

GOOD PRACTICE

Silesian Investor and Exporters Assistance Centre

ORGANISATION: Silesian Investor and Exporters Assistance Centre

TOPIC: Attraction of investment

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

1. Background Information

The development of export / of the regional companies and attracting foreign investors are supported by the regional investor and exporters assistance centers (the Polish acronym - COIE). It belongs to a network of information points that have been established throughout Poland in cooperation between the Ministry of Economy and regional governments.

The main objective of COIE is increasing the level of internationalization of the Polish companies by facilitating the access of entrepreneurs and their associations to free, high-quality, complex information services that are essential to planning, organizing and starting exporting and/or investing abroad. Second objective is to increase the level of foreign investment in Poland by facilitating the access of potential foreign investors to information on regulations on starting a business in Poland and support instruments for the development of entrepreneurship including investment incentives. The substantive support for COIE will be provided by Trade and Investment Promotion Sections of Embassies and Consulates of the Republic of Poland (WPHI), which possess wide and up-to-date knowledge on entry barriers and business conditions in particular foreign markets.

Pro-export services are: target market identification, finding information on potential business partners in available Polish and international databases, B2B matchmaking

Pro-biz services are: delivering economic information on the region to the foreign investors, preparing information about available investment possibilities, promoting regional investment offer.

Each Centre covers the operation area of the region in which it is established. COIE has at its disposal a database of contacts with local governments and business support institutions working for development of the region.

COIE's task is to help SMEs in taking their first steps on the international markets and to support the export already started by the SMEs. To use the services of COIE experts, an entrepreneur simply needs to send an e-mail or make an appointment at the Centre, which is located in the Marshal Office of the Region under consideration - i.e. regional authority. The entrepreneur who approaches COIE, receives free-of-charge on the foreign markets, where the company intends to introduce their merchandise, product, or service. COIE offers an access to the reliable sources of information and to finding potential business partners. Information is made available in the form of a database of foreign companies, reports and analyzes of markets, using the international sources. COIE also provides information on the administrative and legal conditions related to the country concerned. This comprehensive offer for potential exporters from region is complemented by dissemination of information on other support measures currently offered in the region, i.a. conferences and seminars, possibilities of companies' participation in international trade fairs.

COIE is a single contact point, located directly in the region, close to local companies and offering assistance via modern communication technologies as well as face-to-face meeting with the experts. Thanks to matching of international cooperation offers COIE's role is crucial for establishing SMEs' economic

commercial contacts with foreign partners, and thus achieving increase of the number of entrepreneurs with international economic contacts together with the increase the value of trade.

2. The Silesian Investor and Exporter Assistance Centre is located in Katowice, within the structures of the Marshal's Office of the Silesian Voivodeship. The SIAEC is a member of the Polish network of Investor and Exporter Assistance Centers. Subject matter support is provided by the Trade and Investment Promotion Sections of the Polish Embassies and Consulates in 48 places worldwide.

2.1 The Silesian Investor and Exporter Assistance Center organizes forums, conferences, seminars and economic congresses and promotes the region in foreign publications and during international trade fairs as well.

2.2 Basic activities of export-oriented services

- Identifying the markets for the given product and investments outside of Polish borders;
- Searching available databases for information on potential business partners in the export / sale of products or services and investment in selected foreign markets;
- Sharing information about industries and foreign markets that contain the statistical data and marketing for countries, markets, industries and companies;
- Organizing informational meetings and conferences for industry leaders and exporters concerning the terms of exports to foreign markets, as well as legal issues, taxation, certification, labor law, etc.;
- Allowing for the exposition of promotional materials of Polish companies at selected international fairs and exhibitions in collaboration with the Departments of Trade and Investment Promotion of Polish embassies operating in over 40 countries around the world.
- Rendering information about the available active export support instruments in the financial, service and institutional areas;
- Sharing contacts with foreign companies, distributing offer inquiries of companies that are interested in importing Polish goods, initiating cooperation between Polish companies operating on the foreign markets, etc

2.3 Basic activities of investor - oriented services

- Sharing information about the region that contain the statistical and marketing data of region, its markets, industries and companies with potential foreign investors,
- Identifying the land/ investment plot to potential foreign investors
- So called "one-stop-shop" service - comprehensive investor support, including contacts with local authorities
- B2B contact

ROLE OF ACTORS

With the accordance to the State regulation the Polish region authorities are responsible for definition of strategy of regional development, formulating other regional development policies in the field of entrepreneurship, innovativeness, public education, promotion and health protection, culture and heritage, social welfare, modernization of rural areas, spatial management, environmental protection, water management, collective transport and public roads, sports and tourism, consumers rights' protection, defenses, public security, counteracting unemployment and activation of local labor market. So far, the specific (economy) region promotion strategy doesn't exist.

As the second objective of each centres is to increase the level of foreign investment in region under consideration by facilitating the access of potential foreign investors to information on regulations on starting a business in Poland and the region under consideration, the Silesian Investor and Exporter Assistance Center being a part of the Marshal's Office have to work with framework/ priority set by above mentioned regional authority.

- As the Silesia region promotion is concern, the SIEAC are responsible for promotion mission (for example: France, India, UAE) , property international fairs (MIPIM - France, EXPO REAL- Germany), international congress (like European SMEs Congress in Katowice) at Region Authority request
- As pro- biz activities is concern, the SIEAC have to response to individual business inquiry and provide adequate business information and assisted in whole investment procedure.
- In general and practice the SIAEC is focus on SMEs as well as international corporates which are willing to operate outside of Katowice SE Zone promises and their rules.

BENEFICIARIES

In generally the COIE direct beneficiary are all entrepreneurs based in the Republic of Poland (in the case of natural persons with their domicile in the Republic of Poland), who are already running an export or investment activity beyond the Polish borders, or are planning to launch it.

Target groups of the COIE network:

- With the pro-export may benefit all entrepreneurs, established in Poland, in particular SMEs.
- With the pro-biz can use foreign investors interested in conducting business in Poland.

The SIAEC focuses on:

1. Silesian based SMEs
2. SMEs and international corporates which are willing to operate outside of Katowice SE Zone promises and their rules
3. Silesian Regional Authorities

CULTURAL ASPECTS: POSSIBLE KEY LEVERAGES FOR INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESSES
Not identified

INNOVATION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE, POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT AND REPLICABILITY

1. The idea of establishing COIE represents organizational innovation in the field of internationalization. It's a systematic undertaking, covering the area of the whole country, where the network of investors' and exporters' service centers, cooperating with the agency supporting investment on national level, businesses serves as a source of information on possible investment location and as an intermediary in establishing contacts with local and central administration, as well as in possible negotiations conditions for investments. It may play an important role in the institutional system of the internationalization of enterprises by streamlining the flow of information between enterprises, the regional authorities and the ministry responsible of economy, international trade and foreign investments- in respective country, and enables the real impact of local government and enterprises from different regions of the implementation of the policy of economic cooperation with foreign countries.

2. In order to replicate the COIE undertaking in other countries, assuming the availability of adequate financial resources, it's possible to directly replicate the "pro-biz" services in the other region/country, which include knowledge and data already in the possession or easy to collect of the BP receiving region:

- Delivering economic information on the region to the foreign investors
- Preparing information about available investment possibilities
- Promoting regional investment offer.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT AND RESULTS OF GOOD PRACTICE

Tbc.

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