
SLU
SCIENCE AND EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIFE

Insights from Evaluating EIP-Agri in SE 2017–2024: Challenges, Outcomes, and Lessons Learned

Lisa Blix Germundsson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

EIP-Agri in SE

- 55 000 farmers, 2.5 M ha, 0.5 M ha permanent grasslands => 7% of SE land area
- EIP-Agri administrated by the Swedish Board of Agriculture
- Two-step procedure: Step 1 to form OG, Step 2 for implementation.
- The Rural Network provides innovation support services to prospective applicants
- 2014 – 2021, EIP-Agri total budget € 38 M. In 2023 – 2027, total budget € 45 M

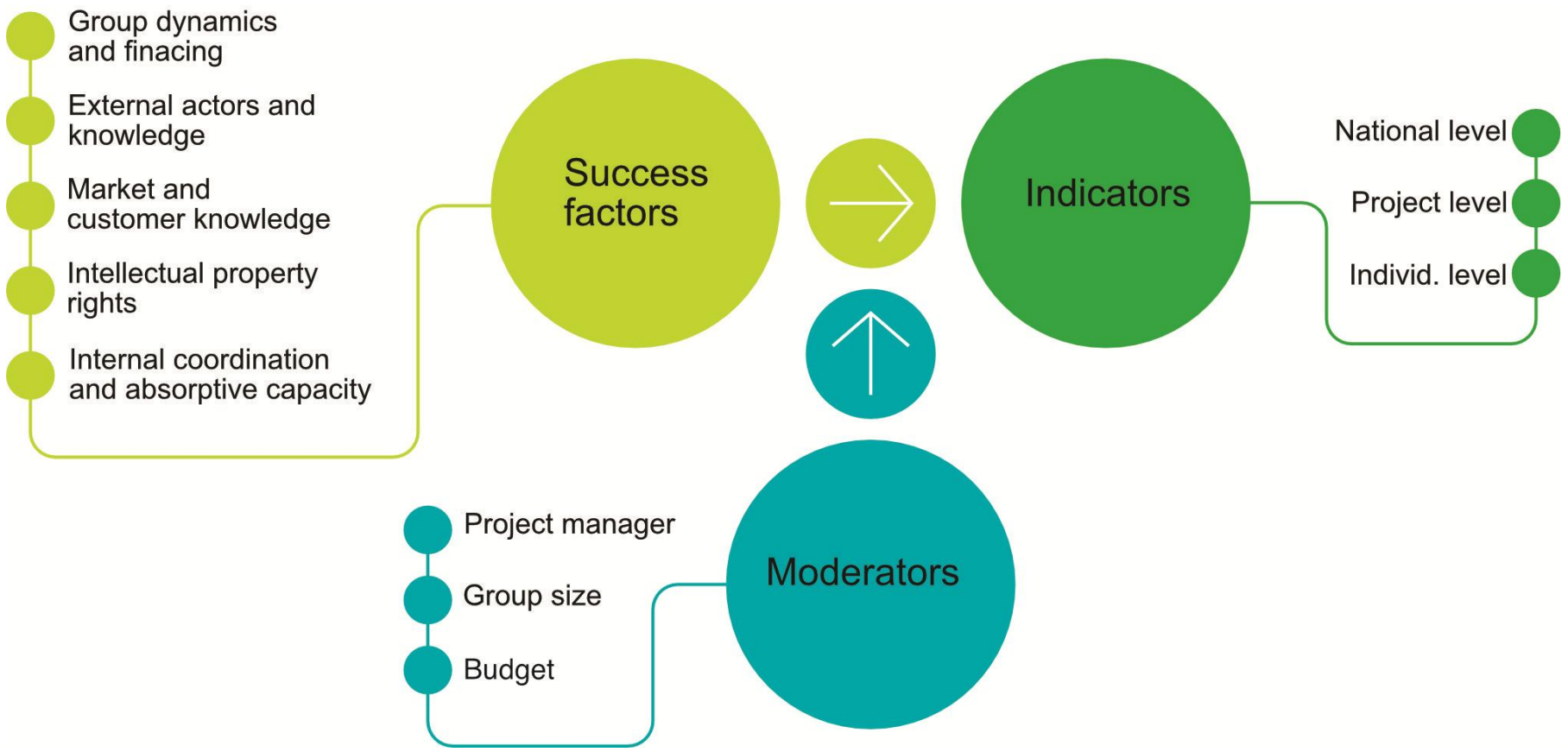
Evaluation of EIP-Agri in SE

1. Program evaluation 2016 – 2021 (Eckerberg et al., 2021; 2023)

2. Evaluation of funded projects in 2024

Aim: to analyse finished EIP-Agri funded projects regarding success and failure, and provide insights on critical success factors

Conceptual model

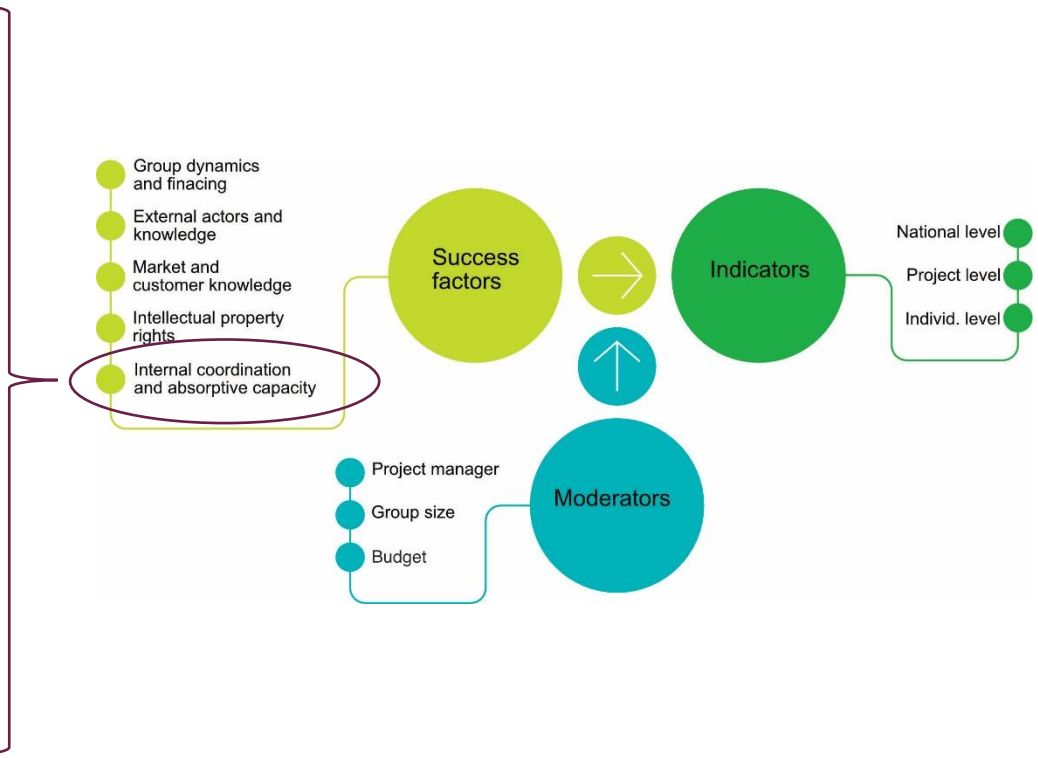


Data collection and analysis

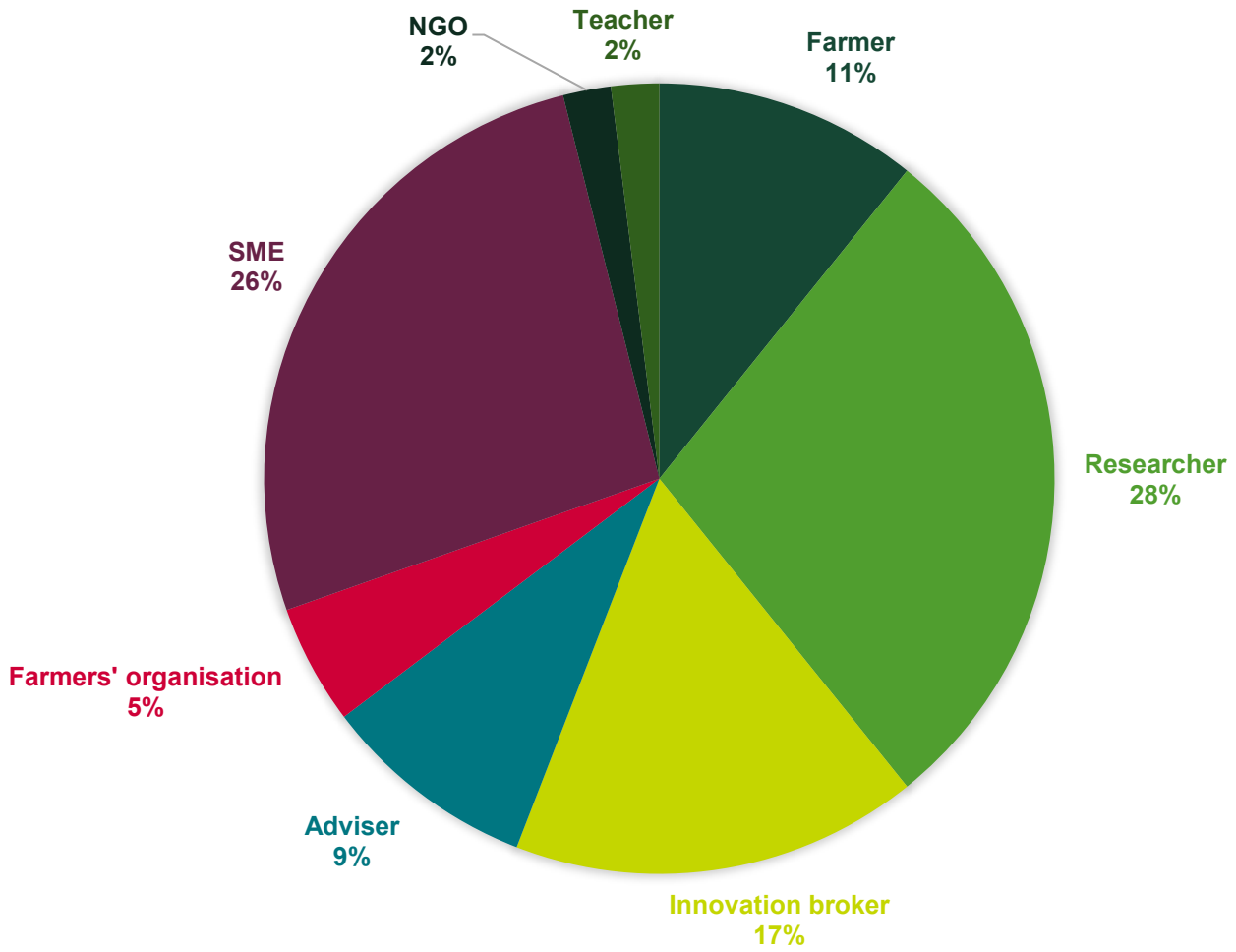
- Web-based survey with 22 questions, a total of 98 sub-questions, distributed to the project managers of 91 completed projects (2018 – Jan 2024) in spring 2024
- Resulted in 75 responses, whereof 66 complete responses => 73% response rate, descriptive analyses and correlation analyses
- In-depth interviews with 6 project managers purposefully sampled, to follow up on survey results, qualitative analysis
- Methodological weakness: All surveys face some unreliability in responses
  Project managers have interests in relation to EIP-Agri

Example of survey questions in relation to factors

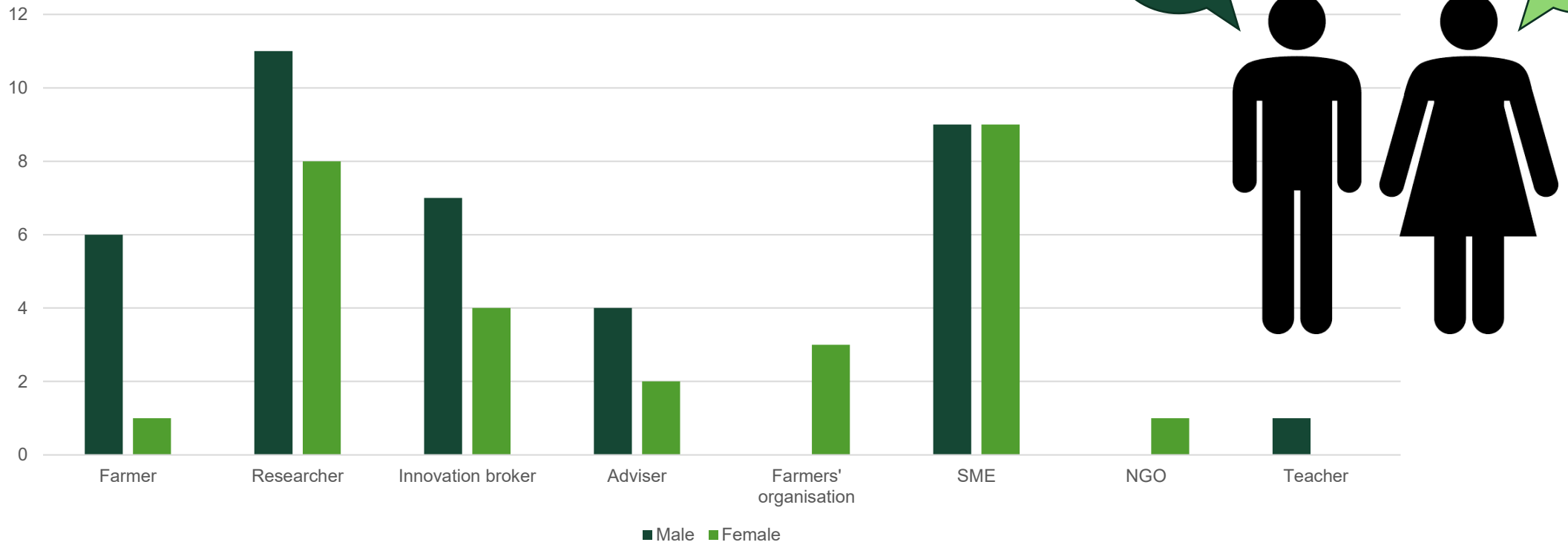
Samordning, samarbete och absorptionsförmåga	Medeltal	Standardavvikelse
Säkerställa tillgänglighet av arbetsresultat när det behövs	4.48	0.81
Säkerställt att resultat av arbetet var tillgängliga där det behövdes	4.48	0.81
Synkronisering av arbetsresultat	4.36	0.82
Översikt över uppgifter och ansvar	4.36	0.82
Lämplig resursfördelning	4.33	0.81
Förstå och analysera information	4.26	0.81
Säkerställt att resultaten av arbetet var i en form som var användbar	4.24	0.93
Samarbete för att maximera prestanda	4.23	0.86
Använda ny kunskap för att förbättra innovationer	4.23	0.86
Uppmärksamhet och omsorg	4.18	0.74
Kombinera befintlig och ny kunskap	4.18	0.91

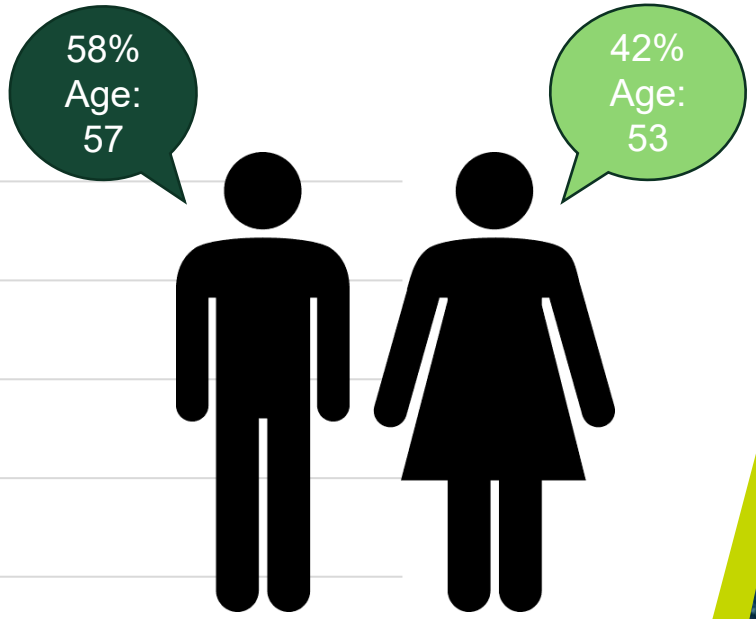


OG managers (survey)



OG managers M/F (survey)





What is the innovation?

EIP-Agri example:
A black currant wine produced using the champagne method

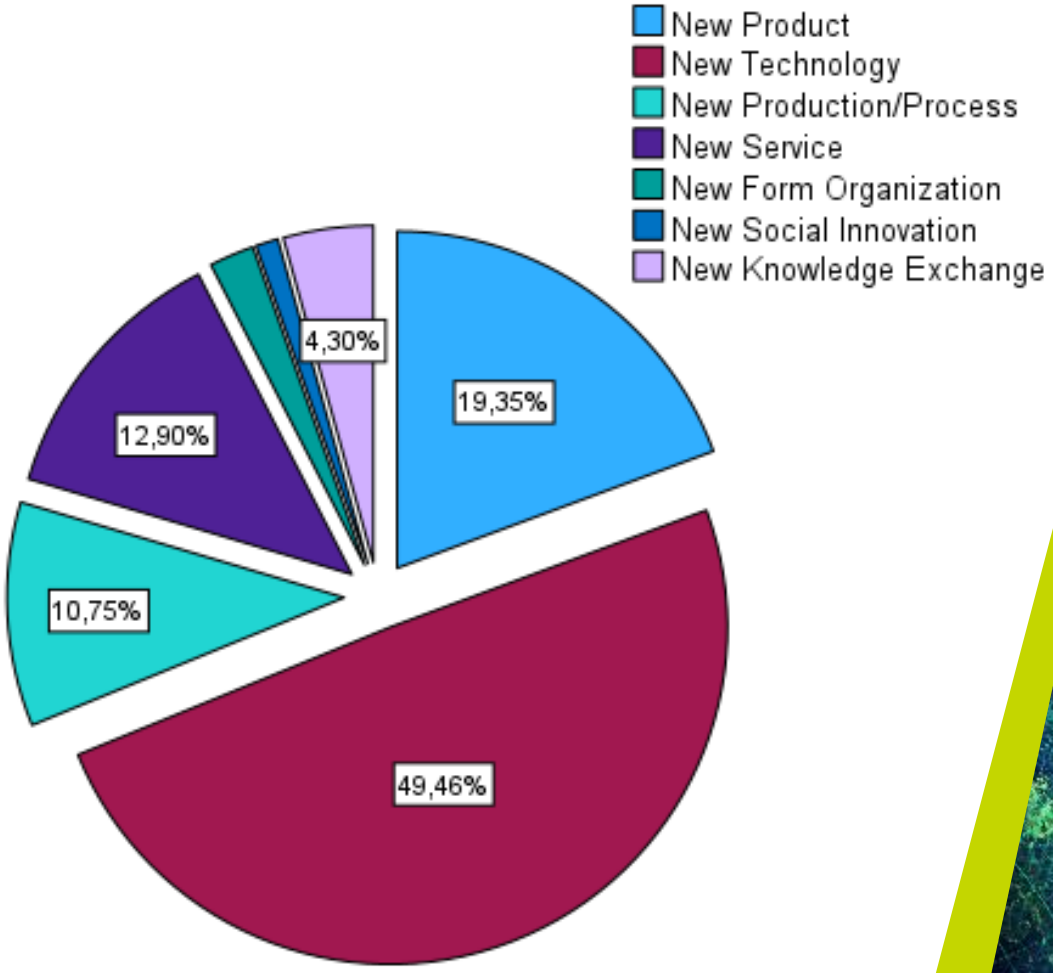
What is the type of innovation?

Photo: Alicia Swedenborg, Agroväst

EIP-Agri example:
An advanced sound monitoring system for pig stables, training AI algorithms to identify and analyze pig sounds for early detection of deviations in the normal sound pattern. It includes an alert system that informs the staff.

Describing the innovations

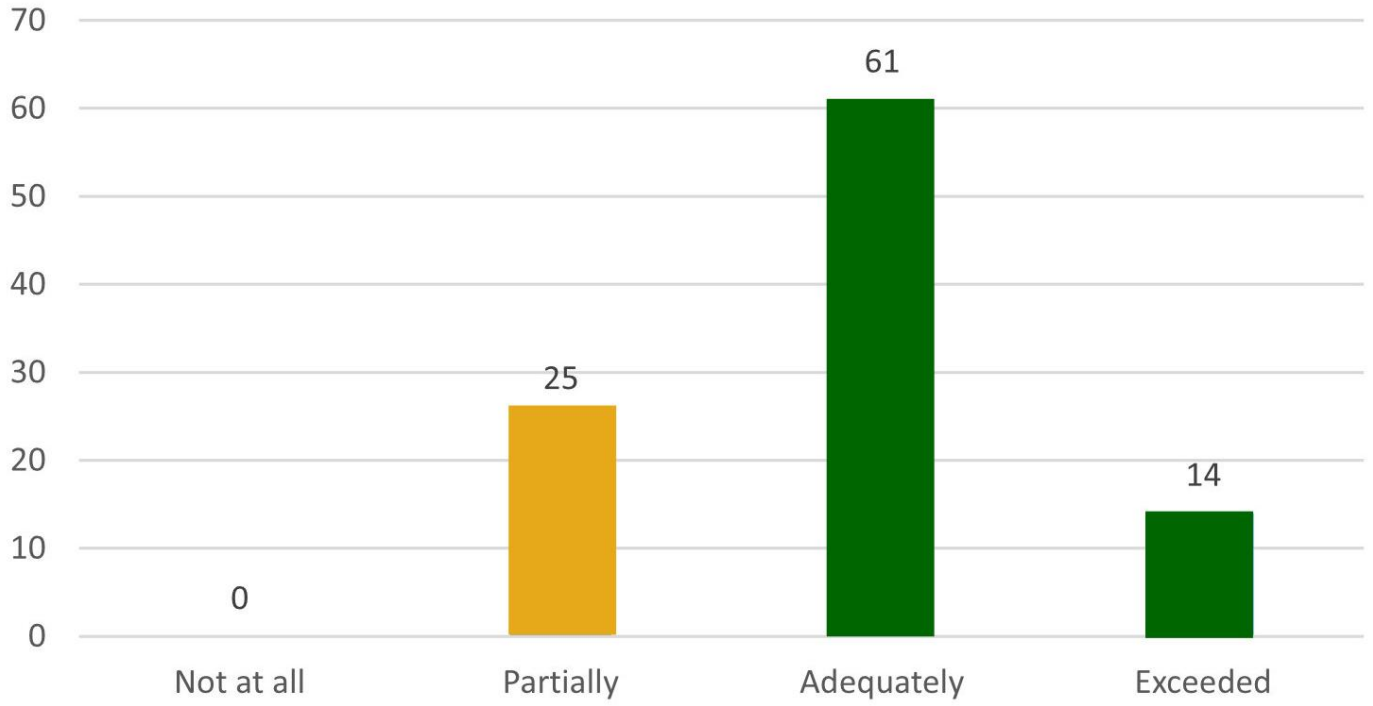
- Respondents were asked to focus on the most important innovation developed in their EIP group and to respond to follow-up questions with the same innovation in mind.
- The most common type of innovation mentioned was a new technology.
- However, type of innovation was difficult to obtain reliably – more than a third chose “other”



EIP projects represented in survey

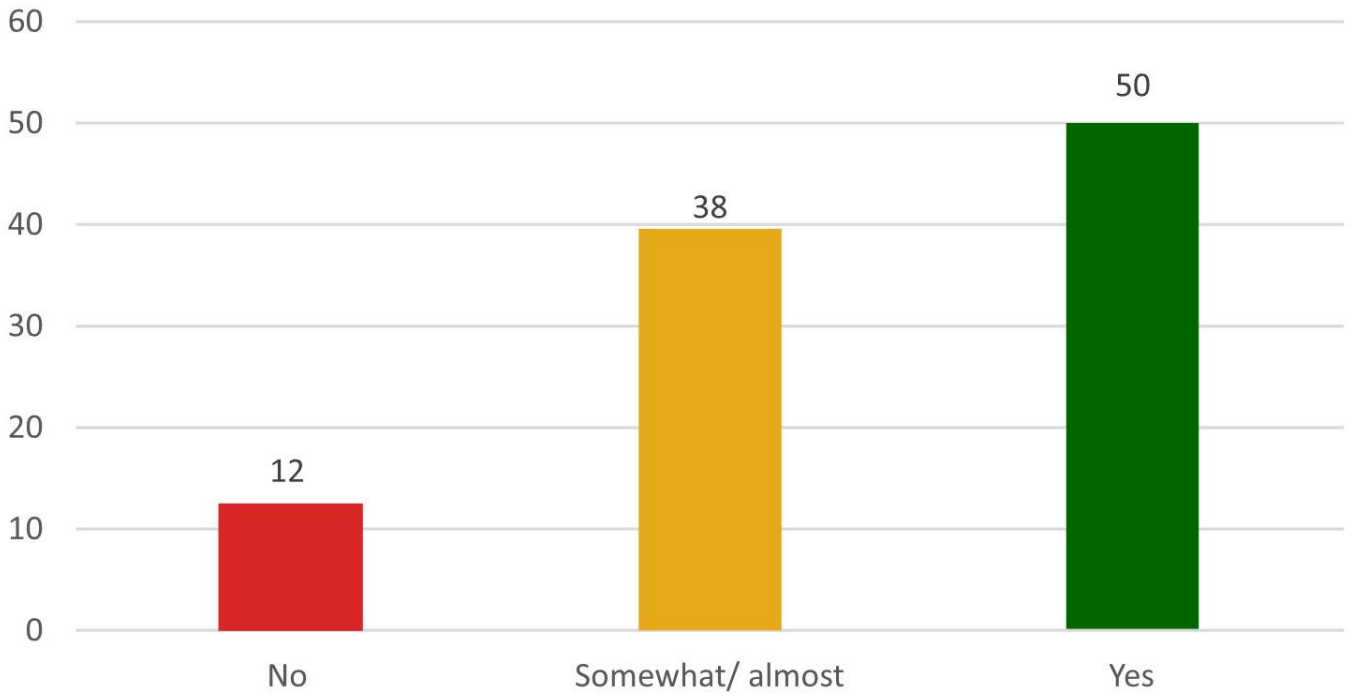
Sector	N	Group Size	Budget in 1000 EUR	Dev. Time Months
Crop Cultivation	24	5,4	286 €	24
Animal Husbandry	14	4,6	288 €	21
Horticulture	5	5,6	406 €	19
Reindeer Husb.	3	8,3	460 €	7
Food Processing	10	6,2	299 €	19
Rural Entr.	2	7,5	213 €	37
Value Chain	7	7,3	280 €	29
Other	1	7	410 €	10
Totals	66	5,8	330 €	21,6

Goal achievement, %



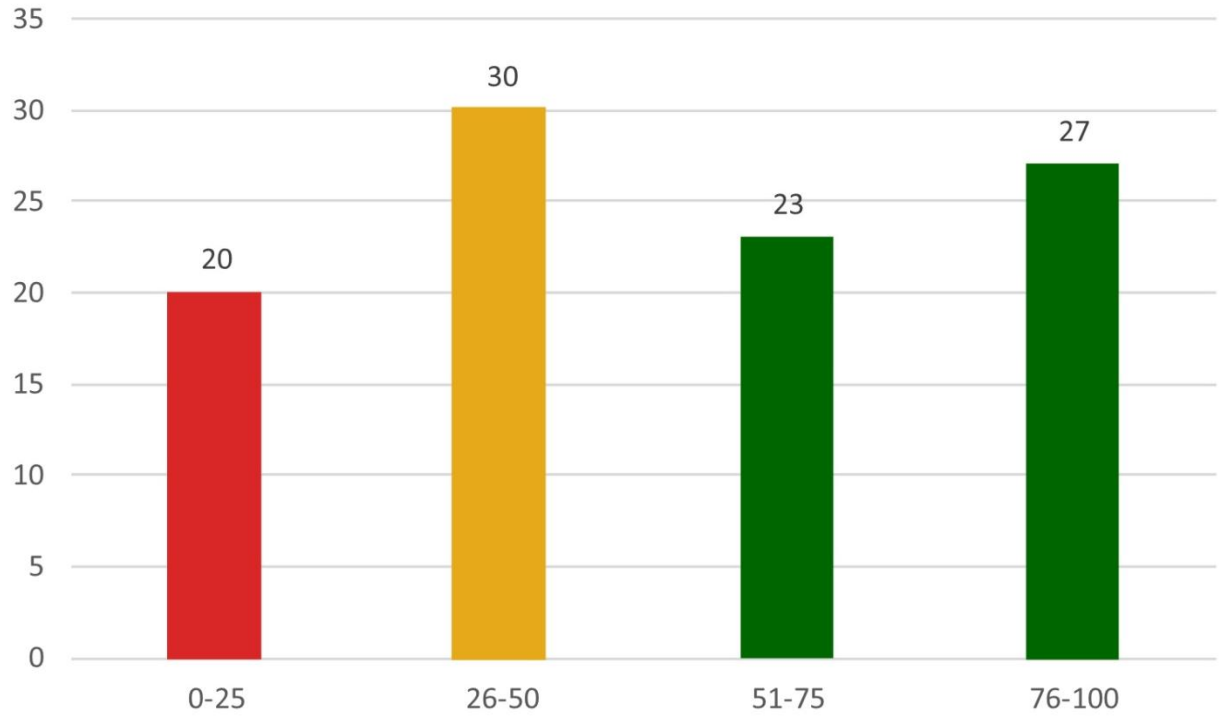
To what extent did the most important innovative solution developed in your project meet the group's expectations?

Innovation readiness, %



Is the innovative solution you developed in the project ready for others to use?

Adoption likelihood, %



Within the next three years, I believe the most important innovation we have developed in our group will be... Please indicate your answer on a scale from "Rarely used" to "Commonly used, 0-100"

Why are some EIP projects more successful than others?

- The ”Fuzzy-Front End” framework
- The survey measured e.g. how much effort went into
  - Understanding the market
  - Using external resources
  - Absorptive capacity
  - Managing teamwork

Correlations

		Goal_Achievement	Innovative_Culture_Scale	User_Competitive_Advantage	Sweden_Competitive_Advantage	Understand_the_Market	Uses_External_Resources
Innovative_Culture_Scale	Pearson Correlation	,116					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,363					
	N	64					
User_Competitive_Advantage	Pearson Correlation	,361**	,283*				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,004	,022				
	N	63	65				
Sweden_Competitive_Advantage	Pearson Correlation	,393**	,281*	,758**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,022	<,001			
	N	64	66	65			
Understand_the_Market	Pearson Correlation	,050	,162	,261*	,201		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,695	,194	,036	,106		
	N	64	66	65	66		
Uses_External_Resources	Pearson Correlation	,096	,506**	,231	,289*	,102	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,452	<,001	,065	,019	,416	
	N	64	66	65	66	66	
Absorptive_Capacity_Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	,232	,417**	,199	,124	,291*	,192
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,065	<,001	,111	,321	,018	,123
	N	64	66	65	66	66	66

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

What characterises successful projects? Significant connections

Success drivers	Success indicator
Ready for others to use; Innovativeness; IPR; Efficiency and growth in the business (for users); Competitive advantage national/international (for users); Market expansion & customer engagement (for users)	Adoption likelihood
IPR; External knowledge use	Ready for others to use
Ready for others to use; Adoption likelihood; IPR; Innovativeness; Efficiency and growth in the business (for users); Competitive advantage national/international (for users)	Goal achievement
IPR; Market and customer knowledge; Search ability	Innovativeness
Market and customer knowledge; IPR; Innovativeness	Competitive advantage for users (index)
IPR; Market and customer knowledge	Shorter time for development
Adoption likelihood; External knowledge use; Internal coordination and communication; Absorption capacity	Innovation culture

Significant connections example – to improve Adoption likelihood

- Ready for others to use
- Innovativeness
- IPR
- Efficiency and growth in the business (for users)
- Competitive advantage national/international (for users)
- Market expansion & customer engagement (for users)

Significant connections – budget

- A smaller budget correlated with Goal Achievement
- A smaller budget nearly correlated with ‘Ready for others to use’

Recommendations

- Prioritise proposals with 1) realistic plans to fully develop the idea within the project period, and 2) good market and customer knowledge and clear plans for market introduction
- EIP-Agri policy-makers could consider enabling OG's connections with business incubators and business advisory organisations
- At the program level: prioritise between the many goals of EIP-Agri

Thank you for listening

Lisa Blix Germundsson

lisa.germundsson@slu.se

+46 722 174761