

ABOUT THE CLUSTER

The CHEM-STER Speciality Chemicals Cluster was founded in August 2013 thanks to great engagement of the pilot group members – research institutions, companies and business-environment units.

The founders include: the Institute of Heavy Organic Synthesis "Blachownia" and the Kędzierzyn-Koźle Industrial Park Sp. z o.o., which became Cluster Coordinator. During the Founding Members' Meeting, Grupa Azoty ZAK S.A. was chosen Cluster Leader. In April 2014, the cluster had 20 members.



CHEM-STER Speciality Chemicals Cluster
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The cluster was founded in order to strengthen the position of its members on the Polish and European market in the present economic situation and in view of changing development trends in the chemical industry. The idea of cooperation in the form of a cluster is aimed at gaining a sound competitive advantage in the area of speciality chemicals, not only for the cluster members, but also for the whole region by increasing the level of competitiveness.

The initiative is also to coordinate joint endeavours and ideas for development projects in order to facilitate effective knowledge and technology sharing, generate innovative solutions and develop and implement new products and services. The members are planning to gain a key position in the region by creating a centre of intelligent technological and production specialisation, at the same time striving to gain social trust by creating a favourable atmosphere surrounding their undertakings by the local authorities.

Mission

Creating favourable investment and development conditions for companies active in the chemical industry and supporting it, as well as offering comprehensive services for technological projects in the field of speciality chemicals, which is to result in competitive solutions for various economy branches.

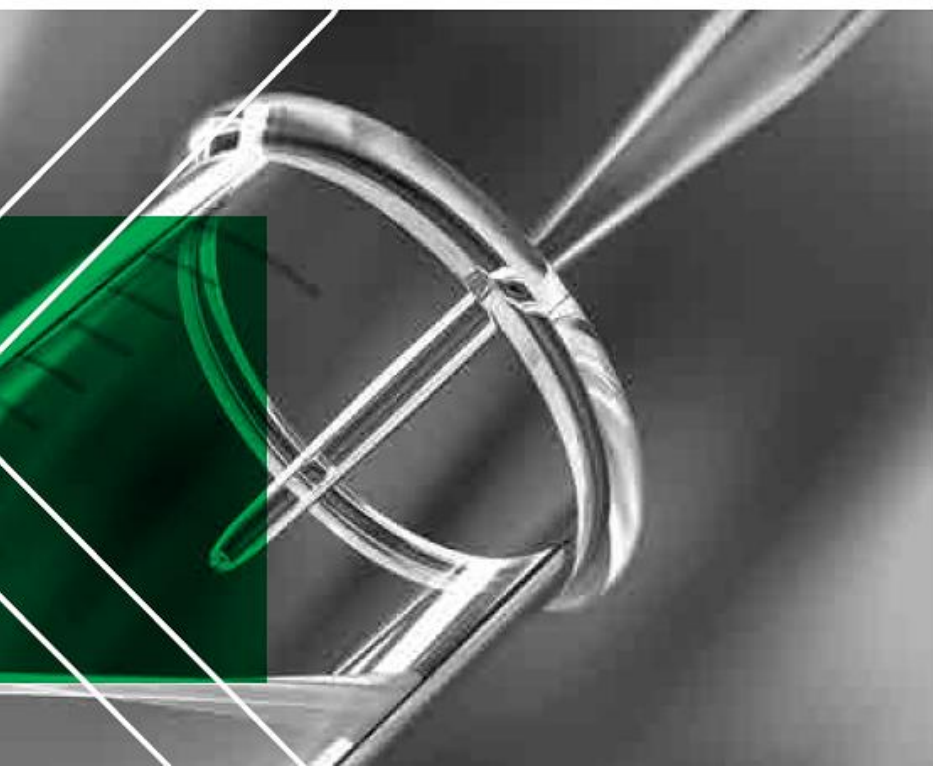
Aims

The concept of the Speciality Chemicals Cluster is in line with the need for local cooperation initiatives, especially in the chemical branch. These initiatives are perceived as a chance for innovativeness development both at the regional and transregional level. The chemical industry is a basic industrial strength of the Opole Voivodeship and its development plays a special role in the region. Moreover, the branch is concentrated here, especially in the Kędzierzyn-Koźle region, and highly differentiated in terms of production type and scale, and employment numbers. The industry also has research and educational support base in this area. Taking these factors into account, the CHEM-STER cluster has set itself strategic aims which are an ambitious reply to chances of improving economic activities in the speciality chemicals branch, i.a. basing on examples of other chemical regions in the European Union which are successful in restructuring traditional chemistry into a more diversified industry of high added value. At the same time, the potential and competences of the cluster members are a foundation for creating a centre of competence in the field of speciality chemicals.

The main aim of the cluster is to direct chemical companies towards modern technologies and products, to facilitate the process of technology and product development and implementation and to push the companies' actions towards greater innovativeness and competitiveness.

Strategic aims of the cluster:

- › **positioning the CHEM-STER cluster among Polish speciality chemicals leaders** thanks to development of a centre of competence. This task includes additional operational aims – efficient and quick reactions to legal and technological changes on the market, creating conditions for quick and complex development and introduction to the market of new products and technological solutions, optimisation of logistic processes, identification of the needs of Polish and foreign industrial partners and creating optimal conditions of cooperation of R&D institutions with companies and business-environment institutions;
- › **by 2020, turning Kędzierzyn-Koźle into an innovative centre of chemical companies** of high investment attractiveness. Operational aims include: reaching agreement on the idea of comprehensive development of industrial areas in Kędzierzyn-Koźle, preparing investment offers which take into account the potential of the cluster members, promotion of Kędzierzyn-Koźle as an attractive place for investment in the chemical industry, including speciality chemicals, creating conditions for starting new production and service companies on the basis of inventions of the cluster members and licences gained in Poland and abroad, efficient use of the inner potential of the cluster members in order to prepare and implement joint R&D and business projects.



Benefits

Directing the cluster companies towards innovative technologies, products and their implementation, which facilitates competitiveness, will create good conditions to initiate cooperation on the challenges connected with rising expectations of clients and the demands of the modern market. Thanks to the actions included in the development strategy, the cluster members will identify the possibilities of entering new markets, start appropriate business projects, do research of pre-competitive character, develop joint technical solutions for application in their own products range or in products licensed, as well as combine offers of the companies, thereby creating new products and services in line with the needs and expectations of target markets.

Actions

The initial action plan of the cluster concentrates on integration activities aimed at its present members, as well as informational undertakings, targeted at potential participants. In the field of marketing, the cluster should be recognised as a Polish platform of cooperation of companies mainly from the speciality chemicals sector. Clear growth dynamics of the cluster is to attract new investment partners on the local market which should evolve towards a centre of competence strategic for Poland.

Achieving the aims of the cluster is planned through the following actions:

- › development and updates of the database of potential project ideas;
- › development of rules of cooperation of scientific units with companies for the purposes of joint preparation and realisation of R&D projects (forming teams that include employees of institutions engaged in realisation of given tasks);
- › development of an efficient system of knowledge and experience sharing between science and industry, including increasing professional qualifications, professional placements in scientific units and industrial companies (employee exchanges);
- › organisation of informational meetings about competitions for research, development and implementation projects and support in gaining funds for them;
- › promotion of the brand of the CHEM-STER chemical cluster, using the name and logo of the cluster;
- › making business contacts.

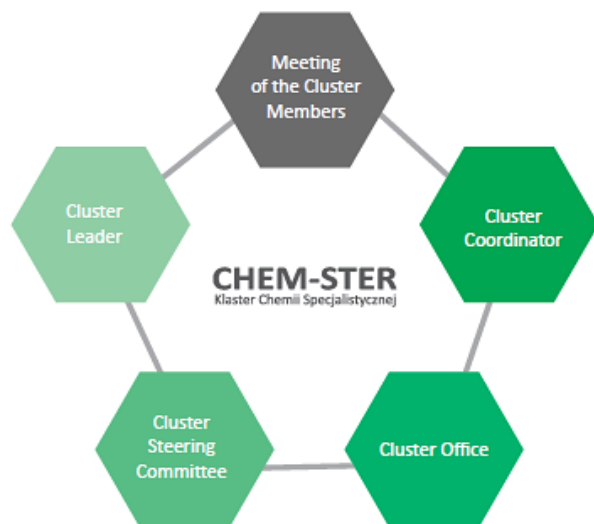


Cluster projects

In combining their potential and inviting new units to the cluster, the members see the chance to develop their companies through joint initiatives. The cluster concentrates on realising development projects, financed from its own resources and/or external resources. The main areas in which the units may realise joint projects include: processing non-renewable hydrocarbon raw materials, processing non-renewable solid fuels raw materials, processing renewable raw materials and processes of obtaining highly-processed products in the field of speciality chemicals, among others.

Cluster bodies

In accordance with the Regulations, the cluster bodies include:



Cluster members

The CHEM-STER Speciality Chemicals Cluster is a cooperation venture of companies, research institutions and business-environment units. The production and service companies involved include both large companies from the sector of big chemistry, as well as medium-size and small companies which are very flexible in their market niches, especially in the area of speciality chemicals. Moreover, some companies provide design, building, modernisation and renovation services in many areas and support production and investment processes in companies. The R&D institutions offer a wide range of chemical studies and analyses, do research and development work, and provide educational and scientific services, especially in the field of application tests in cooperation with the industry. The business-environment units support the cluster members by providing consulting and infrastructure services. They deal with arrangement of meetings, trainings and conferences, as well as obtaining funds for investment projects. Two thirds of the cluster members are based in Kędzierzyn-Koźle, while the share of SMEs is 60%.

The CHEM-STER cluster is a transregional agreement since its activities reach beyond one voivodeship. By definition it is open, also to international cooperation. At present, six members represent other regions and their potential and possibilities facilitate the process of building a regional centre of competence in the area of speciality chemicals. Over 75% of the cluster members are located within 60km from the seat of the Coordinator. The CHEM-STER cluster has significant potential both at the economic level and thanks to rich human capital. A clear leader of the agreement, not only due to its organisational function, is Grupa Azoty ZAK S.A., which has circa 2/3 of the joint income and employee numbers of the cluster companies. The income of 13 production and service companies from the cluster stands at over 3.1 billion PLN, while the number of employees is over 2500.

Cluster members:

1. Grupa Azoty ZAK S.A. – Cluster Leader
2. Institute of Heavy Organic Synthesis "Blachownia" – Cluster initiator
3. Kędzierzyn-Koźle Industrial Park Sp. z o.o. – Cluster Coordinator
4. Opole University, Faculty of Chemistry
5. BELMAR Sp. z o.o.
6. RUETGERS Poland Sp. z o.o.
7. Research and Production Centre ALCOR Sp. z o.o.
8. Association of Chemical Industry Engineers and Technicians, Kędzierzyn-Koźle branch
9. EUROL Innovative Technology Solutions Sp. z o.o.
10. SOLVECO S.A.
11. Petrochemia-Blachownia S.A.
12. ICSO Chemical Production Sp. z o.o.
13. MEXEO Wiesław Hreczuch
14. RESEARCH LABORATORY BLACHOWNIA Sp. z o.o.
15. ROWIS-SYSTEM s.j. M. Siemiński and St. Wilk
16. Advantum Investments Sp. z o.o.
17. Grupa Azoty Polskie Konsorcjum Chemiczne Sp. z o.o.
18. Polwax S.A.
19. M. Rej School Complex no 3
20. Katowice Special Economic Zone Co.

OP IE PROJECT

The CHEM-STER Speciality Chemicals Cluster was created within the project no POIG.05.01.00-00-110/11 titled: "Preparation of organisational and technical foundations of the CHEM-STER Speciality Chemicals Cluster" Realised in the framework of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy 2007-2013, Action 5.1 Supporting the development of cooperation relations at transregional level cofinanced by the European Union from the funds of the European Regional Development Fund.