

7th Congress of European Chemical Regions

The Chemical Regions in Europe meeting the challenges of today

On the occasion of the 7th European Chemical Regions Congress, the Presidium of the European Chemical Regions Network adopted the following declaration:

The European Chemical Regions Network,

- while recognising the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the European chemical industry;
- while taking into account the election of the new European Parliament and the upcoming nomination of the new European Commission;
- while emphasising the ongoing negotiations for a follow-up decision on the Kyoto Protocol;
- while keeping in mind the final stages of the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty,
- while looking forward to the next Spanish and Belgian EU presidencies in 2010 and
- taking into account the important role of the International Year of Chemistry in 2011 where the European Chemical Regions are seeking to play an active role,

are particularly interested in seeking improvements and/or decisions in the following areas:-

development of Innovations,

- through providing an environment of greater openness;
- through lowering the barriers for transforming new ideas into businesses and for capturing the benefits of globalisation;
- through multiple linkages and spill-overs;
- welcomes today's decision of the INTERREG IV C Managing Committee to provide 1,34 million EURO EU funding for the ChemClust project to support interregional cooperation and exchange of best-practice in this field in the coming years,

improvement of Effectiveness in the area of saving water, waste, energy and environmental emissions

- through installations of chemical parks using resource consumptions as a cost factor and basic approach;

- through specific agencies as centres of excellence for cleaner production;
- through the introduction of innovative technologies and (business-) processes to SMEs that improve resource efficiency, avoid waste & hazardous emissions and deliver instant results;
- helping small enterprises (SMEs) by supporting a strategy of sustainable growth;

Skills development

- through encouraging those in lower and higher education to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects (STEM);
- through increasing the number of apprentices applying for, and completing training in, chemical industry disciplines;
- through maintaining delivery and funding of skills training during the economic crisis;
- through mutual learning between regions to mutually improve the capacity and knowledge of regional stakeholders;

Chemical Logistics

- in the field of promoting chemical logistics in Europe. This is a key area of joint actions, particularly regarding the implementation of the Action Plan on Logistics and the further discussion on the Green paper on Trans European Networks in the field of transport,
- in the use of the ChemLog project on developing chemical logistics in Central and Eastern Europe as an example of concerted actions to improve the conditions for chemical logistics in Europe as a whole,
- suggests the extension of the issue of chemical logistics beyond the borders of the European Union, particularly towards Ukraine and Russia,
- suggests also the focus on chemical logistics in the Mediterranean area,

climate change

- urges the European Union to do their utmost to arrive at a global agreement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the Copenhagen Conference on climate change,
- welcomes the current work of the EU in dealing with the specific situation of energy intensive industries in Europe regarding the second generation of Emission Trading,

- urges the European Commission to maintain their efforts to liberalise the energy market in the European Union and to safeguard energy supply for the Chemical regions,

towards the new European Parliament

- is interested in close co-operation between the chemical regions and the Members of the European Parliament,
- suggests discussing the results of the High Level Group in the European Parliament,
- proposes an own initiative report in the European Parliament on the future challenges of the Chemical Industry in Europe,

towards the new European Commission

- offers the European Commission its further support on the debate about the competitiveness of the chemical industry,
- emphasises the need for further action to implement the recommendations of the High Level Group on the competitiveness of the chemical industry in Europe,
- asks the European Commission to present an Action Plan to implement the HLG recommendations in 2010,
- asks to be further recognised as the legitimate stakeholder for chemical regions at EU level,
- suggests regular contacts at all levels with Commission officials and the chemical regions to ensure that the experiences made with implementing EU regulations on the ground are presented at the EU level in an ongoing process,

towards the Spanish and Belgian EU-Presidency

- suggests putting further emphasis on the implementation of the HLG recommendations in the EU,
- suggests to the EU-Presidencies to carry out joint events with the European Chemical Regions Network, particularly on the local and regional impact of EU regulations in chemical regions.

Liege, 6th November 2009