations may be based on new practices, but also on traditional practices in a new geographical or environmental context
- › OGs shall disseminate a summary of their plans and of the results of their projects - in particular through national and European CAP Networks



# OG projects – state of play

Number of OG projects per Member State (both periods)



3,992

360

4,352

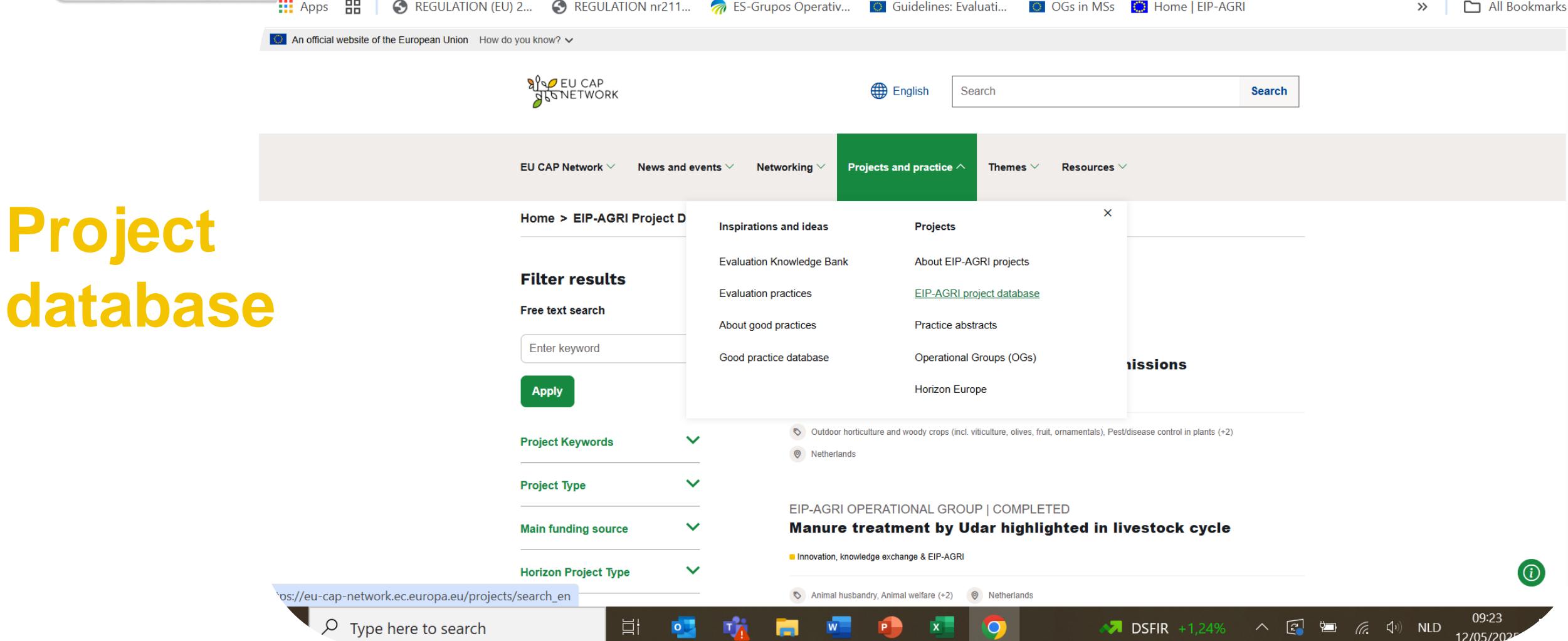
Source: DG AGRI –  
05 May 2025

# OG projects – themes

## Keywords (both programming periods)



Source: DG AGRI  
– 05 May 2025



Access here: [https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/projects\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/projects_en)





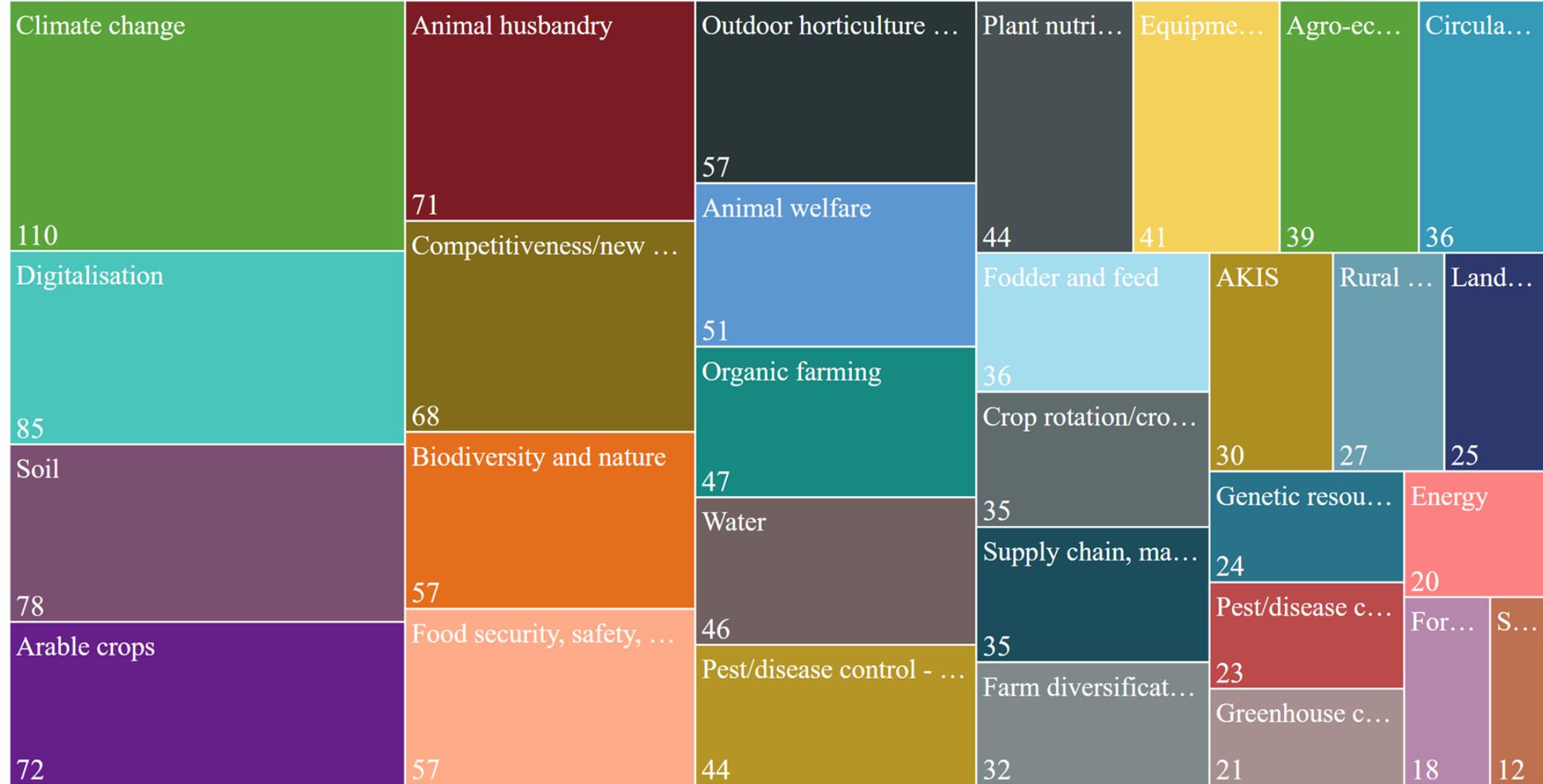
# Current challenges and opportunities



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# Broader scope of EIP-AGRI: an opportunity

**OG  
projects  
per theme  
(2023-2027)**



Source: DG AGRI –  
05 May 2025

# Study on outcomes achieved by EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects under the CAP

- Three study questions** mirroring the objectives
- Two levels of analysis:** EU27 & case studies
- OG survey:** 989 responses / 768 OG projects
- Innovation Stakeholders survey:** 233 responses
- 15 case study OG projects:** AT, BG, DE, ES, FR, IE, IT, LT, NL, PL, PT, SE
- Secondary data:** documentary research + EU and national databases



From September  
2023 to June 2024

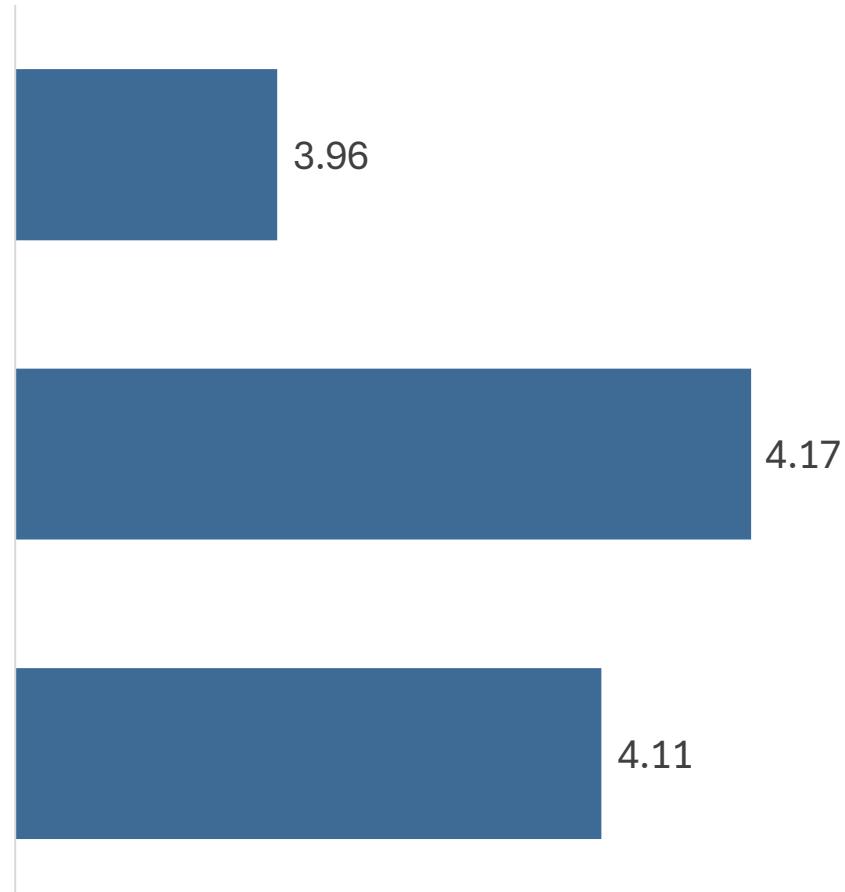
Access here: [https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/study-outcomes-achieved-eip-agri-operational-group-projects-under-cap\\_en](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/publications/study-outcomes-achieved-eip-agri-operational-group-projects-under-cap_en)



# Study on outcomes achieved by EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects under the CAP

## High potential for transferability and upscaling of OG innovative solutions

The OG project results can be transferred from one context (country, sector, etc.) and implemented in another



Q1 - To what extent have EIP OG projects produced the expected outcomes: achievement of project outcomes, wider uptake of innovation, community outcomes?

The OG project results can be implemented at a larger scale

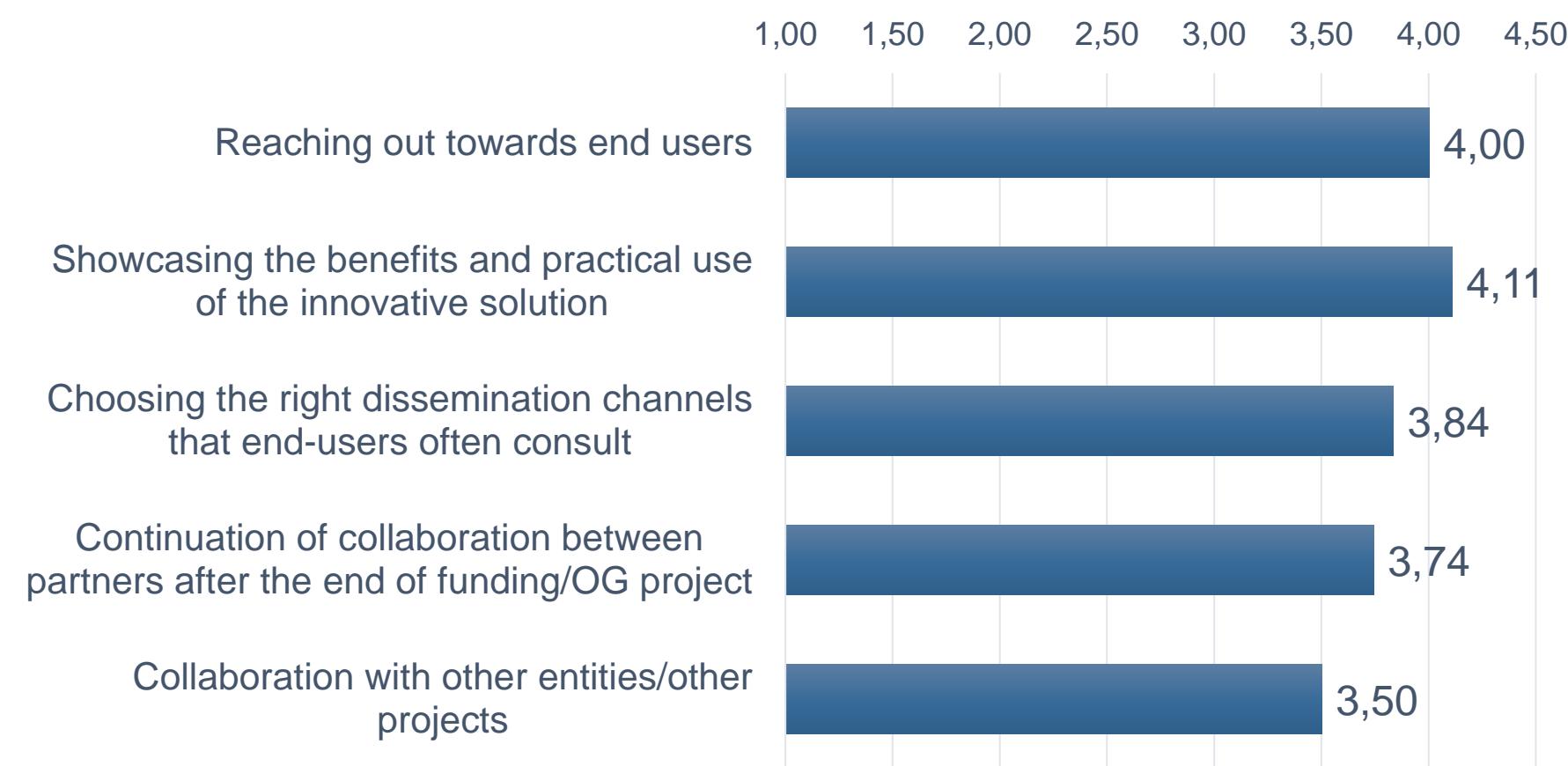
The OG project results have created new opportunities (e.g. through improved quality, product diversification/differentiation, adapting to changing market demand, innovation in packaging, logistics and processing, improving...

**Transposition  
of innovative  
solutions**  
-  
**High potential**



# Study on outcomes achieved by EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects under the CAP

**Reaching out to end users and showcasing benefits are key factors facilitating successful spreading of innovative solutions**



Q.2.1 - What are the main drivers and barriers to the successful co-creation of innovative solutions and to the possibility of scaling-up of EIP-OG project outcomes?

## Dissemination of OG results



Source: OG survey  
Values on a scale 1=not at all to 5=to a very large extent

# Study on outcomes achieved by EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects under the CAP



Q.2.2 - To what extent have communication and dissemination activities contributed to spreading OG project outcomes?

## Case studies:

- Importance of **active communication throughout project life cycle and beyond**;
- **Combination of communication channels** often a winning factor;
- Importance of **personal coaching and advice**.

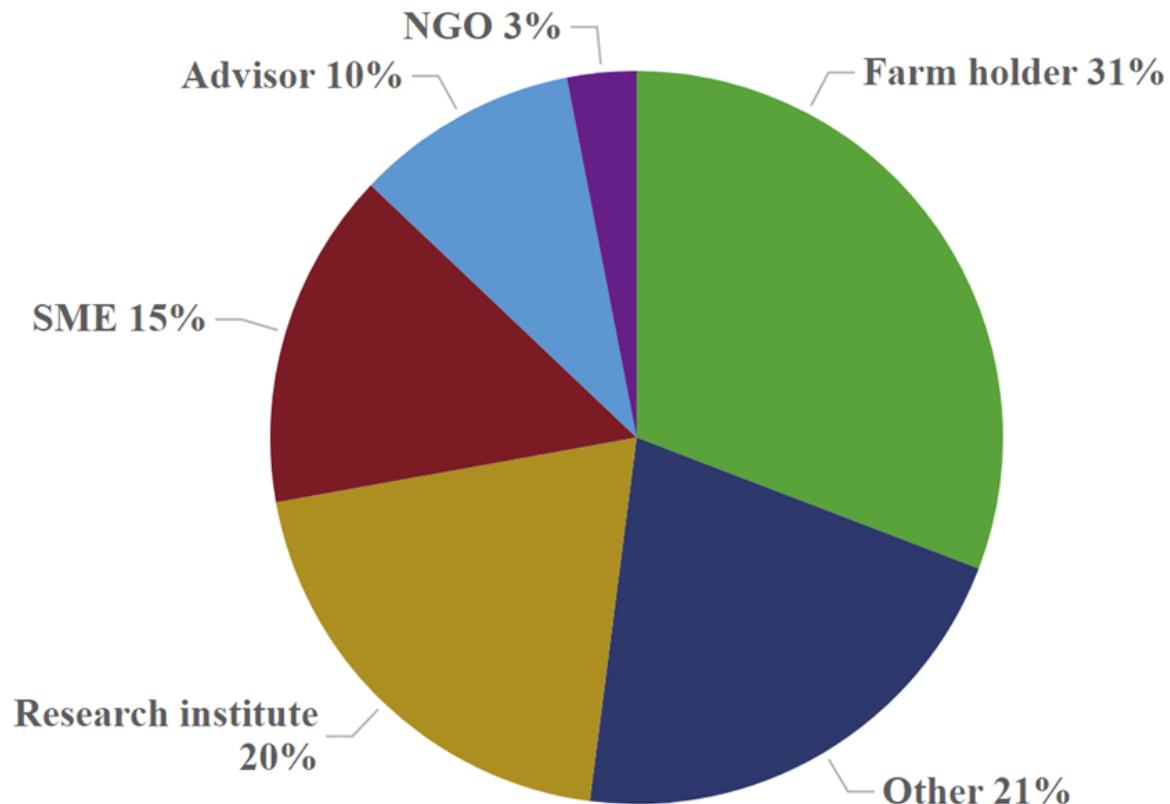
Source: OG survey

Values on a scale 1=No contribution, 2=Very little contribution, 3=Some contribution, 4=Very high contribution



# Disseminate OG results – practitioners as partners

## Types of partners in OG projects (2014-2022)

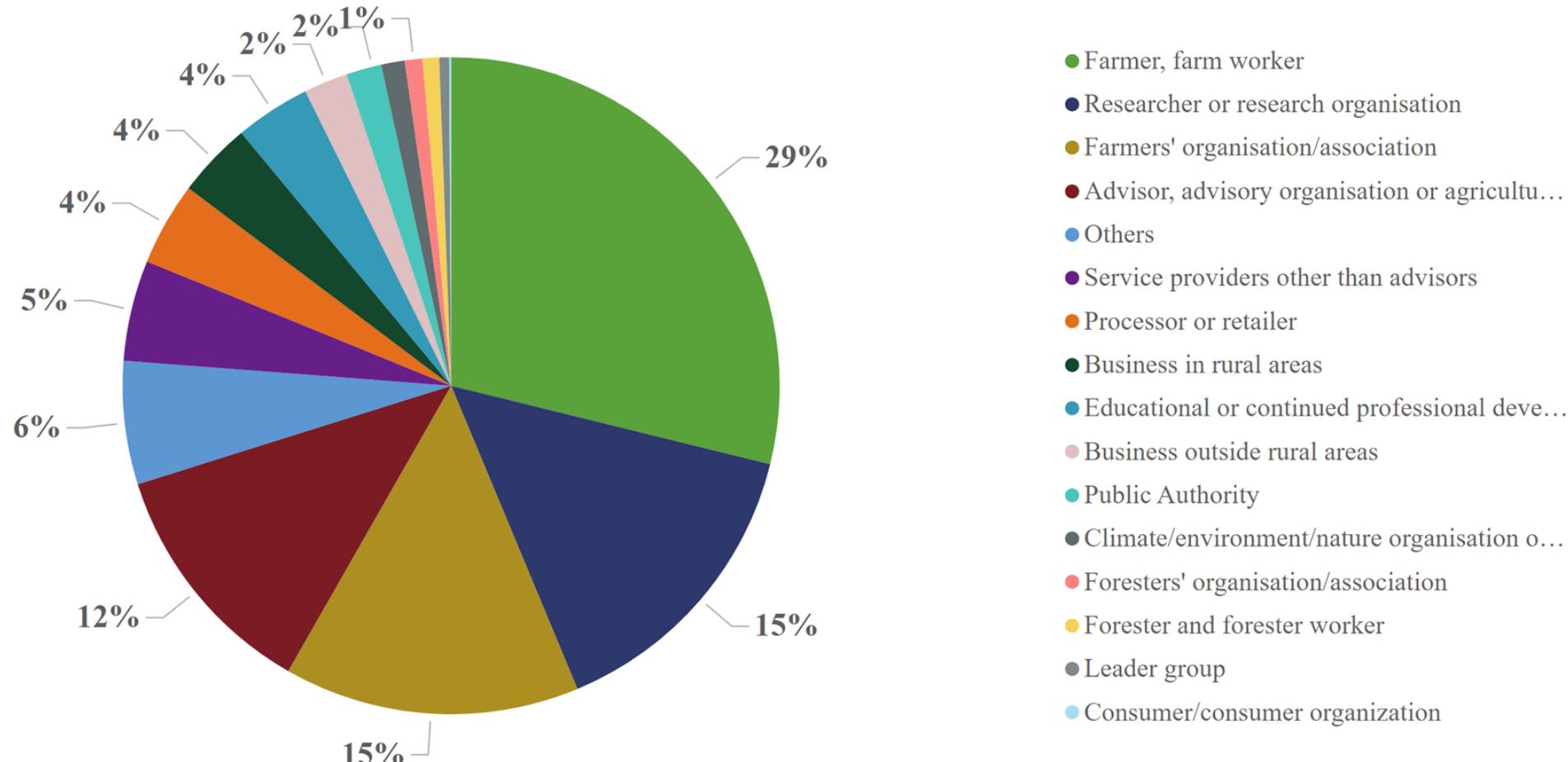


Farmers, foresters and advisors in the partnership – key channels for dissemination towards other practitioners



# Disseminate OG results – practitioners as partners

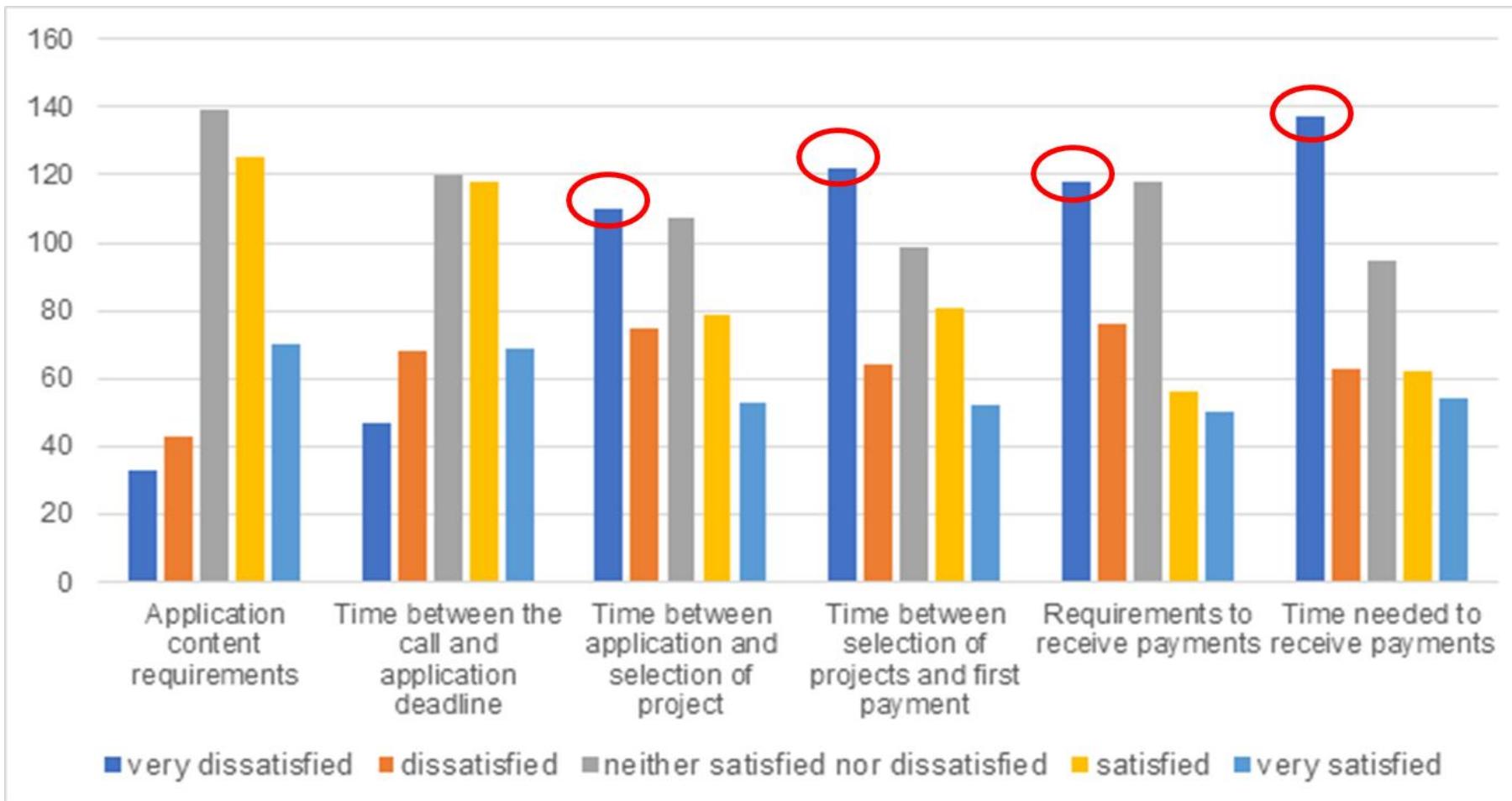
## Types of partners in OG projects (2023-2027)



Source: DG AGRI –  
05 May 2025

# Study on outcomes achieved by EIP-AGRI Operational Group projects under the CAP

**OGs are not very satisfied with certain administrative aspects**



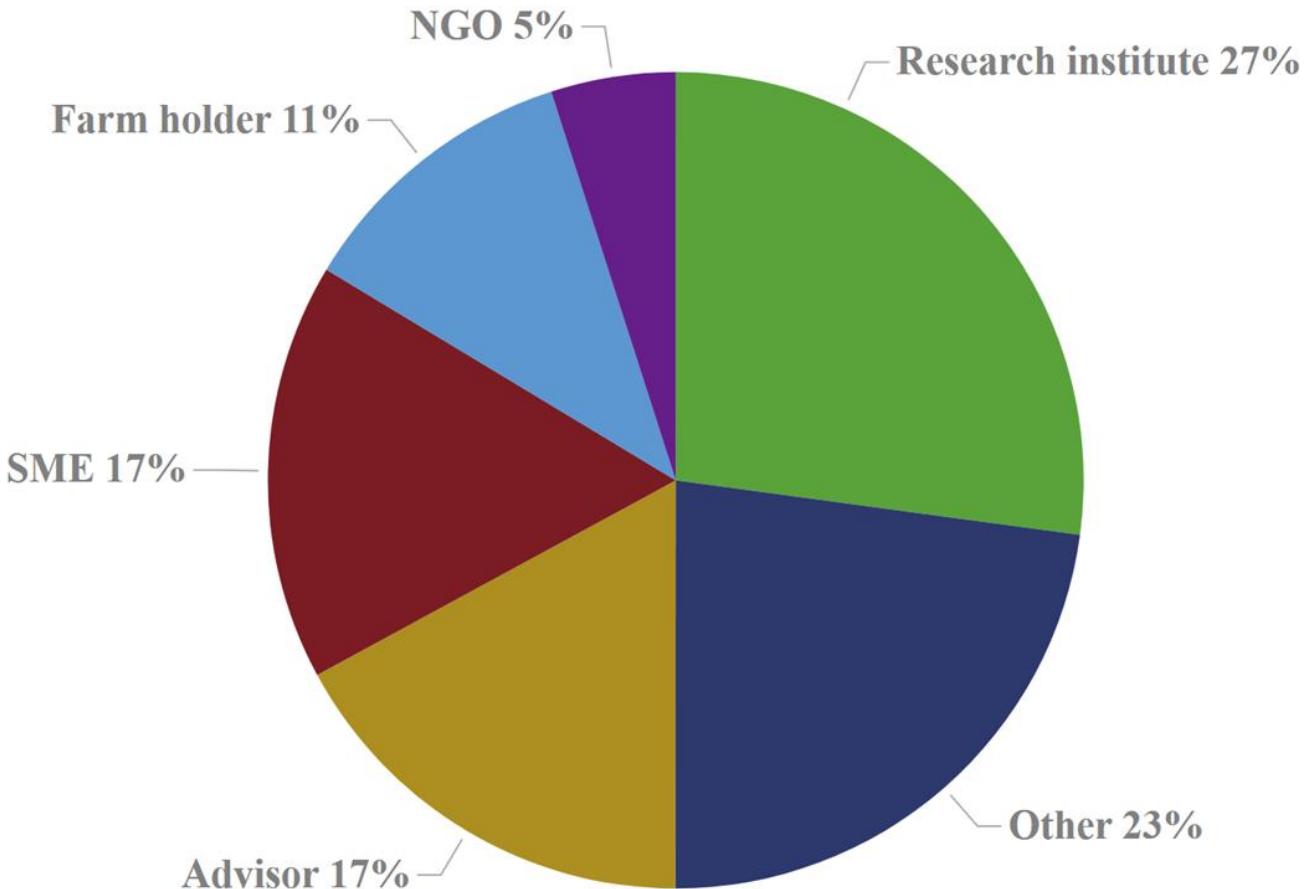
**Administrative aspects – still a challenge?**

Source: OG survey (No. responses)



# Administrative challenges – lead partner?

Lead partners profile in OG projects (2014-2022)

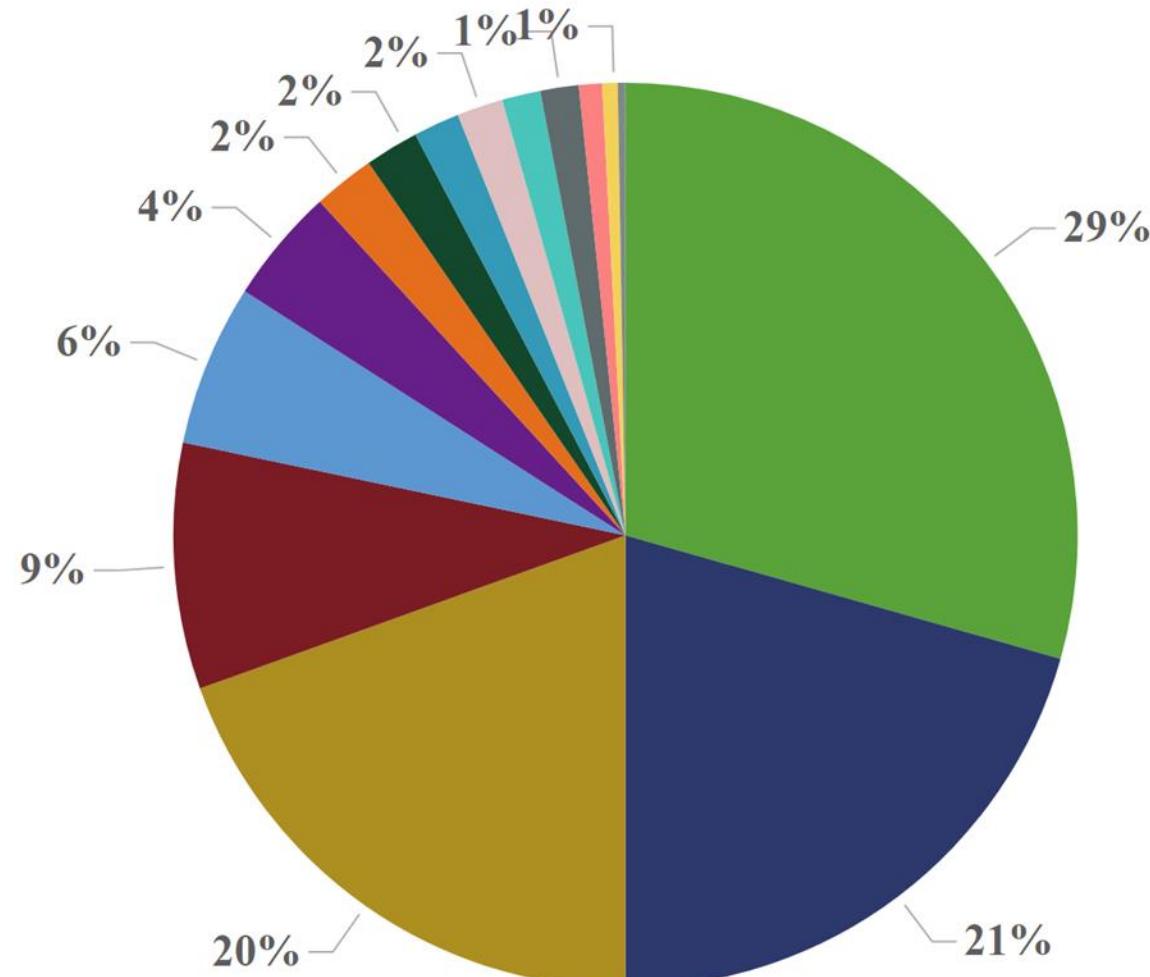


Source: DG AGRI – 05 May 2025

# Administrative challenges – lead partner?

## Lead Partners in OG by category (20230-2027)

Source: DG AGRI – 05 May 2025



- Researcher or research organisation
- Farmers' organisation/association
- Advisor, advisory organisation or agri...
- Farmer, farm worker
- Educational or continued professional ...
- Others
- Service providers other than advisors
- Processor or retailer
- Business in rural areas
- Leader group
- Business outside rural areas
- Foresters' organisation/association
- Public Authority
- Climate/environment/nature organisati...
- Forester and forester worker
- Consumer/consumer organization

## How to achieve...?

- › OGs are fully-fledged EIP-AGRI projects (following the key principles of the interactive innovation model): strengthened support for preparation of applications, well-designed calls and robust implementation
- › Promote the faster and wider transposition of innovative solutions into practice (within and beyond borders)
  - › OG partnership composition + involvement of all partners at all project stages + ensure practitioners with an active role in partnerships
  - › Showcase the benefits and practical use of innovations, reaching out to practitioners
  - › Dedicated events, publications, on-farm demonstrations, and other dissemination tools involving interaction and peer-to-peer communication
  - › Effective communication and dissemination combining different tools and the right channels; the role of Horizon Thematic networks
  - › Transnational networking and collaboration
- › Ensure support is provided by the relevant actors (MAs, advisors, ISS, brokers, CAP networks) at different stages of OG projects



# Transnational and cross-border OGs

- ❖ CAP 2023-2027 - Member States implementing EIP-AGRI OG intervention can create transnational/cross-border OGs with another country/region and pay some costs while the other(s) cover other costs
- ❖ No transnational OGs yet, but:
  - Few examples of OGs with an expert / partner from another country or region
  - Example of Wallonian OGs that have partners in LU financed by national funding
- ❖ Setting up transnational and cross-border OGs – SolKE\* members (4th meeting, October 2023) identified the following challenges:
  - › Collaboration between Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies from different countries, with distinct administrative procedures and legislation
  - › Sharing project costs between different countries / regions
  - › Countries or regions having different timings for OG calls
  - › Difficulties in finding relevant partners in other countries
  - › Project partners speaking different languages

\*SolKE – Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange



## Transnational and cross-border OGs

Setting up transnational and cross-border OGs – SolKE\* members identified the following solutions for the challenges (4th meeting, October 2023):

- › Start with small steps: one single call involving two / very few Member States (MSs)
- › MSs open calls on regular basis
- › Strong cooperation between National CAP Networks (e.g., to identify topics for calls)
- › Existing networks and other structures of cooperation initiate the process (e.g., cooperation in Baltic region)
- › To help find partners across borders, create or use (existing) platforms to help find partners across borders by sharing needs from practice and project ideas across MSs

\*SolKE – Subgroup on Innovation and Knowledge Exchange



# Transnational and cross-border OGs: workshop on national networking for innovation and knowledge transfer (Reims, France, Jan 2025)

Based on solutions for existing challenges in setting up transnational including cross-border OGs identified by SolKE members (on its 4th meeting), workshop participants further elaborated on them and shared several ideas, such as:

- › Managing Authorities look for strategical peers and start with a pilot (small) initiative making use of national /regional funding
- › Paying Agencies share OG costs, paying for partners from their own country
- › National CAP Networks organise matchmaking events before calls and create a digital platform to share & match project ideas
- › Use existing networks and organise thematic networking online events to collect project ideas / identify partners
- › Thematic networks prepare short doc with info on how they can support TN OGs



# Summary - opportunities and challenges

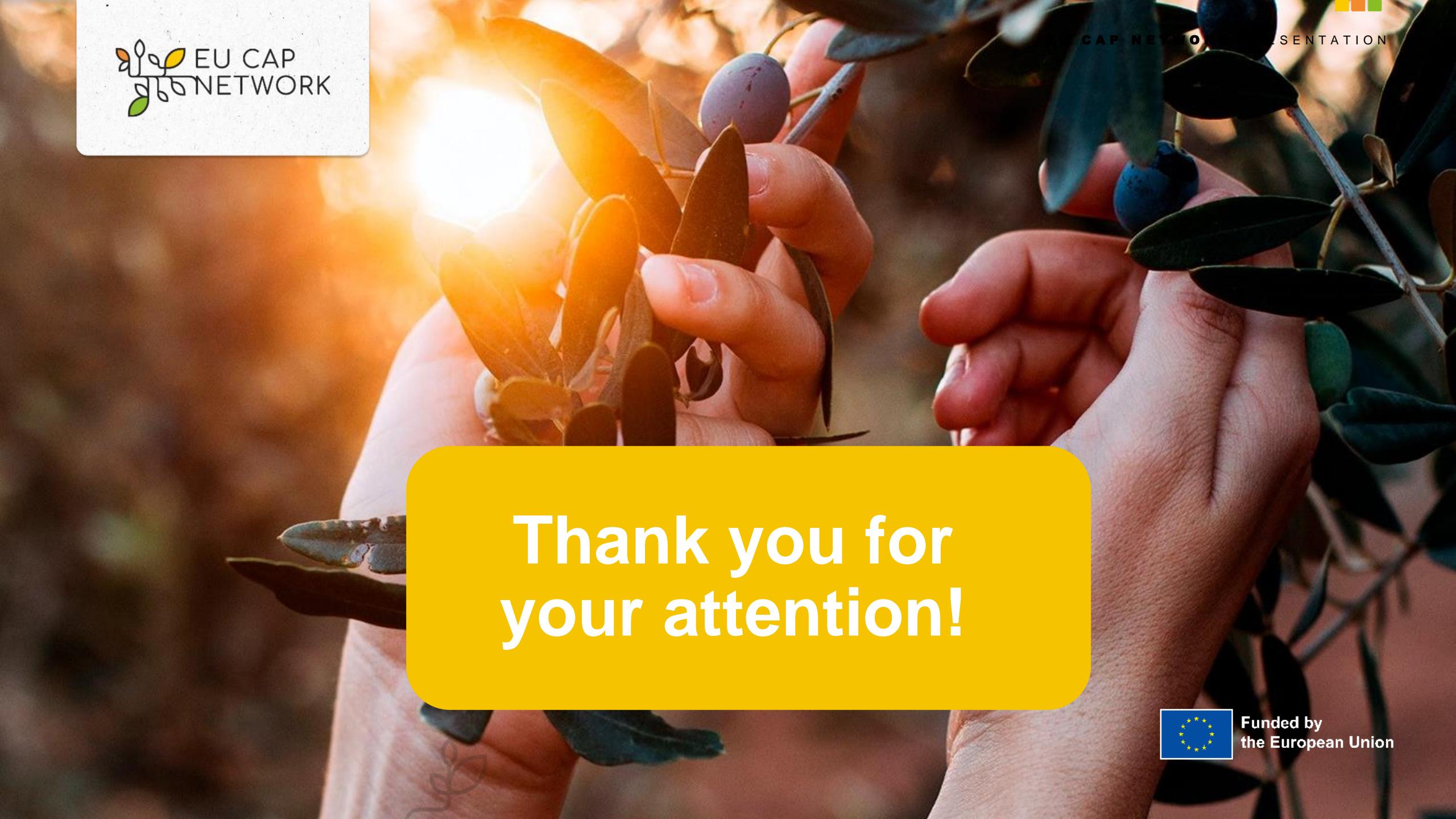
## Challenges

- › Dissemination and uptake by practice of OG solutions
- › Organisation of transnational and cross-border OGs – administrative and legal issues, organisation of calls, finding partners
- › Administrative burden for final beneficiaries (partners in OGs)

## Opportunities

- › Existing experience from previous CAP programming period
- › Amount of already existing OG solutions with potential for transferability and upscaling
- › Broader scope of EIP-AGRI
- › New roles for advisors
- › Involvement of practitioners as partners in OGs
- › Supportive ecosystem, including EU and CAP networks, AKIS CBs, Horizon Thematic networks, advisors, ISSs, etc.
- › Possibility to organise transnational and cross-border OGs
- › Simplification is subject to specific attention in the CAP Strategic Plans – Member States examples applying simplified procedures (e.g., SCO, etc.)





A close-up photograph of hands harvesting olives from a tree. The hands are shown in profile, reaching towards the right side of the frame. The background is blurred, showing more of the olive tree and the warm, golden light of sunset or sunrise. The olives are a mix of green and ripe black ones.

Thank you for  
your attention!



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