



Session 4

HYBRID Breakout Group Activity

Pan-European Food Systems Science Network: Value Proposition and Gaps



Onsite session: Mario Roccaro, EIT Food / Thom Achterbosch, WUR / Bobby Tsvetkov, WUR
Online session: Cecilia Tonelli, EIT Food / Sofia Mendes, EUFIC / Camila Massri, EUFIC



Overview

- 1) Co-creation of a value proposition
- 2) Closing network gaps

Objective

This session will explore the value proposition and identify gaps in the Pan-European Food Systems Science Network, focusing on its role in advancing food systems transformation. More specifically, we aim to:

- Reflect on the needs and challenges that a Pan-European Food Systems Science Network should address.
- Examine how networked collaborations can enable food systems transformation.
- Identify potential actions to closing current network gaps.
- Create synergies among the key actors of the European food systems.

Imagine FoSSNet as the ideal Food Systems Science and Literacy Network – what does it look like?

What key needs and challenges should the network address?

Consider these in relation to your role as a professional and within your organisation. If it helps, you may also choose to reflect on broader societal and environmental challenges that the network could help tackle.

1

Who do you see as key partners to build a strong, sustainable network to tackle agri-food sector challenges?

Who will you collaborate with to address these challenges and create meaningful impact?

How will the network support you?

What concrete resources, collaborations, or actions can the network provide to help address these challenges and needs?

2

Crafting the value proposition

How would you articulate the value that the ideal Food Systems Science and Literacy Network offer to its members, stakeholders and the food system at large?

3

Closing the gaps

What concrete actions can you propose to close these gaps? Who should be involved, what resources are needed and how can these actions be implemented?

Gap 1

1

Gap 2

Evaluating actions: strengths and weaknesses

Describe and explain: a) strengths (e.g. the opportunities the action(s) create(s)), and b) weaknesses (e.g., barriers, risks, during of after the action(s) implementation)

2

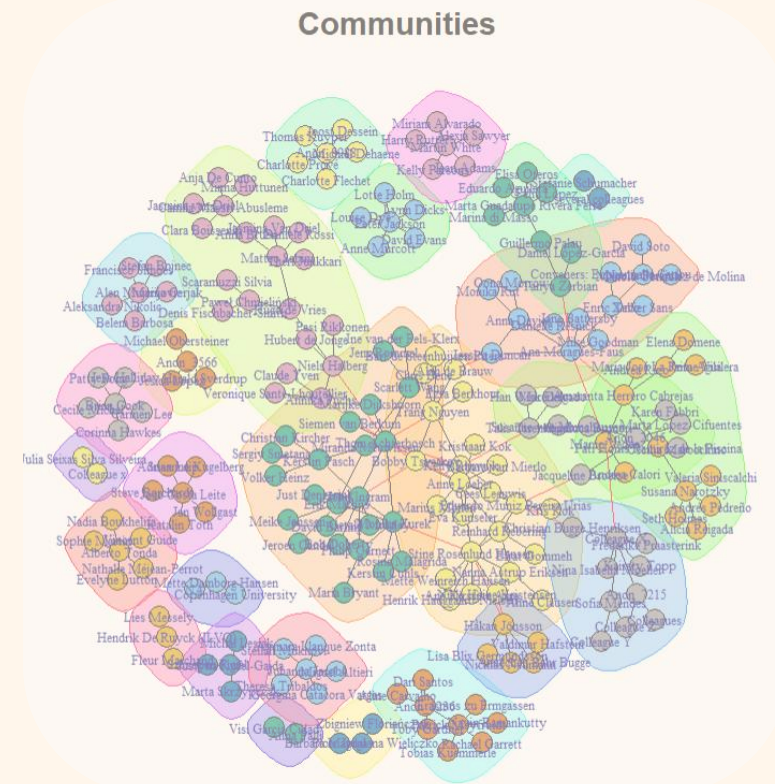
Gap 1: Lack of bridges between communities

Current state

- Clustered communities, less strong interconnections, not very tightly connected internally
- It can take 13 steps to connect the two most distant people!

Ideal state (?)

- Clear communities, and active but not overwhelming communication: a good balance between **collaboration** and **specialisation**.



Gap 2: Vulnerable Hub-driven Network

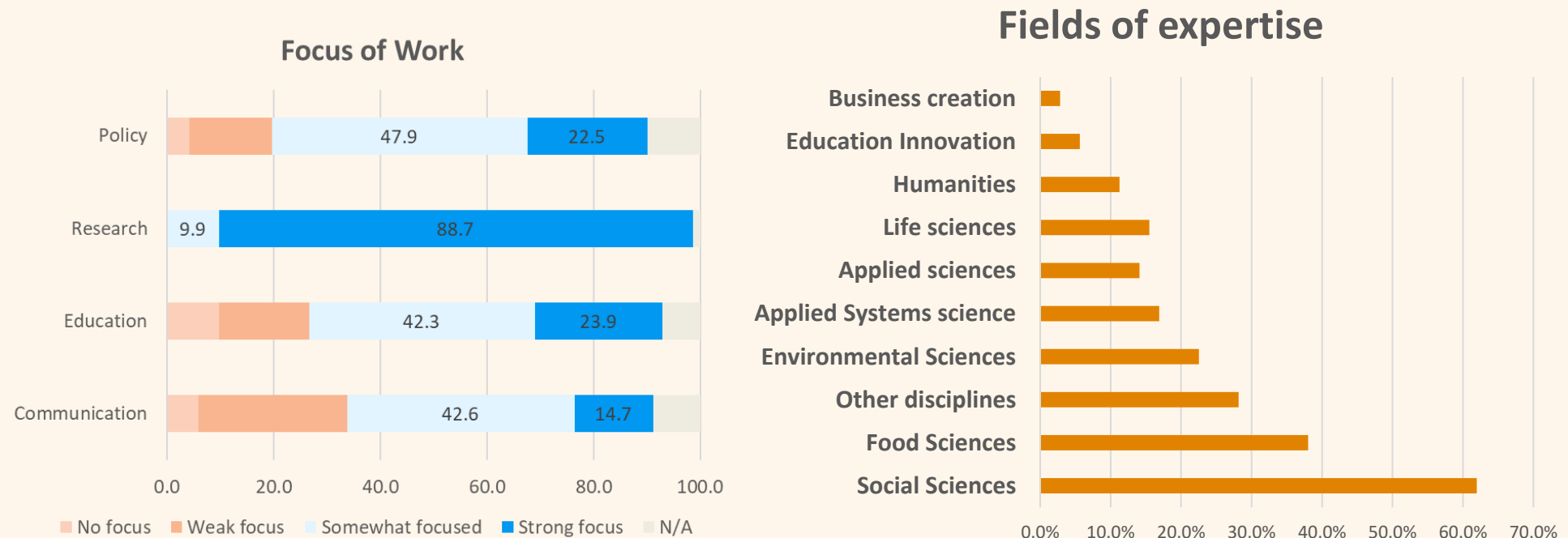
- Most nodes in the network are sparse or isolated, with a majority having only one connection.
- Potentially "hub"-driven network: nodes with many more connections than others
 - Unequal influences and power dynamics
 - Bottlenecks and overloads



Gap 3: Lack of Collaboration beyond Research

	Collaboration activities	% of all connections
RESEARCH	Working in projects together	79%
	Applying for research grants	60%
	Publishing scientific publications	58%
POLICY	Members of science advisory board steering committee	15%
	Development and formulation of policies	14%
	Other	8%
EDUCATION	Development of bachelors/masters/postgraduate programmes	13%
	Development of career trainings	11%
	Other	7%
COMUNICACION	Co-organisation of events and gatherings	44%
	Building partnerships	37%
	Collaboration on social media platforms and websites	17%

Gap 4: Limited Integration of disciplines & roles



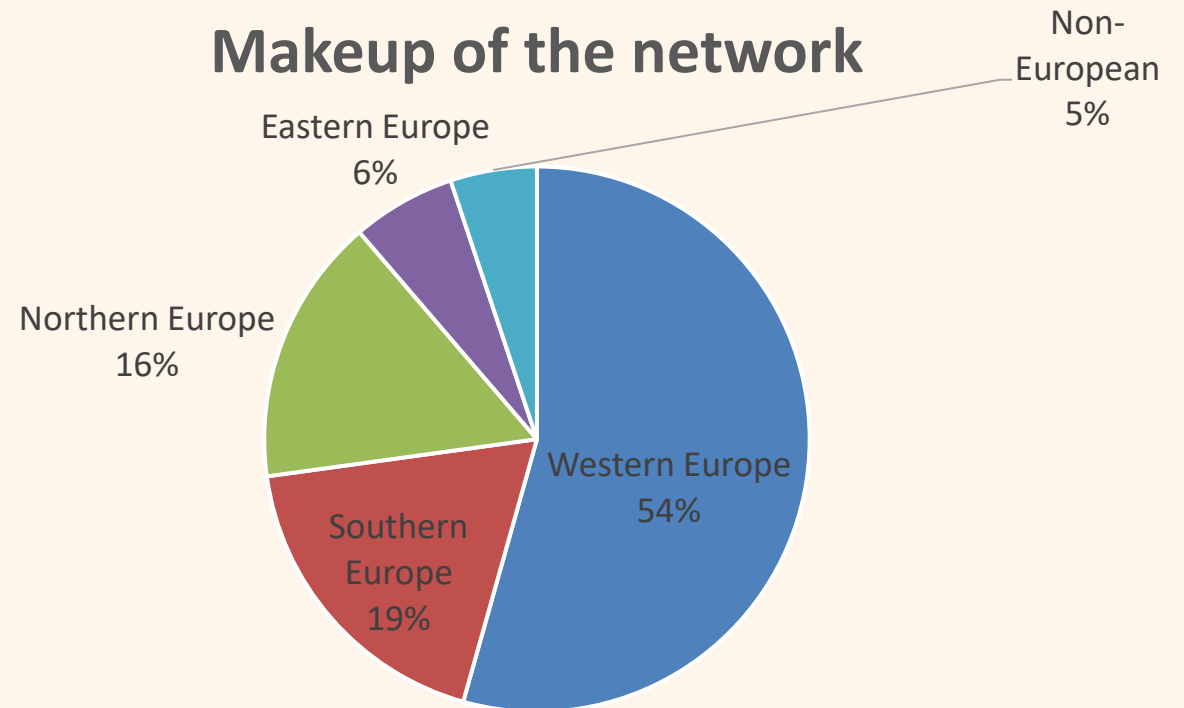
Gap 5: Limited role of earlier career researchers

- Focus on research
- More likely to work with people of their own organisations
- Fewer types of collaborations



Gap 6: Uneven geographical coverage

- 5 countries from Southern Europe, 3 from Eastern Europe





WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH



VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM



LUND
UNIVERSITY

BSC | BALTIC
STUDIES
CENTRE



UNIVERSITAT DE
BARCELONA



Food



Federal Office
for Agriculture and Food

INRAE



UNIVERSIDADE
CATÓLICA
PORTUGUESA

IRWIR PAN



Contact

 [FoSSNet](#)

 info@fossnet.eu

 [SciFoodHealth](#) #FoSSNet

 fossnet.eu



FoSSNet

CONFERENCE 2025



Funded by
the European Union



UK Research
and Innovation

Thank you!

27 March 2025