



Cross-border cooperation of small and medium-sized enterprises on Polish and Czech border

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About the project

- **Project coordinator:** IREAS, Institut pro strukturální politiku, o.p.s.
- **Project partner:**
University of Economics in Wroclaw
- **Project was co-financed by Polish-Czech Forum (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic) and International Visegrad Fund**
- **Project duration:** 05/2010 – 12/2010

Project objectives

- Identification of the most important economic aspects of the Czech-Polish cross-border cooperation for small and medium-sized enterprises
- The definition of opportunities and obstacles of this cooperation through meetings and discussion with the interested parties
- Identification of the impact of European funding for SMEs in border regions

Research Methodology

Research were carried out as follows:

1. short questionnaire sent to small and medium-sized enterprises by e-mail,
2. telephone survey carried out by SMEs,
3. interview with companies that cooperate with the Czech side,
4. also the institutional foundation of the Polish-Czech cooperation associated with the use of EU funds was examined

Research Area



Branches:

- automation, industry, metal processing,
- construction, mining, window frames
- energy, heating, measuring devices,
- business environment institutions,
- furniture, joinery,
- automotive, transportation, freight forwarding,
- packaging,
- printing, advertising, office supplies,
- training, consulting, advisory,
- textiles,
- IT services.

SHORTENED SURVEY

1. Does your company work with the Czech side?

- yes
- no

2. Does your company use or benefit from any grant of the European Union?

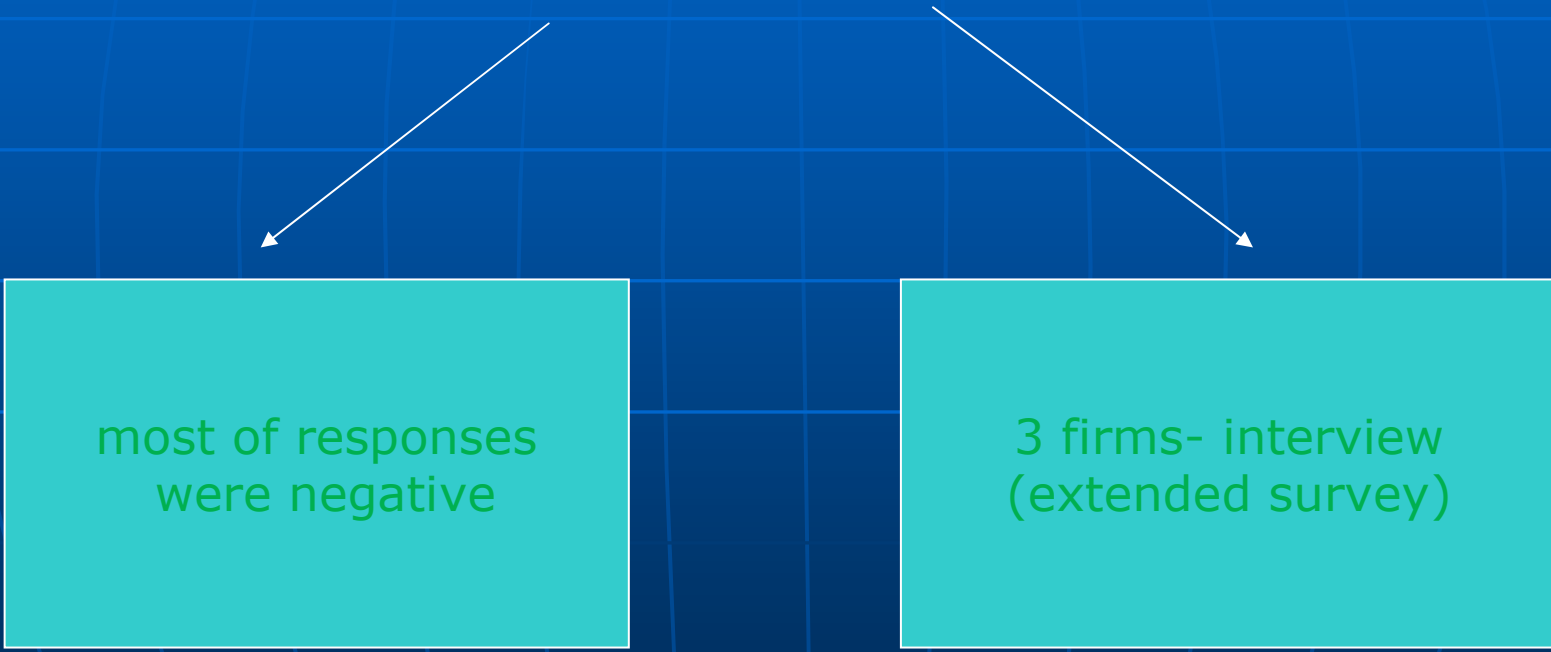
- yes
- no

3 Does your company have used the EU funds in cooperation with the Czech side?

- yes
- no

Response to survey

– around 16%



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graph TD; A[Response to survey - around 16%] --> B[most of responses were negative]; A --> C[3 firms- interview (extended survey)];
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most of responses
were negative

3 firms- interview
(extended survey)

QUESTIONNAIRE 1/5

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

II. How do you cooperate with the Czech side ?

- export
- import
- agency
- cooperation in obtaining contracts
- other...

1. How the cooperation has started?

- Chamber of Commerce
- fairs
- Internet
- other.....

2. How long does the cooperation last?

- <1 year
- 1-4 years
- 5-9 years
- > 10 years

3. What is the frequency of contacts?

- constant
- sporadic

4. What part of your company turnover is the co-operation with the Czech?

- up to 10%
- 10-25%
- 26-50%
- more than 50%

QUESTIONNAIRE 2/5

5. In what language is communication?

- 5. English
- 6. Czech
- 7. Polish
- 8. through a interpreter
- 9. **others...**

6. Are you satisfied with the cooperation?

- yes
- no

7. Are you planning to expand the cooperation?

- yes
- no

8. What were the greatest obstacles in cooperation with Czech partners?

- poor orientation in the Czech conditions and customs
- language barrier
- lack of information
- other....

QUESTIONNAIRE 3/5

II. DIRECT SUPPORT ACTIVITY FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FUND

Do you have information about the possibility of obtaining grants for your business?

- yes
- no

What do you consider the advantages and disadvantages of this type of support?

Advantages

Disadvantages

QUESTIONNAIRE 4/5

Did you ever benefited from any grant of the European Union?

If yes:

What programme?

To which the grant was intended?

Does the grant have some influence on the cooperation with the Czech side?

How do you evaluate this grant:

point of view, the process of submitting a grant application and assessment?

from the standpoint of the effects of a grant for your company?

If No:

Why not?

- do not know about such a possibility
- We have too little experience
- We do not meet the conditions of the programme
- we can not afford it
- other....

QUESTIONNAIRE 5/5

III. INDIRECT SUPPORT ACTIVITY FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

Do you have benefited from European money indirectly (whether you received any information to enterprises through training, fair or otherwise, which were financed by EU funds, which eventually contributed to the development of cooperation with the Czech Republic?

Does your firm is a member of some professional organizations (chamber of commerce, etc.)

- yes
- no

If yes:

How do you assess its activities?

Is the use of funds from the European Union in your immediate environment (eg construction of roads by the municipality of EU co-funded) has contributed to changes in the functioning of your company?

- yes
- no

If yes:

How?

RESEARCH RESULTS ON POLISH SIDE

Firma A

Company size: **small**

Market activity: **10 years**

Headquarters: **klodzki District**

Business area: **sale and installation of windows**

The form of cooperation with the Czech Republic: **export products, the branch**

The way to make contact with the Czech Republic: **Internet, independent search for partners**

Time of cooperation : **5 years**

Frequency of contacts: **constant**

The share of co-operation in trade with the Czech Republic: **around 50%**

Language of communication: **Czech, Polish**

Satisfaction with the cooperation: **yes**

Plans to extend cooperation: **yes**

The biggest barrier in cooperation with the Czech Republic : **difficulties in download payment**

RESEARCH RESULTS ON POLISH SIDE

Firma B

Company size: **medium**

Market activity: **more than 10 years**

Headquarters: **wroclawski district**

Business area: **manufacture and sale of exhaust pipes of stainless steel**

The form of cooperation with the Czech Republic: **eksport, import**

The way to make contact with the Czech Republic: **Beskidzki Dom Maklerski**

Time of cooperation: **1 year**

Frequency of contacts: **constant**

The share of co-operation in trade with the Czech Republic: **around 10%**

Language of communication: **Polish**

Satisfaction with the cooperation: **yes**

Plans to extend cooperation: **yes**

The biggest barrier in cooperation with the Czech Republic : **adjusting the business to the Czech market requirements**

RESEARCH RESULTS ON POLISH SIDE

Firma C

Company size: **small**

Market activity: **5-9 years**

Headquarters: **Wrocław**

Business area: **sale of automotive air fresheners mainly to retail chains**

The form of cooperation with the Czech Republic: **import, branch**

The way to make contact with the Czech Republic: **personal contact**

Time of cooperation: **5-9 years**

Frequency of contacts: **constant**

The share of co-operation in trade with the Czech Republic: **over 50%**

Language of communication: **English**

Satisfaction with the cooperation: **yes**

Plans to extend cooperation : **yes**

The biggest barrier in cooperation with the Czech Republic: **language barrier, poor orientation in the Czech conditions and customs**

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH:

- five of the surveyed companies have not applied to obtain subsidies from European funds,
- this considers also funding for programs of cooperation with foreign partner,
- the reason of this situation, is that these companies indicate a lack of information about the possibilities of this type of support, other reason is the huge bureaucracy of preparing and managing the projects.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH:

-one of the polish companies gained a support within the Sectoral Operational Programme Improvement of the Competitiveness of Enterprises,

-grant had an impact on cooperation with the Czech Republic by the European patent trademark, which contributed to the dissemination of the trademark in the Czech Republic,

-basic advantages of obtaining the grant: a positive impact on business development, particularly having regard to the financial aspect,

-major disadvantages of obtaining a grant: complicated application procedure, lack of concentration on the aim of the proposal but only on the possible beneficent errors, long process of assessing applications, complicated form (which requires patience).

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH:

- none of the surveyed companies have benefited from EU funds indirectly (through training, participation in fairs and other events financed by the EU),
- among the interviewed companies only two are members of professional organization, the activities of this organization was evaluated positively,
- none of the companies indicated that the use of funds from the European Union in their immediate surroundings (such as building roads co-financed by the municipality by the EU) has contributed to changes in the functioning of the company, including cooperation with the Czech/Polish side.

Conclusion:

1. In the Czech-Polish border regions intensive cooperation with many institutions can be observed.
2. This cooperation is not reflected yet in a satisfactory manner on the cooperation of economic units (SMEs).
3. There has been little interest in co-operators (the effect of delay in relation to these institutions).
4. Large role in the activation of public institutions and social play resources from EU funds, however, it is insufficient to use these resources to enhance cooperation between the institutions.

Thank you for your attention.....