

## **The promotion of biotechnology in Germany as exemplified by the development of biotech-clusters.**

Klaus Herzog

German Embassy Seoul

### **Abstract**

Germany is one of the leading biotechnology-nations in Europe. Recent years have seen a wave of newly established biotech companies. Since 2003, however, many of those face liquidity-bottlenecks. To keep up the momentum, the Federal Ministry for Education and Research has initiated a number of schemes to assist the founding of biotech companies.

The most important and successful of these initiatives has been the BioRegio competition,

which has led to the establishment of biotech-clusters, where a sound scientific basis, a favorable legal framework and entrepreneurial spirit have been successfully integrated. These clusters have helped to put Germany firmly on the map of prime locations of biotechnological research. The bioclusters "Rhineland", "Munich", "Heidelberg" and "Jena" have been particularly successful in competing for the 90 million euro in federal funding, available since 1997.

Nowadays Germany is home to almost 500 biotech enterprises, which is the highest number in Europe.

As far as basic research is concerned, Germany has managed to close the gap which existed in the mid-nineties of the last century. Newly established centers for molecular biological research at universities and the leading scientific institutions have helped to create a competitive infrastructure for top-level biotechnological research.