

Developing Europe's Rural Regions in the Era of Globalisation

Small firms and globalisation Survey of local businesses – Norrland

- **Can small enterprises in rural areas benefit from globalisation to the same extent as their urban counterparts?**
- **How has the business environment and technology changed the international opportunities available to rural businesses in recent years?**
- **What are the key characteristics of small rural businesses, which allow strong international trading patterns to develop?**
- **How do rural businesses derive strength from being part of a small, supportive business community, or from other aspects of their local business environment, such as close links to local institutions and agencies?**

These are some of the questions which the DERREG project seeks to answer. DERREG is a three-year European research project, carried out in 8 EU Member States, and funded by the European Commission, Research Directorate (Project ID: SSH-CT-2008-225204).

In order to find answers to such questions we would like your help in answering the following questionnaire. It has been designed to be filled in electronically. It should not take more than a few minutes of your valuable time. You can then return it to the research team by email, or print it out and post it if you prefer. Your answers to the questionnaire will remain anonymous when we analyse the findings of this survey.

On the basis of our findings in this survey, we would like to carry out more in-depth work with a selection of small businesses in your region. These businesses will feature in our report to the European Commission as **best practice examples** of what can be achieved by small businesses in rural areas, - in terms of building international business links, and becoming significant global actors. We hope that you will be encouraged and interested to participate in this second stage of our research. You will have the opportunity to tell us if we may contact you about this, on the last page of the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation!

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Information on your business

(a) Name and location of the business

Name

Address

City Zip Code

(b) In which year did the company start its commercial operations?

Year

(c) Is your business a limited company?

Yes

No

If no, what type is it?

(d) Who owns your company?

Independent company (owned by a single family/individual)

Company part of a local/regional conglomerate

Company part of a Swedish conglomerate

Company owned by a Foreign company

(e) Main sector of activity of your business:

Other ?

(f) Please state the main offerings (goods or services) your business produces:

(g) What is the size of your business in terms of number of staff approximate full-time equivalent?

Micro: 9 employees or less

Small firm: between 10 and 49 employees

Medium-sized firm: between 50 and 249 employees

(h) To what extent would you say that your business is involved in **global** business or trade networks??

Please assess on the 4-point scale below how you perceive your firm's involvement in such networks.



Only slightly Strongly involved

Questions on your activities

In the following questions the actors (firms or institutions) which you have dealings with are divided into four categories:

Regional



Actors either located in the counties of Västerbotten and Norrbotten, or representing actors located in the 2 counties, e.g. the County Administrative Board.

National



Actors either located in Sweden, with the exception of the counties of Västerbotten and Norrbotten, or representing the national level (e.g. Swedish government, or *Tillväxtverket*).

European



Actors either; located in another EU Member State or in Norway or Switzerland, or representing the European level or interests (e.g. European Commission).

World



Actors located outside the EU Norway orSwitzerland, or representing the international interests (e.g. the World Bank, OECD).

For each question, we kindly ask you to assess the strength of your interactions with the different types of actors mentioned, according to each of the 4 categories above.

Please try to answer these questions in terms of the average situation of the past five years or so, (not what has happened in the last year of recession).

Customers and Suppliers

What percentage of your sales (or purchases) are made in the different geographic areas?

					Total
Sales	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	= 100%
Purchases	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %	= 100%

Cooperation with other businesses

How important are interactions with other members of the business community for the development of your business activities? Please score categories of firms, according to the location and size of the business, you are having contact with.

(Here you should think of the intensity or frequency of information exchange with your business partners. Information exchange can deal, for example, with new market entries, new product development, market regulations or trading conditions...

					
Small and Medium-sized Enterprises	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<div style="border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; color: red;"> 0: No interaction 1: few, limited interactions ... 4: Very frequent, intense interactions </div>
Large firm	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Multinational companies	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

Support from institutional actors

How important are your relations with different kinds of organisations, for getting support and information (such as technological transfer, legal advice, financial support...)?

Please score this importance using the 0 (not relevant) to 4 (Very important) scale provided for each case.



Governmental advisory bodies	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Industry/Sector representative organisations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Research institutions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Business consultants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other? Please specify <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

0: Not relevant
1: Of little importance
...
4: of high/strategic importance

Sources of financing

What are your most significant sources of financing for the development of your business activities?

Please score the importance you give to those different financiers for securing your investments, using the 0 (not relevant) to 4 (Very important) scale provided.



Shareholders / Owners	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Banks and other financial institutions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Public support programmes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other? Please specify <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

0: Not relevant
1: of little importance
...
4: Highly valuable

Membership in business associations or clubs

Is your company, or the manager on behalf of your company, an active member of business associations or clubs that you feel help you to obtain useful information related to your business activity?

Please state the name of the association/club when possible.

Cooperative Yes No Name?

Professional or trade association (sectoral) Yes No Name?

Chamber of commerce (or other regional associations) Yes No Name?

Sports or Leisure club¹ Yes No Name?

Other? Please specify

Impact of the financial crisis

What impact has the recent international economic crisis had on your relations with the following organisations ?



Customers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Suppliers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Cooperation with other businesses	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Public agencies or authorities	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Research institutions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Banks and other financiers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other? Please specify	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

0: Not relevant
 1: little impact
 ...
 4: strong impact

¹ In case, the country club is a place where you discuss business with other members, for instance, in a golf club.

Participation to the second stage of our inquiry

We very much appreciate you taking the time to fill in this form and to send it back to us.

In a second stage of our inquiry, we would like to draw up a more detailed picture of the pattern of linkages of a selection of firms with particularly strong or extensive business networks.. For each of the firms selected, the business network will be analysed and illustrated. Our work aims at highlighting a set of illustrative cases of small firms, which have managed to developed international operations despite being located in a remote, sparsely populated part of Europe.

This second stage will require a face-to-face meeting to collect the information we need. The data collected will be used for our research activities only and will be dealt with in the strictest anonymity.

Please indicate below if you would prefer not to be invited to participate in the second stage of our research

Please do not contact me again.

Returning the questionnaire

Thank you again for taking the time for filling in our survey. For sending your results to us, you can choose one of the two alternatives possible, but clicking on either the following buttons.

- By clicking on the `Submit' button, your results will be directly sent to us by email. You just have to follow the instructions that appear on your screen.
- By clicking on the `Print form' button, your filled-in questionnaire will be printed and you can chose to send it back to us either by postal mail or fax.

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