

# Plastics Industry

## Germany is Europe's No.1 Plastics Location

Germany is Europe's largest producer and manufacturer of plastics. The country's plastics industry value chain includes plastics manufacturers and processors, machine manufacturers, the application industries and the plastics and rubber recycling industry. One of the most important industry sectors in Germany, the plastics industry generates annual turnover of over EUR 101 billion. The industry enjoys more than a six percent share of domestic industrial production and plays a major role in providing new and innovative products and solutions to a number of key industries including the automotive, mechanical engineering, packaging, electrical engineering, and construction industries. In addition, plastics are used in the medical, furniture and household goods industries as well as in agriculture - broad applications in a competitive European consumer market.

German plastics producers, processing industries and industry-related research institutions and centers of excellence are setting international standards with their excellent infrastructure, know-how and their results in research and development. Foreign companies located in Germany benefit from the advantages of the single European market and the existing structures along the entire value chain to access innovative clusters and high quality research.



Plastics Industry Sees Partial Increase In Demand From Covid-19

Around half of all companies in the plastics sector saw order increases in April. However, read how increased PPE plastics demand is offset by slump in demand in the auto supplier sector.

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## Interview with Peggy Görlitz

## PLASTICS INDUSTRY



Peggy Görlitz has been working for Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI) for around 12 years and supports foreign investors, and other stakeholders in the plastics industry.

*What part of your job do you like most?*

There is a lot I like about my work. The most beautiful feeling is when I stand with the local mayor at the industrial site that the foreign investor has chosen for his new manufacturing facility. We talk about what will be where and how it will look. This fills me with pride, because I have met the goal of my work as a GTAI employee and can hand over the project and rest of the settlement process to the economic development agency of the respective state and its local partners....

[Read the whole interview](#) [↗](#)

## Publication



### **Industry Overview: The Plastics Industry in Germany - Issue 2018/2019**

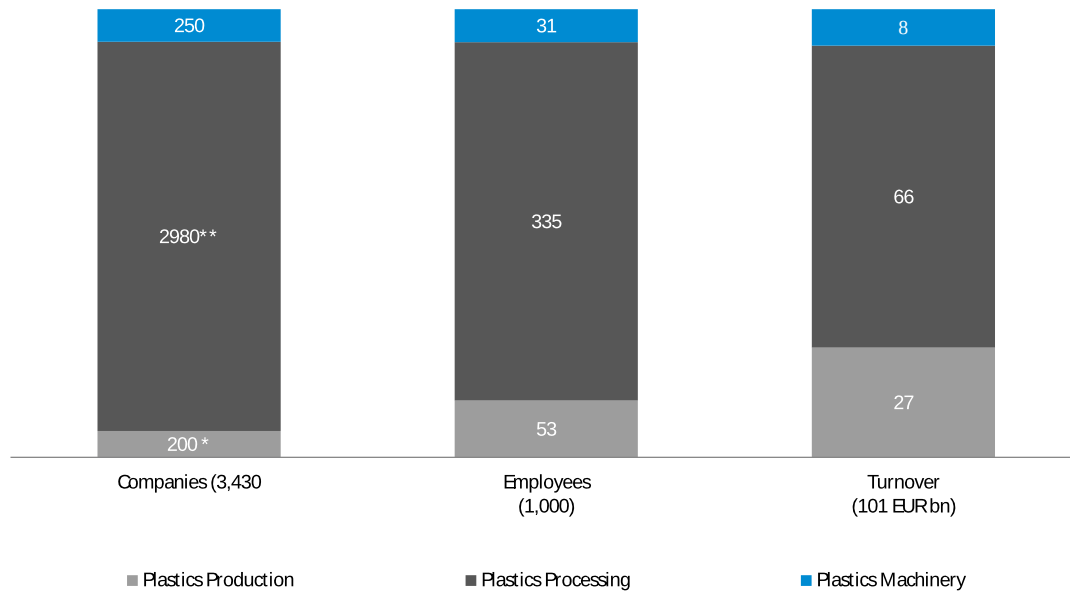
As Europe's largest producer of chemicals and plastics, Germany is Europe's leading plastics industry including polymer manufacturers, converters and machine manufacturers alike. Read more about the opportunities Germany's plastics industry can offer your business and download our latest industry overview.

### Industry & Market Numbers\*

- No. 1 in Europe: Share of around (35 percent) 25% of the total European plastics production
- Leadership in plastics production and consumption, export and import, and in investment in fixed assets and expenditure in R&D
- Major FDI destination country in Europe (2012–2018: Germany received 17% of all plastics and rubber FDI projects in Europe)
- Sales more than (EUR 91 billion) EUR 101 billion, (3,300 companies) 3,430 companies, (393,000 employees) 419,000 employees
- Plastics production: (19.8 million tons) 19.3 million tons per year, sales (EUR 24 billion) EUR 27 billion, 200 companies, (49,000 employees) 53,000 employees
- Plastics processing: sales (EUR 60 billion) EUR 66 billion, (2,850 companies) 2,980 companies, (316,000 employees) 335,000 employees
- Plastics and rubber machinery builders: sales (EUR 7 billion) EUR 8 billion, more than 250 companies (28,000 employees) 31,000 employees
- 76 application-oriented university and non-university research institutes and competence centers in the field of polymer and materials research in close collaboration with the plastics industry
- Over 40 regional plastics networks and innovation cluster

\*2018

## Structure of the German Plastics Industry (2018)



\* Including compound and masterbatch manufacturers  
 \*\* Includes all officially registered companies (business register).  
 Note: Figures are rounded.

Source: PlasticsEurope Deutschland e.V., 2018

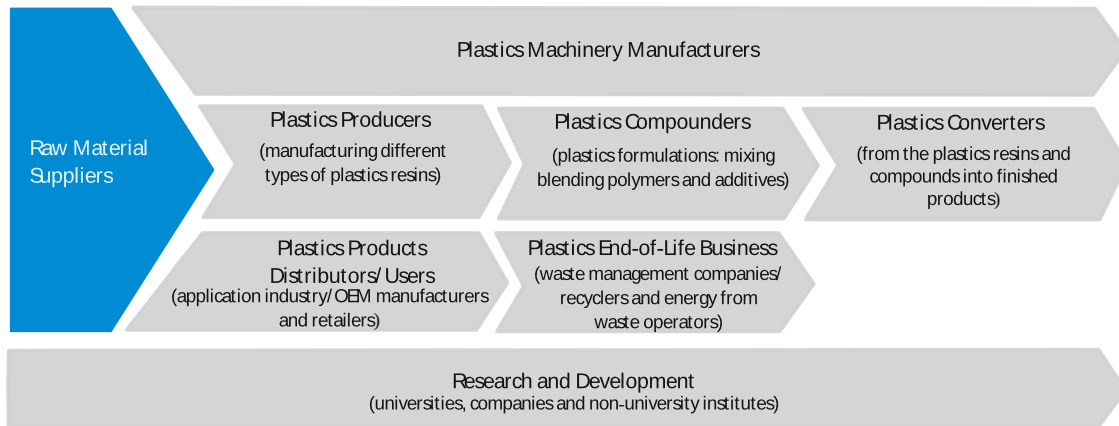
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## The Plastics Industry Value Chain

Foreign plastics companies benefit from the excellent partnerships and synergies within Germany's unique plastics industry value chain.

The entire value chain is available – with the highest integration and based on state-of-the-art technologies and infrastructure.

## The Plastics Value Chain in Germany



National and international chemicals and plastics clusters and innovative networks along the entire value chain.

Source: PlasticsEurope Deutschland e.V., Germany Trade and Invest, 2017

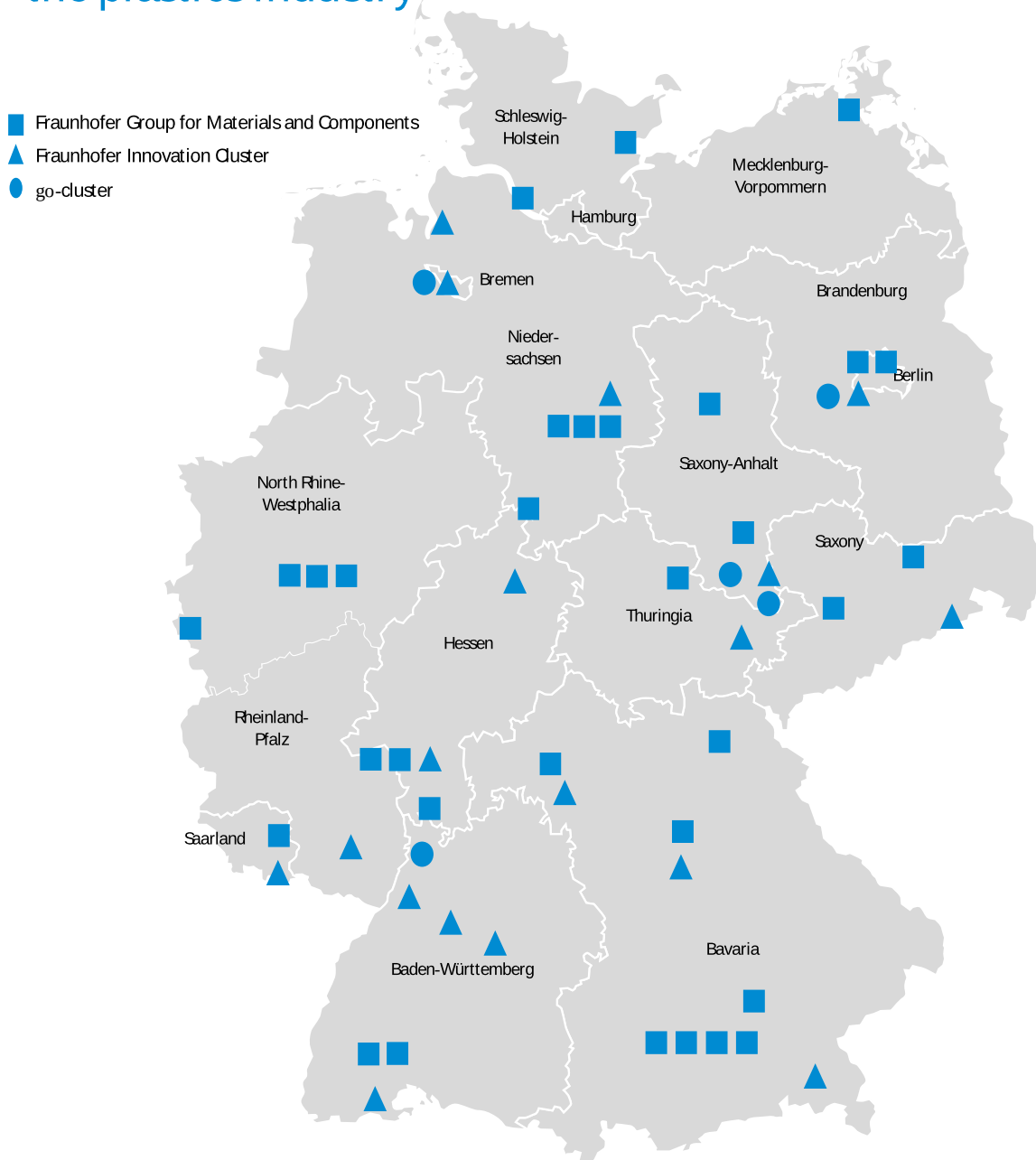
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## German Plastics Clusters

- Synergy potentials from local businesses and new investors as a result of optimal network structures
- More than 40 plastics industry clusters and competence centers in Germany.
- The clusters provide investors an excellent access within the whole value chain, to:
  - Regional and international markets
  - Enterprises (SME and large enterprises)
  - State of the art chemical infrastructure – supply and disposal infrastructure and access to a raw materials network
  - R&D - Know how / knowledge network
  - State of the art R&D infrastructure
  - Competence growth

# German Plastic Clusters

Plastics Clusters and their innovative networks and competence centers include the entire value chain of the plastics industry



Source: Websites clusters, Federal economic development agencies, 2017

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## Testimonial | Harald Schmidt, Mold Hotrunner Solutions Inc. (MHS)



"We decided to set up our European subsidiary in Würzburg in order to be close to German industry clusters and R&D institutions as well as to our customers in southern and western Europe. Thanks to the professional advice and support provided by *Germany Trade & Invest* and our local partners, we were able to implement our plans in just six months. Their expertise regarding laws and regulations was of particularly high value to us. Through our office in Würzburg we are able to provide fast and reliable services from the center of Europe. The positive feedback from our customers has confirmed our decision and we look forward to further strengthening our presence in Europe." [2015]

*Harald Schmidt, Owner and President of Mold Hotrunner Solutions Inc. (MHS), Canada*

## Market | Personnel

**MARKET** - The German plastics industry has the unlimited access to a very high quality demanding and growing European consumer market for plastics. In 2015, approx. 48 million tons of plastics were processed in Europe. Germany accounted for around 25 percent of this amount.

**PERSONNEL** - The German plastics industry employs approx. 400,000 qualified people. The German universities and colleges with accredited engineering degree programs train highly qualified professionals for the industry. There are currently more than 200,000 students in plastics processing-related study programs. More than 35,000 students graduated in this field of study (2016).

## Infrastructure | R&D

**INFRASTRUCTURE** - Germany has an excellent plastics industry-related infrastructure. There are about 28 chemical sites and modern Chemical Parks with high quality chemical infrastructure that specialize in polymer production and plastics processing. In addition, proximity to plastics manufacturers "correspondence locations" for the processing industry can be developed.

Germany offers an extensive and comprehensive logistics infrastructure that integrates state-of-the-art transportation networks with the most modern telematics, IT, and telecommunications systems.



"Plastics companies looking to establish a business in Germany can benefit from the excellent conditions for production and R&D as well as the advantages of the single European market: rapid access to a very high quality European consumer market." *Oliver Seiler, Director Mechanical & Electronic Technologies, Germany Trade & Invest*

**R&D** - Germany's unique plastics industry cluster concept encourages cooperation between the bigger and the medium-sized companies and between industry and research institutions. Non-university based applied research institutions, competence centers, and pilot projects provide mainly small and medium sized companies unparalleled access to cutting edge research infrastructure and expertise. This allows international investors to profit from highly scalable R&D potential.

### Incentives | Stable Investment Environment

**INCENTIVES** - Germany offers numerous incentives for all investors - regardless of whether they are from Germany or otherwise. There is a large selection of programs designed to support a wide variety of business activities at different stages of the investment process available. Support ranges from cash incentives for the reimbursement of direct investment costs to incentives for labor and research and development (R&D).

[More Information: Investment Guide - Incentive Programs](#)

**STABLE INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT** - Social, economic, and political stability provide a solid base for your corporate projects. Our judiciary and civil services are highly professional. Contractual agreements are secure and intellectual property is strictly protected in Germany.


### Related Links


- [BKV - Plattform für Kunststoff und Verwertung \(in German only\)](#)
- [bvse – Fachverband Kunststoffrecycling \(in German only\)](#) [↗](#)
- [Composites Germany](#) [↗](#)
- [GKV - Gesamtverband Kunststoffverarbeitende Industrie \(in German only\)](#)
- [PlasticsEurope Deutschland e.V.](#)
- [VDMA - German Engineering Federation](#) [↗](#)
- [WVK - Wirtschaftsvereinigung Kunststoff \(in German only\)](#)



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