

ISE Project Outputs & Results: 'Innovation Pathway' Programme



European Regional Development Fund

Project Output 5: "Innovation Pathway' programme delivered"

Information from ISE Application Form:	Reporting on the implementation of the 'Innovation Pathway' Programme (May 2019)
<p>Activity Description: "After a planning & design phase by the partners in consultation with SMEs, a series of sector-focused events will take place (each over 2 days) for SMEs at key centres of excellence in the project areas, facilitated by industry experts. The same companies will participate in several events across the partner regions. Content will include problem solving (each SME brings a problem and works with others to solve it), what innovation means in different sectors, 1:1 advice sessions etc. Partners will arrange for video production companies to film some of these events as a promotional tool for the ISE project and to capture in a visual format, some of the key project activities and outputs."</p>	<p>1 programme of events was delivered by the ISE partners during the lifetime of the project consisting of the individual pathway event details below.</p> <p>Feedback was captured from the attending companies from the specific ISE target sectors. E.g. one company said: 'It was excellent, I have made some very good contacts and have had useful discussions and come away with innovative ideas'. Some attendees had provided previous feedback regarding their interest which helped shape the pathway events programme & content.</p>
<p>Expected Project-Specific Result: "150 growing SMEs from target sectors benefiting from new knowledge to facilitate process, product or service innovation. New cross-border contacts gained through participation in an intensive support programme. SMEs will be equipped with knowledge & contacts in order for them to make use of these to enhance different aspects of their business and access new business opportunities in partner regions beyond the implementation phase of ISE."</p>	<p>272 businesses attended the 12 innovation pathway events that we ran in the different ISE partner regions (Kent, Hauts-de-France, East & West Flanders, and the SW of the Netherlands). The innovation pathway events focused on a specific ISE target sector such as food & drink or digital & creative, as well as mechatronics and new materials sectors (businesses from the 'other innovation' categories were also able to attend if there was a clear justification).</p> <p>The events aimed to help these SMEs apply innovation tools and concepts to their own business with the support of companies from partner regions and to establish links with SMEs and experts in partner regions. They supported companies to be able to 'think outside the box' and learn that innovation is often less resource intensive than anticipated. Additionally, these events aimed to help them with future business development, making new contacts & securing new business opportunities.</p>
<p>Target Groups: "SMEs with specific innovation & growth potential from the project's target sectors."</p>	<p>272 carefully selected SMEs primarily from the following priority and emerging industry sectors in the partner regions including: mechatronics, new materials, agri-food, digital & creative industries (some of which had already participated in previous taster sessions and workshops). Although these 4 sectors were the main target groups, the partners did not wish to artificially close any potential possibilities for innovation and cooperation with companies that didn't fit neatly into a sector definition - ISE</p>

therefore let suitable SMEs from different sectors participate to add value.

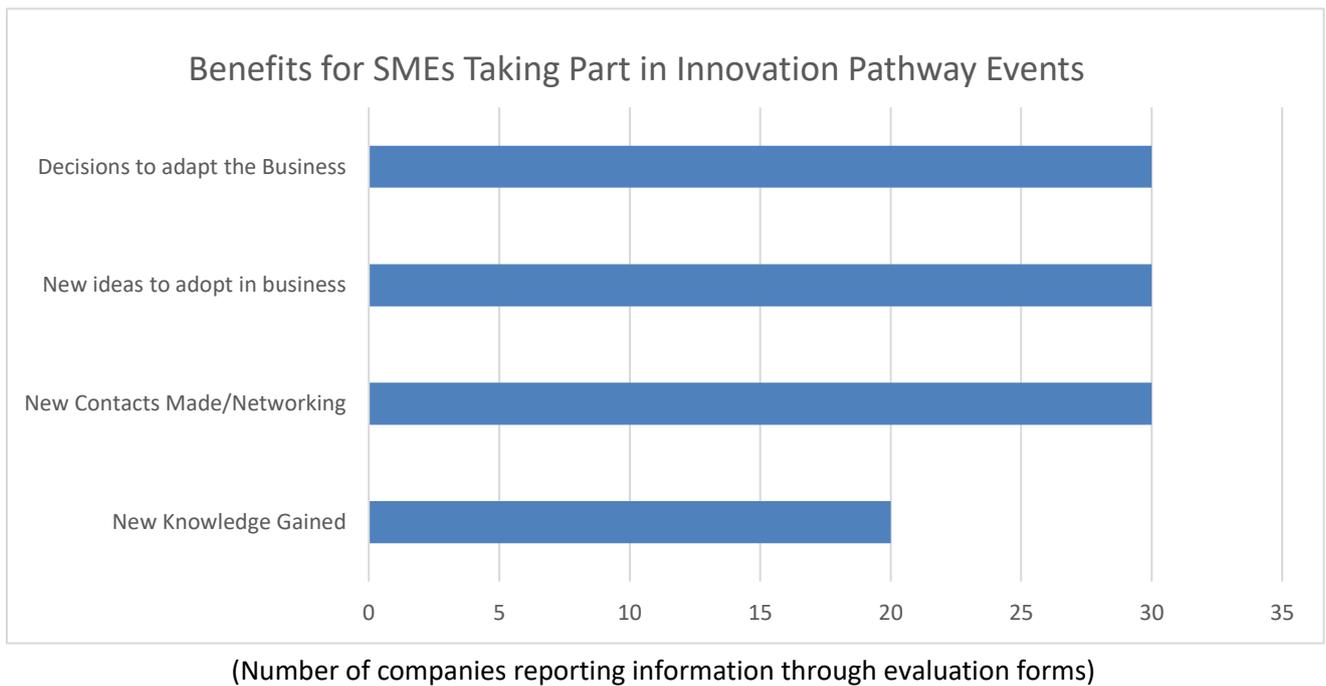
Durability of project output: “SMEs will continue to make use of new cross-border contacts established during 'pathway' events (SMEs, external experts, researchers etc.) They will also employ innovation techniques demonstrated & tested within ISE to facilitate access to new markets/business opportunities in the future. Dialogue with SMEs during ISE will ensure that the offer meets SME demand - thus increasing the likelihood of SMEs using contacts & knowledge from ISE after the project.”

The ISE partners helped the participating SMEs to make new international contacts with project partners, external speakers and experts and other SMEs during the 'Innovation Pathway' programme. Some of these contacts were further developed under WP2 and WP3 (cross-border innovation conference, Major Innovation Events, 1-2-1 diagnostics and the ISE clusters).

The SMEs that attended the events were equipped with knowledge and contacts in order for them to make use of these to enhance different aspects of their business. The ISE project provided the opportunity for SMEs to further gain access to new information and it was then down to them to apply it (whilst also making use of the other ISE activities where possible).

Capturing results and benefits for SMEs:

The pathway events were primarily organised to help SMEs to apply innovation techniques which they could then adapt to their own business. Some benefits were captured by the partners from a small number of evaluation forms that were collated from a small number of pathway events:



ISE 'Innovation Pathway' Programme Delivered

Date	Theme	ISE Sector	No. of SMEs	Location
21-22/11/2017	Food & Drink IPE & Food Matters Live (including meet the buyer session)	Food & Drink	36	Chatham
08-09/02/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event & MNE Tradeshow	Mechatronics	31	Kortrijk
12-13/03/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event & Tavola	Food & Drink	34	Kortrijk
09-10/04/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event & Playgrounds Festival	Digital & Creative	16	Breda
12-13/09/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event: Euratechnologie & Plaine Images IPE	Digital & Creative	18	Lille
22-23/10/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event & SIAL	Food & Drink	25	Soissons/Paris
24-26/10/2018	ISE Cross-Border Event & Dutch Design Week	Digital & Creative	24	Eindhoven
07-08/11/2018	Prototyping 2018: Product Development & the Design Process	Mechatronics	14	Kortrijk
12-13/11/2018	Plastics & Textiles Market Visit & Centexbel	New Materials	13	Bruges
22/11/2018	ISE Visit to Video First	Digital & Creative	31	Brussels
19-20/03/2019	International Food & Drink Event Visit	Food & Drink	25	Kent/London
22-23/05/2019	Advanced Engineering	New Materials	5	Ghent

Event Photos:



Food & Drink IPE & Food Matters Live, Chatham



ISE Cross-Border Event & MNE Tradeshow, Kortrijk



ISE Cross-Border Event & Tavola, Kortrijk



ISE Cross-Border Event & Playgrounds Festival, Breda



ISE Cross-Border Event: Euratechnologie & Plaine Images IPE, Lille



ISE Cross-Border Event & SIAL, Soissons/Paris



ISE Cross-Border Event & Dutch Design Week, Eindhoven



Prototyping 2018: Product Development & the Design Process, Kortrijk



Plastics & Textiles Market Visit & Centexbel, Bruges



ISE Visit to Video First, Brussels



International Food & Drink Event Visit, Kent/London



Advanced Engineering, Ghent