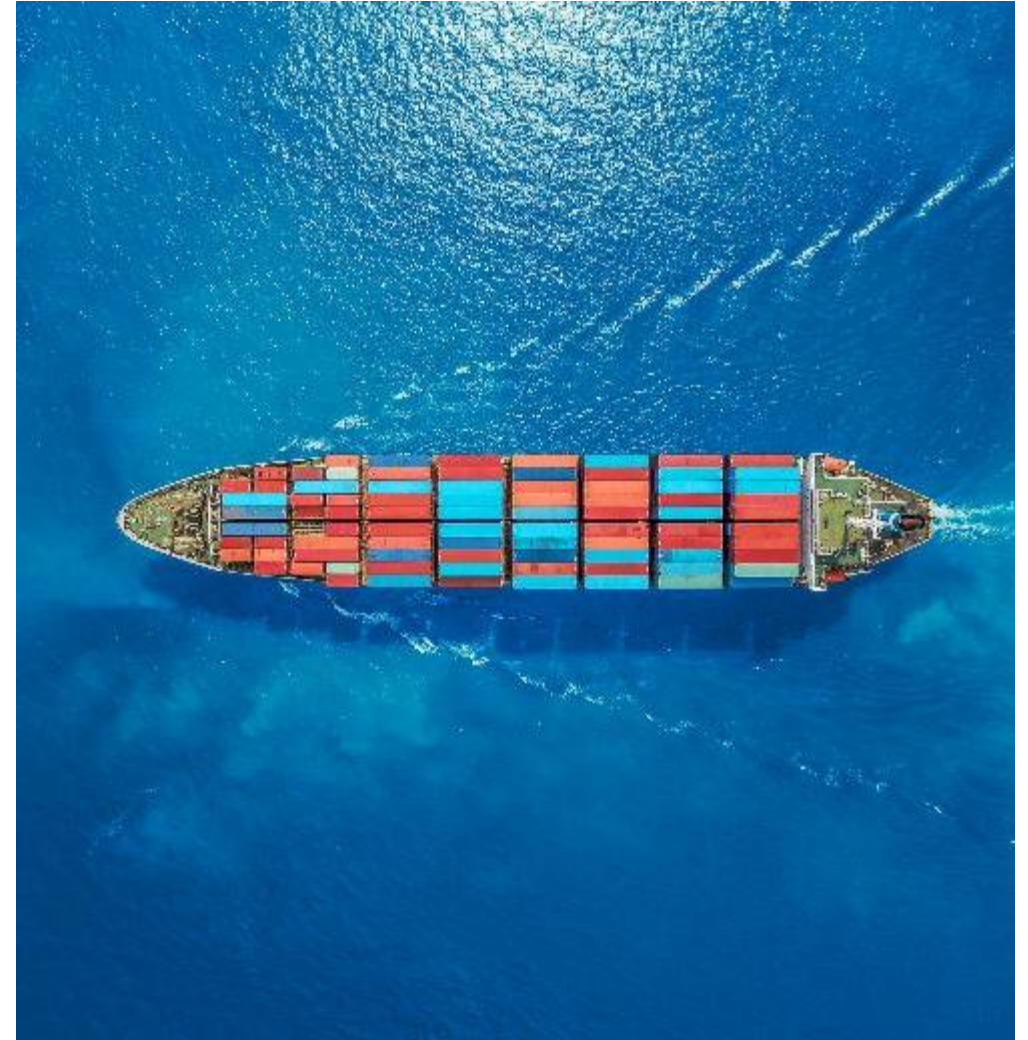


CEE companies in search of global expansion

Summary of the survey for **FedEx**

Cross country analysis

May 2026



Key findings



SMEs from the CEE region most often sell their products to **markets within Europe (99%)**. Companies considering expansion choose Europe as a first step (96%).



Sellers do not stop at their development plans - 78% of them plan further expansion. **Mainly in Europe (64%), USA (27%) and Asia (19%)**.



The barriers are the difficulty in acquiring new customers abroad, the complexity of legal regulations and **the high costs of entering a new market**.

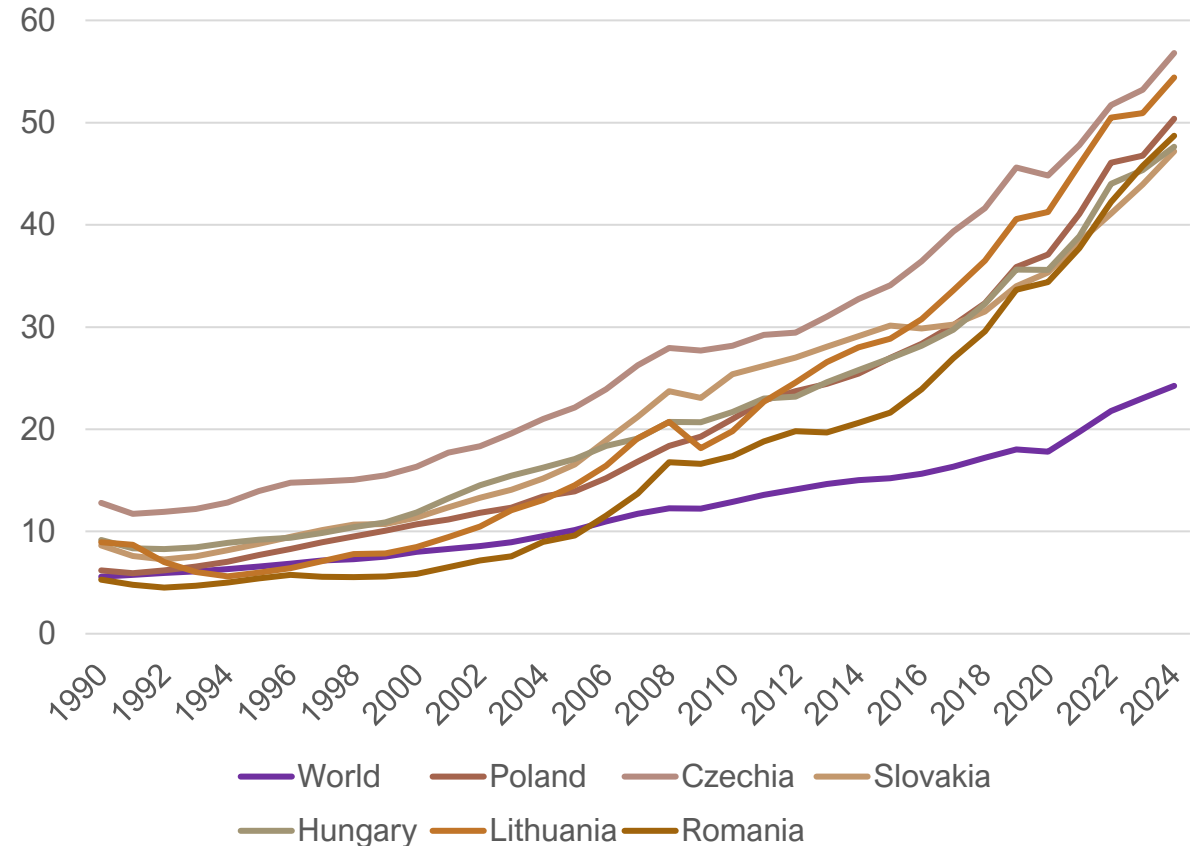


SMEs believe that knowing local culture and **using reputable suppliers** play a key role in entering new markets.

CEE – centre of European growth

- Six countries included in this survey are the biggest markets of CEE – **one of the fastest growing region of the world economically.**
- Ex-communist countries joined NATO and EU during early 2000s, opened their economies for foreign investment and transformed into free markets.
- Western Europe companies played crucial role during CEE transformation, that included local companies into western value chains (e.g., automotive). Germany is a most important export direction for companies from CEE.
- **Companies from CEE are now seeking for new opportunities and ways to grow – including distant markets (USA, Asia etc.)**

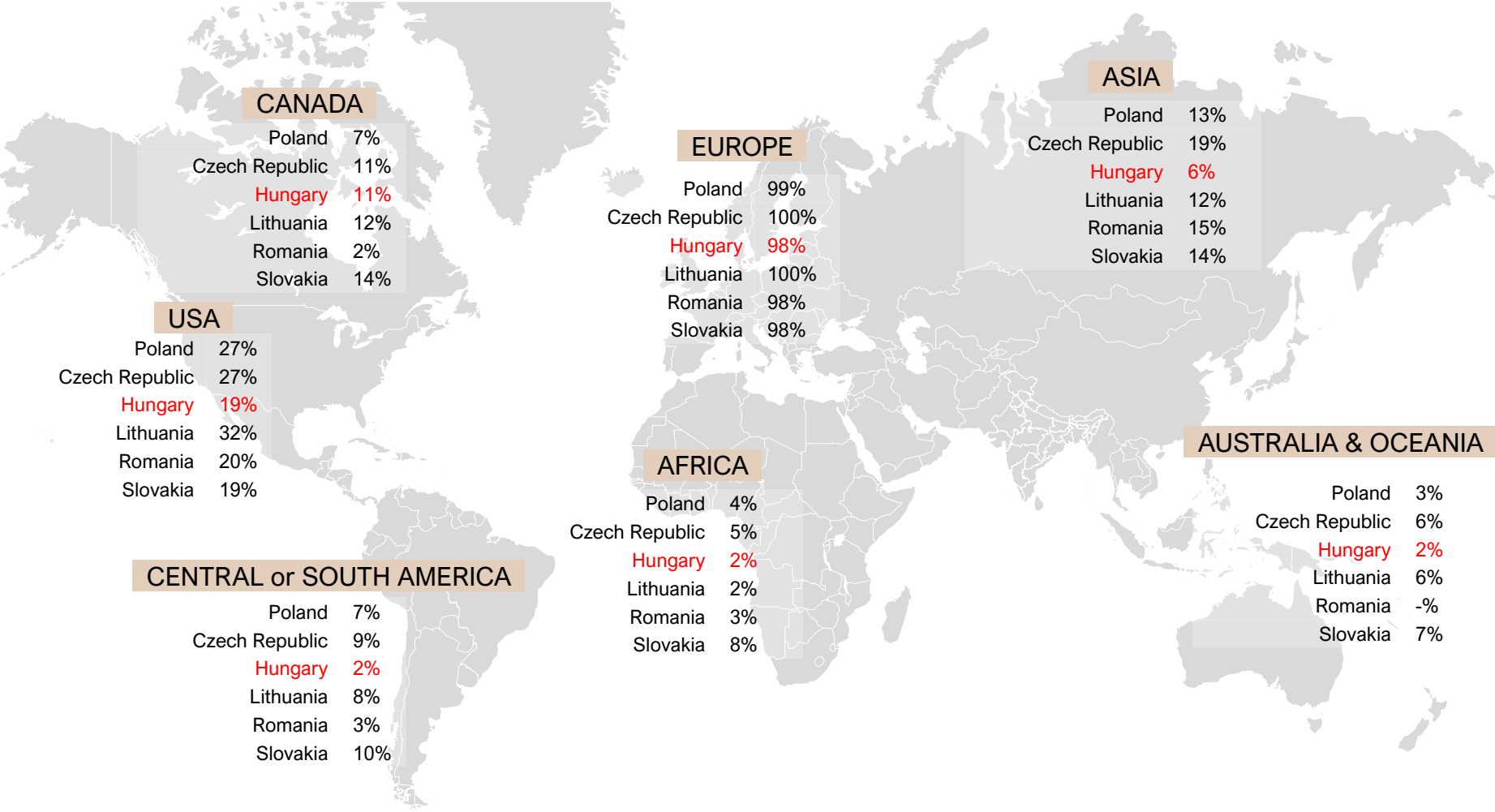
GDP per capita change (PPP, int. \$, k) – CEE vs World average





Sellers abroad from the Eastern European region are taking similar directions of expansion

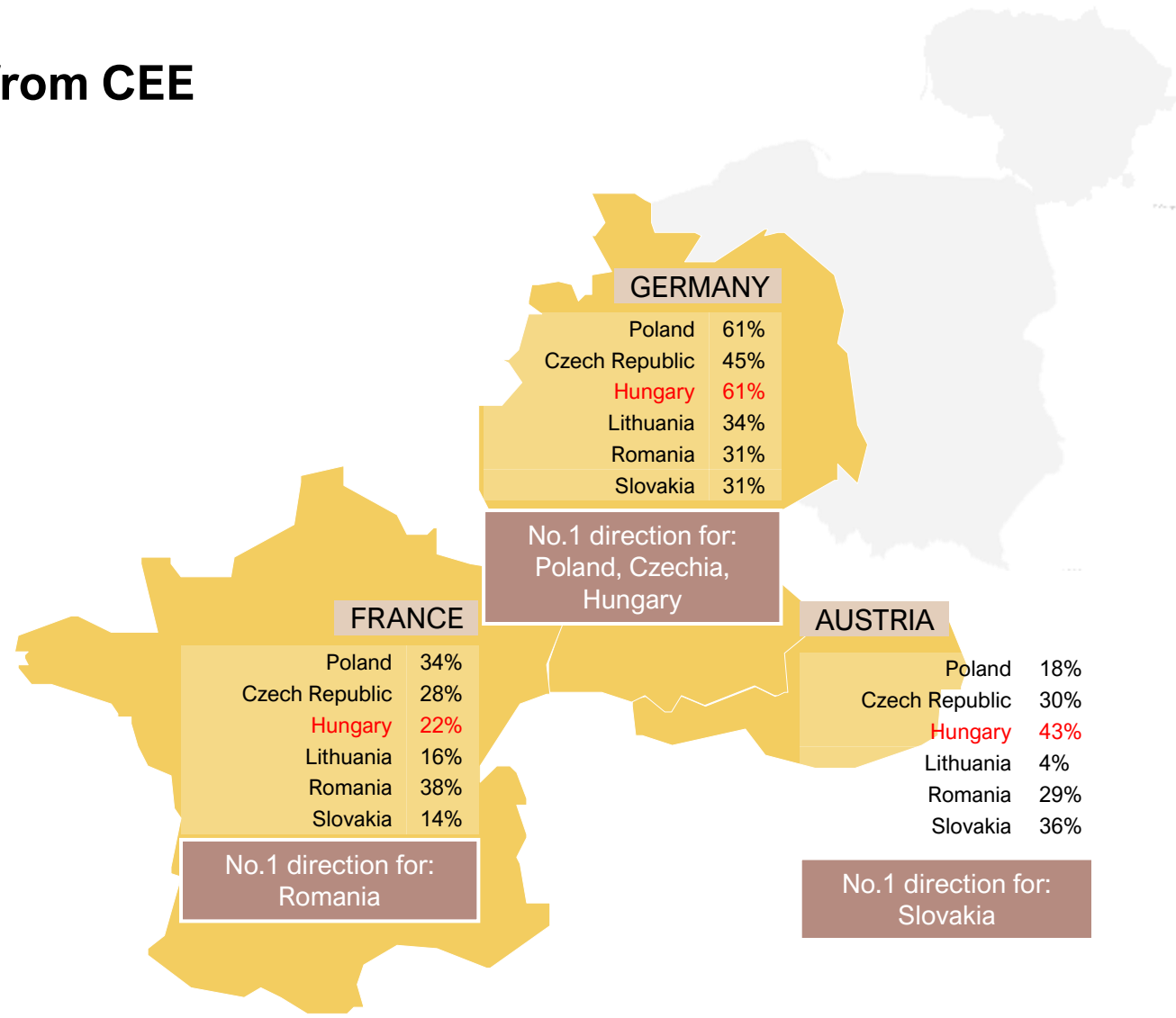
We asked companies selling abroad which markets they target with their products.





TOP 3 export directions from CEE

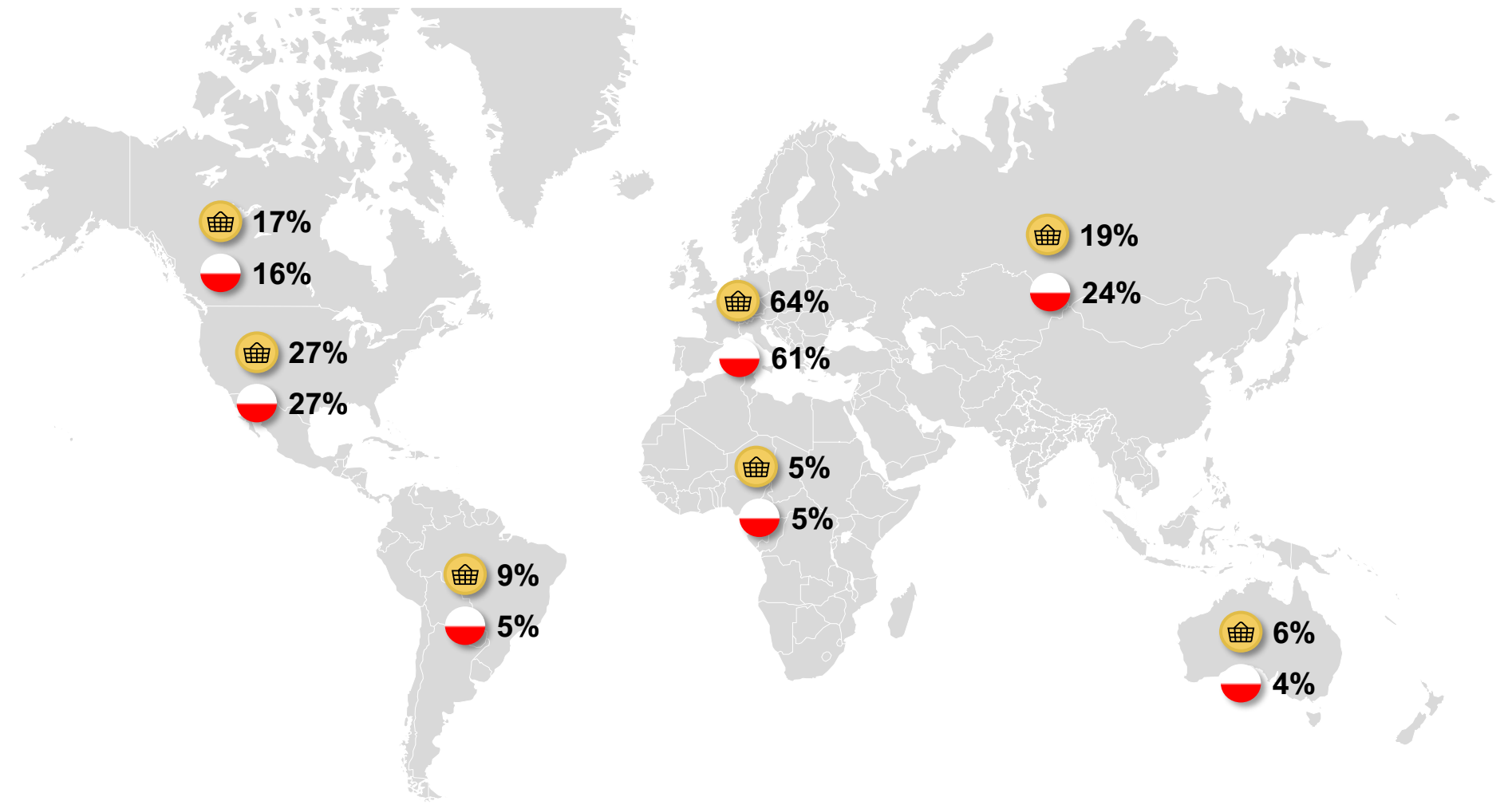
We asked companies selling abroad which countries in Europe they sell to.





Sellers planning to expand into additional markets

78%
of SMEs already engaged in international sales plan to expand into additional foreign markets



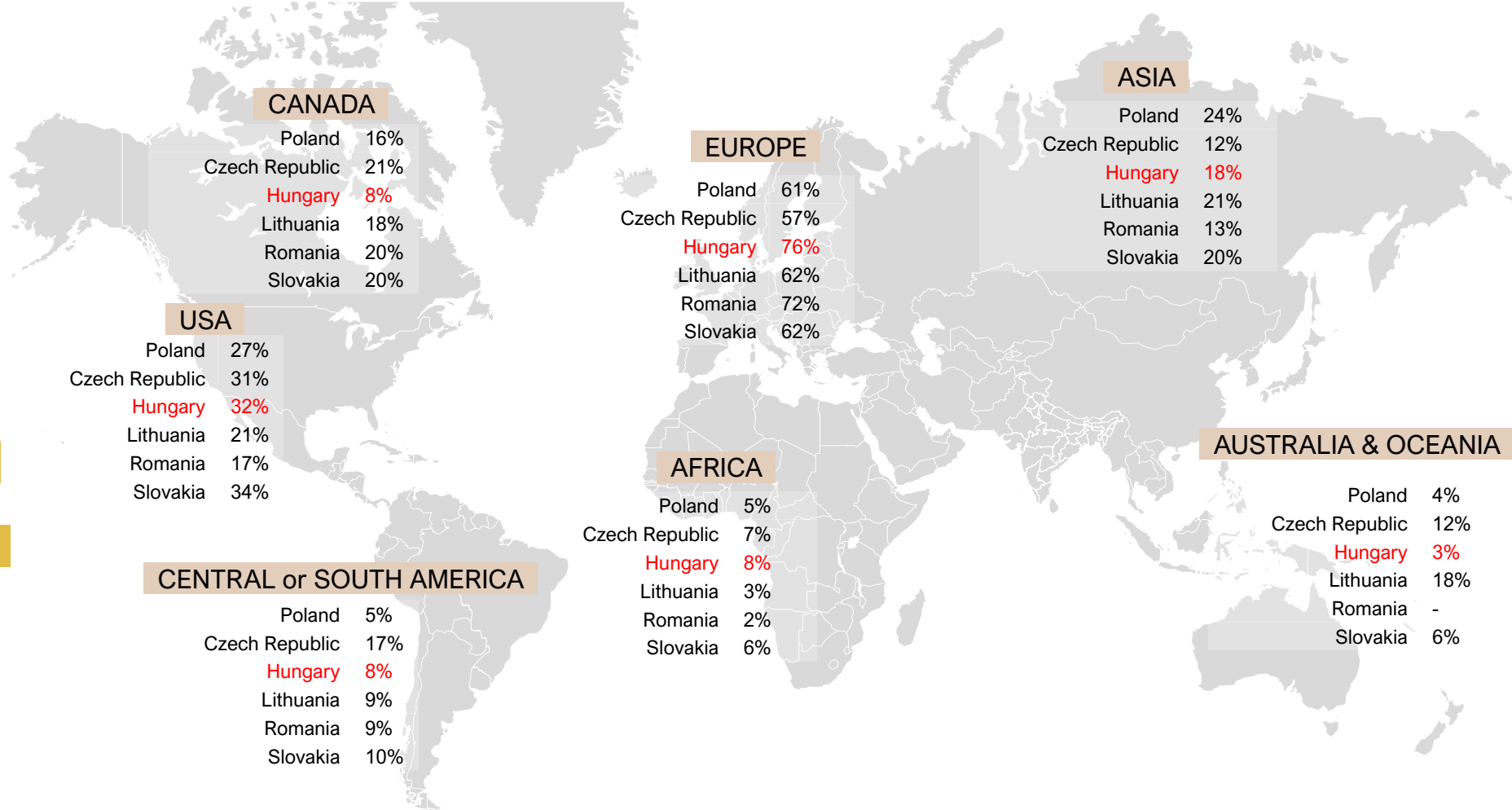
Poland	86%
Czech Republic	66%
Hungary	81%
Lithuania	68%
Romania	78%
Slovakia	85%

A7. Do you currently consider expanding into further foreign markets? Base: Those who sell internationally
 A8. Which markets do you take into consideration when thinking about expanding into other foreign markets?
 Sample size: Poland=113/Czech Republic=64/Hungary=47*/Lithuania=50/Romania=59/Slovakia=59
 *Sample too small for statistical inference



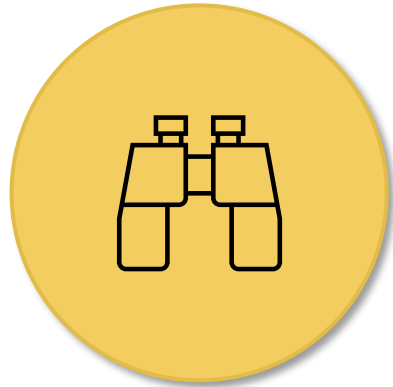
Sellers abroad from the Eastern European region are taking similar directions of expansion

We asked companies considering selling abroad which markets they would target with their products.



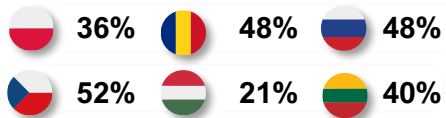


TOP3 motivations for foreign expansion



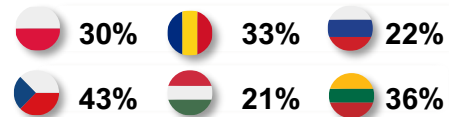
42%

Opportunity to reach a larger sales market



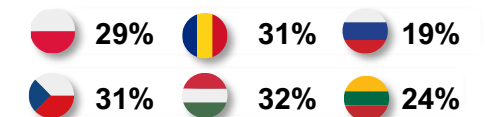
32%

Desire to gain a new source of profit



29%

Growing demand for my products in other markets



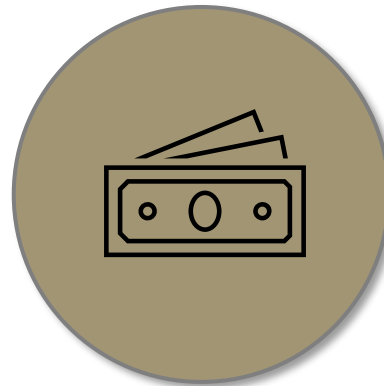
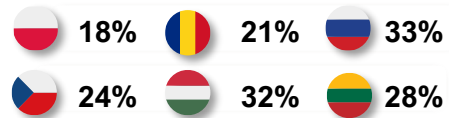


TOP3 barriers related to foreign expansion



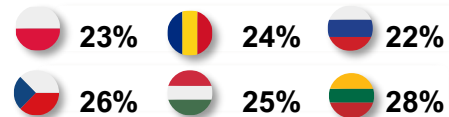
24%

Difficulty in acquiring new customers abroad



25%

High costs of entering foreign markets



21%

Too high costs related with shipping goods abroad

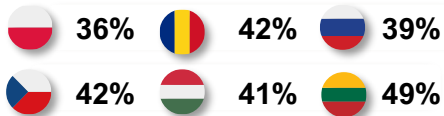


TOP3 perceived benefits of expanding into foreign markets



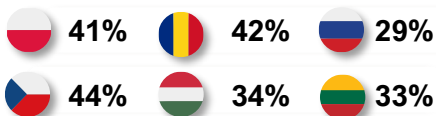
41%

Gaining new business contacts



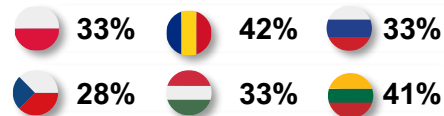
38%

Significant increase in company revenue and profit



35%

Reaching new customers through presence on international marketplaces

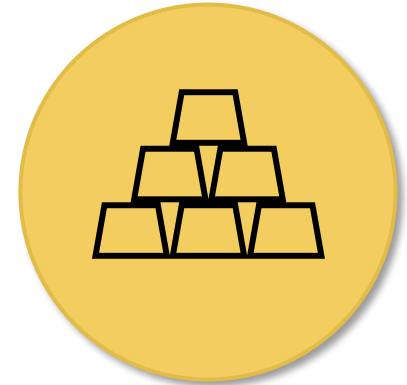


Actual benefit of expansion outside Europe – financial stability

New business contacts, new clients – that's obvious.
But what's most important - expansion outside of Europe
makes companies **stronger and more diversified**

40%

Sellers that sell outside Europe indicate **increased financial stability through diversifying income sources**



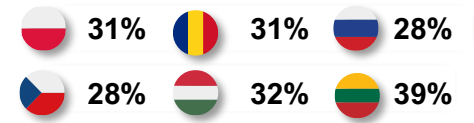
Comparing to **31%** of sellers in general pointing to increased financial stability

TOP3 current obstacles to foreign expansion



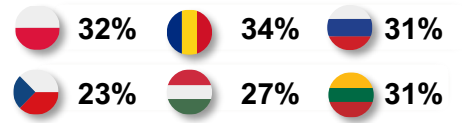
31%

Growing competition in international markets resulting from the presence of many market players



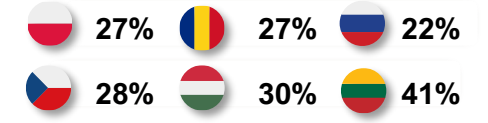
30%

Emerging tariffs and regulations resulting from political conflicts



29%

Growing price competition in international markets resulting from increasing presence of cheaper goods from Asia



Majority of companies agree – courier companies plays key role in their expansion



51% SMEs agree that using proven service providers (e.g., recognized courier companies) plays a key role in planning expansion into new markets

