



Empowering Machining SMEs through digitalisation: first workshop insights from DigiMach

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On January 29th, the first DigiMach workshop took place at Thor Park, Genk, bringing together companies from the machining sector to explore digitalisation challenges and solutions. This event marked a significant milestone for the [Interreg-funded DigiMach project](#), which aims to support 150 SMEs across the Meuse-Rhine region in their digital transformation journey over the next 3 years.

Survey highlights: where do companies stand today?

At the heart of the workshop was the presentation of the **DigiMach Survey**, which gave a snapshot of the current digital maturity of the participating companies:

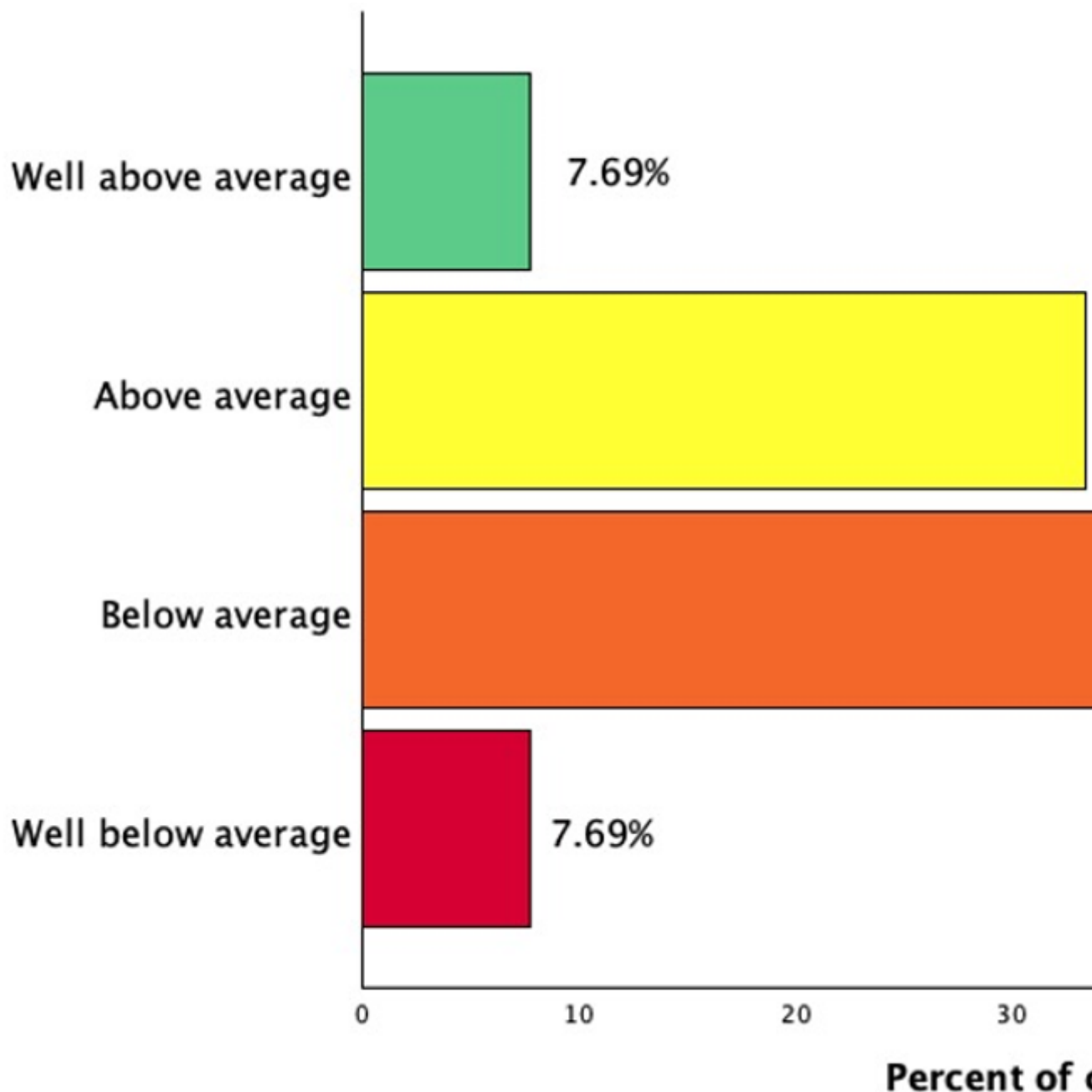


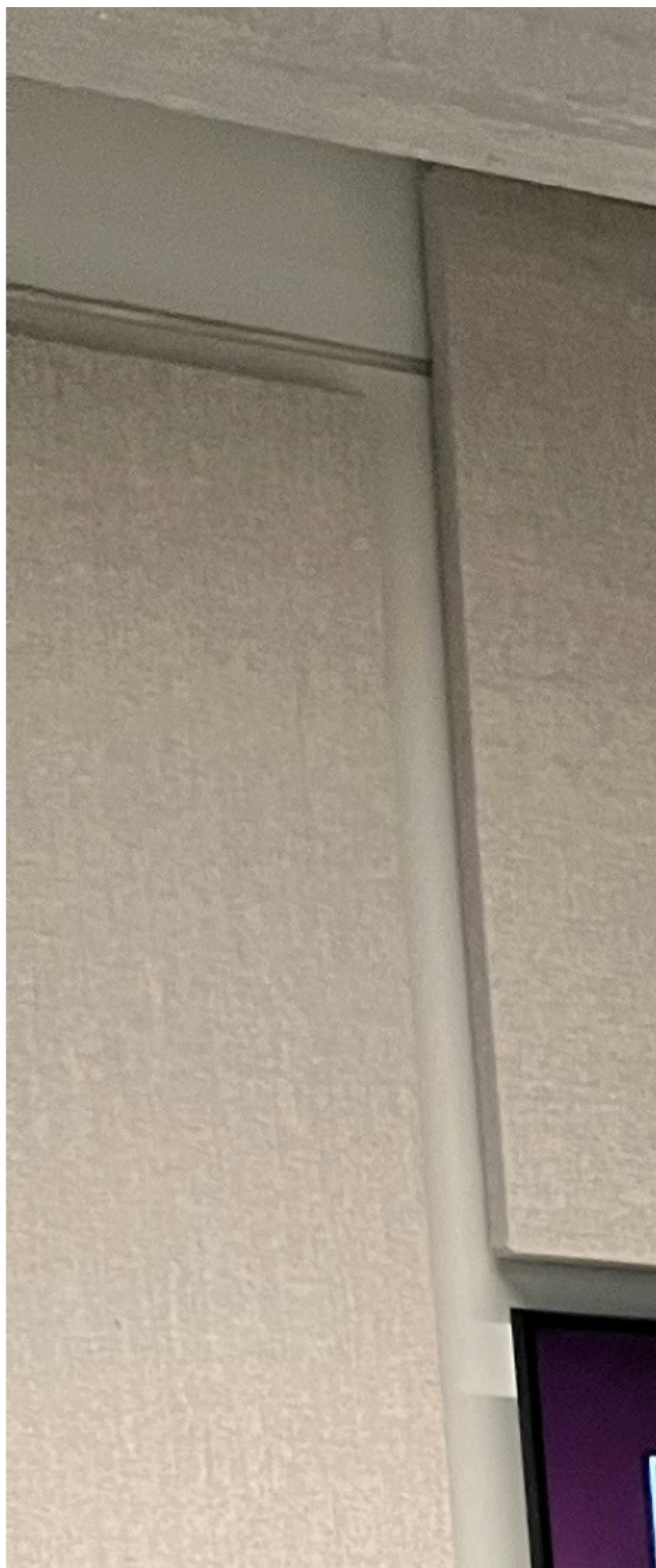
Figure 1: Digital Maturity Index (DMI)

- **58.95%** of the companies assessed were considered to be below average or well below average in their digital maturity in terms of overall digital competence
- Only **7.69%** can be considered as being well above average
- Many SMEs struggle with outdated systems, limited connectivity between machines and management software, and a lack of access to knowledge-sharing networks

These results confirm the urgent need for tailored, accessible solutions to help SMEs digitise at their own pace and according to their real operational challenges.

Brainstorming session: from pillars to practical solutions

The second half of the workshop focused on gathering input directly from the companies.



In small groups, participants shared their needs and ideas across **five key solution pillars** of DigiMach:

1. Process Setup

SMEs want simplified, real-time calculation tools and dynamic production simulations that help streamline job planning and quoting without extensive engineering expertise.

2. Process Monitoring

There's strong interest in affordable sensor integration and dashboards that can monitor productivity, downtime, and energy usage, tailored for smaller companies.

3. Quality Control

Companies see potential in automated visual inspection tools and traceability systems that can be added on without changing existing machinery or software.

4. Machine Health

Predictive maintenance was a hot topic, with SMEs asking for plug-and-play systems that provide actionable alerts instead of overwhelming data.

5. Operator Assistance

There was enthusiasm for smart work instruction platforms (including AR/VR), especially for training new staff in multilingual environments.

The input gathered will directly inform the design of **shared demonstrators and toolkits** within each pillar, ensuring they are practical, modular, and cost-efficient.

What's next? Join Us

DigiMach's work is just beginning. In the coming months, further workshops will be held across the region. Meanwhile, the consortium is working on refining the demonstrators based on feedback and preparing upcoming training sessions and pilots.

[Contact us](#)

Is your company part of the machining chain and are you facing digitisation challenges?

DigiMach can help through fully funded activities including workshops, toolkits, and one-on-one support for pilot implementation.

[Discover more about DigiMach](#)

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