



DISCLAIMER: Please note that SME Fact Sheets are not standalone instruments, do not constitute a comprehensive assessment of Member States' policies and should be regarded as a supplement to, and not a substitute for, available national publications. **Please refer to the methodological note before reading this SME Fact Sheet.**

1. SMEs in Poland – a brief fact check:

There are approximately 37 SMEs per 1000 inhabitants in Poland, which is more or less in conformity with the EU-27 average. Nonetheless available data suggest that Polish SMEs do not reach the same relative importance that their peers have elsewhere in Europe. Although in employment terms they offer relatively more jobs than the EU-average, their share in the country's overall value-added creation is substantially lower than the EU-average. The less favourable figures refer to the micro and small business segments, while the medium-sized business segment matches the EU-average.

	Number of enterprises			Number of persons employed			Value added (MEUR)		
	Value	%	EU-26 average	Value	%	EU-24 average	Value	%	EU-26 average
Micro	1.349.882	95,9%	91,8%	2.967.909	39,2%	29,6%	20.526	16,8%	21,1%
Small	41.296	2,9%	6,9%	906.172	12,0%	20,6%	14.002	11,5%	19,0%
Medium	13.491	1,0%	1,1%	1.415.292	18,7%	16,8%	24.541	20,1%	17,8%
SMEs	1.404.669	99,8%	99,8%	5.289.373	69,8%	67,1%	59.069	48,4%	57,9%
Large	2.680	0,2%	0,2%	2.286.651	30,2%	32,9%	62.915	51,6%	42,1%

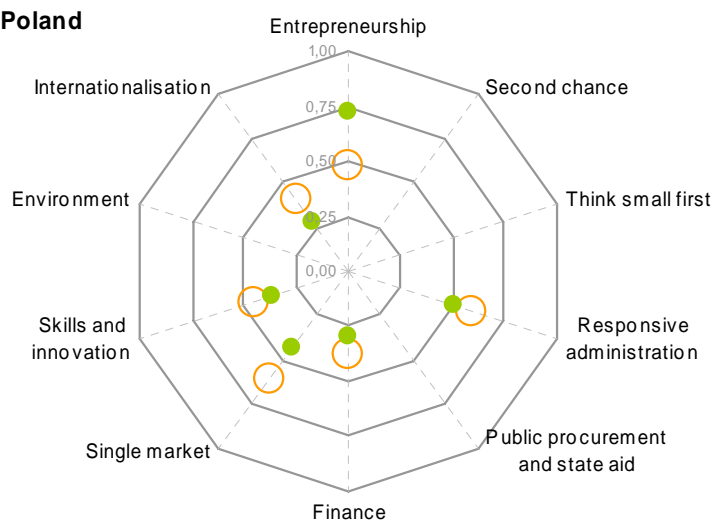
Source: Eurostat SBS data base, 2004 and 2005 data.

2. Poland's SBA profile¹

Poland's overall profile is dominated by categories showing values below the EU-average. There are very few exceptions to this. The most notable is "Entrepreneurship" where the country performs well above the EU average. This is also paired with scores above EU-average in the 4 sections where no category-average could be calculated.

○ EU average

● Poland



Source: European Commission, DG Enterprise

¹ It should be noted that the different dimensions of the radar correspond to the set of 10 principles foreseen in the European Commission's Small Business Act.



I. Entrepreneurship: Poland's performance in this category is well above the EU-average. Almost all indicators showed very positive results as compared to the EU-average. The participation rate in entrepreneurial education stands out with Poland ranking atop of all other EU Member States. The only exception to the rule is the degree to which schooling had an impact on developing an entrepreneurial attitude, where the marks were slightly below average. Other available indicators measuring entrepreneurship aspects run somewhat against the overall positive assessment (i.e. "persons growing a successful new business receive high status" and "media attention towards new businesses", in which the scores are well below the EU-average).

II. Second chance: For the one available indicator in this category – the degree of support for allowing a second chance- Poland's performance is above the EU average (87% to almost 80%).

III. Think small first: The available indicators in this section - time it takes to comply with administrative obligations and the share of support among SMEs- send mixed signals with the former strongly outperforming the EU-average (5% of total working time for Poland as opposed to 8%) while for the second, Poland scores lower as regards the support for current regulations than their average EU-counterparts (24% to 29%).

IV. Responsive administration: Overall, the data available suggest room for improvement in Poland in this category, since the marks are well below EU-average. Nevertheless, on many individual indicators Poland actually beats the EU average - most notably as regards some cost-related items (registering property, enforcing contracts and social security costs incurred by the employer). There are also indicators in which Poland lags behind the EU-average. The costs for closing a business, for instance, are the highest in the EU. Also, as it is the case in many other new member states the availability of e-government is still relatively limited (25% to 59%). In terms of start-up times and costs, results are less favourable in Poland as compared to the EU-average.

V. Public procurement and State aid: There are two indicators in this section. The share of SMEs in public procurement contracts is significantly higher than average (53% versus 42%). and In the case of the proportion of state aid devoted to SMEs, figures for Poland are somewhat lower than the EU-average (7% versus 11%).

VI. Finance: As with the performance in "administrative environment"; overall results for Poland are below EU average due to the fact that almost all individual indicators are sub-average. On the positive side there is a high share of EAFRD funds dedicated to support measures for business creation and development (more than double than the EU average of 2,7%). Among the many indicators below EU-average the ones on venture capital stand out, where the country appears to be considerably away from the EU-average.

VII. Single market: The data for this area place Poland below the EU-average. All three indicators related to the implementation and transposition of EU rules in national law are below the EU-average, but it is the share of SMEs exporting within the EU among all SMEs where the distance to the EU-average is the most significant (2,8% versus 0,8%).

VIII: Skills and innovation: The available information suggests that there is room for improvement in Poland in this category, as compared to the other EU countries. This holds true for both policy areas covered in this segment, (innovation as well as education and skills) although within the former there are some indicators with marks above EU-average. As regards the share of SMEs that have new products or income from new products and SMEs turnover from new or significantly improved products, Poland scores well above the EU average. In the area of education and skills there is only the relatively high share of SME staff with tertiary education that lifts the overall lower marks in this domain. The other education or skills related indicators are below the EU-average. A notable case in point is the share of participants in continuing vocational training (CVT) (21% to 33% for the EU). The remaining two indicators in this category not considered for the average calculation, but available for Poland – (enterprises introducing market innovation and SMEs using organisational innovation) showed a rather mixed picture with the former being above and the latter being slightly below the EU average.

IX: Environment: This category does not allow for a general assessment given that only three indicators are available. It should be noted that Polish SMEs spend approximately one third of the average amount spent by EU SMEs on environmental protection (€330 as compared with almost €900)



X: Internationalisation: Poland's performance is positive for most indicators in this category, and in line with the single market performance. On all of the performance related indicators Poland leads the EU average, although not by a large margin. For example, the share of SMEs gaining income from subsidiaries and/or joint ventures abroad for Poland exceeds the corresponding figure for the

EU (5,6% versus 4,8%). Only for the indicators describing the administrative framework (such as the number of days required for importing or exporting) Poland scores below the EU average. In addition, the share of SMEs exporting outside EU-27 in total SMEs (the only indicator not being included in the category average) is also smaller in Poland than the EU-average (1,5% to 3,8%).

Example for a good practice in SME policy

To illustrate the efforts of the Government to promote SMEs, the statistical information of the fact sheet is enriched by an example of a good practice in SME policy - as singled out in the European Commission's Communication on "Think small first – A Small Business Act for Europe":

Title of the Project: Internet Fair

Purpose: To help SMEs find new partners for development, manufacturing and marketing, to promote the internet as the means of establishing contacts with foreign companies.

This measure from the Ministry of Economy and the Euro Info Centres from Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom promoted cooperation between SMEs with a focus on engineering from China and 6 European countries. Interested companies had to fill in the registration and give a brief description of the company and the type of cooperation they wanted. The company profiles have been put into the catalogue and were used by all participants to choose the firms they would like to meet. Meetings were arranged as internet chats, mainly in English. Each lasted around 35 minutes.

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