

Cooperation of Slovak SMEs with Foreign Investors

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Introduction

We were able to collect 36 questionnaires, mostly in person (or alternatively by remote online meetings). Though the sample is limited and might deliver distorted results in case of a few questions, it still offers relevant inside regarding the experience of Slovak SME-s.

Most questions in the questionnaire were options oriented, but to collect and be able to comprehend the opinions of Slovak entrepreneurs, some open questions had to be kept. In these cases, we used a cluster method to group similar answers – as is presented below.

Without making hasty or unwanted conclusions, we can state from this brief survey that the cooperation between Slovak SMEs and FDIs is active and successful in many ways, not only in the form of pure business transactions. Slovak entrepreneurships benefit from their collaborations in getting know-how in their field, obtaining easier access to further development and R&D tools.

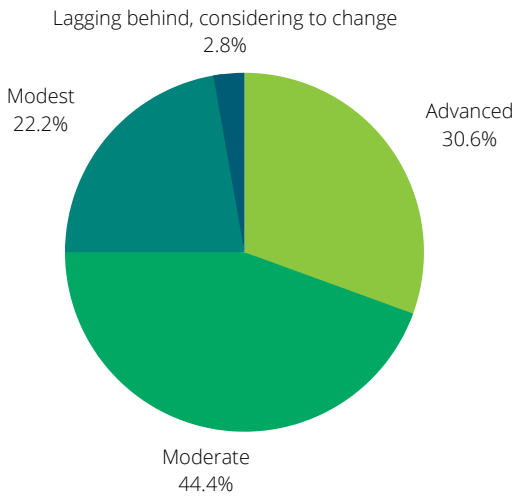
On the other hand, we have registered some negative feedbacks regarding the cooperation, namely higher demand not only on quality of products, but also on the speed of delivery. Also, some have experienced abstractions that arose from the nature of a multinational corporation (internal guidelines, lengthy approval process...).

To conclude, Slovak SMEs see potential in support from public sector that could increase the quality of cooperation with FDIs, mainly through R&D funding, reinforcing the position of clusters or support tools that would better reflect the status of current market development.

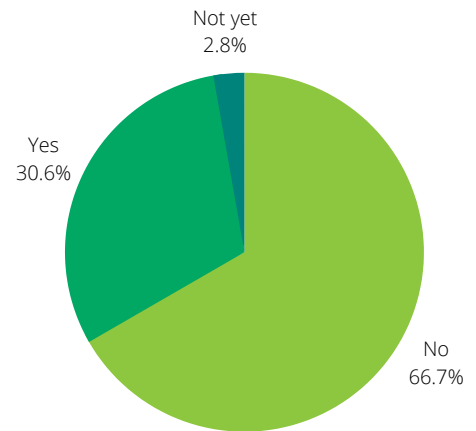
This document was created as a part of the implementation of the analytical activity of the national project Increase of the Innovation Performance of the Slovak Economy.

Innovations in Slovak SMEs

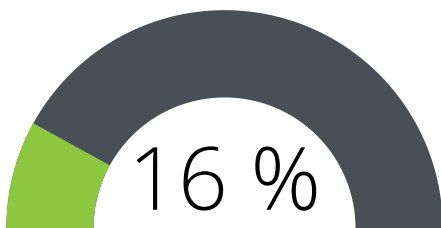
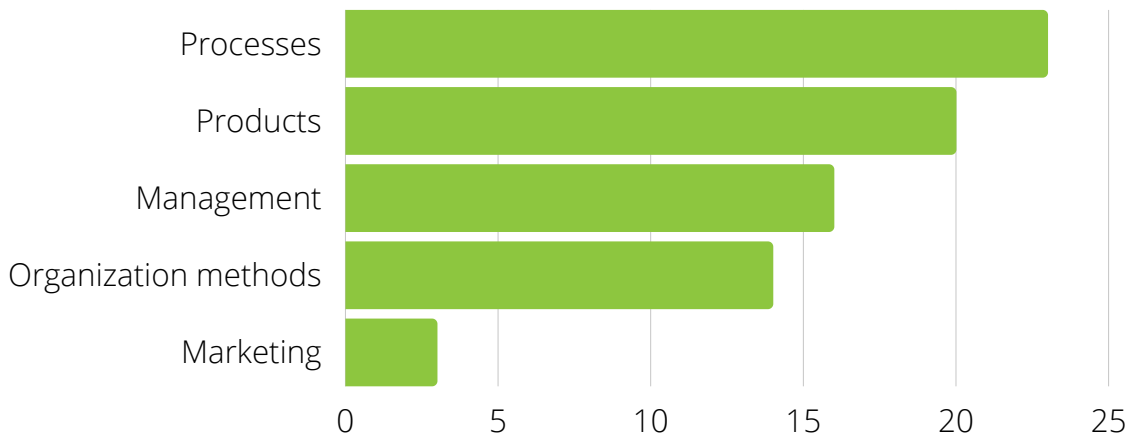
To what extent is your company innovative?



Does your company have a dedicated staff focusing on innovation?



What form of innovations does your company implement?



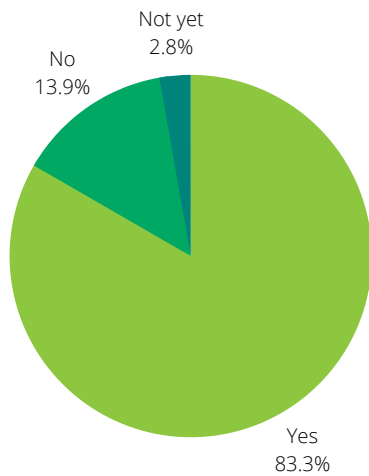
(just 5 out of 36) companies involved in the survey reward staff-induced innovation.



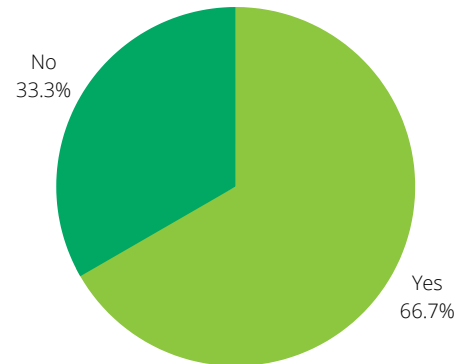
(all 5) of them use financial bonuses as a reward for staff-induced innovation.

Cooperation with FDIs

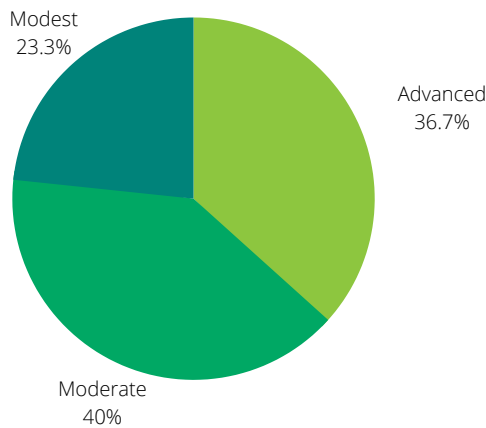
Do you cooperate with foreign companies based in Slovakia?



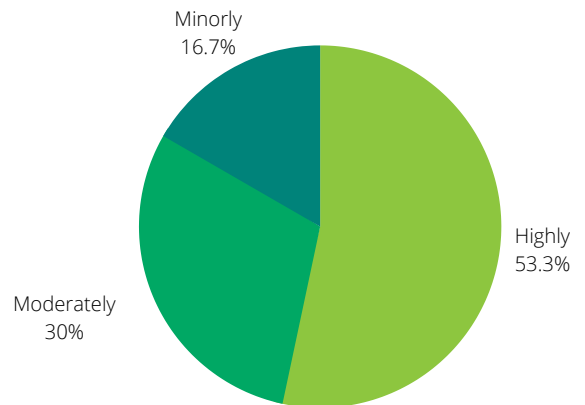
Does this collaboration involve innovative products or services that can be defined as high-tech?



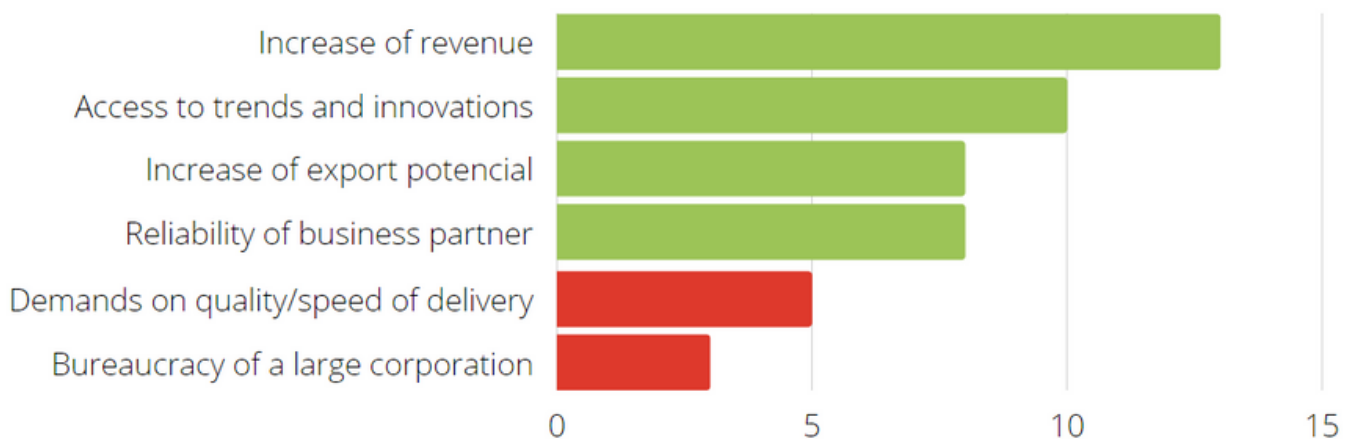
How would you rate the intensity of this collaboration?



To what extent do FDIs require innovations or proof of innovation capacity?



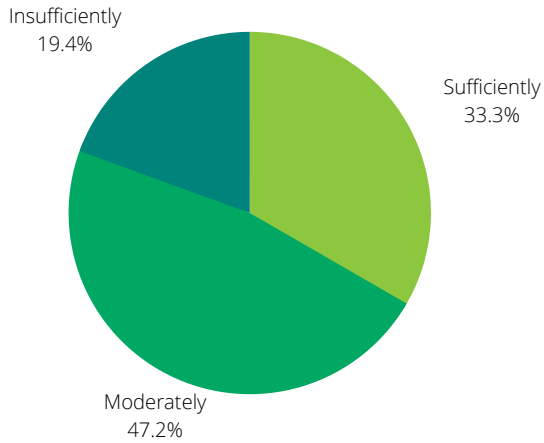
What are the main advantages and disadvantages of this cooperation?



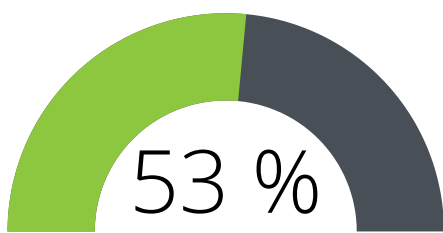
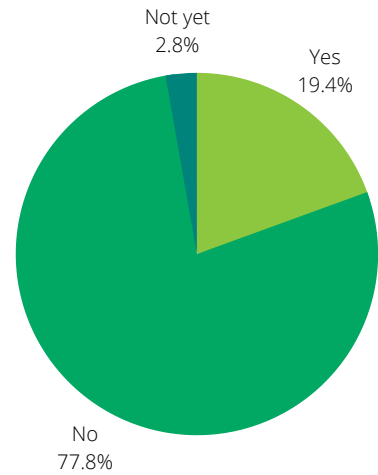
As these numbers represent, Slovak SMEs mostly benefit from their cooperation with FDIs. Only the last two options (quality of product/speed of delivery and corporate bureaucracy) were stated as negative with weaker representation in numbers of answers – only 5 and 3 answers respectively.

Cooperation with FDIs

To what extent do FDIs provide you with strategic information about their future needs, which would require innovations of your products, services or processes?

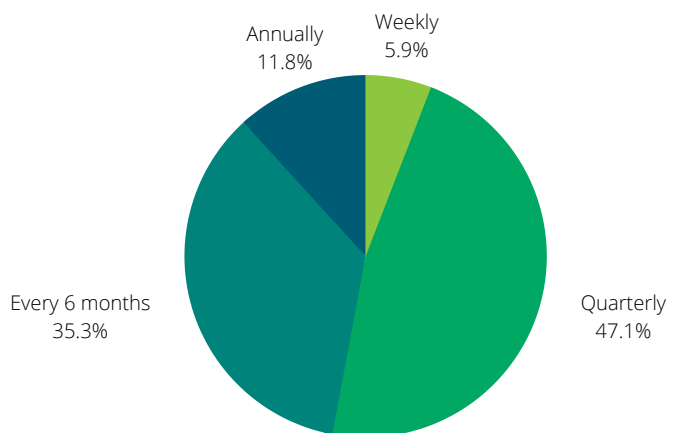


Have you ever been to an international trade fair with the company you cooperate with?



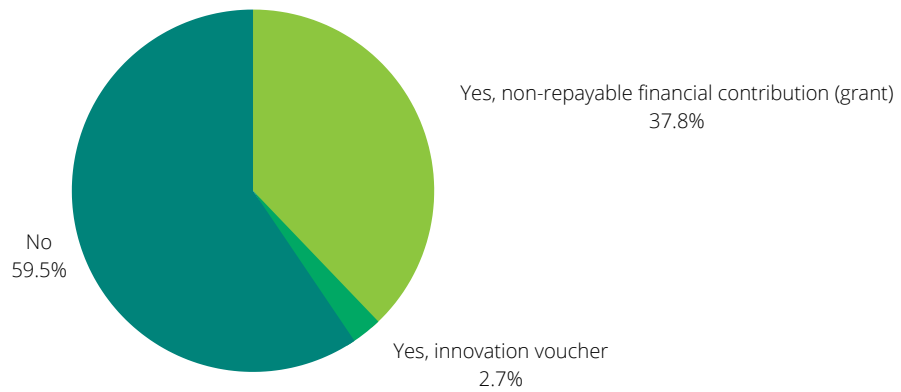
(19) of asked companies meet with representatives of FDIs regularly to discuss their innovation needs.

How often do these meetings take place?



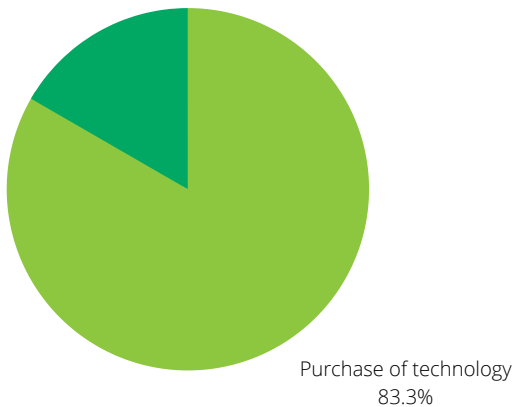
Support from Public Sector

Have you applied for any kind of innovative support from the public sector in the last 3 years?



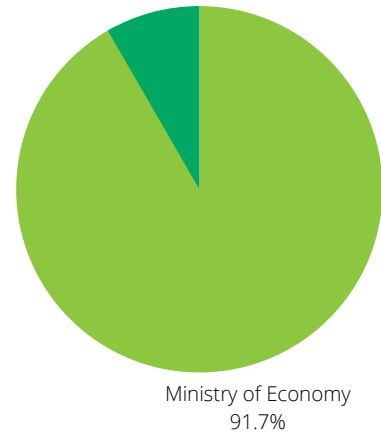
Focus of non-repayable financial contribution (grant):

Automation and robotization
16.7%



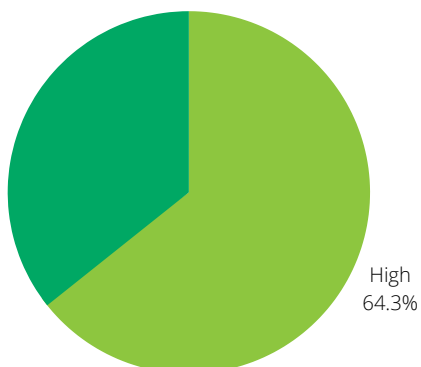
The public organization that provided it:

SIEA
8.3%



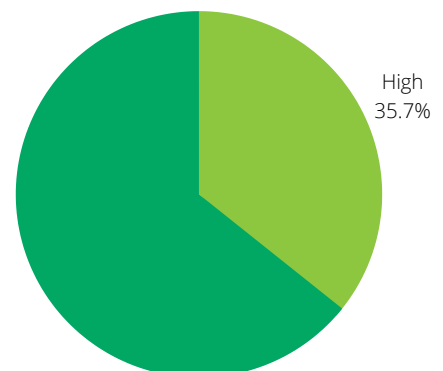
How do you rate the usefulness of this support?

Moderate
35.7%



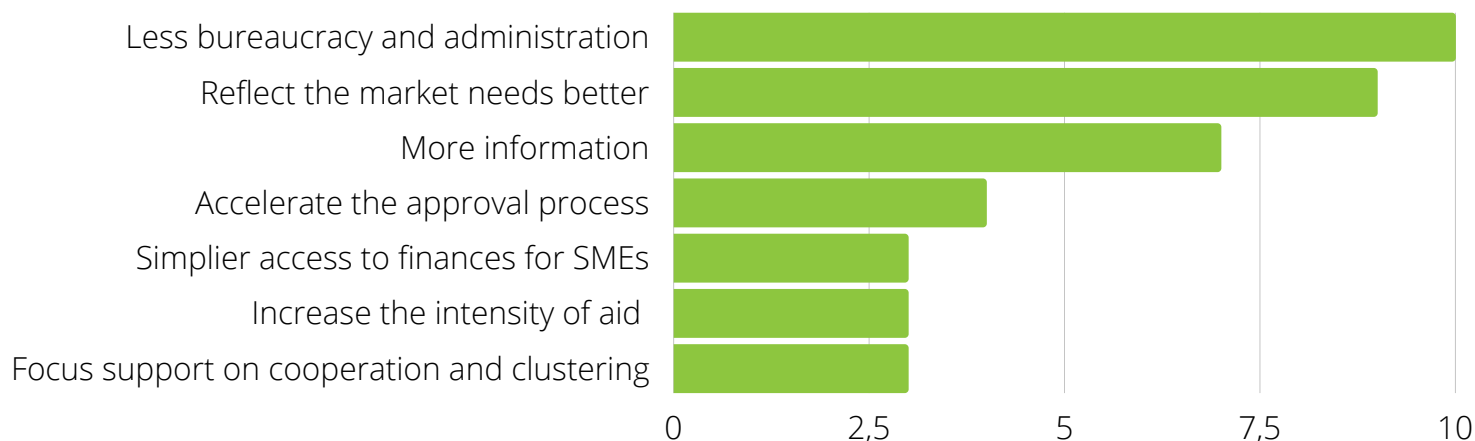
How do you evaluate the organization that provided you the support tool in terms of the services provided?

Moderate
64.3%



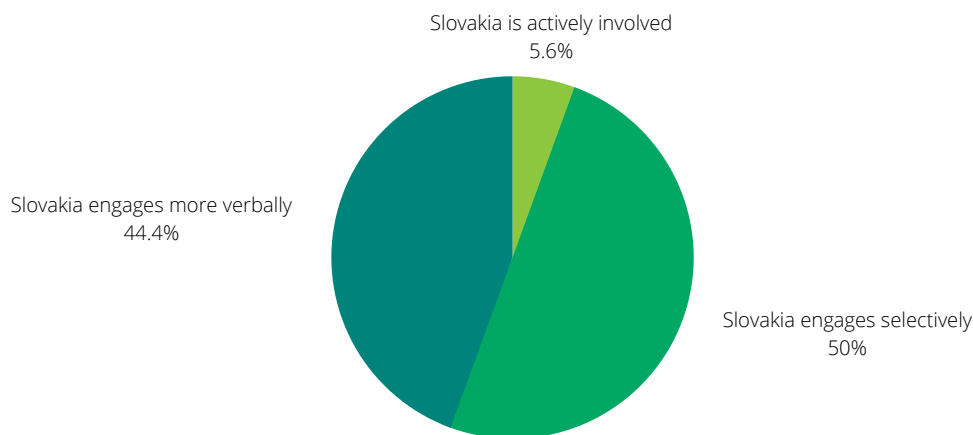
Feedback for the Public Support

How could the support provided by the public sector be improved to help your company innovate and cooperate with FDIs?



Many of the companies that took part in the survey still consider the support of public sector inefficient and too difficult. Some have shared their negative experience and reasons why they would not apply for provided aid in the future (administration that requires a dedicated employee, lengthy approval process). But we have also collected few interesting ideas (some are already being implemented) as a website that would provide information about all available support with filters to be applied to companies individual needs, cooperation with companies in the creation of future support tools (bottom-up approach) or support of clustering which helps the SMEs to gain access to R&D tools.

Innovation is a key theme of current EU initiatives, how do you evaluate the position of Slovakia in this regard?



Your company is categorized as:

