

eBMS network

The European Butterfly Monitoring Scheme (eBMS) started in 2014 to bring together data from existing monitoring schemes into a central database. Nowadays **16 schemes** are part of this network from 14 different European countries. During 2019, Slovenia, Hungary, Italy and Portugal joined the eBMS network.

Current Situation

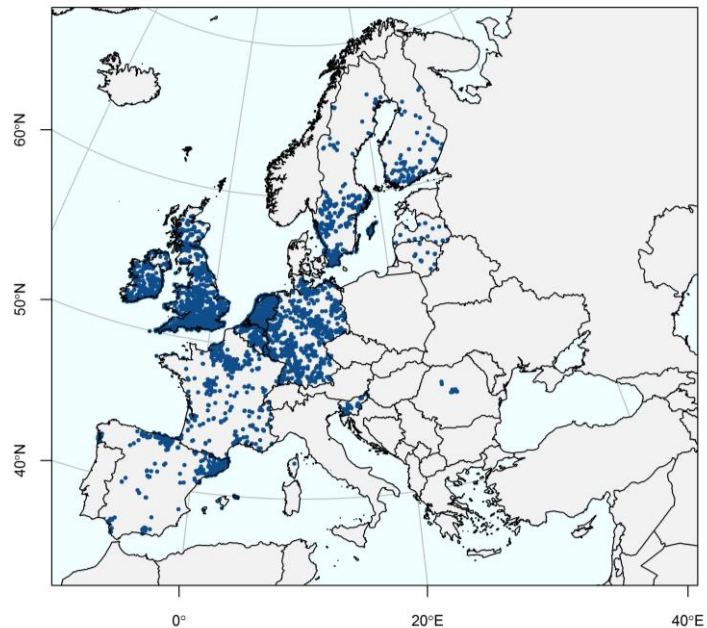
Thanks to our eBMS partners an updated Grassland Indicator for the EU report was generated last summer with data until 2017. We are now working on a suite of indicators that will identify trends of butterflies in different habitats and show how they are responding to climate change. New BMSs will be included for the calculation of the new indicators and the data will be tried to be updated, at least, until 2018.

Growing the network

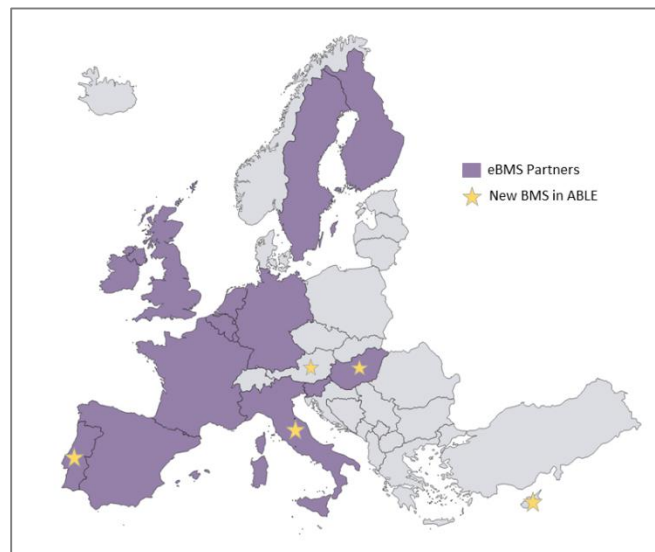
A key part of the ABLE project is to expand the monitoring network to new countries. In 2019, three new BMS were created (Portuguese, Austrian and Cypriot BMS) and 2 other countries made great strides to grow their BMS (Hungary and Italy). By 2020, we hope to develop new schemes in several countries as well as provide support for countries that have recently started monitoring. We made good progress in Poland, Malta, Bulgaria and Greece.

Progress of countries within the ABLE project

During this year there has been a lot of activity to grow the monitoring network. Many people have been involved in developing monitoring in their countries. We would like to say a big thank you to all the volunteers willing to help and all the coordinators giving time and effort to make eBMS a reality. It is not always an easy process, but we can say that with effort and willingness everything is possible. Several countries were working this year with huge advances in the creation or expansion of their BMS that we



Locations of transects in the eBMS that were used for the Grassland Butterfly Indicator. Locations for transects in Estonia were not available yet.



Status of eBMS network and BMSs developed during 2019 in ABLE

will explain in detail. With others such as Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, and Malta we made good steps forward preparing and organising butterfly monitoring in their countries. We hope to build on this next year.

Hungary

In March of 2019, the first workshop on National Butterfly Monitoring Programme in Hungary was placed close to Budapest, in Szendehely, and the ABLE project was invited for starting a collaboration with the Hungarian Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. This workshop was organized by Órség National Park Directorate, Wildtierland Hainich gGmbH, Helmholtz-Zentrum für Umweltforschung GmbH-UFZ and Szalkay József Hungarian Lepidopterologist Society. This first workshop was a training session for the volunteers, having time to learn about butterfly identification and discuss the different problems that volunteers face during their transects.



The Hungarian BMS started in 2016 thanks to the effort of the [Szalkay József Hungarian Lepidopterologist Society](#) and the incredible motivation of András Szabadfalvi, the national BMS coordinator. Hungarian BMS is growing every year including more collaborators and volunteers in its network, promoting butterfly monitoring in protected areas, providing the field equipment to the volunteers and annual sessions to keep the contact and stimulate the community. Next year, ABLE will try to organise a volunteer workshop and try to promote butterfly monitoring in other areas of Hungary. Also, we will provide new materials to the volunteers and help consolidate the Hungarian BMS community.

Portugal

Portugal created its BMS this year, 2019, with great success. There are already 11 transects running in different parts of the country and it is expected that new transects will join next year. Everything started through contact with [TAGIS - Centre of Conservation of Portuguese Butterflies](#) - who have been working with butterflies (and other insects) for a long time. We decided to run a national workshop in Lisbon to gather people interesting in butterflies as well as other stakeholders to explain the plans to create a BMS.



On the 4th of May in Almada (Lisbon) around 64 people came together to learn about the BMS and the possibilities in Portugal. Teachers, rangers, naturalists, students, people from different fields were there to talk about “borboletas” and maybe join the Portuguese BMS. After this successful event, new transects and proposals have knocked on the door of Tagis and the map of Portugal is filling.



ABLE and Tagis prepared a booklet of the **60 most common butterflies** of Portugal Continental and gave this to all the workshop participants and volunteers committed to run a transect. This booklet contains 60 common butterflies with pictures to identify them easily in the field. You can download the booklet pdf from the [Tagis Website](#) or on the [eBMS website](#).

An important collaboration was started with the ICNF (Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests of Portugal) to promote the butterfly transect in protected areas of Portugal. During the spring and late summer, Tagis together with ICNF run two **training seminars** funded by ABLE, one close to Lisbon (Paisagem Protegida da Arriba Fóssil da Costa de Caparica) and another in the North (Vila Real). The purpose was to gather rangers from surrounding protected areas and teach them about BMS, the transect methodology and how to identify butterflies. Thanks to these training seminars now there will be around 15 new transects in protected areas in the North and centre of Portugal.



Future plans: next year there will be more training seminars for rangers and volunteers in Alentejo, Algarve and in Constância. We will provide butterfly nets to committed volunteers to identify butterflies on transects and try to promote Portuguese BMS with other stakeholders and communities working with Citizen Science in other areas of Portugal.

Italy

Italy has been an unexpected success this year for the ABLE project with extraordinary results. The Italian BMS started last year (2018) by establishing an organisation group with 3 coordinators in different areas of Italy: *Simona Bonelli* in the North (Turin University, main coordinator), *Leonardo Dapporto* in the Centre (Florence University) and *Stefano Scalercio* in the South (CREA, Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria). With this starting point, ABLE began to work with the collaborators to design an action plan for 2019 and get the maximum benefit from the effort and activities done.

5 national workshops were planned in strategic areas of Italy during the whole season of butterflies. We decided to collaborate with National Parks of the areas to encourage more people and show the collaboration of citizen science within protected areas.

- 1st workshop: *Sila National Park*. 21st June
- 2nd workshop: L'Aquila, University of L'Aquila and *Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park*. 8th July
- 3rd workshop: *Gran Paradiso National Park* (first transect of the Italian BMS). 19th July
- 4th workshop: Elba Island – *Arcipelago Toscano National Park*. 4th Sept.
- 5th workshop: *Ticino Valley Regional Park*. 10th Sept.

Together with the incredible coordinators, we managed to organise 5 workshops with a varied audience, from National Park rangers to naturalist, volunteers, amateurs, and scientists. We learnt a lot from the diverse requirements of the volunteers in Italy depending on the area, the climate and histories behind on the volunteers. In every place, we were well welcomed by volunteers who were eager for news from other parts of Italy to know what is happening with butterflies and what they can do to help.



Apart from the workshops, we had the challenge of providing Italian butterfly material. Italy is the richest country of butterfly species in Europe, but it doesn't have a book for the identification of all the Italian butterflies. So, we decided to do something useful and fast for the volunteers that they could take into the field: Field Guides for each climatic region. We divided Italy in 4 areas (excluding the Alps that has already a book) and the coordinators selected 72 most common species per region. The result is a pdf with butterfly images, pointing out identification characteristics, that can be easily printed and used by anyone wants to learn about butterflies. There are Field Guides for the Mediterranean area, Apennines, Padana Plain and Mediterranean Islands. You can find them in the [website of eBMS](#) and download them.



In 2020, training seminars will be the main activity in other areas of Italy. New collaborations will be developed with other groups, including regional museums and other protected areas. We hope that more and more Italians will join this big community of citizen science and continue collaborating for the conservation of butterflies

Cyprus

Cyprus has created its BMS this year following a formal meeting in September. The leader of ABLE, David Roy, travelled to Cyprus to explain how other countries are doing transects and how it would be possible in Cyprus. Thanks to the Cypriot coordinators many volunteers joined this first workshop and several transects have been established on the island.



Cyprus already had a lot of amateurs posting pictures in a **Facebook group**, sharing finds and views about butterflies. This enthusiasm was brought together to do something for the conservation of Cypriot butterflies, in the BMS Cyprus. We will continue working with them next year, to provide materials to the volunteers and expand the transect network..



Austria

Austria doesn't have a BMS organised for the whole country, but some regions have started monitoring butterflies. In April of 2019, ABLE organised a workshop in Salzburg, thanks to the effort of Andrea Grill, to bring together people from the West and East of Austria. Several presentations showed that some butterfly monitoring is being run in areas such as Tirol and Vienna, and stressed the importance of bringing all the data together. Many ideas, actions, and tasks were identified to prepare for the next meeting. In September, the second workshop was held and the **Austrian BMS** was created with several regional coordinators, the chairwoman of the scheme, Daniela Lehner, with collaborators in National Parks and connections with National Institutions. An incredible step was taken, and many activities are planned for next year.

