



EUROPEAN CHEMICAL  
REGIONS NETWORK

# ECRN - NEWS ::

03 September 2005

## ECRN Presidium Meeting in Warsaw

The third meeting of the ECRN Presidium took place in Warsaw on the 12 May 2005. The host region Masovia used this opportunity to give a detailed overview of the chemical industry in Poland and discuss prospects for joint activities with the Presidium Members.

The main result of the ECRN Presidium has been the adoption of a joint declaration on the future of the European Chemicals Policy. The ECRN has jointly developed amendments for the REACH proposal in the framework of the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of the European Parliament and wants to promote modifications to increase the workability of the Commission's proposal. From the perspective of the chemical regions the new European chemical legislation has to be based on transparent and unbureaucratic procedures that constitute a EU wide standardised framework.

Furthermore, the Presidium has decided on a future statute for an ECRN association.

## Third European Congress of Chemical Regions, 6 October 2005, Milan

The 3<sup>rd</sup> European Congress of Chemical Regions will take place on the 6 October 2005 in Milan in order to discuss joint challenges of the chemical regions together with high-level representatives from politics, science and industry. Main topics of the Congress will be the contribution of the chemical industry to sustainable development in Europe, new perspectives of the REACH proposal,



This will establish the basis for a sustainable partnership of the chemical regions beyond the INTERREG project and will integrate new members in the network activities. The association shall be established by the end of the year.

During the year 2005, the exchange of experience is supported by the implementation of five studies with the following topics: cooperation of science and industry, development of human resources, chemical park management, environment and legislation and waste land improvement. First intermediary results should be presented during the third European Congress of Chemical Regions on the 6 October 2005 in Milan. Several high-level representatives from European, national and regional level will be expected for the Congress.

European Research and Innovation in chemical regions and the future shape of EU structural funds. Roberto Formigoni, President of Lombardy Region and Dr. Horst Rehberger, Minister for Economy and Labour of Saxony-Anhalt and ECRN President will be the key speakers of the event. The Congress is organised at the Fiera Milano. More information and online registration is available at [www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net).

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PROJECT PART-FINANCED  
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Lower Saxony  
*Regional Partnership Meeting*

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*Summary of Results*

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*Presentation of Study Topics*

Opening of  
Fraunhofer Pilot  
Plant Centre

Regional Profiles  
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Lombardia*

## The regional network in Limburg is alive and kicking

After the organisation of two Regional Partnership Meetings this year and with the third on the horizon (13 October) the Province of Limburg had a promising start for the local chemical enterprises network. The network consists of about 50 chemical processing companies, universities and professional training institutions in Limburg and the direct vicinity (RWTH Aachen, ULG Liège, and TU Eindhoven). At the first meeting three topics were discussed: opportunities for Limburg, knowledge exchange and REACH. At the end of the meeting, a network agenda was drawn up including topics and actions for the future. The participants were surprised that they did not know many of the other companies. At the second meeting, companies discussed possibilities for cooperation and joint activities with regard to efficient produc-



*Regional Partnership Meeting in Limburg*

tion and cooperation in the value chain. For more information about the network and meetings, please visit [www.erische.mieinlimburg.nl](http://www.erische.mieinlimburg.nl) (the site is in Dutch). The website also includes an overview of the companies and other parties involved.

## Regional Partnership Meeting in Lower Saxony

The ECRN Regional Partnership Meeting in Lower Saxony was organised for the 19 May 2005 in Hannover. 17 participants from industry and administration came together to discuss joint activities in the ECRN. Several topics were discussed such as the participation of Lower Saxony in the studies “Science and Industry”, “Skills and Training” and Chemical Park Management” or the general implementation of the ECRN work plan. Dr Legler from the Lower Saxony Institute for Economic Research (NIW) presented the most important results from the study “Innovation engine Chemistry 2005 – Performance and challenges” published in April 2005. Mr Wallenhauer from the Chemical Industry Training Programme in North Germany (BCI) presented an alliance training

project in the plastics area “New models in the area of training”. Ms Schneider from ChemCoast e. V. reported on developments in the ChemCoast project in which the chemical industry locations of Brunsbüttel in Schleswig-Holstein and Seelze, Stade, Walsrode and Wilhelmshaven in Lower Saxony are involved. ChemCoast – which is now a registered association – represents the entire North German chemical region and its marketing. During the meeting the participants identified the future focus of Lower Saxony in the future ECRN activities in order to benefit from the interregional exchange of experience. More information is provided on the web page of the chemical association VCI Nord: [www.chemieverbaende.de/s01n.html](http://www.chemieverbaende.de/s01n.html).

## Mentoring European Knowledge of Chemical Regions – Summary of Results



The final conference of the project “Mentoring European Knowledge of the Chemical Regions” (MentorChem) took place on the 15 June in Brussels to present the results of the cooperation between Saxony-Anhalt, Lombardia and Asturias. High level representatives from the three partner regions and the European Commission came together to discuss joint challenges and prospects for future activities. The project MentorChem has been a spin off from the ECRN partnership that gave the opportunity to deepen the exchange of experience between chemical regions in several areas. The results of this project are also to the benefit of the other ECRN partners.

Being among the first projects supported by the pilot action “Regions of Knowledge” that is partly financed by the European Commission, the project partners IDEPA, Cestec and isw GmbH used the opportunity to exchange best practice solutions for the development of chemical regions. The main topics of cooperation were the support of the cluster development, regional research competences in chemistry, regional strategies on REACH and the exchange of experience between chemical site initiatives.

The partners have been developing a comprehensive overview about the regional research competences in chemistry that has been published in a joint brochure. This publication contains detailed information about the research activities in the three regions. It should help to increase transparency and to facilitate joint research cooperation projects.

The two chemical site initiatives CeChem-Net (Saxony-Anhalt) and AIQPA (Asturias) have been brought together in the framework of the MentorChem project. An expert delegation from Asturias has visited Saxony-Anhalt to exchange

experience and to identify topics for cooperation. A joint brochure has been published to describe innovative activities and to identify potential for the transfer of experience.

The impact of REACH on the chemical industry in the partner region was a main concern of the project. Based on the experience of the partners, IDEPA has carried out an impact assessment of REACH in Asturias and organised a high level conference on the 5 May 2005 in Oviedo to discuss the results with representatives from politics, science and industry.



The MentorChem Project has participated in the debate on the development of the European Technology Platform “Sustainable Chemistry” (SusChem). During the round table the potential for a long-term strategy of the European Research Policy in Chemistry has been intensively discussed with representatives from the European Commission, the chemical industry and the project partners.

Finally, the exchange of experience about several topics has been summarised in a joint brochure that gives a comprehensive description about topics such as the Metacluster and the Voucher System in Lombardia, the Fraunhofer Pilot Plant Center for Polymer Synthesis and Processing and the chemistry initiative in Saxony-Anhalt or the network of technology centres in Asturias.

All information about the project and the publications as well as the presentations of the conference can be accessed at the project webpage: [www.mentorchem.net](http://www.mentorchem.net).

## SPORT results presented – practical testing of REACH

The results of the project “SPORT”, initiated by the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic), several Member States as well as the European employers associations UNICE and UEAPME and the European Commission, have been presented. Under the name “Strategic Partnership for REACH Testing (SPORT)” registration procedures for 8 chemicals have been tested in order to develop concrete proposals for an improvement of the REACH system. During the last 12 months working groups have been

established under participation of downstream users and chemical producers to practically implement the proposed registration procedures of REACH. The European Commission had already announced before to integrate SPORT results in a modified proposal. The European Chemical Regions Network has been directly participating in the SPORT project as an observer.

The report and annexes can be downloaded in the following web page: [www.sport-project.info](http://www.sport-project.info).

## ECRN further strengthens the interregional exchange of experience

The main objective of the European Chemical Regions Network is the initiation of a broad process of exchange of experience. Based on the intensive discussion in the project, the partners will implement five studies that are focused on themes of common interest. The five topics that have been jointly identified by the partners are “Cooperation of Science and Industry”, “Skills and Training in the Chemical Industry”,

“Chemical Park Management”, “Environment and Legislation” and “Waste Land Improvement”. The final results of the studies will be presented at the end of 2005. For each study one partner region has taken over the responsibility for implementation. More information will be published on the projects web page [www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net) or can be obtained directly from the coordinating region.

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### UPCOMING ECRN-ACTIVITIES

6 October 2005

3<sup>rd</sup> European Congress of Chemical Regions  
Milan, Italy

23 / 24 November 2005

ECRN Working Group Meeting  
Tees Valley, UK

24 / 25 November 2005

DICIDA Conference  
Gisborough Hall,  
Tees Valley, UK

December 2005

ECRN Presidium Meeting  
Maastricht, Netherlands

## Short Presentation of Study Topic “Chemical Park Management”

### IMPRINT

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(ECRN)

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#### Pictures

isw GmbH  
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The management of chemical parks plays an important role for the further development of the chemical industry in Europe. There are many innovative solutions for management models of chemical parks that respond to the challenges of globalisation and competition. Especially the trend of developing networks between several chemical locations increases the cooperation for joint marketing activities or collaboration in other areas. The examples of ChemSite and ChemCologne in North Rhine Westphalia, CeChemNet in Saxony-Anhalt or ChemCoast in Northern Germany demonstrate the success of joint activities. Based on these developments the study aims to give an overview about the situation of the chemical park management in the six regions Lower Saxony, North Rhine Westphalia, Saxony-Anhalt, Limburg, Masovia and Huelva. The study will give an overview about the existing chemical locations and the competencies in the area of chemical park management in order to identify best-practice solutions that are relevant for a mutual learning process. Finally the study will develop conclusions for the prospects of joint activities and the further development of chemical locations.

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### ECRN – Links

- European Chemical Regions Network  
[www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net)
- Saxony-Anhalt (Germany) – Lead Partner  
[www.sachsen-anhalt.de](http://www.sachsen-anhalt.de)
- North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany)  
[www.nrw.de](http://www.nrw.de)
- Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit (UK)  
[www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk](http://www.teesvalley-jsu.gov.uk)
- Government of Catalonia (Spain)  
[www.gencat.net](http://www.gencat.net)
- Voivodeship of Masowia (Polen)  
[www.mazovia.pl](http://www.mazovia.pl)
- Province of Limburg (The Netherlands)  
[www.limburg.nl](http://www.limburg.nl)
- Lower Saxony (Germany)  
[www.niedersachsen.de](http://www.niedersachsen.de)
- Piedmont Region (Italy)  
[www.regione.piemonte.it](http://www.regione.piemonte.it)
- Country Council of Huelva (Spain)  
[www.diphuelva.es](http://www.diphuelva.es)
- Lombardy Region Government (Italy)  
[www.artigianato.regione.lombardia.it](http://www.artigianato.regione.lombardia.it)
- Ida-Viru Country Government (Estonia)  
[www.ivmv.ee](http://www.ivmv.ee)
- Principality of Asturias (Spain)  
[www.idepa.es](http://www.idepa.es)
- Cheshire County Council (UK)  
[www.cheshire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk)

## Opening of Fraunhofer Pilot Plant Centre for Polymer Synthesis and Processing

A new dimension of research and development in the field of plastics is possible in the Fraunhofer pilot plant centre for polymer synthesis and polymer processing at Schkopau ValuePark. The pilot plant centre at Schkopau represents a new level of quality in research co-operation of the Fraunhofer Institute of Applied Polymer Research (IAP) with the Fraunhofer Institute for Mechanics of Materials (IWM) Halle. By combining the synthesis and processing competence of both Fraunhofer institutes involved in the pilot plant centre, it is possible to reach tailor-made solutions from raw materials for synthesis to high-performance components.

The horizontal development line represents a new quality of R&D potential. Usually, there is a clear separation of polymer production from polymer processing, which hinders the flow of information on application problems and attempts to solve them. One of the main concerns at the pilot plant centre is the optimisation of just this interface by carrying out joint corporate R&D work between the synthesis and processing groups.

In the synthesis section, the development of new polymer systems from laboratory to pilot plant scale is in focus. There are also activities on process optimisation in the field of polymerisation technology. Polymer synthesis processes can be carried out in solution, bulk, emulsion and suspension. Seven modular polymerisation lines provide a strong solid basis for this field. The developments are assisted by the co-operation with the Chair of Poly-

merisation Technology at the Martin Luther University Halle.

In the processing group, the development of thermoplastic compounds (especially long-fibre reinforced composites with a thermoplastic matrix) and prototype components with, paying particular attention to the influence of processing on material and component properties is encouraged. The equipment makes it possible to process these materials in a variety of ways, from extrusion and injection moulding, to compounding and injection moulding as a closed process in a single machine (IMC). Glass fibres and a wide variety of natural fibre types are being investigated for use as fibrous filling materials. The work also covers the complex of additive incorporation.

The mechanical properties of polymers and components will be determined in cooperation with the IWM. The investigations are focused on questions of damage and long-term behaviour. All test concepts consider the material structure and the material application conditions. There will be a close relation of experimental and numerical methods.

The investigations focus on the systematic evaluation of the influence of materials and technological conditions on a component's characteristic values. Thus, the experimental and numerical description of a material characteristics provides information on the performance and the reliability of plastic components.

More information:

[www.polymer-pilotplants.com](http://www.polymer-pilotplants.com)





## Saxony-Anhalt

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Inhabitants: 2,5 million
- Area: 20.445 km<sup>2</sup>
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP): 44.21 billion Euro

#### Chemical Industry

- Number of employees: 13.141
- Turnover: € 4.38 billion
- Foreign turnover: € 1.88 billion
- Main Sectors: Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Plastic and Rubber, Polymers
- The chemical industry is characterised by several global players and a large number of SMEs.

Saxony-Anhalt is the 8<sup>th</sup> biggest German Land located in the Eastern part of Germany with borders to Brandenburg, Thuringia, Saxony and Lower Saxony. The capital city is Magdeburg and the biggest city is Halle/ Saale (240.077 inhabitants).

After the German unification Saxony-Anhalt has experienced a deep process of transformation from socialist economy to market economy. This process has particularly influenced the chemical industry. The region has successfully managed the restructuring by diversifying the mono-structures in the former chemical region and the establishment of a modern infrastructure and new settlements of SMEs. Today, the development of the chemical industry in Saxony-Anhalt is a success story.

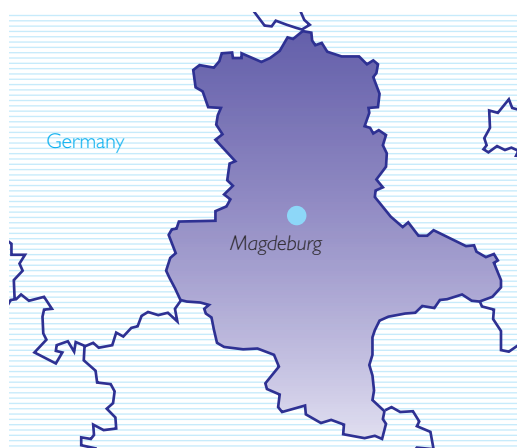
The Central German Chemical Triangle is one of the most modern and competitive centres of the chemical industry.

Investors such as Dow, TOTAL, DuPont, BASF, Akzo Nobel, Atofina, Bayer, Radici, Solvay, Degussa, AMI and Linde are located in the region. The chemical sector in Saxony-Anhalt is dominated by SMEs; 88% of the enterprises in the chemical industry have less than 200 employees (96% of the plastic/rubber enterprises). With the total number of employees of 13.141 it is the second biggest employer within the manufacturing industry of Saxony-Anhalt (16,8%). The employment in the chemical industry

in the region is also growing against the overall German trend. The total sales in 2004 reached € 4.38 billion. The main part of the chemical production is concentrated on the manufacturing of basic chemicals. But also manufacturing of pharmaceuticals is becoming more and more important. Furthermore, the regional industry is focused on polymer production, polymer processing companies and the production of rubber.

The development of the cluster “Chemicals/ Plastic” has successfully led to the establishment of several networks and numerous projects. Regional chemical parks joined forces in the Central European Chemical Network (CeChemNet). Together with chemical companies, service providers, business associations, scientific and research organisations they combine extensive expertise in the chemical industry and the successful chemical park management excellence. The association POLYKUM e.V. supports small and medium-sizes enterprises in the plastic sector through collaboration with regional research organisations, cultivation of business contacts and continuous information amongst the network. Saxony-Anhalt has also a leading position in the European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN).

The cooperation between industry and government in relation to cluster development and strategic issues is successfully pursued in the framework of the “Strategic Dialogue Chemistry”. With the recently commenced initiative “Chemistry Initiative Saxony-Anhalt for Central Germany” the process has been accelerated and the neighbouring regions as well as the federal government have been invited to participate in the further strengthening of the chemical cluster in Central Germany.



## Lombardy Region

Among the 20 Italian Regions Lombardy is the largest by population, and its residents enjoy an enviable economic well-being. Comparing the Gross Domestic Product per capita indicator across the country, (provided it would be a rough proxy of the residents' wealth in the area) Lombardy ranks at € 26.581,00.

One of the main reasons why Lombardy is the most developed and industrialized Region in Italy is to be found probably in the richness of its territory and the presence of fertile plains, fruitful hills, high mountains, lakes and rivers, with a large availability of natural resources such as water and minerals.

Furthermore Milan, its chief town, has emerged in the past as a strategic commercial centre due to its special location at the intersection point of ancient routes crossing the Alps and connecting Central Europe to Southern Italy.

Italian industrial production is highly concentrated in Northern Regions and among them Lombardy Region plays a leading role. Lombardy in fact has 112.778 active companies employing 1.319.988 people.

Its leadership in the chemical sector is even more pronounced, ranking 2<sup>nd</sup> at European level after North-Rhine-Westphalia if we consider the number of people employed by the chemical sector, and ranking 1<sup>st</sup> if the number of chemical companies is considered.

The regional chemical sector employ about 40% of the people employed by chemistry at national level (about



43% excluding pharmaceutical employment data).

### Lombardy has:

- 4 airports, of which 1 intercontinental and 2 international
- 6 Universities with chemistry-related departments
- 9 Public Research Centres with a direct/indirect interest in chemistry-related topics
- 7 Private Research Centres with a recognised specialisation in chemistry-related topics
- 5 Scientific & Technological Parks with chemistry-related competencies
- 4 incubators
- 4 Business Innovation Centres



RegioneLombardia

### FACTS & FIGURES

- Population: 8.922.000 (15,8% of Italian population)
- Area: 23.861 km<sup>2</sup>
- Gross Domestic Product (GDP): 245.8 billion Euro (20,6% of Italian GDP)
- Main economic sectors: Maschinery, Metallurgy, Textiles, Wood, Rubber, Plastics & other Products, Coke & Petrochemical Production

### Chemical Industry

- Number of companies in total: 1.678
- Number of employees: 75.883