



UpGradeSME
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

EDIOP 1.3.7 | Services for SMEs to exploit their export potential in COVID times

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Short summary of the practice



The project objective is to improve the policy instruments dealing with the **internationalization of SMEs** in the partner regions by capitalizing the knowhow of the partners and through the **active involvement of the members** of the local Stakeholder Groups to **promote SMEs' awareness of external markets.**

Information of the call for proposal

Aim of the call

Professional training for SMEs to confidently enter foreign markets

Beneficiaries

HEPA Hungarian Export Promotion Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Amount of subsidy / intensity rate

- Budget of the priority project: 3,8 m EUR;
- Intensity rate: 100%

Supported activities

- Development of enterprises entering foreign markets;
- Communication, dissemination;
- Services provided to novice exporters;
- Implementation of the development plans of the enterprises identified within the framework of EDIOP-1.1.4-16 Hungarian Multi Program I.

Main outputs

- Development of an export maturity evaluation system
- Methodology for the selection of SMEs with export potential
- Development of an education material to help SMEs to access to foreign markets
- 250 SMEs receiving financial and also non-financial support

Challenges and handling them

State of play

Project were contracted and launched in July 2020, the predefined activities had to be adapted to the changed circumstances by the COVID-19

Challenges and amendments

- For final beneficiaries, especially for potential exporters without experience in the foreign market it was a challenge to present their business activity effectively and to build new relationships online.
- priority project offer a wide range of services that helped them to deal with these new online solutions
- enhance the different skills of the SMEs
- Fit for Export
 - Step 1: learn the basics of e-commerce and online advertising tools through e-learning courses
 - Step 2: practical workshop provides feasible knowledge for short, concise, targeted information transfer methods (small groups & individual)

Evidence of success

- Compared to previous, similar support schemes in the framework of this project, the foreign market entry was preceded by **targeted consultancy, training and preparation** in order for the SMEs to have a **customised and clear strategy for starting their export activity**.
- An **export maturity measurement** system was introduced and **online learning materials** for SMEs were developed to prepare them for entering international market.
- These activities were adapted to the world created by COVID.



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Thank you!



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