

# Methodology for Measuring the Benefits of Participation in Business Clusters

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## ABSTRACT

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Running a business in the complex and global world requires cooperation of entities with different complementary resources and competences. A socio-economic organization which wishes to be competitive in the modern market must possess proper human, financial, material and information resources and be able to use them in the most effective way. A significant element in creating a network of connections is the absorption of knowledge and its skillful use linked with shaping innovation. Stimulation of the flow of knowledge between cooperating entities increases the level of innovation of undertaken projects. Enterprises and institutions that join together in cluster initiatives bring their material potentials, skills and experience in order to survive in a competitive market (most often small and medium-sized enterprises, scientific and research institutions) and to multiply the possibilities of achieving benefits. The accepted thesis of the article which claims that new, cooperating, innovative inter-organizational networks supported by local institutions contribute to an increase of their competitiveness in the market does not require special justification. However, the research problem is to indicate the methods by which it is possible to assess if participation in a business cluster brings benefits in specific areas of activity. The starting point for considerations in the presented study is the assumption that participation in clusters provides economic, social and scientific entities with economic or marketing benefits as well as knowledge development and socio-economic revival of a region. The main scientific inquiry, not only for the purposes of this thesis but also knowledge necessary for managers, is the effectiveness level of the adopted project. The aim of the article is to present research methods that can be used to assess the benefits that individual organizational entities achieve due to participation in a business cluster or a cluster initiative.

**Keywords:** Clusters, Innovation, Efficiency, Competitiveness.