ECRN - European Chemical Regions Network

Programme zone / Zone de programme:
East / Est

Type / Type
Network / Réseau

Topic / Thème
Other appropriate subjects / Autres sujets appropriés

Problem description / Description du problème ciblé par le projet
The operation "European Chemical Regions Network" (ECRN) is centered around concerted actions for European regions with dominant chemical industries. In Europe, the chemical industry (especially the petrochemical industry) is clustered in just a few regions. In these regions, the chemical sector often represents the major economic force exhibiting strong impacts on most other economic sectors. Due to significant transformation and restructuring processes, chemical regions have faced significant challenges of transformation and restructuring in the past and continue to experience tremendous pressure to adapt to new conditions (e.g. associated with EU enlargement). With all these factors in mind, regions have taken the initiative to form a network of chemical regions in Europe.

Overall objective / Objectif général de l'opération
The major goal of the network is to facilitate joint actions of chemical regions in Europe based on the exchange of experiences regarding successful regional development strategies and industrial policy approaches. As such, the network strives to develop new and innovative concepts for the transition of 'chemical regions' and seeks to act as a platform for discussion with the European Union and a recognised stakeholder representing chemical regions in all aspects affecting chemical regions (e.g. the future reform of regional policy in light of the Lisbon strategy).

Expected results / Résultats attendus
The operation will create awareness of and regional profiles and strategies for Chemical regions in Europe acting as a recognised stakeholder at the European level. This will strengthen the competitiveness of chemical sites and will allow joint positioning on essential EU policies affecting chemical regions as envisaged in the Lisbon Strategy. Jointly developed recommendations will help improve the effectiveness of Structural Fund programmes with regards to chemical regions.

Lead partner / Partenaire principal
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Duration / Durée
January 2004 - December 2007

Total budget / Budget total:
1.609.295 €

ERDF contribution / Contribution FEDER:
967.862 €

Norwegian contribution / Contribution des fonds norvégiens:
0 €
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Activities / achievements so far

After the successful establishment of the Network and the intensive exchange of information in the first year of the operation, the project has concentrated its activities in the year 2005 on the interregional exchange of experience that is supported by the implementation of studies in the following areas 1. Industry and Science, 2. Skills and Training, 3. Chemical Park Management, 4. Environment and Legislation, 5. Land improvement. Under the involvement of the regional experts the progress and the results of the studies have been intensively discussed in the Regional Partnership Meetings, the Permanent Working Group and the Presidium Meeting. The thematic focus of the ECRN in 2007 has been the capitalisation of results in the areas of land improvement, skills development, REACH Implementation and Regions of Economic Change. The 5th European Congress of Chemical Regions has been organise in Ludwigshafen, Rhineland-Palatinate to discuss present challenges for the chemical regions. In 2007 three meetings of the PWG have been organised in Brussels and Narva (Estonia) to implement the activities of the ECRN. The final meeting of the ECRN Presidium took place in Ludwigshafen (Germany). Furthermore an Dissemination Seminar has been organised in Ludwigshafen to present the results of interregional cooperation of the ECRN with representatives of EU institutions and other regional representatives in view of strategy development. The ECRN has approved 17 joint position papers: 1. Ludwigshafen Declaration, 2. RfEC 3. Energy Action Plan. Five further chemical regions (Usti - CZ, Flanders - BEL, Ida Viru - EE and Catalonia - ESP, Novarra - ITA) have joined the ECRN Association. Further chemical regions have articulated their interest to join the association. The ECRN Association has succesfully established an office in Brussels and employed staff, which will ensure the continuation of work after the end of Interreg funding. Regional Partnership Meetings have been organised to involve the relevant regional stakeholders, to disseminate the results and articulate the regional interest. Publicity activities have been strengthened with the publication of the 7th newsletter and regularly updated web page. The ECRN is currently actively working in the EU HLG on Chemical Industry. Working Group Meetings are foreseen for February and June 2008 in Brussels and the Presidium will meet in March. Furthermore partners are continuing to organise Regional Partnership Meetings to involve regional stakeholders in the network. The ECRN has developed a follow up project within the Interreg IVC first call with a focus on the establishment of Regional Technology Platforms for Sustainable Chemistry (RegioSusChem).

More information:

www.ecrn.net