

WP6:– A strategic research and innovation agenda for very small traditional food processors

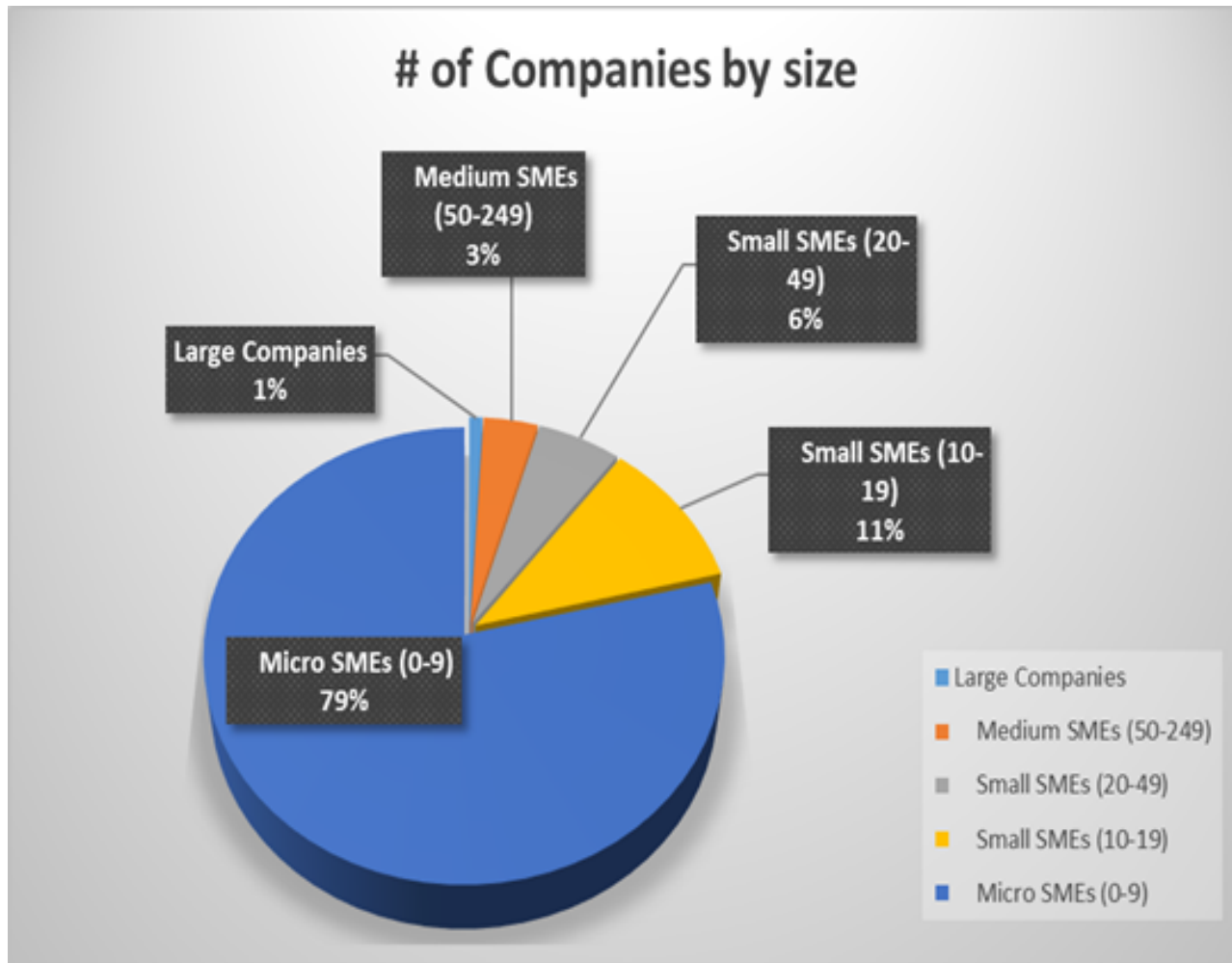
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Structure of the European Food Industry



The European Food Industry

78.8% of European food companies have an average of only 2.84 employees. How can they innovate?

	Number of companies	(% of total)	Average number of employees
TOTAL			14.5
SMEs (all)	2,601	(0.9% of total)	592
Medium SMEs (50–249)	286,399	(99.1% of total)	9.2
Small SMEs (20–49)	10,693	(3.7% of total)	102.5
Small SMEs (10–19)	16,473	(5.7% of total)	30.3
Small SMEs (10–19)	31,501	(10.9% of total)	13.2
Micro SMEs (0–9)	227,732	(78.8% of total)	2.84

Source: Further analysis of data published by FoodDrinkEurope

Normal method of creating a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)

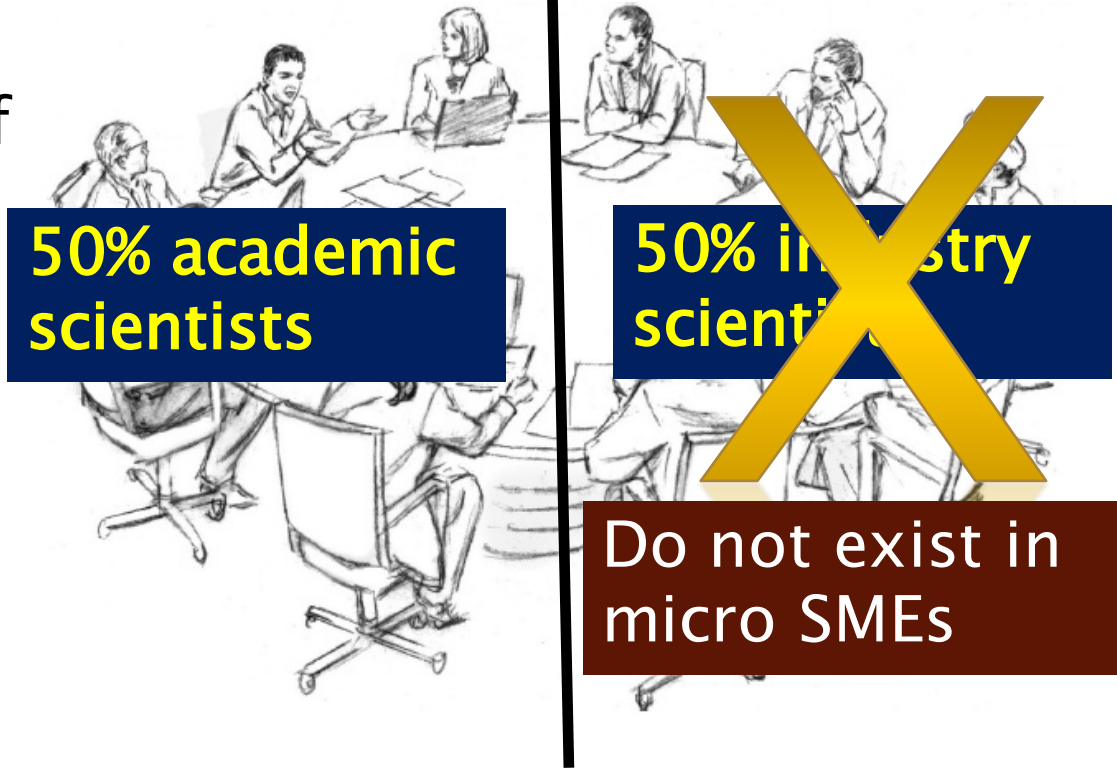
1. Brainstorming of experts from academia and industry



First draft



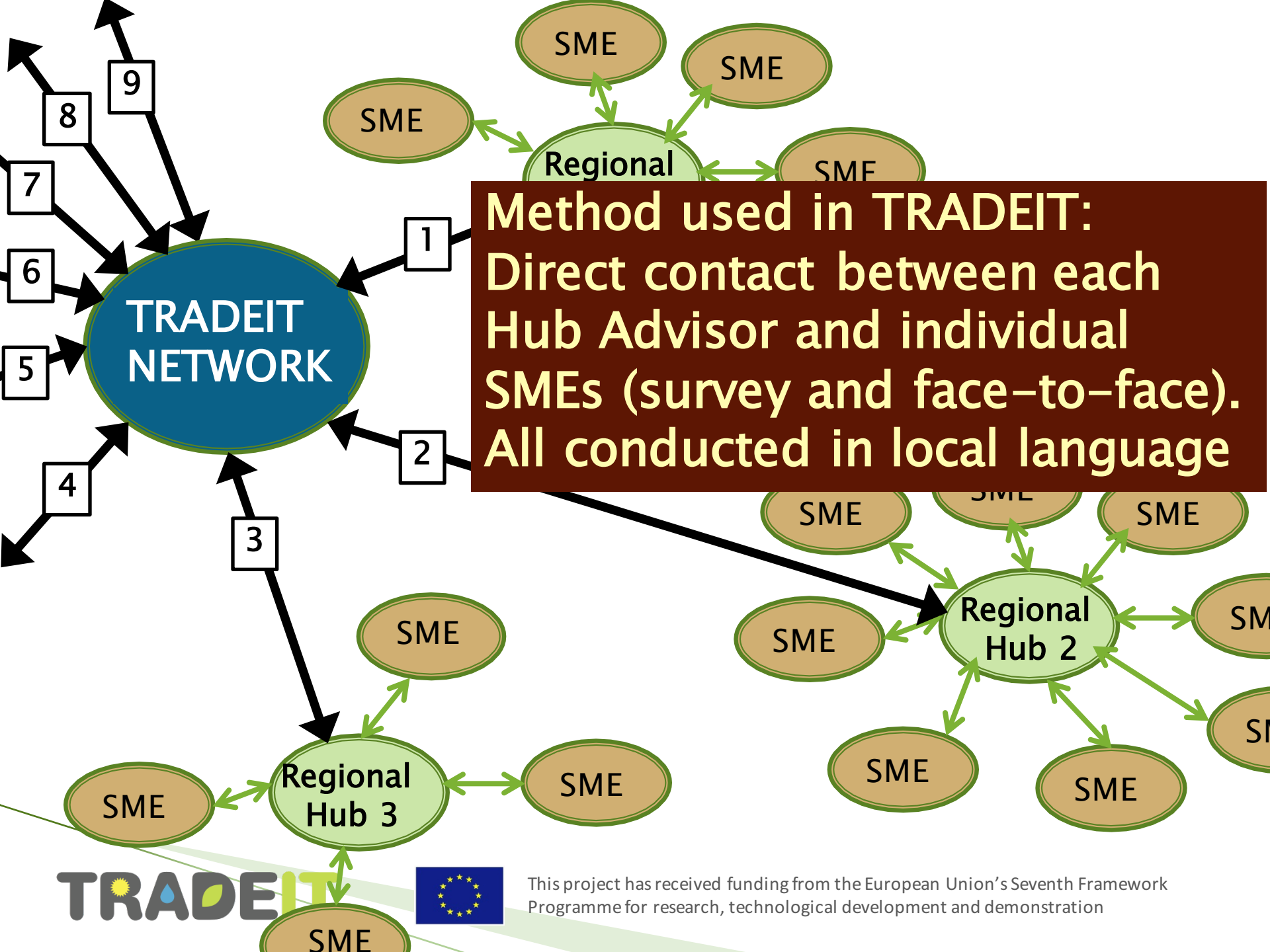
2. Web-based open consultation



50% academic scientists

50% industry scientists

Do not exist in micro SMEs



Method used in TRADEIT:
Direct contact between each Hub Advisor and individual SMEs (survey and face-to-face). All conducted in local language

Therefore, the major topics were not surprising

- Lack of time for adequate innovation
- Difficulties of access to finance for innovation
- The unsuitable size and cost of new processing equipment for delivering product innovations
- Problems in creating adequate distribution networks
- The problem of innovation awareness

Only topic common to other SRIAs
(e.g. ETP *Food for Life*)

Other generic topics (1)

- ▶ Growth management of the business
- ▶ Personal development within the company
- ▶ Lack of skilled workers/technical personnel
- ▶ Lack of experience in marketing & internationalization
- ▶ Lack of information about the business and potential new markets
- ▶ Difficulties in dealing with regulations
- ▶ New business models and e-commerce
- ▶ Lack of access to external/advanced knowledge (scientific, technological and business)

Other generic topics (2)

- ▶ Knowledge of new technologies & new products
- ▶ How to ensure increased shelf life
- ▶ Knowledge of new packaging developments including active and intelligent packaging
- ▶ How to lower energy requirements/costs
- ▶ Food labelling (arising from new legislation)
- ▶ Rapid analysis for process control & food safety
- ▶ Controlling raw materials costs
- ▶ Sustainability related to waste management, reduction of food waste, valorization of residues

Science deficiencies were found for:–

- ▶ Processing
- ▶ Sustainability
- ▶ Rapid testing
- ▶ Allergen management
- ▶ Packaging
- ▶ Product formulation
- ▶ Product characteristics
- ▶ Health and safety aspects
- ▶ Labelling and related issues

The problem of innovation awareness

How can a micro company with no scientific expertise access scientific innovation?

