

From conversion to recycling: ECPI introduce journalists to a responsible flexible PVC value chain

29-30 June 2016, Germany – Hosted by the European Council for Plasticisers and Intermediates (ECPI), ten journalists working for trade publications in five different European countries had the opportunity to discover more about the lifecycle and sustainability of flexible PVC. In this 2-day trip, participants visited a converting and a recycling plant – [Mehler Texnologies](#) and [AgPR \(Arbeitsgemeinschaft PVC-Bodenbelag Recycling\)](#).

The main objective of this annual media visit sponsored by [VinylPlus](#), the voluntary commitment of the PVC value chain, is to spread awareness about the flexible PVC value-chain, how plasticisers are used and their benefits for our everyday life.



The trip kicked off at Mehler Texnologies, a leading European producer of PVC coating and technical textiles. Guided by Dr Szymkowiak, Mehler's marketing manager, journalists learned about the company's processes to create durable flexible PVC membranes combining flexibility, lightweight and stress resistance. These are key properties to ensure the highest performance in a wide variety of applications, from tents to stadium roofings, biogas containers and inflatable boats.

On the second day, journalists witnessed the role recycling plays through a visit to AgPR's facilities. Dr. Jochen Zimmermann, AgPR's Managing director, illustrated the different steps of the floor covering recycling process, from collection to sorting, shredding, cleaning and all the way to the final product, a PVC powder used by converters to manufacture new products, closing the loop of PVC. This gives PVC multiple lives and avoids less sustainable solutions such as land filling and incineration.

Michela Mastrantonio, spokesperson of ECPI, said: "Plasticisers are widely used and play a key role in enabling a multitude of flexible PVC applications which bring huge benefits to our everyday life. The European plasticisers industry promotes their safe and sustainable use and advocates for science as the principle governing plasticisers' regulation and EU chemicals policies in general. By showing to the media how flexible PVC is made and recycled, we hope we can demystify some common misconceptions about our products".

Thomas Hülsmann, General Manager of AgPU, the German PVC association, reiterated the importance of communicating about the benefits of flexible PVC in reference to some of the campaigns AgPU is running as well as the key achievements of VinylPlus. "VinylPlus is materialising important objectives related to the sustainable use of additives, resource efficiency and, in particular, PVC recycling. Thanks to a European network of over 170 recyclers, VinylPlus recycled 514,913 tonnes of PVC in 2015, getting closer to its recycling target of 800,000 tonnes by 2020".



The media field trip confirmed the commitment of the PVC value chain and demonstrated with on-the-ground experience how plasticisers and flexible PVC can improve the safety and comfort of our life in a responsible way.

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About ECPI: The European Council for Plasticisers and Intermediates is a Brussels-based trade association representing the common interests of European manufacturers of plasticisers, alcohols and acids. Member companies are BASF, Deza, Evonik Performance Materials GmbH, ExxonMobil, Lanxess and Perstorp. ECPI is a sector group of Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, which represents the interests of the European chemical industry. For more information, please visit www.ecpi.org.

About VinyPlus: VinyPlus is the voluntary sustainable development programme of the European PVC industry. It aims at creating a long-term sustainability framework for the entire PVC value chain. The regional scope of our 10-year programme is the EU-28 plus Norway and Switzerland. For more information, please visit www.vinyplus.eu.