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## **PVC Now – Windows/Frontale Fair 2008**

20 years of Arbeitsgemeinschaft PVC und UMWELT e.V. (Working Group PVC and Environment) in 2008 is a good reason to draw some interim conclusions: PVC has become even stronger by overcoming the storms of the past twenty years!

### **Economically Successful**

The economic development of PVC in Germany has been successful due to a rise in demand by around 40 percent between 1988 and the end of 2007. For example, the processing of profiles across Germany increased from approximately 400,000 tonnes to approximately 900,000 tonnes. And the sale of classics such as floor coverings and pipes also continues to grow. For example, the production increase for pipes in 2007 was at 9.9 percent according to KRV, the German Association of Plastic Pipes.

This success is not only based on growing customer interest, but also on the further development of the products. In the case of window profiles, this involves better thermal insulation right up to suitability for passive houses. In pipes, we have seen an increase in performance in terms of rigidity through a foam core and biaxial stretching. Further improvements involve the development of new stabilisers and plasticizers which are already widely used. Furthermore, progress in productivity must not be forgotten, e.g. through new electrolysis systems by PVC manufacturers and greater output from processing machines. They also contribute greatly to the competitiveness of German production.

Great expenses for innovations, as well as the commitment of financial investors in a number of companies, are also evidence of the industry's confidence in the future of the material.

### **Ecologically Improved**

Impact on the environment resulting from the manufacturing, use and disposal of the material has been reduced through a number of steps during its entire life-cycle. Emissions in manufacturing and processing have already been significantly reduced because of savings in energy which have been achieved. Progress in recycling deserves a special mention. According to our most recent survey from 2007, we achieved material recycling of 180,000 tonnes in 2005 in Germany from 505,000 tonnes of PVC waste. 75 percent of this was sent to material or energy recovery.

### **Socially Progressive**

The economic success of the PVC industry has also resulted in positive contributions for society: in the past 20 years new jobs have been created in the processing sector. This is especially the case with profile manufacturers which utilize approximately 52 percent of the PVC in Germany today. The success of PVC profiles in energy-saving investments in Central and Eastern Europe resulted in new jobs in a number of companies in 2007. It is assumed that in 2007 the PVC

processors had an average of approximately 3 percent more employees than in the previous year, just like other plastics processors.

PVC offers customers products of outstanding quality with great benefits. These include windows that do not need to be painted, pipes that do not clog because of their smooth surfaces, and floor coverings that only need minimal cleaning. This is reflected in low-maintenance costs and in low-incident housing expenses.

With regard to customers' confidence in plastic PVC products, it is undoubtedly no coincidence that a large number of products such as profiles, pipes, films, and wall coverings are made with a quality mark.

### **Interim Results – Towards Sustainable Development**

The interim results thus reveal that PVC has become even stronger by overcoming the storms of the past twenty years. The plastic material has not only survived, but has set standards for growth, the environment, and society particularly in Germany. Furthermore, PVC has become a pacesetter for the European industry.

This achievement has been primarily reached by the group of companies and associations that has sponsored and continues to sponsor the Arbeitsgemeinschaft PVC und UMWELT. This group, and those individuals active within it, have learned to present the advantages of their products in a way that is easy to understand and to create trust by their dialogues with decision-makers and the public.

For years now, the European PVC industry has also been committed to specific steps towards sustainable development with its Voluntary Commitment Vinyl 2010. Together with the Vinyl Foundation, it wants to ensure the continued financing of these measures which have been adopted.

This is an important contribution to continuing on the path that has been taken. Even PVC is not safe from new storms forever. Therefore, we need to make a constant effort to be prepared for such difficult situations.

The press release can be downloaded at: [www.agpu.com](http://www.agpu.com)

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