

### Information leaflet

Support for Bulgarian Clusters:

Clusters do actions together they cannot achieve alone!

- Since grouping together for business development might be seen as an alien concept, Growthclusters can help to facilitate the process.
- As a strong EU concept – to assist Innovation, Entrepreneurship and International Trade – most EU Countries have support schemes to develop strong Business Clusters. Bulgaria has been operating a Cluster Grant Scheme since 2009.
- The Clusters Grant Scheme has awarded 12 Grants so far – to:
  - Marine Cluster Bulgaria
  - Association Cluster and Specialized Institute of Clothing and Textiles - Danube
  - NGO EVIC - Electric Vehicles Industrial Cluster
  - Accessible Tourism Cluster
  - Cluster "Metal casting"
  - Varna Welcome Cluster
  - Inter Moda Trading Ltd.
  - Black Sea Energy Cluster
  - Green Synergy Cluster
- The 4 main Clusters in Bulgaria, longest in operation and with most results are:
  - IT Cluster (Sofia) – in operation since 2002
  - Bulgarian Furniture Cluster – 2006
  - Mechatronics Cluster (Blagoevgrad/Sofia) – 2006
  - Varna Marine Cluster – 2006 (Also awarded Cluster Grant Scheme)
- EU is moving policy to “World Class Clusters” whilst most Eastern Europe is still developing Business Groupings, encouraged by EU/IPA and membership fees. We also know that the Top 6% of SMEs produce 50% of all jobs in an economy. So, supporting more enterprising, more innovative Companies is good policy.
- We recommend:
  - You have at least 10 Companies and the ambition to increase this to 20+



- NGOs, Municipalities,
- High Schools, etc. are also encouraged to join
- Leadership stays with the SMEs
- The first Action Plan is activities you can achieve more easily
- You need some start-up monies from the first 5 to 10 SMEs.
- We can advise you on sorting out the “bureaucracy”
  - Registration of the Cluster
  - Financial models
  - Job descriptions for Cluster support staff
  - How to manage an OP Competitiveness Project
- We can train your Cluster staff (you can have up to 4)
- We can develop Terms of References for any International Marketing you need to do
  - Market Research
  - Export Strategy
  - Finding Partners in other Countries
  - Accessing SME Agency Funding
  - “Export Readiness” Training
- We are experts in Project management. Entrepreneurship and leadership Development, but also simple things like
  - How to facilitate meetings?
  - Time management
  - How to Network?

If you think our experience would be useful to you don't hesitate to contact us!