



## Press Release

06 October 2005

### **3<sup>rd</sup> European Congress of Chemical Regions is worried about REACH workability**

**Milan, Italy** – The 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the European Chemical Regions Network held in Milan on October 6<sup>th</sup> considered that the results of the votes of the European Parliament's Environment Committee do not solve yet problems of bureaucracy and workability of the new regulation for the future chemicals policy in Europe (REACH).

“The European Chemical Regions Network always advocated a fundamental revision of the REACH proposal of the European Commission in order to make it workable and more SME friendly.” said the **President of the network and Minister for Economy and Labour of Saxony-Anhalt, Dr. Horst Rehberger.**

The **President of the Region of Lombardy, Roberto Formigoni**, welcomed the participants of the Congress by highlighting the leading role of the chemical industry in his region. “The new chemicals regulation in Europe must stimulate Research and innovation so that Europe can maintain its position in a global economy.”

“We very much welcome the initiative of the chemical regions to include the regional dimension into EU policy development. At regional level public authorities and chemical companies gain direct experience of the effect and impact of European legislation. It is vital that these experiences are taken into account before new regulations are initiated at EU-level. That is why CEFIC sees the ECRN as an instrument for better governance in Europe,” said **Thomas Jostman, Executive Director of the European Chemical Industry Federation (CEFIC)** at the Congress in Milan.

More than 300 participants gathered in the Fiera di Milano to discuss key aspects of industrial and environmental policy, which directly affect the chemical industry and the chemical regions. A declaration was adopted in which the ECRN welcomed its growing recognition as a genuine European stakeholder on behalf of chemical regions in Europe.

This was also underlined by a written statement the Commissioner for Environmental Affairs, Stavros Dimas, addressed to the conference participants.

Alongside the congress the chemical regions network agreed upon joint statutes for setting up the ECRN as an association in Europe.

Finally the new Presidium of the network was elected. For the coming year the following members will be part of the ECRN Presidium:

- Dr. Horst Rehberger, Minister for Business and Labour of Saxony-Anhalt (ECRN President)/Germany
- Bert Kersten, Minister for Environment of the Province of Limburg/Netherlands
- Councillor Tony Richmond / Councillor Andrew Needham, United Kingdom
- Karl Uwe Büttof, Head of Department Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany
- Joan Pau Clar Guevara, Deputy Director for Industry, Generalitat Catalunya, Spain
- Ago Silde, County Governor Ida Viru, Estonia

Lombardy Region and Masowia will nominate their representatives for Italy and Poland in the next weeks.

The next congress of chemical regions will take place in Catalonia in October 2006. Further information on the network can be found at: [www.ecrn.net](http://www.ecrn.net).

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**For more Information**

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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).