

## Policy Briefing Report Template

### **POLICY BRIEF FOR THE 2021-2027 PROGRAMMING PERIOD**

Written by: Rzeszow Regional Development Agency

#### **Executive statement**

Outline your main message – what do you want to say and to whom (may: 500 characters)

Podkarpackie region, due to its cross-border location, gives SMEs better opportunity to expand, develop and internalize their enterprises and as a result increase their competitiveness. All forms of support in the matter (grants, trainings, loans etc.) may be expanded through, for instance, the implementation of INTER VENTURES good practices. It will encourage foreign investment in the Podkarpackie region. The recommendations are addressed to local authorities responsible for the implementation of Policy Instrument activities.

#### **About the project**

A brief outline of the aims of the project Inter Ventures and description of what you did to address the problem within this project (max: 1000 characters)

The Inter Ventures project aims at promoting the internationalization of SMEs in EU border regions, thus contributing to their growth and increased competitiveness. Project Partners will intensely share their experiences and learn jointly via lessons learnt that will be adapted to regional conditions explored through targeted surveys of regional SMEs. Specific actions and measures prescribing the most appropriate ways to change the policy frameworks in partner regions will be identified in a step-by-step action planning process assisted by advisory services. As a result, tailor-made regional Action Plans will be elaborated that can lead to the desired improvement of SMEs internationalisation. Thanks to the lessons learned (good practices) RRDA, by implementing good practises, will try to trigger (increase) the cross-border cooperation between SMEs. So far RRDA has decided which lessons learned are to be transferred/incorporated in Podkarpackie region.

#### **Context**

Outline the problem and any relevant contextual information and political background. State why the problem is urgent and important. Use evidence and infographics to support your argument (max: 2000 characters)

#### **Within the Policy Instrument – Regional Operational Programme for Podkarpackie Voivodeship 2014 – 2020 the main forms of support offered to SMEs were as follows:**

##### **Financial**

- Grants for the development of SMEs or business start-ups through investments in tangible and intangible assets necessary to market new or improved products or services.
- Innovation vouchers for SMEs
- Loans for starting or developing a business

- Grants for trainings/providing trainings to SMEs regarding starting up a business, creating a business plan, managing it or developing it.

According to the Regional Situation Analysis Report of SMEs of the Podkarpackie Region carried out for the needs of INTER VENTURES project almost **80%** of the surveyed entrepreneurs have not used the financial support programs in the last 5 years. **94.6% of the surveyed entrepreneurs**, who nevertheless operate abroad, did not use non-financial support programs in the last 5 years.

**The main problems regarding ROP 2014-2020 for Podkarpackie region refer to:**

(Below data is taken from Regional Situation Analysis Report of SMEs of the Podkarpackie Region carried out for the needs of INTER VENTURES project)

- a small number of offers regarding practical examples of the implementation of export and import projects by SMEs and case studies on specific markets,
- limited access to the best specialists and practitioners in the field of internationalization of enterprises,
- difficulties in identifying foreign business opportunities,
- limited financial resources of SMEs allowing to start and increase activity in foreign markets,
- lack of or very limited knowledge in the field of legal regulations hindering the safe development of activity on foreign markets,
- no use of the cross-border area in the case of Podkarpackie region,
- insufficient support from public and EU funds - especially with regard to exports to foreign markets,
- lack of an integrated training concept for SME enterprises consciously building their competitiveness in the region and abroad,
- lack of instruments and infrastructure in enterprises,
- limited possibilities of regional policy aimed at innovation (product, process, organization or marketing).

**Results, conclusions and recommendations**

**1. Describe what you want your audience to do about the problem using evidence from the project to back up your recommendations. Make sure the recommendations are (max: 2000 characters)**

- Short
- Practical and realistic
- Concrete (avoid generic recommendations)
- Based on evidence from the project
- Clear and easy to understand
- Written so that the sentences start with a verb, e.g. Use ..., Engage ..., etc

In order to improve the SMEs situation it is advisable for the local authorities to carry on with self-employment support (grants, trainings in starting/managing business, supporting women

entrepreneurialship ect.). Such practices being already implemented in Podkarpackie region are also widely practiced by INTER VENTURES project partners (Hungarian good practices: „**Fostering value added business cooperation between SMEs operating on different sides of the Hungary-Croatia border**” and “**Promoting women entrepreneurship within project “Partnership for all 2”**”).

Local authorities should support foreign investment in Podkarpackie region by providing support for investors in (selection of the most appropriate real estate opportunities for investment, assistance in finding information and functional data to create a business plan, support in obtaining authorisation from local and national institutions to launch business, support with bureaucratic practices) wanting to expand/establish business activity in the region. This practice taken from the **Italian good practice AttrACT** would enable international cooperation between Polish and foreign entrepreneurs at the same time increasing internationalization.

## **2. Please describe each of your recommendation in detail:**

Podkarpackie region shows almost no business activity in the cross-border area. In order to improve SMEs’ competitiveness the following improvements are recommended based on INTER VENTURES learning exchange.

### **Recommendation 1 (max: 1500 characters)**

Encouraging self-employment and women’s entrepreneurship by providing non-refundable grants, trainings in starting/managing business is one of the key practices recommended to increase SME’s competitiveness in the Podkarpackie region. These practices are backed by **the Hungarian lesson learnt „Fostering value added business cooperation between SMEs operating on different sides of the Hungary-Croatia border”** that provides non-refundable grants for consortia of at least two SMEs, at least one from each country, to develop joint product, technology or service, processes and productive capacities or carry out common marketing activities. In Poland in comparison to Hungarian GP the grants will be distributed to individual SMEs not to consortia. Additionally trainings in starting/managing business will be provided. The other Hungarian lesson learnt - “**Promoting women entrepreneurship within project “Partnership for all 2”** aims at promoting and supporting self-employment, especially women entrepreneurship that includes encouraging entrepreneurship through educational and promotional activities of unemployed people and encouraging of entrepreneurship through offering support for self-employment by awarding small value amounts as support. In Podkarpackie Region the idea to encourage women entrepreneurship and professionally activating unemployed people back into the labour market will be backed by the Hungarian Partnership for all 2 good practice. Women will be given advantage over man in recruiting process. More women than man will be allowed to qualify for the project giving women advantage over man in starting their own business.

### **Recommendation 2 (max: 1500 characters)**

The Italian GP **Attract Invest in Lombardy** aims at gathering and promoting Lombardy and its local investment opportunities abroad, assisting foreign companies and local public administrations on the field. In order to attract investors the Italian GP foresees a direct cooperation with Lombard Municipalities, with the central aims of reducing bureaucracy by building a clear, transparent and favourable economic context, as well as offering concrete actions to facilitate investments, such as fiscal incentives by reducing local taxes. It also includes: the creation of a database of thousands of

potential investors interested in investing in Lombardy, tailor-made offline and online campaigns for target-companies, also through specific events participation, organization of workshops to promote and foster the participation of the regional Municipalities, after care services for existing foreign companies in Lombardy through dedicated round tables and one-to-one meetings during the year. The project has also developed a platform to map ready-to-use investment opportunities. The services offered on the platform are to facilitate investment in Lombardy. It is recommended for local authorities of Podkarpackie region to encourage similar activities such as: selection of the most appropriate real estate opportunities for investment, assistance in finding information and functional data to create a business plan, support in obtaining authorisation from local and national institutions to launch business, support with bureaucratic practices, providing assistance in establishing B2B cross-border cooperation or assisting in setting up/ running an enterprise. It will initiate/support/promote and encourage foreign investments in the Podkarpackie region. The planned actions will contribute not only to the development of the region but they also may initiate SMEs internationalization – hopefully a long-lasting cross-border cooperation between Poland and its neighbouring countries.

## References

Only include maximum of four sources where readers can find further information. Give the web addresses of publications and dates for when they were last accessed if possible.

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/interventures/>

<http://www.karpacki.pl/>

<https://rarr.rzeszow.pl/>