



## **ECRN Joint Position**

### **Joint Declaration of the ECRN Presidium**

**13.05.2004, Berlin**

**[www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net)**



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The European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN) is a co-operation of chemical regions in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Poland and Estonia which aims at fostering and profiling the regional aspects in developing the framework conditions for the chemical industry in the European Union.

At the meeting of the network Presidium on the 13.05.04 in Berlin the following declaration was adopted:

- The chemical industry in Europe is currently faced with a deep process of restructuring and adaptation towards new framework conditions which for example are linked to globalisation and the enlargement of the European Union. These framework conditions are more and more determined by European directives and regulations in the field of environment, safety and competitions policy.
- In the chemical regions the chemical industry plays a leading determining role for economic performance, growth and employment.
- To meet the challenges of globalisation and EU enlargement and to react in a pro-active way towards the growing number of European rules and regulations, the chemical regions in Europe have set up a network, to work together for safeguarding competitiveness of their sites.
- The European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN) has already several times taken a stand towards the current proposals of the European Union for the new chemical policy and the design of the European industrial policy. One result of these measures is the documentation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> European Congress of Chemical Regions which took place on the 05/06.02.2004 in Halle/Saale.
- With regard to the future design of the European chemicals policy the ECRN Presidium welcomes the announcement of the European Institutions to leave the



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first reading of the Commission proposals to the newly elected European Parliament.

- This ensures more time for case studies and impact assessment and to discuss the still open questions.
- The ECRN-Presidium welcomes the intention of the European Commission to co-operate closer with the European Chemical Regions in the future. Especially the simulation exercises carried out in some chemical regions have shown that the burden for SME are too big in implementing the proposed regulation.
- The economic and social viability of the regulation can only be measured on the basis of a clear impact and cost assessment. The regulation must be considerably shortened, streamlined and more focussed on the reality at the ground. Double regulations must be avoided and the registration procedure must be simplified. Disadvantaged in the global competition regarding market shares and the loss of employment must be avoided for the companies in the EU-Member States. The new regulation must provide framework conditions which do not endanger future and current investments.
- Regarding the future link between the chemical policy and other EU policies such as labour and health policy it must be ensured that the data gathered by the REACH system are also the basis for actions in these policies. Different models for registering chemicals and expositions must be avoided.
- The ECRN Presidium reaffirms its interest to involve also representatives from the Member States and is in particular welcoming the initiative of Great Britain, France and Germany to establish a closer co-operation in industry policy matters.
- The ECRN Presidium calls upon all chemical sites in Europe to join this initiative and to ensure that regional aspects of the chemical industry in Europe are stronger recognised as in the past.



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**Notes for Editors:**

**ECRN:** The “European Chemical Regions Network” has the objective to exchange experiences about the joint challenges for chemical regions and initiate a mutual learning for the strengthening of the chemical sector. Joint positions on relevant policy issues are developed to raise the regional voice in the European decision making process. The partner regions are Saxony-Anhalt as the coordinator, North Rhine Westphalia and Lower Saxony (GER), Huelva, Asturias and Catalunya (SPA), Lombardia and Piemonte (ITA), North East and North West of England (UK), Limburg (NL), Masovia (PL) and Ida-Viru (EST). Contacts to further chemical regions have been established to enlarge the network and become a stakeholder at European level. The total project budget is 1.639.000 €, 61% of which is funded by the European Union. More details about the ECRN can be found on its website at [www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net).

**INTERREG IIIC** is an EU-funded programme that helps Europe’s regions form partnerships to work together on common projects. These projects enable regions to share knowledge and experience that will help them develop new solutions to economic, environmental and social challenges. 98 percent of all European Union regions are involved in INTERREG IIIC projects. There are more than 250 INTERREG IIIC projects running involving 2500 local and regional actors from 50 countries; 20 percent of these are from new EU Members. More information on INTERREG IIIC can be found on [www.interreg3c.net](http://www.interreg3c.net).