D5.4 DIH Survey Report

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Abbreviations

EC: European Commission
GA: Grant Agreement
OC: Open Call
DIH: Digital Innovation Hub
EoI: Expression of Interest
SME: Small and Medium Enterprise
FBOX: Fundingbox Accelerator
BCA: Bonseyes Community Association
BMP: Bonseyes Marketplace Platform
AIOD: AI on-demand platform created under the project GA number 825619
PAC: Common Agricultural Policy

Executive Summary

This document, created by Fundingbox - a strategic partner of the BonsAPPs project that is responsible for the connection with the Digital Innovation Hubs ecosystem is created under the task related to the industry-based definition of challenges for an AI adoption that will be used for preparations of 2nd Open Call for low tech Adopter SMEs (August - November 2022). Detailed information about the BonsAPPs project and its Digital Innovation Hubs context is described in section 1 of this document.

The report includes results and conclusions based on answers from the targeted group of Digital Innovation Hubs that filled out the DIHs survey between 03 - 05.2022. Results of the survey (included in section 3) cover the description of a target group of DIHs interviewed, AI Adoption challenges in their local ecosystems (SMEs focused) and analysis of the needs of DIHs in their mission to support their network.

The survey was launched as a part of DIHs roadshow webinars. Section 2 includes the details on dissemination actions made to reach the DIHs and details on the content of the series that was focused on cascade funding opportunities for AI and networking.

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1. Introduction

1.1. What is BonsAPPs?

BonsAPPS is an EU-funded H2020 project that will help SMEs in their digitalization process by allowing them to access, implement and make use of Artificial Intelligence easily and affordably through the fully functional cycle for the AI development that can be done through the Bonseyes Marketplace Platform (BMP).

The platform offers a series of modular services — such as experimentation, model compression, optimisation, benchmarking, and deployment of hardware and security that **will increase AI usage among enterprises and low-tech SMEs that currently lack internal innovation capabilities.**

BonsAPPs project was created in line with the EC's AI Strategy for building an ecosystem of excellence that can support the development and uptake of AI across the European Union that will interoperate with the AI on-demand platform (AIOD).

Throughout the project, BonsAPPS will launch 2 Open Calls (OC) for AI Talents[1] and low-tech Adopter SMEs that will lead to the **development of 20 Use Cases for AI Adoption** in total.
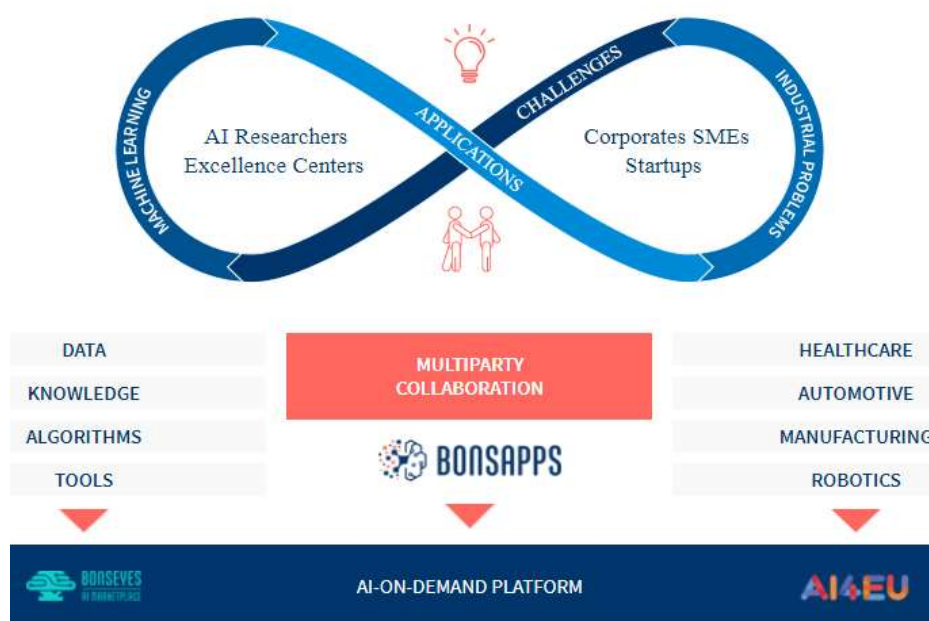
Figure 1 BonsAPPs Use Case - innovation cycle

1.2 BonsAPPs and Digital Innovation Hubs context

One of the important European efforts to drive excellence in AI research, innovation, and application, the EC is to drive inclusiveness in AI on a regional level. This is where the Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) come into play. These bodies are positioned to support organizations with their uptake of AI on a regional level. This support is not only in the form of technical support but also through business, legal, data, skills, and ecosystem support. For example, DIHs can provide their clients with use cases and

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[1] 1st Open Call was finished in 2021. Results are available here:
https://spaces.fundingbox.com/spaces/artificial-intelligence-ai-community-ai-for-the-deep-edge-helpdesk/61eeb529a00ca005d3d2419f

access to infrastructure. Nonetheless, DIHs also support other actors, such as AI solution providers, policymakers, and students. That is why **DIHs are an important part of the BonsAPPs project to connect with SMEs and define the industrial challenges for the 2ⁿᵈ Open Call.**

Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) are one of the four pillars of the 'Digitising European Industry initiative' — a key instrument to foster local collaboration amongst all relevant actors involved in technology uptake (research technology organisations, system integrators, early adopters, other manufacturing SMEs/midcaps) as well as to channel the efforts (funding, upskilling programs, etc.) that regional and national governments dedicate to digital transformation locally. This role will be maintained, and even fostered, in the context of the 'Digital Europe Programme' (2021-2027). Engagement with DIH networks is a key element of BonsAPPs communication and dissemination strategy and is leveraged based on the strong position of the Fundingbox Group with the Digital Innovation Hub ecosystem, as a partner in strategic EU projects regarding DIHs such as DIHNET (pan-European network of networks of regional DIHs), I4MS CSA (Industry 4.0), and BOWI (widening DIHs in regions underrepresented in I4MS and SAE Initiatives).

There are 2 main actions planned over the BonsAPPs project duration that aim to engage with DIHs:

- 2022: DIHs roadshow (covered by this report): series of training for DIHs focused on cascade funding opportunities in AI and networking. Participating DIHs received a certificate and were asked to fill the survey to prioritize the 2nd OC challenges scope.

- 2023: DIH ¨train-the-trainers¨ toolkit. After the successful compilation of 2 editions of BonsAPPs support programmes, the learnings on how to execute AI Use Cases will be shared with DIHs to foster AI uptake in the DIH ecosystem.

2. DIHs Roadshow

2.1 Content

Between March - May 2022, Fundingbox organized a trilogy of webinars to attract Digital Innovation Hubs interested in boosting the AI adoption into the ecosystem. The webinars were organized jointly with another ICT49 initiative - StairwAI and the Fundingbox AI Community bringing together these networks.

Webinars were hosted through the GoToWebinar platform and were divided into 3 main pieces of training. All the series was hosted by Izabela Zrazinska - Senior Project Manager at FBOX and Open Call Manager in BonsAPPs. Each webinar was led by a different expert from Fundingbox that involved a diversity of speakers such as DIH representatives sharing good practices, SMEs supported in previous EU-funded projects (AI4EU) or AI experts from Bonseyes Community Association.

Below is the detailed content of each webinar:

Workshop 1, 7th April: Discover an alternative source of funding.

☑What is Cascade Funding? (Mayte Carracedo, Co-founder & Partnerships and Business Development Manager at Fundingbox)
☑ Learn about AI Funding Opportunities (Izabela Zrazinska, Senior Project Manager at Fundingbox)
☑What companies can gain from a technology perspective (Miguel De Prado, Bonseyes Association)

☑ What companies can gain from a technology & business perspective (Svetla Boytcheva, Ontotext Sirma, beneficiary of AI4EU Open Call)

☑ How DIHs can help companies in obtaining cascade funding (Sergio Mayo, Aragón DIH – Instituto Tecnológico de Aragón (ITAINNOVA)

Materials from the workshop (video&presentations) are available through the AI Community public link HERE.

Figure 2 DIHs Roadshow - Print Screen from webinar 1 presentation (Funding Opportunities for AI)

Workshop 2, 20th April: How to win Cascade Funding Opportunities.

☑ How to make the best proposal (Graciela Garrido, Business Development Manager at Fundingbox)
☑ Master on how to apply to an AI Cascade Funding Opportunity - a DIH expert view (Pedro Arques, Innovation Manager at Agora DIH)
☑ The compliance process (Izabela Zrazinska, Senior Project Manager at Fundingbox)

Materials from the workshop (video&presentations) are available through the AI Community public link HERE.

Workshop 3, 4th May: Build your Alliances in the EU AI DIH Ecosystem.

☑European AI Ecosystem and Landscape (Roi Rodríguez, Fundingbox Program Manager and supervisor of AI and Robotics acceleration programs)
☑Case studies. A couple of DIHs experiences (Daniel Alonso, ITI Manager, BDVA Board Member)
☑ Workshop session (led by Roi Rodriguez)
☑ Summary of DIHs roadshow content (Izabela Zrazinska, Senior Project Manager at Fundingbox)

Materials from the workshop (video&presentations) are available through the AI Community public link HERE.

Figure 3 DIHs Roadshow - Print Screen from webinar 3 presentation (lessons learnt about ecosystem building)

2.2 Dissemination

Before the launch of the DIHs roadshow, a dedicated dissemination strategy was developed to reach the highest number of DIHs joining the webinars and filling out the DIHs survey. Dedicated graphics and communication templates were created by the FBOX team to reach the targeted audience:

Figure 4 DIHs Roadshow - banner

The dissemination actions targeted DIHs with an interest in AI adoption with a clear message and offer: **help them boost AI adoption in their region by providing them insights and training on cascade funding**. DIHs that participated in all the series would be able to support their local SMEs in writing a winning proposal for funding in multiple AI projects and connect to the ecosystem.

The main channels for disseminating the webinars and the DIH survey are detailed below:

1) Social media:

Fundingbox:

Channels	Number of posts	Number of impressions
Twitter	5	1,847
LinkedIn	5	867
Facebook	2	148
FBOX Community	**6:** FundingBox Community, AI Community, I4MS, BOWI, DIHNET, & NGI	931
TOTAL	**18**	**3,793**

Table 1 Dissemination actions - FBOX channels

DIHs roadshow series posts were also shared in ICT 49 projects' social media channels (BonsAPPs, StairwAI and I nergy) and in AI4EU.
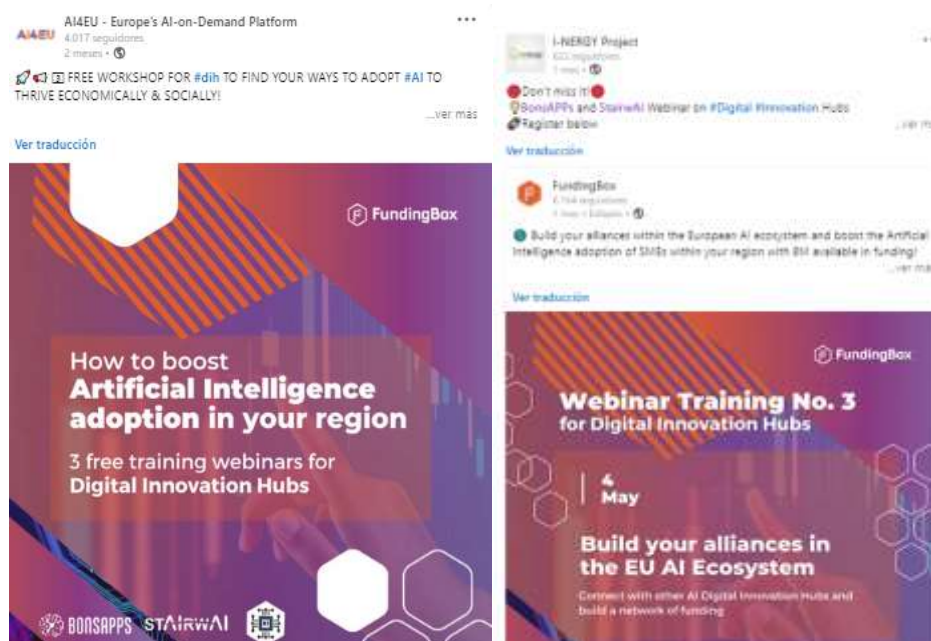
Figure 5 Dissemination actions - print screens from ICT 49 projects social media channels

2) Newsletters and Mailing

Channel	Users subscribed
FBOX Newsletter	17,000
DIHNET Community newsletter	1,100

DIHs mailing list	318
TOTAL	**18,418**

Table 2 Dissemination actions - newsletters and mailing campaigns

2.3 Participants

In total, all 3 webinars counted 222 registrations that converted to 111 participants.

In the middle of the dissemination of the 1st Webinar, organizers added a supportive question to the registration form to identify the DIHs representatives participating in workshops (¨*Are you involved in DIH?* ¨).

As presented in the figure below, **DIH representatives and DIH ecosystem members are the majority of participants of the DIHs roadshow (66% of all participants).**
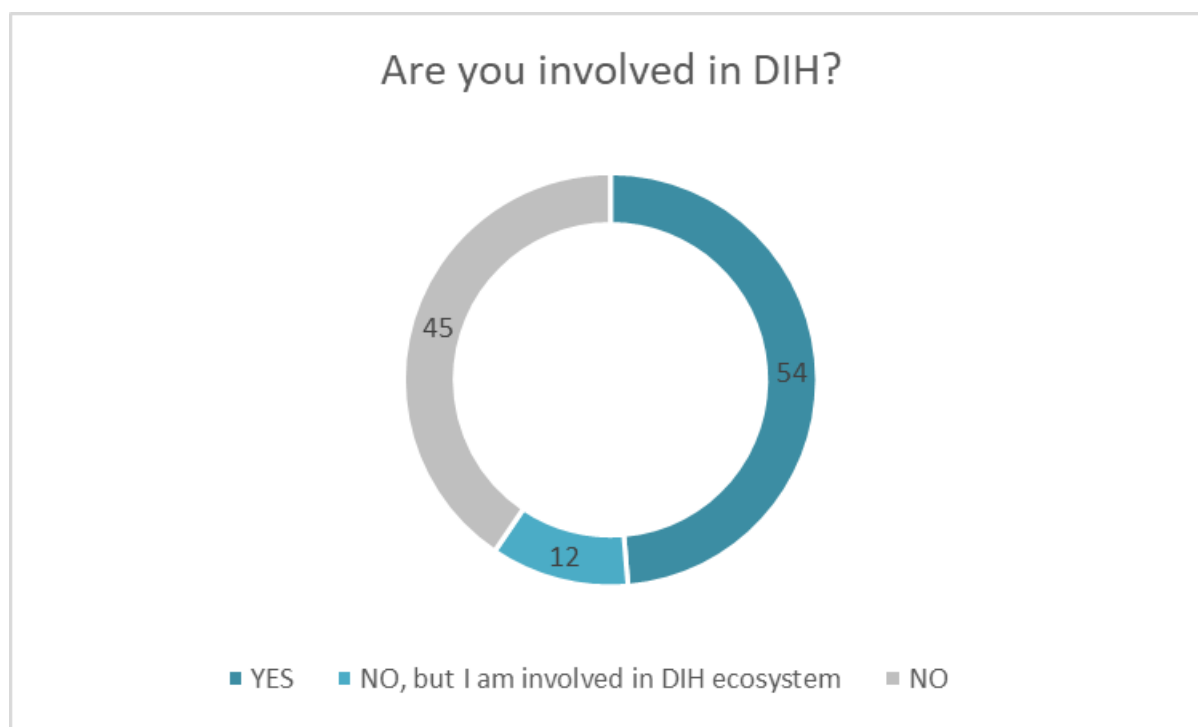
Figure 6 DIHs Roadshow participants' statistics

It is important to underline that these numbers include a total of participants per webinar and some representatives participated in multiple webinars. That means that among 54 DIH participants, some of them are duplicated. DIHs roadshow team has compared participants' lists of all webinars to receive a final number of unique users.

As a result, the final number of unique participants in the whole DIHs roadshow is 53, including 33 DIHs representatives (62% of the total). A full list of DIHs unique participants is included in Annex I.

DIHs that participated in at least one webinar and that filled the DIH survey received a certificate afterwards. As a result, **24 DIH representatives were certified** at the end of the series.

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Figure 7 DIH Roadshow certificate template

3. DIHs Survey results

One of the main goals of the DIHs roadshow was to bring added value to DIHs and invite them to fill out the DIHs survey (consultation to DIH ecosystem about the 2nd Open Call challenges) available through the link: https://h8pbjbijejp.typeform.com/to/yZGS6h8h

For this purpose, the survey was promoted during each webinar and its dissemination campaign (see section 2.2), its follow-up emails and through certification. The survey was created on the Typeform platform to add a friendly user experience layout connected to DIHs roadshow graphics. As a result, **15 DIHs that participated in the DIHs roadshow filled the survey.** The rest of the answers were received from DIHs connected to the FBOX ecosystem.

The overall statistics of the survey show a good ratio of started vs submission (43.1%) that allowed to reach the expected target of 50 DIHs filling out the survey by 24.05.2022.

Views	Starts	Submissions	Completion rate	Time to complete
319	130	56	43.1%	12:31

Figure 8 DIHs survey general statistics from Typeform tool[2]

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[2] 56 submissions - 6 submissions are related to testing of the survey that are counted for statistics in typeform system.
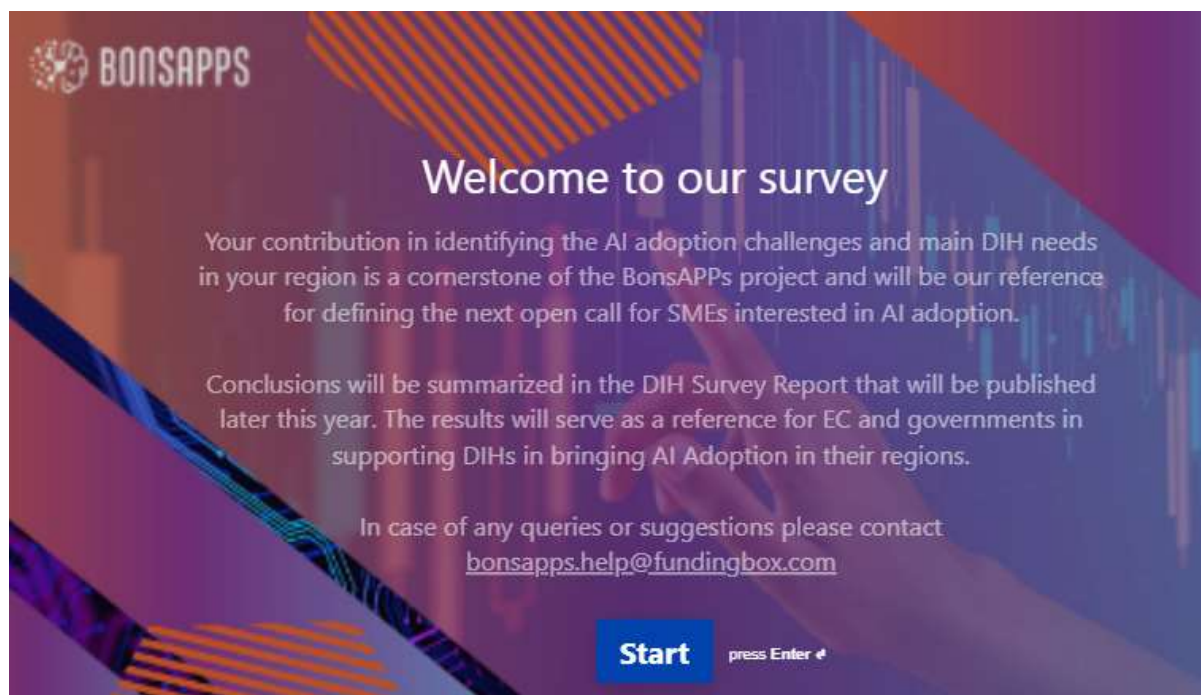
Figure 9 DIHs Survey welcome panel

Survey questions were divided into 3 main categories:

1) Tell us who you are - to understand the profile of the target group that filled the survey
2) Industry challenges for AI Adoption - used for 2nd OC challenges prioritization
3) Tell us about your challenges and needs - to gather information on how to adapt the support to DIHs and start preparing ¨the train the trainers¨ toolkit (expected for 2023)

3.1 Overview of the target group that filled the survey:

From 50 surveys submitted, it is important to underline that
- 1 DIH filled in the survey 5 times (only the survey submitted last was taken into account)
- 3 DIHs filled in the survey 2 times (only the survey submitted last was taken into account)
- 2 natural persons filled in the survey twice BUT for 2 different DIHs
- 3 surveys were filled in by DIHs from Africa (included in the statistics)
- 3 answers were provided by different representatives from the same DIH (CINECA from Italy)

This means that from 50 surveys submitted, the final target group that is presented through the statistics below include 43 DIHs. The full list of DIHs that answered the survey is included in Annex II.

The first part of the survey was used to understand better the survey group profile with some basic questions related to the DIH activity and experience.

Survey target group characteristics are the following:

The country where your DIH is registered:
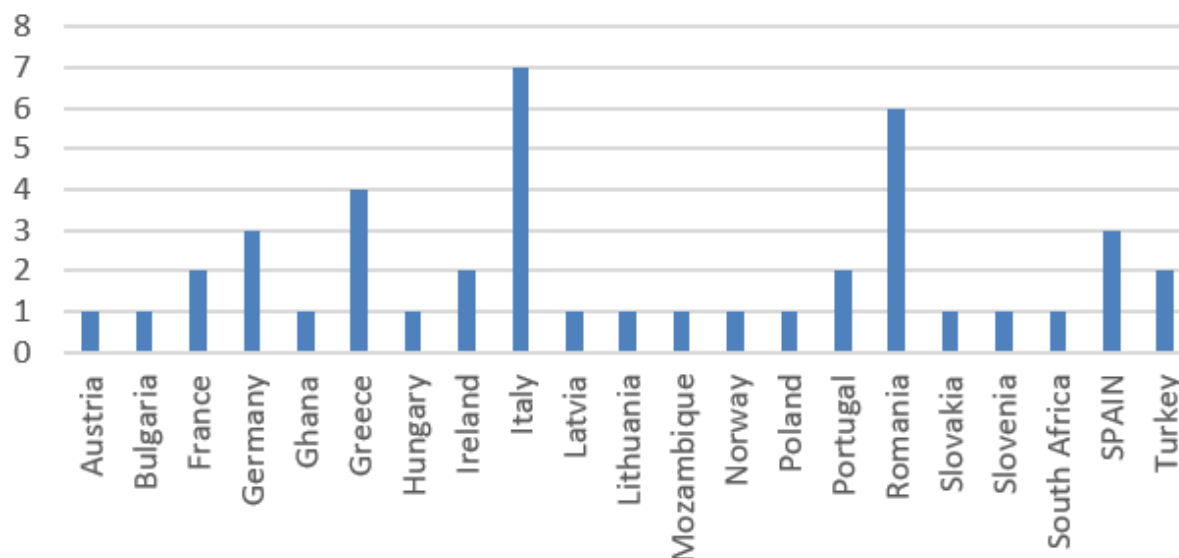
Figure 10 DIH survey: DIH representatives per country

The highest number of DIHs that answered the survey were from **Italy, Romania and Greece.**

3 DIHs coming from Africa (1 reply per each: Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa) are most probably the effect of FBOX's involvement in AEDIBNET project that aims to build the ecosystem of DIHs in Africa and could bring an interesting reflection that DIHs from that countries are also interested in AI Adoption.

Your role within your DIH organisation

As the people filling out the survey included different names for these roles, these have subsequently been divided into three broad categories:

Management: CEO, Coordinator, Director, President, Founding Member, Project Manager, Senior Funds Expert, Unit Manager, Project Advisor.

Innovation/Business: Business Developer, Innovation Services specialist, Innovation Programs Manager, Ideation and early-stage start-up advisor, Head of Communication & Marketing.

Research/Technology: R&D engineer, Scientific Director, Vice President Research, Technology manager, HPC Specialist.

These replies validate the fact that people that replied to the survey had the competencies to provide resourceful information about the DIH they represented requested through the survey.

Which sectors does your DIH operate?

The main activity sector covered by survey participants was **Manufacturing** (one of the key verticals of the BonsAPPs project). Other BonsAPPs focus areas such as **Automotive and Health were listed as the top 10.** That shows a good match for the survey group whose main goal was to point out the main challenges for the 2nd OC definition in those 4 verticals, pre-defined by the BonsAPPs consortium at the beginning of the project.

Sector	Responses
Manufacturing	33 resp. 76.7%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	22 resp. 51.2%
Healthcare	21 resp. 48.8%
Energy and utilities	20 resp. 46.5%
Mobility (incl. Automotive)	20 resp. 46.5%
Public administration	20 resp. 46.5%
Transport and logistics	20 resp. 46.5%
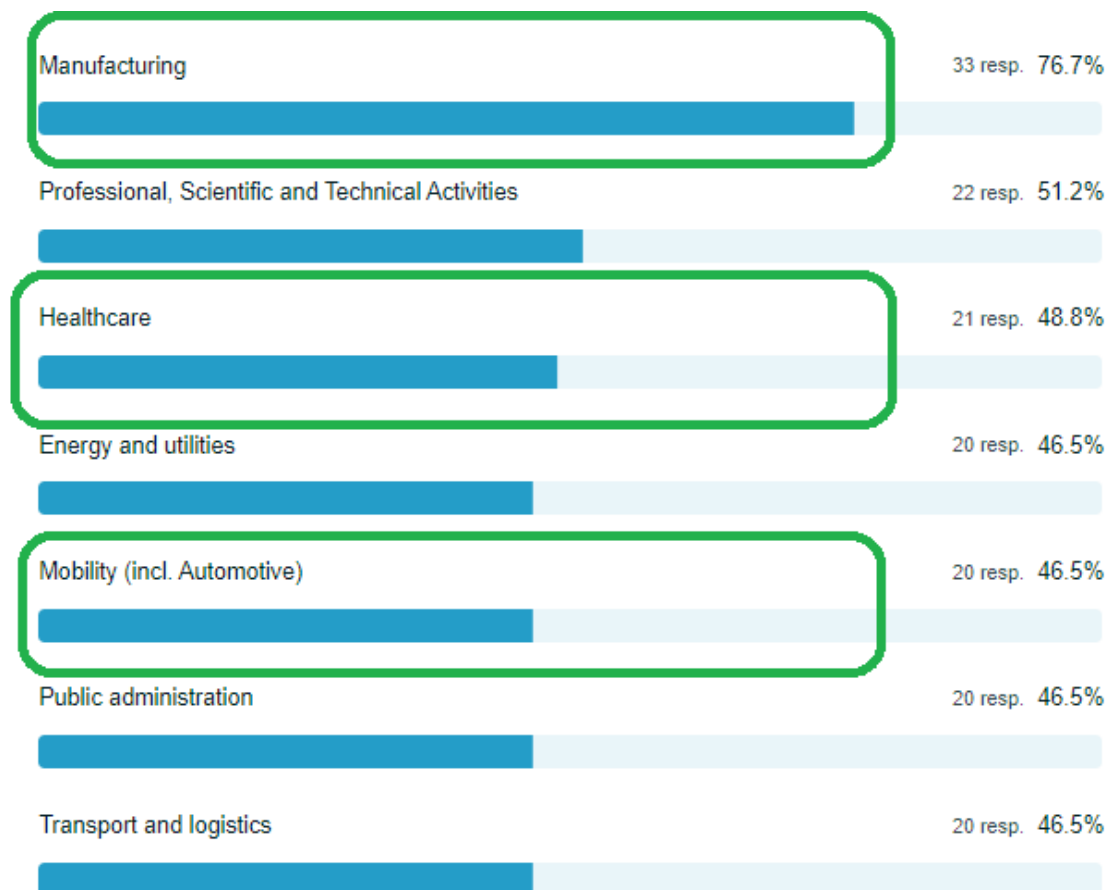
Figure 11 DIH survey answer: Which sectors does your DIH operate?

How long has your DIH been working in the AI field?

As for the maturity of the DIHs that participated in the survey: most of them could be considered **medium mature - being established for between 1 and 5 years**. The answer is quite logical taking into account the fact that the DIH concept was proposed by the European Commission in 2016 as an instrument for digital transformation and it took time to implement it (not that many very matured DIHs have more than 5 years of experience). Those that are less mature (less than 1-year reply) are most difficult to reach, as some of them are not yet connected to the ecosystem, so the DIHs roadshow opportunity might have not reached them through standard communication channels.

Between 1 and 5 years — 25 resp. 58.1%

Between 5 and 10 years — 12 resp. 27.9%

Less than 1 year — 6 resp. 14%

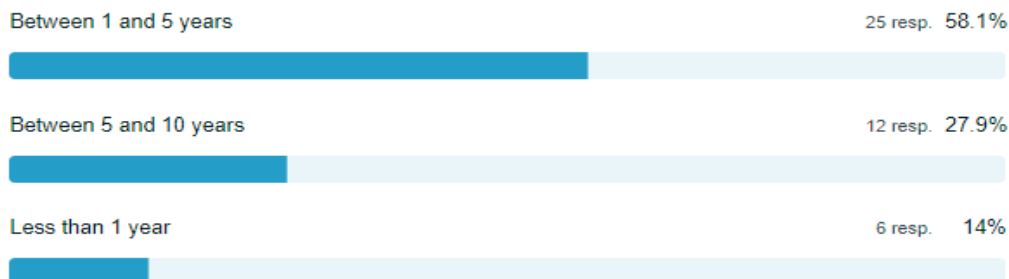*Figure 12 DIH Survey answer: How long has your DIH been working in the AI field?*

What is a typical profile of the SME looking for support in AI Adoption in your ecosystem?

The majority of the answers for this question confirm the fit of the surveyed group for the 2nd Open Call applicant profile, which is a low-tech SME - an early Adopter of AI technology that is classified between Beginners and Early Adopters answers (74,3% of total).

Beginners: They have identified use cases for AI solutions in our organization but have not assessed their value or taken steps to implement such solutions — 22 resp. 51.2%

Early Adopters: They have not identified any use-cases for AI solutions in our organization — 10 resp. 23.3%

Experimenters: They have identified use cases for AI solutions in their organization, have assessed their value and taken first steps to implement such solutions (e.g. consulting or accepting services from an AI expert or solution provider) — 10 resp. 23.3%

Experts: Their organization is using AI solutions for services, products, in business processes or other areas of organization (pilots and fully functional solutions) — 1 resp. 2.3%

Figure 13 DIH Survey answer: What is a typical profile of the SME looking for support in AI Adoption in your ecosystem?

Please provide an estimation of the number of SMEs that can be reached by your DIH

The average number of SMEs per DIH is 200
The total number of SMEs reachable through DIHs that filled the survey is **482,569**.

Are you a member of any AI association? If so, please list them here

8 DIHs are members of BDVA: Big Data Value Association[3]
3 DIHs are members of **CLAIRE:** Confederation of Laboratories for Artificial Intelligence Research in Europe

At least 2 DIHs that answered the survey are members of:
- AIOTI: Alliance for Internet of Things Innovation
- EurAI: European Association for Artificial Intelligence
- AI4EU: European AI-on-demand platform

Other associations that were mentioned once by different DIHs:
- AENEAS: AENEAS is an industry association promoting RD&I in Electronic Components & Systems to strengthen European competitiveness.
- AI Slovakia: National platform for the AI development in Slovakia
- Artificial Intelligence Coalition of Hungary
- euROBOTICS
- SLAIS: Slovenian Artificial Intelligence Society
- AI DIH Network
- SCODIHNET: Smart Connectivity Digital Innovation Hub Network
- AI REGIO: Regions and Digital Innovation Hubs alliance for AI-driven digital transformation of European Manufacturing SMEs
- GAIA-X: A Federated Secure Data Infrastructure

3.2 Industry Challenges for AI Adoption

The main goal of the survey was to identify the priorities for the 2nd BonsAPPs Open Call that will be open under the link: https://bonsapps-2nd-oc-adopters.fundingbox.com/ from 15th August 2022 at 00:00 CEST (Brussels Time) with a deadline on 2nd November 2022 at 17:00 CET (Brussels Time).

Through this open call, BonsAPPs will select low-tech Adopter / End-Users with SME status that represent the high-potential business Use Case, for the development of a low-cost, highly scalable AI Solutions at the Edge using Bonseyes AI Marketplace Platform components that could be scaled to needs **from one of the prioritized industry challenges defined though DIHs survey.**

The AI Industry Challenges were divided into 4 main verticals, presented below. Those marked with a green square will become a part of the 2nd Open Call package that will be published in August 2022.

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[3]Note: BDVA has recently changed the name to DAIRO: Data, AI and Robotics

Which listed process from ROBOTICS has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?

Figure 14 DIH Survey answer: Which of the listed process from ROBOTICS has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?

Which of listed process from MANUFACTURING has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?
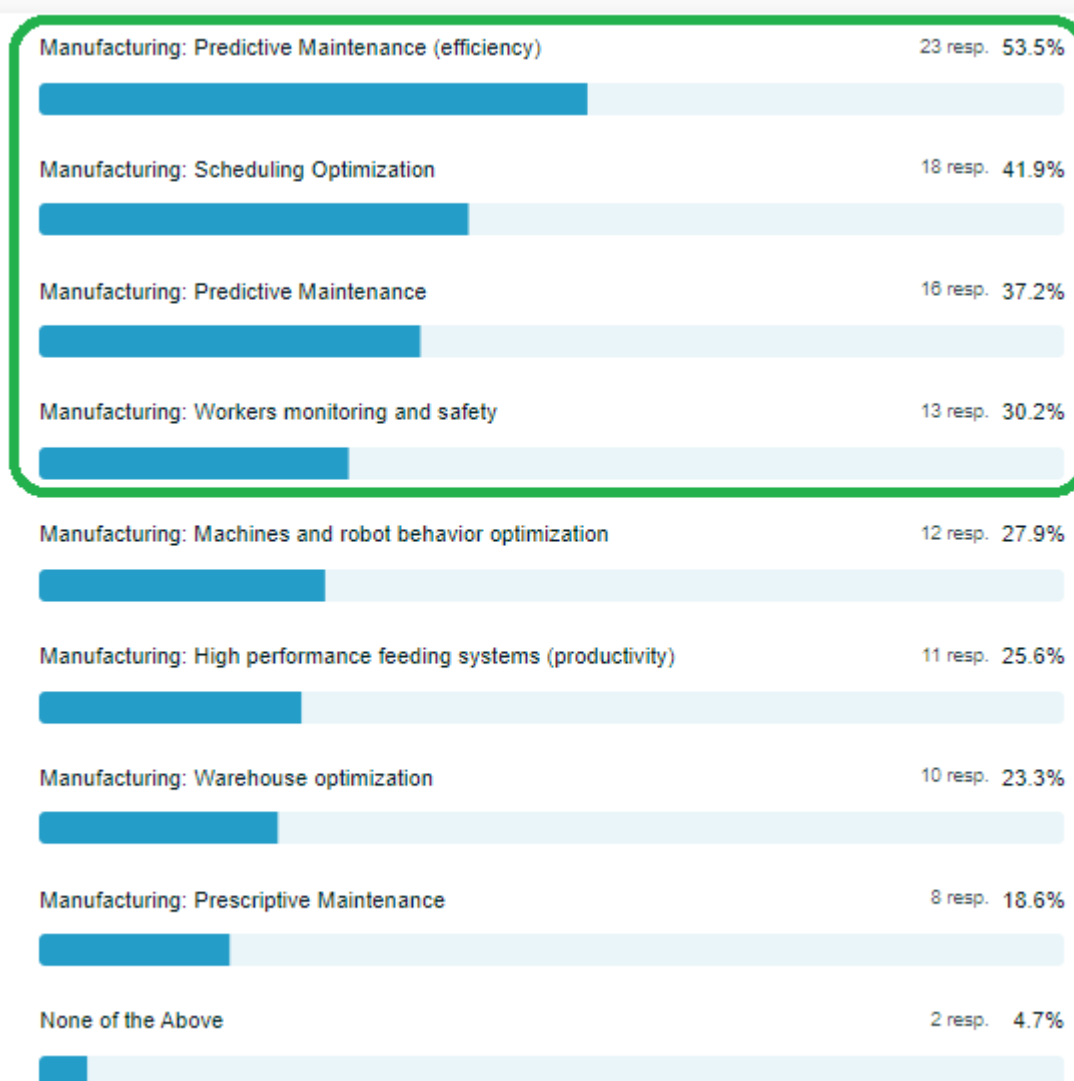
Figure 15 DIH Survey answer: Which of the listed process from MANUFACTURING has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?

Which of the listed process from HEALTHCARE has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?
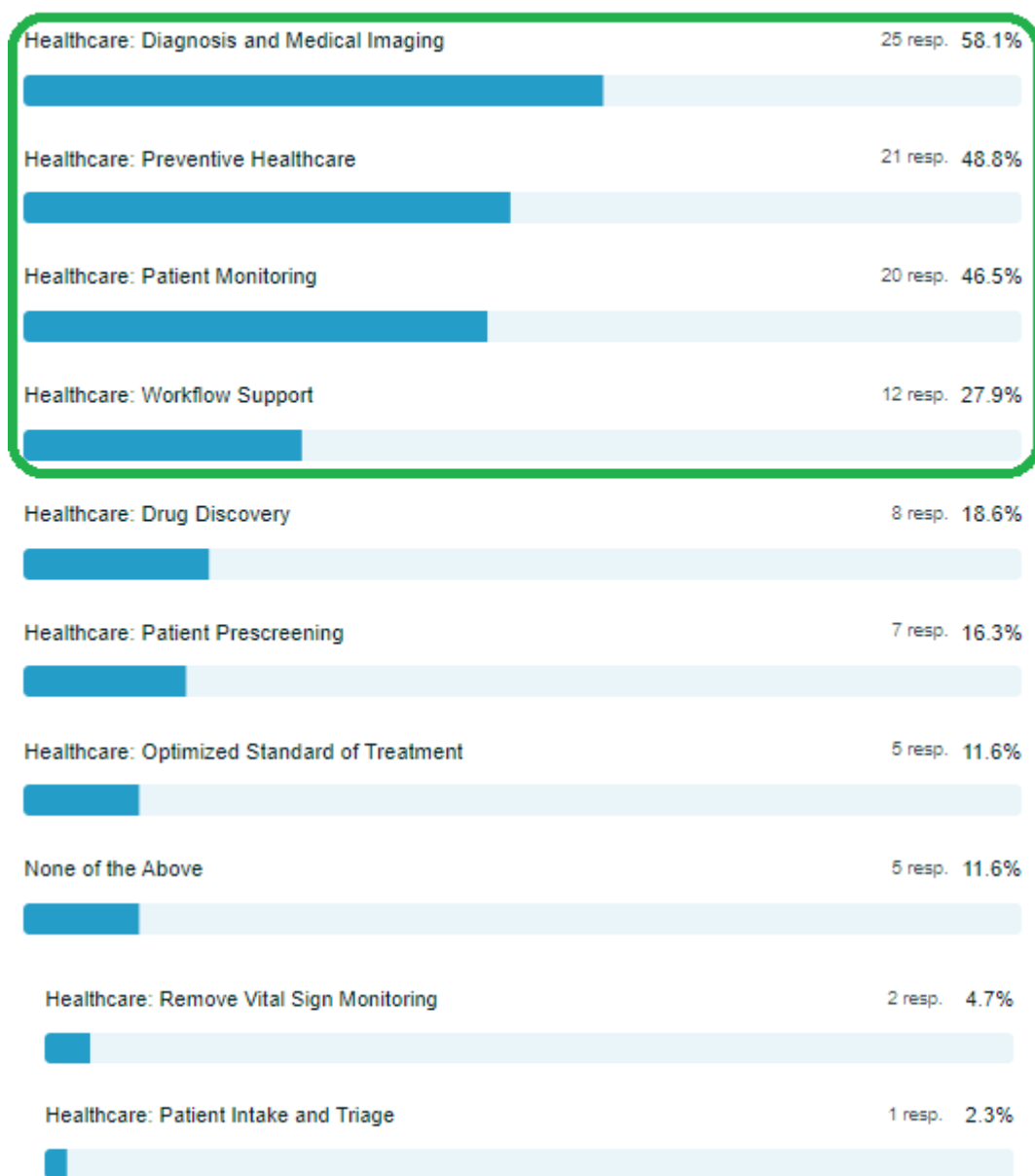
Figure 16 DIH Survey answer: Which of the listed process from HEALTHCARE has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?

Which listed process from AUTOMOTIVE has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?
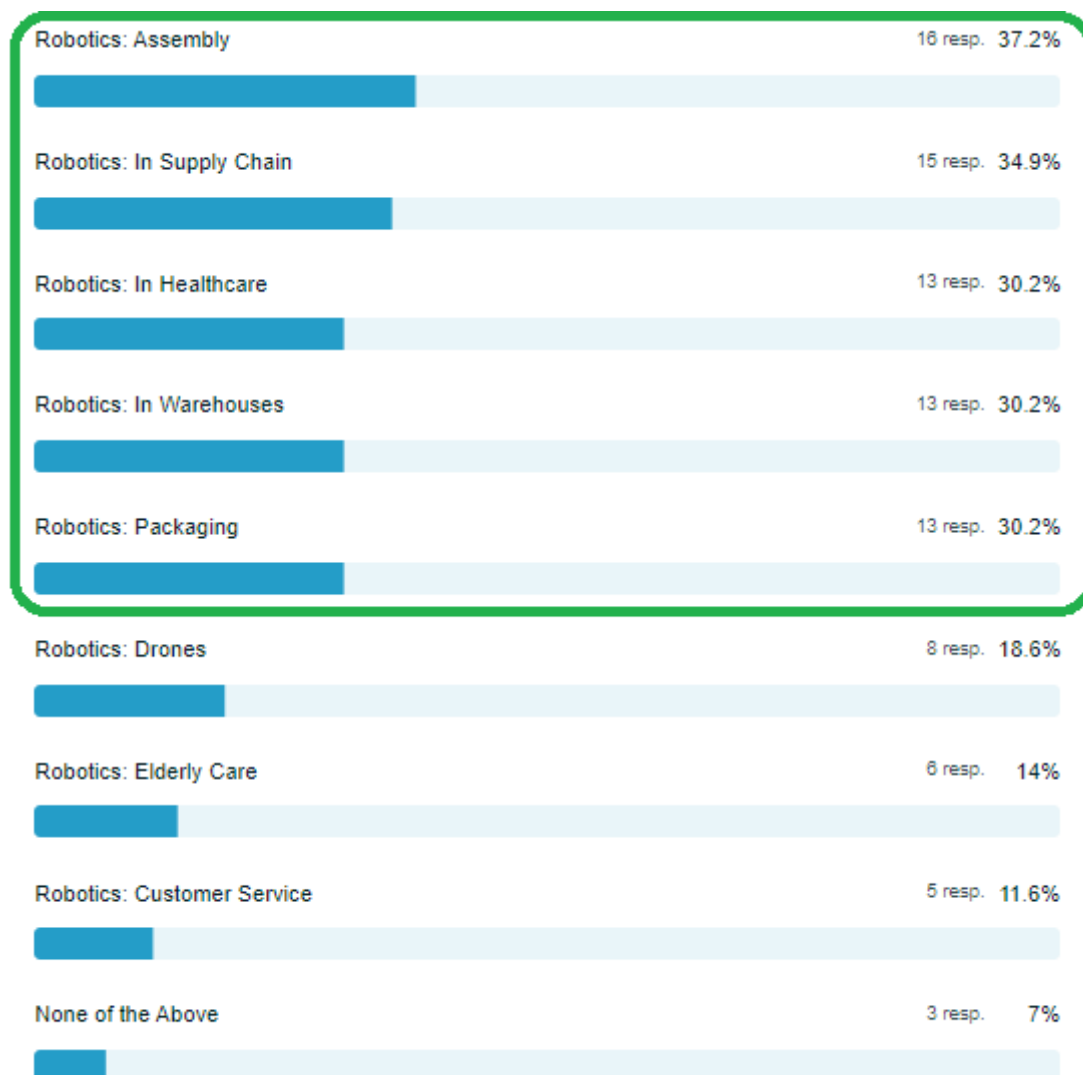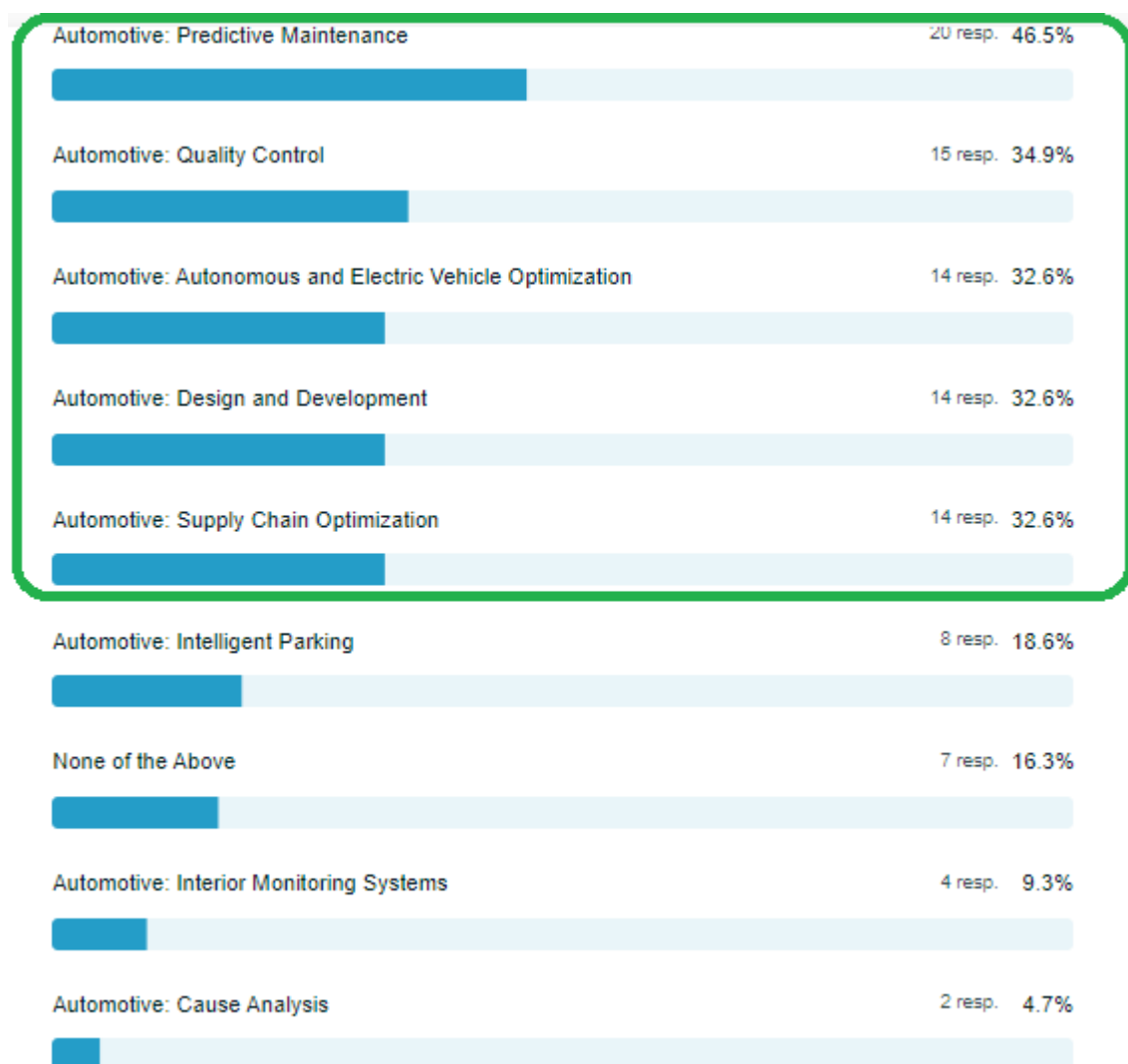

Figure 17 DIH Survey answer: Which of the listed process from AUTOMOTIVE has the highest relevance for end users in your region from a sector/value chain perspective?

Are there any other industrial challenges that could be solved with AI in your region?

Through this open question, some DIHs suggested challenges from other sectors with low AI absorption rates in which AI uptake can generate a relevant innovation leap that show a broad application of AI in different sectors. Those can be divided in:

Environment:
- Recycling, service development to Industrial customers, innovation
- Management of natural resources (forestry, agriculture, sea, etc.)

Energy:
- Energy usage in production
- Predictive Energy Consumption

Agrofood:
- Quality optimization
- Adapting to new PAC policies
- Crop pest detection and diagnostics

Public Administration:
- Public Admin & Tourism sectors
- Governmental services
- Organising administrative processes
- Public administration data-based decision making

Education:
- Knowledge management
- AI in Education (EdTech)

Health:
- Elderly care/Providing better care services to an ageing population in residential care options
- Links between health, lifestyle and environment

Manufacturing:
- Quality Assurance
- AI supported Artificial vision quality control

What are the main challenges for the implementation and use of AI?

Lack of data: companies do not have enough data to feed AI. Many are still collecting data manually or not collecting them at all. — 35 resp. 81.4%

Under-skilled employees: employees are not ready for the AI transformation. They need more training for producing value for the company out of AI usage. — 33 resp. 76.7%

Lack of customised solutions: companies struggle in finding personalised AI solutions that can solve their problems at an affordable price. — 17 resp. 39.5%
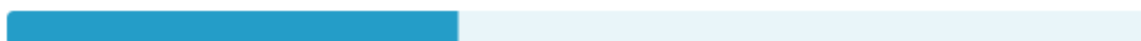
Complexity of solutions: AI tools are still too complicated. Companies need simple systems that can be deployed and used quickly by employees avoiding complex setups, commands or user interactions. — 16 resp. 37.2%
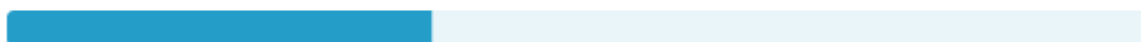
Lack of AI lifecycle assessment methods: companies have the perception that the cost of AI solutions is still too high. — 14 resp. 32.6%
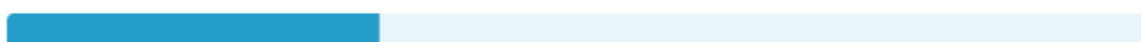
Figure 18 DIH Survey answer: What are the main challenges for the implementation and use of AI?

Specify any other challenges for the implementation and use of AI:

AI Skills:
- Competence of management and board
- Management does not see the benefit
- Lack of high-level understanding of AI
- Lack of available AI specialists
- More capacity building

Awareness:
- Raise awareness of the type of problems that can be solved with AI
- Lack of awareness of potential benefits
- Level of understanding of AI applications in the region
- More awareness and training
- Many SMEs do not know what AI is, have not heard of best practice use cases for their sector, do not understand the infrastructure and organizational changes needed to be able to implement it, nor the costs involved.
- Lack of digital literacy in more traditional sectors

Data and Integration:
- Lack of digitalization readiness of companies - data not collected enough yet, data collection Interfaces are not implemented yet
- Interoperability of health data
- Costly preparation of classified data sets, lack of historical data
- Data privacy and security
- Privacy, confidentiality and security concerns
- Reluctance to change and gaps for implementation with legacy systems
- Integration of different intelligent systems and models

Regulations:
- The additional burden associated with regulatory compliance

Based on these multiple-choice question answers it was confirmed that **lack of data** is the main issue. Initiatives like the Big Data Value Association[4] and the upcoming European Data Governance Act[5] are the key to overcoming this main AI adoption challenge.

Under skilled employees and **lack of customized solutions** were pointed out like other important blockers for AI Adoption. Both of these are addressed by the BonsAPPs and StairwAI support programmes. These EU initiatives will support low-tech SMEs that lack internal capabilities for customized AI solutions. This will be done with the <u>engagement of a pool of validated AI Talents[6] that will help low-tech SMEs develop customized solutions for their business.</u>

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[4] https://www.bdva.eu/
[5] https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/data-governance-act
[6] Application for Expression of Interest for AI Talents is available under this link: https://ai-talents.fundingbox.com/
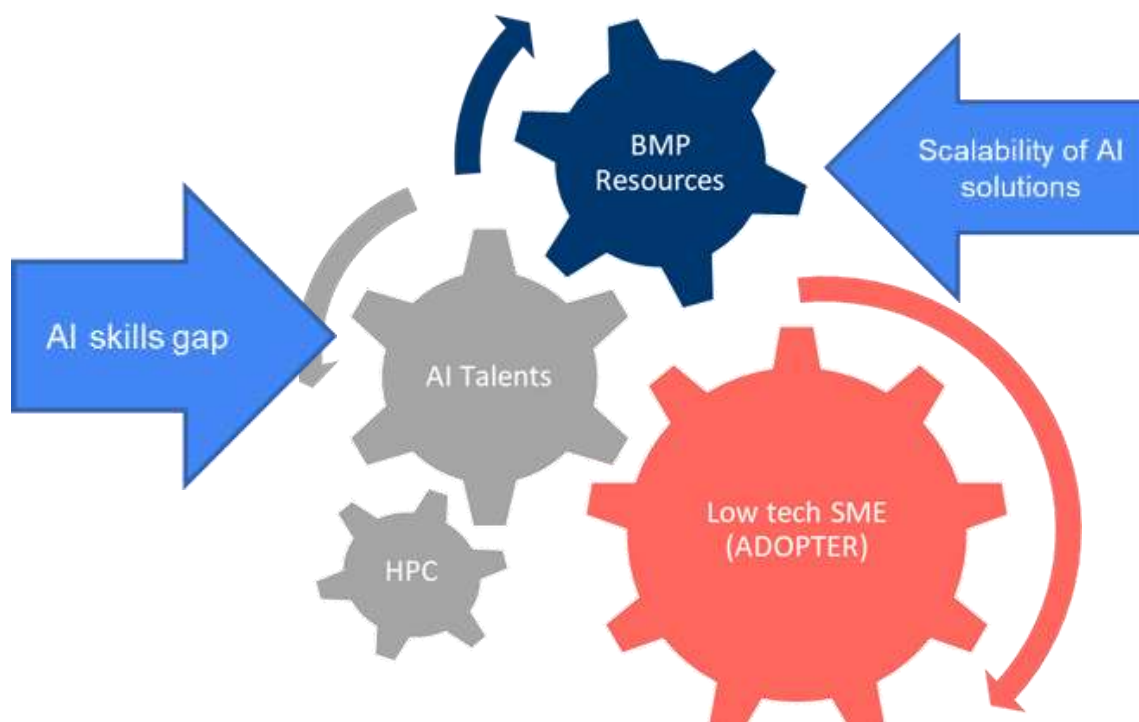
Figure 19 How BonsAPPs solves some AI Adoption gaps

BonsAPPs aims to overcome the challenge related to the **complexity of solutions and their costs** through the Bonseyes Marketplace Platform (BMP). During the project duration BonsAPPs aims to deploy a <u>fully functional cycle for the development of AI Apps at the Deep Edge that will turn application challenges into feasible and re-usable AI Solutions.</u> This simplifies the handling of usually time-consuming non-functional tasks in AI design and produces AI at a lower cost. The developed solutions will not only be ready for pilot integration into the end user that launched an Industry Challenge but AI developers/integrators ('AI Talents') will have the possibility, under specific re-use licencing conditions, to commercialise them and develop new AI@Edge products for additional end users (Adopter SMEs).

Answers provided in this open question confirm the problem related to AI Skills <u>underlining the lack of awareness of AI benefits in Management positions as one of the biggest obstacles.</u>

Another interesting conclusion is <u>the lack of digitalization and general awareness of SMEs about AI Adoption</u>. That is why the promotion of Use Cases supported through EU projects like BonsAPPs is one of the key actions to boosting the adoption of AI.

2.3 Tell us about your CHALLENGES AND NEEDS:

BonsAPPs believe that one of the key elements for AI Adoption is increasing the number of AI-oriented Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs). That is why the last section of the survey was focused on DIH needs and challenges to orientate the support and BonsAPPs offer towards the DIHs ecosystem. Conclusions from this section will be a starting point for the preparation of the Train the Trainers toolkit planned for 2023.

What expectations does your DIH have concerning the European projects like AI4EU, BonsAPPs or StairwAI?

Business Support: networking space to find funding and sponsors. News on European AI funding opportunities, such as Open Calls, HE, DIGITAL and other programmes

26 resp.   60.5%

Ecosystem Support: access to an ecosystem of researchers, industry, AI experts etc., and a forum for sharing results, tools, and solutions from the broader European AI community.

23 resp.   53.5%

Technical Support: access to tools and resources that could aid DIH customers with AI solution development, technical challenges and testing and validation

20 resp.   46.5%

Skills Support: access catalogue of courses, best practices for teaching AI skills, recruitment services including job offerings and demands

17 resp.   39.5%

Technical Support: matchmaking tools to identify needs and technological responses to fill technological gaps and find suitable AI experts to provide solutions

15 resp.   34.9%

Technical Support : data services, support in assisting with data acquisition, data processing, and data analysis.

10 resp.   23.3%

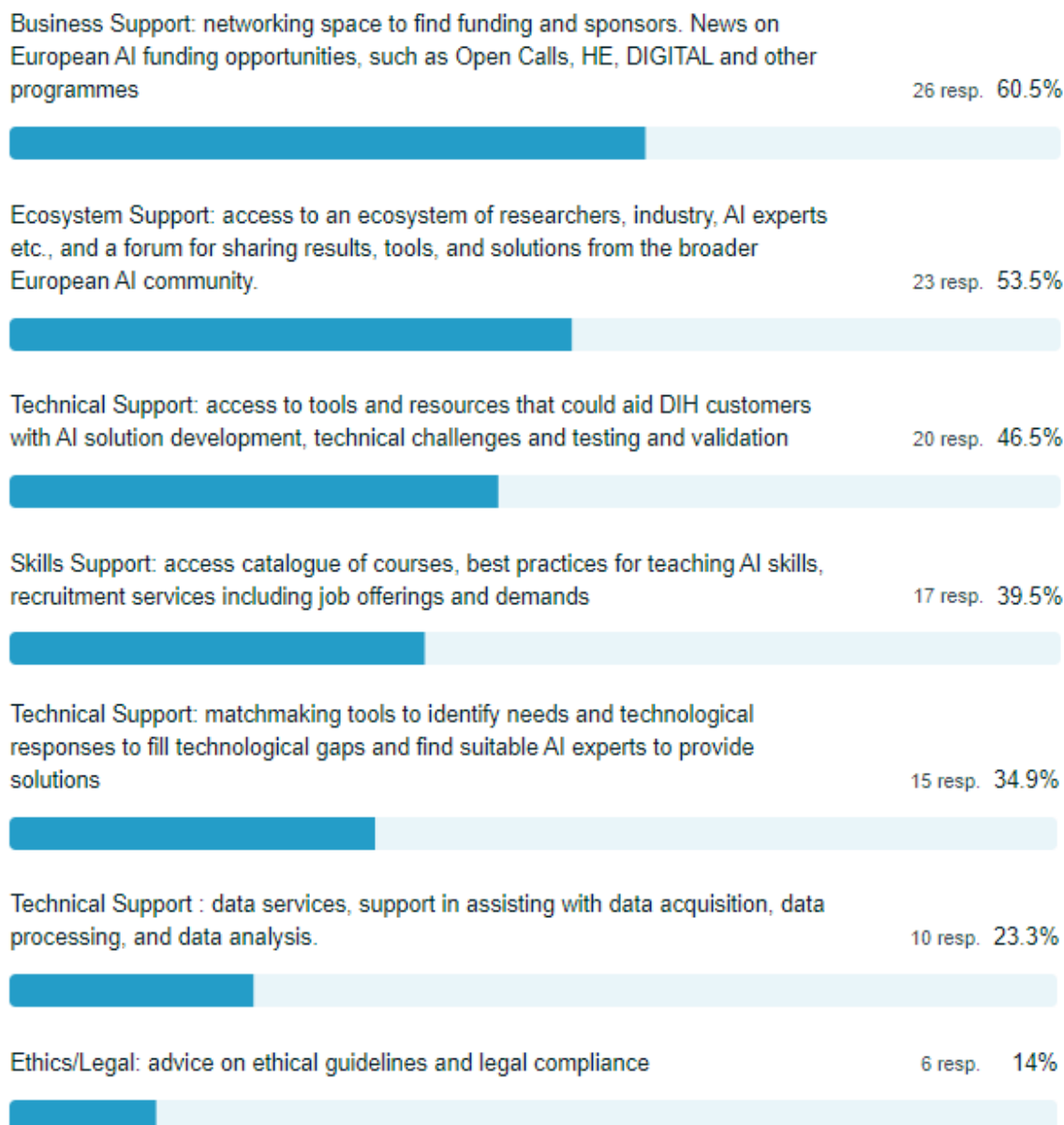Ethics/Legal: advice on ethical guidelines and legal compliance

6 resp.   14%

Figure 20 DIH survey answer: What expectations does your DIH have concerning the European projects like AI4EU, BonsAPPs or StairwAI?

According to your experience, what are the biggest challenges for your organization in providing your ecosystem with AI-related support?
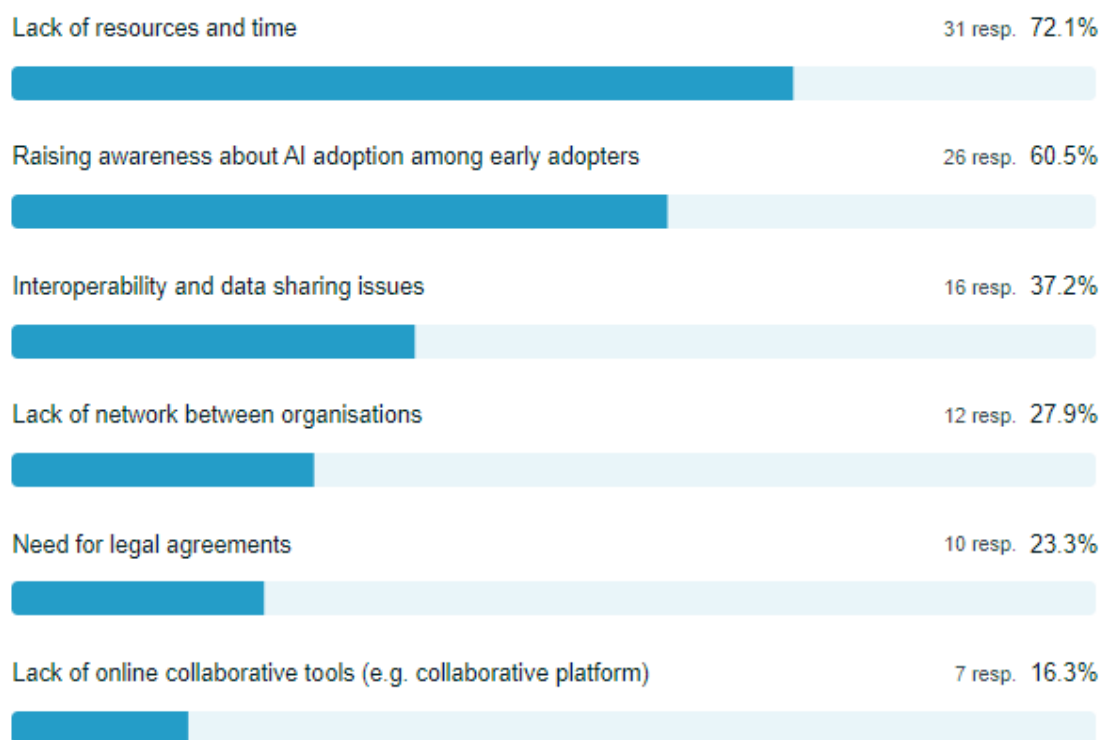

Figure 21 DIH Survey answer: According to your experience, what are the biggest challenges for your organization in providing your ecosystem with AI-related support?

Do you have any suggestions on how funding opportunities (Open Calls) can be communicated to SMEs in your region? What is the most effective way according to your experience?

Most of the answers to this open-ended question are related to traditional ways of dissemination that EU projects are using already (webinars, newsletters and social media). DIHs that filled in the survey pointed out the importance of:
- using local language in communication campaigns
- better effectiveness of small targeted campaigns
- using economical/industrial chambers as one of the dissemination partners

Other Comments related to DIH's Needs and another way of collaboration:

Most of the answers to this question underlined the importance of raising the awareness of AI Adoption by identifying successful projects that can be used as examples to showcase potential applications.

Some DIHs pointed out the lack of systematic funding for DIH activities and showed their interest in joining the project consortia in the future.

Both projects offer broad communication about funding opportunities and AI adoption awareness news through AI Community and projects social medias that DIHs and their SMEs can join to follow on the latest news.

Nevertheless, it has been identified that closer contact with DIHs and their support in translating the message to their ecosystems is a key to reaching a broader group of low-tech SMEs.

This relation has already been initiated through the Support Partners programme - 37 DIHs that answered YES to the question presented below will be the first focus group for further collaboration in cross dissemination of open call opportunities and creating the awareness about AI Adoption.

Would you like to become a Supportive Partner of BonsAPPs and StairwAI projects? Choose YES if you would like to gain visibility in our ecosystem including AI&DIHNET Communities and access funding opportunities. In exchange, we will ask you to help us to share the news about BonsAPPs and StairwAI updates (such as open calls)
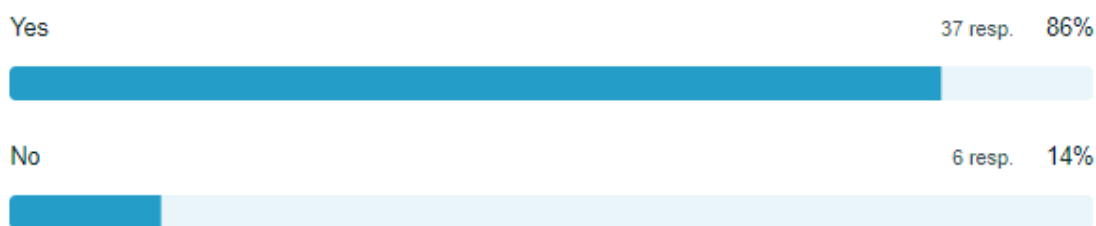

Figure 22 DIH Survey answer: Would you like to become a Supportive Partner of BonsAPPs and StairwAI projects?

4. Conclusions and Next Steps

Thanks to an intensive and customized dissemination campaign organized by Fundingbox in March-May 2022 (**22,211** impressions/users reach through social media, newsletters and mailing), the DIH roadshow ended with success - a total of **53** unique participants joined the series and DIH representatives represent 62% **(33 DIHs in total).**

The DIH roadshow aimed to offer added value for DIHs and become an incentive to fill out the DIHs survey**. The final target group of 43 DIHs that filled out the survey** provided a detailed overview of the AI DIHs ecosystem, confirmed the **main challenges that will be applied to BonsAPPs 2nd Open Call** and helped to understand the main needs and **support that should be provided in the future to those entities in 2023 via train the trainers' toolkit.**

37 DIHs have expressed their wish to become a Supportive Partners of BonsAPPs and the StairwAI initiative and will become the first evangelists to reach their local SMEs and raise awareness for AI Adoption based on conclusions from the survey.

Annex I: DIHs Roadshow: list of DIHs participants

Name of DIH	Country
am-LAB Digital Innovation Hub	Hungary
Aragon DIH	Spain
PBN - Pannon Business Network Association	Hungary
ahedd DIH	Greece
Hub for Digital Innovations - DIH	Czech Republic
Cybersecurity Innovation Hub	Czech Republic
CINECA	Italy
Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH)	Greece
DIH Udine	Italy
IP4FVG - Industry Platform 4 Friuli Venezia Giulia	Italy
Confindustria Veneto SIAV	Italy
Sunrise Valley DIH	Lithuania
AIR-Andalusia	Spain
Innomine DIH	Hungary
Faubourg Numérique	France
Intelligent Factory and Robotics Laboratory Digital Innovation Hub (IFARLAB-DIH)	Turkey
Magyarország	Hungary
UVP TECHNICOM Kosice	Slovakia
ICUK DIH	Czech Republic
IS4PROD	Ireland
FIT DIH	Romania
Green Digital Innovation HUB	Romania
BI-REX++	Italy
Wallachia eHub	Romania
Smart Islands Hub (SIH)	Portugal
Gaia-X Germany	Germany
pro_digital	Germany
Cubitlab	Italy
Tekniker	Spain
ZTS VVU KOSICE a.s.	Slovakia
NOI Techpark	Italy
AEGEAN	Greece
POLE TES	France

Annex II: DIHs Survey: list of DIHs that answered the survey

The name of the Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) organisation you represent/work for	The country where your DIH is registered
Latvian IT Cluster DIH	Latvia
Intelligent Factory and Robotics Laboratory Digital Innovation Hub (IFARLAB-DIH)	Turkey
DIH TECHNICOM	Slovakia
Added Value	Hungary
DIH Oceanopolis	Norway
ESPA	Greece
inNOVA4Tech - UNINOVA	Portugal
VRVis Zentrum für Virtual Reality und Visualisierung Forschungs-GmbH	Austria
DIH Faubourg Numérique	France
Aragon DIH	SPAIN
DIH JSI	Slovenia
Smart Islands Hub	Portugal
Transilvania DIH	Romania
ahedd DIH	Greece
IS4PROD	Ireland
CeADAR	Ireland
HealthGoDigital!	Poland
EMC2	France
flexis AG	Germany

Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas (FORTH)	Greece
IP4FVG DIH	Italy
Hellenic Emerging Technologies Industry Assosiation	Greece
Green Digital Innovation HUB	Romania
Equip Mozambique	Mozambique
BI-REX++	Italy
Digital Innovation Zone	Romania
Sunrise Valley DIH	Lithuania
AIR4S - Digital Innovation Hub in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics for the Sustainable Development Goals	Spain
FIT DIH	Romania
IP4FVG	Italy
Wallachia eHub	Romania
CINECA	Italy
DATAlife	Spain
Congretpe	South Africa
Digital Innovation Zone	Romania
Gaia-X Germany	Germany
Pro_digital	Germany
Thy Bounty Farm	Ghana
IFARLAP	Turkey
Technical University of Sofia	Bulgaria
Friuli Innovazione	Italy