2026	SOIL-TOLoKA: Soil Health Network for Open Knowledge and Action in Ukraine						
Country	**Contract value (€)**	**% by Epsilon**	**Staff # provided**	**Client**	**Origin of funding**	**Date (start/end)**	**Consortium Members**
Malta	**4,970,057.93**	4.45% (€220,937.50)	5	European Commission (Mission Soil)	Horizon Europe CSA, Lump Sum	36 months (start TBC)	AUTh (coord.), CZU, GFZ, HSG, K&I, EPLO, TAU, T4S, EPSILON, I-BEC, UZFA, BFRS, UCAB, MCU, ECSA, IMV

The Project (2026)

SOIL-TOLoKA (Soil Health Network for Open Knowledge and Action in Ukraine) is a 36-month Horizon Europe Coordination and Support Action under the Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe" (HORIZON-MISS-2026-05-SOIL-03). Ukrainian soils face long-standing degradation (erosion alone affects around 40% of the land), now compounded by war-related contamination, munitions, fires and disrupted monitoring and advisory services.

The project will strengthen Ukraine's soil-health research and innovation ecosystem and long-term recovery capacity through a demand-led, Ukrainian-hosted knowledge support and exchange system. Inspired by the Ukrainian tradition of "toloka" (collective community action), three Regional Soil-Health Knowledge Hubs (Agricultural Soil Resilience, Forest and Landscape Recovery, and Rural Soil Recovery and Contamination Awareness) will each operate through a Toloka Circle of researchers, practitioners, authorities and civil society, linked by a National Soil Health Toloka Network.

Rather than developing new technologies, SOIL-TOLoKA will map actors, capacities and gaps; prioritise regional needs; assess and adapt established Ukrainian and European soil-health knowledge, methods and infrastructures; and build technical, advisory and knowledge-brokering competences through Regional Soil Dialogues, practical workshops and train-the-trainer activities. Nine user-led challenge cases will verify practical uptake. Regional experience will feed policy learning, including regional recommendation briefs and an EU–Ukraine Soil Governance Roadmap supporting alignment with the Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive (EU) 2025/2360. Targets include ≥500 participants trained, ≥60 Ukrainian facilitators and ≥30 organisations demonstrating verified reuse, with Ukrainian hosts progressively taking over Hub operation beyond the project.



Services to be provided by EPSILON

EPSILON participates as a technical partner (33.5 person-months across 36 months), contributing expertise in environmental engineering, soil and land management, GIS and environmental data infrastructures, climate resilience and EU environmental policy. Building on its Horizon Europe experience (e.g. NEUROCLIMA, TRANSFORMAR, AGRARIAN), EPSILON will support the following activities:

- **Evidence readiness (WP2):** assessment and adaptation of established Earth Observation, digital soil mapping, geospatial and proximal-sensing workflows to Ukrainian regional contexts, with data requirements, interpretation and uncertainty guidance for field prioritisation.
- **Ecosystem mapping (WP3):** mapping of agricultural, forest and rural-municipal actors, services and capacities for the three Hubs and contribution to the national R&I/AKIS knowledge-system baseline and gap analysis.
- **Capacity building (WP4/WP9):** co-delivery of Practical Soil Workshops combining soil-health evidence interpretation, sustainable management and realistic decision scenarios with Ukrainian facilitators.
- **Dissemination & exploitation (WP7/WP12):** Ukrainian- and English-language dissemination products, cooperation with Mission Soil, SOILL and other EU initiatives, the Key Exploitable Results register, replication support to follower organisations and long-term sustainability planning.
- **Knowledge brokerage:** transfer of established European soil-health technologies and practices to Ukraine, linking Toloka Circles with European expertise, initiatives and environmental-service markets, and fostering EU–Ukraine networking among researchers, advisors and businesses.
- **Quality assurance (WP1/WP8):** cross-WP review of deliverables, CSA compliance and completion evidence.

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