



Joint Statement on the impact of the energy crisis on the EU chemical industry

The EU chemical sector supplies virtually all other value chains, including food, healthcare, construction and transport. It provides 1,2 million direct jobs and covers around 96.000 companies across the EU.

The green and digital transitions, along with the move to circularity and safe and sustainable by design chemicals require substantial investments to ensure a just transition where no worker or region is left behind.

The current energy crisis has dire consequences on the competitiveness of the chemical industry, which is one of the most energy intensive ones in Europe. For the first time ever, the EU imports more chemicals than it exports both in volume and value, resulting in a trade deficit of € 5.6 bn for the first half of 2022¹. Many companies will have to resort to short-time work² as a long-term formula to secure employment, and to avoid redundancies.

The European Social Partners, the European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG) and industriAll European Trade Union (industriAll Europe), call for urgent action to safeguard the European chemical sector and protect high skilled, quality jobs in Europe while also working towards climate neutrality, and an internationally competitive chemical industry.

European Social Partners:

1. Agree to fully respect social dialogue at all levels, in line with national or European legislation.
2. Call on companies to keep investing in both their plants and their people, and on public authorities to swiftly support industrial decarbonisation projects and the related energy infrastructure by accelerating the approval of pending authorization procedures.
3. Urge to implement energy efficiency programs while investing in renewable and low carbon energy sources to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels.
4. Ask to mobilise all remaining available resources to provide financial stress relief for industry in need, such as a SURE-like EU solidarity mechanism and/or remaining funds from the NEXT Generation EU recovery package with social conditionality in place.
5. Request to provide access to financing mechanisms especially for SMEs, to prevent the further erosion of industrial value chains in Europe.
6. Hope that the Green Deal Industrial Plan can be developed to steward the European industry through these turbulent times.

The European Social Partners will continue to work together and with national and European policy makers to ensure the future of the European chemical sector.

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¹ https://cefic.org/app/uploads/2022/10/Cefic_Position_energy_crisis.pdf

² <https://www.leadersnet.de/news/64924,der-chemiekonzern-evonik-erwaegt-kurzarbeit.html>