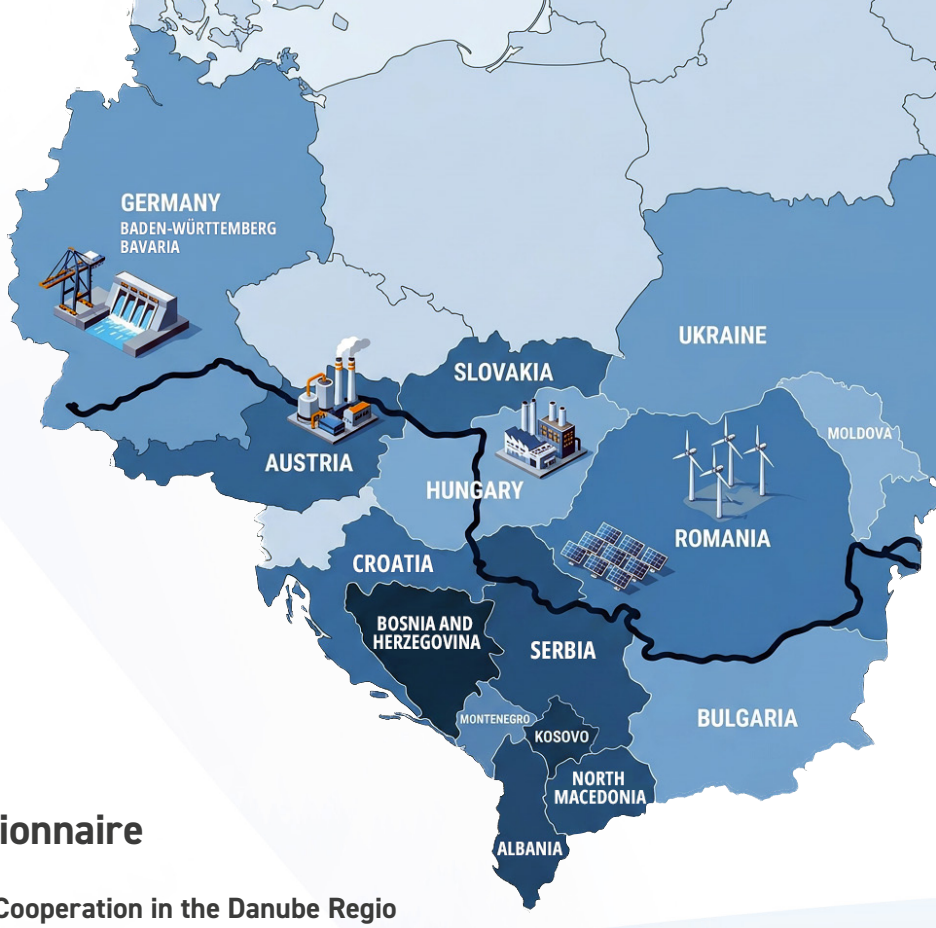
IHK Exportakademie



SME Needs Assessment Questionnaire

Capacity Building for Sustainable Business Cooperation in the Danube Regio

Target group: SMEs in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and the Western Balkans

Purpose of the questionnaire
This questionnaire aims to identify the current challenges, needs and opportunities of SMEs in Croatia and the Western Balkans related to competitiveness, sustainability, innovation, supply chain resilience and cross-border business cooperation.

The planned programme seeks to strengthen SMEs by developing modern management skills and competencies and facilitating bilateral and cross-border cooperation with partners in Western Europe. It will also provide practical knowledge on sustainable and efficient production processes, with a particular focus on digitalisation, technological modernisation and innovation.

A further focus is on initiating new business relationships and supporting the development of more resilient, sustainable and diversified value and supply chains across the Danube Region.

The findings of this questionnaire will support the development of a practical training and cooperation programme designed to:

- strengthen SME competitiveness;
- foster cross-border business cooperation;
- support the transition towards more sustainable and efficient business and production processes;
- promote digitalisation, innovation and modern management practices; and
- build more resilient, sustainable and diversified value and supply chains in the Danube Region.

First, please answer your foreign language skills:

	basic	*goood*	*fluent*	*none*
English	☐	☐	☐	☐
German	☐	☐	☐	☐

1. Company Profile

Introduction Candidate and Company

Candidate Data _____
First Name _____
Last Name _____
Gender _____
E-Mail _____
Phone number _____
Position in the company _____

Company Data

Name of company _____
Address, City and Country _____
Contact name _____
Telephone number _____
Email address _____
Website _____
Year of foundation _____
Short description: _____

Q1. In which country is your company located?

Single choice

- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ☐ Serbia
- ☐ Montenegro
- ☐ North Macedonia
- ☐ Albania
- ☐ Other: _____

Q2. What is your company's main manufacturing sector?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Automotive / Mobility
- ☐ Machinery / Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Metal / Metal Processing
- ☐ Plastics / Chemicals
- ☐ Electronics / Electrical Equipment
- ☐ Food / Agri-food
- ☐ Textiles / Apparel
- ☐ Wood / Furniture
- ☐ Other: _____

Q3. How many employees does your company have?

Single choice

- ☐ 1–9
- ☐ 10–49
- ☐ 50–249
- ☐ 250 or more

2. Internationalisation & Cross-Border Business

Q4. What type of international activities does your company currently undertake?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Import / purchasing from abroad
- ☐ Export / selling abroad
- ☐ International sourcing
- ☐ International distribution
- ☐ Subcontracting / outsourcing
- ☐ Cross-border business partnerships
- ☐ Joint product or service development
- ☐ Technology cooperation
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ None

Q5. Approximately what percentage of your company's sales comes from international markets?

Single choice

- ☐ 0%
- ☐ 1–10%
- ☐ 11–25%
- ☐ 26–50%
- ☐ More than 50%
- ☐ Not sure / not applicable

Q6. What are the main barriers to expanding your company's international or cross-border activities?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Finding suitable business partners
- ☐ Lack of market information
- ☐ Regulatory / administrative barriers
- ☐ Different standards and certifications
- ☐ Language / cultural barriers
- ☐ Logistics and transport costs
- ☐ Lack of financing
- ☐ Lack of qualified personnel
- ☐ Lack of digital capabilities
- ☐ Supply chain risks
- ☐ Other: _____

Q7. Which types of cross-border cooperation would be most valuable for your company?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Finding new customers / markets
- ☐ Finding new suppliers
- ☐ Joint product or service development
- ☐ Joint innovation / R&D
- ☐ Technology transfer
- ☐ Knowledge and know-how exchange
- ☐ Joint sourcing / procurement
- ☐ Joint investment
- ☐ Joint participation in projects / tenders
- ☐ Other: _____

Q8. Relevant goal of your program participation is your individual B2B contact with German companies

Please specify products/solutions you want to buy

_____

Please specify products/solutions you want to sell

_____

Please specify any other kind of business cooperation you want to enter into

_____

3. Sustainability & EU Green Deal

Q9. How important is sustainability for your company's future competitiveness?

Single choice

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Moderately important
- ☐ Of limited importance
- ☐ Not important

Q10. Which sustainability areas are currently most relevant to your company?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Energy efficiency
- ☐ Renewable energy
- ☐ Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- ☐ Resource efficiency
- ☐ Waste reduction
- ☐ Circular economy
- ☐ Sustainable materials
- ☐ Sustainable production processes
- ☐ Sustainable packaging
- ☐ Environmental certification / standards
- ☐ Other: _____

Q11. What are the main challenges your company faces in implementing sustainability measures and responding to the EU Green Deal?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Lack of financial resources
- ☐ Lack of technical knowledge
- ☐ Lack of qualified staff
- ☐ Lack of information
- ☐ Unclear regulatory requirements
- ☐ Lack of suitable technologies
- ☐ High investment costs
- ☐ Lack of suitable suppliers
- ☐ Lack of customer demand
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Innovation & Competitiveness

Q12. Which areas would most improve your company's competitiveness over the next 3–5 years?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Access to new markets
- ☐ Innovation and R&D
- ☐ Digitalisation
- ☐ Automation
- ☐ New products / services
- ☐ Sustainable production technologies
- ☐ Process optimisation
- ☐ Skilled workforce
- ☐ Access to finance
- ☐ Internationalisation
- ☐ Other: _____

Q13. Which areas of innovation are currently most relevant to your company?

Select up to 3

- ☐ New products / services
- ☐ New production technologies
- ☐ Automation
- ☐ Digitalisation
- ☐ Artificial intelligence
- ☐ Process optimisation
- ☐ Sustainable / green technologies
- ☐ New business models
- ☐ Materials innovation
- ☐ R&D cooperation
- ☐ Other: _____

Q14. What are the main barriers to innovation in your company?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Lack of funding
- ☐ Lack of skilled personnel
- ☐ Lack of technical expertise
- ☐ Lack of time / internal resources
- ☐ Lack of suitable cooperation partners
- ☐ Limited access to technologies
- ☐ Market uncertainty
- ☐ Regulatory barriers
- ☐ Other: _____

5. Supply Chain Management & Resilience

Q15. Approximately how many international suppliers does your company currently work with?

Single choice

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1–5
- ☐ 6–10
- ☐ 11–20
- ☐ More than 20
- ☐ Not sure

Q16. How would you assess the resilience of your current supply chain?

Single choice

- ☐ Very resilient
- ☐ Rather resilient
- ☐ Neither resilient nor vulnerable
- ☐ Rather vulnerable
- ☐ Very vulnerable
- ☐ Not applicable

Q17. What are the main risks affecting your company's supply chain?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Dependence on individual suppliers
- ☐ Dependence on individual countries / regions
- ☐ Raw material shortages
- ☐ Price volatility
- ☐ Energy costs / availability
- ☐ Transport / logistics disruptions
- ☐ Geopolitical risks
- ☐ Regulatory changes
- ☐ Labour shortages
- ☐ Climate-related risks
- ☐ Other: _____

Q18. Which measures is your company currently taking to increase supply chain resilience?

Multiple answers possible

- ☐ Diversifying suppliers
- ☐ Increasing local / regional sourcing
- ☐ Developing alternative suppliers
- ☐ Using multiple sourcing countries
- ☐ Increasing inventories / safety stocks
- ☐ Digital supply chain monitoring
- ☐ Long-term supplier partnerships
- ☐ Risk assessment and contingency planning
- ☐ Other:_____
- ☐ None

6. Training & Capacity-Building Needs

Q19. In which areas would your company benefit most from practical training?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Sustainability and the EU Green Deal
- ☐ Green production and technologies
- ☐ Circular economy
- ☐ Innovation management
- ☐ Digitalisation
- ☐ Supply chain management
- ☐ Supply chain resilience and risk management
- ☐ Sustainable procurement / sourcing
- ☐ Internationalisation
- ☐ Cross-border business cooperation
- ☐ Other:_____

Q20. What type of learning and support would be most valuable for your company?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Practical training workshops
- ☐ Expert consultations
- ☐ Business matchmaking
- ☐ Cross-border networking events
- ☐ Best-practice exchange
- ☐ Company / site visits
- ☐ Technology demonstrations
- ☐ Support in finding international partners
- ☐ Support in developing joint projects
- ☐ Access to funding information
- ☐ Other:_____

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Thank you for your participation

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.
Your input will help us better understand the needs of manufacturing SMEs and design a practical programme that responds to their challenges and creates opportunities for sustainable, innovative and resilient cross-border business cooperation.

☐ I consent to the collection, processing, and sharing of the data from this questionnaire with collaborating partners. I consent to IHK-Exportakademie GmbH to collect, process and share the collected data in this questionnaire – precisely last name, first name, gender, email address, phone number, position in the company, Company Data as well as the answers to questions Q1-20 – with the Chamber of Commerce Ulm and regional partners in Zagreb and either Belgrade or Sarajevo.

The information is disclosed solely for the following purpose: Implementation of the foreign trade measure within the framework of the project "Capacity Building for Sustainable Business Cooperation in the Danube Region".

Consent is voluntary. Participation in the project is contingent on completing the questionnaire. You may revoke your consent at any time, effective for the future, by contacting *datenschutz@ihk-exportakademie.de*. Further information, particularly regarding recipients, retention periods, and your data protection rights, is provided in the Privacy Policy: Data protection - IHK Exportakademie – Make Your Trade Flow.

Signature _____

In Kooperation

IHK Ulm

HGK
CROATIAN CHAMBER OF ECONOMY

VANJSKOTRGOVINSKA KOMORA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE
СПОЉНОТРГОВИНСКА КОМОРА БОСНЕ И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНЕ
FOREIGN TRADE CHAMBER OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF SERBIA
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