



voestalpine is acquiring an interest in ACStyria Autocluster

voestalpine, the leading international technology and capital goods Group and industry leader in Styria, is acquiring a stake in ACStyria Autocluster, thus clearly signaling that Styria is on an upward trajectory as a prime location for business and industry. Consequently, the voestalpine Group, which operates worldwide, will become a part of the 20-year success story of the premier Austrian auto cluster.

The history of ACStyria Autocluster is a true success story. Established in 1995, the number of its partner companies has grown in the last 20 years to around 180 companies. "The topic of mobility is one of the three key issues in the Economic Strategy Styria 2020, where we are focusing on growth through innovation. In recent years, we have developed ACStyria into a comprehensive mobility cluster; in addition to the automotive sector that is its core focus, aerospace and railway systems technology have also been integrated," says Christian Buchmann, Provincial Minister for Economic Affairs. ACStyria's partner companies are making a major contribution to the economic success of Styria. "With a research and development rate of 4.7 percent, Styria is one of the most innovative regions in Europe," Buchmann adds. In ACStyria's partner companies, the R&D rate is even 11.6 percent.

As of January 1, 2014, voestalpine AG is acquiring shares of ACStyria Autocluster and, as a shareholder, will be part of this internationally recognized cluster organization. As a result of this expansion of the shareholder structure, the shares of the existing shareholders—AVL, Magna Steyr, Krenhof, and TCM—will be reduced from 18 percent to 14.8 percent. voestalpine AG will also hold an interest amounting to 14.8 percent. With a holding of 26 percent, the largest shareholder of ACStyria will continue to be the Styrian Business Promotion Agency (SFG). "I am delighted that as a shareholder voestalpine will be sharing the responsibility and will play an active role in the future direction of the cluster," says Buchmann.

voestalpine in Styria

With voestalpine, ACStyria is bringing a strategic partner for the automotive, aviation, and railway technology sectors on board. Within the voestalpine Group, the business segments aerospace and railway systems technology are represented in the Special Steel and Metal Engineering Divisions. Both divisions of voestalpine AG, which operates in 50 countries and on all five continents, are headed by two natives of Styria: Management Board member Franz Kainersdorfer is responsible for the Metal Engineering Division, while Management Board member Franz Rotter is the head of the Special Steel Division. Currently, 60 percent of the Group's revenue is generated by the segments mobility and energy. The voestalpine Group employs around 8,000 persons in the state of Styria and generated revenue of EUR 3.3 billion here in the past year (export ratio 75 percent). Twelve production companies at eight locations in Styria are making a significant contribution to regional value creation. In the companies that have apprentices, currently 360 apprentices are being trained in 16 skilled trades with concrete and attractive prospects.

For voestalpine CEO Wolfgang Eder, the reasons for this new investment are obvious: “We are a global high-tech player and the most research-intensive industrial enterprise in Austria. By acquiring this stake in ACStyria, we are contributing this expertise in order to strengthen this economic region, and at the same time, we anticipate that our own knowledge will be enhanced and enriched by ACStyria's partner companies.”

The connection between the voestalpine Group and Styria has a long tradition. Its most visible achievement is the LD steelmaking process that was jointly developed in Linz and Donawitz about 60 years ago and which enabled the company to establish its leading position in the metallurgical industry. Its consistent emphasis on research and development has always been a crucial component of voestalpine's success. In the current business year, the research and development budget is at the record level of almost EUR 140 million. Styria offers an ideal environment for innovative companies: the local universities and external research facilities, such the Leoben University of Mining and Metallurgy, the University of Technology in Graz, and the Materials Center Leoben, provide voestalpine with highly qualified, competent partners in the sciences.

Aerospace industry and railway system technology are opportunities for the Styrian economy

ACStyria Managing Director Franz Lückler is very pleased about the reorganization of the shareholder structure within the cluster: “Thus far, our shareholders have largely represented the automotive industry. With voestalpine among our shareholders, we now have a strategic partner who is involved in aerospace and railway technology, both future-oriented markets.” Viewed as a future hope for Styrian companies, the aerospace industry will be able to utilize multiple synergy effects between it and the automotive industry. For the coming years, the industry is anticipating an average growth of six percent or a requirement of around 27,000 new passenger and freight airplanes that will be ordered worldwide by airlines between now and 2030.

ACstyria Autocluster GmbH

Since 1995, ACstyria Autocluster GmbH has considered its task to be linking up business, industry, research, and public institutions. As Austria's premier auto cluster, ACstyria currently includes over 40,000 employees in 180 partner companies and generates an annual revenue of around EUR 10 billion.

voestalpine-Group

The voestalpine Group is a steel-based technology and capital goods group that operates worldwide. With around 500 Group companies and locations in more than 50 countries on all five continents, the Group has been listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange since 1995. In the business year 2012/13, the voestalpine Group reported revenue of more than EUR 11.5 billion and an operating result (EBITDA) of EUR 1.45 billion; it had around 46,400 employees worldwide.

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