

UpGradeSME

Interreg Europe 



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

SME internationalisation solutions in South Muntenia

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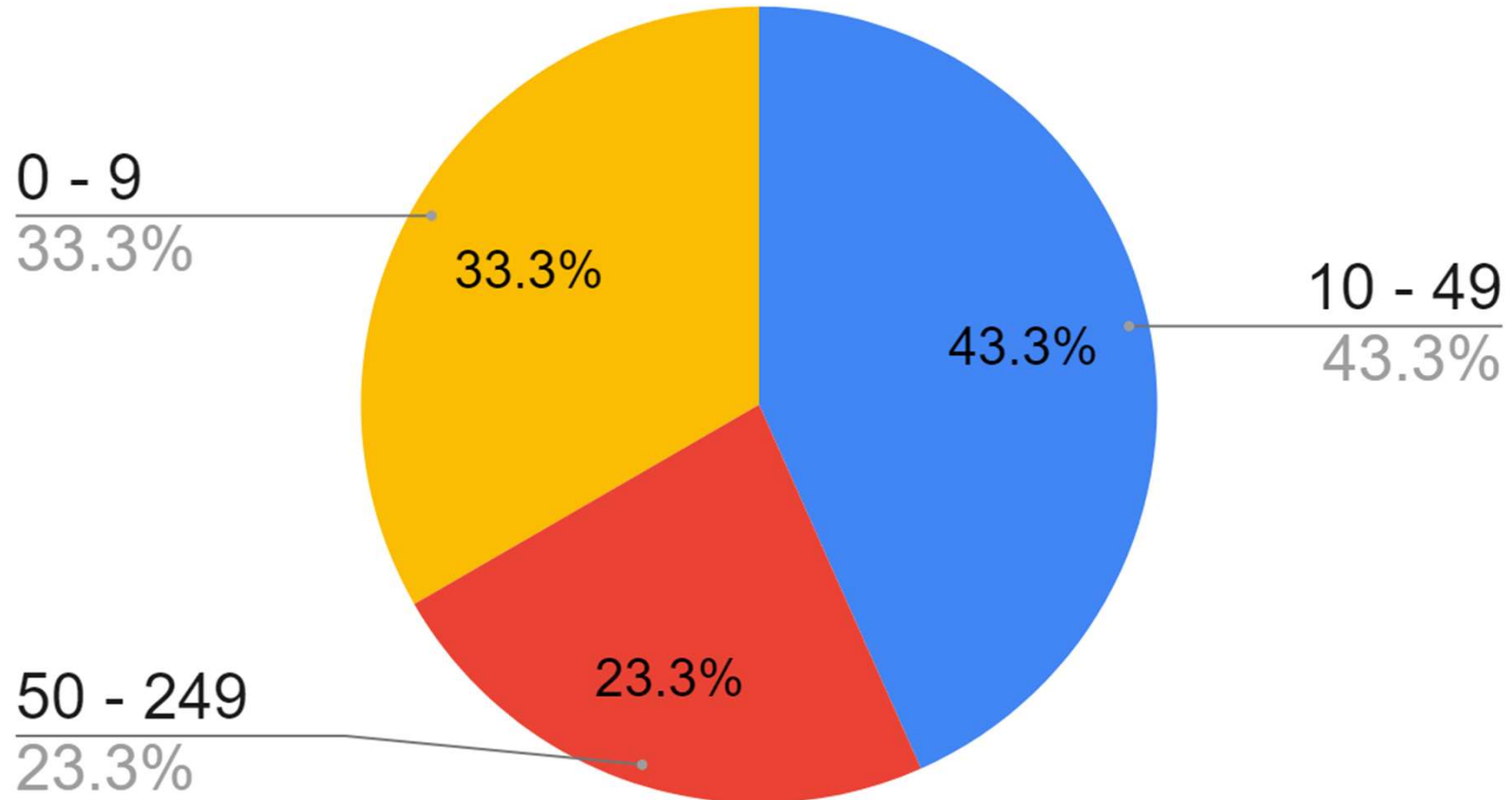
Survey context

Analysis of the **impact of COVID-19 on the internationalization of SMEs and the public policy instrument.**

- ✓ The survey was launched in January 2021, throughout the region (7 counties around Bucharest); over 31 SME out of more than 150 answered our invitation in participating at the survey.
- ✓ The interview with the Intermediate Body on public policy instrument.

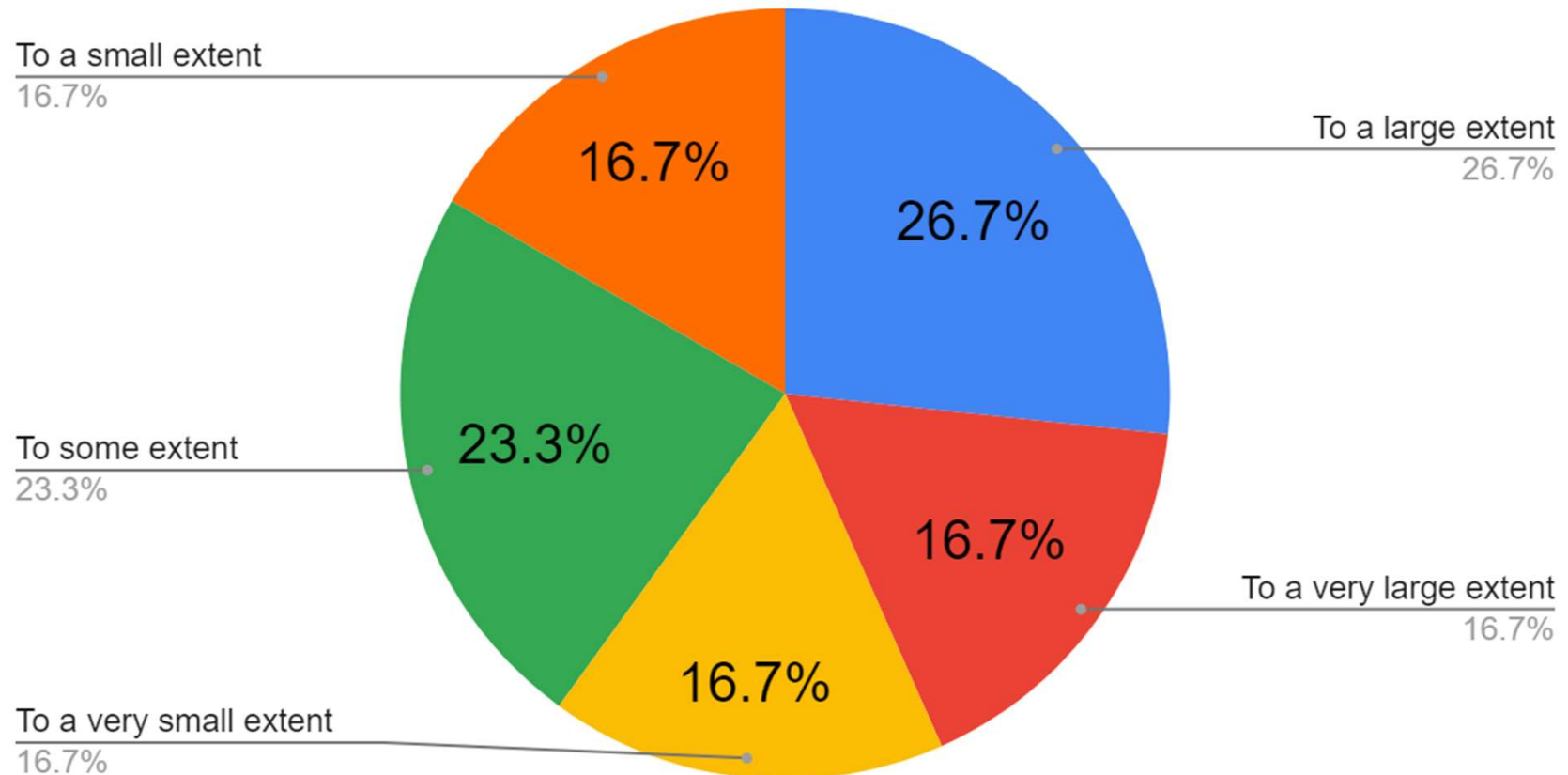
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Number of Employees



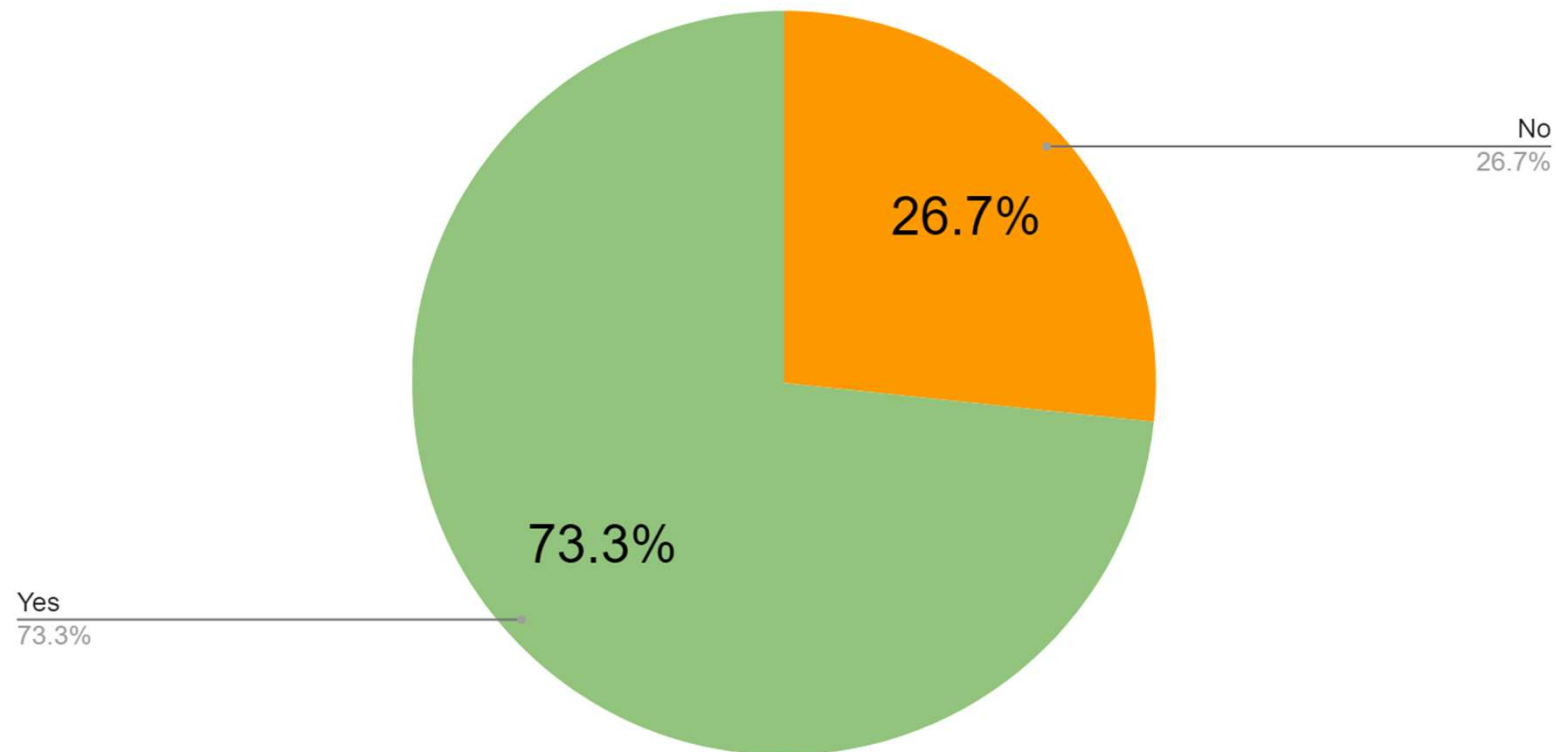
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your business in the last year and a half?



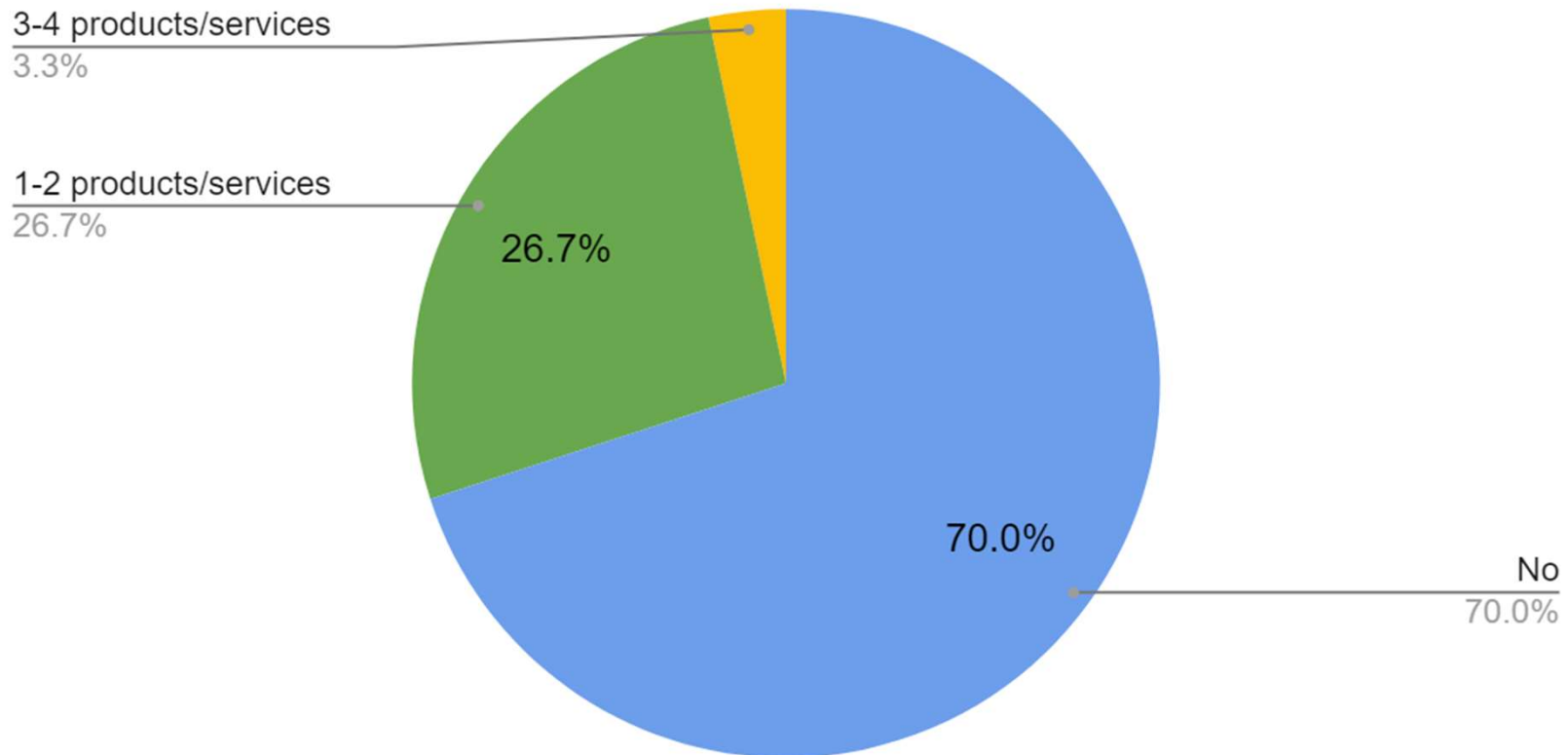
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you developed new measures within the company to counter the impact of COVID-19? Please list measures also related to your import / export activity.



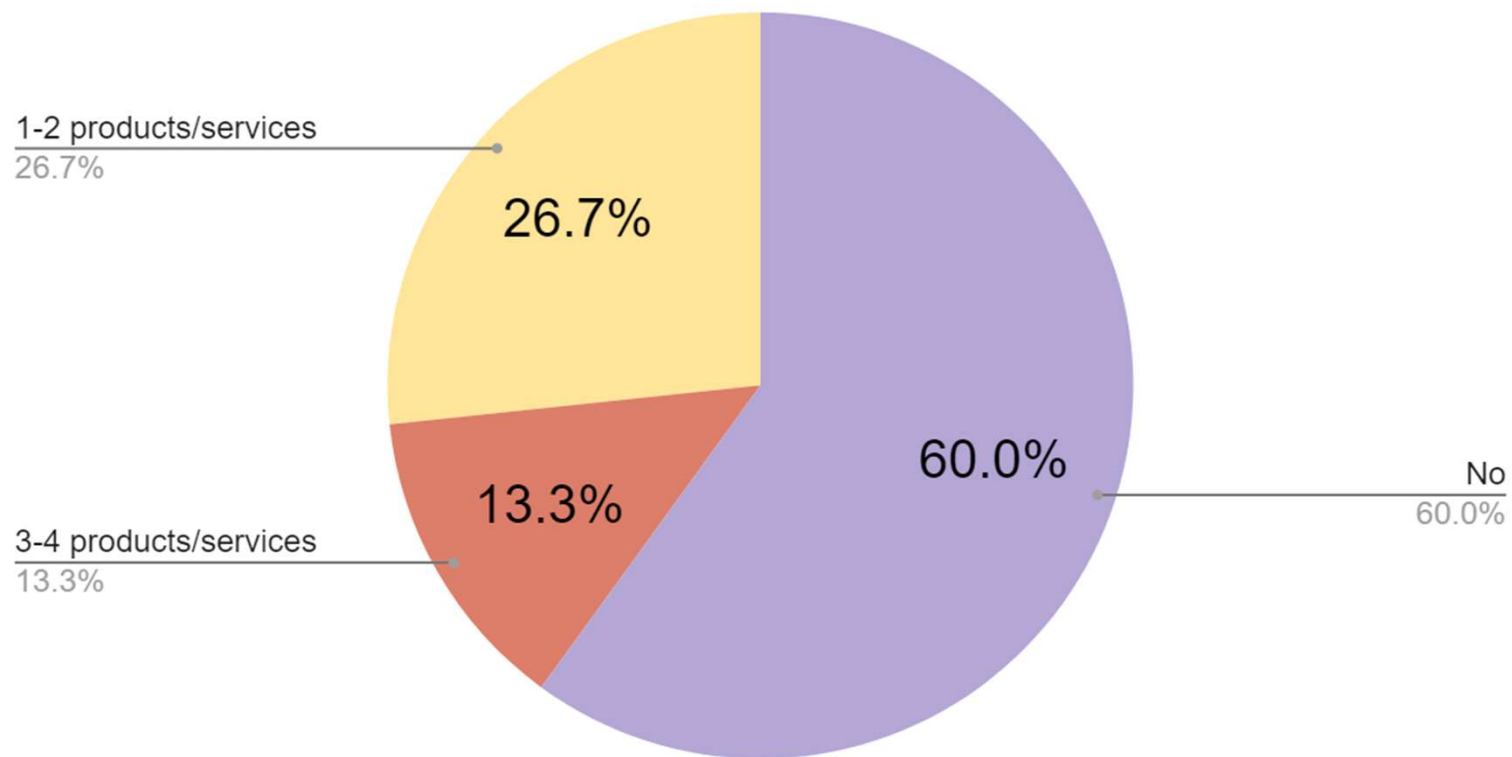
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you removed products and/or services from your portfolio due to COVID-19?



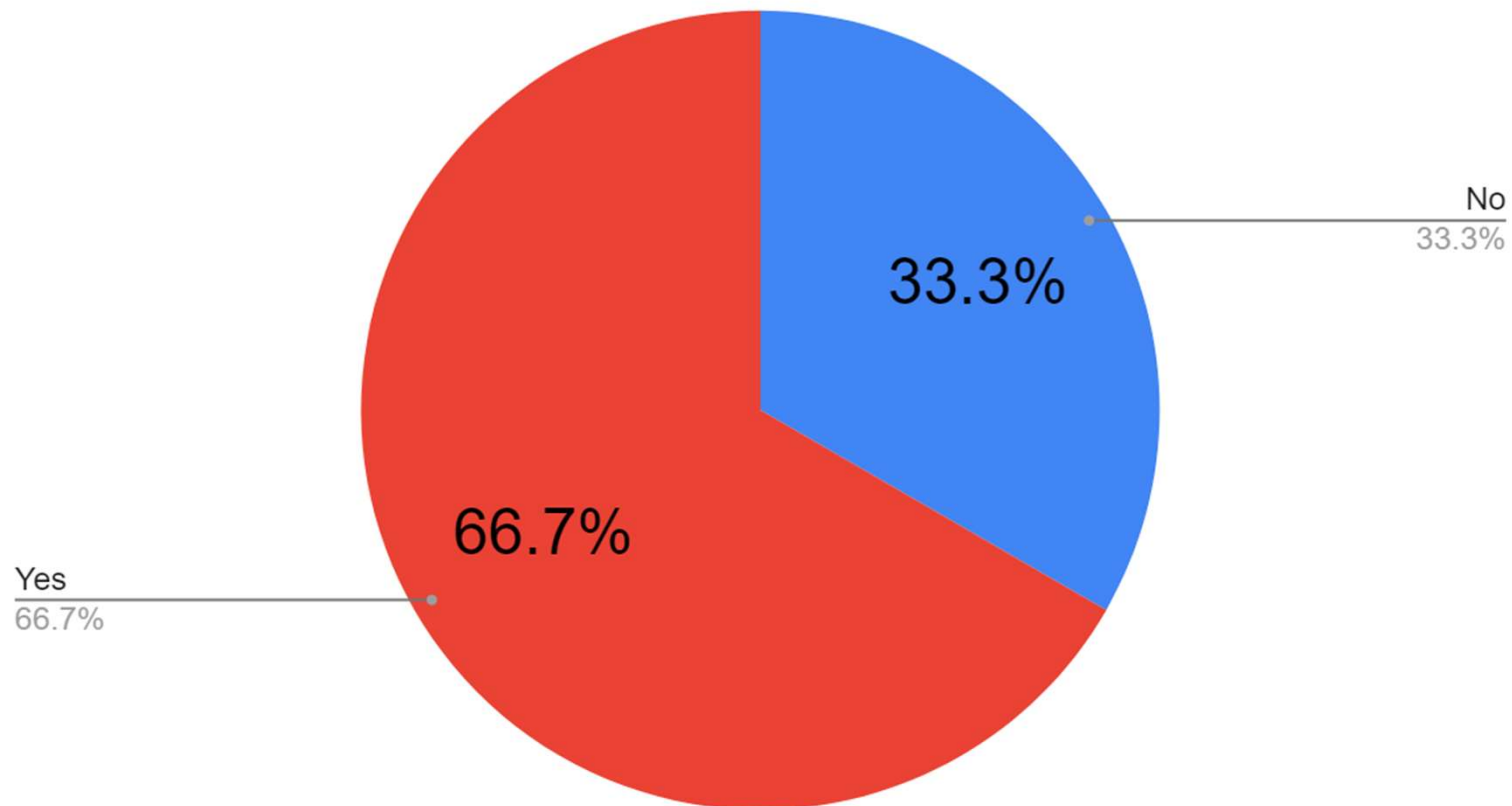
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you introduced new products and/or services due to COVID-19?



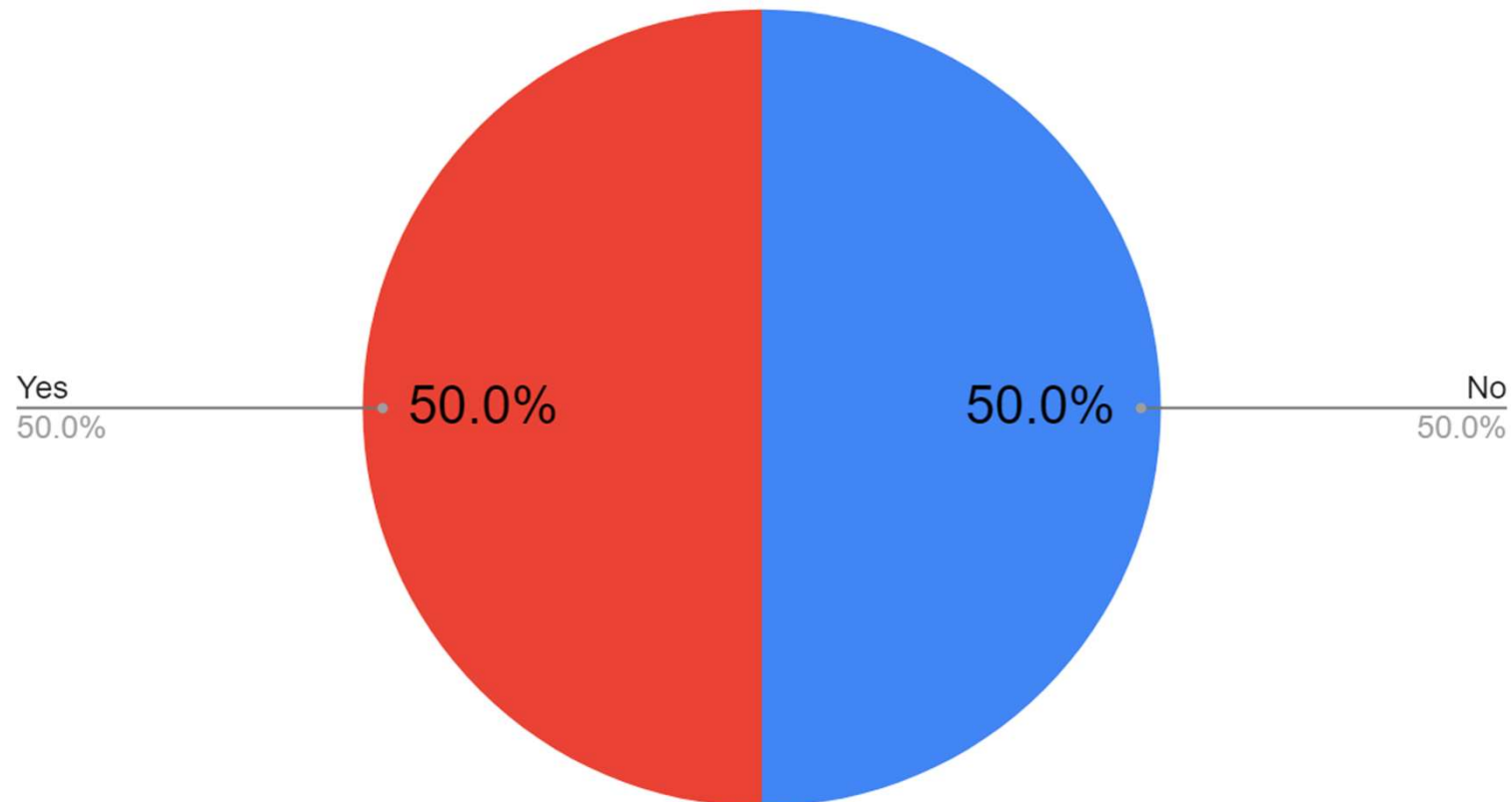
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you made changes to the way you work every day?



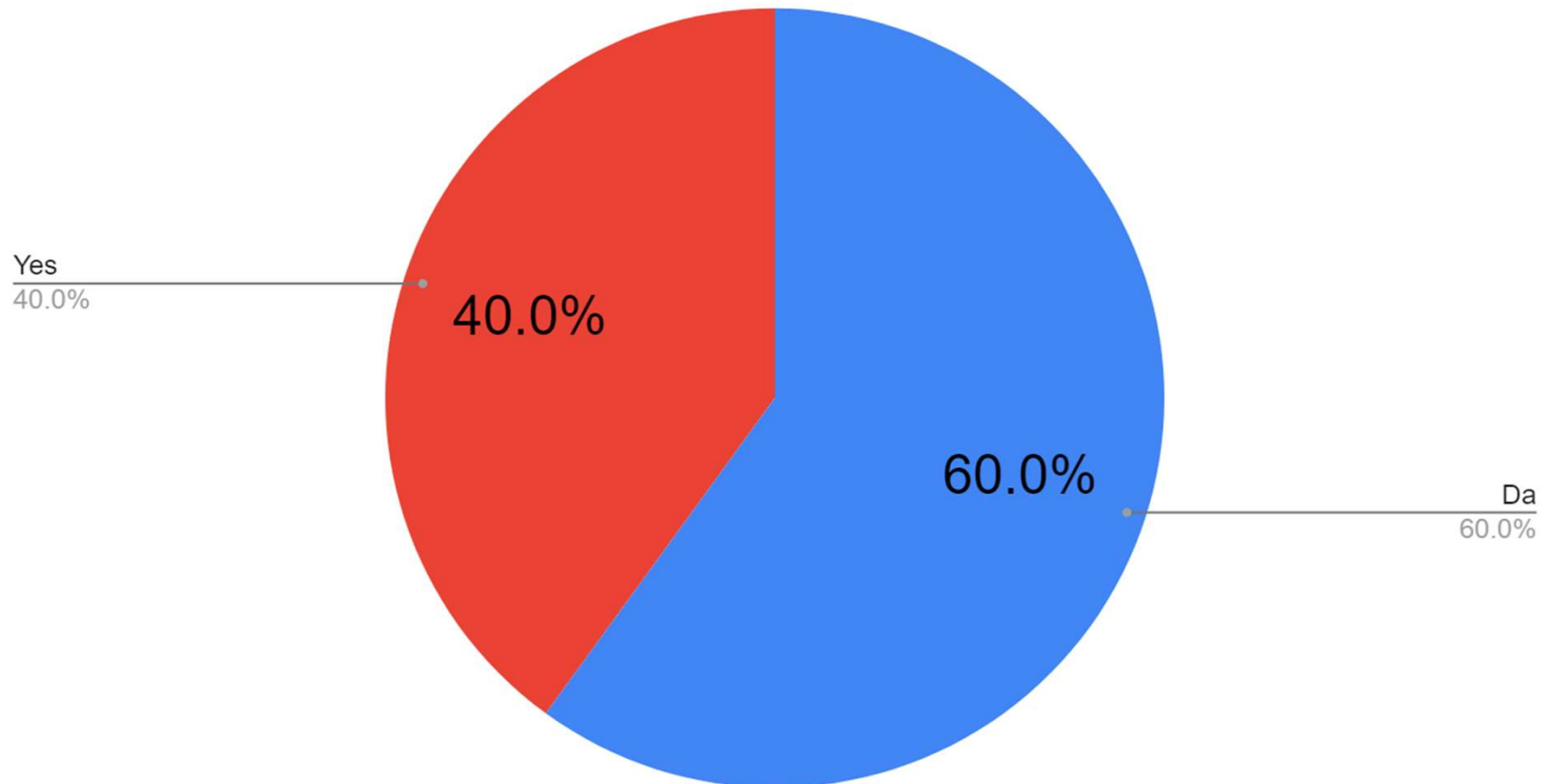
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you started using new tools and/or services?



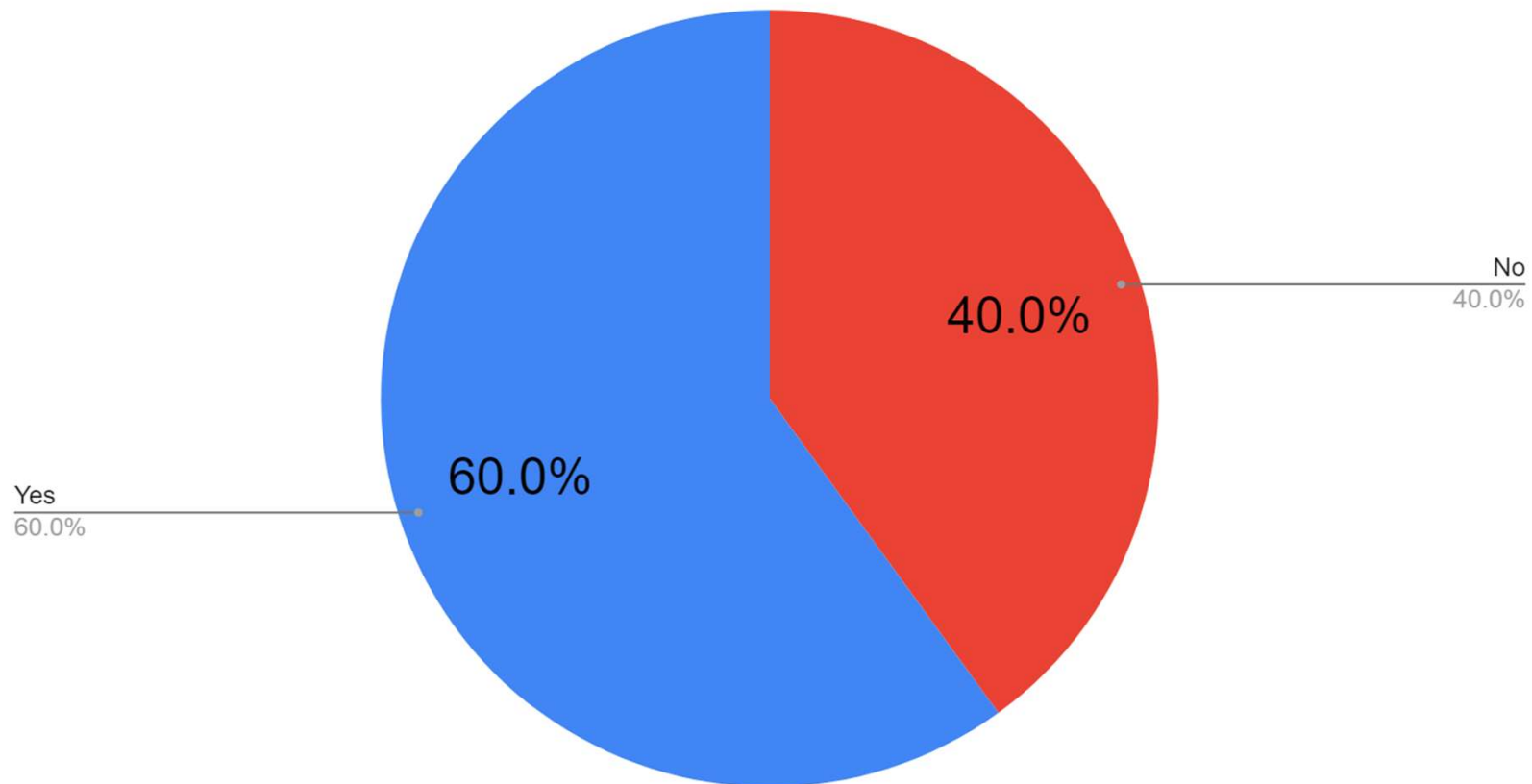
Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you applied for structural support during the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, please select or mention the type of support you received.



Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

Have you applied for financial support during the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, please select or mention the type of support you received.



Pandemic impact on the internationalization of SMEs in the region (qualitative analysis)

The degree of impact of COVID-19, for SMEs in the region, was closely related to:

- The stage of development of the company;**
- The economic sector in which the company operates;**
- Appetite for innovation and digitalization.**

Pandemic impact on policy instrument and on Management Authority/Intermediary Body (quantitative analysis)

Original policy instrument addressed

Regional Operational Program 2014-2020

Priority Axis 2 – Increasing the competitiveness of SMEs,

Specific Objective - 2.2. Support the creation and expansion of advanced manufacturing capability and development services



- the initial support measures of the instrument have not been modified;
- no new measures have been developed;
- extension of the state aid scheme;
- the list of eligible NACE codes was upgraded;
- the derogation from the eligibility criteria regarding the applicant's uninterrupted/suspended activity for a period corresponding to at least one full fiscal year was temporarily accepted.

Pandemic impact on policy instrument and on Management Authority/Intermediary Body (quantitative analysis)

- the most typical challenges for SMEs were:**

- suspension of the operation of SMEs during the application of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (state of emergency/alert).
- adapting the company's activities to telework.
- digitization of processes.
- communication and promotion through online platforms
- consumers have drastically changed their buying habits – mainly looking online for local supply.

New policy instrument addressed on the 5th call

South Muntenia Regional Development Plan 2021-2027

RDP 2021-2027 is the instrument by which the region promotes its priorities and interests in the economic and social fields – it is the main strategic planning instrument, developed at regional level and contributes to the elaboration of the ROP.

- The plan has been improved and upgraded based on the examples of good practice presented in the UpGradeSME project;
- The need for regional companies to be supported to access international markets through grants and the provision of dedicated support services was highlighted;
- Indicative actions were considered in this regard like grants for the development of feasibility studies and market research, for export plans or matchmaking activities, for innovation and digitization, etc.

a GP about the digitalization of the support services for SMEs in facing the pandemic/war's impact

ADA, the first chatbot in Romania for business development.

- ❑ provides 24/7 support and instant response
- ❑ it offers up-to-date information on the options for developing a business or accessing financing from European and national funds.
- ❑ depending on the profile of the company and the sector of activity, the project idea, the development needs, ADA presents the right variants of financing programs and the accessing details;
- ❑ a tool that helps to develop the entrepreneurial environment.



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Agenția pentru Dezvoltare Regională



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Thank you!

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