

Project INTRA:
Participation at an External Event
"51. mednarodni obrtni sejem"
Celje, September 11th, 2018

REPORT



Maribor Development Agency

Date: 11 September 2018

Venue: Celjski sejem, Celje (Slovenia)

1. Description of the event

Mednarodni obrtni sejem (MOS), is a business and trade fair event that attracts over 900 exhibitors and 120,000 visitors each year. In 2018 the 51st instalment of the fair was organized between September 11th and September 16th. At the 51st MOS there were 1.400 exhibitors present, from 30 different countries. The event programme was divided among 5 themes: MOS Plus – products for wide consumption; MOS Tur – camping, caravanning, tourism and food; MOS Teh – equipment for small businesses and crafts; MOS dom – construction and renovation of housings; and MOS Biz – business services and opportunities abroad, where MRA, the lead partner of INTRA also participated with a dissemination stand.



2. Dissemination of INTRA

MRA participated at the MOS with a stand, as part of the exhibitors of MOS Biz, and was located next to the SID Bank (SID – Slovenska izvozna in razvojna banka, d.d., Ljubljana) is a promotional development and export bank 100% owned by the Republic of Slovenia, the Regional Chamber of Craft and Small Business Maribor and the VIP section of the national Chamber of Craft and Small Businesses.

On the opening day the RCCSB Maribor held a round table discussion with the main theme: international cooperation in exchange of knowledge and joined venture among SMEs from different countries.



At the stand, as well as through networking with other exhibitors, project INTRA was disseminated to the identified stakeholder groups of INTRA project (Embassy of India, Unione Regionale Economica Slovena, Slowenischer Wirtschaftsverband) and representatives of SMEs.

3. Feedback

The event offered an important opportunity to collect first hand feedback from SMEs about the support to internationalization.

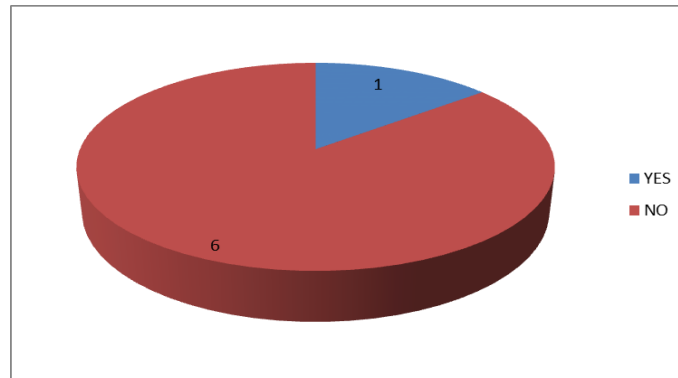
At the fair there were 10 selected start-ups, that were recognised as very potential:

- 4FUN (from Mozirje) – simple solution for mobile photo printing;
- Ajdina harmonija (from Mozirje) – a transportable garden;
- C-TECH (from Postojna) – a programme for development of children aged 0 – 1;
- Evergreen (from Mislinja) – producers of biodegradable pots;
- Kokica (from Maribor) – gourmand pop-corn;
- Mima team (from Celje) – toothbrush upgrades;
- Medenka (from Ljubljana) – honey pastries;
- StarkMAT (from Črnomelj) – ergonomic chairs;
- Šubidu (from Kranj) – a bowl for people who like to eat good;
- Vermipur (from Maribor) – naturally produced ecological universal fertilizer.

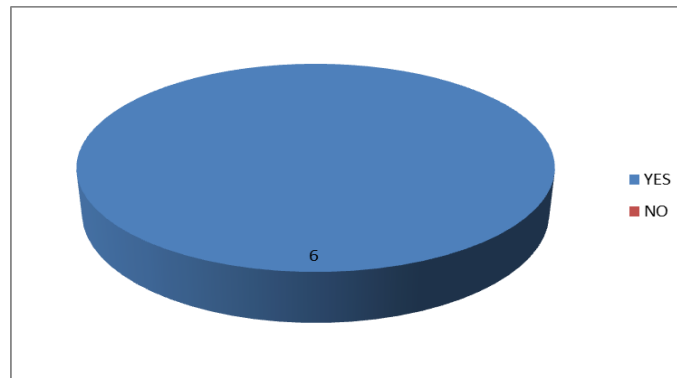
Only 1 (C-TECH) out of 10 start-ups is already trying to achieve foreign markets, with additional 4 (Vermipur, Ajdina Harmonija, StarkMAT and Evergreen) out of 10 who are interested in internationalization, but not at such an early stage. As an additional remark, except for C-TECH, all other start-ups said their representative at the fair is not the person who is in charge of the business model and they cannot speak competently about the possible internationalization of their SME, however, their opinion was that it is either too early at this stage, or they are too closely linked to the home market.

Apart from the start-ups, several other SME representatives were interviewed, with only 7 (altogether) providing competent feedback (as mostly the exhibitors only send people to promote their products at the event and the management was not present).

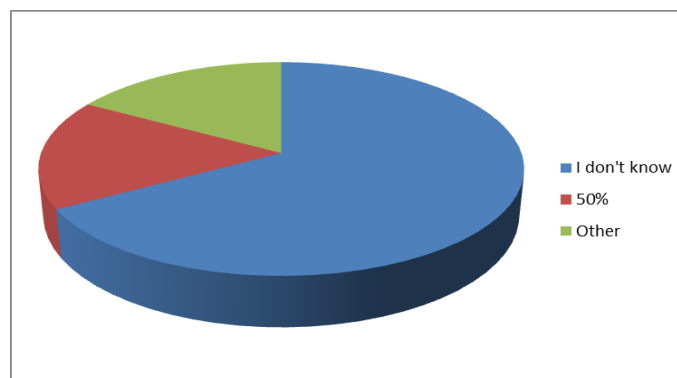
1) Does your SME a department/person, dedicated solely to exporting?



a) If not, would you establish such a position, were it co-financed by the state?

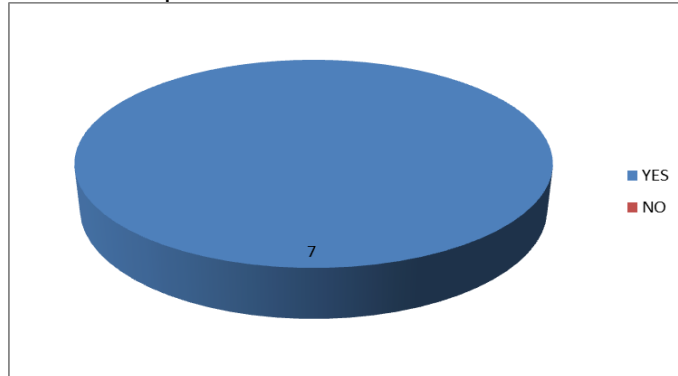


b) If you would establish such a position, how much would you the SME be prepared to co-finance it?

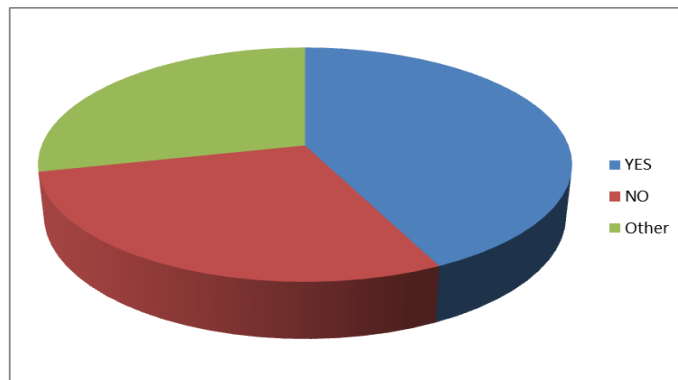


Other: The state should finance the minimum wage of the person, and the SME would provide provisions based upon the arranged business.

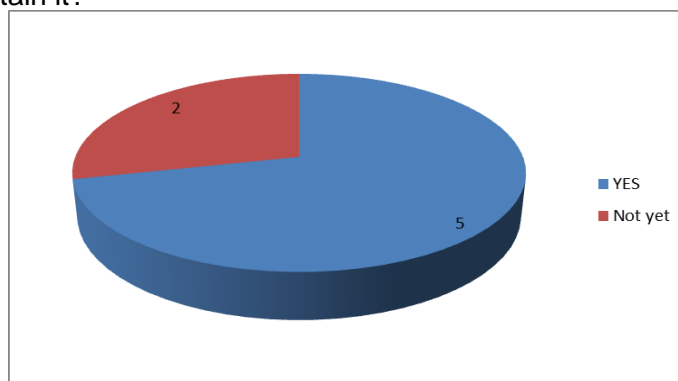
- 2) If a public online B2B platform would be set up, would you market your products/services on such a platform?



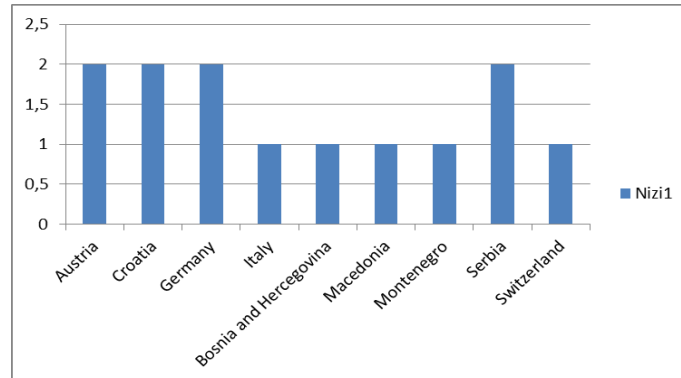
- 3) Would you be prepared to reinvest a part of the profit for the maintenance of such a platform?



- 4) If a National Vocational Qualification for an export expert would be set up, would your SME want to obtain it?



5) On which foreign markets are you already present?



A list of companies providing feedback:

Elementum d.o.o., EGRO d.o.o., Razvoj otroka, Moja Kišta (Ajdna harmonija), PS d.o.o., Mizarstvo Jesenko, Vermipur.