



Working package 4 – report on costumers survey of Research Infrastructures (RIs) service evaluation.

The Science Link project aims to support and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in the Baltic Sea Region. A central task is to improve the interaction between commercial customers and existing research infrastructures (RIs) and to relate the service at RIs to the needs of commercial users by creating good conditions and easy understandable communication between them.

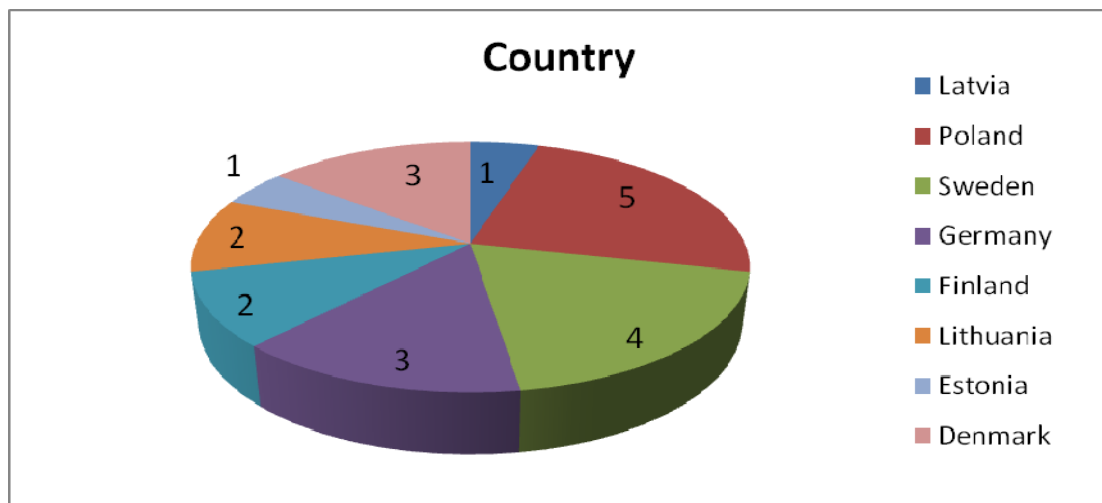
In order to get better understanding about our costumers capability and easiness of working together with RIs and Industrial liaison officers (ILOs) and regional contact points, Science link conducted web based survey to our costumers or companies that have participated and written their proposals for our free calls to get free beam time in our RIs. Survey was sent out to the companies and was available to fill in starting from March 3rd till April 2nd.

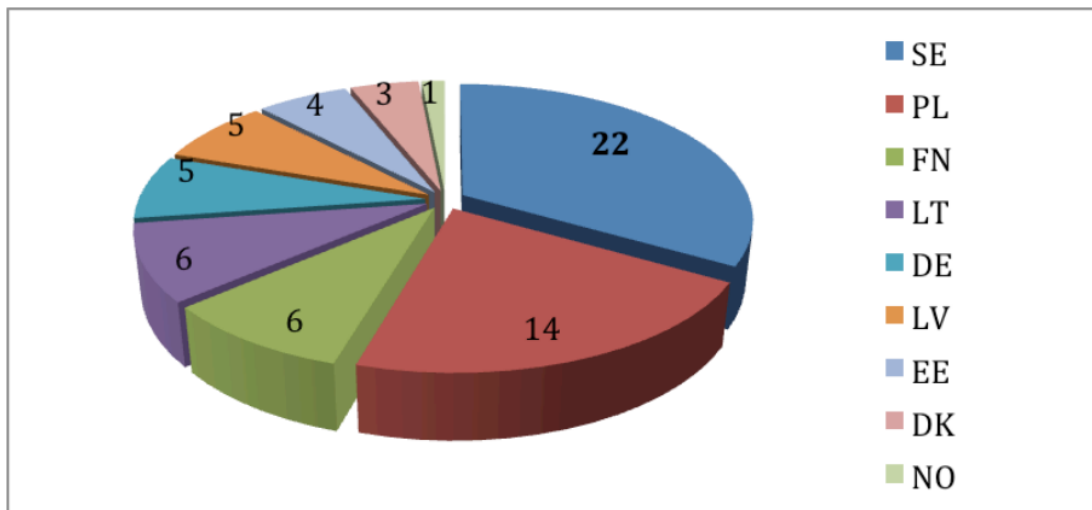
The survey concentrated on companies experience working together with RIs, ILOs and regional contact points, their satisfaction with the frameworks, usefulness, and easiness and understandability with the results provided by RIs.

The companies were asked to participate in the survey and totally 21 company participated and asked to our questions.

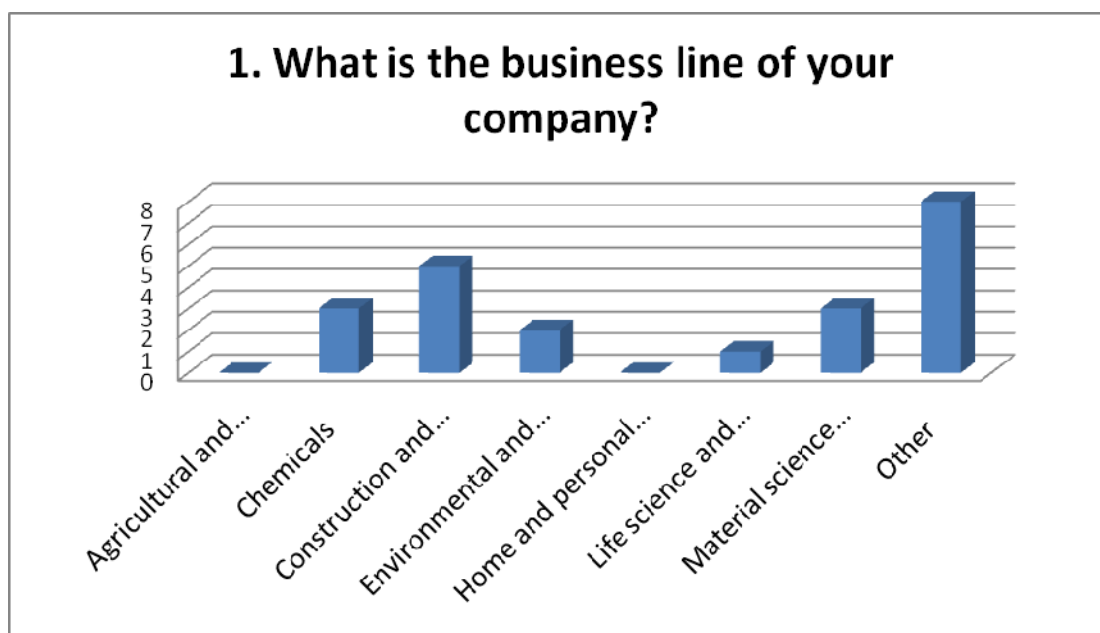


The biggest amount of answers we got from Poland (5), Sweden (4) and Germany (3)/Denmark (3). Comparing these results with total number of applications per country (see below) we can see that the countries with the biggest amount of applications have also answered best to our survey's questions. The biggest response relative we got from Denmark. All the companies who applications had been approved answered to our survey. Together from all the companies whose applications were approved almost one third (33,3%) answered to our survey. The least response we got from Finland, where only 1 company out of 6 responded to our request and filled in the survey.





Number of applications per Country, 2012-2013, Preliminary results for Science Link (<http://www.science-link.eu/pressreleases/preliminary-results-science-link>)



Most of the company’s representatives that filled the survey in could not define their company’s business line according to the business line in one of the offered options. Some of them called their business line “plastic profiles production” or “thin films”. Both of these answers could fit under section of Material science.



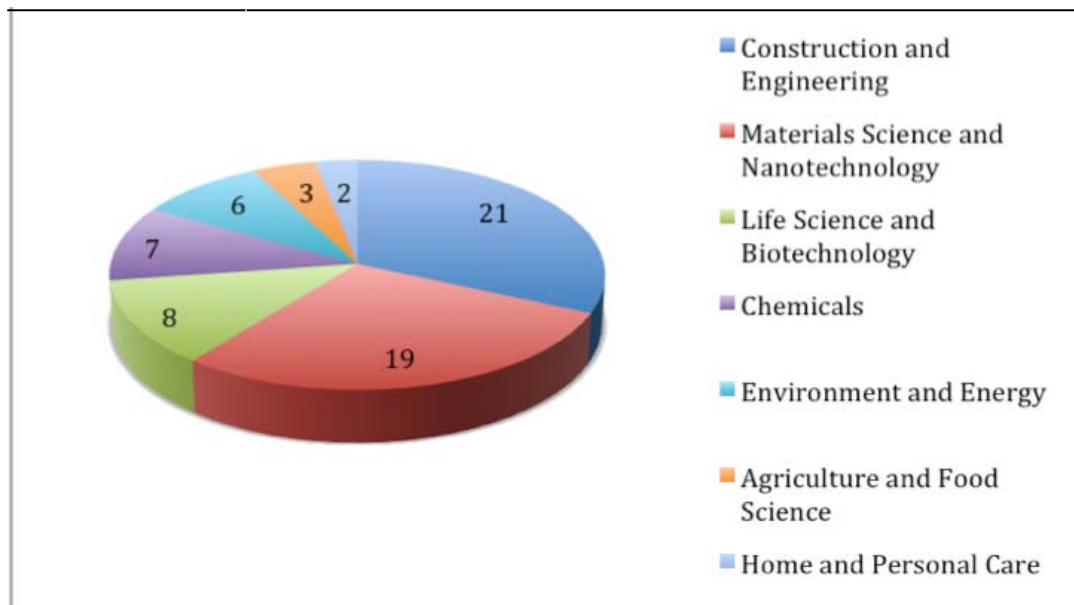
Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund)



One of the companies ticked other and wrote that their business line includes Material science, Life science and also Chemicals.

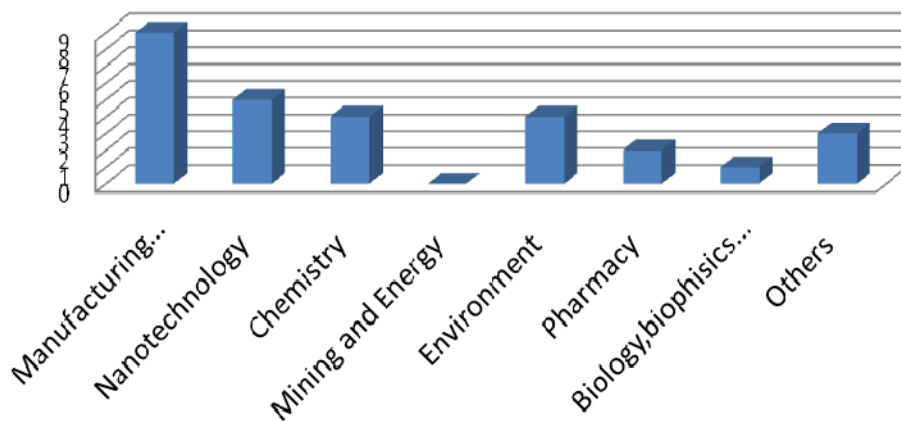
That concludes us that business line areas that are represented the most in this survey is Construction and Engineering, Chemicals and Material science and Nanotechnology.

Comparing these results with total number of applications per Industry we can see some parallels (see below). The biggest amounts of applications have been received in the same business lines as the answers in our survey. Leading industry is Construction and Engineering, it follows Material Science and Nanotechnology. Also the less answers we have in Agriculture and Food science field and Home and Personal Care, the same as in all the applications together. That concludes us to that the results represent the same as all the calls and applications.



Number of applications per Industry, 2012-2013, Preliminary results for Science Link (<http://www.science-link.eu/pressreleases/preliminary-results-science-link>)

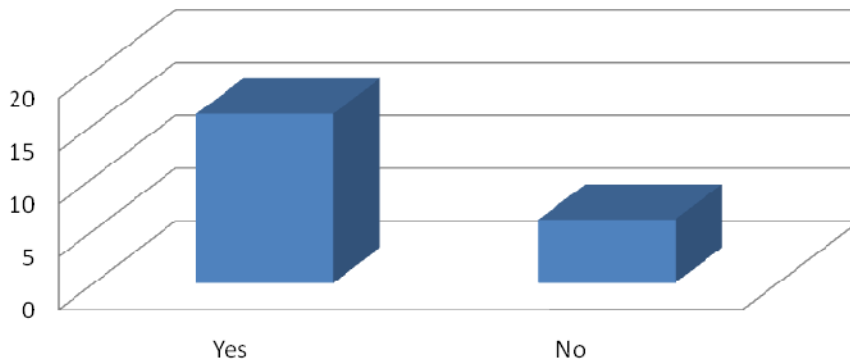
2. Which of the following categories best describes your company's primary research areas? Please select as many as applicable



The next question shows in which categories the companies do research the most. Companies mainly do research on Manufacturing technologies, that shows that if you want to make some new product you have to do some research before you launch it. Second category is Nanotechnologies, which is a very specific area that needs research that would help companies understand better how the nanotechnologies work. Also the same thing is Chemistry. Not all can understand chemical processes that are why companies use help from experts and do research in the field of Chemistry.

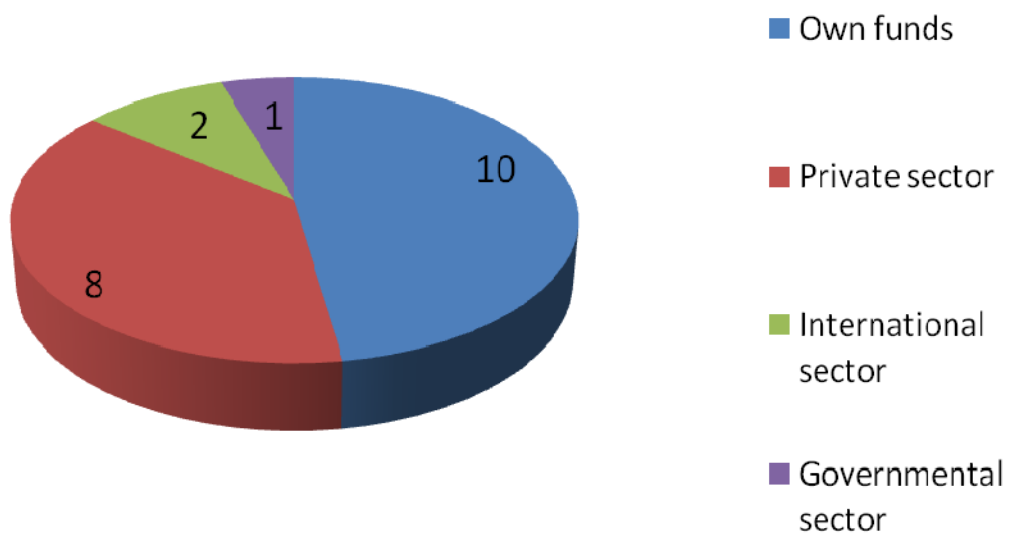
Also one of the popular research fields is Environment. This has become more and more popular to make products and work safe to environment. Also to get all kind of quality certificates you need to be environmentally responsible. This field is growing rapidly, because more and more people are starting to care about environment.

3. Does your company have its own Research&Development (R&D) department?



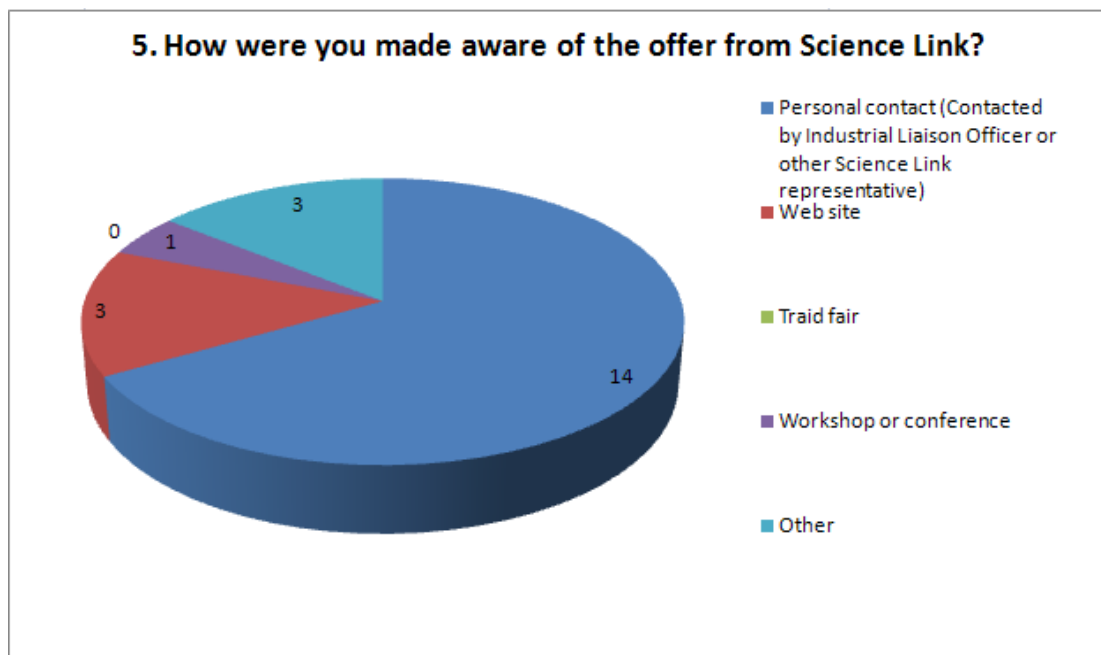
15 or 71% of the companies that answered to our survey have its own Research and Development (R&D) department. That helps companies set their goals for what they want to research and how they want to develop it better.

4. What is the primary funding source of your company?





Financial resources for the R&D activities of the companies were mainly by own funds (10 or 49%) and private funds (8 or 36%). International funds or funds by government were minor (10% and 5 % respectively). None of the respondents has educational founding as source of the company.



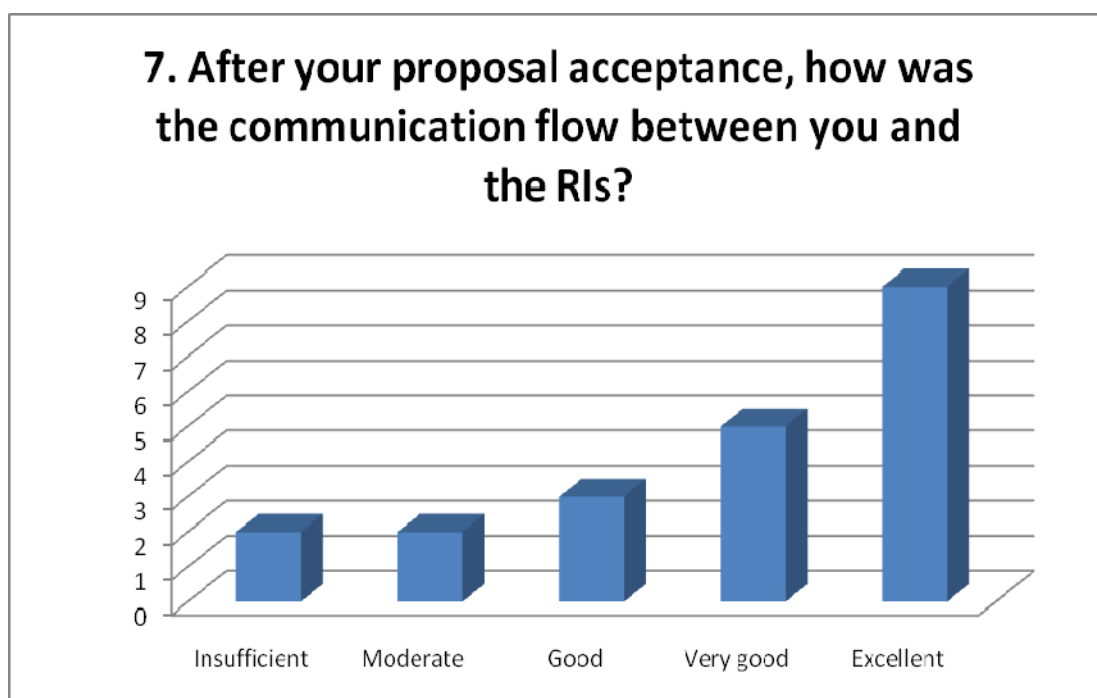
66,6% of the respondents made aware of the offer of Science link by the personal contact, either ILO or regional contact point etc. That shows that the most powerful way to spread out Science Link and its offer is by personal contacts and contact point network.

14 % found out on it from the science link web site and also 14 % became aware of it from social platform LinkedIn or colleague recommendations. Only one respondent said that he knew about Science Link from workshop or conference. None became aware of Science Link by trade fairs.



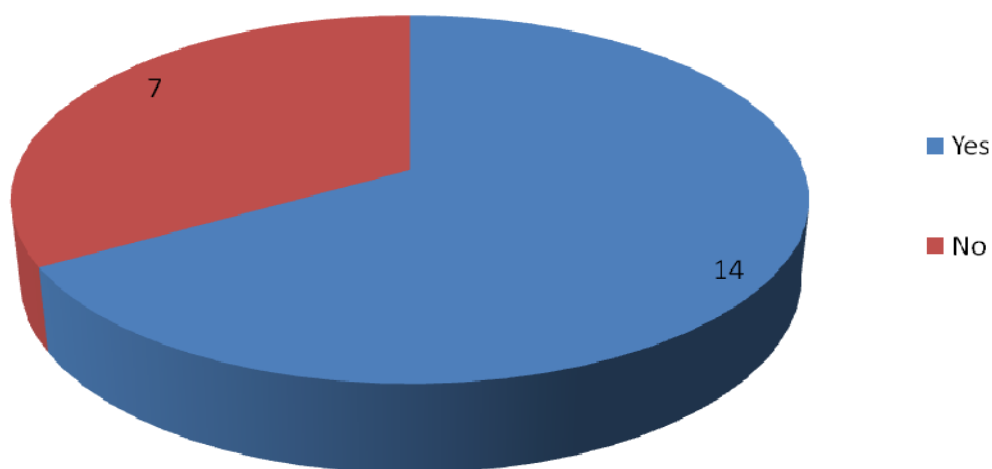
6. How did you experience the procedure for submission?

100% of all the respondents answered that it was easy to submit for Science Link offers, as it was only one page to fill in and due to the possibility to ask guidance from the regional contact point or ILO.



Most (43%) of the companies had an excellent communication flow with the RIs after proposal acceptance. Also 24 % said it very good. Not so good experience faced only 5% of the costumers.

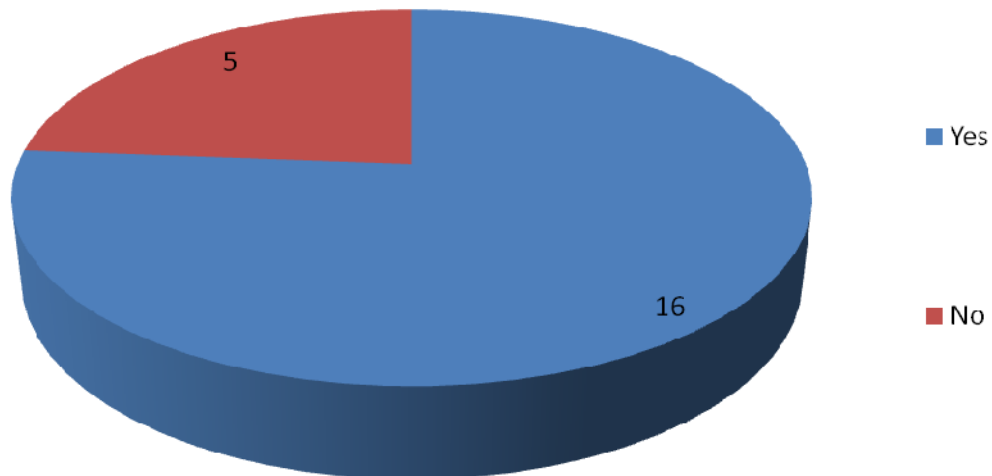
8. Did you get all necessary information regarding the application, allocation and preparation for your beam time?



67% of the costumers were satisfied with the necessary information from the project representatives during the application, allocation and preparation for the beam time. For the rest 33% that wasn't satisfied with the information quality or speed we asked to specify why. Most of the answers were that the time of the reply took too much time, and the preparation for the samples took too much time or there was no explaining of the results.

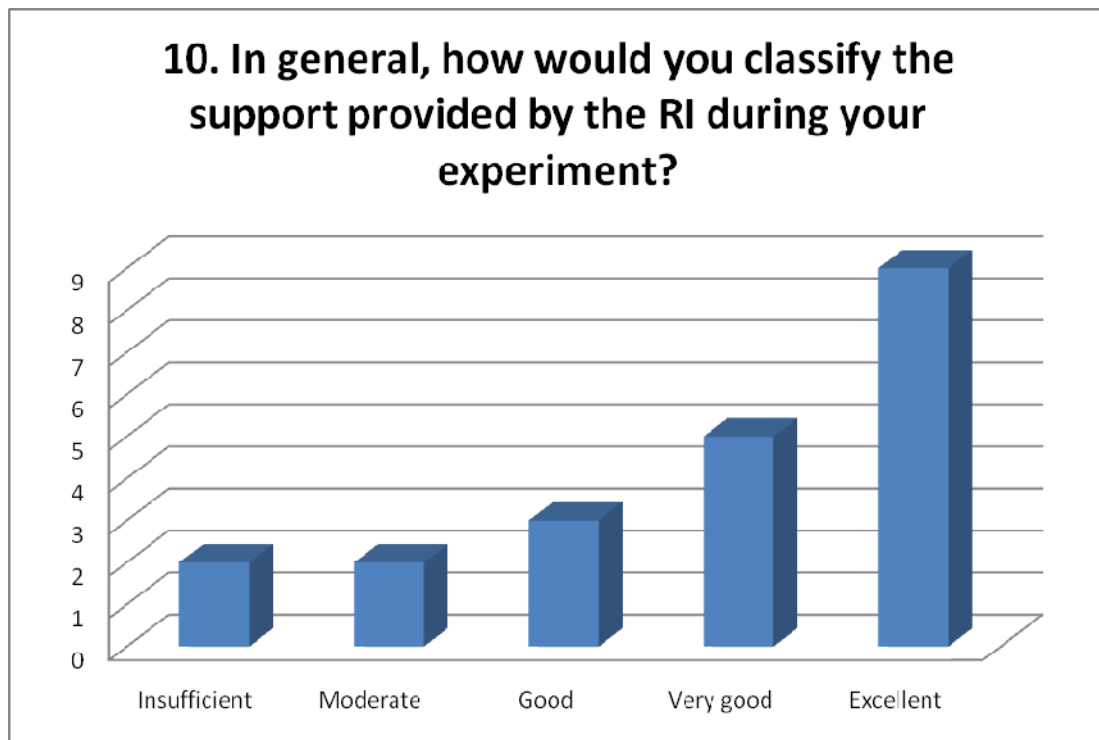
One of the company complained that they got different kind of instruments for the beam time, so some of the results that they wanted to see wasn't able to achieve.

9. Regarding the instrument operation, did you get all necessary information?

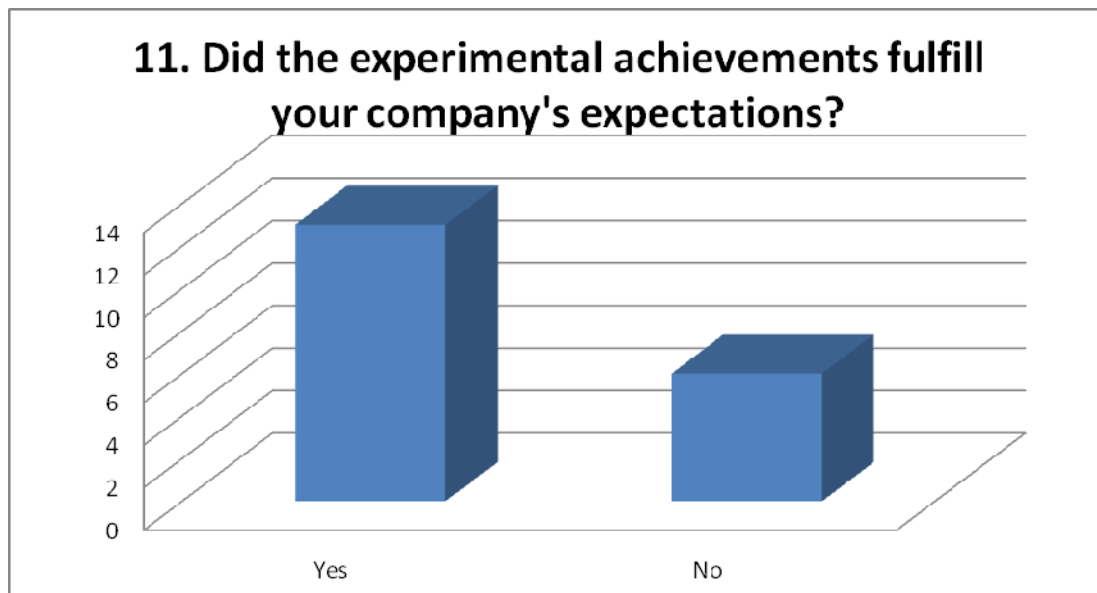


76% of the costumers got the information what they wanted and why they applied for Science Link offer regarding to the instrument operation. But 24% missed some kind of information. The information they missed was the instrument limitation and sample treatment and how exactly the certain instrument works with the sample to get the results that are given.

Mainly companies care only about the results, but few also wanted to know more how it is possible to achieve the results that are given to them and more explanation about the results that are in front of them.



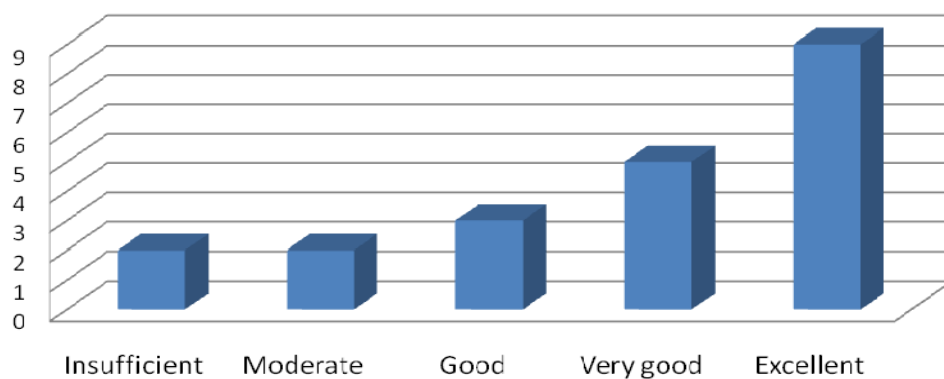
Almost the same results as in the previous question about communication flow between RI's and customer are shown in this question about general support from RI. 43% said it was excellent and 24% that it was very good. Here the ILO holds all the communication between RI and the company.



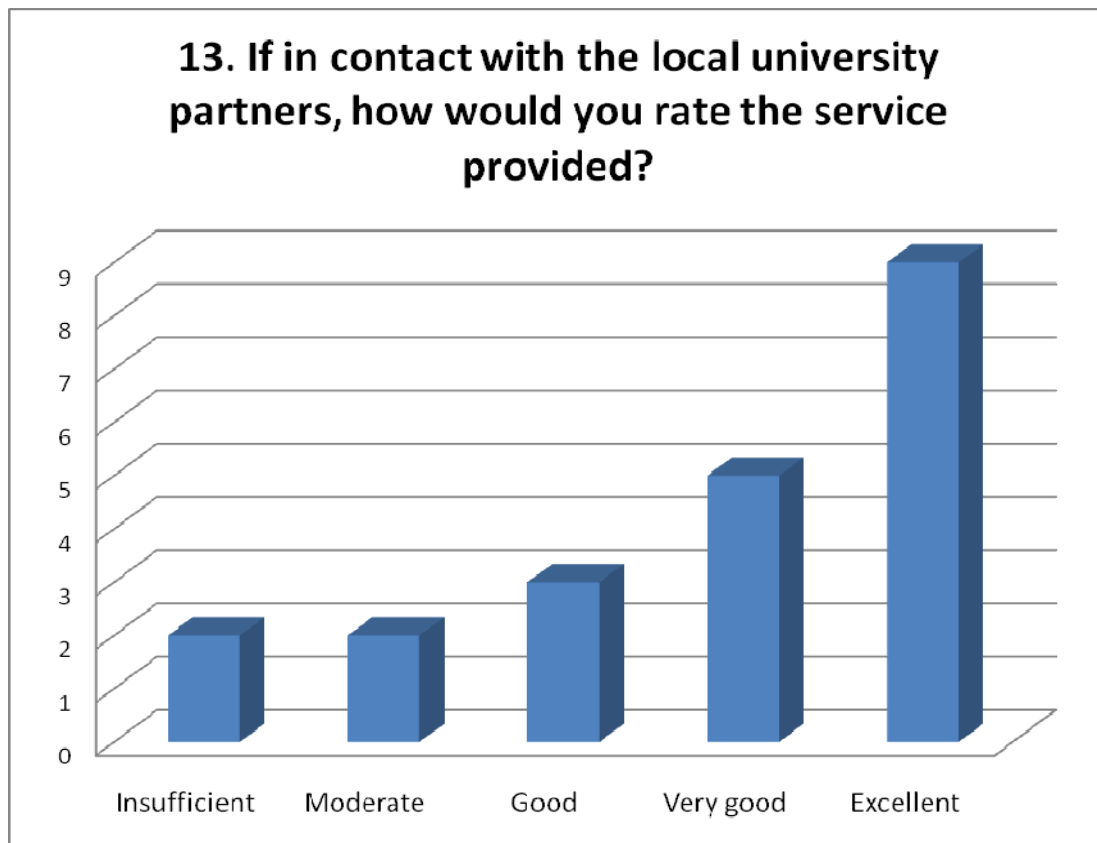
57% percent of companies fulfilled their expectations with the experimental achievements and can use them in their company's further development. Two of the companies that filled the survey had their measurements still going on in the Ri's, so they couldn't answer to this question.

The rest of the companies were less satisfied with the results and it did not fulfill their expectations as also shown in the previous chart and its comments.

12. If in contact with the regional contact and consultations points, how would you rate the service provided?



72% of the costumers are very happy with the local contact point work and their service provided. They rate it with excellent and very good. As it was shown in question 5 not only the regional contact points popularize the Science Link project, but here you can see that the regional contact points also help with all the other information necessary for the costumer and it is useful and well evaluated.



Also one of the very important components in the Science Link network are the local universities as project partners that help the companies with scientific questions and also prepare samples for measurements in RI's. Also here the university partners have been evaluated mainly as very good and excellent. That leads us that also these types of partners are useful and necessary in the project further development.



Also the same situation is with the ILO's and their usefulness and contribution to the project. It is the last level of communication before beam time starting from the contact point in the beginning of the project of applying, than university partner with scientific consultation and last, but not the least, the ILO. The ILO work has also been evaluated mainly as excellent and very good.

At the end of the survey it was asked to write any additional comments and we got mainly positive feedback. Some of the comments expressed appreciation and gratitude to the project and its offers, thanked for support and the possibility to develop their products. A few more critical comments were about timing in all of project stages. This is totally understandable comparing the time pressure in



private sector in comparison to academics. One of the costumers suggested defining timeframes.

The survey demonstrates that there are still improvements to make in all of the stages of the project, but the customers see the project on the right path to achieve its goals which are to support and encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in the Baltic Sea Region and to strengthen the region's competitiveness in a global context. There is clearly a substantial benefit to gain from cooperation between science and the industry. The benefit to increase knowledge as a benefit, that goes both ways between industry and academia and vice versa.

All together costumers are more positively disposed about Science link and presumably would like to continue to take part in this kind of project in near future.

Better understanding for customer requirements and interests

Customer survey by Science Link



Dear Sir/Madame,

Thanks to the opportunity offered by the EU funded project Science Link your company has been able to apply for, prepare, perform and analyse an experiment with the help of expert scientists at one of the four advanced research facilities that the network comprises.

We would now like to ask you to take a few minutes to evaluate our services so that we in turn, can share and thus help improve, the services offered by our facilities. The questions are few but the answers are important.

Thank you in advance for helping improve our services. Should you have additional questions feel free to [contact us](#).

Company

Name

Size (number of employees or turn over)

Country

Address

Company website

Contact person

First and last name

E-mail

Job title

1. What is the business line of your company?

- Agricultural and food science
- Chemicals
- Construction and engineering
- Environmental and energy
- Home and personal care
- Life science and biotechnology
- Material science and Nanotechnology
- Other, please specify

2. Which of the following categories best describes your company's primary research areas? Please select as many as applicable

- Manufacturing technology

- Nanotechnology
- Chemistry
- Mining and Energy
- Environment
- Pharmacy
- Biology, biophysics, biochemistry
- Others

3. Does your company have its own Research & Development (R&D) department?

- Yes No

4. What is the primary funding source of your company?

- Own funds
- Private sector
- Government sector
- Education sector
- International sector

5. How were you made aware of the offer from Science Link?

- Personal contact (Contacted by Industrial Liaison Officer or other Science Link representative)
- Web site
- Workshop or conference
- Trade fair
- Other way _____
- If other, please specify _____

6. How did you experience the procedure for submission?

- Easy
- Difficult

7. After your proposal acceptance, how was the communication flow between you and the RIs?

- Excellent Very good Good Moderate Insufficient

8. Did you get all necessary information regarding the application, allocation and preparation for your beam time?

- Yes No If no please specify what information you missed _____

9. Regarding the instrument operation, did you get all necessary information?

- Yes No If no, please specify what information you missed.

10. In general, how would you classify the support provided by the RI during your experiment?

- Excellent Very good Good Moderate Insufficient

11. Did the experimental achievements fulfill your company's expectations?

- Yes No If not, please comment on why _____

12. If in contact with the regional contact and consultations points, how would you rate the service provided?

- Excellent Very good Good Moderate Insufficient

13. If in contact with the local university partners, how would you rate the service provided?

- Excellent Very good Good Moderate Insufficient

14. If in contact with the Industrial Liaison Officers at the RI, how would you rate the service provided?

- Excellent Very good Good Moderate Insufficient

Any additional comments? Please feel free to convey them.

Thank you!

Best regards,

Science Link

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Send