

**PGI01464, INTRA**

Internationalisation of Regional SMEs

**Guidelines for the State of Affairs**



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## History of the document

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## **1. Introduction**

INTRA project (PGI01464) is funded within the first call of the INTERREG EUROPE Programme of the European Commission (EC), under the policy topic Competitiveness of SMEs. It focuses on the role of public authorities in creating internationalization services to support the competitiveness of the regional economies and thus contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy. The project duration is five years (from 01.04.2016 to 31.03.2021) and the total grant is 1.640.062 EUR.

INTRA partners are from six different EU28 member states: Maribor Development Agency (Slovenia), Regional Agency for entrepreneurship and innovations – Varna (Bulgaria), Foundation FUNDECYT Scientific and Technological Park of Extremadura (Spain), University of Algarve (Portugal), Coventry University Enterprises Limited (United Kingdom), CAPITANK (Italy) are supported by the Managing Authorities for ERDF in their countries/regions and represent the active stakeholders in internationalization.

The objectives of INTRA are to provide comprehensive mapping, evaluation and benchmarking of various internationalisation services available across the regions, highlight good practices/gaps that promote/impede on SMEs at various stages of the internationalisation process. Upon the selection of GP the viable strategies/instruments to enhance good practices and address gaps within the regional development programmes will be elaborated and described in the Policy recommendations and implemented in the regional Action plans as to contribute to the internationalisation policies aligned to the needs of SMEs and gaps not filled by the existing instruments.

The purpose of the Guidelines for the State of Affairs (SoA) is to provide the whole conception for the preparation of national/regional reports of the SoA from each of the INTRA partners, which will map, evaluate and benchmark the national/regional current situation and existing policies for internationalisation. It will also provide the partners with methodology on how to organize the surveys among the SMEs and the interviews with the stakeholders, which are organizations providing services supporting SMEs internationalisation. As a result of the process of mutual learning and collective debate and reflection, each partner will elaborate a SoA analysis that will lay the grounds of a Joint SoA analysis, outlining the current situation of SMEs internationalisation in the different regions, which will incorporate information from surveys, conducted in the regions.

## **2. Task definition of the Guidelines**

Each partner has to develop a SoA report in order to estimate the differences in implementation of internationalisation policies among the regions. The reports must be built on regional investigation of the internationalisation processes and policy regulations in each region, as well as on surveys, conducted in the participation regions.

The implementation of the regional SoA reports will be implemented in two steps. In the first part of the analyses the partners are expected to provide a regional overview on the internationalisation of SMEs in their region – they must present existing statistical information, as well as analyses of the existing policy documents and strategic documents tackling this problem.

During the second step the partners must organize a survey among the regional SMEs in order to indicate their needs and the barriers they face during their internationalisation. They must also organize interviews with the main stakeholders, as well as with regional quadruple helix partnerships (universities, business, civil society and local authorities), as the main stakeholders in research and design of new internationalisation policy models, in order to achieve wider acceptance of the good practices identified within the INTRA regions.

### **3. National/regional SoA reports content**

#### **3.1. Executive summary**

This part of the reports provides general information about the project INTRA and the partnering organization. It also includes a short summary of the information from the SoA and the surveys conducted in the country/region.

#### **3.2. Portrait of the country/region**

##### **3.2.1. General information**

In this part of the reports, each partner must provide general information about the region, main economic characteristics (description of leading economic sectors, human resources characteristics, etc.). An overview of the SMEs sector must be provided, their level of internationalisation and development of innovations. SMEs internationalisation includes the following activities: export/import; being a subcontractor of a foreign company or subcontracting foreign companies, foreign direct investments; international technical collaboration, etc. Partners are expected to provide statistical information and to draw conclusions.

*Statistics that could be used:*

*Main export/import markets for each partnering country (region) analysis;*

- *Main trade partners (export/import);*
- *Foreign direct investments per countries;*

*Lead economic sectors (with highest export potential) for each partnering country/region;*

**Statistics for measuring internationalisation:**

- **International trade** statistics for each participating country/region  
*Imports of goods and services in percentage of GDP*  
*Exports of goods and services in percentage of GDP*  
*Export to import ratio*
- **Foreign direct investment** statistics for each participating country/region  
*Inward FDI stocks in percentage of GDP*  
*Outward FDI stocks in percentage of GDP*  
*FDI flows intensity – market integration*
- **Employment** statistics for each participating country/region  
*Employment in foreign-controlled enterprises as a share of total domestic employment*  
*Employment development in foreign-controlled enterprises*  
*Employment development in foreign affiliates*
- **Research and development** statistics for each participating country/region  
*R & D expenditure in foreign-controlled enterprises as a share of total R & D expenditure*

- **Value added statistics for each participating country/region**  
*Value added in foreign-controlled enterprises as a share of total value added*  
*Value added development in foreign-controlled enterprises*

### **3.2.2. Internationalisation environment (Describing and analyzing regulatory framework concerning internationalisation)**

This part of the reports should provide a retrospection of the national/regional strategic documents and policy instruments concerning SMEs internationalisation support (priorities, objectives, measures and activities). Evaluation of the measures applied and policies adopted must be presented.

### **3.2.3. Main regional/national stakeholders**

An overview of the stakeholders involved will be provided and the relations between the national/regional stakeholders must be described (*the information could be presented in the form of tables*).

### **3.2.4. Some results drawn from previous surveys**

Information from previous projects/surveys that have common topics could be used.

## **3.3. Methodology on survey in regional SMEs and interviews with stakeholders**

### **3.3.1. Task description**

The partners will develop a coordinated survey on the regional barriers and needs for SMEs, entering the internal as well as international markets and interviews with the stakeholders for to identify the gaps between the public policies and the actual needs of companies. Within this task all partners will develop a survey and interviews in their region. The survey and the interview will have some common questions, prepared by RAPIV and proposed by all PPs, and some questions specific to the region. The output is defined to be 6 regional State of Affairs on results of a survey on barriers and needs for internationalisation of SMEs and gaps between the public policies and the actual needs of companies which are written by the partners.

The results of the interregional survey on the needs and capacities of the regional SMEs will serve as criteria to assess the practices developed by the partners and to identify good practices.

This survey shall furthermore help to elaborate a report on good practices. As a result of the process of mutual learning and collective debate and reflection, each partner will elaborate a Regional Action plan, with recommendations for the practical implementation of the learned good practices in its regional context.

#### **- Target groups**

The INTRA survey ensures a broad experts view on the existing infrastructure while keeping effort and time manageable. Together with existing country-based surveys the collected data will draw a current picture on the regional SMEs need. A general list with possible institutions and relevant players will be provided together with the questionnaire and then adapted and completed by the partners for their respective region.

The target group within the stakeholders group are the policy makers (decision makers on national, regional and local level), service providers (specialized agencies, banks, funds, consultants, foreign trade offices etc.) as well as the SMEs (in the whole life cycle, especially in their growth phase).

### - **Drafting the survey**

The survey will consist of two parts. In a first step a questionnaire for the INTRA partners will help to provide information about the barriers and drivers of SMEs internationalisation in each country/region, on the basis of the survey among the regional SMEs.

The second part addresses a broader range of stakeholders and can be performed as interviews or by distributing the questionnaire to the stakeholders.

The questionnaire will amongst others help to draw the regional quadruple helix and to investigate the relevant data concerning each of the regional participants in the groups of the quadruple helix. Together with interviews and the insight-views of the involved stakeholders this will enable us to identify good practices and innovation needs.

RAPIV will provide the questionnaire and a scheme for the analysis so that all questionnaires, evaluated by the respective partners, look similar and can be compiled in the overall report by RAPIV.

The partners will perform the survey in their region, evaluate the answers and present the results in their regional reports which are the base for one compilation report.

#### **3.3.2. Methodological consideration for survey preparation**

A variety of surveys and material regarding innovation exists and already several EC-funded projects have tackled this issue. So the INTRA project can rely on several case studies including reports about the participating countries, the Innovation index etc. All INTRA partners should therefore be aware of the existing surveys and findings, agree on the definitions and the expected goals described in this document.

Especially an agreement is necessary how to define internationalisation need as this term implicate subjective interpretation option and various ranking methods. Is a need expressed by several stakeholders more important than a need only mentioned once? Do the addressed stakeholders agree to the definition of internationalisation as described in the INTRA project? How to handle their statements if they differ?

#### **3.3.3. Internationalisation services demand. Barriers and drivers to SMEs internationalisation.**

This part provides information about the barriers and drivers of SMEs internationalisation in each country/region, on the basis of the survey among the regional SMEs. Following the the objectives of this survey the questions to be investigated are for to:

- *To determine the profile of the SMEs performing activities of internationalisation and what kind of activities they perform (import/export, subcontracting activities with international partner, establishing foreign representation, working with foreign subcontractors, FDI etc.);*
- *To outline the external and internal barriers to SMEs internationalisation faced by SMEs per regions (countries);*
- *To review recent work pertaining to factors driving or motivating the internationalisation of SMEs*

**\* A draft of the structure of the questionnaire for the survey among the SMEs is given as an annex to the Guidelines**

### **3.3.4. Measures offered by national/regional stakeholders in the sphere of SMEs internationalisation support**

The objectives of the survey are to outline the measures offered by the national/regional stakeholders - providers of SMEs support. These are public administrations, agencies, chambers of trade and commerce, branch organizations, clusters, banks, funds, consultants, foreign trade offices, business centers, incubators, etc. This will be determined on the basis of the interviews with the internationalisation services providers and will include the following information:

- To determine what kind of SMEs support (activities, tools and programmes) is the most working one: public support, individual support, support received by networks and clusters, support provided by sectoral programmes.*
- To determine the main barriers that the SMEs face using the proposed measures and the main difficulties that the organizations providing support face in their work with SMEs.*
- To identify how the European structural and investment funds could be used for supporting internationalisation.*

***\* A draft of the structure of the questionnaire for the interviews with the stakeholders is given as an annex to the Guidelines***

## **3.5. SWOT Analysis**

In order to evaluate the present state of the internationalisation in the regions, a SWOT analysis will be carried out. It describes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threatens (SWOT analysis) in the sphere of internationalization of SMEs in each region.

## **3.6. Main results and conclusions**

This part summarizes and analyzes the main results at a glance from the previous parts and from the two surveys conducted. This information will be included in the Joint SoA Report.



## Annex 1

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INDICATING THE BARRIERS AND DRIVERS TO SMEs INTERNATIONALISATION

*This document represents a short conception of the Questionnaire for indicating the barriers and drivers to SMEs internationalisation. It follows the methodology, proposed in the SoA Guidelines. Survey questionnaires will be distributed among the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from the region, in order to gain information about the SMEs capability for internationalisation, to assess the main internal and external barriers they face and to determine the main driving forces for internationalisation. The document is divided in 6 parts, each of them describing the content of a group of questions that will be included there. The questions are foreseen to be both closed (with answer selection) and open (where the interviewee is asked to provide his/her opinion and suggestion).*

## Introduction

This survey is conducted within the project INTRA, under the Programme INTERREG EUROPE of the European Commission. It addresses the SMEs from the region...../name of the region/.....with the aim the most considerable internal and external barriers and growth-related factors to SMEs internationalisation to be identified and analyzed in-depth. The questionnaire also foresees to outline the SMEs needs from services and programmes supporting their internationalisation.

### **Regarding the project INTRA:**

INTRA project (PGI01464), funded within the INTERREG EUROPE Programme of the European Commission (EC) focuses on the role of public authorities in creating internationalisation services to support the competitiveness of the regional economies and thus contribute to the Europe 2020 strategy. Developed by the project partners, it builds on internationalisation research findings as well as highlights the importance of regional quadruple helix partnerships to bring together universities, business, civil society and local authorities as the main stakeholders in research and design of new internationalisation policy models, wider acceptance of the good practices identified within the INTRA regions and preparation of new project proposals to be funded under the respective national Cohesion policy 2014 2020.

INTRA partners are from six different EU28 member states: Maribor Development Agency (Slovenia), Regional Agency for entrepreneurship and innovations – Varna (Bulgaria), Foundation FUNDECYT Scientific and Technological Park of Extremadura (Spain), University of Algarve (Portugal), Coventry University Enterprises Limited (United Kingdom), CAPITANK (Italy) are supported by the Managing Authorities for ERDF in their countries/regions and represent the active stakeholders in internationalisation.

The objectives of INTRA are to provide comprehensive mapping, evaluation and benchmarking of various internationalisation services available across the regions, highlight good practices/gaps that promote/impede on SMEs at various stages of the internationalisation process. Upon the selection of GP the viable strategies/instruments to enhance good practices and address gaps within the regional development programmes will be elaborated and described in the Policy recommendations and implemented in the regional Action plans as to contribute to the internationalisation policies aligned to the needs of SMEs and gaps not filled by the existing instruments.

## 1. Details about the organization

Name of the organization.....

Type of business entity.....

Year of foundation.....

Type of enterprise:

Micro  
(less than 10 persons)

Small  
(10-49 persons)

Medium  
( 50-249 persons)

Tel/Mobile.....

Web site.....

E-mail.....

Headquarter address.....

Name and position of the person filling the questionnaire

.....  
.....

### 1.1. Economic sector

Aeronautics;	
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishery/	
Automotive industry	
Chemicals	
Consultancy services	
Energy	
Engineering/construction/steel	
Environmental technologies	
Fashion	
Food and beverage/agrifood	
Green energy	
ICT/software	
Industrial production	
Marine industry	
Medical care/health	
New Materials/Nanotechnology	
Pharmaceutical/biotechnology	
Telecommunications	
Textile Industry	
Tourism	
Transport/Logistics	
Wholesale and retails trade	
Other /specify/.....	

## 2. Level of competitiveness

### 2.1. What are the advantages of your company compared with the competitive companies? (Multiple answers possible)

<i>High quality of products/services</i>	
<i>Trade mark of the products/services</i>	
<i>Low expenses for ensuring the activity of the company</i>	
<i>Implementing research and technology-development activities</i>	
<i>High qualification of the personnel</i>	
<i>Effective marketing, intensive advertisement</i>	
<i>Good distribution chain</i>	
<i>Large products/services range</i>	
<i>Large market segment</i>	
<i>More information about technologies, markets, products</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

### 2.2. What are the most important factors, ensuring high competitiveness of your company? (Multiple answers possible)

<i>Expansion, intensification and improving of the advertisement</i>	
<i>Improving the quality of products/services</i>	
<i>Optimizing the total and production expenses</i>	
<i>Introducing advanced IT solutions</i>	
<i>Introducing new technologies in the production and services</i>	
<i>Enlarging foreign markets</i>	
<i>Introducing quality control systems, ISO</i>	
<i>Improving the working conditions and employing new staff</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

### 2.3. Does your company propose: (Multiple answers possible)

<i>A web site presenting the products and services offered</i>	
<i>Option to order products and services on-line</i>	
<i>Option to pay for products and services on-line</i>	
<i>On-line communication with customers in real time</i>	
<i>None of the above</i>	

### 2.4. How you determine the technology readiness level (TRL) of your main products/services? (Choose one option from 1 to 9)

<i>TRL 1 – basic principles observed</i>	
<i>TRL 2 – technology concept formulated</i>	
<i>TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept</i>	
<i>TRL 4 – technology validated in lab</i>	
<i>TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (</i>	
<i>TRL 6- technology demonstrated in relevant environment</i>	
<i>TRL 7- system prototype demonstration in operational environment</i>	
<i>TRL 8 - system complete and qualified.</i>	
<i>TRL 9 –actual system proven in operational enviromnet</i>	

**2.5. Does your organization benefit from European, national, regional or local public funds?  
(Multiple answers possible)**

<i>EU structural funds</i>	
<i>National funds</i>	
<i>Regional funds</i>	
<i>Local funds</i>	

**2.6 Does your organization use any of the following financial instruments?  
(Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Grants</i>	
<i>Loans</i>	
<i>Credit guarantee schemes</i>	
<i>Venture capitals</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

### 3. Level of internationalisation

**3.1. Does your company have a strategy for internationalisation?**

<i>YES</i>	
<i>NO</i>	

**3.2. What are the main reasons for your company to go international?  
(Multiple answers possible)**

<i>To expand competitiveness by accessing to new technologies and know-how</i>	
<i>To reach new fast-growing markets</i>	
<i>To enhance our productivity by reducing production costs</i>	
<i>The legal/fiscal environment of the targeted markets</i>	

**3.3. What is the degree of maturity of your internationalisation?**

<i>Exploring</i>	
<i>Early phase</i>	
<i>Expanding</i>	
<i>Mature</i>	
<i>Declining</i>	

**3.4. Is the qualification of the management and of the personnel adequate to develop international activities?**

<i>YES</i>	
<i>NO</i>	
<i>Not relevant</i>	

**3.5. What kind of activities does your company have on the international market?  
(Multiple answers possible).**

<i>Exporting</i>	
<i>Importing</i>	
<i>Technological partnership</i>	
<i>Setting up subcontractors</i>	

<i>Becoming a subcontractor</i>	
<i>Foreign direct investments (FDI)</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**3.6. Does your company collaborate with any of the following institutions for support internationalisation activities? (Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Governmental administration</i>	
<i>Regional, Local administration</i>	
<i>EU initiative</i>	
<i>Embassy</i>	
<i>University, Research center</i>	
<i>Financial Institution</i>	
<i>Chamber of commerce, branch association</i>	
<i>Business support organization</i>	
<i>Investment and trade agency</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

## 4. Barriers for internationalisation of SMEs

**4.1. Choose the degree of difficulty when you encounter internal obstacles for the development of international activities?**

	Not relevant to my business	Easy	Not so hard	Hard	Very hard
<i>Shortage of working capital to finance export</i>					
<i>Price and quality of the products/services</i>					
<i>Obtaining adequate production capacity</i>					
<i>Lack of managerial time enough to deal with internationalisation</i>					
<i>Shortage of human resources for export activities</i>					
<i>Qualified and/or trained personnel for internationalisation not enough</i>					

**4.2. Choose the degree of difficulty when you encounter the external obstacles when you develop international activities?**

	Not relevant to my business	Easy	Not so hard	Hard	Very hard
<i>Ensuring investments for internationalisation</i>					
<i>Obtaining transparency of financing schemes</i>					
<i>Overcoming export administrative restrictions</i>					
<i>Difficulties in identifying foreign business opportunities</i>					
<i>Finding strategic information to locate/analyze markets;</i>					
<i>Ability to contact potential overseas customers;</i>					
<i>Intellectual property protection</i>					
<i>Collaboration with the supporting bodies /public institutions, banks, chambers of commerce, business associations, etc/</i>					
<i>Obtaining home government assistance/incentives</i>					
<i>Obtaining reliable foreign representation;</i>					
<i>Ability to overcome strong local competitors</i>					
<i>Excessive transportation costs</i>					
<i>Relations with local suppliers/partners/agents/distributors</i>					

## 5. Main driving forces for SMEs internationalisation

**5.1. What kind of services and activities better supported your first steps on new international market? (1 – definitely no; 2- rather no; 3 – cannot determine; 4 – rather yes; 5 – definitely yes)**

	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Organization of networking and B2B activities in the foreign country</i>					
<i>Partner search in the foreign country</i>					
<i>Innovation services (intellectual property, R&amp;D collaborations)</i>					
<i>Scouting for international joint event</i>					
<i>Web site accustomed to foreign customers</i>					
<i>Distribution channels search</i>					
<i>Representation and virtual office services</i>					
<i>Scouting for funding opportunities;</i>					
<i>Joint communication and promotion services</i>					
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>					

**5.2. What kind of financial tools supported the internationalisation of your company? (Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Insurance solutions and risk management</i>	
<i>Financing short-term exports</i>	
<i>Pre-shipment financing and post-shipment financing</i>	
<i>Loans</i>	
<i>Credit guarantee scheme</i>	
<i>Tax incentives</i>	
<i>Funding/grants for recruitment of advisors, researchers, accountants</i>	
<i>Funding to attend international trade events and exhibitions</i>	
<i>Grants to support any stage of the internationalisation activity</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	
<i>None of the above</i>	

**5.3. What kind of SME Internationalisation support infrastructure and services you consider as appropriate/useful? (Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Market research support</i>	
<i>Export/Internationalisation observatory facilities</i>	
<i>IPR support</i>	
<i>Account management support</i>	
<i>Technology transfer, technology consultancy services</i>	
<i>Services tailored especially for start-ups, incubating services</i>	
<i>Services provided by business parks</i>	
<i>Services provided by science parks</i>	
<i>Specialized services provided by technology centers</i>	
<i>Consultancy support</i>	
<i>Other / specify/.....</i>	
<i>None of the above</i>	

**5.4. Did you use some kind of services supporting human resources/managerial capacity in your way of internationalisation? (Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Training on internationalisation and new market entry strategy</i>	
<i>Training on smart mobility market trends and opportunities</i>	
<i>Language and cultural training</i>	
<i>Country-focused training (fiscal, legal, ...)</i>	
<i>Export coaching course</i>	
<i>Export forums</i>	
<i>Internationalisation/export academies</i>	
<i>International technology transfer</i>	
<i>Other / specify/.....</i>	
<i>None of the above</i>	

**5.5. Did you use some kind of information provision regarding SME Internationalisation? (Multiple answers possible)**

<i>Export promotional activities/marketing</i>	
<i>Regularly updated analysis reports on foreign markets</i>	
<i>Information about administrative rules and regulations</i>	
<i>Trade missions, business forums and other promotional events</i>	
<i>Partner search services</i>	
<i>One stop customer service to assist SMEs exporters with foreign markets</i>	
<i>Trade centers abroad</i>	
<i>Market intelligence services</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	
<i>None of the above</i>	

**5.6. Does your organization participate in public programmes co-funded by the public programmes co-funded by the EU Structural Funds, concerning:**

<i>Programmes for entrepreneurship development, innovations, competitiveness of SMEs (for example mentoring of entrepreneurs, innovation technologies for management systems in SMEs, environmental innovations and better using of information and communication technologies)</i>	
<i>Programmes for improving the regional and local environment for SMEs (for example access to funding at an earliest stage and growing stage, business infrastructure and support services, regional and local support for science and technological research, technological development, capacity for innovations and business collaboration in the sphere of innovations)</i>	
<i>Programmes for interregional and transregional collaboration</i>	
<i>Human resources investment programmes (co-funded by the European Social Fund ESF)</i>	
<i>Programmes for encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit, especially through facilitation the economic realization of new ideas and stimulation of the creation of new enterprises, including through business incubators</i>	
<i>Programmes for development and application of new business models for SMEs, especially encouraging their internationalisation</i>	
<i>Support for the creation of improved possibilities for development of new products and services</i>	
<i>SMEs support capacity programmes in the frames of regional, national and international markets and taking part in the process of innovation</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**5.7. Are you aware of any of the following EU instruments supporting internationalisation? (1-not aware at all; 2-basic information; 3-well informed, but haven't used so far; 4-using occasionally; 5-constantly using)**

	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)</i>					
<i>Business and Innovation Centers Network (EBN)</i>					
<i>European Business Organizations Network (EBO)</i>					
<i>IPR Helpdesk</i>					
<i>Export Helpdesk</i>					
<i>SMEs Trade Defence Helpdesk</i>					
<i>Instruments for indirect financial support funded by the EU</i>					
<i>Cluster Go International Action, within Cluster International of the EC</i>					
<i>European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI 2014-2020)</i>					
<i>Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme</i>					
<i>Horizon 2020 Programme</i>					
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>					

**5.8. How do you consider the importance for your company internationalisation by the public funds support provided /1 – very low; 2 – low; 3 – average; 4 – high; 5 – very high/**





	1	2	3	4	5
EU structural funds					
National funds					
Regional funds					
Local funds					
<i>Other /specify.....</i>					

**5.9. What are your suggestions for improving the work of the public funds provided?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## Annex 2:

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INVESTIGATING THE SME INTERNATIONALISATION SUPPORT MEASURES

*This document represents a short conception of the Questionnaire for investigating the support measures offered for SMEs internationalisation. It follows the methodology, proposed in the SoA Guidelines. Survey interviews will be organized and the Questionnaire will be distributed among the national/regional stakeholders, in order to determine the policies and measures undertaken in this sphere, strategy instruments available and the SMEs needs. The document is divided in 5 parts, each of them describing the content of a group of questions that will be included there. The questions are foreseen to be both closed (with answer selection) and open (where the interviewee is asked to provide his/her opinion and suggestion).*

## Introduction

This survey is conducted within the project INTRA, under the Programme INTERREG EUROPE of the European Commission. It addresses the organizations providing services for SMEs internationalisation support. The survey will be organized within the form of interviews with the selected organizations. Its objectives are to determine what kind of measures and services are available for the companies for raising their competitiveness and capacity to internationalize, the most successful approaches and pro-active measures to stimulate the SMEs internationalization, and to determine and evaluate the relationships between the organizations-providers and the SMEs.

## Regarding the project INTRA:

INTRA project (PGI01464), funded within the INTERREG EUROPE Programme of the European Commission (EC) focuses on the role of public authorities in creating internationalisation services to support the competitiveness of the regional economies and thus contributing to the Europe 2020 strategy. Developed by the project partners, it builds on internationalisation research findings as well as highlights the importance of regional quadruple helix partnerships to bring together universities, business, civil society and local authorities as the main stakeholders in research and design of new internationalisation policy models, wider acceptance of the good practices identified within the INTRA regions and preparation of new project proposals to be funded under the respective national Cohesion policy 2014 - 2020.

INTRA partners are from six different EU28 member states: Maribor Development Agency (Slovenia), Regional Agency for entrepreneurship and innovations – Varna (Bulgaria), Foundation FUNDECYT Scientific and Technological Park of Extremadura (Spain), University of Algarve (Portugal), Coventry University Enterprises Limited (United Kingdom), CAPITANK (Italy) are supported by the Managing Authorities for ERDF in their countries/regions and represent the active stakeholders in internationalisation.

The objectives of INTRA are to provide comprehensive mapping, evaluation and benchmarking of various internationalisation services available across the regions, highlight good practices/gaps that promote/impede on SMEs at various stages of the internationalization process. Upon the selection of GP the viable strategies/instruments to enhance good practices and address gaps within the regional development programmes will be elaborated and described in the Policy recommendations and implemented in the regional Action plans as to contribute to the internationalisation policies aligned to the needs of SMEs and gaps not filled by the existing instruments.

## 1. Details about the organization

Name of the organization.....

Tel/Fax.....

Web site.....

E-mail.....

Headquarter address.....

Name and position of the person filling the questionnaire

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### 1.1. Type of institution

<i>Governmental administration</i>	
<i>Regional, Local administration</i>	
<i>EU initiative</i>	
<i>Embassy</i>	
<i>University, Research center</i>	
<i>Financial Institution</i>	
<i>Chamber of commerce, branch association</i>	
<i>Business support organization</i>	
<i>Investment and trade agency</i>	
<i>Other, please specify.....</i>	

## 2. Type of support provided to SMEs

### 2.1. Activity coverage of your organization

*/Multiple answers possible/*

<i>Local</i>	
<i>National</i>	
<i>Regional</i>	
<i>European Union (EU)</i>	
<i>Outside EU</i>	

### 2.2 What is the focus of the SMEs services, provided by your organization?

*/Multiple answers possible/*

<i>Providing financial support services for SMEs</i>	
<i>Providing SMEs support services for specific sector</i>	
<i>Focused on SMEs internationalisation</i>	
<i>Providing support services for start-ups and micro enterprises</i>	
<i>Research and development activities, applied research</i>	
<i>Providing training, educational activities;</i>	
<i>Technology and know-how transfer activities</i>	
<i>Support of innovations</i>	
<i>Other.....</i>	

### 2.3. Please, indicate the rate of experts in your organization, dealing directly with SMEs, compared with the total number of the personnel (in %)

<i>Rate of experts in %</i>	
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## 2. Support services for SMEs internationalisation

### 3.1. What model of internationalisation your services support?

*/Multiple answers possible/*

<i>Exporting</i>	
<i>Importing</i>	
<i>Technological partnership</i>	
<i>Setting up subcontractors</i>	
<i>Becoming a subcontractor</i>	
<i>Foreign direct investments</i>	
<i>Other.....</i>	

### 3.2. What kind of SMEs internationalisation support services does your organization provide?

*/Multiple answers possible/*

#### 3.2.1. Financial support services for internationalisation

<i>Insurance solutions and risk management</i>	
<i>Financing short-term exports</i>	
<i>Pre-shipment financing and post-shipment financing</i>	
<i>Loans</i>	
<i>Credit guarantee scheme</i>	
<i>Tax preferences</i>	
<i>Funding/grants for recruitment of advisors, researchers, accountants</i>	
<i>Funding to attend international trade events and exhibitions</i>	
<i>Grants to support any stage of the internationalisation activity</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

#### 3.2.2. SMEs support infrastructure and other non-financial services

<i>Market research support</i>	
<i>Export/Internationalisation observatory facilities</i>	
<i>IPR support</i>	
<i>Account management support</i>	
<i>Technology transfer, technology consultancy services</i>	
<i>Services tailored especially for start-ups, incubating services</i>	
<i>Services provided by business parks</i>	
<i>Services provided by science parks</i>	
<i>Specialized services provided by technology centers</i>	
<i>Consultancy support</i>	
<i>Other / specify/.....</i>	

#### 3.2.3. Services for developing human resources/managerial capacity

<i>Training on internationalisation and new market entry strategy</i>	
<i>Training on smart mobility market trends and opportunities</i>	
<i>Language and cultural training</i>	
<i>Country-focused training (fiscal, legal, ...)</i>	
<i>Export coaching course</i>	
<i>Export forums</i>	
<i>Internationalisation/export academies</i>	
<i>International technology transfer</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

### 3.2.4. Information provision services

<i>Export promotional activities/marketing</i>	
<i>Regularly updated analysis reports on foreign markets</i>	
<i>Information about administrative rules and regulations</i>	
<i>Trade missions, business forums and other promotional events</i>	
<i>Partner search services</i>	
<i>One stop customer service to assist SMEs exporters with foreign markets</i>	
<i>Trade centers abroad</i>	
<i>Market intelligence services</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**3.3. Please list 3 of the services provided by you (from the selected in question 3.2.), which you consider are the most used ones by the SMEs.**

No	Service for support of SMEs internationalisation

## 4. Collaboration between SMEs and organizations, providing SMEs support for internationalisation.

**4.1. What are the advantages of your institution in providing support services for SMEs internationalisation?**

**/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>High quality of internationalisation support services offered to SMEs</i>	
<i>Large range of services, covering all 4 types of support for SMEs internationalisation (financial services, SMEs support infrastructure and other non-financial services, human resources/managerial development services, information provision services.)</i>	
<i>One-stop shop approach of providing services</i>	
<i>Integrated services and services tailored to individual SMEs demands (especially for start-ups and micro enterprises)</i>	
<i>Large range of sector-specific services</i>	
<i>Networking and intensive collaboration with national and foreign providers of internationalisation services</i>	
<i>Minimal time of providing services</i>	
<i>Actual and detailed information about technologies, markets, products</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**4.2. How do you provide information to your customers /SMEs looking for internationalisation support services/?**

**/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>Internet portal regularly updated</i>	
<i>Publication and dissemination of an information bulletin</i>	
<i>Publication of advertisements in specialized editions</i>	
<i>Advertisements in TV, radio, news papers, on-line media</i>	
<i>Collaboration with private consultants (companies/individuals) forwarding information to SMEs</i>	
<i>Providing information to branch chambers and sectoral organizations</i>	
<i>Organization of events (conferences, seminars, workshops, etc)</i>	
<i>Visiting customers on the spot</i>	
<i>We don't need advertisement, our clients recognize us and come alone</i>	
<i>We have permanent clients, we do not look for others</i>	
<i>Other.....</i>	

**4.3. What kind of difficulties you encounter when working with SMEs? (1 – definitely no; 2- rather no; 3 – cannot determine; 4 – rather yes; 5 – definitely yes).**

	1	2	3	4	5
<i>SMEs are not so interested to collaborate</i>					
<i>Different expectations of SMEs from the services providers regarding the available services</i>					
<i>Not so active policy in the institution regarding SMEs support services</i>					
<i>Shortage of qualified experts/consultants</i>					
<i>Procedures in the institution for providing services are too complicated</i>					
<i>The institution does not have the capacity to deal with big number of SMEs</i>					
<i>The institution does not have the capacity to cover a large range of services</i>					
<i>Other.....</i>					

**4.4 How the services for SMEs internationalisation support could be provided more effectively? (1 – definitely no; 2- rather no; 3 – cannot determine; 4 – rather yes; 5 – definitely yes).**

	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Better support by the public governments</i>					
<i>More intensive involvement of private SMEs support services providers</i>					
<i>Better collaboration between the institutions (public or private) when providing SMEs support services for internationalisation</i>					
<i>Individual-oriented approach to each company</i>					
<i>Better on-line distribution of information for international joint events, funding opportunities, partnership opportunities, etc.</i>					
<i>More available representation and virtual office services</i>					
<i>Integrated services in support of internationalisation, by the one-stop shop approach</i>					
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>					

**4.5 What are the achieved results for SMEs from your services?**

**/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>SMEs gained new experience and as a result starting internationalisation activities</i>	
<i>SMEs gained new experience, but haven't started internationalisation activities yet</i>	
<i>SMEs received financial support and this directly helped their internationalisation</i>	
<i>SMEs received financial support and this indirectly helped their internationalisation</i>	
<i>SMEs received actual economic and foreign market information and this helped their internationalisation</i>	
<i>SMEs received intellectual property support or R&amp;D support and this supported their innovation</i>	

<i>potential and internationalisation</i>	
<i>SMEs received other business support (accounting, marketing, etc) and this supported their internationalisation</i>	
<i>Managers of SMEs improved their attitude to internationalisation because of trainings, courses, mentoring sessions, etc</i>	
<i>SMEs received training and this improved the qualification of the personnel to provide internationalisation activities</i>	
<i>SMEs improved their on-line and advertisement presentation</i>	
<i>SMEs realized contacts with foreign partners</i>	
<i>SMEs improved their competence about administrative rules and regulations</i>	
<i>SMEs improved their relations with local suppliers/partners/agents/distributors</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**4.6. What are your suggestions for improvement of collaboration between SMEs and SMEs support services providers for internationalisation?**

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**5. Estimation of policy measures for SMEs support**

**5.1. How do you consider the importance of the public support for SMEs internationalisation?  
/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>With the help of the public support the SMEs achieved internationalisation earlier than they could achieve without using it</i>	
<i>Owing to the public support received the SMEs have the chance to participate in further activities related with internationalisation</i>	
<i>Owing to the public support received the SMEs obtained better understanding about the possibilities of the international markets.</i>	
<i>Without public support the SMEs wouldn't be able to internationalize at all</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**5.2. Does your organization participate or support the participation of SMEs in public programmes co-funded by the EU Structural Funds, concerning:  
/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>Programmes for entrepreneurship development, innovations, competitiveness of SMEs (for example mentoring of entrepreneurs, innovation technologies for management systems in SMEs, environmental innovations and better using of information and communication technologies)</i>	
<i>Programmes for improving the regional and local environment for SMEs (for example access to funding at an earliest stage and growing stage, business infrastructure and support services, regional and local support for science and technological research, technological development, capacity for innovations and business collaboration in the sphere of innovations)</i>	
<i>Programmes for interregional and transregional cooperation</i>	
<i>Human resources investment programmes</i>	
<i>Programmes for encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit, especially through facilitation the economic realization of new ideas and stimulation of the creation of new enterprises, including through business incubators</i>	



<i>Programmes for development and application of new business models for SMEs, especially encouraging their internationalisation</i>	
<i>Support for the creation of improved possibilities for development of new products and services</i>	
<i>SMEs support capacity programmes in the frames of regional, national and international markets and taking part in the process of innovation</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**5.3. Does your organization collaborates or support the participation of SMEs in the following EU instruments, contributing to the internationalisation of the European enterprises?  
/Multiple answers possible/**

<i>Enterprise Europe Network (EEN)</i>	
<i>European Business and Innovation Centers Network (EBN)</i>	
<i>European Business Organizations Network (EBO)</i>	
<i>IPR Helpdesk</i>	
<i>Export Helpdesk</i>	
<i>SMEs Trade Defence Helpdesk</i>	
<i>Instruments for indirect financial support funded by the EU</i>	
<i>Cluster Go International Action, within Cluster International of the EC</i>	
<i>European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI 2014-2020)</i>	
<i>Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs Programme</i>	
<i>Horizon 2020 Programme</i>	
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>	

**5.4. How do you consider the importance for SMEs internationalization by the public funds support provided /1 – very low; 2 – low; 3 – average; 4 – high; 5 – very high/**

	1	2	3	4	5
EU structural funds					
National funds					
Regional funds					
Local funds					
<i>Other /specify/.....</i>					

**5.5. What are your suggestions for improving policy instruments, concerning the support of SMEs internationalisation?**

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