

Tomasz Dorożyński

Supporting Exports in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises



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Foreword

Small and medium-sized enterprises currently play an important role in the global economy and their economic standing impacts its various areas. In the European Union SMEs account for ca. 99.8% of all economic entities and, which has been confirmed by numerous studies, they importantly influence employment, GDP and many other indicators, which describe the level of economic development of states and regions.

Small and medium-sized enterprises may follow various development paths. They may focus on winning new markets, also abroad. This latter subject is discussed by the study at hand.

The main subject of the publication is the internationalisation of economic operations pursued by small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular the support to their export activities by means of instruments and programmes co-financed with the public resources, also from the European Union's budget. The book is divided into five chapters.

The first one is devoted to the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises to the economy. It outlines general characteristics of the sector together with different classifications and terms relating to small and medium-sized enterprises. The second part of the chapter discusses issues pertaining to the fundamental areas of SMEs' impact upon the economy and to their development determinants.

The second chapter discusses processes connected with the internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises. Its first part explains the notion of internationalisation and makes a review of selected theories of internationalisation. Then it identifies drivers of small and medium-sized enterprises to get involved into export

activities and the barriers to internationalisation. Finally the chapter analyses data on the internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises and compares the situation in Poland and in the EU.

Chapter III presents economic reasons behind export-promoting policy. The considerations focus on theories and literature. Moreover, it is an attempt of economic evaluation of the efficiency of export-promoting policy. Studies quoted in the book demonstrate a positive correlation between export-promoting policy and economic growth. This may be used as a sort of justification for state's engagement into the area and, by the same token, it may justify public expenditure on, e.g., export-promoting instruments.

The main objective of Chapter IV is the evaluation of the State aid scheme in Poland in the light of the binding EU regulations, with particular attention paid to the specificity of small and medium-sized enterprises. The first part of the chapter is an overview of terms, provisions and rules connected with State aid. The second part analyses and evaluates State aid scheme in Poland with particular attention paid to the support to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Chapter V, the final one, is clearly practice-oriented. It starts with the comparison of support schemes available in Poland and in the EU based on the research of the European Commission. It also provides the list of institutions and instruments, which directly or indirectly contribute to the internationalisation of business operations, especially of small and medium-sized enterprises. These instruments have been divided into three main groups: international, national and regional. International instruments are mainly programmes co-financed with the EU resources. Under national programmes we discuss support granted through the intermediary of the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance and the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development. Regional part focuses on activities coordinated by self-government units.

The publication combines theoretical and practical aspects. It may become an interesting reading for students of departments of economy and for economic practitioners in Poland and abroad.

I would like to thank Prof. Krystyna Żołądkiewicz from the University of Gdańsk, Beata Połowińska (editor) and my wife Agnieszka for their valuable comments and assistance.

Summary

In summing up the considerations of the study devoted to the support to export activities of small and medium-sized enterprises we may formulate the following conclusions:

1. Small and medium-sized enterprises play an important role in the economy and contribute to the GDP, improved competitiveness and higher employment.

2. SMEs represent a rather high growth dynamics although limited with many economic, administrative and legal factors.

3. Enterprises may grow as a result of expansion consisting in winning new markets, also abroad, i.e. by intensification of cooperation with abroad, e.g., by the exchange of goods and services, which may enhance the growth of a business and improve its competitive position.

4. Export is the most frequent form of SMEs' internationalisation.

5. Increased engagement of businesses in internationalisation calls for a range of activities that would support the involvement of the sector with foreign markets.

6. There are numerous empirical studies, which demonstrate that many states support export activities. At the same time we should stress positive correlation between export-promoting policy and economic growth.

7. State aid rules and provisions offer preferential treatment to small and medium-sized enterprises compared to large companies and ensure their access to numerous assistance schemes and higher intensity of aid.

8. Relatively friendly regulations and easy access to EU resources have resulted in almost 60% of total State aid in Poland being addressed to small and medium-sized enterprises.

9. Surveys demonstrate that various support instruments addressed to small and medium-sized enterprises may enhance their growth and foster their competitive position in international markets.

10. Enterprises in Poland may benefit from many types of support to their export activities. They include investment, information and promotional measures, which target mainly small and medium-sized enterprises.

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About the Author

Dr Tomasz Dorożyński is a lecturer at the Department of International Trade of the University of Lodz. He is a member to several prestigious international organisations of researchers and experts in economics and international business, such as: (1) *European International Business Academy*, (2) *European Economics and Finance Society*, (3) *Réseau Européen pour Insertion Sociale et Professionnelle des Personnes Défavorisées*, (4) *Academy of International Business Central and Eastern European Chapter*. His research achievements include ca. 70 reviewed publications (after 2008). Two of his publications were awarded by the Rector of the University of Lodz for their research content. So far Dr Dorożyński has been involved in 6 research projects, also as project manager, 3 of them were co-financed by the EU. On top of that, he received three grants for young research workers. Results of his studies have been presented on numerous occasions to domestic and international conferences, e.g., in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, France, Turkey, Spain, Greece and Latvia. His research work focuses, inter alia, on the EU cohesion policy, regional economic disparities, efficiency of using public resources, foreign direct investment and various aspects of the development of the Lodz region. He has been the author and expert to several European Commission projects under, e.g., Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig programmes. For many years he has been collaborating with the Foundation for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship as an accredited expert of the Enterprise Europe Network centre at the FPE within the framework of the consortium Central Poland Business Support Network, co-financed with the resources of the European Commission Framework Programme

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The book *Supporting Exports in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises* provides a significant insight into the internationalization of economic operations of small and medium-sized enterprises, focusing in particular on exports, which can benefit from support instruments and schemes co-financed with public resources. Considerations center around the role of the SMEs in the economy, their internationalization and economic premises of an export promoting policy. An attempt is made to assess the system of State aid in Poland in the light of the EU regulations. The final part provides an overview of institutions and instruments which, to a lesser or greater extent, contribute to the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises.



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