



RECETAS
TESTING ACTIONS FOR SOCIAL
PRESCRIBING IN NATURAL SPACES

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

2025



MEMBER OF THE:



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Engaging with the community is at the core of the RECETAS project

The RECETAS project (*Re-imagining Environments for Connection and Engagement: Testing Actions for Social Prescribing in Natural Spaces*) explores how urban nature fosters social connections, combats loneliness, and improves well-being. It tests and evaluates **Nature-Based Social Prescribing (NBSP)** in **6 cities worldwide** (Barcelona, Cuenca (Ecuador), Helsinki, Marseille, Melbourne, Prague), using participatory methods and a transdisciplinary approach that integrates social, behavioural, health, and natural sciences. By linking research with practice and policy, the project supports communities implementing and scaling up NBSP, helping to ease pressure on healthcare systems. Community engagement ensures the project's findings are relevant and applicable to the real-life challenges of urban residents.

Engagement is a central element of the communication and dissemination strategy (Work Package WP6). This report examines how the RECETAS project partners have interacted with their target audiences, and explains how we are preparing our strategic engagement in this final year of the project, as we shift our focus to impact and translation of the findings.

METHODS

ACTIVITIES MONITORING

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS



To assess **public engagement** throughout the project, a structured and multi-faceted approach was employed, focusing on data collection, analysis, and continuous improvement.

WP6 maintains key resources, including a **communication activities** sign-up sheet and an **event database**, to systematically record partners' planned activities, upcoming events, and past participation.

Engagement across **social media platforms** is closely monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of project communications. Key metrics enable strategic adjustments to optimize messaging and outreach.

To focus on **qualitative data**, a survey was conducted among the consortium to obtain members' insights about local engagement activities and strategies.

Alongside the survey, **interviews** were conducted with pilots, providing local perspectives about project activities, and encouraging project partners to reflect on strategies to strengthen relationships with institutional partners and outreach strategies towards the target audience groups.

AUDIENCE GROUPS

The **Scientific community** critically analyses RECETAS' findings, key performance indicators, and evidence. They are interested in using the project's data to advance knowledge and develop new health solutions. An example of engagement with this audience is a workshop being held for local stakeholders, policy makers, and health professionals called 'Nature Pathways to Health and Reducing Loneliness' organized by the University of Helsinki, in June 2025.

Policy makers (at the local, national, European and international levels) are of primary interest for the RECETAS consortium - to set up the guidelines of the current and future urban health and environmental policies. Special focus will be on local authorities to encourage policies that integrate nature-based solutions for health improvement. For example, Jill Litt, Project PI, testified at the European Parliament at a public hearing about loneliness in the European Union.

Services, businesses and NGOs (in health, social and environment) are engaged early, as RECETAS is anchored in participative principles and aims at developing solutions with these stakeholders. This audience is interested in the general technical features of the novel solutions, their implementation and replication as well as the key economic indicators and cost assessment evaluation. We have been approached by local organizations who express that RECETAS is the "missing link" between screening and intervention, as was the case with Many Coloured Sky, a Melbourne-based NGO.

General public possesses a shared awareness of environmental issues and a concern for health and well-being, even without a scientific background. RECETAS has worked to raise the public profile of loneliness as a key public health issue and the value of nature based solutions as a community-based health resource. We have worked with international journalists, authors and social media networks to produce and disseminate content, including recent feature stories in Science Magazine, the BBC and the Ara Newspaper.



RESULTS
2021-PRESENT

OVERVIEW

RECETAS emerged from increasing awareness that loneliness is a major public health issue that has not been sufficiently recognized.

In Europe alone, and before COVID-19 pandemic, over 30 million adults frequently felt lonely. Loneliness is a condition known to shorten one's lifespan and may be as dangerous to one's health as smoking or obesity. This, coupled with the fact that healthcare systems are largely overburdened, calls for a different type of care for socially isolated people. RECETAS is a project bringing together researchers around the world who chose to explore another form of care through the collective, and in nature, by using our key concept: nature-based social prescribing. RECETAS has been, from the beginning, a health-, environmentally, and socially-oriented project. Nature-based social prescribing is a method that directly targets one's well-being and overall health while maintaining a broad focus on population health and wellbeing. RECETAS has developed the Friends in Nature intervention that uses facilitated outdoor time in groups, to prevent and treat loneliness as a community-based alternative to traditional medical treatments and a way to improve impact in health care systems worldwide while leveraging nature-based solutions to be part of the prevention and treatment pathways.

RECETAS's rigorous design of nature-based social prescribing methods permits strong ties with health professionals, policy makers, third-sector organizations, and scientists. Our public engagement strategy strengthens these synergies through events, scientific publications, communication and connections. From our events to our publications, RECETAS inserts itself in the (health)care and urban planning contexts worldwide, providing insights on how nature can alleviate loneliness through community-based interventions. RECETAS investigators have participated in many conferences and public events, such as the European Conference of the Society for Medical Decision Making, the Nordic Congress of General Practice, the European Public Health Conference, and at the European Parliament, in addition to contributing to public discussions on social health and wellbeing (over 200 events).

Many of the publications and articles featuring RECETAS are found in interdisciplinary journals and magazines including *Science*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, *BMC Public Health*, *BMC Geriatric Health*, *Health and Social Care in the Community*, and *Horizon*, the EU Research & Innovation Magazine of the European Commission

From the start, RECETAS has engaged local ecosystems of stakeholders, collaborating with administrations, civic organizations, neighborhood networks, senior associations, care providers, academic institutions, primary healthcare centers, sister horizon and other commission projects, and local citizens. Specifically, in October and November 2021, 639 organizations across the six pilot cities were invited to participate in a Social Network Analysis of their current organizational partnerships as part of the RECETAS research project. 226 organizations responded to the network survey using Visible Network Labs' PARTNER platform (www.partnertool.net), obtaining a 35% response rate. The main results from this work can be reviewed [here](#).

This process allowed pilot city partners to understand local knowledge and perceptions on loneliness and nature-based social prescription. It also set up the basis to start conversations, create relationships and engage with stakeholders throughout the project. Decision-makers have been involved through co-creation workshops, local meetings, and the annual consortium meeting—where best practices for engaging residents in NBSP trials were identified. The methodology to support co-creation has been disseminated through several international conference presentations, videos and poster sessions (e.g., Santos et al., 2023)

To enhance communication, RECETAS developed clear, visually compelling materials, and diversified the multimedia mix. Social media plays a key role in mobilizing partners, sharing updates, amplifying project news, and offering personal testimonials on loneliness. Since its launch in 2021, the RECETAS newsletter has grown to 840 recipients (as of February 24, 2025), with language translations for each local context.

MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The monitoring of communication and event activities provides insights into the evolution of RECETAS' outreach efforts. Over time, the project has seen a steady increase in the number and diversity of activities, reflecting a growing commitment from consortium members to visibility and engagement with stakeholders and audience groups.

The data suggests that RECETAS is moving towards a more impact-driven communication strategy, balancing public engagement with institutional influence, reflecting the growing interest in the project within discussions on urban health and environmental policies.

DIVERSIFICATION OF ENGAGEMENT METHODS AND EXPANSION OF ACTIVITIES

Activities are aligned with the project phases, looking at a long-term impact:

- **Phase 1 (2021-2022):** Introducing the project (events, new social media accounts and newsletter, infographic, leaflet, video, press releases).
 - 164 events, with a focus on launching events and co-production workshops.
- **Phase 2 (2023/2024):** Engaging the community with multimedia content (growth of audience on social media accounts, videos, visuals, newsletter issues, photo exhibitions, publications, posters), with training courses, events, workshops).
 - 70 event invitations, with 33 international, 30 national events, 33 invitations as speakers.
- **Phase 3 (2025-Present):** Focusing on institutional impact and dissemination of findings (scientific publications, policy briefs and presentation, press releases).
 - 27 event invitations (to date as of February 2025) with 5 international events, 2 national events, 20 invitations as speakers.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Screenshots showcasing a diverse range of activities undertaken by consortium members to engage with key audience groups at local, national, European and international levels.

Dr Nerkez Opacin from RECETAS team in Melbourne talks about the benefits of nature therapy for loneliness on the **podcast "Humans: Connecting"**.



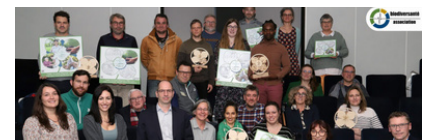
A **debate-evening on the documentary "Vive les Microbes"**, directed by journalist Marie-Monique Robin, organised by the RECETAS team in Marseille in partnership with the Biodiversanté association.



Laura Hidalgo researcher at ISGlobal Barcelona **interviewed on the RECETAS project by The Good Place channel** at the 20th International Conference for Urban Health, in Marrakech.



Marseille's University Hospitals **awarded the Hippocrate's Gardens Trophy** (category for South of France), for their action-research approach on social isolation and the healing power of nature.



Since 2022, RECETAS has been associated to the **USA-based initiative Social Prescribing Day**, celebrating the people and organisations who help make social prescribing happen.



RECETAS partners from UVic, ISGlobal, and ASPCAT participated in a panel discussion about social prescribing to address loneliness, in partnership with **El Prat de Llobregat Primary Health Center, Catalunya**.



The RECETAS project won an **Ageing Well International Award for Best New Health Innovation** at the SilverEco International Festival gathering stakeholders from the global silver economy, held in Cannes, France.



The Barcelona RECETAS team actively represented the project at the **Nature and Health Workgroup (Taula Salut i Natura)**.



RECETAS Coordinator Jill Litt spoke in a **public hearing at the European Parliament about “Loneliness in the European Union”**.



The RECETAS team in Cuenca, organized a **meeting on Nature for Inclusive Aging**, with the Universidad de Cuenca and the Consejo de Salud Cuenca, mixing groups of older adults and professionals.



International workshop on social prescribing led by UVic and Supported by ISGlobal “Understanding the Different Models of Social Prescribing”.



The RECETAS team in Prague was invited to the **Vogue Conference on Longevity** with Charles University, an opportunity to present the project to diverse stakeholders.



Jill Litt taking part in the **Global Social Prescribing networking event** as part of the inaugural Academic and Practitioner International Research in Nature Network (APRIN).



Collaboration and participation of Jill Litt as trainer with the Forest Therapy Hub, a **training on forest therapy and forest bathing**.



Publication of **Policy Briefs from the Urban Health Cluster** by the six Horizon2020 cluster projects, about how to monitor multiple health determinants in urban settings and plan targeted interventions.



Communicating around Loneliness Awareness Week, an annual campaign organized by the Marmalade Trust, a UK-based charity whose goal is to tackle loneliness and social isolation.



RECETAS researcher, Anu Jansson, was invited as a speaker in the **Round Table - Effective Actions to Address Loneliness** of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.



RECETAS in Marseille was invited to the Departmental Congress on the **Battle against Loneliness**, highlighting the deep link between precariousness and isolation.



A book reading of *"The Connection Cure"*, featuring RECETAS, and a discussion with author Julia Hotz on **community connections, nature and well-being**.



ANNUAL MEETINGS

Our Annual Consortium Meetings in pictures through the years: a great opportunity for the partners to gather, share insights, progress and thought, but also **a moment to share our project with local relevant stakeholders**, including the Ministry of Health during the last Annual Consortium Meeting in Prague.



First Annual Consortium Meeting in Barcelona
(UVIC / ISGLOBAL)

Second Annual Consortium Meeting in Tyrol
(UNIT TIROL)



Third Annual Consortium Meeting in Prague
(University of Charles)

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Published in 2024

[Access all publications](#)

Sachs, AL., Maso-Aguado, M., Bach, A, Opacin, N, Hill, N, Cattaneo, L, Coll Planas, L, Litt, JS, Bekessy, S (2024). Research note: **Capturing the dose of nature in nature-based interventions to reduce loneliness.** MethodsX, Volume 13, 102969. DOI: 10.1016/j.mex.2024.102969.

Pitkälä KH, Rautiainen L, Aalto UL, Kautiainen H, Kolster A, Laakkonen ML, Partonen T, Roitto HM, Strandberg TE, Opacin N, Puntcher S, Siebert U, Coll-Planas L, Sachs AL, Litt JS, Jansson AH. The RECETAS Consortium (2024), **Participants' baseline characteristics and feedback of the nature-based social intervention "Friends in Nature" among lonely older adults in assisted living facilities in Finland: a randomised controlled trial of the RECETAS EU-project**, BMC Geriatrics, Vol 24 (1), 812. DOI: 10.1186/s12877-024-05408-0.

Vert, C, Litt, JS, Gascón, M, Roqué, M, Masó, M, Opacin, N, Garcia, G, Jansson, A, Cattaneo, L, Bártová, A, Briones-Buixassa, L, Carbó, A, Rautiainen, L, Hidalgo, L, Sachs, A, Domènech, S, Blancafort-Alias, S, Homerová, I, Pitkälä, K, Coll-Planas, L. (2024) **Evaluating the feasibility of "Friends in Nature", a complex nature-based social intervention to address loneliness and quality of life in six cities worldwide.** Pilot and Feasibility Studies 10, 146. DOI: 10.1186/s40814-024-01575-4

Coll-Planas, L., Carbó-Cardena, A., Jansson, A., Dostálová, V., Bartova, A., Rautiainen, L., Kolster, A., Masó-Aguado, M., Briones-Buixassa, L., Blancafort-Alias, S., Roqué-Figuls, M., Sachs, A. L., Casajuana, C., Siebert, U., Rochau, U., Puntcher, S., Holmerová, I., Pitkälä, K. H., Litt, J. S. (2024) **Nature-based social interventions to address loneliness among vulnerable populations: a common study protocol for three related randomized controlled trials in Barcelona, Helsinki, and Prague within the RECETAS European project.** BMC Public Health 24, 172.

Tate, W., Sachs, AL, Litt, JS., Razani, N., Chawla, L. (2024). **Nature Prescribing or Nature Programming? Complementary Practices to Increase Time in Nature to Support Mental Health.** Ecopsychology (In Press).

Sachs, A. L., Kolster, A., Wrigley, J., Papon, V., Opacin, N., Hill, N., Howarth, M., Rochau, U., Hidalgo, L., Casajuana, C., Siebert, U., Gerhard, J., Daher, C., Litt, J. C., (2024). **Connecting through nature: A systematic review of the effectiveness of nature-based social prescribing practices to combat loneliness.** Landscape and Urban Planning, Volume 248; DOI: 10.1016/j.landurbplan.2024.105071

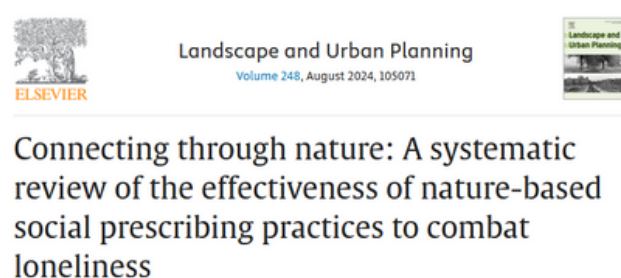
Published in 2023

[Access all publications](#)

Litt, J. S., Coll-Planas, L., Sachs, A. L., Rochau, U., Jansson, A., Dostálová, V., Daher, C., Beacom, A., Bachinski, K., Garcia-Velez, G., Bekessy, S., Blancafort-Alias, S., Hill, N., Gascón, M., Bartova, A., Cattaneo, L., Cucchiaro, A., Casajuana Kögel, C., Opacin, N., Colom, J., Gentile, S., Holmerová, I., Johnson, K., Kimberlee, R., Siebert, U., Varda, D., Pitkälä, K. H. (2024). **Nature-based social interventions for people experiencing loneliness: the rationale and overview of the RECETAS project.** *Cities & Health*, 1–14.

Litt, JS., Coll-Planas, L., Sachs, A., Masó Aguado, M., Howarth, M., (2023). **Current Trends and Future Directions in Urban Social Prescribing, Current Environmental Health Reports.**

Celia Santos-Tapia, Laura Hidalgo, Pol Jimenez-Arenas, Cristina Casajuana, Sara Domènech, Aida Ballester-Lledó, Jill Litt, Ashby Sachs, Gabriela Garcia, Sergi Blancafort-Alias, **Co-Creating a Nature-Based Social Prescription Intervention in Urban Socioeconomically Deprived Neighbourhoods: A Case Study from RECETAS Project in Barcelona, Spain, Health & Social Care in the Community**, vol. 2023, Article ID 6616991, 16 pages, 2023.



SPRINGER NATURE Link



SOCIAL MEDIA

The analysis of RECETAS' social media performance on Twitter/X and LinkedIn from 2021 to 2024 reveals steady progress across all key metrics, especially in engagement, reactions, and audience size. The data highlights a clear upward trajectory in user interactions and post reach over the years.

Audience growth has been sustained, with particularly strong momentum on LinkedIn. This can be attributed to the platform's alignment with the project's target audiences—researchers, institutional stakeholders, and professionals—making it an ideal space for policy discussions and professional networking.

On LinkedIn, the metrics show a steady increase in both followers and reactions consistently over the years, demonstrating that the content became more relevant or resonated more strongly with the audience preferences. 2024 stands out with the highest number of reactions and an increase in new followers.

More targeted content and increased engagement per post have also led to an increase in impressions, reflecting growing interest and visibility for the RECETAS project. Maintaining high-quality content is likely to be crucial for further engagement growth, targeted campaigns or collaborations could help continue the growth trajectory.

On X/Twitter, engagement and reactions peaked significantly in 2022, driven by the volume of posts and impressions. In subsequent years, engagement remained steady, with an increase in 2024.

This suggests growing interaction and interest of the existing audience, despite slower community growth and reduced reach per post starting in 2024—likely due to algorithm changes or decreased impressions.

To amplify both engagement of the community and visibility of the project, new content strategies can be implemented (e.g. interactive content, strategic hashtags, targeted campaigns, collaborations with influential accounts), with a narrative in line with the phases of the communication actions: content on the origins and evolution of the project, project review (pre-results phase), dissemination of results and final event, post-project dissemination. To do so, bi-weekly meetings with the project leader are carried out to complete our editorial calendar, a new tool allowing us to plan in advance, link our content with relevant partners and stakeholders, create synergies with them, etc.

LINKEDIN

2021

- Total of publications: 29
- Impressions: 6132
- Reactions: 203
- Average engagement: 8.97%
- Number of followers (total/year): 111

2022

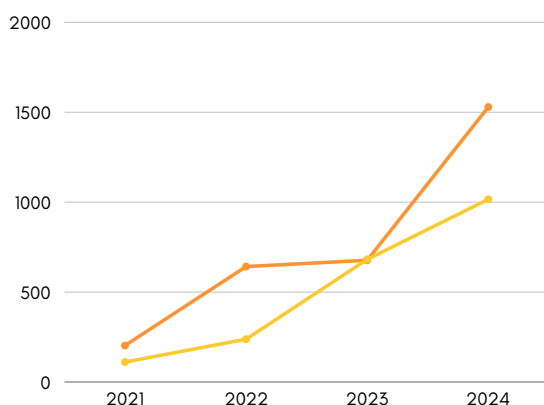
- Total number of publications: 68
- Impressions: 18203
- Reactions: 656
- Average engagement: 8.67%
- Number of followers (total/year): 238

2023

- Total number of publications: 53
- Impressions: 13 711
- Reactions: 677
- Average engagement: 10.88%
- Number of followers (total/year): 682

2024

- Total number of publications: 51
- Impressions: 31464
- Reactions: 1 529
- Average engagement rate: 10.85%
- New followers: 334



X/TWITTER

2021

- Total of publications: 38
- Impressions: 21 146
- Reactions: 192
- Average engagement: 4.29%
- Number of followers (total/year): 170

2022

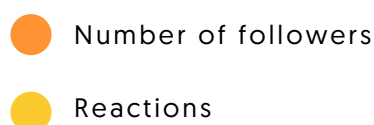
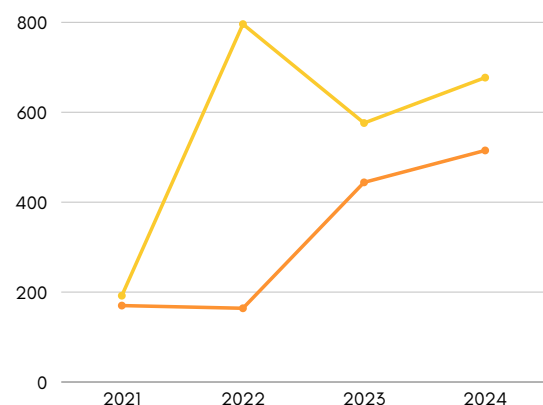
- Total of publications: 134
- Impressions: 40646
- Reactions: 796
- Average engagement: 5.35%
- Number of followers (total/year): 164

2023

- Total number of publications: 74
- Impressions: 26 478
- Reactions: 576
- Average engagement: 6.09
- Number of followers (total/year): 444

2024

- Total number of publications: 131
- Impressions: 16 687
- Reactions: 677
- Average engagement rate: 12.35%
- New followers: 71



MEDIA COVERAGE

Media coverage plays a crucial role in the project's engagement strategy, achieved through press releases, or direct collaboration with journalists and media outlets, including :

- Cristina Saez, La natura millora el benestar emocional més que un fàrmac, Ara, February 22, 2025
- Julia Hotz, [Bat-watching, beach explorations and 'sniff' walks: How nature can provide a tonic for loneliness](#), The BBC, December 27, 2024.
- Antoine Beau, [Vies brisées et décès précoces : comment la solitude est devenue une urgence sanitaire](#), L'Express, Paris, September 22, 2024,
- Marc Solares Calderón, [Estem demostrant que els espais verds redueixen considerablement l'estrès i l'ansietat](#), Sostenible, July 8, 2024
- NEWS ARTICLE- 13 May 2024 European Health and Digital Executive Agency - [European Mental Health Awareness Week: Horizon 2020 promotes natural spaces in cities to combat loneliness](#)
- Kelly Servick, [Striving to connect: Health officials are raising alarms about loneliness and isolation. Can researchers identify what helps?](#), Science, Vol 384, Issue 6694 (2024)
- Alison Jones, The EU Research and Innovation Magazine, Feature Article, [The health powers of birdsong, breezes and bushes](#), Horizon, January 5, 2024



BBC



Célébration de la fête des cerisiers en fleurs (Hanami) au parc de Sceaux, en région parisienne, le 11 avril 2023. ERIC BRONCKHOFF / HANS LUCAS

Bat-watching, beach explorations and 'sniff' walks: How nature can provide a tonic for loneliness

27 December 2024

Julia Hotz



Horizon
The EU Research & Innovation Magazine



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ENVIRONMENT | HEALTH | SCIENCE IN SOCIETY | SOCIAL SCIENCES

RESEARCH

The health powers of birdsong, breezes and bushes

Nature is being harnessed in the EU to improve the wellbeing of city dwellers, including people suffering from loneliness.

X Sostenible

Portada La Xana Reflexió Territori Recursos Butlletí

"Estem demostrant que els espais verds redueixen considerablement l'estrès i l'ansietat"

Jill Litt, investigadora de l'ISGlobal

MARC SOLANES CALDERÓN
Periodista. Cap de redacció de continguts propis de Sostenible.cat

08/07/2024 - 08:00

Jill Litt és professora de Salut Ambiental al Programa d'Estudis Ambientals de la Universitat de Colorado a Boulder i investigadora sènior a l'Institut de Salut Global de Barcelona (ISGlobal). Té un llarg recorregut en l'àrea de la salut ambiental urbana, treballant durant l'última dècada als barris de Baltimore, Filadèlfia, Boston i Denver i, més recentment, a Barcelona, Marsella i Montpeller en una varietat de qüestions relacionades amb els entorns construïts i naturals i la salut.

L'EXPRESS

SCIENCES ET SANTÉ | SANTÉ

Vies brisées et décès précoces : comment la solitude est devenue une urgence sanitaire

Sciences. Depuis le Covid-19, plusieurs pays se sont dotés d'un arsenal politique pour lutter contre les effets du manque de relations sociales sur la santé. Mais sur le plan scientifique, les mystères restent nombreux.

Par Antoine Beau | Publié le 22/09/2024 à 09:00

NEWSLETTER

Since its launch in 2021, the RECETAS newsletter has grown to 840 recipients (as of February 24, 2025), with translations of content for local outreach.

The goal of this publication is to present the progress achieved by the consortium during the past semester. We talk about our recent news, the articles newly published, the main events we attended or organized, the updates from the pilot cities and our intervention. We also add ideas of projects and initiatives similar to RECETAS that might interest readers.

Email performance

(source: Mailchimp from October 2024 to February 2025)

 Open rate	 Click rate	 Bounce rate	 Unsubscribe rate
29.0%	19.7%	9.3%	1.3%
221 opened	150 clicked	78 bounced	10 unsubscribed

Additional email details

Successful deliveries	762 (90.7%)	Clicks per unique opens	67.9%
Total opens	560	Total clicks	556

RECETAS Newsletter #4

NOVEMBER 2023



What is going on in our pilot cities?

This year, we test & evaluate!



RECETAS NEWSLETTER

October 10, 2024

World Mental Health Day

2
0
2
4



Clinical
trials

Analysis of
the results

WHAT HAS RECETAS BEEN UP TO?

CROSS-SITE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

Connections with other consortia play a key role in RECETAS' engagement strategy, broadening stakeholder involvement. Collaborations with other research networks and initiatives create synergies to exchange best practices, innovative solutions, and address common challenges. Beyond the projects in the Urban Health Cluster, RECETAS has formed active connections with projects such as these listed below.

Space – Social Prescribing and Civic Engagement

Connecting social prescribing and volunteering to support the health and well-being of people with health and rehabilitation needs.

GREENMe Project - Mental health for all through nature

An integrated multi-scalar approach for the expansion of nature-based therapies to improve mental health equity (greenme-project.eu).



RESONATE - Building individual and community resilience through nature-based therapies

A consortium of world leaders NbT and stakeholders in the health, environmental, economic, and societal sectors (resonate-horizon.eu).



Urban Health Cluster (UHC)

RECETAS collaborated with 5 other Urban Health-based EU projects on environment-health research and innovation.



Lonely-EU - monitoring loneliness and develop evidence-based policies

A consortium addressing loneliness at both individual and societal levels.

In order to get insight about the engagement activities carried out by the consortium from out pilot cities, an anonymized survey was sent to the partners with the following questions. The answers provided an excellent basis for work in WP6, encapsulating the success and areas for improvement in terms of engagement in every local context. This survey will enable RECETAS teams to tailor local communication efforts according to the strengths of each pilot. Get an overview of the answers.

Question 1: Current situation: how would you describe the situation we are trying to change?

Summary of answers: There is a lack of awareness, data, training and public policies supporting nature-based social prescribing (NBSP) and addressing loneliness as a public health issue.

Question 2: What would you say are the goals of the project - in general, and in terms of public engagement?

Summary of answers: Key goals include raising awareness of loneliness as a public health issue, reducing stigma, fostering multi-sector collaboration, expanding public engagement, influencing policy, and building scientific evidence.

Question 3 : Inputs: how do you contribute? Describe your activities. How do you get to change the public's perspective on our topics of interest, in the context of your activities in the project?

Summary of answers: The project engaged professionals, NGOs, and key institutions through articles, talks, congresses, and face-to-face meeting - with a clear strategy including stakeholder mapping, annual events, and collaborations with local governments to foster long-term involvement.

Question 4: Output: What did you create to achieve engagement? Events, publications, partnerships, courses, etc.

Summary of answers: The project has produced presentations, peer-reviewed articles, professional publications, reports, and leaflets, while participating in public debates, lectures, and podcasts, with a strong media interest, TV interviews and articles in major newspapers.

Question 5 : Outcome and Impact: what outcome in terms of public engagement? What are the results?

Summary of answers: While the project's long-term effects and findings are still unfolding, key outputs include training facilitators, expanding professional and political networks, influencing stakeholder approaches, and fostering community engagement, with former participants advocating for continued interventions.

Question 6 : What were the assumptions you had at the beginning of the project in terms of engagement? Did they evolve? Are there external factors affecting the way we engage with people?

Summary of answers: There was initially an assumption that NBSP was more widely known, but significant efforts were needed to introduce and frame it properly. Connecting with key actors helped expand networks, though discussing loneliness in communities required more work than anticipated.

CREATING HUMAN LINK THROUGH ART, CULTURE AND NATURE

The Cuenca RECETAS team focuses on older adults. In a city that is so vibrant and rich with artforms, cultural manifestations and traditions deep-rooted in nature, linking the locals with these elements has been key.

A true connection built through
shared experiences and traditions.

RECETAS Team in Cuenca
Universidad de Cuenca

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN CUENCA

The Cuenca RECETAS team's approach prioritises direct engagement with the elder community and care organizations, local government authorities and partner projects, emphasising that human connection cannot be replaced by emails and videoconferences. Following a post-Covid shift towards a more human-centred strategy, stakeholders began showing a real interest in the project and its upcoming results, especially since RECETAS is one of the first projects to provide data on loneliness in Cuenca.

The Cuenca RECETAS team has integrated itself into the local landscape of stakeholders related to nature and health issues, by disseminating project information and facilitating local dialogue around this challenging topic. They have built meaningful connections, and participated in key events such as the First International Congress of PROSALUD, organized by the UCSC (Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción).



The RECETAS team, alongside those stakeholders, developed innovative events such as the 1st Meeting with Nature for Inclusive Aging in October 2023, which is now a recurrent annual event, highly anticipated by locals.

In 2024, the [2nd Meeting with Nature](#) for Inclusive Aging, organized in collaboration with the REECETAS team, centered around local traditions. The picture (left) demonstrates the ancient Andean Chakana Ritual, which symbolizes the connection between humanity and the cosmos (performed with flowers, grains, fire, water, medicinal plants and ancestral tools).



ANCHORING RECETAS INTO A LOCAL NETWORK FOCUSING ON URBAN BIODIVERSITY

In Marseille, RECETAS is a natural fit. A rich city with a wide network of stakeholders to reach, and local politics highly active on connecting nature to the urban setting, with a proximity to the Calanques, a treasure of biodiversity.

IN MARSEILLE, SOCIAL PRESCRIBING IS THE PERFECT APPROACH.

RECETAS Team in Marseille
Assistance Publique des Hôpitaux de Marseille
[AP-HM]

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN MARSEILLE

The Marseille RECETAS team began engaging with stakeholders to ensure that loneliness was recognized as a public health issue and to build local capacity and activity around the intersection of nature and health. The social network survey revealed that there are more than 300 local organizations working on these topics, including many cultural entities such as museums. Among many successful partnerships, the collaboration with the NGO Biodiversant  stood out, and has evolved into a close relationship, leading to the co-creation of local events and a shared commitment to community engagement.

Acknowledging the fact that NBSP is a relatively new and not well understood topic, the team organized visibility events to explore broader themes beyond NBSP (e.g. in partnership with the NGOs Astr e and Educalanques).



The goal was to integrate NBSP into wider conversations, remain open to diverse perspectives, to create opportunities for new collaborations, but also to keep engaging with the public. The Marseille team operates on multiple fronts, with event organization being a key focus, and is involved in disseminating RECETAS through national media (e.g. [French newspaper Le Monde](#)).

A group of people are walking away from the camera on a dirt path that winds through a dense forest. The path is made of light-colored soil and is flanked by tall, thin trees with green foliage. The people are dressed in casual outdoor attire, including hats and backpacks. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

OFFERING A HAND: WARMTH AND INCLUSION FOR MARGINALIZED INDIVIDUALS

In Melbourne, RECETAS focuses on individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ refugees or asylum seekers, through community engagement, it is an integral part of the ecosystem addressing loneliness within the LGBTQIA+ community.

A DEEP COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TO BRIDGE LONELINESS AND INCLUSION.

RECETAS Team in Melbourne
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
{RMIT}

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN MELBOURNE

In Melbourne, the RECETAS project focuses on individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ refugees or asylum seekers. The work done by our Melbourne team is directly related to community involvement. For this reason, RECETAS in Melbourne is now a part of the ecosystem of stakeholders working on loneliness within the LGBTQIA+ community, and therefore works with NGOs groups focusing on the same topic, namely Many Coloured Sky, an organization that actively supports LGBTQIA+ organizations with capacity building, planning and project development, and empowers those at the margins and intersections of LGBTQIA+ communities to participate fully and equally.

The Melbourne RECETAS team has done the work of identifying links with local, regional and national media outlets in Australia. They are quite active on social media and participate in campaigns like the Loneliness Awareness Week within RMIT. and the broader social prescribing networks such as ASPIRE.



The team also attends many events, disseminating what RECETAS is to an even wider public, such as the Social Connection Symposium, the [Refugee Trauma Recovery in Resettlement Conferences](#).

Melbourne has connected with diverse initiatives connected to health and nature: they participated in the [Critical Forest Studies Collaboratory](#), an emerging collective for critical studies and regenerative practices with forests. Moreover, the Melbourne team gets to reach a very wide audience by spreading the word on podcasts like [Human: Connecting](#).



ENGAGING WITH LOCAL ELDERLY FOCUSED EVENTS AND FACILITIES

The Prague based RECETAS team is focused on implementing the Friends in Nature model among the older generations. The team participates actively in diverse events, where they present the project and the NBSP approach.

NATURE AND SOCIAL CONNECTION TO THE HEART OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RECETAS Team in Prague
University of Charles

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PRAGUE

The Prague RECETAS team is deeply engaged in implementing the Friends in Nature model among older generations. They actively participate in various events to showcase the NBSP approach and raise awareness of the RECETAS project, such as at the Vogue Live CS Conference in October 2023, that also included participation from ISGlobal, where RECETAS became part of the broader dialogue on longevity and wellbeing.

The Prague team has focused on dissemination efforts at public events like the Fresh Senior Festival, with printed and radio dispatches. This has played a key role in establishing RECETAS locally and recruiting participants into the study. The team also established communication with politicians and experts, many of whom are now open to discussions on the potential of non-pharmacological interventions, following the publication of project findings and embracing social prescribing as part of the public response to loneliness.



In June 2024, the Prague RECETAS team hosted the RECETAS Annual Consortium Meeting. A representative from the Ministry of Health attended in person to open the 3-day session, and express the Ministry's interest in collaborating with our project.

Alongside this important milestone, the Prague team also initiated collaborations with key stakeholders, including the Czech Radio and the Prague City Library, to feature content about loneliness, nature and RECETAS, in support of the project.



REACHING PEOPLE WITH MAINSTREAM ENGAGEMENT OUTLETS

RECETAS' methodology, Friends in Nature, was born in Finland - inspired from the Finnish methodology Circle of Friends. Already well known by stakeholders and population, the pilot now puts the light on loneliness as a public health issue.

ROOTED IN STRONG FOUNDATIONS AND REACHING OUT TO TACKLE LONELINESS

RECETAS Team in Helsinki
University of Helsinki

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN HELSINKI

The RECETAS team in Helsinki serves a unique pilot, as its methodology, "Friends in Nature," is rooted in the Finnish approach "Circle of Friends". The Finnish pilot is indeed already well integrated in networks of stakeholders and interested individuals who put the light on loneliness as a critical public health issue.

The Helsinki-based RECETAS team is highly active in presenting, networking and publishing, attending a wide range of events, such as the Nordic-Baltic Conference, "Preventing Dementia in the Nordics", and "Age-Friendly Cities for Everyone", "The Good Age" Trade Fair (tradefairdates.com), and [The People and Planet Conference](#).

They also participate and speak at various national training sessions for physicians, healthcare professionals, scientists and researchers, which allows them to greatly enhance RECETAS' visibility among professional stakeholders. Those usually take place in scientific facilities such Biomedicum (biomedicum.com), HY+ (hyplus.helsinki.fi), among others.



These training sessions are a great opportunity to meet students, NGO managers, directors, physicians, health and social care professionals, etc. Alongside these actions, the Helsinki team also was featured twice on Finnish television (2023 and 2024) helping to reach a larger audience.

The team is also active on other projects related to similar topics, further expanding RECETAS' reach to stakeholders with similar interests. For example, the [Nature Prescription project](#) led by the Natural Resources Institute of Finland (Luonnonvarakeskus, or Luke).

INCLUDING SOCIALLY EXCLUDED INDIVIDUALS INTO NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Coordinating the testing of the project's NBSP process, while strengthening local ties through key initiatives and innovation hubs, to ensure RECETAS' visibility and recognition among policymakers, researchers, and healthcare stakeholders.

MAKING NATURE-BASED SOCIAL PRESCRIBING A RECOGNIZED PRACTICE

Universitat de Vic – Universitat Central de Catalunya
Barcelona Institute for Global Health - ISGlobal
Generalitat de Catalunya

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN BARCELONA

The Barcelona-based RECETAS team leads WP4, with support from ISGlobal, the Catalan Regional Government and the Public Health Agency of Catalonia, which aims at coordinating the testing of the project's NBSP process and leading a local pilot of Friends in Nature. The team is also well embedded in networks of stakeholders having an interest in loneliness, notably at the municipal level in Barcelona. Laura Coll-Planas, RECETAS researcher, is a member of the Advisory Board of the Municipal Strategy Against Loneliness 2020-2030, which allows RECETAS to be brought in front of elected officials and other researchers focusing on loneliness. The team showcased RECETAS to the Health and Social Departments of Catalonia.

The Barcelona-based team worked with diverse structures and organisations in 12 different Barcelona neighborhoods or metropolitan municipalities to engage as many people as possible: meetings and conferences to open public about loneliness, NBSP, Friends in Nature. This process had an impact at a local level in a broad territory.



The team also participates in seminars, courses, and conferences. WP4 leader Laura Coll-Planas also hosted [podacst episode about loneliness](#)).

The [Connection Cure book reading event](#) with author Julia Holtz also allowed the project to engage with professionals across different sectors in the local ecosystem of stakeholders.

The Barcelona Team is also present on other events organized by hubs of innovation like the Hub of Social and Sanitary Innovation of Catalonia, which organized a meeting for healthcare stakeholders.



RECETAS is establishing a strong foundation for integrating NBSP into health and urban planning discussions.

Over the past four years, awareness of loneliness as a public health issue in the EU has grown, and the understanding of nature's role in mental and physical well-being has deepened. The RECETAS project is contributing to raising the profile of loneliness as a health issue and providing valuable insights into the evolving discourse around loneliness, NBSP, and the role of community-driven interventions in public health. The RECETAS work is crossing international borders to engage with policy makers at the European level, for example our presence as a plenary speaker at the European Public Health Association, and the Public Hearing of the European Parliament on loneliness.

Moreover, social media engagement has shown increasing interest from target audiences in the project's findings and publications. Academic content, in particular, has been well received, demonstrating the project's role in bridging research and public discourse. Regular publications have not only enhanced visibility but also facilitated connections with external institutions, strengthening RECETAS's influence.

RECETAS has been proactive in direct public engagement, particularly with institutions and the general public. The initial lack of data on loneliness and nature-based social prescribing required the consortium to focus on awareness-building, effectively shaping the narrative around the importance of nature in mental and physical health. To illustrate this, RECETAS is a founding member of an international nature network out of Edge Hill University in the United Kingdom, creating opportunities for research and policy synergy between Europe and the UK.

After four years of work, there has been a notable shift in perception:

- The understanding of nature's role in urban well-being has deepened.
- The discourse around loneliness has evolved, emphasizing social and structural determinants rather than solely personal challenges.
- Nature-based social prescribing is now recognized as a valuable, holistic alternative to conventional drug-centered healthcare approaches.

This evolution reflects the impact of RECETAS' outreach, establishing a foundation for further integration of nature-based solutions in health and urban planning discussions.

The findings from this public engagement report underscore that consistent human engagement, combined with a strong social media presence and institutional networking, is key to maintaining momentum. For the final year of the project, the focus should be:

1. Maximizing direct interactions with key stakeholders (policymakers, healthcare providers, community organizations) to build on existing relationships and ensure sustainable adoption of RECETAS's findings: organizing workshops and conferences, B2B meetings, attending policy making sessions (e.g. Marseille's Regional Biodiversity Strategy). In 2025, the consortium will begin a strategic exercise called the "RECETAS Pathway to Impact", a series of internal workshops to map out our network of stakeholders and their potential strategic impact. This work will culminate in a public-facing international event where simultaneous, multi-city, regional workshops will be held to engage local stakeholders and promote an exchange to inform policy and practice.

2. Securing long-term impact – facilitating discussions on how to integrate nature-based interventions into health policies and urban development frameworks

- A good example is the involvement of the Marseille-based RECETAS team in the discussions around the creation of the new Regional Biodiversity Strategy for Région Sud (regional authority). The team has been involved in the talks for the health and biodiversity parts of the Strategy, allowing us to bring our insights on nature-based interventions and loneliness to the table for a long-term and impactful public policy.
- Another example is the exploitation activities to maximize impact through the development of a digital platform. ISGlobal is opening up dialogue with innovation leaders and social impact investors, together with technology experts to examine the integration of a digital platform to support FiN implementation and translation to the marketplace. The platform has been prototyped with healthcare and third-sector stakeholders in Barcelona. As indicated earlier, this platform received an international award for best new healthcare innovation at the SilverEco International Aging Well Festival in Cannes, France in 2024.

3. **Strengthening legacy efforts** to ensure that the methodologies and insights developed within RECETAS continue to influence research, policy, and practice: by keeping the relationships with key stakeholders strong, participating in hubs of reflection, partnering and mentoring local and international projects, etc.

- Examples of this include:
 - The GreenMe Project
 - The Resonate Project
 - The Hub of Social and Sanitary Innovation of Catalonia
 - The Forest Therapy Hub
 - SPACES Erasmus +
 - Lonely EU

4. **Monitoring of activities and feedback** to and from consortium members to further enhance the effectiveness of the engagement strategy. By continuing to use our tracking spreadsheets we are able to support our partners during our monthly Steering Committee meetings, and at a wider scale during our annual consortium meetings, in discussing their activities and events for wider dissemination.

5. **Digital strategy** to expand our current reach across and beyond our audience base. We hold bi-weekly editorial meetings to strategize our online engagement, to maximize impressions and interactions on our social media, and discuss the development of graphic elements and other outreach efforts to showcase our work.

RECETAS engagement strategy fosters long-term collaborations and impact beyond the project's timeline.

Engagement strategy 2025-2026 and beyond

Value the project achievements

Key goals: Showcase the project to enhance the visibility in preparation for the results dissemination phase, capitalize on existing communication tools and build on current engagement actions, to keep expanding outreach to a wider audience.

Develop and strengthen stakeholder relations

Key goals: Identify local ambassadors to be involved in promoting results and key speakers to participate in the final event, organize local workshops and professional meetings in the pilot cities-allowing to provide hands-on experience of project activities.

Anticipate the dissemination activities

Key goals: Prepare for effective dissemination, strengthen information-sharing with influencers, media, and local stakeholders, engage with targeted audience groups, including scientists, policymakers, and the general public (through presentations, case studies, transformation stories, policy recommendations, press kits, and bilateral meetings).



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TESTING ACTIONS FOR SOCIAL
PRESCRIBING IN NATURAL SPACES