

How Will Europe Manufacture Medicines When the Next Crisis Hits?

ECCPM Forum 2026 brings international experts to Graz to strengthen the resilience of pharmaceutical manufacturing in Europe

Graz, 15 September 2026. Medicines need to remain available, affordable and safe – even when supply chains are disrupted or demand suddenly surges. The [ECCPM Forum 2026](#) explores how advanced manufacturing can help Europe prepare for precisely these scenarios. From 14 to 16 September, more than 130 international delegates are gathering in Graz under the theme **“Supply Chain Security & Fast Crisis Response in the Era of Continuous Manufacturing”**. The forum brings together experts and decision-makers from the pharmaceutical industry, research, technology development and public institutions.

ECCPM – the **European Consortium for Continuous Pharmaceutical Manufacturing** – works to advance continuous manufacturing processes from research and development to reliable industrial-scale implementation. It provides a pre-competitive environment where industry, academia, regulators and technology providers can exchange expertise and jointly develop solutions.

A highlight of today's opening program in the historic Assembly Hall of Graz University of Technology was the panel discussion **“Building Resilient Pharmaceutical Supply Chains”**. **Ilaria Del Seppia** from the European Commission's Directorate-General HERA, **Stephanie Jedner**, Head of the Anti-Infectives Site at Sandoz in Kundl, **Kasper Ernest**, Director General of the European Healthcare Distribution Association (GIRP), **Brigadier Rudolf Zauner** from the Austrian Ministry of Defense, and **Johannes Khinast**, Scientific Managing Director of RCPE, discussed security of supply from the perspectives of policy, manufacturing, distribution, security and research. The discussion focused on how these areas can work together more effectively to identify risks earlier, deploy manufacturing capacity more flexibly and ensure that medicines continue to reach patients reliably, even during a crisis.

“We need to be prepared before the next crisis hits. HERA brings public and private stakeholders together and facilitates collaboration so that Europe can respond quickly and in a coordinated manner when it matters,” said **Ilaria Del Seppia**, Head of Supply Chains and Industry Relations at DG HERA. Her work focuses on the security of supply of medical countermeasures, industrial partnerships, manufacturing capacity and strategic autonomy.

Stephanie Jedner highlighted the importance of a strong European manufacturing base: “Security of supply starts with manufacturing. This requires robust processes, skilled teams and long-term investment in strong manufacturing sites. Kundl demonstrates the contribution European manufacturing can make to ensuring that critical medicines remain available and affordable in the future.” Sandoz operates the only remaining large-scale, fully integrated penicillin production chain in Europe at its Kundl site – from the active pharmaceutical ingredient through to the finished dosage form.

The forum was opened by **Willibald Ehrenhöfer**, Styrian Minister for Economic Affairs, Labor, Finance, Science and Research, and Heinz Mayer, Managing Director of JOANNEUM RESEARCH and representative of one of the shareholders of the organizing [Research Center Pharmaceutical Engineering \(RCPE GmbH\)](#). RCPE is an independent research organization owned by Graz University of Technology, the University of Graz and JOANNEUM RESEARCH. Together with international partners, RCPE develops new technologies to advance pharmaceutical manufacturing and help ensure the reliable supply of medicines.

The conference program spans **continuous API** and **drug product manufacturing, digital twins** and **simulation**, regulatory agility and hands-on technology workshops. The shared goal is to prepare rather than react: **to build today the technologies, partnerships and capabilities that will be needed when the next crisis occurs.**

Collaboration at the ECCPM Forum extends beyond the conference room. The program deliberately creates opportunities for personal exchange – from the Styrian opening event “Vines & Vibes” at a traditional Buschenschank, hosted together with the life sciences cluster **Human.technology Styria**, to barista-made espresso during the breaks and the conference dinner. Because resilient supply chains depend on resilient relationships: some partnerships begin in a research project, some in a workshop – and some over a glass of Styrian wine.

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