



ALLIANCE

A hoListic framework in the quality Labelled
food supply chain systems' management
towards enhanced data Integrity and verAcity,
interoperability, traNsparenCy, and tracEability



D5.3 Interim Dissemination and Communication Strategy and Periodic Dissemination and Communication Report

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
ASINCAR	Asociación de Investigación de Industrias Carnicas del Principado de Asturias
CMAST	Consejería de Medio Rural y Cohesion Territorial del Principado de Asturias
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
EU	European Union
EUR	EuroFIR AISBL (project partner)
FBS	FederBio Servizi (project partner)
FINS	Institute for Food Technology of Novi Sad (project partner)
GI	Geographical indication
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation, Regulation (EU) 2016/679
INTRA	Netcompany - formerly Netcompany-Intrasoft (project partner)
IoT	Internet of things
KER	Key Exploitable Result
KPI	Key Performance Indicator



LC	The Lisbon Council for Economic Competitiveness ASBL (project partner)
NIR	Near Infrared Spectroscopy
PDO	Protected designation of origin
PGI	Protected geographical indication
UI	User interface
UNIBO	Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna (project partner)
UTH	Panepistimio Thessalias (project coordinator)



Executive Summary

This deliverable contains the interim report on communication and dissemination, as well as an update of the communication and dissemination strategy of ALLIANCE that was outlined in D5.2 - 2 *ALLIANCE Initial Communication and Dissemination Strategy and periodic dissemination and communication report*. This document describes the activities that have been carried out so far under WP5 - *Dissemination, Communication and Exploitation of Results*, and provides an overview of how the strategy is being updated to guarantee that ALLIANCE reaches its intended audiences.

In accordance with the original Communication and Dissemination strategy, the first 12 months of the project were dedicated to setting up various communication channels, such as the project's website and social media channels. Content has also been produced aimed mainly at engaging new audiences and raising awareness about the issues that the project is planning to tackle, as well as describing how the project is structured. Towards the first-year mark, the focus has gradually shifted to presenting initial results and insights from the project, and to amplifying dissemination activities carried out at in person and online events, as these types of dissemination activities were taking off. In terms of Key performance indicators (KPIs), monitoring shows that the project is making good progress, for instance those related to events organised and attended have already been achieved, and several are on track to be reached.

Overall, the communication and dissemination strategy for ALLIANCE remains relevant, with some minor adjustments mainly to adapt and improve. An example can be seen in the need to set up a community page on Zenodo, which was not initially foreseen but appeared to be helpful in helping the consortium to adhere to open science requirements. Similarly, accessibility was not a main feature of the initial strategy, but it is going to be mainstreamed in the second phase, ensuring that all project outputs can be used by all.

Collaboration of ALLIANCE consortium remains essential to keep ensuring that the project results are widely disseminated to the relevant audiences.



1. Introduction

This document builds upon and expands on deliverable D5.2 Initial Dissemination and Communication Strategy and Periodic Dissemination and Communication Report, which defined the dissemination and communication strategy for the Horizon Europe project ALLIANCE.

This document is structured into four major sections. Following this introduction, section 2 contains a report on communication and dissemination activities carried out in the first eighteen months of ALLIANCE. The initial focus is on the communication channels managed directly by the project (website and social media), and there are also details of dissemination events organised or attended by consortium members. Frequent references to KPIs help the reader understand which aspects are on track, and which ones may require additional effort during the second reporting period.

Building on an analysis of performance in the reporting period, section 3 presents some updates to the initial Dissemination and Communication Strategy for the second half of the project, including some pointers for the final exploitation phase. This is meant to ensure that the strategy stays relevant to the developments of the project and of the general context in which it operates.

Section 4 contains an overview of the key next steps and upcoming activities, followed by some short conclusions.



2. Report on communication and dissemination activities

As outlined in the initial communication and dissemination strategy D5.2 (pp. 26-27), the communication and dissemination efforts of ALLIANCE follow a phased approach.

After the inception months dedicated to the development of the project’s brand identity (D5.1) and of the initial communication and dissemination plan (D5.2), starting from March 2023, the efforts focused mainly on “Engage”: developing and positioning the ALLIANCE project in the chosen digital channels, and targeting both specialised and more general audiences. After the first twelve months of activities, the project has gradually shifted to the “Promote” phase - that is, a phase of regular updates and production of content linked to the project’s events and (interim) results. This phase is expected to continue well into the third year of the project, when it will eventually give way to the third and final phase, “Exploit”. The strategy for each phase and communication mechanisms, as described in D5.2, is presented in table 1 below.

Table 1 - Strategy for communication for each communication mechanism for the phases of the duration of the project
(Source: adapted from Deliverable 5.2, p. 9)

Communication mechanism	I – Engage (M01-M12)	II – Promote (M12-M30)	III – Exploit (M30-M36)
Social media	Establishment of presence in social media; reproduce relevant content and monitor relevant hashtags; upload public material; follow influencers of the domain engage with other projects and initiatives.	Promote project outcomes and events; interact with followers to get feedback; answer comments and private messages on the various channels; upload public material; reproduce relevant content and monitor relevant hashtags.	Promote project outcomes and events; interact with followers to get feedback; answer comments and private messages on the various channels; upload public material; reproduce relevant content (more sporadically).
Project's website	Website completed, search engine optimisation.	Regular update web analytics monitoring; Provide content of impact.	Regular update; web analytics monitoring Provide content of impact.
Project's blog	Deploy project blog; provide blog posts related to project’s positioning and technologies.	Provide frequent blog posts to initiate discussions on specific issues relevant to the project to receive feedback.	Publish frequent blog posts to demonstrate and promote project results and/or to promote and attract partnerships and growing user base.
Communication material	Project branding and visual identity,	Prepare revised communications pack	Prepare final communications starter

	communications starter pack.	and frequent releases of e-Newsletter publish blogs/news in EU instruments (e.g. Cordis News, research EU magazines etc.).	pack and frequent releases of digital newsletters and video demonstrators; publish blogs/news in EU dissemination instruments.
Traditional communication	Press release to announce the project launch, presentations at events and conferences.	Press releases to announce the significant events/results; press releases to promote the business case of the project's results.	Promote (new) partnerships; acknowledge successful collaborations; promote growing user base.

At this stage, it is of fundamental importance to examine the analytics of the progress made since the launch of the website and social media channels, which will be analysed in more detail in this deliverable. This will provide insights to effectively adjust the strategy and better prepare for the upcoming activities.

In general, thanks to the development of a solid brand identity, with a logo and a well-defined colour palette used across the website, social media and other communication and dissemination materials, ALLIANCE can be easily recognised. This process was accompanied by a change, or rather an adaptation of the handles used across social media, which shifted from “ALLIANCE PROJECT” to “ALLIANCE EU”, as “EU” serves as a reminder that the project is funded via the EU’s Horizon Europe programme.

All the communication channels identified in the planning phase and deployed in the “Engage” phase are active, and some are gaining a solid base of followers.

2.1 Website overview and analytics

The ALLIANCE website is indexed on the main search engines, thanks to contents and resources linked to the project. The website plays a pivotal role in the ALLIANCE communication and dissemination strategy, as it is the most complete channel in terms of information. Most of the content shared via the project’s social media accounts indeed direct readers to the project website.



Figure 1 - Screenshot of the ALLIANCE website

The website structure has been slightly updated compared to the initial version released in March 2023. A new section, “Dissemination materials”, was created in October 2023, and can be accessed via the website footer. This section hosts, among other resources, the project brochure. This has been downloaded 61 times (KPI: 200 per year), which suggests that it should be given more prominence going forward. The latest change to the website has been the creation of a space for public deliverables, which can be accessed via the top-level menu, and which will be constantly updated as new deliverables are produced:

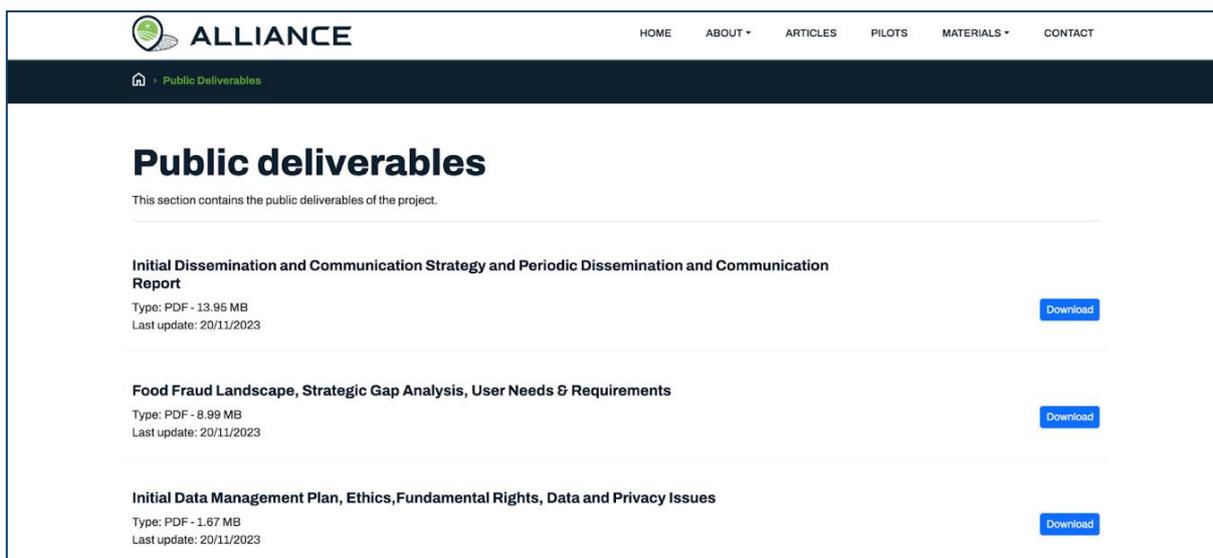


Figure 2 - Screenshot of the "Public Deliverables" page

The user-friendly structure of the menu means that resources developed for ALLIANCE by the consortium partners are easily findable. The blog section hosts the content updates submitted by different project partners. Every time a new blog post is published, it gets shared on social media with tailored messages. After the initial campaign, all contents are periodically re-shared via social media to reach new audiences.

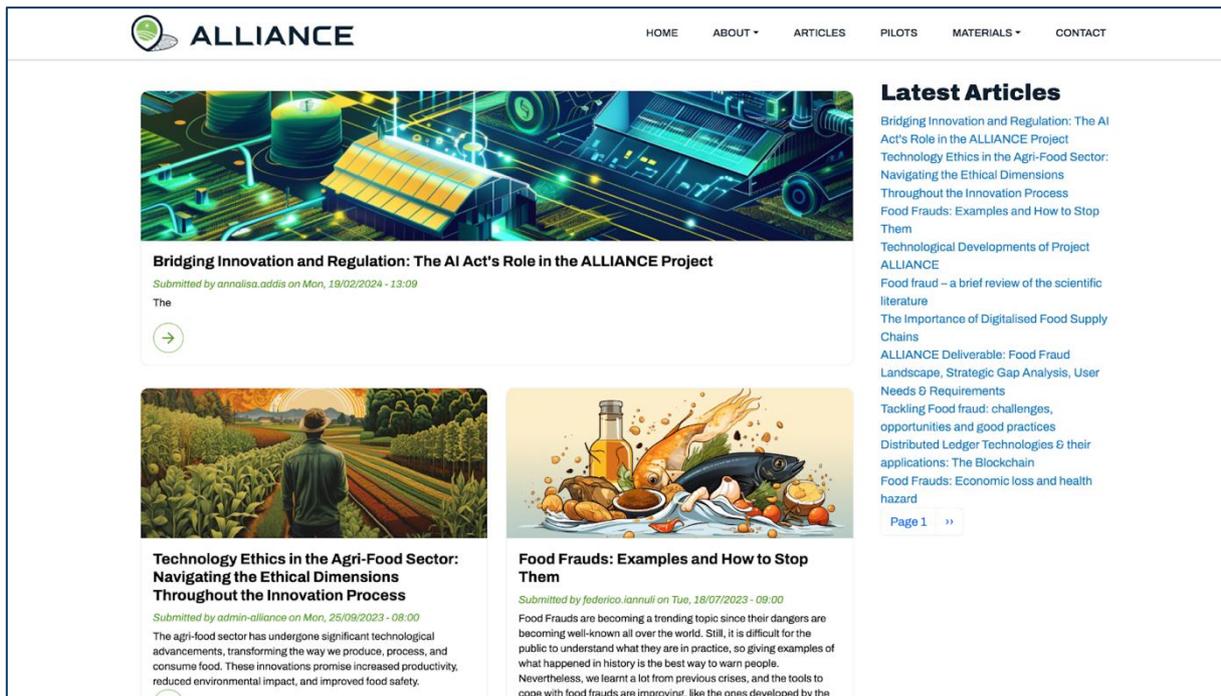


Figure 3 - Blog section of the website

Data analytics for the period March 2023-April 2024 show a positive track record with 2,568 unique visitors as of 26 April, which exceeds the KPI, set at over 1,000 unique visitors per year. This demonstrates that the website is findable on search engines. Furthermore, data on page views, duration, and website actions all contribute to showing that its contents are easy to digest.



Figure 4 - Website statistics

The screenshot above contains more detailed analytics on user engagement on the website. These data confirm a positive trend concerning the role of the website in dissemination, which is expected to continue to have a central role throughout the next phases of the project’s life.

As far as geographical origin of website visits, the vast majority come from European countries, above all Italy and Greece. This confirms the effectiveness of dissemination activities targeting first and foremost a European audience. The “top ten” notably includes all the countries where the project’s demonstrator activities are taking place: Italy, Greece, France, Spain, Croatia, Serbia.

Country

COUNTRY	▼ VISITS
 Italy	539
 Greece	409
 United States	277
 France	189
 Spain	126
 Germany	123
 Serbia	104
 Croatia	93
 Netherlands	80
 United Kingdom	60

Figure 5 - Website visits: countries of origin

Finally, data on website traffic sources show that visitors are mainly arriving at the website through search engines. This means that users have been searching the project’s name, which is a testament to the consolidation of the brand identity which took place in the first year. The second source of website traffic is social media, which will be subject to further analysis below. The third traffic source is other specialised websites and/or partner websites, which exemplifies the importance of creating synergies with other actors. Users who reach the ALLIANCE website through other food sector websites are those who stay the longest. It is safe to assume that those people are the most specialised audience, which the project is particularly keen to reach.

CHANNEL TYPE	▼ VISITS	ACTIONS	ACTIONS PER VISIT	AVG. TIME ON WEBSITE	BOUNCE RATE
Direct Entry	1,474	3,190	2.2	2 min 13s	65%
<input type="checkbox"/> Search Engines	720	2,013	2.8	2 min 59s	52%
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Networks	244	500	2	2 min 1s	62%
<input type="checkbox"/> Websites	130	361	2.8	2 min 39s	53%

Figure 6 - Sources of traffic to the website

The chart below offers an additional breakdown of which social media channels drive most traffic to the website: LinkedIn constitutes by far the most important channel, as it generated over 87% of the social media traffic to the website. The next one is X/Twitter, source of almost 8% of the traffic, and then Facebook with about 5% of social media traffic. It is relevant to note that ALLIANCE does not have a Facebook account, but some partners do have a presence on this social network and have posted about the project, which may explain the data. Mastodon has so far not proven to be a relevant source of traffic.

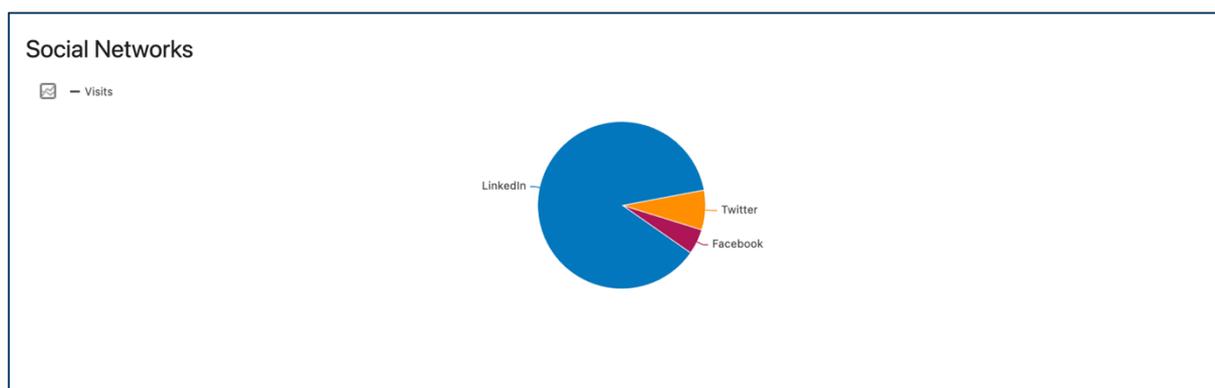


Figure 7 – Social media channels as sources of traffic to the ALLIANCE website

2.2 Social media channels overview and analytics

After having examined the website traffic, we now move to the analysis of the social media channels of the project: LinkedIn, X/Twitter, Mastodon, YouTube. Having profiles on different social media helps the project in reaching different target groups, hereby maximising the communication and dissemination actions. Generally, the same content is posted across all social media channels, but there is some degree of tailoring to the specific platform. This includes for instance respecting different character limits and tagging users (e.g. consortium members) active on that specific platform.

Contents shared on social media are primarily posts on the website: all posts are shared at least once following publication and may then be re-shared if still relevant. In addition, all YouTube videos are shared on all other social media platforms. Furthermore, social media channels are used to share or repost information about recent events organised or attended by partners even if there is no dedicated blog post.

From the table below, it is evident that LinkedIn constitutes the most important social media account of the project, the one that has built the largest follower base, and where posts have by far the greatest reach. Also, as seen in the previous paragraph, LinkedIn generates considerable traffic to the project’s website.

Table 2 - Social media followers comparison

Social media channel	Number of followers	Total views / impressions
LinkedIn	452	27,844
X / Twitter	69	3,047
Mastodon	6	n/a ¹
YouTube	17	376

In the next subsections, each channel will be examined separately. It is important to note that the analysis below refers to the social media channels that have been set up for ALLIANCE and managed as part of the project. These figures do not include the social media posts about the project from consortium partners, which are another important element that supports the broader communication and dissemination strategy.

2.2.1 LinkedIn

The project’s LinkedIn page is performing better than any other social media channel, and it is also driving traffic to the ALLIANCE website. As of early March 2024, the total followers count is **452**, over half of whom have started following the page in the last 12 months. This already exceeds the total KPI of followers expected for the whole duration of the project (200), and it is close to the higher target that had been initially set for Twitter / X.

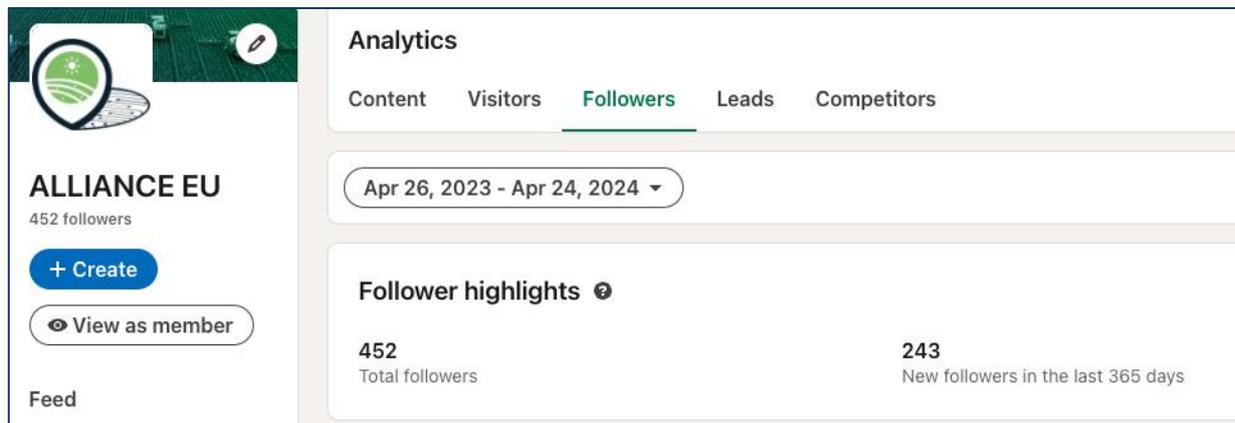


Figure 8 - LinkedIn Followers

The total number of impressions in the past twelve months is 24,757². Over 10,000 of these are unique impressions. The traffic generated via LinkedIn is entirely organic, as no paid advertising is used, as shown by the chart below.

¹ Mastodon does not currently share data about post views or impressions.

² LinkedIn does not show analytics for periods longer than 12 months. Therefore, the total number of impressions will be actually higher than what reported.

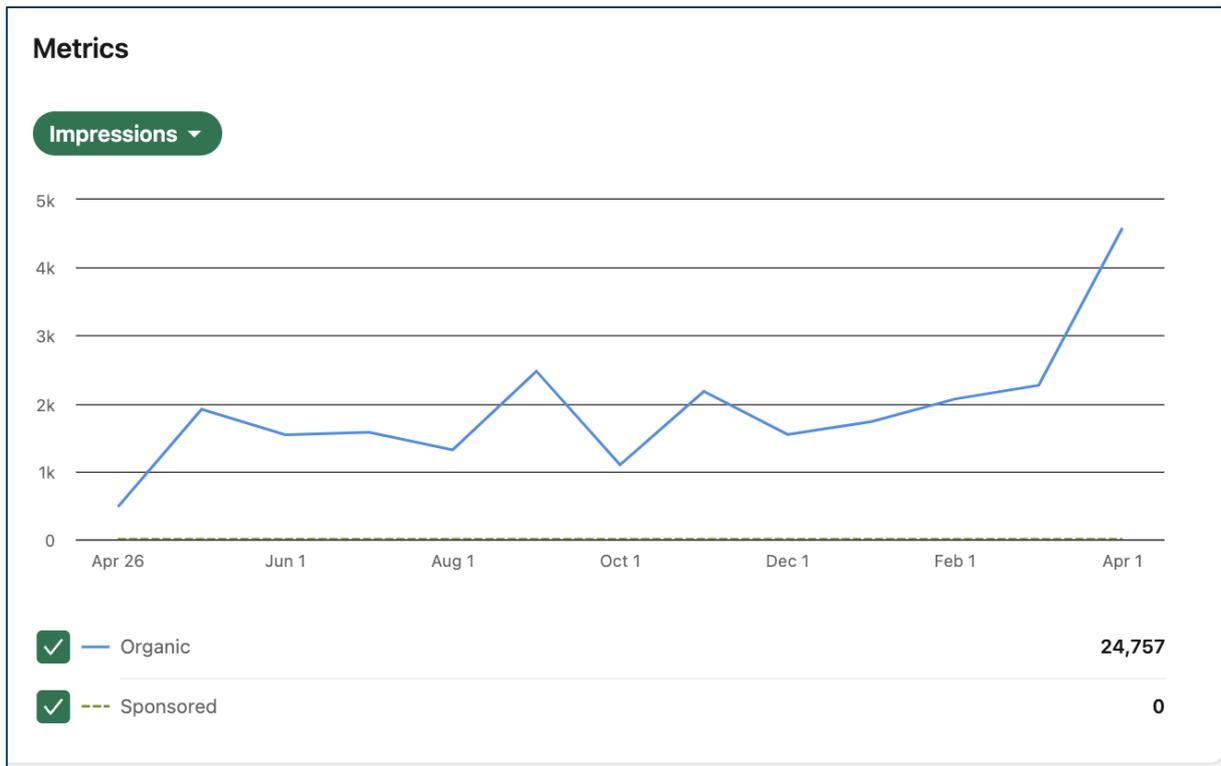


Figure 9 - LinkedIn organic vs sponsored impressions



Figure 10 - LinkedIn unique impressions

The following figure shows the type of device used by unique visitors of the ALLIANCE LinkedIn page in the past 12 months. Data shows a prevalence of mobile users (which includes both app and mobile browsers) over desktop users, respectively at 62.5% and 37.5% of the total. This is still somewhat balanced and shows that the project is reaching users regardless of the type of device used.

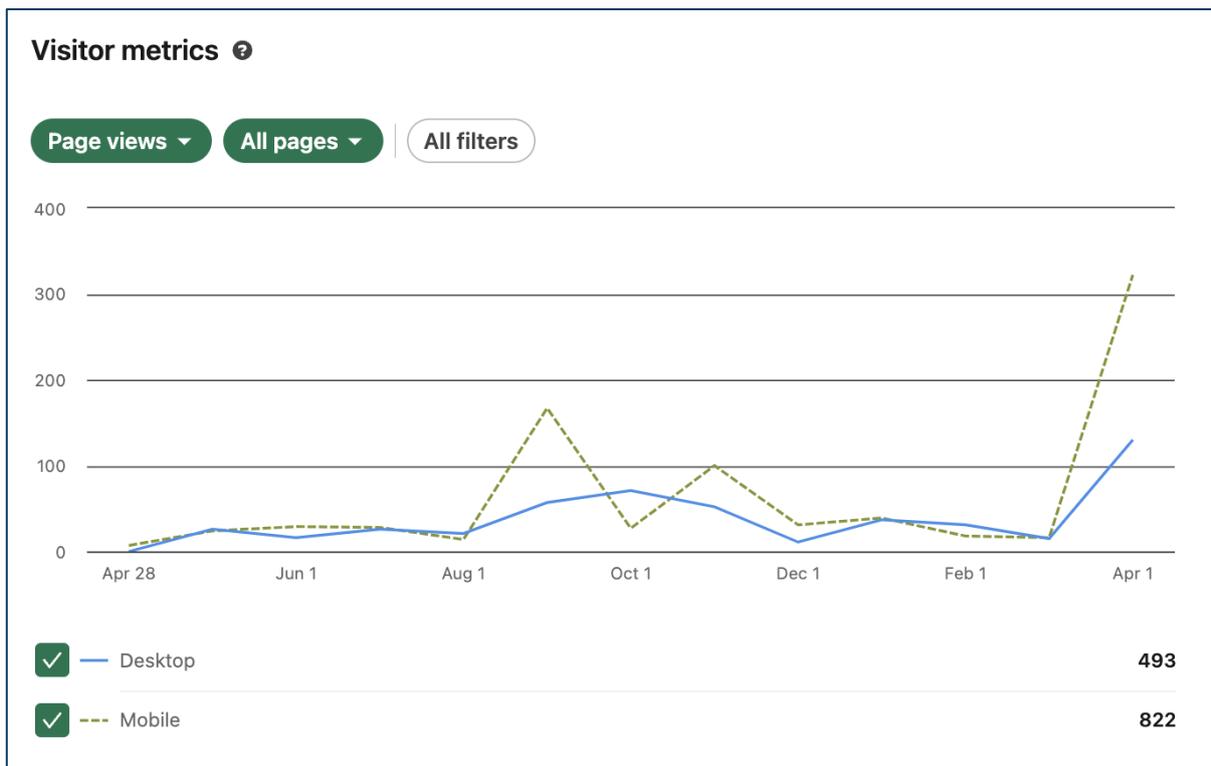


Figure 11 - LinkedIn visits: desktop vs mobile

Figure 12 below showcases the best performing posts on LinkedIn according to three different parameters. The most viewed post, containing a series of pictures taken at the latest consortium meeting in Athens, has been seen by almost 1,900 users. A close second, not included in the “best performing posts” below, but still worth mentioning, is a post about the clustering of ALLIANCE with projects “Theros” and “Watson”, which has been seen by over 1,800 people.

The post with the highest click-through rate and it links to a conference paper presented by a consortium member at a conference in January 2024. The fact that 53% of the 786 people who saw the post clicked on it, reveals that users were particularly interested in finding out more about the content, rather than just stopping at the post itself.

Finally, the post that attracted most likes and reposts is a picture from the September 2023 consortium meeting in Bologna, which highlights the importance of using pictures and visuals in social media communications.



Figure 12 - Best performing posts on LinkedIn

LinkedIn analytics also offer insights on the target audiences, mainly their industry and job roles, which can be useful to further tailor the content in line with their specific interests and needs. An analysis of these data shows that ALLIANCE followers are part of its target audiences. As shown in figure 13 below, the majority of LinkedIn followers work in higher education (18.1%) and research services (10%), and an additional 2.7% works in biotechnology research. These three industries, representing about 30% of LinkedIn followers, can be assimilated to the “Research community”, one of the main target audiences of ALLIANCE. Indeed, “research” and “education” are indicated as main job functions by about 30% of followers (see figure 14). Other followers work in industries such as farming, food and beverage services, and food and beverage manufacturing – which all fall into the target audience of food sector industry. A sizable group of followers come from IT services, business consulting, and software development, which can also be interested in the ALLIANCE technology. Government administration, part of the “regulators” audience, is also one of the represented industries.

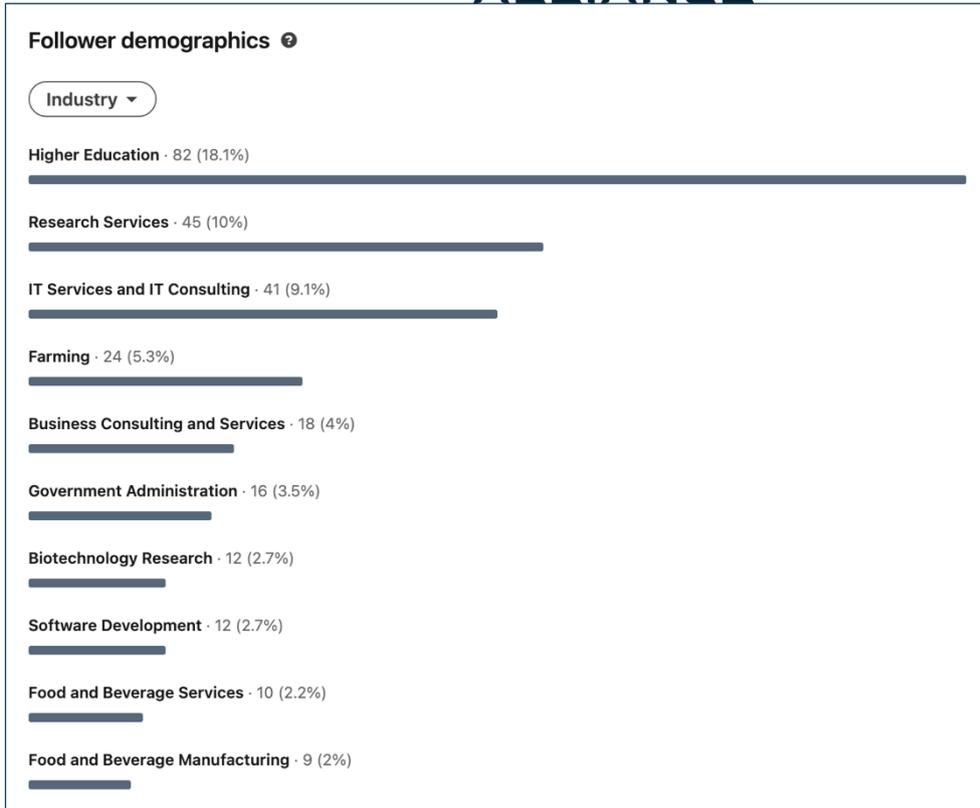


Figure 14 - LinkedIn follower demographics: Industry

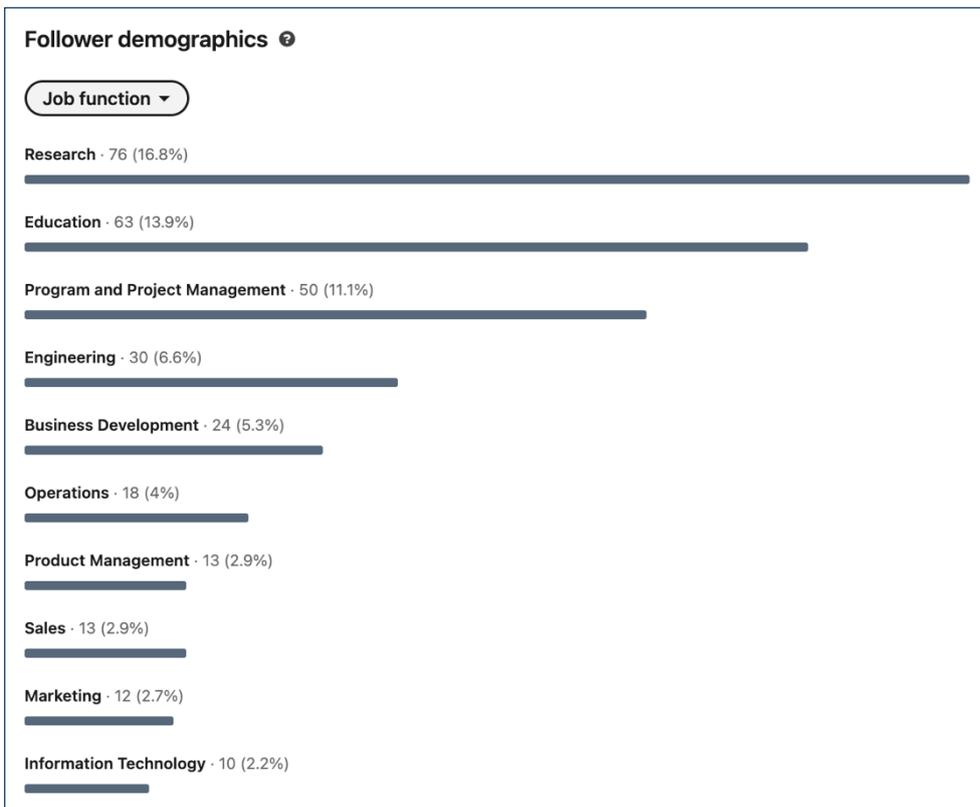


Figure 14 - LinkedIn follower demographics: Job function

There is also data on geographic provenance of followers. As is the case for the project website, the majority are based in European countries, and notably in some of the demonstrator sites.

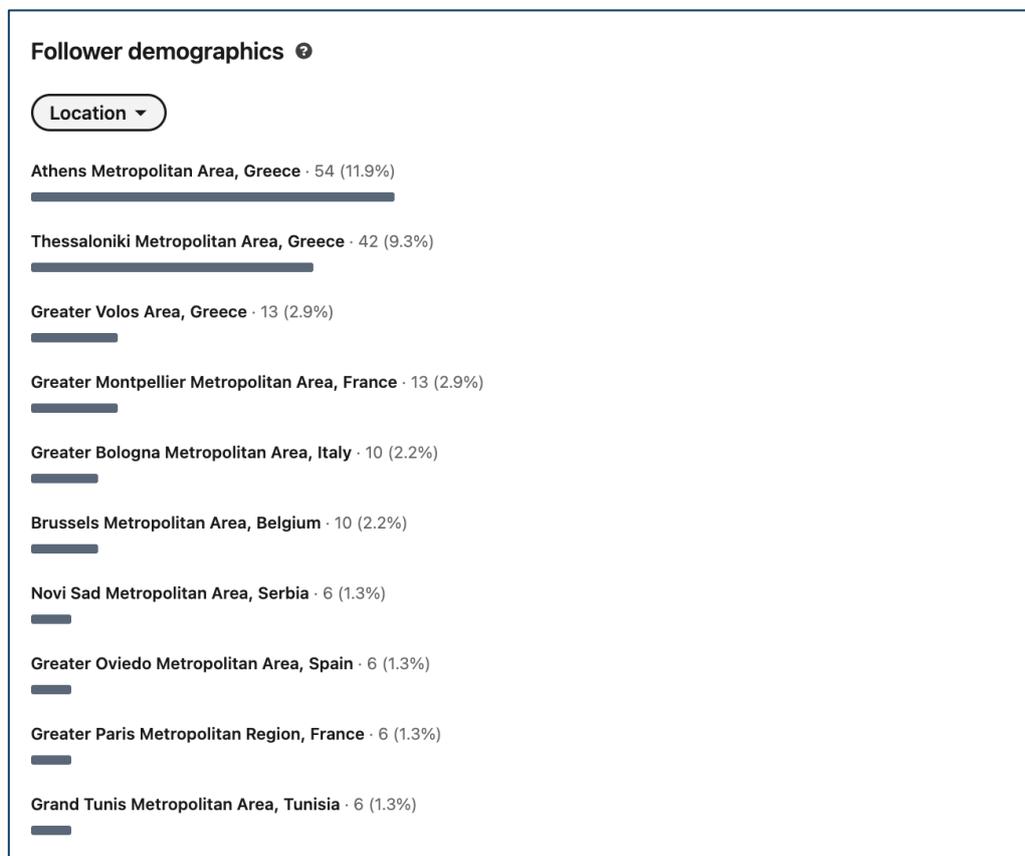
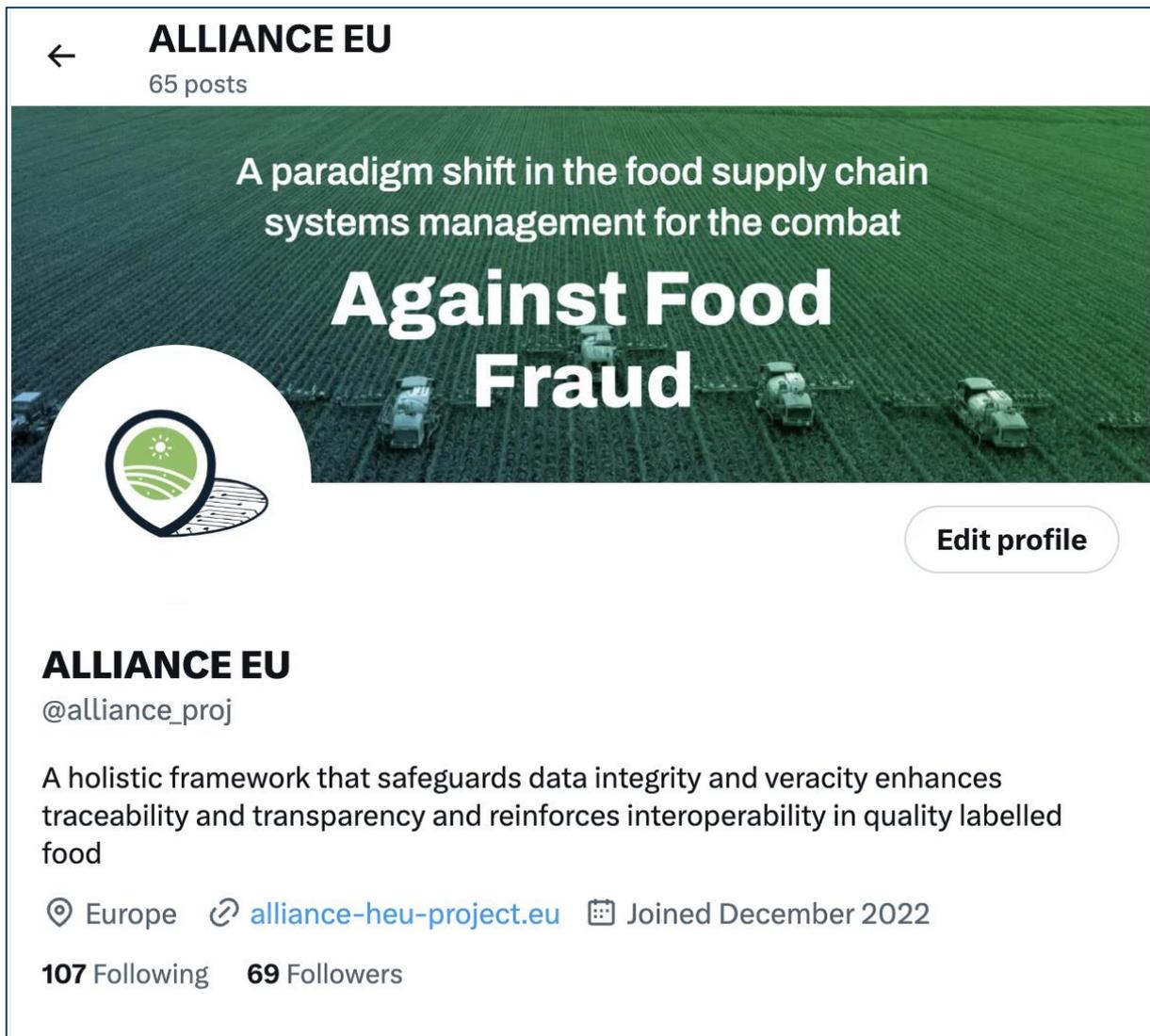


Figure 15 - LinkedIn Follower demographics: location

2.2.2 Twitter / X

When the initial dissemination and communication strategy for ALLIANCE was developed, Twitter was expected to be a key main communication and dissemination channel. This was because, back in early 2023, it was still heavily used by professionals and opinion leaders in various sectors, including those targeted by ALLIANCE. In fact, it was the social media channel that was expected to bring in the most followers according to the initial KPIs (500 vs 200 for LinkedIn). However, it is well known that the platform has changed considerably since the acquisition by Elon Musk in September 2022, epitomised by the rebranding of the platform as “X” in August 2023.

The frequent updates and policy changes throughout 2023 have substantially changed the user experience, leading to widespread user disengagement. Some former Twitter users have moved to different platforms which, despite their differences, may serve similar purposes than “old” Twitter, such as Mastodon, Bluesky, and more recently Threads by Meta. It is not just that there are fewer active users on Twitter / X, but some of the changes introduced in the past year have also affected the algorithm that determines which posts will be seen, considerably limiting the number of visualisations for non-sponsored posts. This has greatly impacted the expected reach of this channel in the project’s communication and dissemination strategy.



Despite regularly posting content with the same frequency than on LinkedIn, ALLIANCE account on X / Twitter has only managed to gather 69 followers, less than one fourth of the followers on LinkedIn. This still far from the KPI of 500. The trend is similar when analysing the number of visualisations. The project X / Twitter account has a total of 2,290 post impressions, about one tenth of those achieved on LinkedIn.

It is also worth noting that some other European project that started in the same period, such as Theros (with which ALLIANCE is clustering), also appear to have a similar number of followers.

MAR 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 403 New followers 5	APR 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 188 New followers 14
MAY 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 198 New followers 1	JUN 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 108 New followers -5
JUL 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 149 New followers 2	AUG 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 147 New followers 7
SEP 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 280 New followers 5	OCT 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 159 New followers 5
NOV 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 432 New followers -	DEC 2023 SUMMARY Post impressions 161 New followers -
JAN 2024 SUMMARY Post impressions 87 New followers -	FEB 2024 SUMMARY Post impressions 272 New followers -
MAR 2024 SUMMARY Post impressions 126 New followers -	APR 2024 SUMMARY Post impressions 337 New followers 0

Figure 16 - Twitter / X post impressions and new followers by month

Figure 16 above presents a month-by-month overview of post impressions and new followers, taken from the Twitter analytics page. It is worth noting the new follower data does not appear to be fully accurate, displaying zero new followers in months when an increase has been observed, such as November-April 2024. But if these official X / Twitter statistics are to be trusted, we can gather that there have never been more than 432 post impressions per month. Also, there seems to be little correlation between post impressions and new followers, with the highest increases seen in months with relatively lower post views. Even though the performance on X / Twitter has been lower than expected, this is still considered to be a relevant channel and will continue to be updated.

2.2.3 Mastodon

ALLIANCE also has a profile on Mastodon, a free and decentralised open-source social media platform. One of the peculiarities of Mastodon is the total absence of advertisements and sponsored posts, and the fact that all posts are displayed in chronological order, rather than based on proprietary algorithms as in commercial social networks. In other words, any user will only see posts from followed accounts plus any posts including hashtags they follow.

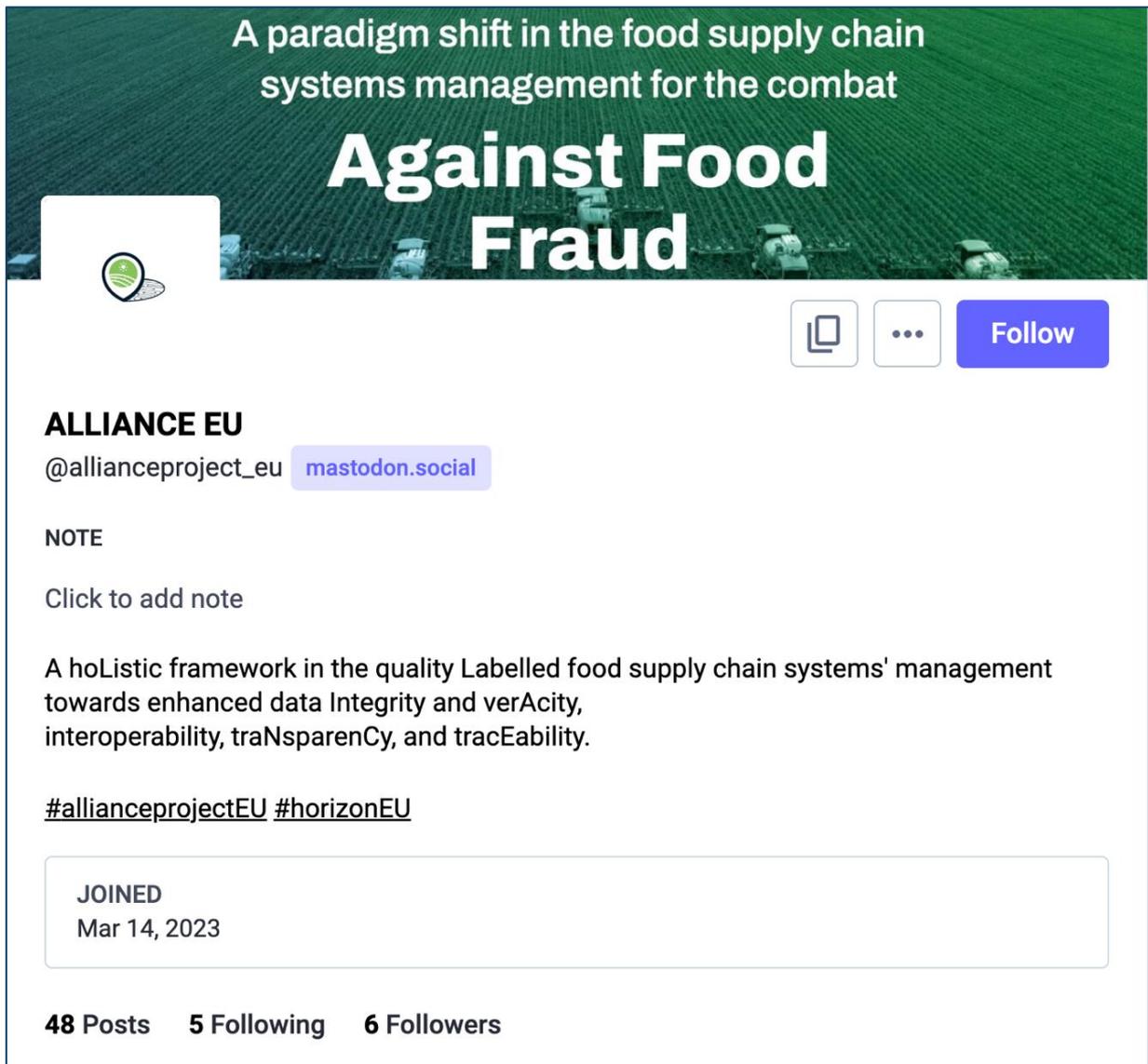


Figure 17 - Mastodon profile

As the number of active users on Mastodon is smaller than commercial social media, it tends to be a community of tech experts and early adopters - precisely one of the audiences that ALLIANCE is aiming to reach. Indeed, the project's follower base remains extremely limited at only 6 users, but the account continues to be updated as it does not constitute an excessive burden in terms of costs and staff effort. No KPI was established for this specific platform.



Mastodon is based on a logic of federated instances, or servers, each with their own moderation rules, and the system allows for migrating accounts from one server to another. Originally, the ALLIANCE account had been opened on mastodon.uno, which happens to be managed by an Italian community and intended mostly for an Italian-speaking audience. Therefore, the account was later transferred to Mastodon.social, the main server operated by the Mastodon gGmbH non-profit. This is a generalist instance, with an international (mostly English speaking) audience, which appeared to be more suited for the purposes of the project-related contents. This server “migration” has resulted in a URL change, from the initial https://mastodon.uno/@allianceproject_eu to the current https://mastodon.social/@allianceproject_eu

Despite the limited reach on Mastodon, we plan to continue dedicating attention to this channel, as it is well suited for public debate. Indeed, some EU institutions are also present on Mastodon with their dedicated server social.network.europa.eu. We believe that an official server for Horizon Europe funded projects (or more broadly, for any project receiving EU funding) would give a strong impulse to moving the debate here rather than on commercial social media. In general, it is possible that if the user experience on Twitter / X does not improve, more of the academic and technology debates will probably shift to other platforms, including Mastodon. Furthermore, the recent integration with the Meta-owned Threads platform (where ALLIANCE does not have a presence) means that Mastodon accounts will be reachable by users of that social network, too.

2.2.4 YouTube

Videos are a powerful communication language, and they lend themselves very well to scientific communication and dissemination. A dedicated [ALLIANCE YouTube channel](#) has been set up and populated with introductory videos from each of the seven demonstrators of the project.

As of April 2024, the videos have been visualised a total of 388 times, ranging from 128 for the most viewed video of demonstrator #6 (the first to be recorded), and 10 for demonstrator 2 (which was recorded last). Videos include English closed captions for accessibility, as well as subtitles in the official language of the country where the demonstrator takes place. This way, the content is also accessible to local stakeholders, even if their understanding of the English language is limited and can for instance be used in case of in-person events in the relevant country.



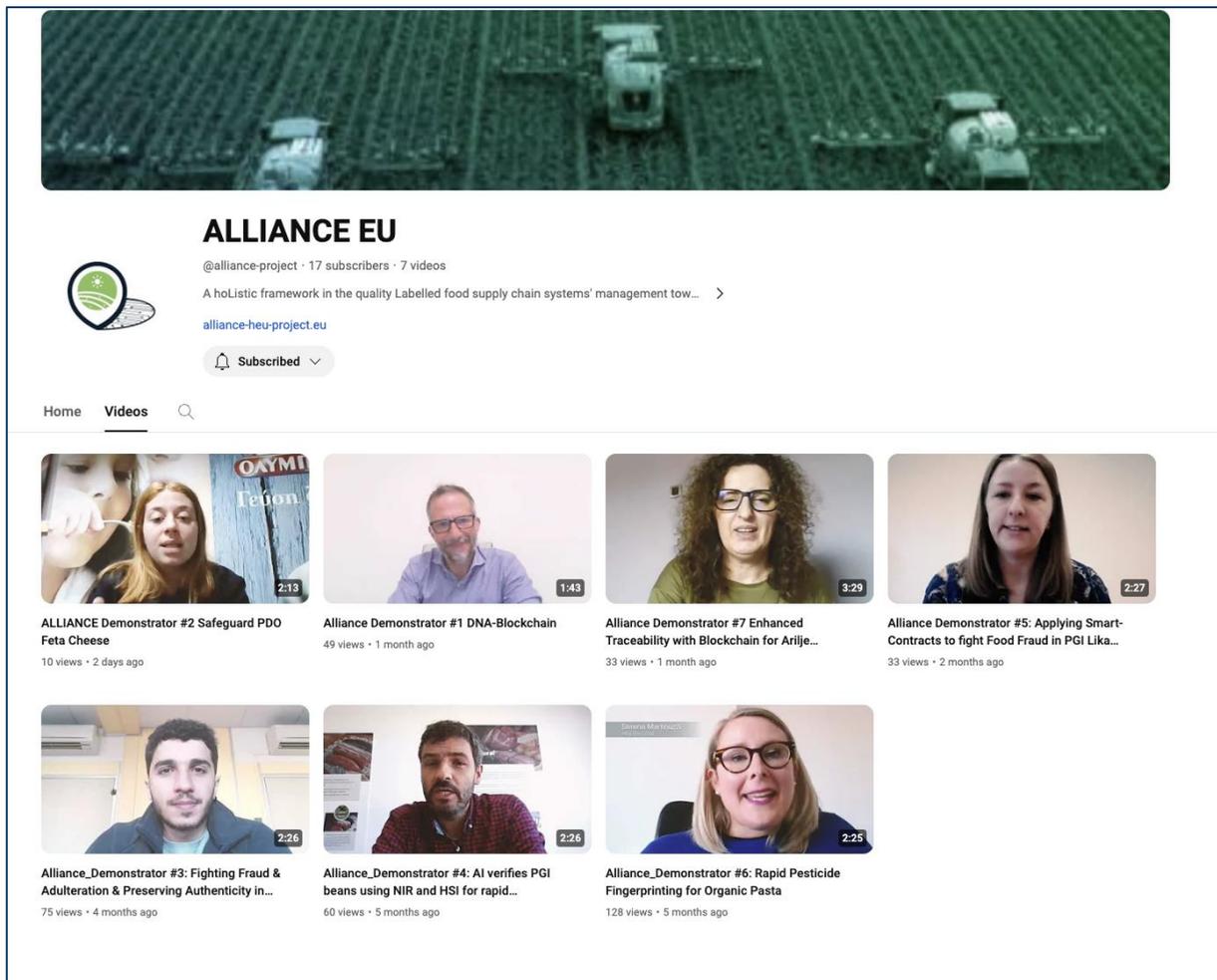


Figure 18 - YouTube channel

The same videos are also embedded in each Demonstrator webpage, to offer users an alternative way to access information about the project.

Demonstrator 1 ⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHmq7g4GN0Y>

Demonstrator 2 ⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbJPC6m2hB4>

Demonstrator 3 ⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtIDBktY6w>

Demonstrator 4 ⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAityXS1WUU>

Demonstrator 5 ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfUzyEpd_oA

Demonstrator 6 ⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ankl84Ne8_0

Demonstrator 7 ⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8a3G83KfssM>

As of April 2024, the YouTube channel has 17 subscribers, a number that is still low compared to the target of 100. However, upon further research, it appears that subscribers is not necessarily the most relevant metric. Most users will not subscribe to a channel after watching a video, especially when



they are watching the video embedded outside of YouTube (as is the case for those who watch the video embedded on the website).

Therefore, we believe it is more important to keep track of visualisations: for the videos published so far, these range between 10 and 128 (average 55), with more views for the videos that have been online for longer. The relevant KPI for visualisation was 2 videos with 1,000 views each: this is still attainable, as views can gradually grow over time, and most importantly, not all the videos need to achieve these higher figures. As mentioned above, it is expected that videos presenting project results will gain more attention than the introductory ones. The videos that have been published so far have been developed for the initial “engage” phase of the strategy which was mostly about setting up the channel and raising awareness on the work of ALLIANCE in general. In the “promote” phase, and even more so in the “exploit” phase, there is going to be a growing emphasis on providing updates on the progress of the ALLIANCE project, publicising the main findings and building greater interest on the technological solutions developed in each demonstrator. Videos will be an important asset in the communication and dissemination toolbox. Moreover, all the videos will continue to be shared cyclically on social media, so that they can reach new audiences.

2.3 Project Newsletter

As planned in the KPIs (one newsletter per year), a project newsletter was shared towards the end of the first year of the project to all those who had subscribed via the form on the ALLIANCE website, managed via Mailchimp in compliance with GDPR.

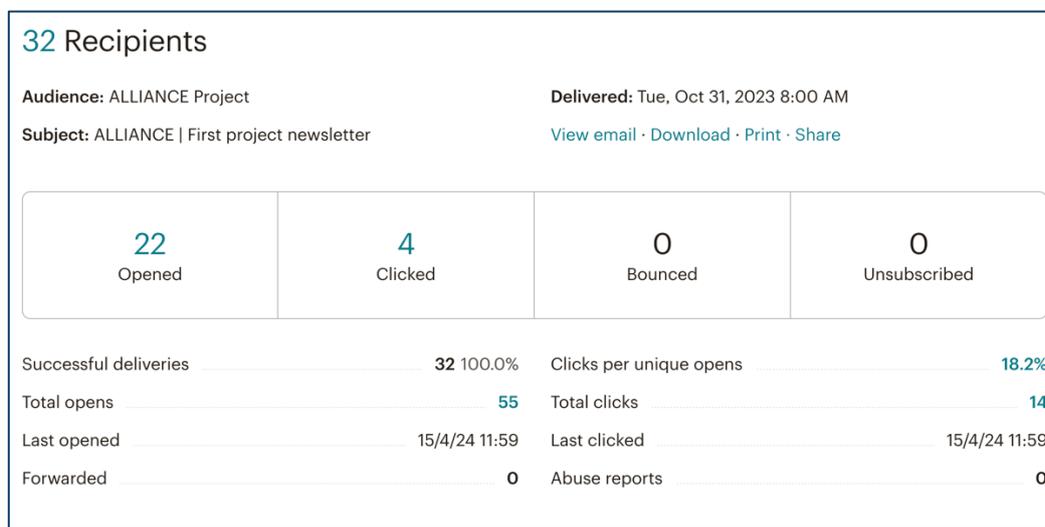


Figure 19 - Mailchimp analytics for the first newsletter

The analytics shown in figure 19 show that the newsletter was sent to the 32 recipients that were subscribed at that time (as of April 2024, the total number of subscribers is 42). The newsletter has been opened 55 times, demonstrating interest in its contents. The newsletter was also shared on social media, and it remains accessible via the following link: <https://mailchi.mp/2c69ac9a4501/alliance-first-project-newsletter?e=3b43adcc8b>



The first newsletter provides an overview of the project, including a spotlight on each of the 7 pilots, and features previews of a number of recent blog posts.



Figure 20 - First project newsletter

From a visual perspective, the newsletter uses the ALLIANCE visual identity, with its logo and specific colour palette, to increase brand awareness and recognition. The EU flag is also displayed.

2.4 External dissemination

2.4.1 Workshops organised Workshops Organised by ALLIANCE Consortium

The project partners have organised a total of 7 workshops during the first reporting period of ALLIANCE, attracting an average of about 50 participants per event. The workshops have been carried out across Europe covering countries, such as Greece, Spain, Italy and Serbia, introducing the project objectives and expected results to the wider population. A summary list of the events that were attended during the first reporting period can be seen in Table 2.

Table 3 Summary of Workshops Organised by ALLIANCE Consortium

Wokshop	Date	Location	No. of attendees
<u>Tools and Methods for Ensuring Food Quality Safety in the Supply Chain</u>	6th of April, 2023	Region of Thessaly, Greece	+150
Presentation of the ALLIANCE project to stakeholders in Asturias (Faba bean supply chain)	19th of January, 2023	Asturias, Spain	+30
<u>Digital Services to Promote the Efficiency of the Agrifood Sector</u>	24th of January, 2024	Asturias, Spain	+40
<u>Workshop on EU Projects</u>	23rd of February, 2023	Asturias, Spain	+50
<u>Seminar “The Organic Food Industry: The Word from Food technologists”</u>	9th of September	Bologna, Italy	+25
<u>Alliance Local Conference</u>	4-5th of April 2023	Arilje, Serbia	N/A
Dalla filiera biologica al cloud: l'impegno di Alce Nero e Aruba Enterprise nella Modernizzazione dell'Infrastruttura IT	16th of April, 2024	Bologna, Italy	+30
Dalla filiera biologica al cloud: l'impegno di Alce Nero e Aruba Enterprise nella Modernizzazione dell'Infrastruttura IT	16th of April, 2024	Bologna, Italy	+30
<u>Villaviciosa Faba Show</u>	21-26 th of March, 2023	Villaviciosa, Spain	+100

More details about each workshop can be seen below.

2.4.1.1 Tools and Methods for Ensuring Food Quality Safety in the Supply Chain

On the 6th of April 2023, the team from UTH organised a workshop titled “Tools and Methods for Ensuring Food Quality Safety in the Supply Chain” in the Region of Thessaly in Greece. During the workshop, the ALLIANCE project was presented, highlighting the project’s objectives and use cases that will be carried out. The workshop attracted over 150 people.



Figure 21 The UTH team at the Workshop "Tools and Methods for Ensuring Food Quality and Safety in the Supply Chain"

2.4.1.2 Presentation of ALLIANCE to stakeholders in Asturias (Faba beans supply chain)

On 19th of January 2023, ASINCAR, IGPPFA and CMAST partners organised a regional ALLIANCE information day at the ASINCAR facilities, bringing together approximately 30 people, including key regional stakeholders, end-users of the envisioned faba bean fraud detection tool, faba producers and packers, research organisations, public authorities as well as innovation funding bodies. During the workshop, different digital solutions for improving the efficiency and the control of food processing operations were presented. In this context, ASINCAR showed different applications based on the use of portable NIR (Near Infrared Spectroscopy) that are currently under development, including ALLIANCE, which is focussing on a portable, easy to use device for the detection of frauds in the regional PGI faba bean. The activity raised interest amongst media outlets, including regional TV and radio stations.



Figure 22 Media coverage of the presentation of ALLIANCE to the Faba beans supply chain

2.4.1.3 Digital Services to Promote the Efficiency of the Agrifood Sector

On the 24th of January 2024, the team from ASINCAR organised an event in collaboration with CMAST, in which ALLIANCE was presented. The event took place in Asturias, Spain and attracted over 40 participants.



Figure 23 The team from ASINCAR and CMAST presenting ALLIANCE at the Workshop on Digital Services to Promote Efficiency of the Agrifood Sector

2.4.1.4 Workshop on EU project in the Asturias Region

On the 23rd of February 2023, the team from CMAST presented their participation in research and innovation projects related to biodiversity, rural development and agrifood, mobilising more than 18 million euros for the region. Amongst the projects that were presented was ALLIANCE, showcasing the pilot project that will take place in the region. ASINCAR were also an active contributor to the event which attracted over 50 people.



Figure 24 The team from CMAST presenting ALLIANCE at a regional workshop

2.4.1.5 Seminar “The Organic Food Industry: The Word from Food technologists”

On the 9th of September 2023, the team from FBS organised a seminar titled “The Organic Food Industry: The Word from Food technologists” during SANA Fair, in Bologna, which attracted an audience of over 25 people. The paradigm shift in the management of food supply chain systems for the fight against fraud in organic products was highlighted during the seminar. Cristina di Mauro, Project Communication Officer, reiterated the objectives that ALLIANCE aims to achieve. The participation of the two Italian partners in the consortium, FederBio Servizi srl and Alce Nero S.p.a, was

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also mentioned. The two organisations will work on a pilot project aimed at developing a tool useful for preventing fraud in the organic pasta supply chain, using IoT and Artificial Intelligence technologies and which supports the actors in the supply chain to predict possible fraud.



Figure 25 The team from FBS presenting ALLIANCE at a seminar during the SANA Fair in Bologna, Italy

2.4.1.6 ALLIANCE Local Conference

From the 4th to the 5th of April 2023, ORIG, in collaboration with MENA and FINS organised an event in Arilje to inform the wider audience about the start of the ALLIANCE project, its objectives and steps taken in the preparatory stage. The event aimed to mobilise wider producers' group to interact with the Association of Arilje raspberry PDO and Original in further activities of the project. During the event, the president of the municipality of Arilje, Predrag Maslar, said that the local self-government stands with the "Ariljska malina" Association and the "Alliance" project, because it will improve the traceability of the Arilje raspberry, as well as protection against misuse.



Figure 26 A news item in the Agroportal website covering the ALLIANCE Local Conference

2.4.1.7 Dalla filiera biologica al cloud: l'impegno di Alce Nero e Aruba Enterprise nella Modernizzazione dell'Infrastruttura IT

On the 16th of April 2024, the headquarters of ALNE hosted the event “From the Organic Supply Chain to the Cloud” in San Pietro, Bologna, Italy. In addition to the partnership with the company Aruba Enterprise aimed at modernizing IT infrastructure, ALLIANCE was also presented and discussed. Promotional material for the project was also distributed.



Figure 27 The ALNE team presenting ALLIANCE during the event "From the Organic Supply Chain to the Cloud"

The ALLIANCE consortium has already exceeded the existing target for the organisation of workshops (3 with an average of 30 participants each). As the project moves into the second reporting period, the workshops will continue and will move to more focussed workshops on specific elements of the project, such as the technologies being used in the pilot studies.

2.4.1.8 Villaviciosa Faba Bean Show

From the 21st to the 26th of March 2023, IGFA organised the Villaviciosa Faba bean show. The team from ASINCAR also participated in the event. Paula Álvarez (IGPFA Manager) took part in a round table where ALLIANCE project was mentioned. ASINCAR’s team participated in a technical session where the ALLIANCE activities were also mentioned.



Figure 28 The IGPPFA Team presenting ALLIANCE during a round table discussion at the Villaviciosa Faba Bean Show 2023

2.4.1.9 Meet PGI Faba Bean Operators

On the 9th of March 2023, IGPPFA organised the event titled “Meet the PGI Faba bean operators that was held in Valdés, in Asturias, Spain. ASINCAR and CMAST also participated actively in the event which attracted 35 people. During the event, ASINCAR gave a presentation on ALLIANCE, highlighting the challenges, objectives and technologies that will be used in the project.



Figure 29 The programme from the Meet the PGI Faba Beans Operators event

2.4.2 Events attended by the Project Consortium

The ALLIANCE consortium has been extremely active during the first period of the project with regards to attending external events in representation of the project. As of April 2024, consortium partners have attended a total of 14 external events. Representation at these events ranged from a specific presentation about ALLIANCE, to a booth containing promotional material about the project. During this phase, the focus has been on communication about the project’s existence, the objectives, activities that are underway, partners and expected results. The events were attended took place across Europe, spanning countries such as Spain, Greece, Germany, Croatia and Belgium and had a potential reach of over 204,000 people. Networking was also carried out to engage with and grow and the ALLIANCE community of stakeholders. A summary list of the events that were attended during the first reporting period can be seen in Table 3.

Table 4 Summary of Attended Events

Event	Date	Location	No. of attendees
TRANSIFIERE 2023 – 12th European Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation	15-17 th of February, 2023	Málaga, Spain	+4,300



ALLIANCE

<u>TRANSFIERE 2024 – 13th European Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation</u>	20-22 nd of March, 2024	Málaga, Spain	+5,000
<u>ALIMENTARIA 2024 – International Food Fair</u>	18-21 st of March, 2024	Barcelona, Spain	+100,000
<u>ETAGRO 2023 – 17th International Conference of the Hellenic Association of Agricultural Economists</u>	2-3 rd of November, 2023	Thessaloniki, Greece	+300
<u>FOOD4FUTURE 2024 – Foodtech for the Food Industry</u>	17 th of April, 2024	Bilbao, Spain	+8,000
<u>18th International European Forum (Iglis-Forum*) on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks</u>	12-16 th of February, 2024	Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany	+70
<u>Salon Gourmet 2023 – 36th International Fine Food and Beverages Fair</u>	17-20 th of April, 2023	Madrid, Spain	+116,000
<u>Conference of the Region of Thessaly on Agricultural and Livestock Development</u>	6-7 th of April, 2024	Region of Thessaly, Greece	+70
<u>SALENOR 2024 – The Northern Spain Food and Equipment Fair</u>	19-21 st of February, 2024	Aviles, Asturias	+9,000
<u>AGROPEC 2023 – 37th Field and Agriculture Industry Fair</u>	22-24 th of September, 2023	Gijón, Asturias	+78,000
<u>Standing Committee on Agricultural Research SCAR Conference</u>	22 nd of June, 2023	Brussels, Belgium	+30
<u>Horizon Europe Information Session</u>	15 th of November, 2023	Asturias, Spain	+50
<u>I MEDIFIT Conference</u>	16-17 th of October, 2023	Cordoba, Spain	+50
<u>59th Croatian and 19th International Symposium on Agriculture</u>	11-16 th of February, 2024	Dubrovnik, Croatia	+50
<u>I National Congress of Legumes with Quality Label</u>	9 th of February, 2023	Asturias, Spain	+40
<u>THINK Innovation Forum</u>	4 th – 5 th of April 2023	Democritus University of Thrace Incubator, Xanthi	+40
HELEXPO International Fair	9 th -17 th of September 2023	Thessaloniki, Greece	+80000
<u>Workshop, “Digital Transformation towards a Sustainable Agriculture”</u>	27 th of September 2023	Larisa, Greece	+100
IoPotato	15 th of December 2023	Neurokopi, Greece	+30
NASELOS S.A.	15 th of December 2023	Thessaly, Greece	+10
<u>PHILOSOFISH S.A.</u>	30 th of January 2024	Thessaly, Greece	+10



Press conference, Prefecture of Thessaly	27 th of March 2024	Thessaly, Greece	+40
Training Workshop, “Digital Transformation in the agrifood sector”	4 th – 5 th of April 2024	Tyrnavos, Larisa, Greece	+40

More details about each event can be seen below.

2.4.2.1 TRANSFIERE, 2023 and 2024 Editions

The TRANSFIERE event is held in Malaga on a yearly basis and is one of Europe’s largest events on R&D&I and knowledge transfer, connecting the entire Spanish innovation system and helping to increase the international exposure of ALLIANCE. ASINCAR participated actively in the 2023 and 2024 editions of the event with a booth and distributed promotional materials about the project, showcasing ALLIANCE to attendees and promoting a more interoperable, transparent, and traceable food system. The event attracted over 9,000 people over the two editions.



Figure 30 ASINCAR partner distributes ALLIANCE promotional materials during TRANSFIERE 2024

2.4.2.2 ALIMENTARIA 2024

The ALLIANCE project was also represented at the ALIMENTARIA EXHIBITION that was held in Barcelona from the 18th-21st of March 2024. ALIMENTARIA is the international meeting point of reference for all professionals in the food, beverage and food service industry, due to its attractive offer, which is based on the sector’s key markets and their consumer trends. ASINCAR distributed promotional materials about ALLIANCE at the event. The event was attended by over 100,000 people.



Figure 31 ASINCAR partner distributes ALLIANCE promotional materials during ALIMENTARIA 2024

2.4.2.3 ETAGRO 2023

The 17th International Conference of the Hellenic Association of Agricultural Economists (ETAGRO 2023) took place on the 2nd and 3rd of November 2023 in Thessaloniki, Greece, attracting over 300 participants. The team from UTH made a presentation at the event titled “The food fraud landscape: A brief review on food safety and authenticity” where ALLIANCE was also presented.



Figure 32 UTH team presenting ALLIANCE at the 17th International Conference of the Hellenic Association of Agricultural Economists (ETAGRO 2023)

2.4.2.4 FOOD4FUTURE 2024

Armando Menéndez Estrada and Pelayo González González, ASINCAR’s team members of ALLIANCE project, attended the Food4Future FoodTech and Congress, which was held from the 23rd to the 25th of April 2023 in Bilbao, Spain. It is the leading FoodTech tradeshow and congress where one can acquire cutting-edge technology, innovative products, and solutions that will boost the competitiveness and sustainability for the entire food value chain. During the event, ASINCAR distributed ALLIANCE promotional material to the stakeholders interested in the project.





Figure 33 ASINCAR distribute ALLIANCE promotional materials during the FOOD4FUTURE – FOODTECH WORLD SUMMIT in Bilbao, Spain

2.4.2.5 18th International European Forum on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks

From the 12th to the 16th of February 2024, the team from UTH participated in the 18th International European Forum on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks in Garmisch-P, Germany. They gave a presentation titled “Vulnerability and Critical Control Point Assessment of the Feta Cheese Supply Chain in Greece towards Blockchain Implementation” highlighting ALLIANCE and the case study being carried out. The event attracted 70 people.



Figure 34 The team from UTH presenting at the 18th International Forum on System Dynamics and Innovation in Food Networks

2.4.2.6 Salon Gourmet 2023

From the 17 to the 20th of April 2023, the team from ASINCAR attended the Salon Gourmet 2023, the 36th International Fine Food and Beverages Fair held in Madrid, Spain which attracted an audience of over 116,000 people. During the event, the team distributed promotional materials about ALLIANCE to visitors.



Figure 35 The ASINCAR team distributing promotional materials about ALLIANCE at Salon Gourmet 2023

2.4.2.7 Conference of the Region of Thessaly on Agricultural and Livestock Development

From the 6th to the 7th of April 2024, the team from UTH presented ALLIANCE at the two-Day Conference of the Region for Agricultural and Livestock Development. The professor and director of the Agricultural Economy and Consumer Behaviour laboratory, George Vlontzos, presented ALLIANCE to an audience of over 70 people, alongside other research projects in which the laboratory participates.



Figure 36 The UTH team presents ALLIANCE at the two-day conference for Agricultural and Livestock Development in the Region of Thessaly

2.4.2.8 SALENOR 2024

From the 19th to the 21st of February 2024, the ASINCAR team participated in the SALENOR 2024 trade fair, which has a focus on the good and food equipment. The event attracted over 9,000 people and promotional material on ALLIANCE was distributed to participants.



Figure 37 Promotional materials at the SALENOR 2024 event

2.4.2.9 AGROPEC 2023

From the 22nd to the 24th of September 2023 the ASINCAR team attended AGROPEC – 37th Fair of the Field and Agricultural industries. The event attracted 78,000 visitors and the promotional material about ALLIANCE was distributed to attendees.

2.4.2.10 Standing Committee on Agricultural Research SCAR Conference

On the 22nd of June 2023, the team from UTH attended the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) Conference. SCAR advises the European Commission, EU member states and associated countries on R&I priorities to address Europe’s challenges in agriculture, fisheries, food systems and the wider bioeconomy. The UTH made a presentation about the ALLIANCE project to the attendees.

2.4.2.11 Horizon Europe Information session

On November 15th, ASINCAR participated in the regional event “Horizon Europe Information Session” organised at regional level. The multiple funding opportunities available in the cluster 6 2024 calls were presented by the National Contact Point, Marta Conde. The General Manager of ASINCAR then presented ALLIANCE as a success case, highlighting the work carried out to date and the expected results. ALLIANCE was also represented during the round table discussion where several regional organisations shared their experience in cluster 6 approved projects. The event attracted over 50 people.



Figure 38 ASINCAR presenting ALLIANCE as a success case at a regional event in Spain

2.4.2.12 I MEDIFIT Conference

The I MEDIFIT Conference was held on the 16-17th of October in Cordoba, Spain and was organised by MEDIFIT-PRIMA, a consortium of academic institutes and industrial partners funded by the PRIMA-EU scheme. The aim of this group is to enable authenticity and control of traditional Mediterranean foods using the latest analytical and software technologies. The conference convened about 50 researchers and scientists working on food traceability, digital solutions and non-destructive methods aimed to improve food safety and quality and to protect food authenticity in the Mediterranean region and Europe. At this first conference, the ALLIANCE project was represented by project partner MIGROS who presented a poster on the project.



Figure 39 The MEDIFIT Conference Programme highlighting the participation of ALLIANCE

2.4.2.13 59th Croatian and 19th International Symposium on Agriculture

From the 11th to the 16th of February 2024, the team from UNIZGB presented the ALLIANCE project at the 59th Croatian and 19th International Symposium on Agriculture in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The presentation was titled "Applying Smart-Contracts to fight Food Fraud in PGI Lika Potatoes". They highlighted the preliminary research carried out during the first year of the project demonstrator #5 on PGI Lika Potatoes, aimed at improving food traceability via encrypted sensor-derived information that will ensure authenticity of the product.



Figure 40 The team from UNIZG presenting ALLIANCE at the 59th Croatian and 19th International Symposium on Agriculture

2.4.2.14 I National Congress of Legumes with Quality Label

On the 9th of February 2023, IGPFA, ASINCAR and CMAST attended the I National Congress of Legumes with Quality Label. During the event, ALLIANCE (objective and technology proposed for pilot) was presented by ASINCAR's team.



Figure 41 - The ASINCAR team presenting ALLIANCE at the I National Congress of Legumes with Quality Label

In relation to the KPIs set for ALLIANCE, the consortium has already exceeded the target for attended events for the whole duration of the project (6 workshops and 3 conference presentations). This shows the dedication of ALLIANCE consortium members to actively participate and share the project updates and results. As the team moves forward into the second reporting period, a focus will be more on showcasing the results from the project.

2.4.2.15 THINK Innovation Forum

THINK Innovation Forum organised at Democritus University of Thrace Incubator, in Xanthi 04/04/2023-05/04/2023. ALLIANCE presented AI revolutionary services in a fast-becoming one the foremost digital technology exhibitions in Southeast Europe, though the #DigiAgriFood hub.



Figure 42 - The UTH team presenting ALLIANCE at the THINK Innovation Forum

2.4.2.16 HELEXPO International Fair

HELEXPO International Fair, organised in Thessaloniki 09/09/2023-17/09/2023. UTH team presented project results to educational stakeholders and policy representatives.



Figure 43: UTH team presenting ALLIANCE results at the HELEXPO International Fair in Thessaloniki

2.4.2.17 Digital Transformation towards Sustainable Agriculture

UTH team participated and presented the results at the Workshop, “Digital Transformation towards a Sustainable Agriculture” 27/10/2023, JOIST Venue, Larisa The workshop was organized via FarmB and the EIT - European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT Food), where stakeholders and public were informed about the mission, objective and services offered by the #DigiAgriFood hub.



Figure 44: UTH team presenting ALLIANCE at the Digital Transformation towards Sustainable Agriculture workshop

2.4.2.18 IoPatato

IoPotato organised at 15/12/2023. UTH team participated in the organized dissemination event for the Project “Optimizing potato product value chain in Nevrokopi (PGE product) with precision agriculture applications”, to promote state-of-the-art technology solutions for an important product of Greece.

2.4.2.19 NASELOS S.A. visit

UTH team presented ALLIANCE solutions at NASELOS Industry at 15/12/2023. UTH team visited a modern husbandry unit for pilot application and requirement analysis, with the aim to improve traceability and quality of products of animal origin.



Figure 45: UTH team's visit at NASELOS industry to present ALLIANCE

2.4.2.20 PHILOSOFISH S.A. visit

UTH team visited a modern fish hatchery unit for pilot application and requirement analysis, in order to apply digital tools for controlling food authenticity. ALLIANCE solutions were presented.



Figure 46: UTH team's visit at Philosofish industry to present ALLIANCE solutions

2.4.2.21 Press conference, Prefecture of Thessaly

Press conference of the District Governor of Thessaly, D. Kouretas, to support the work of the University of Thessaly on digitally transforming the agrifood sector and to announce local bureau for citizen support.



Figure 47: UTH team presentation at the Prefecture of Thessaly

2.4.2.22 Digital Transformation in the agrifood sector

The workshop aimed to offer training to producers and agriculturists on the use of digital technologies in the agrifood sector, with focus on improved traceability, product quality improvement and transportation efficiency with blockchain and other disruptive technologies. UTH team participated and presented ALLIANCE solutions.



Figure 48: UTH team presenting ALLIANCE solutions

2.4.3 Scientific publications

Scientific publications are planned for the latter phases of the project once results have been obtained. Nevertheless, one conference paper has been published onto Proceedings. Additionally, six research papers are being prepared for submission at international conferences and/or peer reviewed journals.

In compliance with article 17 of the ALLIANCE Grant Agreement, which states that the project must ensure open access to peer-reviewed scientific publications relating to their results, a so-called “community” for the ALLIANCE project was set up on Zenodo and is reachable at the following link: <https://zenodo.org/communities/alliance-againstfoodfraud/>

Zenodo is a free to use, open-source repository hosted by CERN and developed as part of the European OpenAIRE programme. Zenodo allows researchers to upload different types of research outputs (papers, datasets, reports) and share them openly. Zenodo can also generate a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for those outputs that do not have one already.

While researchers could theoretically upload their own contents independently onto Zenodo without the need for a project-related account, the creation of a project community – not initially foreseen in the initial dissemination strategy - offers the notable advantage of establishing a sort of project repository, a “one-stop-shop” providing easy and open access to all project-related research outputs at once. It is also a way to ensure that content will continue to remain accessible and linked to the project for many years to come, as documents uploaded to ZENODO are guaranteed to be kept on CERN’s servers indefinitely.

For now, the only content available on the Zenodo ALLIANCE collection is the above-mentioned paper presented at a conference and subsequently published in Proceedings. It is expected that more research outputs will be uploaded there once results of the research activities are published.

2.5 Monitoring against KPI

As shown in the summary table below, most of the KPIs are on track to being achieved, with some having already exceeded the target for the whole project (e.g. unique visitors to the website, number of events organised). In some other cases, progress has been slower. In some cases, such as performance on Twitter / X, this is mostly due to the change in the platform that were discussed above, which resulted in the original target becoming unattainable. Furthermore, some of the metrics initially identified for the KPIs are not as suitable for ALLIANCE. This is the case of the metric chosen for the KPI for YouTube, number of subscribers. In hindsight, the number of visualisations of the videos would be more relevant.

In other cases, it was largely expected that there would not be results in the first half of the project, due to the nature of the indicator, and /or because they are linked to key results to be released in the second half of the project. This is particularly the case with the scientific papers, which can only be published after the data collection, analysis, write up, peer review and, often, revisions have taken place. The fact that six papers are in the pipeline confirms that the target of 5 peer reviewed articles, while certainly ambitious, does remain attainable within the second half of the project.

Table 5 - Progress against KPIs

Measure	KPI	Objective	Achieved by April 2024
e-brochure	No. of brochures distributed	At least 200 downloads per year	61
Poster	No. of posters produced	2	1 in year 1
e-newsletter	No. of newsletters	At least 1 per year	1 in year 1
High-level materials for policy makers	No. of sets / white papers published and disseminated	At least 1 per year / 3 white papers in total	0
Website	No. of unique visitors	> 1000 visitors/year	2,568
Social Networks	No. of followers in Twitter/LinkedIn/YouTube	>500/>200/>100	69/452/17
Workshops	No. of workshops and no. of participants	3/30 per event	9 / avg 50 attendees per event
Videos	No. of videos published on YouTube channel /average number of views	2 videos and > 1000 views per video	7 videos, avg. 55 views each (388 in total)
Scientific publications	No. of peer-reviewed papers/articles	5	0
Presentations	No. of presentations made	At least 3 per year	4

External events	No. of events attended	6	23
Best practices, regulations and lessons learned	No. of sets of best practices with related statistics from different EU /EU associated countries uploaded on the ALLIANCE website	20	7
Liaison with relevant EU funded projects	No. of Joint meaningful activities with EU funded projects from the Green Deal (H2020) and the Horizon Europe framework. MoUs signed with respective stakeholders along with minutes from meetings	>10	3
Valorisation board	Number of stakeholders from the food industry comprising the valorisation board of the project	50	-

3. ALLIANCE Dissemination and Communication strategy update

In this section, we will provide an update of the strategy considering lessons learned in the first half of the project. By and large, the strategy outlined in D5.2 with its phased approach remains relevant. Phase 1 “Engage”, which was mostly concerned with building an audience and raising awareness about the project in its first year, is now over. The project has now transitioned to the central phase “Promote” (M12-M30), which aims at keeping stakeholders informed of the project’s scientific and technological developments. The focus will be on providing information on how the project’s results address the needs of different stakeholders, and on engaging these audiences in meaningful dialogue, nurturing a community around ALLIANCE. These dissemination efforts will intensify after M18 of the project, following the release of several interim reports about the different technological solutions being developed. Then, in the last six months of the project the “Exploit” phase will lay out the foundations that will enable future exploitation and/or marketability of the solutions developed through ALLIANCE. This last phase will involve activities such as publicising the project results, creating promotional materials, and further engaging with the ALLIANCE community, building on existing interest and collaborating with stakeholders to encourage further investment in its development. Promotional activities can also help to share successful experiences from the project that can be used as models for other projects or initiatives. This helps to ensure that best practices are shared widely so that others may benefit from them.

3.1 Objectives

The objectives for the dissemination and communication strategy remain the same defined in the Grant Agreement and in the initial Dissemination and Communication Strategy (D5.2). ALLIANCE aims to provide a holistic framework that safeguards data integrity and veracity, enhances traceability and transparency and reinforces interoperability in quality labelled supply chain of organic, PDO, PGI, and GI food, through innovative and improved track-and- trace mechanisms from farm to fork. ALLIANCE’s Grant Agreement defines the objectives of the dissemination and communication strategy of ALLIANCE as follows:

- Define a clear and distinctive brand identity.
- Ensure broad visibility and promotion of ALLIANCE.
- Ensure broad visibility of ALLIANCE's work.
- Facilitate the exploitation of ALLIANCE outcomes.
- Support the sustainability of ALLIANCE beyond its lifetime.

These activities support the achievement of the primary objective of dissemination and communication activities in ALLIANCE, which is: "... to grow the size, reach and activities of the ecosystem [...] for increased scientific and socio-economic impact."



The following basic principles for communication and the approach to and engagement of stakeholders remain equally valid:

- Personalised, multi-channel communication.
- Participation to and organisation of events.
- Long-term relationship building and earning trust.
- Empowerment.

The monitoring of performance of activities related to the dissemination and communication of ALLIANCE is built around the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) defined in the Grant Agreement.

3.2 External communication

3.2.1 ALLIANCE Website

As seen in section 2.1 above, the ALLIANCE website is performing quite well, confirming that the initial strategy and its implementation have been successful. While no major changes are foreseen, the LC team will continue to ensure that it stays relevant and serves the project well. For instance, it may be possible to reorganise menus to give more prominence to certain elements based on the evolving needs of the project. The team will also ensure that all public deliverables are promptly uploaded to the website upon submission.

Going forward, the blog section will continue to play a key role in keeping the target audiences up to date through short summaries of key results and achievements. For this, the project relies on the collaboration of various consortium members who are uniquely positioned to share regular updates on their activities and achievements.

3.2.2 ALLIANCE social media strategy

Given the very strong performance of LinkedIn, which has replaced Twitter as the main social media network for communication and dissemination of ALLIANCE, more effort will be shifted onto the possibilities offered by this platform. Having access to information about the occupation (industry and job function) of the followers can help better understand the needs of the audience and tailor future posts to what may be most relevant for them. In addition, the same data could allow for targeted sponsored campaigns to reach specific sub-groups identified via their industry (e.g. Manufacturing -> Food production; or Agriculture: Farming, Dairy) and/or specific role or seniority level.

While less of a priority compared to LinkedIn, Twitter and Mastodon will continue to be used regularly to share all new website contents, and to repost relevant contents from partners. This will maintain an engagement with the (smaller) audiences who are active on these platforms, but not on LinkedIn. The use of relevant hashtags should in principle (subject to algorithm changes) allow to expand the reach beyond the current follower base. The LC team will also monitor the development of the Mastodon-Threads integration, to be well positioned in the event of a sudden growth in the number of people from relevant target groups using either or both platforms.





Additionally, as mentioned above, the plan is to continue to use the YouTube channel to share videos which summarise in a visual and engaging way the achievements of the project. This is of relevance to more complex concepts that can benefit from a simple and agile presentation. While we do not expect to achieve 100 subscribers to the channel as originally written, the target of having at least 2 videos with 1000 visualisations each appears to be attainable.

3.2.3 ALLIANCE Newsletters

According to the initial plan, at least two additional newsletters will be published during the remainder of the project: The next one will be released during year 2 (summer – early autumn 2024, and it will summarise the key lessons from the deliverables that are going to be released in M18. As in the first newsletter, each “news” item on the newsletter will be a small preview of a dedicated a blog post or website page. Both the newsletter as a whole and the individual news items will be shared on social media to reach a larger audience.

The third newsletter will similarly summarise the final set of deliverables due in year 3. If appropriate, there may be a fourth, final newsletter to be released at the end of the project to summarise final lessons learned.

3.3 External dissemination

3.3.1 Dissemination to policymakers

Plans are in place to organise high-level policy events such as roundtables and workshops to disseminate the key policy-relevant lessons from the project, with the first one tentatively taking place in October-November 2024. The consortium is exploring the possibility of a joint event with other linked Horizon EU projects to exploit the synergies. Another European policy event is expected to take place at around M32.

The ALLIANCE consortium will also publish policy briefs, position papers, and other documents to lay out the main policy-related issues and recommendations emerging from the project’s research.

3.3.2 Scientific and technical dissemination

The KPI for scientific publications of the project is 5 peer reviewed papers. At the time of writing, there are six research papers in the pipeline, of which at least four are intended to be submitted to peer reviewed journals. Others will be presented at conference papers which will contribute to the dissemination of project results in the research community, one of the main target audiences of the project. Copies of all these research outputs will be uploaded in the above-mentioned ALLIANCE project community on the Zenodo open access repository. Summary information and links to the relevant open access outputs will be shared on social media with appropriate hashtags to reach a larger audience.





3.3.3 Dissemination events

ALLIANCE will continue to organise dissemination events, with a tentative plan to have at least one, and ideally two in each pilot site. The objective of these one-day workshops will be for the partners involved to present the pilot development to the relevant community and stakeholders. Partners directly involved in the demonstrator will lead on developing the contents, mobilising the relevant stakeholders, and delivering the workshops in the local language, with organisational / strategical support offered by the Lisbon Council as WP5 lead. A calendar of events is currently being finalised. Additionally, one final European conference will be held around M32 to present the ALLIANCE results to the wider public and the media. This will be organised by LC as the leader of WP5, in close collaboration with the coordinator UTH and other relevant partners.

Furthermore, partners will continue to be encouraged to present ALLIANCE and/or distribute dissemination materials at relevant conferences and industry fairs.

Given that the original KPIs have already been achieved in the first half of the project, it is expected that the consortium members will continue to organise and attend numerous events, substantially exceeding the original targets.

3.3.4 Synergies with other initiatives and projects

As mentioned above, ALLIANCE is clustering with two related initiatives, THEROS (<https://theros-project.eu>) and WATSON (<https://watsonproject.eu>), which will lead to regular meetings and joint activities. THEROS aims to implement an integrated toolbox being capable to modernise the process of verifying organic and geographical indications food products and preventing adulterations and non-compliances, through the use of various technological innovations and data sources, while demonstrating enhanced security, transparency and interoperability in the quality labelled food supply chain. WATSON provides a holistic framework with anticounterfeit and intelligence-based technologies that will assist food chain stakeholders in rapidly identifying and preventing the spread of fraudulent practices.

ALLIANCE is collaborating with the 1st European Digital Innovation Hum in the Hellenic Agrifood sector, titled DigiAgriFood (<https://digiagrifood.gr/en/>), which aim to empower the digital and green transformation of the entire spectrum of the Agri-Food value chain with immediate benefits for citizens, SMEs and public sector.

Similarly, synergies with other related projects will also be pursued by the ALLIANCE consortium.

Partners are already exploring links with related projects such as MEDIFIT-PRIMA, Data4Food2030, or Titan. The KPI of 10 joint activities appears to be attainable. To this end, the ALLIANCE consortium will actively pursue collaborations with other linked projects throughout the remainder of the project.

3.4 Plans for exploitation and /or commercialisation

The ALLIANCE consortium is starting to lay the foundations for the future exploitation and/or commercialisation of the project results, which will become the focus of the final phase – so-called “Exploit” – of the project’s Communication and Dissemination strategy. Two key elements of this final phase will be the Innovation Management, Market Analysis and Commercial Roadmap (T5.3 led by

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Eurofir) and the “ALLIANCE Marketplace” to be developed as part of T5.4 *Marketplace, Systemic Innovations and Industrial Data* led by Netcompany. The work of both tasks has recently started in M15, with the first interim results expected in M24, and final versions to be completed by the end of the project. The next two paragraphs provide some additional details of what the work will focus on, based on the preliminary activities carried out so far. The consortium will also explore the possibility of applying to the Horizon Results Booster.

3.4.1 The ALLIANCE Marketplace

The objective of the ALLIANCE marketplace is to provide an innovative digital platform dedicated to software applications tailored for food fraud detection. The marketplace will serve as a central hub for connecting stakeholders within the food industry, providing a wide range of cutting-edge software solutions designed to address the threat of food fraud.

- The main roles/stakeholders interacting with the marketplace will be the following:
- The customer who represents a user or organization that is looking to buy software.
- applications from the marketplace.
- The supplier who represents a user or organisation looking to sell software applications to the customer. Typically, the supplier will have some publicly accessible data about their offerings and some private information to be shared on a peer-to-peer (P2P) basis.

The app provider who is looking to provide added-value software applications regarding food fraud detection, thus facilitating the interaction between customers and suppliers.

It is worth noting that the peer-to-peer (P2P) marketplace will allow stakeholders to share or exchange resources directly with each other, without the involvement of intermediaries. Through the said digital platform stakeholders/end users can access the systemic innovations described in the technical Work Packages 2 and 3, (to the extent they can be made available/exploitable, together with the industrial data used by relevant stakeholders. The ALLIANCE market platform will integrate business models and plans, commercial exploitation strategies and assessment of overall ALLIANCE impact, as an output of T5.3 while the interaction with the ALLIANCE Digital Knowledge Base (T3.4) will also be investigated.

The ALLIANCE Marketplace is an outcome of T5.4 which has been active from January 2024 (M15). In the coming months the focus will be on the definition of the content/elements that will drive the design of the platform. The first version will be available in M24 and will be reported in the D5.5, while the final version of the ALLIANCE Marketplace will be released at the end of the project (M36).

3.4.2 Innovation Management, Market Analysis and Commercial Roadmap

Innovation management will consider market needs and technical evolutions during the project lifetime to ensure ALLIANCE key exploitable results (KERs) meet market needs. The objectives of the task are to address legal issues (e.g., intellectual property), identify and engage with potential user communities, develop business models that also consider the circular economy, and facilitate knowledge transfer and investment.



Work began in January 2024 (M15) using a series of guided interviews that seek to explore key areas of interest (e.g., nature of the exploitable results, owner/provider, background and contributions within ALLIANCE, previous funding, ambitions for the future) as well as privacy and legal considerations, data FAIRification (findable, accessible, interoperable, re-useable), and training materials. Invitations for guided interviews were sent to KER providers and hosted on Microsoft TEAMS during March 2024 (Table 1). During the interview participants were guided through questions by EuroFIR (Siân Astley, Hana Mušinić) with support from Christina-Ariadni Valagkouti. The guided interviews were recorded for analysis and are stored securely; they are marked for destruction on or before 31st October 2025.

In parallel with Task 4.1– Uses case Scenarios, Planning and Preparation [M12-M19] led by EUROFIR, information obtained through the guided interviews has been used to identify both potential solutions/technology (e.g., next generation portable DNA sequencing, advanced spectroscopy, for Identification of Adulteration and Provenance of Food) and KERs (e.g., DNA database for Italian olives, database of Asturian faba bean physical and chemical characteristics) but also open science outputs (e.g., peer-reviewed publications) that are important for user communities (e.g., researchers) as well as business models and market engagement.

Table 6 - Overview of tools and exploitation routes

Tool, Provider	Development under ALLIANCE	Owner of elements or data	Target Audience	Outcomes	Exploitation Routes
Digital Knowledge Database, FINS	Database	To be confirmed	Producers	Certification	To be confirmed
Blockchain Platform, UTH	UI and blockchain platform	UTH	Food businesses operators (FBO), consumers	Service Publications	Licence
Early Warning Decision Support System, INTRA	Functionalities of pre-existing modules brought together	Intrasoft	Agri-food actors	Service Publications	Monetisation Research
DNA Authentication & Traceability System, BIOCOS	Scalability and specific variety targets	BioCoS	Growers Authorities	Service DNA database Publications	Licence Research
Advanced Spectrometry, ASINCAR	Portability, faba bean specificity	ASINCAR	Authorities	Technology Service Database Publications	Licence Research

For example, BIOCOS had developed a bioinformatics pipeline for processing genomic data and extracting DNA signatures from different plant species prior to ALLIANCE. Now, the team aim to



improve scalability and expand the 2019 olive DNA database, with the ALLIANCE pilot use case starting in M19. Ambitions post-project include extending the technology to other regions with high-value olive products, engaging with the scientific community to further develop and refine the technology, and applying the technology to other plant or animal foods of high value.

Next steps for Task 5.3 are elaboration of individual exploitation pathway in collaboration with Tasks 4.1, 5.2 and 5.4 including market analysis (target audience, needs), business model definition and development using, for example, business model canvas, and including other consideration such as circular economy investment, intellectual property (e.g., patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret), stakeholder engagement, marketing and promotion, routes for continuous improvement, and training.



4. Dissemination and communication monitoring

The main goal of this plan is to ensure the effective communication and dissemination of the project's developments and results through various means and to set forth the approach to the exploitation of the results. For this reason, the contribution of the ALLIANCE consortium is essential to a comprehensive consideration and thorough analysis of the stakeholders as well as tools and channels of communication and dissemination. The Strategy is designed to ensure that the project's results and development are communicated and disseminated in a way that is consistent with the project's objectives and goals, and that the exploitation activities are aligned to the impact that ALLIANCE aims to have.

As leader of WP5, LC will continue to monitor dissemination and communication activities, with particular emphasis on keeping track of progress against KPIs. To that effect, the consortium will continue to record data using monitoring tools and systems already in place, as well as by continuing to have regular (monthly) WP5 meetings.

Particular attention will be given to the KPIs that have shown more limited progress in the first half of the project.

4.1 Next steps

A list of next steps for the communication and dissemination of ALLIANCE is provided in the table below.

Table 2 - Immediate next steps

What	Responsible Partner	Planning
Organisation of dissemination events in each demonstrator site	All partners supported by the Lisbon Council	Ongoing and until end of projects
Roll out of the clustering with “sister” projects	UTH, The Lisbon Council	M18
Organisation of first event with policymakers	The Lisbon Council, UTH, other partners as relevant	M24
Interim commercialisation roadmap	EUROFIR	M24
Interim marketplace	INTRA	M24
Submission of manuscripts to scientific peer reviewed journals	UTH, UNIBO, FINS, INTRA, BIOCOS	M24



5. Conclusion

This deliverable has provided a report of the communication and dissemination activities carried out in the first half of the project, as well as an updated strategy to adapt to changes in circumstances and, finally, a practical overview of next steps to facilitate monitoring efforts. The phased approach outlined in deliverable 5.2 is confirmed. After the first phase, “Engage” (M1-M12) the strategy has transitioned to the central phase of “Promote” (M12-M30). The shift is expected to become more evident after the release of some key deliverables in M18, when it will be possible to provide more details on the solutions being developed under ALLIANCE. This will be followed by the “Exploit” phase in the last six months of the project.

Building onto the existing strategy, and updating it to the present circumstances as needed, this deliverable sets the stage for the consortium to take the next steps towards supporting the project's impact on society and its long-term success.

Going forward, the ALLIANCE consortium is also keen on more consistently applying accessibility best practices in all communication and dissemination materials, such as ALT text on images and closed captions on videos, to ensure that the contents can be used without barriers.





6. References

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