



## Press Release

15 June 2005

### Chemical regions cooperate successfully

**HALLE, Germany** - The final conference of the project "Mentoring European Knowledge of the Chemical Regions" (MentorChem) took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June in Brussels to present the results of the cooperation between Saxony-Anhalt, Lombardia and Asturias.

*"MentorChem is a successful project of the pilot action 'Regions of Knowledge'. The exchange of experience between the regions is an important contribution for the strengthening of the European Research Area. Therefore, the regional dimension will be stronger supported in the future EU Research Policy."* **Dimitri Corpakis**, Head of Sector on Regional aspects of Research Policy; European Commission - Directorate General for Research

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 chemical cluster in Saxony-Anhalt is a positive example for a successful cooperation between the relevant stakeholders from politics, science and industry. In the MentorChem project we could learn a lot from the best-practice in Lombardia for an improvement of our cluster strategy and the internationalisation of activities."* **Dr. Gunthard Bratzke**, Managing Director of the isw Institute for Structural Policy and Economic Promotion, Halle, Saxony-Anhalt.

Furthermore the partners have been developing a comprehensive overview about the regional research competences in chemistry that have been published in a joint brochure.

*“The census of regional research competences is a unique opportunity to initiate joint research projects between the partner regions”*; **Dr. Rinaldo Psaro** CNR – National Research Council, Milan, Lombardia

The two chemical site initiatives CeChemNet and AIQPA 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.

*“AIQPA has benefited from the intensive cooperation with CeChemNet in identifying new activities that could be jointly implemented in the future.”* **José Ramon Fernández**, Coordinator of AIQPA, Asturias

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 and organised a high level conference to discuss the results with representatives from politics, science and industry.

*“REACH will have a strong impact on the chemical enterprises, especially the SMEs. We must work together to achieve a more practical regulation.”* **Victor Manuel Gonzales Marroquin**, General Manager, IDEPA Asturias

The MentorChem Project has participated in the debate on the development of the European Technology Platform “Sustainable Chemistry” (SusChem). During the round table the perspectives 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.

*“The European Technology Platform “Sustainable Chemistry” aims to develop a long-term strategy for the European Research Agenda in Chemistry. We especially welcome the contribution of the chemical regions for the further development of the initiative”*, **Dr. Marian Mours**, Innovation Manager, European Chemical Industry Council, Cefic

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 Meta-cluster and the Voucher System in Lombardia, the pilot plant center for polymer synthesis and processing and the chemistry initiative in Saxony-Anhalt or the network of technology centres in Asturias.

Based on the successful cooperation and the results of the MentorChem project, a new project application has been developed in the second call of the “Regions of Knowledge” pilot action. The project “Mentoring European Research in Chemistry” (MERiC) has the objective to improve RTD strategies and regional research investments in the area of chemistry. Building on the sustainable partnership that has developed during the project, the partners are confident to further cooperate in the future.

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

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**For more Information**

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**Notes for Editors :****MentorChem:**

The Project “Mentoring European Knowledge of the Chemical Regions” is a cooperation between the regions Saxony-Anhalt, Lombardia and Asturias. The objective is to exchange experiences about the successful development of chemical regions and initiate a mutual learning for the strengthening of the chemical sector. The partnership consists of the isw Gesellschaft für wissenschaftliche Beratung und Dienstleistung mbH ([www.isw-gmbh.de](http://www.isw-gmbh.de)) from Saxony-Anhalt as the coordinator, IDEPA - Instituto de Desarrollo Económico del Principado de Asturias ([www.idepa.es](http://www.idepa.es)) and Cestec SpA – Centro Lombardo per lo Sviluppo Tecnologico e Produttivo dell’Artigianato e delle Piccole Imprese ([www.cestec.it](http://www.cestec.it)) from Lombardia. The total budget is 430.000 €, 50% of which is funded by the European Union. More details about MentorChem can be found on its website at [www.mentorchem.net](http://www.mentorchem.net)

**Regions of Knowledge**

The 'Regions of knowledge' pilot action is an EU funded programme that aims to support experimental actions at regional level to develop 'regions of knowledge' in the area of technological development, co-operation between universities, and research at a regional level and stimulate the integration of regions in Europe. More information about KnowReg can be found on [http://www.cordis.lu/era/knowreg\\_about.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/era/knowreg_about.htm)