



Overview ESA Plant Breeding  
Innovation Communication  
activities



# Image Study for the EU seed sector

## Market Research Report for European Seed Association

### Preliminary Results

## Currently

Currently, the European Seed Sector image is continuously deteriorating amongst the general public, under the battering of NGOs biased communication.

After decades of science-based communication, the ESA realizes that this is no longer enough. Both the public and politicians should be approached in different ways.

The stake of getting the right messages through is big. In particular **Plant Breeding Innovation** may be stopped, if misinterpreted, which would put the whole sector at jeopardy.

## Short term

In order to help re-gain a more favourable image, the ESA wants to:

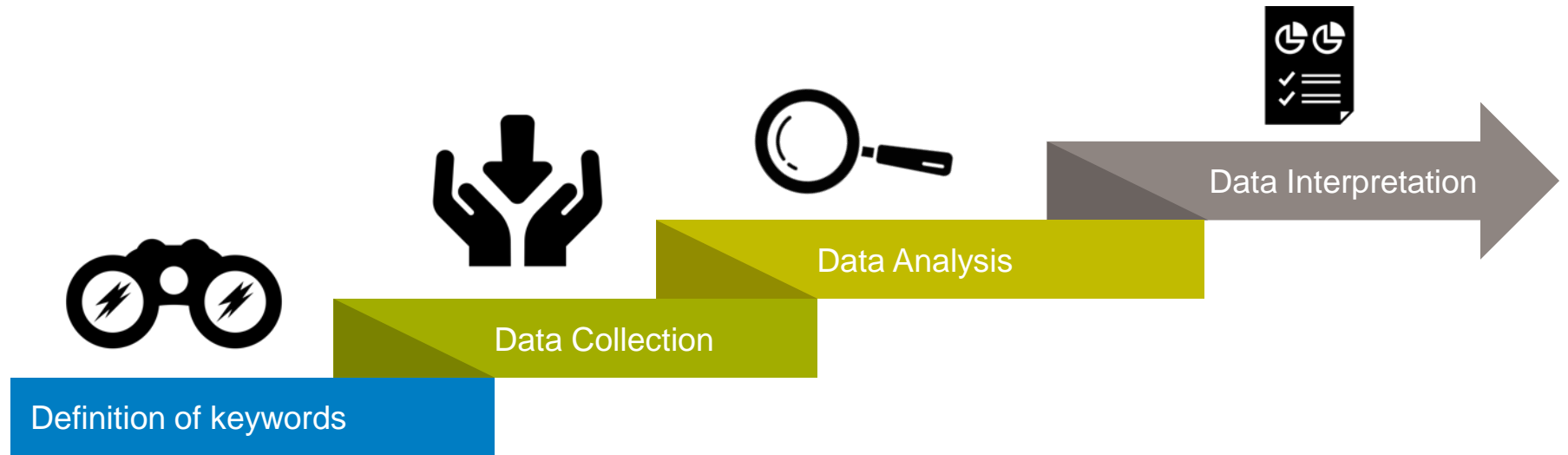
- Equip the seed sector and national associations with guidelines and recommendations with best practice for talking points and image positioning with their national decision makers/stakeholders.
- One of the main aim of this research is to provide ESA members, especially national associations, with a solid overview of what has been said/commented on the seed industry topics, especially in view of the **Plant Breeding Innovation campaign**.

## Future

In the long run

Measure the results of the PBI initiative through an assessment of the image of the seed sector by 2020

# Social Listening Analysis in 4 Steps



# Where have we harvested data?

## Which languages were covered?



- English
- German
- French
- Spanish
- Italian
- Dutch

## Which channels were covered?

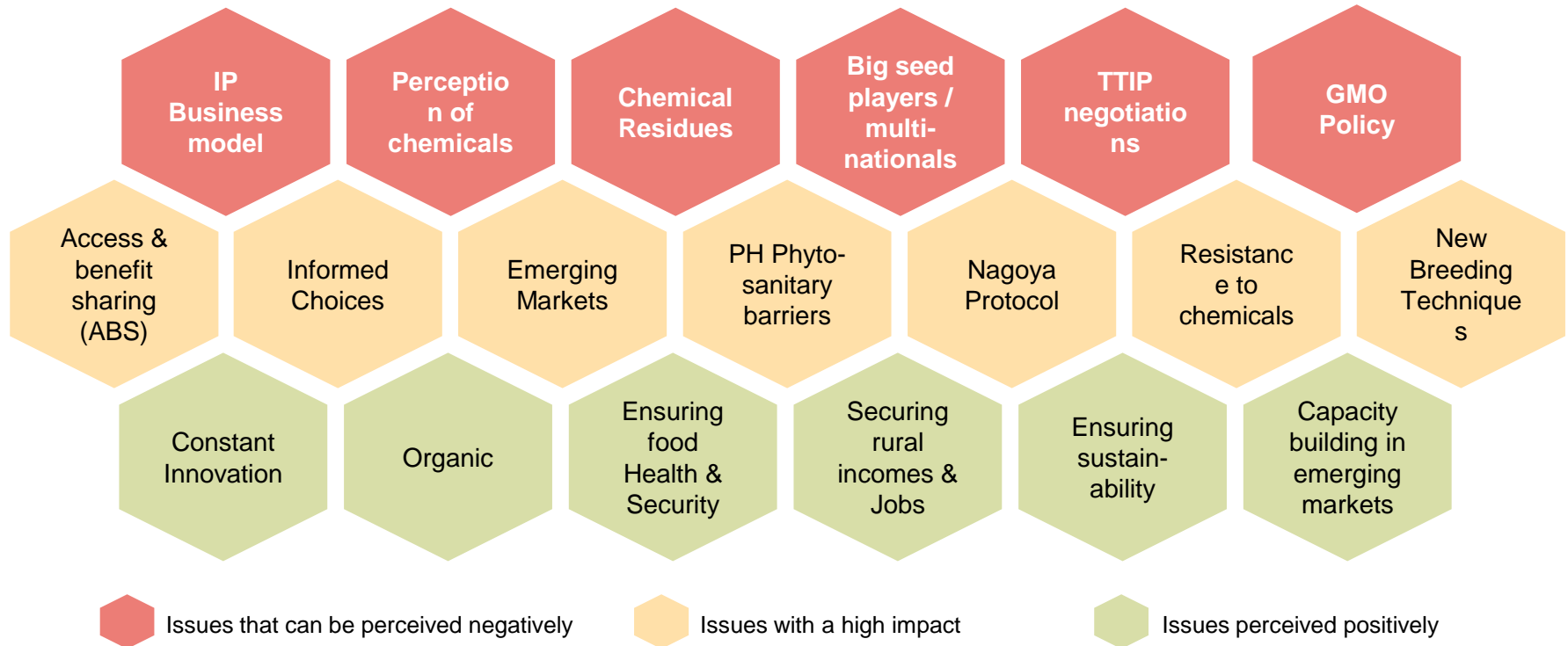


- Twitter
- Websites
- Blogs
- Forums
- News sites (e.g. FAZ, BBC, la Repubblica, Le monde, el Pais, Telegraph)
- Facebook (w/o location)
- Videos (Youtube, Vimeo...) (w/o location)

# Preliminary Results in a Nutshell

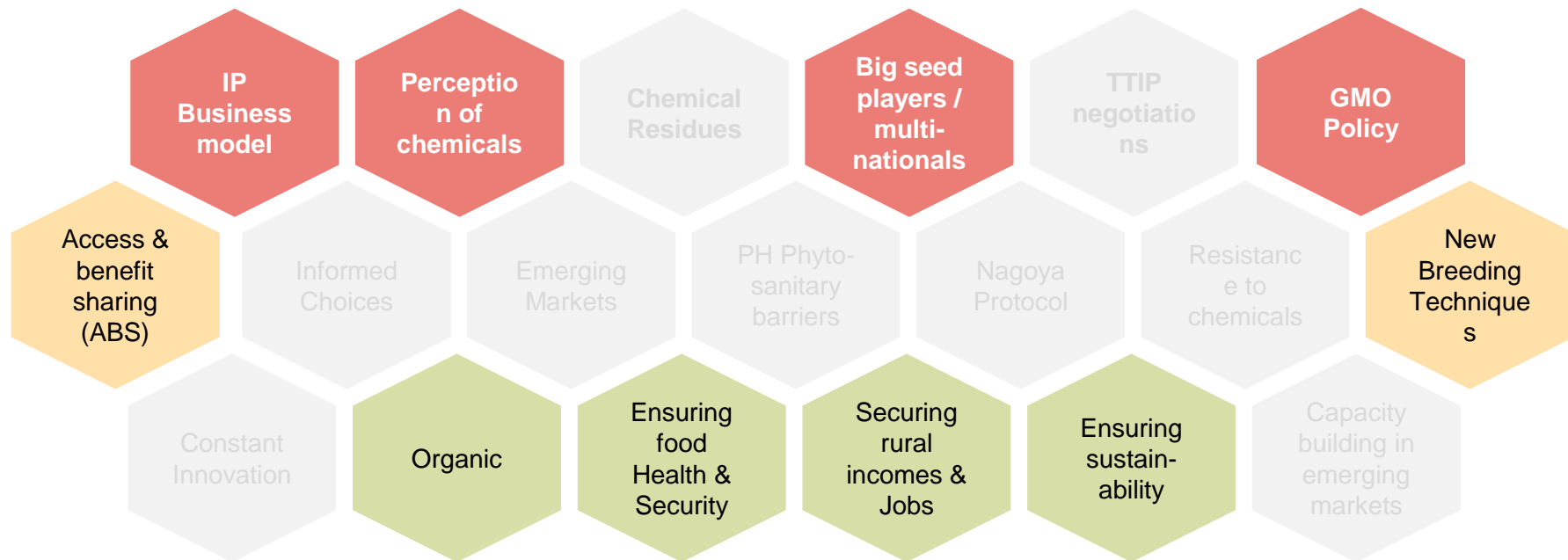
# The Hypothesis

Prior to this project, ESA has created the following Industry Issue Map



# Validating the Hypothesis

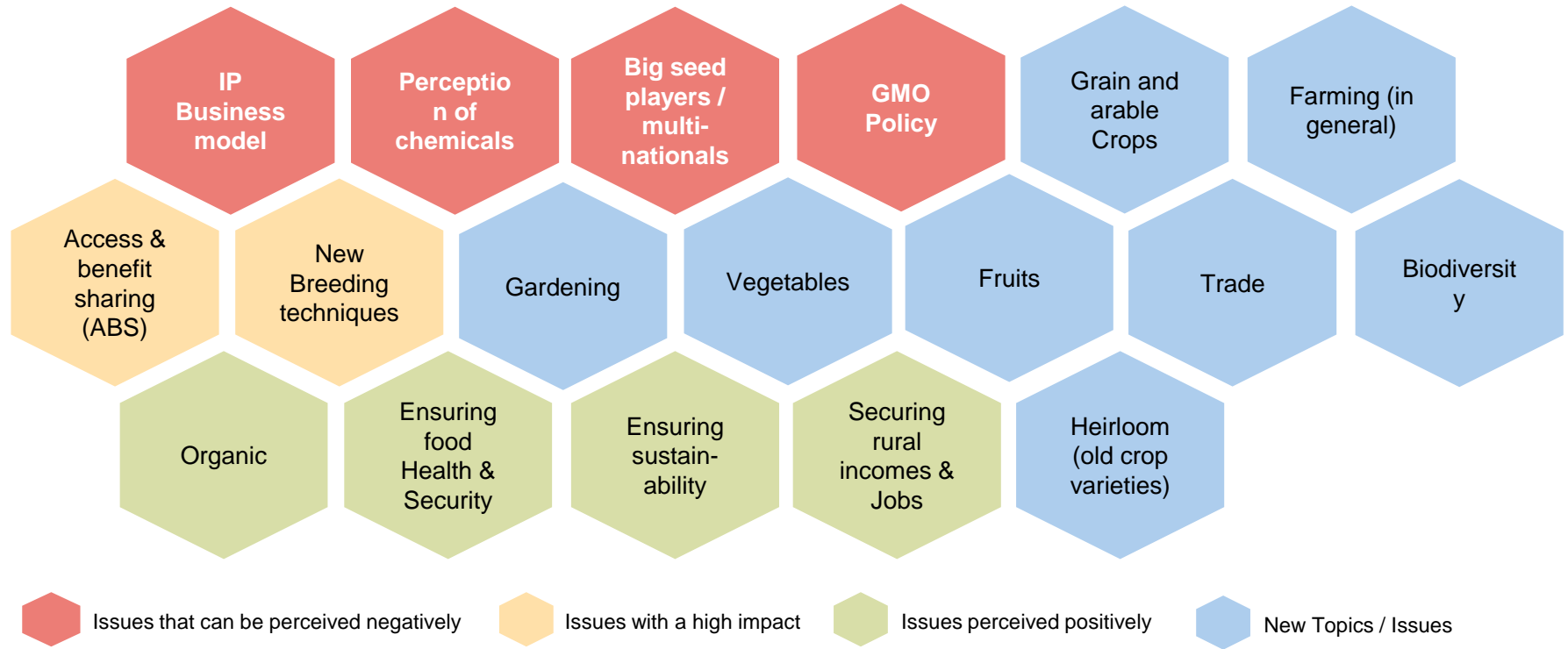
The following issues were validated to be of relevance in social media



-  Issues that can be perceived negatively
-  Issues with a high impact
-  Issues perceived positively
-  Not of relevance in social media

# Validating the Hypothesis

Besides the validated issues, other major topics were identified

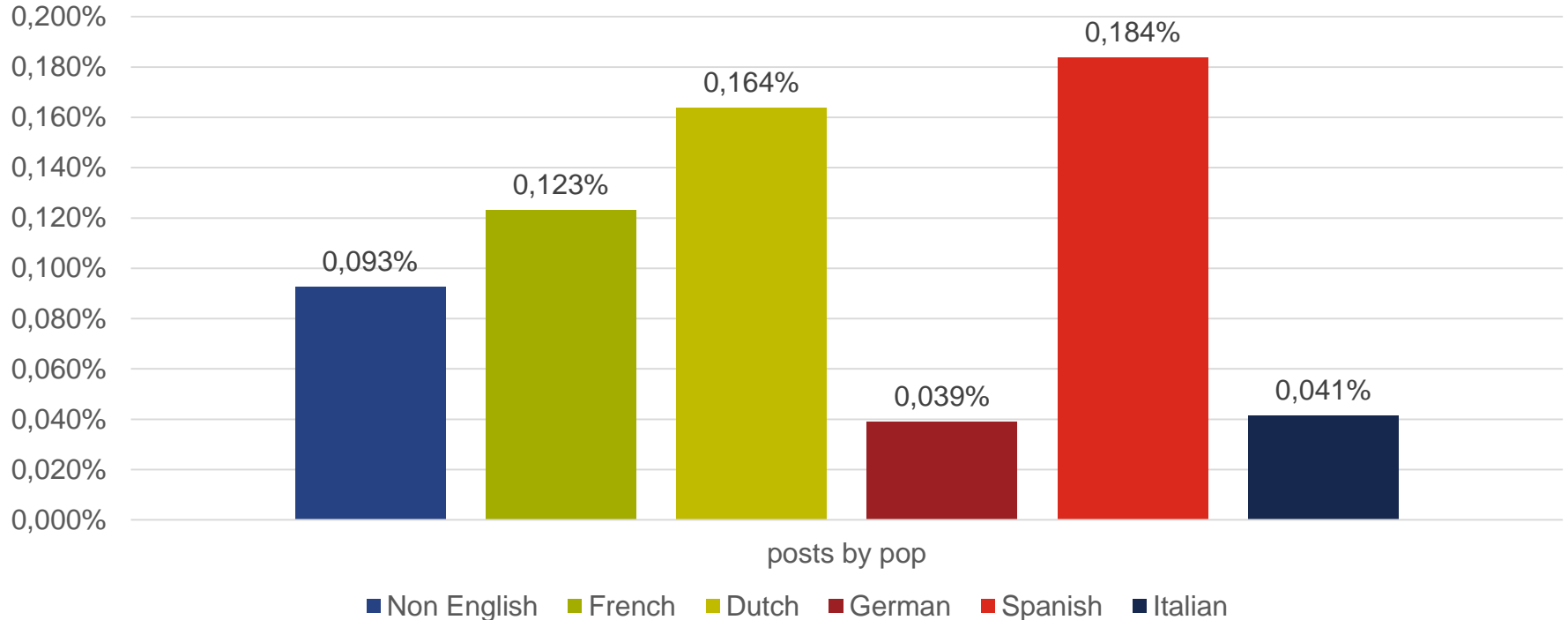


# How intensively seeds related topics are being discussed in Social Media?

Besides English as a social media language, the topic of seeds is more intensively discussed in Spanish, Dutch and French – it seems that in Germany and Italy, the topic of Seeds is less of relevance than in those countries.

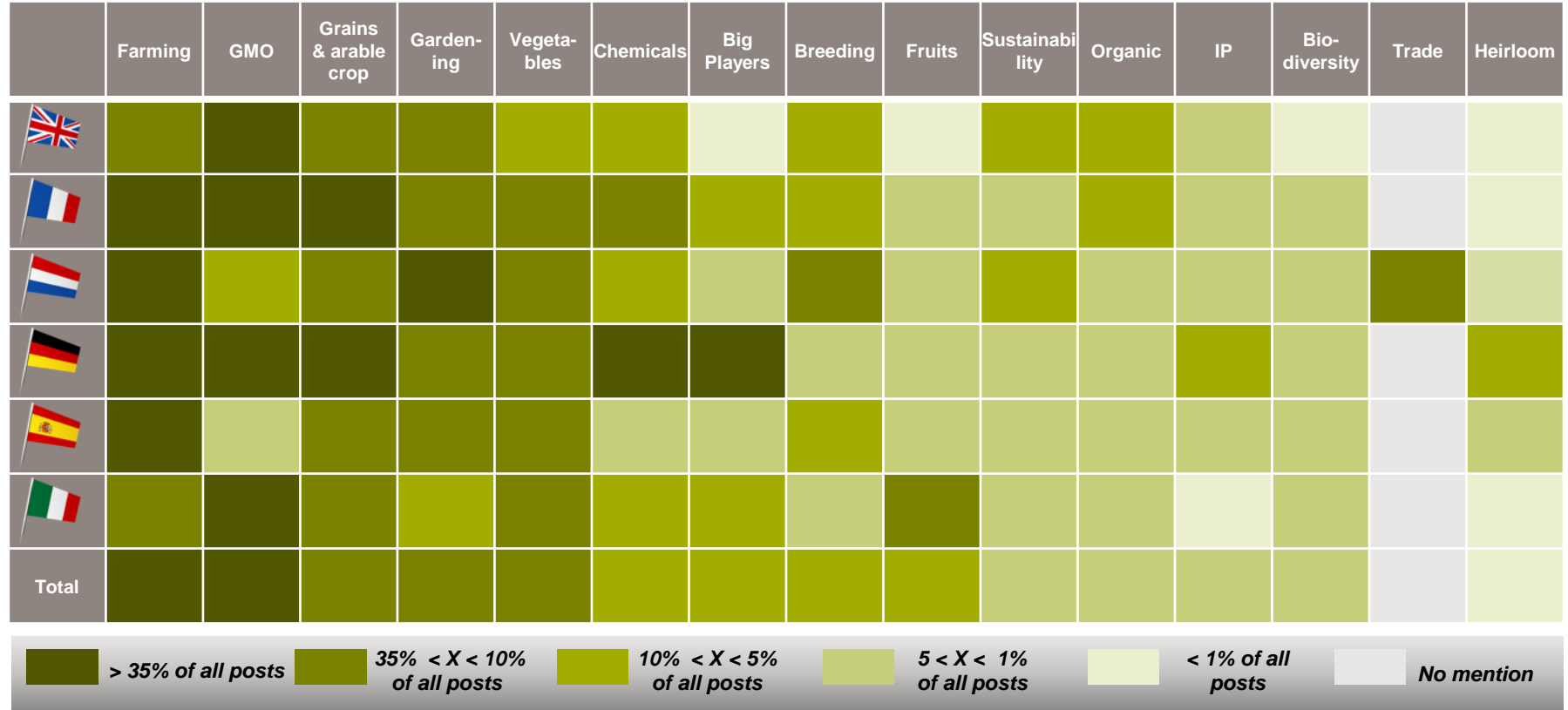


## Posts / inhabitant



# How intensively are the identified topics being discussed in social media?

“Farming”, “GMO”, “Grains & Arable Crops”, “Gardening” and “Vegetables” are the most often discussed seed related topics



# In which sentiments are the identified topics being discussed in Social Media?

“GMO”, “Chemicals”, “Big Players” and “IP” are mainly discussed in a negative context. More personal topics like “gardening” and “vegetables” are usually discussed in a positive context.



	Farming	GMO	Grains & arable crop	Garden- ing	Vegeta- bles	Chemicals	Big Players	Breeding	Fruits	Sustainabi- lity	Organic	IP	Bio- diversity	Trade	Heirloom
Total															

Referencing to the total average among all countries



More than 11% are expressing positive sentiments



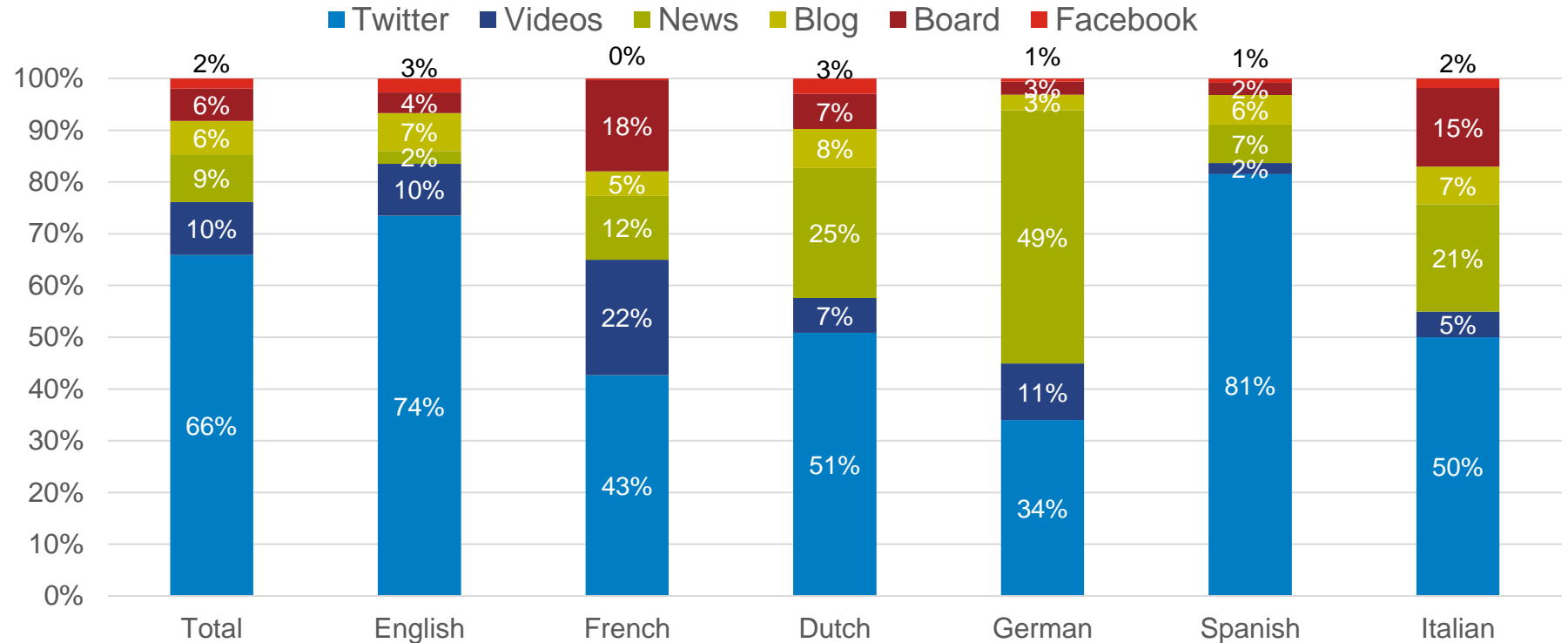
More than 73% are expressing neutral sentiments



More than 16% are expressing negative sentiments

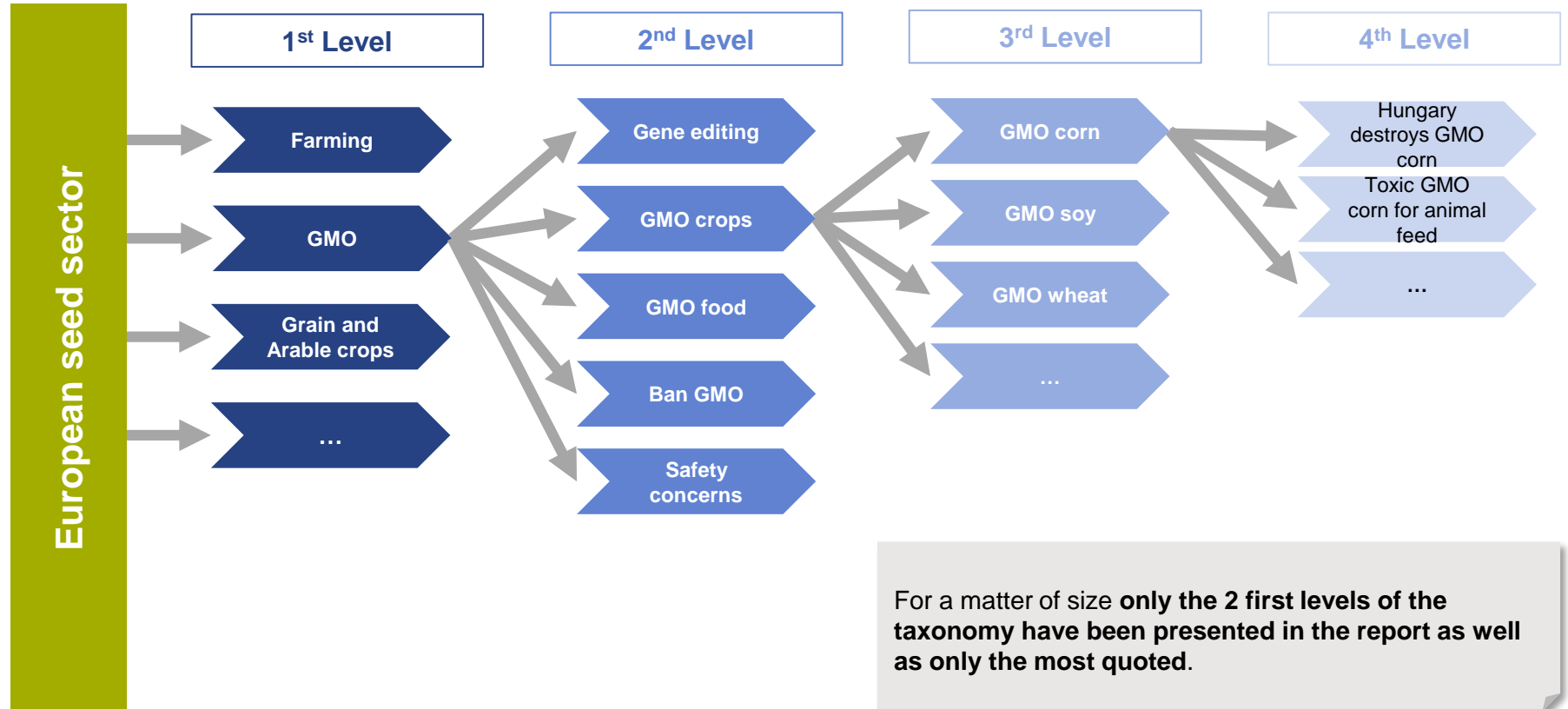
# Where are seeds related topics being discussed in Social Media

Twitter, video related posts and news posts are the main social media channels, where seed related topics are being discussed



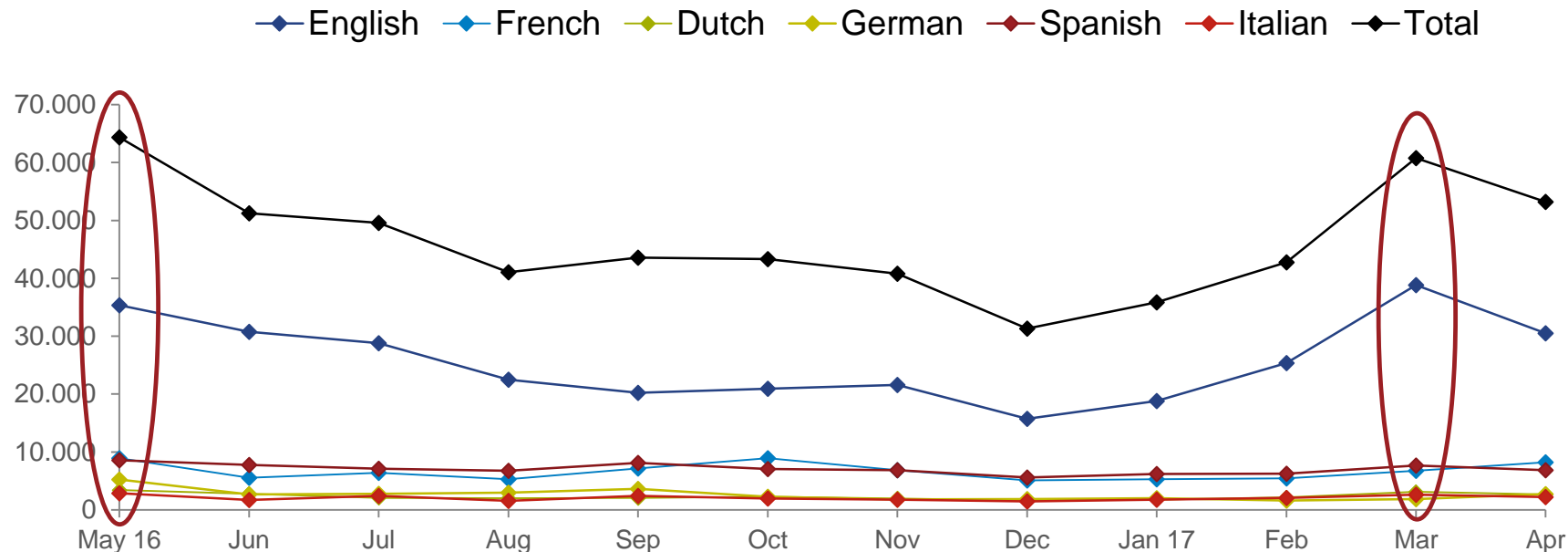
Caution – For facebook and video posts a precise location of the author posting the post is not possible,

Each topic has been shared in different levels of subtopics in order to create a taxonomy



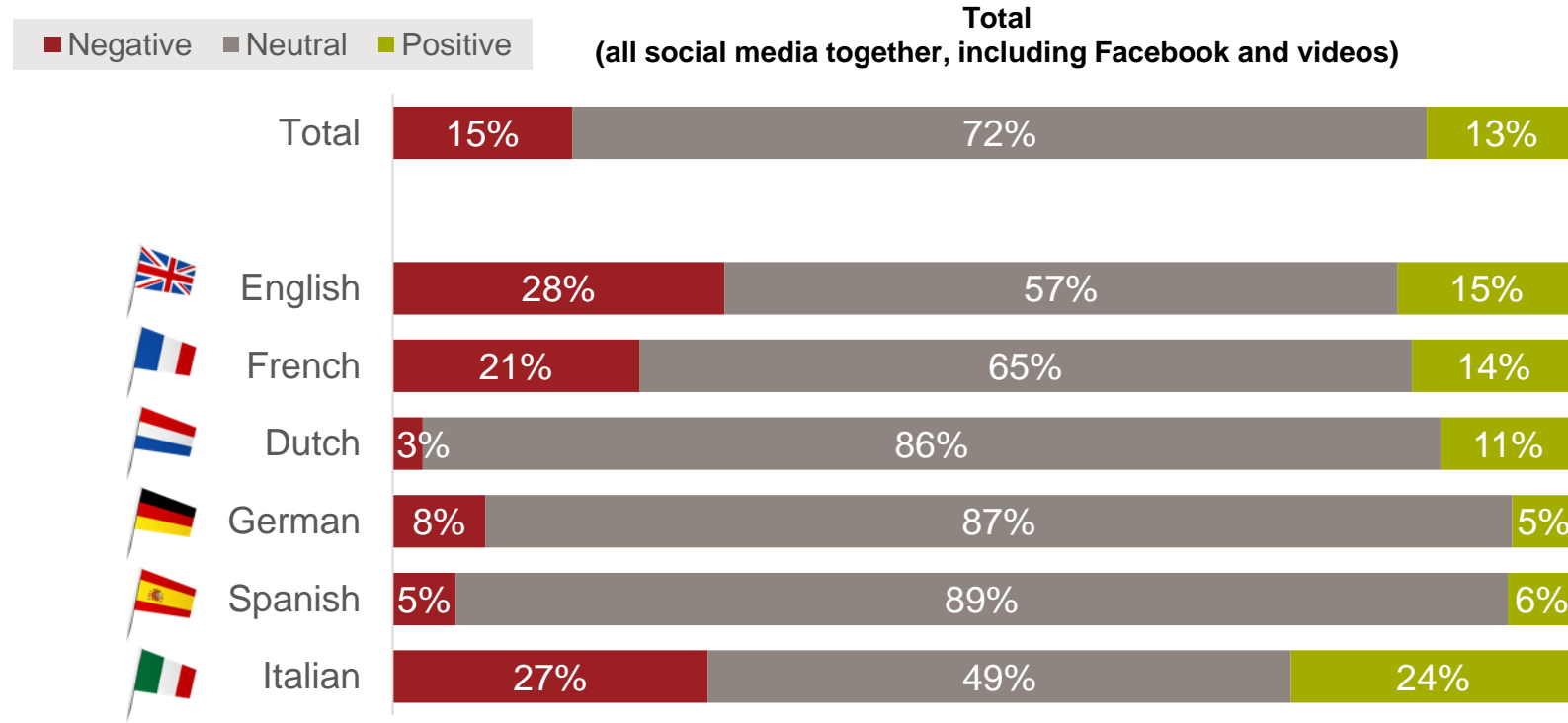
In English, in average, 26 000 posts are published per month. Volumes of posts are way lower in other languages.

Volume of posts collected along the year



**Caution:**  
\* Facebook and video : no possibility to distinguish precisely country of origin.

Among the 6 languages, the majority of posts are neutral. However, English, Italian and French posts appears to be the ones with the most temper (positive or negative).



**Caution:**  
\* Facebook and video : no possibility to distinguish precisely country of provenance.



**Plant Breeding Innovation  
communication campaign**



## The context → The Age of Digital Populism: communication is changing

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- 'Post-truth' is the word of the decade
- Social Media polarisation (the Facebook echo chamber)
- A growing gap over key issues: science-based facts are not working anymore:
  - Anti-science, anti-vaccines, anti-GMOs
  - TTIP/CETA
  - Glyphosate





## NGOs are the new establishment

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**Friends of  
the Earth**



**GREENPEACE**

# NEWS



## Twitter is the new press release

>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut nec  
suscipit quam. Morbi consectetur urna a mauris condimentum  
interdum. Class aptent taciti sociosqu ad litora torquent per

quis pharetra massa pharetra. Nulla facilisi. Nulla at est eu  
purus euismod consectetur in at velit. Praesent venenatis  
auctor tellus at imperdiet. Mauris interdum nunc in orci egestas

system applies. Financial news

new year. Financial account

opens all over the world.

opens all over the world.



**We need new tools,  
a new structure and  
a new mindset...**

# FOUR PILLAR APPROACH



Digital Hub



Show me,  
don't ask me to  
trust you



Engage



Audience  
becomes  
ambassadors

01

# Campaign objectives



## Campaign objectives

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- Freedom of choice for consumers, growers and farmers in having access to seeds using innovative, diverse breeding methods
- Demonstrate that the latest plant breeding methods are not GMOs to promote fair and proportionate European regulations



## Core communication message

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Plant breeding innovation is essential for sustainable agriculture.

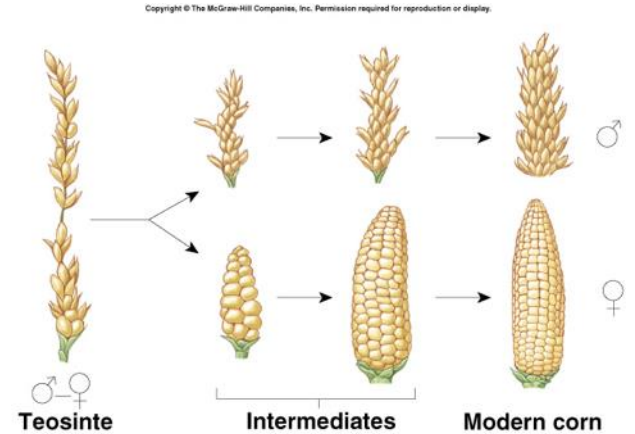
Plant breeding innovation is a natural step towards tackling Europe's agri-food challenges and ensuring the quality and safety of our food.





## Agriculture has progressed over time

Over past centuries, plant breeding has made an important contribution to the evolution of agriculture, by meeting consumer demands and by addressing the challenges of a highly productive and sustainable agriculture and food production

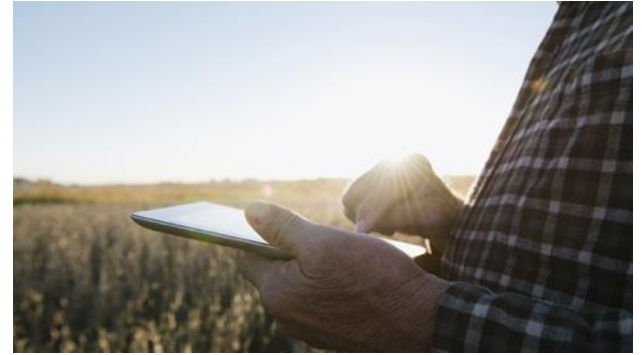




## New methods = new opportunities

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With the continuous evolution of our understanding of nature, plant breeders today can rely on a large toolbox that includes smart, molecular tools and big data analysis, which can help us to speed up traditional plant breeding processes that otherwise often require many years.





## Purpose of the initiative

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Use modern communication channels to:

- Engage with a wider public interested in learning about plant breeding and latest plant breeding methods
- Encourage a European regulatory and policy environment that supports plant breeding innovation
- Provide fact-based information on plant breeding innovation
- Explain the latest plant breeding methods and why plant breeders should be able to add them to their toolbox



02

# Creative concept

A man with a beard, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is leaning over a row of large-leafed plants in a field. The background is bright and hazy, suggesting a sunny day. In the foreground, there are large green leaves and a red tomato. A green semi-transparent box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

**Plant breeding innovation  
has helped agriculture  
feed Europe in the past.**



**Breeding methods are an essential step towards tackling Europe's food challenges**

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small green plant seedling. The hands are using tweezers to hold the stem of the plant, which has several bright green leaves and a small root system. A clear petri dish is held in the other hand, positioned near the base of the plant. The background is a blurred garden with various green plants and a path, suggesting an outdoor research or agricultural setting.

Based on research...



...and innovation, and



work in the fields, we can...




...learn from nature,



and nurture it  
for the future.



We are scientists, big and small  
growers, researchers

A close-up photograph of a person's legs wearing bright yellow rubber boots. The boots are standing on dark, rich soil. A wooden handle of a shovel or similar tool is visible, with a red band around it. The background is a blurred garden with green foliage and sunlight filtering through the leaves.

that believe in innovation  
in rubber boots,

A close-up photograph of several small green seedlings with two leaves each, growing out of a dark brown, textured seedling tray. The background is dark and out of focus, with a thin green horizontal line near the top. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is overlaid in the lower center of the image, containing white text.

who embrace the power of  
nature...

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding several potatoes. The person is wearing a black and white striped shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus field of green plants, likely potatoes, with sunlight creating a bokeh effect. A semi-transparent green rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

... to help us shape the future.



EMBRACING  
THE POWER  
OF NATURE

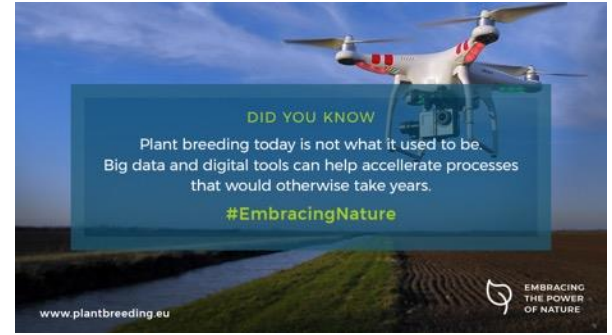
# 03

## Bringing it to reality

website and social media:

<http://plantbreeding.eu>

# Social media assets - Infographics and GIFs





# Soft campaign launch: Workshop with ESA members



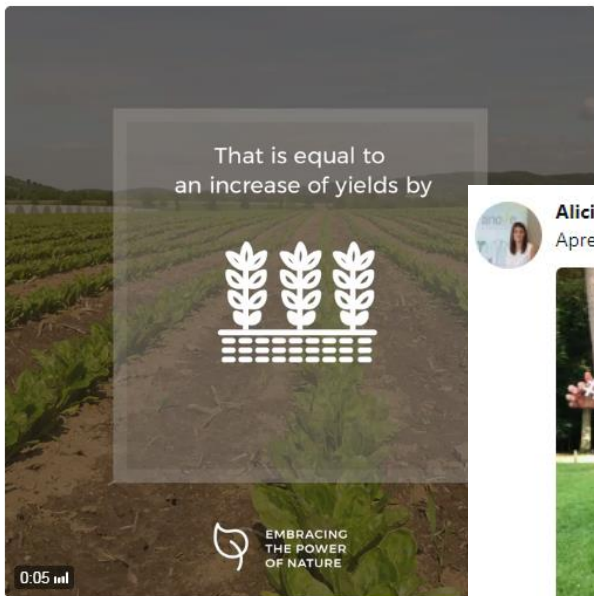
29-30/08/2017:  
Workshop with ESA  
members and  
communications agency



# Soft campaign launch: Workshop with ESA members



ESA @ESA\_euroseeds · Aug 29  
#Plantbreeding innovation helps improve yields that secure farmers' income & our #food supply #EmbracingNature [bit.ly/2iBRRnU](https://bit.ly/2iBRRnU)



0:05 ml 14 16



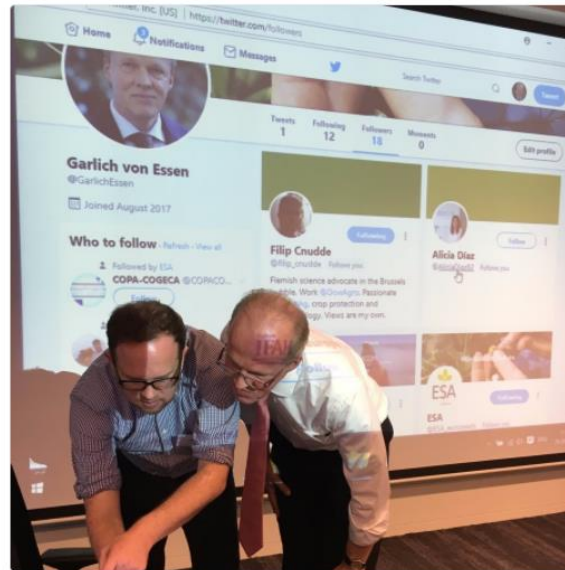
Alicia Díaz @AliciaDiaz82 · Aug 30  
Aprendiendo mucho e intentando aportar #plantbreeding #Emb



14



BSPB @PVR\_org · Aug 29  
Great fun at Twitter masterclass for #plantbreeding sector today, it's all about #embracingnature -find out more at [euroseeds.eu](https://euroseeds.eu)



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# 04

Next step: hard campaign launch  
European Commission conference  
28 September 2017





# Commission Conference: Launch of Communication Campaign

- Intro video
- Social media activation: before, during, after
- 3D hashtags
- 360° footage
- Live quotes
- Interviews
- Media pack – contact with journalists
- Photos, videos, backdrop, roll ups



**FFA**

# 1 Day

LEFT

[Register now](#)

DIRECTOR DG TRADE,  
EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
SIGNE RATSO

"EU is the priority trade partner for majority of the world."

#EPW16



Interview with MEP Richard Ashworth



## What can you do?

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- Basic understanding of our campaign channels  
Facebook and Twitter
- Spread the news in your association & share content  
using the hashtag:

**#EmbracingNature**

**#PlantBreeding**

**#Innovation**



# How can you interact on Twitter?

- Like a tweet
- Retweet
- Follow someone
- Direct messaging

