

Nóvoa, T., Roca, R. & Naciph, K. (2025). Identification and description of the KPIs to monitor the Mission R&I priorities.

Deliverable D5.2 EU Horizon Europe.

13. Number of municipalities and regions pursuing citizen led R&I activities related to the Mission Soil

QUANTITATIVE



Funded by
the European Union

SOLO receives funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101091115. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the EU nor the EC can be held responsible for them.

INTRODUCTION

SOLO introduces a comprehensive impact assessment framework designed to evaluate the real-world effects of Mission Soil research and innovation activities across society, the economy, policy, and practice. This adaptable tool supports Mission Soil projects in monitoring and evaluation, with future potential for ex-ante assessment and project design. Beyond defining key components, qualitative indicators, quantitative metrics, and impact narratives, SOLO also outlines the mechanisms needed to effectively implement the framework in practice.

The assessment framework allows for the evaluation of 5 types of impact of Mission Soil Research and Innovation (R&I) activities:

- 1 **Project impact in practice:** focus on impact among land managers, advisors, urban planners and other stakeholders;
- 2 **Project impact on policy and administration:** focus on policy strategies and tools, and other institutional arrangements;
- 3 **Project impact on value chain organisation and practices:** focus on market mechanisms, business models and requirements;
- 4 **Broader societal impact:** focus on literacy, awareness, school programmes and education;
- 5 **Impact on research and innovation:** focus on academic institutions, researchers, publications and funding.

These 5 types of impact correspond to categories under which key performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, are grouped.



The other component of the impact assessment framework is the **impact narrative**: a compelling, substantiated statement which reflects the contributions of R&I activities to society, the economy, policy and practice beyond numbers and quantitative targets.

An **impact narrative** must describe the societal challenge to be tackled; identify the stakeholders and beneficiaries who are positively impacted, explaining how they have experienced meaningful change; describe the situation at the start of the project vis-a-vis the goal of the assessment; describe the specific outcomes and results of the R&I activities; describe changes in behaviour, practices and policies; include real-world examples and stories; be supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence; connect the impact to broader societal goals; and provide insights into the potential future implications and opportunities resulting from the developed R&I.

Number of municipalities and regions pursuing citizen led R&I activities related to the Mission Soil

DESCRIPTION AND IMPORTANCE

This KPI measures the number of municipalities and regions that actively implement research and innovation (R&I) activities aligned with the objectives of the Mission Soil and that have been initiated by citizen input. Citizen-led activities are actions or initiatives that are initiated, designed, governed, and often implemented primarily by ordinary citizens or community groups. It reflects the extent to which local and regional authorities are empowered to take action on soil health by integrating citizen-driven priorities into their soil-related R&I agendas. The KPI captures both the diffusion of Mission Soil principles at the territorial level and the role of public engagement in shaping place-based solutions. It also serves as an indicator of how Mission Soil fosters inclusive, bottom-up approaches that enhance the relevance, legitimacy, and uptake of soil health innovations.

DEFINITION

Number of municipalities and regions pursuing citizen-led R&I activities related to the Mission Soil objectives. These activities may include local soil monitoring programs, citizen driven environmental assessments or experiments, or other R&I activities.

MEASUREMENT

This indicator is measured by counting the number of municipalities and regions that have initiated or are actively implementing R&I activities related to soil health that were proposed, co-designed, or strongly influenced by citizen input. Citizen-led R&I activities refer to actions that emerge from participatory processes which may include public consultations, citizen science initiatives, co-creation workshops or other forms of structured community engagement, local soil monitoring programmes, among others.

This indicator is disaggregated by:

- Country
- Administrative level (municipality or region)
- Type of initiative
- Connection to Mission Soil objectives (e.g., soil restoration, organic matter management, erosion prevention)

Data is collected from:

- Project reports and deliverables describing citizen engagement outcomes and follow-up actions
- Official documents from municipalities or regional authorities (e.g., action plans, policy briefs, funding decisions)
- Stakeholder interviews or surveys verifying citizen involvement and local authority commitment

Only activities that demonstrate a clear link between citizen input and the resulting R&I actions are counted under this indicator.

LEVEL

NUTS level 3

DATA SOURCE

MS reporting; Reporting through the Council of Cities Living Labs

PERIODICITY

Quadrennial

TYPE

Outcome

CLASS

Public take-up

REFERENCES

European Commission. (n.d.-c). *EU Missions & citizen engagement activities*. Retrieved May 29, 2025, from https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/eu-missions-citizen-engagement-activities_en

Schwanitz, V. J., Wierling, A., Arghandeh Paudler, H., von Beck, C., Dufner, S., Koren, I. K., Kraudzun, T., Marcroft, T., Mueller, L., & Zeiss, J. P. (2023). Statistical evidence for the contribution of citizen-led initiatives and projects to the energy transition in Europe. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-28504-4>

