



**TRANSFORMATION SCENARIOS FOR BOOSTING  
ORGANIC FARMING AND ORGANIC AQUACULTURE  
TOWARDS THE FARM-TO-FORK TARGETS**

## **Deliverable D6.1**

**CORE Organic Pleiades network roadmap to  
2030 and EU-level recommendations for better  
alignment of transnational R&I investments**

Document, report/Public

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## Contents

.....	1
<b>Figures</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>History of Changes</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>List of acronyms</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1. CORE Organic Pleiades Network Roadmap 2030</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1. Background .....	7
1.2. Interstellar Tracker .....	8
1.2.1. Revision of the Interstellar Tracker .....	8
1.3. Action Plan 2025-2026 .....	11
<b>2. CORE Organic Pleiades Network Partners</b> .....	<b>15</b>
2.1. List of partners in the CORE Organic Pleiades network .....	15
2.2. Barriers to widening the network .....	17
<b>3. Obstacles to transnationally coordinated research and innovation investments</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>4. Recommendations for better aligning transnational cooperation and R&amp;I investments</b>	<b>21</b>

## Figures

Figure 1 Interstellar Tracker .....	10
Figure 2 CORE Organic Pleiades Network Action Plan 2025-2026 .....	12
Figure 3 CORE Organic Pleiades partners .....	15
Figure 4 Identified barriers to participating in the CORE Organic Pleiades network .....	18
Figure 5 Overview of main structural, funding, and procedural obstacles to transnationally coordinated R&I investments .....	19



## Summary

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## History of Changes

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<b>VERSION 0.2</b>	11/02/2025	Boglarka Bozsogi (IFOAM Organics Europe)	Revisions
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<b>VERSION 0.4</b>	24/02/2025	Boglarka Bozsogi (IFOAM Organics Europe)	Finalisation
<b>VERSION 1</b>	28/02/2025	Ambra De Simone (IFOAM Organics Europe)	Submission



## List of acronyms

CO: CORE Organic network

EC: European Commission

EFTA: European Free Trade Association is an intergovernmental organisation among Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland

ERA-NET: European Commission's European Research Area Network

EUPAHW: European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare

F2F: Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy, and environmentally friendly food system (European Green Deal)

GEH: Coordination Support Action Green ERA Hub

HEU Partnerships: Horizon Europe Partnerships

MS: EU Member States

OAP: National Organic Action Plan

OFF: Organic food and farming

R&I: Research and innovation

SCAR SWGs: Standing Committee on Agricultural Research forming thematic Strategic Working Groups

SRIA: Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda

TP Organics: European Technology Platform (ETP) for research & innovation into organics and agroecology



## Executive Summary

The present document reflects an important turning point in the work of CORE Organic Pleiades Network (CO) that is a continuation of previous four network programme periods implemented under the European Commission's European Research Area Network (ERA-NET) funding scheme since 2004. Two decades of active transnational cooperation among European ministries and research councils resulted in 8 joint transnational research calls, totalling EUR 61.9 million for organic food and farming research projects. Following the EC decision to end the ERA-NET funding scheme under the Horizon Europe R&I Framework Programme, the CORE Organic (CO) network partners developed further coordination and networking activities as a part of the OrganicTargets4EU project. Under the Green Deal organic targets, the CO network objective is to maintain policy exchange and ensure specific focus on transnational coordination for organic food and farming research at the European level and beyond. Based on this CO network objective, in the present deliverable, we have included the *CORE Organic Pleiades Network Roadmap to 2030* with an *Action Plan 2025-2026*, the list of committed network members, and at last national, regional, and EU-level recommendations for better alignment of transnational cooperation and R&I investments.



# 1. CORE Organic Pleiades Network Roadmap 2030

CORE Organic (CO) is a European network of ministries and research councils that has existed since 2004 and has launched 8 transnational research calls, totalling EUR 61.9 million.

The present CO network called CORE Organic Pleiades Network is a continuation of previous four network programme periods that were implemented under the European Commission's European Research Area Network (ERA-NET) funding scheme since 2004. CO Pleiades is primarily a funders' network aiming to ensure transnational coordination supporting organic food and farming research at the European level and beyond. The network welcomes stakeholders and research partners with complementary expertise.

During the current network period, CO Pleiades is focused on increasing research and innovation (R&I) funding to support the European Green Deal's targets for organic food, farming, and aquaculture. The network is implemented under the OrganicTargets4EU Horizon Europe project and serves as a platform for policy exchange and supports network partners in the preparation of new Horizon Europe funding instruments relevant to organics. CORE Organic Pleiades has 43 partners across 27 countries and regions. More information about the network can be found at the [CORE Organic Pleiades network website](#).

The current objectives of the network are to:

- Expand and strengthen the network to include all EU Member States in CORE Organic and thereby strengthen coordination of R&I investments in the international organic sector,
- Align national and regional regulations and structures for more efficient R&I investments in the organic sector to ensure more efficient regulations in transnational call mechanisms,
- Support transnational calls funded by the CORE Organic Pleiades network partners that support transnational organic research—ideally as a part of the future European Partnerships, as for instance AGROECOLOGY and FutureFoodS.

## 1.1. Background

EU Member States (MS) have financially supported organic food and farming since the 1990s and have collaborated transnationally under the European Research Area Networks (ERA-NET) scheme since its introduction in 2002. Most of the MSs have published official national organic action plans (OAPs) that include research related provisions guiding national efforts to further develop and support the organic sector.

The launch of the *CORE Organic Roadmap to 2030* coincided with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CO network. It is a visionary document supported by the second revised operational Action Plan covering the period 2025-2026. The Roadmap combines inputs from the 43 partners who were present at the CORE Organic Annual Workshop held in October 2023 in Brussels, Belgium. The document was revised in 2024 and 2025.

During the CORE Organic Annual Workshop 2023, the partners collaborated on identifying thematic challenges based on their respective national or regional OAPs and ultimately creating a joint platform for their policy exchange relevant for transnational research funding engagements.

The workshop focused on identifying and clustering research priorities from national or regional OAPs to find overlaps, research gaps, and short and long-term synergies. The partners further engaged in a workshop on research gaps and institutional implications, which aimed to identify legal and procedural barriers to organic R&I and mitigation measures. The scope of these two workshop sessions was broad. They served as a tool to map the wider landscape and context in which the CO network is operating and resulted in two operational documents described in the following sections. The Roadmap 2023 and Action Plan 2025-2026 can also be found on the [CORE Organic Pleiades website](#). Most of the content is included in this section of the deliverable.

## 1.2. Interstellar Tracker

The findings from the CO Annual Workshop 2023 have been integrated into a visual tool, the so-called 'Interstellar Tracker' (**Figure 2**Figure 1), to ease the comparison of priorities across partners' national or regional contexts. The inspiration for the name of this visual tool originates from the name of the CO Pleiades network itself, which refers to the Pleiades star constellation, used from ancient times both by farmers for seasonal organisation of agricultural work and by sailors to navigate at sea.

The overall common research priorities identified in the OAPs were:

- Co-creating foundations for knowledge exchange and research capacity building;
- Identifying thematic research challenges;
- Facing the three transitions: timeframe – intensity – territoriality nexus;
- Broadening partnerships.

Despite the overall priorities receiving frequent mention in several OAPs, the OAPs revealed various interpretations and views on the identified priorities. For further clarification, sub-priorities have been added and allocated to countries, allowing for specific identification and comparison of national and regional priorities.

The sub-priorities related to “Co-creating foundations for knowledge exchange and research capacity building” were not allocated to specific countries as this priority is overarching and the sub-categories can be considered approaches that are used by all the highlighted countries/regions in the figure.

### 1.2.1. Revision of the Interstellar Tracker

The Interstellar tracker was revised with inputs from OrganicTargets4EU research partners in 2024 following the third project meeting on 18 September 2024. The inputs led to the suggestions on the following additions of new categories in the Interstellar tracker:





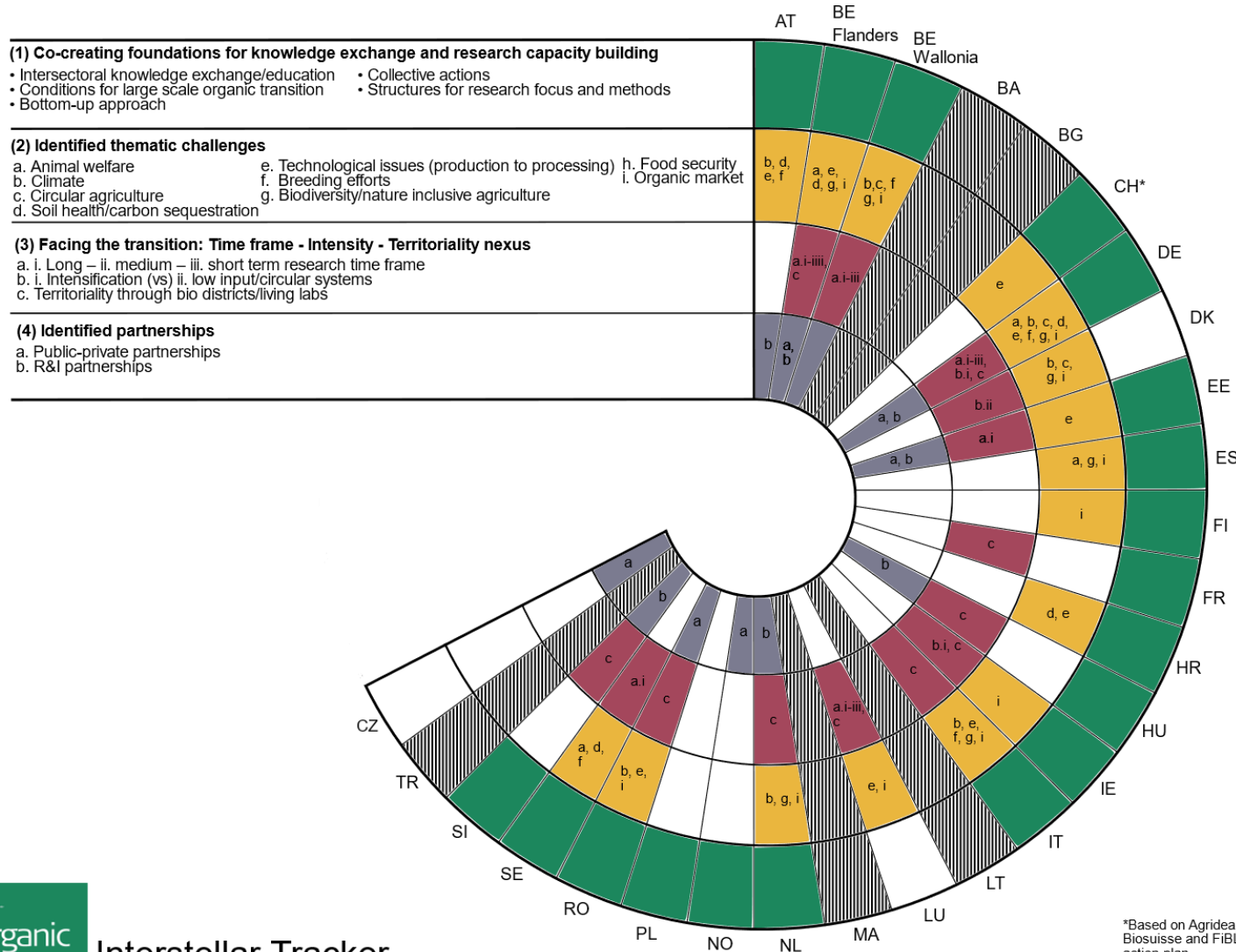
- Section (1) Co-creating foundations for knowledge exchange and research capacity building: Involvement in policymaking, and Reliability on data in farming and agriculture.
- Section (2) Identified additional thematic challenges: j. Value chain/business models linking consumer and producer, k. Organic policy-oriented research, l. Digital solutions/ technologies tailored for organics, m. Health, and n. Water management.

These additions were sent out as a part of consultation process to all partners in the CO network in early 2025 and were addressed and discussed at a CO Pleiades Network on-line Exchange meeting on 19 February 2025. The network partners have decided to continue with more in-depth discussions and final decisions at the extraordinary Governing Board meeting scheduled during spring 2025 and in the present deliverable keep the original Interstellar Tracker categories.

The Interstellar Tracker was thus only revised by updating the mapping of categories in case of new or revised national Organic Action Plans, which led to revisions from Flanders, Belgium, Germany, and Estonia. All national Organic Actions Plans can be found at the [CO website](#).

Figure 1 Interstellar Tracker

The interstellar tracker is based on the contents of the national and regional organic action plans (OAP). Colours and letters indicate that the specific theme was identified in the national OAP of each country. A blank field indicates that the theme was not identified in the AOP. Grey shaded fields indicate that the country does not have an OAP.



CORE Organic Pleiades Roadmap 2030  
National Organic Action Plans

\*Based on Agridea, Biosuisse and FiBL action plan



## 1.3.Action Plan 2025-2026

### ***Implementation activities***

The CORE Organic Pleiades network offers coordination and activities that align with and address the priorities identified in the OAPs. The CORE Organic Pleiades network will:

- Involve new participants in CORE Organic Pleiades (e.g., European funding bodies and policymakers on national and regional levels, public funders funding industries, and thereby expand the reach of the network);
- Improve coordination and increase support of R&I related to organic food and farming of high relevance;
- Establish a partly self-sustained CORE Organic network to explore the continuation of the network.

Figure 2 CORE Organic Pleiades Network Action Plan 2025-2026

No.	ACTIVITY (WORKING AREAS)	OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES/ RESULTS (SHORT-/MEDIUM-TERM)	KPIs RELATED TO THE OUTCOMES/ RESULTS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPACTS (LONG TERM)
1	<b>Participation in European Joint Programming with a focus on increasing research funding for organic food and farming (OFF) on all scales - European, national, and regional</b>	Co-creation of foundations for knowledge exchange and research capacity building (e.g., conditions for large-scale organic transition, etc.)	<p>Inclusion of organic research themes in HEU Partnership calls until 2030, and more immediately in calls 2025/2026: Partnerships AGROECOLOGY, FutureFoodS and EUPAHW</p> <p>Inclusion of organic research in Green ERA Hub (GEH) call 2025</p>	<p>Number of projects and amount of total funding in calls dedicated to OFF (e.g., Partnership calls and GEH calls)</p> <p>Number of CO Pleiades funding partners in the HEU Partnerships and GEH</p>	Data about the selected projects from the transnational calls	<p>Impact assessment of HEU Partnerships as regards OFF research &amp; innovation (R&amp;I) call subjects and funding scale</p> <p>Continuous widening and cooperation towards support for OFF and increased transnational R&amp;I funding until 2030</p>
		Identification of thematic challenges across Organic Action Plans (OAP)	<p>Implementation of national/ regional Organic Action Plans (OAP)</p> <p>Continuous policy exchange for funders, stakeholder partners, researchers and the European Commission (EC) representatives</p>	<p>Number of OAPs related to CO Pleiades partners and their respective revisions</p> <p>Number of policy recommendations (e.g., policy briefs, statement letters, etc.)</p>	<p>Records from the CORE Organic website (dedicated OAPs section)</p> <p>Records from the CO Annual Workshops (with TP Organics' (TPO) 'Organic Innovation Days 2025' and OrganicTargets4EU Final Conference 2025)</p>	Impact on HEU Work Programme as regards OFF R&I, call subjects, and funding scale
		Facing the transition: time frame-intensity-territoriality nexus partnerships (e.g., public-private)	<p>Identification of research gaps and priorities in CO ROADMAP 2030 Interstellar Tracker (dedicated section on thematic challenges)</p> <p>Contribution to new TP Organics Strategic Innovation and Research</p>	<p>Number of research gaps and priorities from CO ROADMAP in synergy with TP O SRIA and HEU Partnerships SRIA 2031</p> <p>Number of CO Pleiades partners participating in the TP</p>	TPO SRIA and HEU Partnerships SRIA documents	Contribution to the Green Deal strategic targets stipulated under the Farm to Fork (F2F) and Biodiversity strategies

No.	ACTIVITY (WORKING AREAS)	OBJECTIVES	OUTCOMES/ RESULTS (SHORT-/MEDIUM-TERM)	KPIs RELATED TO THE OUTCOMES/ RESULTS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	IMPACTS (LONG TERM)
			Agenda (SRIA) 2031 and identification of research gaps	Organics SRIA consultation process		
2	<b>CORE Organic Pleiades network (CO) implementation and widening activities</b>	Widening and involvement of new participants in the CO network (e.g., European funding bodies on national and regional level; public funders funding private sector, etc.)	CO network to include all 27 EU Member States plus EFTA states covering various types of funding bodies and partners	Number of CO full and observer members from the EU-27 plus EFTA states and possibly beyond	Letters of intent received by all CO Pleiades partners	Values, identity, and integrity impulse from the organic sector in synergy with other relevant sectors such as agroecology, biodynamics, etc.
		Continuation of the CORE Organic network 2026-2030	Revised Action Plan 2025-2026 Follow-up of the CO partner survey and integration of the results in the strategic network documents	Number of joint policy actions where the network can ensure impact  Number of CO partners willing to participate in the network's continuation	CO strategic documents (e.g., ROADMAP 20230) and Minutes from CO Governing Board meetings	Integration of new OFF funding and stakeholder partners can be facilitated by being in touch with the organic movement as a whole and relevant debates (e.g., conventionalisation thesis)

3	<p><b>CORE Organic Pleiades network efforts towards improved institutional coordination and alignment of OFF R&amp;I actions</b></p>	<p>Continuation of joint efforts towards transnationally coordinated R&amp;I investments</p>	<p>Aligning partners' efforts in organic research, policy, and funding towards reducing the national and regional legal and procedural barriers in relation to organic R&amp;I investments (e.g., internal and external events, capacity building visits, and one-on-one interviews)</p>	<p>Number of co-creation events and mechanisms supporting the preparation of recommendations on organic research policy and funding transformative change</p> <p>Number of policy recommendations and letters towards SCAR SWGs, HEU Partnerships, EC, etc.</p> <p>Number of partners in capacity building events (e.g., Biofach)</p>	<p>Policy recommendations, letters</p> <p>Minutes from events and one-to-one interviews with CO partners</p> <p>Deliverables from the OrganicTargets4EU project</p>	<p>Contribution to the Green Deal strategic targets stipulated under the Farm to Fork (F2F) and Biodiversity strategies</p> <p>Impact on HEU Partnerships as regards OFF research &amp; innovation (R&amp;I) call implementation</p>
4	<p><b>Network's Communication and Dissemination Activities</b></p>	<p>Efficient communication and dissemination activities on the network level and towards external target groups</p> <p>Creation of long-term dissemination plan for CO network 2026-2030</p>	<p>HEU CO Exchange workshops</p> <p>CO Annual Workshop 2025 in junction with TP Organics/ OrganicTargets4EU events</p> <p>CO newsletters, flyers, social media, homepage, CO research themes archive, Organic Eprints archive</p>	<p>Number of HEU CO Exchange workshops</p> <p>Number of CO partners and guests attending Annual Workshop</p> <p>Number of visualisations and diversity of audience</p>	<p>Presentations from HEU CO Exchange Workshops</p> <p>Minutes from Annual Workshop in junction with TP Organics/ OrganicTargets4EU events</p> <p>Statistics regarding communication and dissemination activities (e.g., social media, Organic Eprints).</p>	<p>Continuous and improved uptake of results from OFF R&amp;I projects (e.g., visibility of CO research themes archive; development and expanded coverage of Organic Eprints under the Partnership AGROECOLOGY, etc.)</p>

## 2. CORE Organic Pleiades Network Partners

The main objective of Task 6.1- Building the CORE Organic Pleiades network for stronger coordination of R&I investment in the organic sector of the OrganicTargets4EU Horizon Europe project is to widen the previous CORE Organic Cofund network with members from 19 European countries and regions at the time of OrganicTargets4EU project application into the new CORE Organic (CO) Pleiades network. The first 13 months of the project were dedicated to an extensive network building coordinated by the ICROFS Programme Secretariat with the support of CORE Organic Pleiades Management Board members. Potential network partners were initially contacted via e-mail or personal communication (e.g., at meetings or conferences) and were invited to join the CO Pleiades network. In some cases, the membership process was supported with individual online meetings to discuss in detail the purpose of the CO network and the requirements for the partners (e.g., with the ERIAFF network).

### 2.1. List of partners in the CORE Organic Pleiades network

The CORE Organic Pleiades network currently encompasses 43 network partners across 27 European countries and regions and beyond: 21 public funding institutions, and 13 stakeholder partners representing the organic sector. The network has 8 observer partners that can be both funders or stakeholders but due to limited resources are participate less actively in the network. Finally, ICROFS as Programme Secretariat and network coordinator links the network with the OrganicTargets4EU project. The full list of the CORE Organic Pleiades members can be found in the below table and is available on the [CORE Organic Pleiades website](#).

The members of the network (coordinator, funders and stakeholders) have each signed a letter of intent stating their commitment to participate in the CORE Organic Pleiades network within the project period. For confidentiality reasons, the letters of intent are only available upon request to the European Commission and are stored at the OrganicTargets4EU closed data repository.

Figure 3 CORE Organic Pleiades partners

#	Country/region	Organisation	Acronym
<b>Coordinator</b>			
1	Denmark	International Research Centre for Organic Food Systems	ICROFS
<b>Funders</b>			
2	Austria	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Regions and Water Management	BML
3	Belgium - Flanders	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	Dep. LV

4	Belgium - Wallonia	Walloon Agricultural Research Centre	CRA-W
5	Bulgaria	Bulgarian National Science Fund	BNSF
6	Croatia	Ministry of Agriculture	MPS
7	Estonia	Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture	REM
8	Finland	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	MMM
9	France	National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment	INRAE
10	Germany	Federal Office for Agriculture and Food	BLE
11	Germany	Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture	BMEL
12	Hungary	Ministry of Agriculture	AM
13	Ireland	Agriculture and Food Development Authority	TEAGASC
14	Ireland	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	DAFM
15	Italy	Ministry of agriculture, food sovereignty and forestry	MASAF
16	Morocco	The Ministry of National Education, Professional training, Higher Education and Scientific Research	MENFPESRS
17	Netherlands	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	MinLNV
18	Norway	The Research Council of Norway	RCN
19	Romania	The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding	UEFISCDI
20	Slovenia	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food	MKGP
21	Switzerland	Federal Office for Agriculture	FOAG
22	Turkey	Ministry of Food Agriculture and Forestry	GDAR
<b>Stakeholders</b>			
23	Belgium - Flanders	Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research	ILVO
24	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Center for Economic and Rural Development	CERD
25	Croatia	Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb	
26	Finland	Natural Resources Institute Finland	LUKE
27	Greece	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki	AUTH
28	Hungary	Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Farming	ÖMKI
29	International	TP Organics	



30	International	Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari	CIHEAM BARI
31	International	Forschungsinstitut für Biologischen Landbau	FiBL
32	Lithuania	Lithuanian Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry	LAMMC
33	Luxembourg	Institut fir Biologesch Landwirtschaft and Agrarkultur Luxemburg	IBLA
34	Netherlands	Wageningen Research	WUR
35	Sweden	Centre for Organic Food and Farming, at Swedish University of Agricultural	EPOK
<b>Observers</b>			
36	Denmark	Innovationsfonden	IFD
37	International	European Regions for Innovation in Agriculture, Food and Forestry Network	ERIAFF
38	International	BIO-EAST	BIO-EAST
39	International	Organic Eprints	
40	Italy	Ministry of Education, Universities and Research	MUR
41	Lithuania	Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania	MOALIT
42	Poland	The National Centre for Research and Development	NCBR
44	Spain	Agencia Estatal de Investigación	AEI

## 2.2. Barriers to widening the network

The main objective of Task 6.2 - Alignment of national/ regional regulations and structures for more effective R&I investments in the organics is to identify national (or regional) legal and procedural obstacles to transnationally coordinated R&I investments and draft recommendations for alignment and harmonisation of R&I investments. The current CO Pleiades network has good geographical coverage, yet six EU Member states are not represented (Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Latvia, Malta, Portugal, and Slovakia).

ICROFS has experienced challenges in involving funding agencies as full members. There are several reasons behind the current membership status, for example, some smaller EU members (e.g., Cyprus and Malta) have more limited institutional capacities and need to tend to other priorities. There are further structural reasons why in the Horizon Europe Programme funding mechanisms are placed under multiple European Partnerships where the funders are now mainly involved. **Figure 4** provides an overview of the defined differences in strategies and objectives of the partners that are hindering funders' participation in the transnational cooperation and mitigation actions by the CO network.

**Figure 4 Identified barriers to participating in the CORE Organic Pleiades network**

<b>1. Formal EC shift from the ERA-NETS mechanism to the HEU Partnerships</b>	
Implication	Creating new cross-institutional systems on the national level is both time and resource consuming, requiring new forms of alignment and inclusion (accreditation) of new institutions to take part in European cooperations such as this network.
Mitigation by CO network	The thematic focus of the online exchange Workshop and the Annual Workshop were adjusted to include information about the HEU partnership mechanism and update of the current Agroecology Partnership (AE Partnership) (e.g., inviting the AE Partnership coordinator to annual event). This mitigates barriers 1 and 2.
<b>2. Funding commitments and broader focus of partners to diverse types of sustainable agriculture (e.g., agroecology)</b>	
Implication	While partners in the past may have dedicated more resources specifically towards organic research, some organisations now seem to widen their scope to include a more diverse range of sustainable agriculture.
Mitigation by CO network	See the above means of mitigation described in relation to barrier 1. Furthermore, the first version of the CORE Organic ROADMAP 2030 included information about the strategies, needs and funding commitments of the funders to reflect the future orientation of the CO network and their engagement in the HEU Partnerships, which will mitigate the consequences of barrier 2 and 3.
<b>3. More focus on funding national activities</b>	
Implication	Some partners prioritised national funding activities over transnational activities.
Mitigation by CO network	See above means of mitigation described in relation to barrier 2.
<b>4. Insufficient time and resources available</b>	
Implication	Some partners reported that they had limited time and resources and had prioritised other initiatives and/or preparation of HEU Partnerships. It was also mentioned that they were trying to navigate a new EU funding environment and therefore were not able and/or willing to commit to the CO network long term.
Mitigation by CO network	Potential partners with limited resources, time, and/or willingness to formally commit were offered to be observers in the network, which does not require participation in meetings, however, observers remain on ICROFS Programme Coordinator distribution lists and thus continue to receive newsletters and other relevant communication.

### 3. Obstacles to transnationally coordinated research and innovation investments

Based on a survey distributed among the partners and individual communication with new and existing members in the process of widening the CORE Organic Pleiades network, national obstacles to transnationally coordinated research and innovation (R&I) investments were also identified. These were discussed with the partners (to be elaborated).

The main structural, funding, and procedural obstacles to transnationally coordinated R&I investments in organic food and farming are based on the same barriers for partners to engage in transnational networks as with the CORE Organic Pleiades network.

**Figure 5 Overview of main structural, funding, and procedural obstacles to transnationally coordinated R&I investments**

Obstacles
<p><b>1. Formal EC shift from the ERA-NETS mechanism to the HEU Partnerships</b></p> <p>The new EC HEU funding environment made some networking mechanisms, such as CORE Organic network, redundant for some partners, while at the same time, other funding partners started considering thematic networks as very relevant as they still offered narrower R&amp;I thematic focus compared to the broader HEU Partnerships. This structural change in HEU funding mechanism calls for unprecedented cooperation at the national level among institutions that historically funded different types of research and were independently responsible for certain thematic areas (e.g., agriculture, food, health, environment, etc.). Hence, creating new cross-institutional systems on the national level is both time and resource consuming, requiring new forms of alignment and inclusion (accreditation) of new institutions to take part in European cooperation. The process consequently also demands capacity to align transnational cooperation on a European level (e.g., differing requirements in the transnational calls based on national contexts).</p>
<p><b>2. Funding commitments and broader focus of partners to diverse types of sustainable agriculture (e.g., agroecology, regenerative agriculture)</b></p> <p>While partners in the past may have dedicated more resources specifically towards organic research, some organisations now seem to widen their scope to include a more diverse range of sustainable agriculture (e.g., agroecology, regenerative farming, nature inclusive farming).</p>
<p><b>3. More focus on funding national activities</b></p> <p>Some partners prioritised national funding activities over transnational activities.</p>
<p><b>4. Insufficient time and resources available</b></p> <p>Some partners reported that they had limited time and resources and had prioritised other initiatives or preparation of HEU Partnerships.</p>



In some aspects it would be possible to distinguish between different levels of obstacles (EU and national level); it is evident that the scopes of obstacles are closely interlinked. Obstacles at the EU level, for instance regarding the shift from the ERA-NETS mechanism to the HEU Partnerships, affect the national and regional levels. Vice versa, the focus of some partners on national and regional funding affects the possibilities to engage in transnational networks or in transnational activities on coordination of R&I investments.

Besides the above structural, funding, and procedural obstacles, the partners also discussed at the CO Annual Workshop in 2023 obstacles for transnationally coordinated R&I investments related to research. The partners identified the following obstacles:

- Lack of specific budget for organic research
- Lack of data particularly in organic aquaculture systems
- Lack of reliability of organic data including good financial, market, and environmental data
- Not sufficient cross-disciplinary research efforts
- Limited knowledge-sharing systems
- Lack of human resources
- Limited political support

The obstacles related to research and the more structural obstacles listed in Table 3 coalesce around the issues of capacity building and moving from a short-term project to long-term programme action.

## 4. Recommendations for better aligning transnational cooperation and R&I investments

To provide recommendations for better alignment of transnational cooperation and R&I investments for organics, there is a need to face a comprehensive transformation in terms of structural, funding, and thematic research barriers for R&I in organic food and farming. In the present document we have provided a timeline of important structural and thematic transformation that has occurred in terms of funding organic food and farming research from the Horizon 2020 to the Horizon Europe R&I Framework Programmes.

The CORE Organic Pleiades partners during the course of OrganicTargets4EU activities have identified a number of obstacles and consequent mitigation actions under the *CORE Organic Pleiades Network Roadmap to 2030* with an *Action Plan 2025-2026* driving the CO partners in their joint European R&I cooperation efforts. The *Action Plan 2025-2026* contains the transnational cooperation recommendations that the CORE Organic partners have already started to put into practice and aim to implement beyond 2026:

1. **Participation in European Joint Programming with a focus on increasing research funding for organic food and farming (OFF) on all scales: European, national, and regional.**
2. **Expanding and involving new participants in the CO network (e.g., European funding bodies on national and regional level, public funders funding the private sector, etc.)**
3. **Aligning National Organic Action plans and identified common research priorities to ensure the CO Network's align with national R&I funding for organics and among network partners (see Figure 1 Interstellar Tracker).**
4. **Aligning partners' efforts in organic research, policy, and funding towards reducing the national and regional legal and procedural barriers in relation to organic R&I investments (e.g., by attending internal and external events, capacity-building visits such as the Biofach trade fair for organic food)**
5. **Aligning understanding of current funding commitments that follow a broader focus towards diverse types of sustainable agriculture (e.g., agroecology, regenerative farming, nature inclusive farming) that are often oriented towards funding national activities.**
6. **Participation in and active contribution to new TP Organics "Strategic Innovation and Research Agenda" (SRIA) covering the organic sector's R&I vision until 2031.**
7. **Participation in and active contribution to the development of OrganicTargets4EU joint policy recommendations towards EU policy actors.**



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