Key Performance Indicators

How to measure the performance in LIFE and HE proposals

- Carmela Marangi

  Istituto per le Applicazioni del Calcolo M. Picone

  Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

IR0000032 – ITINERIS, Italian Integrated Environmental Research Infrastructures System
(D.D. n. 130/2022 - CUP B53C22002150006) Funded by EU - Next Generation EU PNRR-Mission 4 “Education and Research” - Component 2: “From research to business” - Investment 3.1: “Fund for the realisation of an integrated system of research and innovation infrastructures”

Finanziato dall'Unione europea NextGenerationEU

Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca

Italiadomani

Key performance indicators: the concept

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in research are quantifiable measures used to assess how well a research project or organization is meeting its goals.
- They offer clear metrics to monitor progress, support informed decision-making, and promote accountability.
- By tracking KPIs, researchers can evaluate performance, pinpoint areas that need improvement, and showcase the significance and impact of their work

Key performance indicators: the steps

1. **Define Clear Objectives**
   Start by identifying what you want to achieve with your research project. These goals could include:
   - Publishing in a peer-reviewed journal
   - Securing research funding
   - Achieving specific outcomes or discoveries
   - Improving collaboration or efficiency
2. **Select Relevant KPIs**
   Choose KPIs that directly measure progress toward your goals. Examples include:
   - Number of publications
   - Citation counts
   - Funding amount secured
   - Number of experiments completed on time
   - Stakeholder satisfaction
   - Research impact (e.g., policy changes, patents, community outcomes)
3. **Set Targets**
   Establish benchmarks or target values for each KPI. For example:
   - Publish 3 papers in top-tier journals within 2 years
   - Achieve at least 80% of project milestones on schedule
   - Increase citations by 20% year over year
4. **Collect and Monitor Data**
   Regularly gather data related to each KPI. This could involve:
   - Tracking publications and citations via tools like Google Scholar or Scopus
   - Monitoring budget and timelines
   - Conducting surveys or interviews for qualitative KPIs
5. **Analyze and Interpret Results**
   Compare actual results against your targets. This helps you:
   - Understand what's working
   - Identify areas needing attention or adjustment
   - Justify funding or policy decisions
6. **Take Action**
   Use insights from KPI tracking to:
   - Adjust your strategy or methods
   - Improve efficiency or collaboration
   - Report progress to stakeholders or funders
7. **Review and Revise KPIs**
   As the project evolves, your KPIs may need to change. Periodically review them to ensure they remain relevant and useful.

Example

If one of your goals is to enhance the impact of your research, a KPI could be **"Number of citations in the first year after publication."** If you fall short of your target, you might invest more in dissemination or collaboration strategies.

Source: Horizon –Europe performance

LIFE KPIs

Information gathered at project level contributes to the assessment at programme level

European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency

Home | About us | Programmes | Funding opportunities | Advisory Support | Beneficiaries' corner | News & Events | Publications

European Commission > CINEA > Programmes > LIFE > Key Project-level Indicators (KPIs)

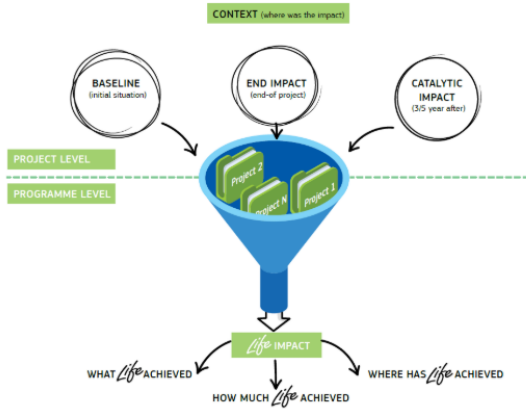
Key Project-level Indicators (KPIs)

PAGE CONTENTS

LIFE KPIs

According to the LIFE Regulations (1293/2013 and 2021/783) the LIFE programme shall be assessed against indicators (named Key Project Level Indicators - KPIs). Annex II of the LIFE Regulation 2021/783 includes a series of Output and Results indicators for this purpose.

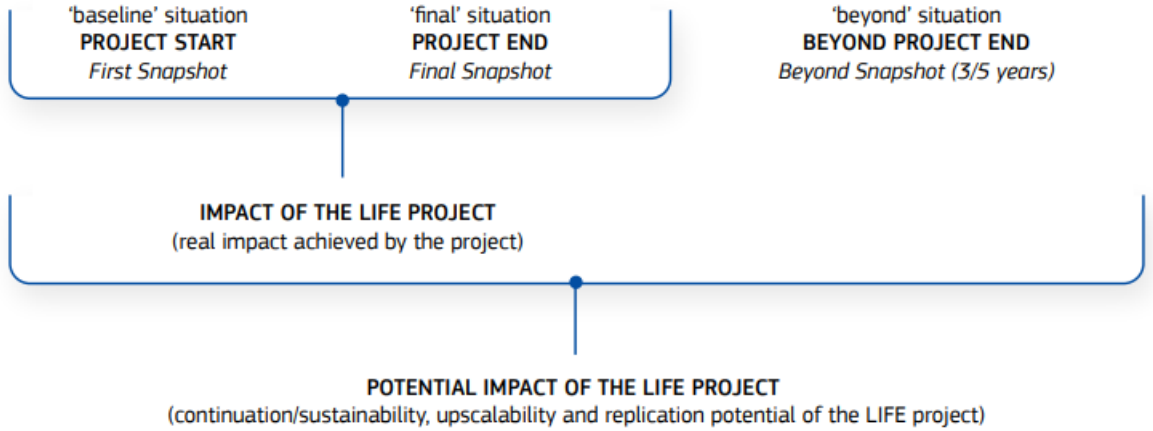
The LIFE programme gathers information on KPIs from LIFE beneficiaries by aggregation of specific project level indicators.



Source: CINEA on LIFE KPIs

Key Performance indicators

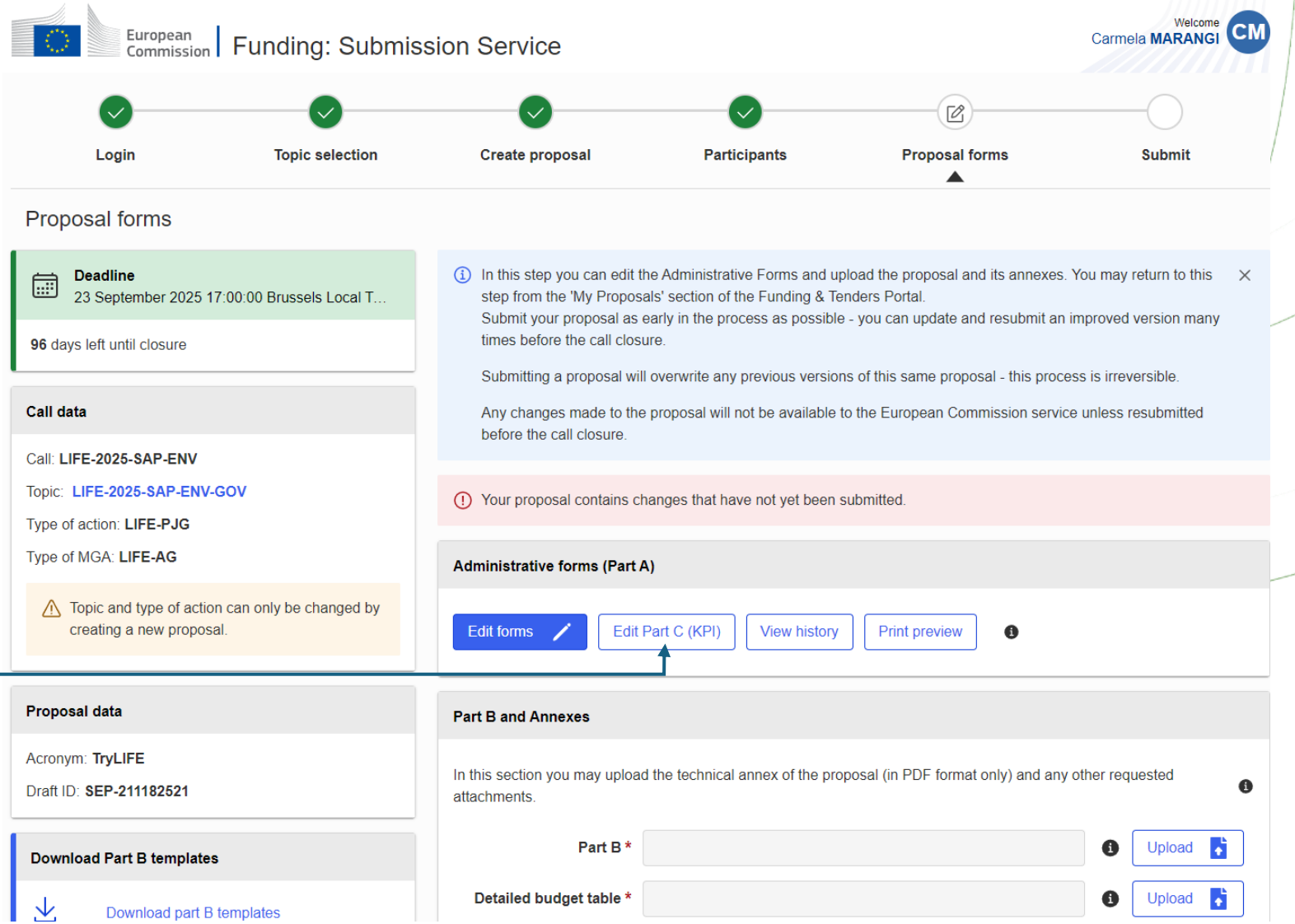
- In practice, LIFE projects are asked to enter three sets of values along with the relevant context within the KPI webtool. These three values are the initial situation or "**baseline**" at the start of the project, the situation at the **end of the project**, and the expected further improvement **3 to 5 years after the project-end**.
- The difference between the final value at project-end and the baseline provides an indication of the impact achieved during the LIFE project.
- The difference between the expected value 3 to 5 years after the project-end and the baseline provides an indication of the potential impact of the LIFE project both during and 3 to 5 years after its end, thus highlighting the continuation/sustainability and replication potential of the LIFE projects.
- This also provides an indication of the full potential impact of the LIFE funding, though it is worth noting that it is difficult to accurately assess the expected impact beyond the project duration.



Source: CINEA on LIFE KPIs

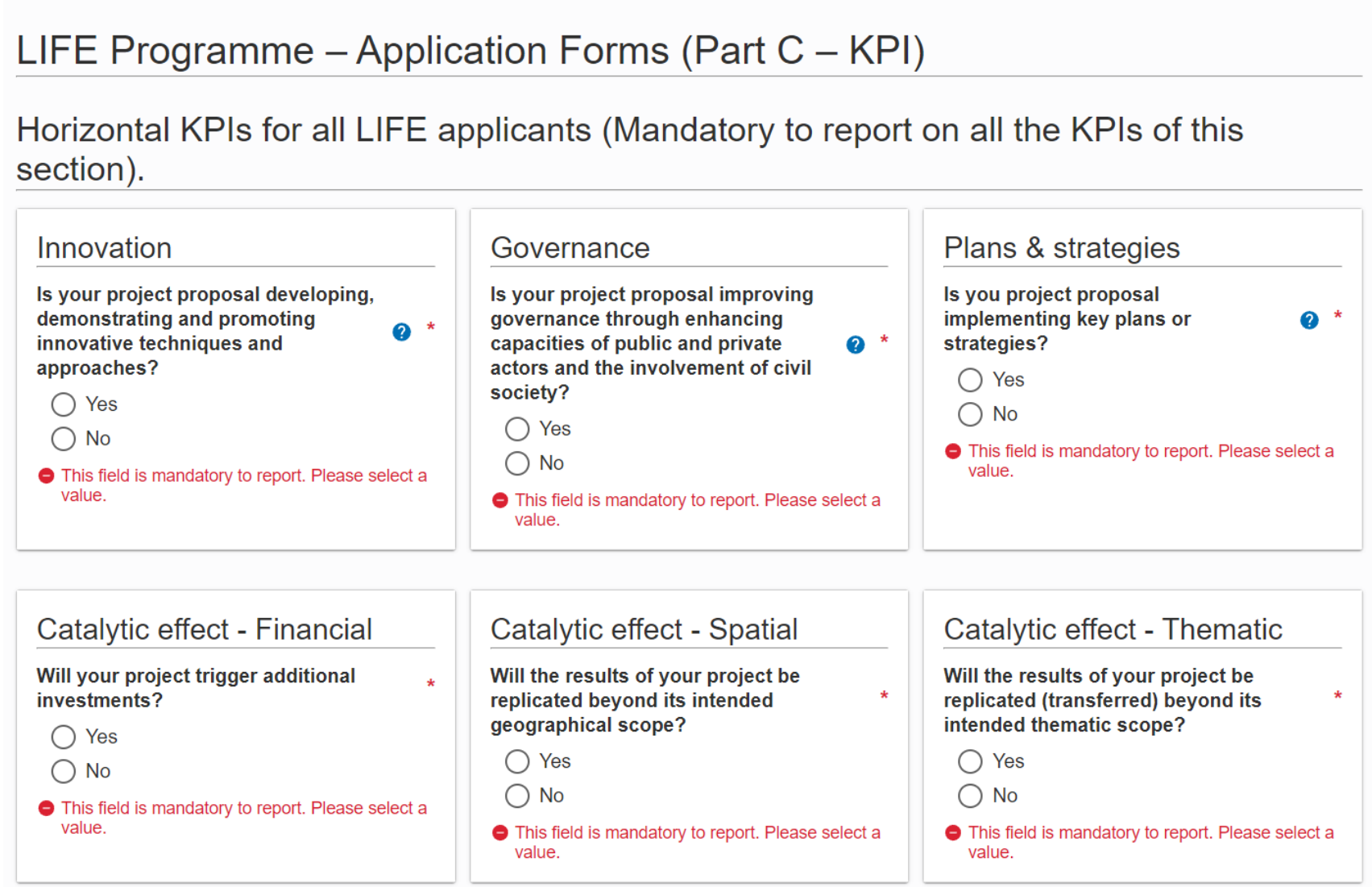
Key Performance indicators

Selecting and quantifying KPIs in a LIFE proposal is mandatory



LIFE Key Performance indicators

The application form facilitates the KPI selection



LIFE Programme – Application Forms (Part C – KPI)

Horizontal KPIs for all LIFE applicants (Mandatory to report on all the KPIs of this section).

Innovation

Is your project proposal developing, demonstrating and promoting innovative techniques and approaches? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

Governance

Is your project proposal improving governance through enhancing capacities of public and private actors and the involvement of civil society? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

Plans & strategies

Is you project proposal implementing key plans or strategies? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

Catalytic effect - Financial

Will your project trigger additional investments? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

Catalytic effect - Spatial

Will the results of your project be replicated beyond its intended geographical scope? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

Catalytic effect - Thematic

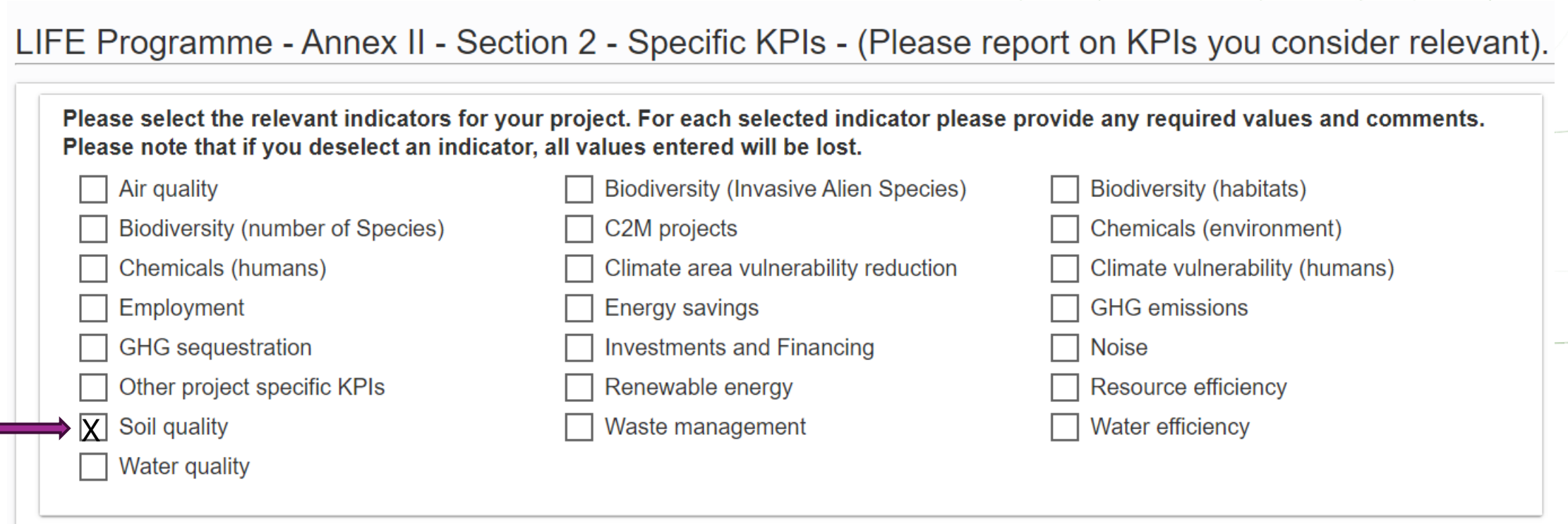
Will the results of your project be replicated (transferred) beyond its intended thematic scope? *

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

This field is mandatory to report. Please select a value.

See the Guidance on LIFE KPIs, the guide and KPI tool

LIFE Key Performance indicators



LIFE Programme - Annex II - Section 2 - Specific KPIs - (Please report on KPIs you consider relevant).

Please select the relevant indicators for your project. For each selected indicator please provide any required values and comments. Please note that if you deselect an indicator, all values entered will be lost.

☐ Air quality	☐ Biodiversity (Invasive Alien Species)	☐ Biodiversity (habitats)
☐ Biodiversity (number of Species)	☐ C2M projects	☐ Chemicals (environment)
☐ Chemicals (humans)	☐ Climate area vulnerability reduction	☐ Climate vulnerability (humans)
☐ Employment	☐ Energy savings	☐ GHG emissions
☐ GHG sequestration	☐ Investments and Financing	☐ Noise
☐ Other project specific KPIs	☐ Renewable energy	☐ Resource efficiency
☒ Soil quality	☐ Waste management	☐ Water efficiency
☐ Water quality		

See the Guidance on LIFE KPIs, the guide and KPI tool

Key Performance indicators

The application form facilitates the KPs' quantification

Soil Quality

Reduction of land area with soil quality issues in km2

In the start-value please provide the baseline of the problem at the start of the project (e.g. the land area with soil quality issues that you aim to address). In the end-value please provide the estimated land area still affected at project-end. The end-value is expected to be lower than the start-value, demonstrating a reduction of the land area with soil quality issues, due to the project actions. Please also provide the estimated area for the 3/5 years after the project end to demonstrate if further reduction would be achieved. Please indicate also the type of pressure on the soil of the area, using the drop-down list. Please also provide relevant comments.

Please select type of pressure on the soil of the area addressed

- [x] Desertification
- [ ] Diffuse contamination
- [ ] Local contamination
- [ ] Soil biodiversity
- [ ] Soil compaction
- [ ] Soil erosion
- [ ] Soil organic matter
- [ ] Soil salination
- [ ] Soil sealing
- [ ] Other or multiple types

Maximum number of items (1) reached.

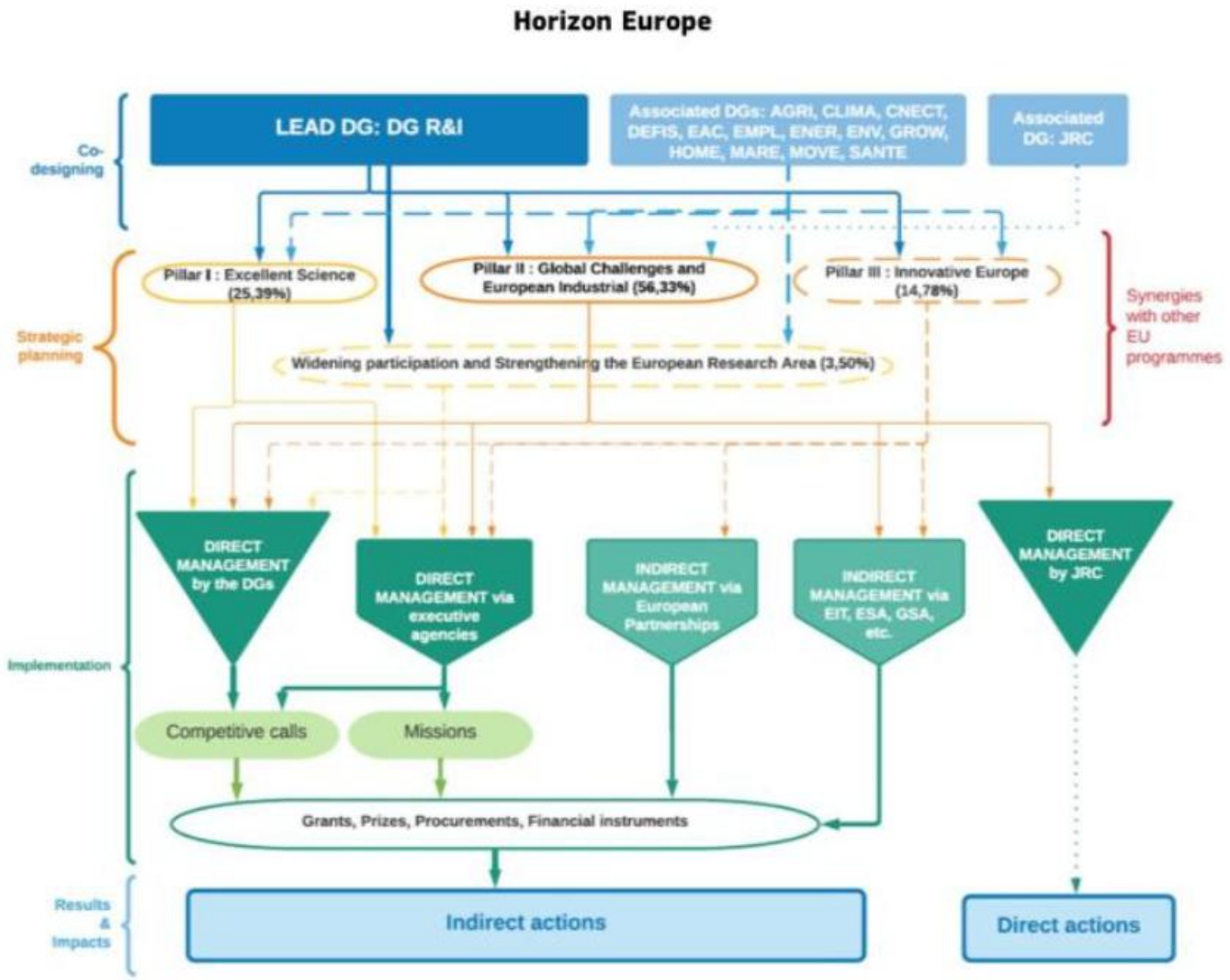
Project-Start Value (Baseline) *	Project-End Value *	3/5 years beyond Project-End Value *	Unit
100	50	2	km2

Please provide stand-alone information to further clarify your input and briefly explain any assumptions/calculations. Please also ensure alignment with the main proposal text.

1000

See the Guidance on LIFE KPIs, the guide and KPI tool

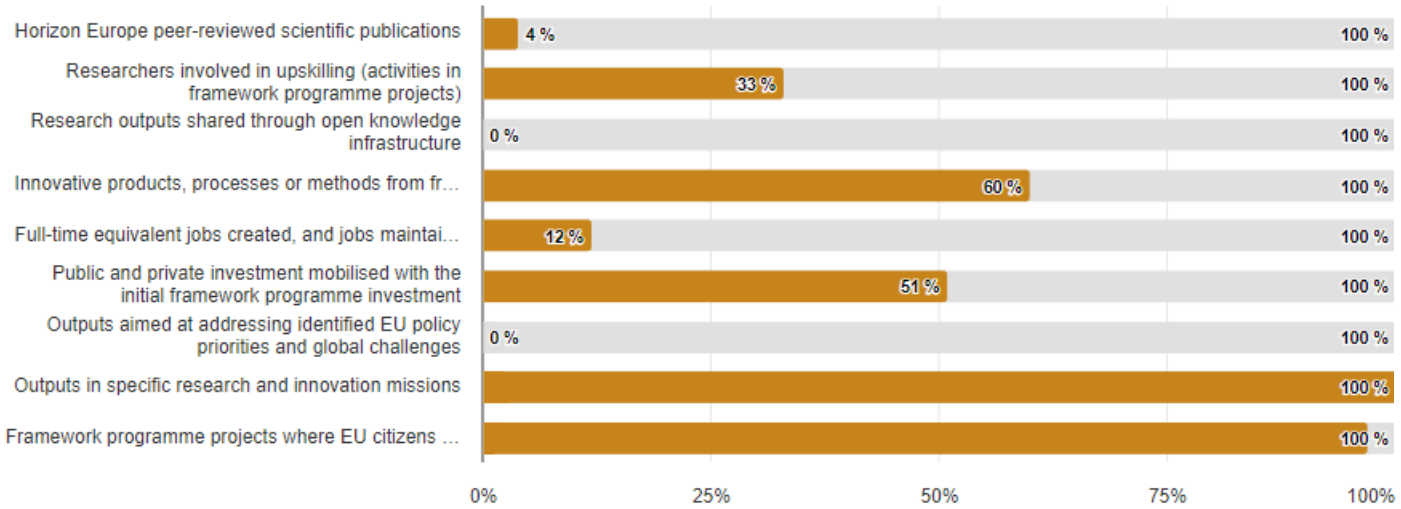
Horizon Europe : the structure



Source: Horizon –Europe performance

Horizon Europe KPIs

The Commission is committed to present a summary of the overall progress towards achieving the programme objectives, and includes the 'Key performance indicators' with an assessment of whether the indicators are on track to reach their targets.



Time horizon 2030 (2027)

Concrete examples of achievements

106 525
eligible proposalshave been put forward (since 2021).

17 813
proposalswere created and supported between 2022 and 2024.

26 972
distinct organisationshave been involved in the projects.

17%
of fundshave been allocated to small and medium-sized enterprises.

7 753
peer reviewed scientific publicationshave resulted from the programme.

179 000 in 2030

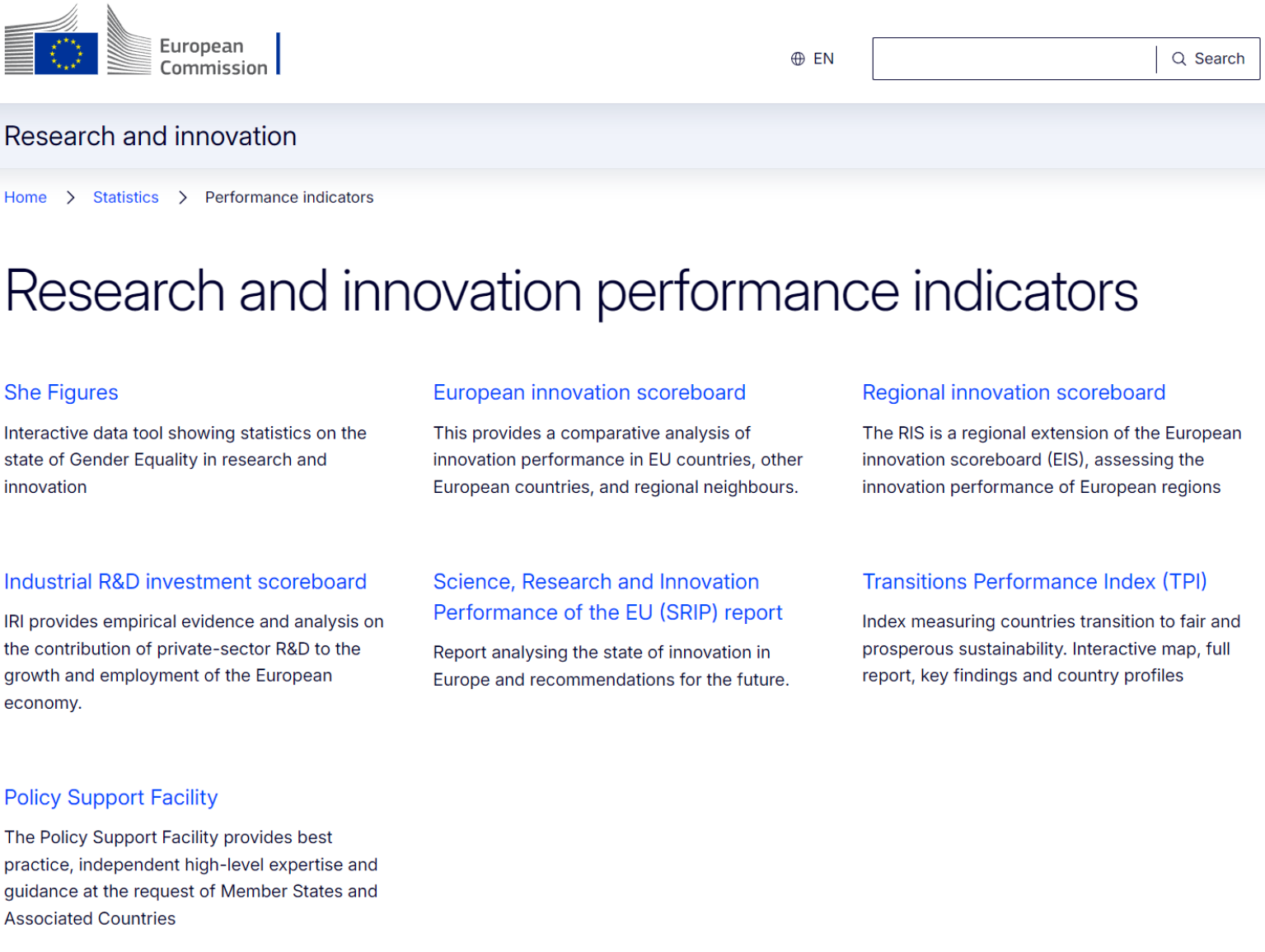
33 273
full-time-equivalent jobshave been created and maintained in Horizon Europe projects.

24.9
EUR billionhas been invested in partnerships, leveraging additional investment of nearly EUR 40 billion from partners, leading to a significant increase in the amount of investment in the EU's priorities.

627
legal entities(including regions and local authorities, private companies, non-governmental organisations and research institutions) have signed the Mission Soil Manifesto, committing themselves to the objectives of the EU mission 'A soil deal for Europe'.

For Methodology see Programme Performance Statements page

Overall statistics



Source: page on performance indicators

Horizon Europe: project-level KPIs

Most common use of KPIs to measure the performance in communication and dissemination activities

Example 1:

The Project DEC activities will yield significant additional visibility for the infrastructure, and we will follow that as part of the KPIs of the project. We anticipate 5000 unique visits to the website, 2 press releases, 8 newsletters with 50 new subscribers, 60 social media posts with 100 new followers, 3 promotional videos and 1000 printed and digital promotional materials for distribution.

Sometimes used to measure impact

Example 2:

Expected Impacts from the *Call Destination*	
Scientific Impact **Indicator**: number of ISI publications on high ranking journals. **Target**: 40	**RESTORE4Cs** *will strengthen the European Research Area on climate change*, combining real data (Case Pilot sites and meta-analysis), for the first time, enabling the calibration of response models on the effect of restoration actions on GHG emissions abatement in wetlands, giving the basis, and the tools, to a scientifically-based selection procedure for the selection of the best restoration actions and the best sites to be applied by considering the trade-offs. This is a key milestone for the implementation of scientific knowledge into the selection of nature-based solutions (NbS) to mitigate climate change.
Economic Impact **Indicator**: managers using the online platform **Target**: 2000 managers	**RESTORE4Cs** *will provide solutions in cost-efficient pathways,* through a structured online platform and a toolbox for decision making that will integrate generated knowledge to support wetlands restoration actions (*e.g.* data, information, models). The online platform and toolbox will provide a consistent framework for making available existing and improved data, tools and models to ensure quality, comparability, and availability of environmental information to be used in assessments of status, restoration potential and restoration actions at different scales.
Social Impact **Indicator**: ECoP platform at the EU level. **Target**: Societal Readiness Level (SRL 7-8)	**RESTORE4Cs** *will provide solutions in social science for climate action; and better understanding of climate-ecosystems interactions* by improving the knowledge base and providing quantified evidence on the role of wetlands in carbon sequestration and appropriate management actions, contributing to increased C-sequestration and GHG emissions abatement; by rising societal awareness on the need for restored wetlands and their long-term management, making the case for wetland restoration as a worthwhile investment with significant net societal benefits, compared to existing alternative land management options; and by supporting and improving the implementation of EU policies on restoration and climate neutrality, based on a systematic analysis of lessons learned on policy effectiveness.

Conclusions

- KPI are a useful tool for evaluating performances at both the project and the programme level
- In some programmes, like LIFE, the use of KPIs is mandatory and the KPIs are pre-defined because they are used for assessement of the ERA's performance
- Within the LIFE programme tools are available to facilitate the quantification of KPIs
- In Horizon Europe the use of KPIs is encouraged but there is not a mandatory scheme to follow although it is convenient to use the indicators already identified for measuring the programme performance
- The most common metrics used in HE is the one associated to DEC activities

THANKS!

IR0000032 – ITINERIS, Italian Integrated Environmental Research Infrastructures System
(D.D. n. 130/2022 - CUP B53C22002150006) Funded by EU - Next Generation EU PNRR-Mission 4 “Education and Research” - Component 2: “From research to business” - Investment 3.1: “Fund for the realisation of an integrated system of research and innovation infrastructures”

Finanziato dall'Unione europea NextGenerationEU
Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca
Italiadomani