

TARGET GROUPS

▶ **370 SMEs' representatives from Dolj-Vidin cross border area:** 185 from Dolj and 185 from Vidin

The basis for economic development is represented by SMEs' development level. Even if it appears that Dolj county is most developed, with 10 600 SMEs, than Vidin – 2 081, the SMEs density per capita is in favor of the Bulgarian district: 25 SMEs/1000 inhabitants, compared to 16 in Dolj. These numbers prove that SMEs sector is evolving in both districts, supporting local economies, as the GDP/capita (euro) proves: 1 755,2 in Dolj and 1 622 in Vidin (year 2003). However, these SMEs are oriented to traditional sectors and agriculture, despite important efforts made for management and technological development by business incubators, technological parks and universities. Research institutes and centers are well represented in Dolj-Vidin area (5% of Romanian researchers are concentrated in Dolj), however, there are few demands for technological improvements from SMEs in the area. SMEs rarely export their products or services, in Dolj main exporters being large automotive enterprises. However, only 22,1% of Dolj industrial production is exported. SMEs' interest in exports is proved by increased participation to over 20 fairs and exhibitions organized in Dolj-Vidin cross border area, even if fewer are internationally open.

▶ **40 Public authorities from Dolj-Vidin cross border area:** 20 from Dolj and 20 from Vidin

There are 11 municipalities in Vidin district and the commitment to support economic development and improve local image is proven by recent projects implemented, such as "PromSTAP" , in cooperation with regions from Germany, Italy, France, Denmark, Switzerland and Netherlands. The objective of this project is to give the opportunity to local SMEs for reaching unified standards and quality of the food products, in order to supply on EU market. In Dolj county, there are 3 municipalities, 4 cities and 104 villages. Most of the economic activity of these districts is concentrated in cities and municipalities, therefore, local authorities are strongly committed to increase SMEs' development opportunities. However, there are few local and/or regional portals and information facilities to support public authorities' efforts for local promotion. Generally, local authorities promote economic actors on local web pages, which have less impact on international and cross border level. The initiative of this project is important for local authorities, due to the enlargement given to local promotion, from public sector to business climate. Project partners are representative organizations for their field of activity, with strong business impact, therefore this initiative to promote cross border competitive advantages to international business climate will attract and sustain local authorities' participation.