

Abstract

The main purpose of this doctoral thesis is to analyze the current state of Macedonian SMEs that produce packaged foods in context of global retailing, which are at different stages of the internationalization of their business. Furthermore, the objectives of this dissertation are to locate the SMEs entre modes and problems (internal and external) perceived as an obstacles for the successful and rapid completion of the internationalization process, to examine the methods and strategies utilized in the planning and implementation of export activities, to define their competitive advantage in the global market, to determine the type of assistance expected from the wider community and to observe their relationships with global retail chains. This research covers the following internationalization dimensions: time, operation mode, market and products and brought answers to the main research questions of this study: "why", "how" and "when" Macedonian food processing SMEs manage their path toward global market and "what" are the implications on their international performances caused by the collaboration with the global retail chains. To achieve a high level of confidence of the research, the qualitative, case study approach was used. Subjects of observation are nine food processing Macedonian SMEs. The findings imply that the internationalization of the Macedonian food processing SMEs is imperative if they want to be in line with the trends in the FMCG sector and global retail industry. Collaboration with global and regional retailing chains has positive impact on the SMEs internationalization process and on their overall business performances. In some segments of internationalization they manage this process successfully, but they need further reorganization of their business and institutional support to manage this process as efficient as possible.