

ClusterNet Newsletter

February 2007 n° 1



ClusterNet

**Connecting, Match-making and Clustering:
new strategies to foster entrepreneurship
and to strengthen the competitiveness of
European SMEs**

Welcome to the first edition of ClusterNet on-line Newsletter!

ClusterNet aims at helping SMEs across Europe identify new opportunities in international markets and turn them into concrete business.

ClusterNet will promote advanced business cooperation formulas such as **Match-Making** and **Clustering** as strategies to foster entrepreneurship and to strengthen the competitiveness of European SMEs.

This bimestrial Newsletter will keep you informed about the latest developments in the ClusterNet project, its activities, results and relevant events.

The Newsletter will be circulated amongst all members of the ClusterNet platform.

Enjoy the reading!
The ClusterNet team

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ClusterNet at a glance

Overall objective

ClusterNet has a clear aim: to bring SMEs together in order to explore the possibilities for developing their international business. Match-Making and Clustering as strategies to Foster entrepreneurship and to strengthen the competitiveness of European SMEs

ClusterNet partners will organize local and regional events, and participate in International Trade Fairs designed to facilitate SMEs matchmaking.

By taking part in International Trade Fairs, SMEs will have access to a wealth of experience; not just access to new products and services, but also to strategic guidance and sector-specific information.

Encouraging strategic alliances in order to create clear business opportunities for SMEs: this is the benefit of ClusterNet.

ClusterNet helps enhance strategic alliances across borders, bringing more business to more SMEs.

ClusterNet strategy

Strength in numbers. Strength from creating alliances with like-minded companies from other countries:

- this is why clusters can be so successful, and this is what ClusterNet aims to provide.

ClusterNet partners will facilitate SMEs participation in local events.

Then, the most dynamic and promising SMEs will be introduced to Cross-Border Trade Fairs, with a particular emphasis on companies from new member states.

Finally, ClusterNet will interact with a network of International Trade Fairs, increasing the potential for SMEs to reach new markets and new clients, giving them business opportunities they cannot find on their own.

Logistical, service and financial supports available to SMEs joining the ClusterNet programme. Tools designed to help them obtain a competitive advantage, identify potential markets and develop new business opportunities



ClusterNet Partnership

The ClusterNet consortium is made of 12 partners from 11 countries.

EBN is the project coordinator.

European Business & Innovation Network Centre Belgium		www.ebn.eu
Sviluppo Italia Friuli Venezia Giulia Italy		www.sviluppoitalifvg.it
BIC Frankfurt Oder Germany		www.bic-ffo.de
Sviluppo Italia Sicilia Italy		www.sviluppoitaliasicilia.it
LOP – Lubuska Organizacja Pracodawców Poland		www.lop.wsb.gorzow.pl
Business Development Friesland Netherlands		www.bdfriesland.nl
Innostart National Business & Innovation Centre Hungary		www.innostart.hu
BIC Brno Czech republic		www.bicbrno.cz
West BIC Ireland		www.westbic.ie
CRMG Ljubljana Slovenia		www.crmg.si
Nicosia Chamber of Commerce & Industry Cyprus		www.firstelements.cy
BIC Burgenland Eisenstadt Austria		www.bice.at

ClusterNet Kick-off Meeting

27th – 28th February 2007

ClusterNet takes off...

The ClusterNet kick-off meeting was held on 27th - 28th February 2007 in Frankfurt Oder (GE) and it was hosted by the German partner BIC Frankfurt Oder.

All ClusterNet partners participated in the meeting and this represented the first occasion for them to meet and discuss the key objectives of the project.

The consortium welcomed CRMG, who has replaced the Slovenian partner JAPTI .

The partners also approved the Consortium Agreement, which will regulate the partnership.

All partners showed great enthusiasm towards the project and underlined the first steps to be taken to successfully achieve the challenging objectives of the project.



The next ClusterNet partners meeting will be held in June, 20th 2007 in Canterbury (UK) on the occasion of the XVI EBN Annual Congress



The consortium agreed on a common strategy to be followed by all the partners to assist and support SMEs in order to foster entrepreneurship and to strengthen the competitiveness of European SMEs.

Partners' efforts will mainly focus on:

- ◆ Raising Awareness of the ClusterNet initiative amongst SMEs and BSOs
- ◆ Assessing SMEs internationalization needs
- ◆ Training/Coaching to prepare SMEs for the events
- ◆ Matchmaking activities for SMEs at regional & international events/fairs
- ◆ Follow Up activities to assist SMEs to achieve their international business development goals



Partner of the month...

BIC Frankfurt Oder (Germany)



Supporting SMEs...

✓ Support for innovative companies

- ◆ Consultation
- ◆ Services
- ◆ Infrastructure
- ◆ Contact- and information negotiations

✓ Support for setting up a new business

✓ Individual support for your business activity on site.

- ◆ Technology and innovation promotion
- ◆ Business Promotion
- ◆ Starting Capital for innovative businesses
- ◆ Support for international commerce



Our services...

- ◆ Services and equipment for rent
- ◆ Office services
- ◆ Telecommunication services
- ◆ Video conference
- ◆ Conference room

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