

File name: spotlight_on_benelux_-_invest_ni___invest_ni (720p).mp4

Moderator questions in Bold, Respondents in Regular text.

KEY: Unable to decipher = (inaudible + timecode), **Phonetic spelling** (ph) + timecode), **Missed word** = (mw + timecode), **Talking over each other** = (talking over each other + timecode).

Amy Dalton: Hello and welcome to the Spotlight on the Benelux Data and Cybersecurity as hosted by Invest NI's Benelux team. The Benelux team is based in Brussels and we support all companies from all sectors to identify opportunities and sell into the Benelux, and we also support FTI opportunities from the Benelux into Northern Ireland. My name is Amy Dalton and I'm regional director for the Benelux, and although I support companies or we support companies from all sectors I have a particular focus on supporting companies to sell into financial services and also around security and defence.

Emilien Thorin: Hi, I'm Emilien Thorin, I work with Amy in the Brussels office as a business development manager. I focus mostly on trade work and I help NI companies internationalise in the Benelux as well as in France (mw 00.58). In terms of sectors, I focus on smart cities in a broad sense, so this will include sub-sectors such as mobilities, (mw 01.05) energy and utilities, etc, and at that point we'll include include data and cybersecurity solutions applied to all of the-, all of the sub sectors. So to start with, what is the Benelux? So for those who do not know, it stands for Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg. It is considered as an open, competitive and affluent European market. Actually, if you take together those three countries, Benelux is one of the first export destinations for NI businesses in mainland Europe. So you have first Belgium, which is one of the UK's largest trading partners with opportunities particularly lying in the high value products and services. Official languages there in Belgium are French, Dutch and German but English is a widely accepted business language and is considered as a neutral language because it can be used by the different Belgian communities to communicate with each other. For the Netherlands it is-, it is one of the largest economies in Europe, one of the world's most open economies. It is very culturally similar to the UK, making it an ideal test market for new products and solutions. Their official language there is obviously Dutch but English is also very widely spoken and accepted as a business language. And last but not least, Luxembourg, a very small European nation but a wealthy country. It is financial and private funds hub in Europe.

So to summarise, we can say that the Benelux is a very open market with advanced buyers and significant export possibilities for your businesses but it is also highly competitive.

Amy Dalton: We in the Benelux are seeing opportunities for selling into a number of industries for a number of reasons. Some of the reasons-, some of these reasons are, one, we're seeing an increase in digitalisation, two, we're seeing an increase in the risk and threat of cyber crime, and three, data and cybersecurity has very much become a government priority across the Benelux markets. Emilien is now going to take you through some of the opportunities we are seeing in the verticals and who we are

targeting for business.

Emilien Thorin: First the ports and maritime industry, it's a very significant one in the Benelux with the two largest ports in Europe being Rotterdam and Antwerp. So along those ports you will find integrated maritime and logistic clusters as well as significant manufacturing and chemicals industries. So those large ports of Antwerp on-, and Rotterdam are considered as pioneers in terms of technology innovation. They invest in cyber security and data but they usually have their own resources in-house so there might be more business opportunities lying with the mid-sized ports such as Amsterdam or (mw 03.53), for example. Second is utilities and energy, also an important sector in the Benelux. The Benelux is actually considered as a world leader in renewable energy as well as being a significant logistics hub. Utilities and energy companies in the Benelux are facing disruption now with new players and new technologies such as Edge Computing, IoT, National Intermission Connections and are therefore looking for data and cyber security solutions. Manufacturing and advanced manufacturing including aerospace, also important to Benelux. It's a hub in this sector and it's a pioneer industry 4.0, which we have seen that the factories of the future have already been present in the Benelux for a long time already. Across the Benelux and across those organisations you can find pioneering technologies including robotics, AI, 3D printing, IOT or Big Data, and manufacturing companies are currently looking to optimise their production processes and create more efficient business models so there might be opportunities laying there for data and cyber security solutions.

For life sciences, the Dutch life sciences community is a world leading and it's very significant, with for instance more than 3,000 R&D life sciences companies, 400 biopharmaceutical companies and more than 60,000 employees in pharmaceuticals. Belgium is also extremely strong in this sector, especially in biotech, medtech, and also pharmaceuticals with 200 companies including big players like JSK or Pfizer. And you have Flanders in Belgium which has one of the world's highest concentrations of biopharmaceutical companies. So in this sector the opportunities in data and cyber security would mostly lie in data solutions for the protection of the data of patients and the provision of the leakage of those data. And last but not least financial services, so the financial services sector is also important to the Benelux. You have this sector, especially banking, which is moving from physical buildings to online solutions and companies are investing in technologies such as AI and blockchain, etc. The Netherlands in particular is considered as an early adopter of fintech solutions and you have Luxembourg, as I mentioned earlier, which is a financial hub. It is actually the number two financial centre in the EU and number one funds centre in the EU.

Amy Dalton: The most commonly feared threats and risks in the Benelux include things like data leakage, phishing and extortion, and to combat these threats there is recognition of the need to work together across academia, business and government and there are a number of initiatives listed on the slide to do this. What is important to note is the presence of organisations such as NATO in Brussels and The Hague, the Europol, even the EU institutions among others has driven the growth of the Benelux countries as leading cyber security communities. Belgium rebooted their cyber security strategy in June of this year to bring them up to 2025 to combat attacks after several very high profile attacks. The six strategic areas that they will focus on over the next five years are investing in secure network infrastructure, raising

awareness of cyber security threats, protecting vital institutions, deterring cyber attacks, improving public, private and academic partnerships, and articulating a clear international commitment to the issue. And in line with that the Centre for Cyber Security in Belgium will double its headcount. What's also important to note and not forget is that the Luxembourg government also have ambitions, one of which is to become Europe's most trusted data economy, thanks to various measures they've put in place, such as a national data exchange platform, digital twin projects and the implementation of a high performance super computer to service business and academia.

Emilien Thorin: So why should an NI cyber and data security business consider the Benelux as a target export market? So we have seen that those markets are early adopters of technology across very different sectors such as, as we've seen, manufacturing was industry 4.0, fintech, life sciences, etc. As Amy also started to say, securities and identified government and business priority. It's included in the country's strategic roadmaps such as for example with Belgium and its strategic plan to make it one of the safest European countries in the field of cyber security by 2025. It has a range of sophisticated potential buyers across a number of varied sectors that we have seen earlier. We also have seen that English is widely spoken, widely accepted as the language of a business everywhere in the Benelux and more specifically in the Netherlands. Thanks to this language accessibility, this cultural proximity and other factors, it's-, it is considered as a gateway market for, for British business going into mainland Europe and the EU. And so to summarise, it is an open, easy to access economy but it is also highly competitive. So if you have the best solution or the most cost effective you'll probably get the market now.

Amy Dalton: And Invest NI want to support your growth in the Benelux market and we can support you in a number of ways and tailor those supports as to what you require. So first of all, as you can see in this slide, we have a number of trade supports to help you understand market opportunities and engage with potential partners and buyers. Secondly, we run an early stage export programme if you are exploring outside of the UK and Ireland for the first time, and this programme is called Going Dutch. Thirdly, we have or we have to be able to launch the hub in 2022 which will be a plug and play office space in Brussels where you can work, host meetings, host events when in market. Fourthly, we run a number of programmes, both physical and online, to include things like sector focused trade shows, missions and even pitching to potential buyers here in market. And finally we can help you connect into the Department for International Trade and we work closely with DIT and even undertake joint events together. As an example in February 2020 we were able to bring five companies out to The Hague where we did an event with DIT focused on cyber security and financial services. So if you're interested in exploring the Benelux markets, please do speak to your client executive. The purpose of today's webinar is really to share some initial insights with you on cyber and data security sector and opportunities in the Benelux markets, and we are going to hear from some fantastic speakers. So directly after this presentation we're going to hear from Innovation Quarter on market opportunities in the Netherlands which will be followed by a presentation from Angoka, where they will share their journey from Northern Ireland to the Netherlands and beyond.

Finally we're gonna have a Q&A session with all the speakers and we would encourage you to put your questions in the chat throughout today's webinar, and also you'll have opportunities to put those questions

directly to the speakers at the end. Although today's webinar is focused on Belgium and the Netherlands, we just don't have time to cover Luxembourg as well, but do not forget Luxembourg and if you are targeting financial services sector and the funds sector, we would be delighted to speak to you and support you in looking at the Luxembourg as well. So I'm going to hand over to the Innovation Quarter now who are going to take you through opportunities in the Netherlands. Thank you.

Captions by www.takenote.co.