

# Chemical industry's manifesto for the 9<sup>th</sup> legislature of the European Parliament



The European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG) represents the European chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and plastics industry in Europe, which is one of the biggest and most dynamic industries in the EU. It has approximately 3.3 million direct employees in more than 94.000 enterprises generating a turnover of €1078 billion and a record trade surplus of €129 billion in the EU28.<sup>1</sup>, Our sector is instrumental in the transition to a sustainable industry in Europe.

As a Brussels-based social affairs organisation, the ECEG is a recognised social partner on the EU-level and a consultation body of the European Institutions and other stakeholders. The ECEG is the official interlocutor of the sector vis-à-vis the trade unions on employment and social affairs at the European level.

## Policy recommendations for the legislative period 2019-2024

We advocate for a business-friendly policy environment, which respects the autonomy of social dialogue at all levels as well as the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality.

### **Social partnership**

The chemical industry in Europe puts big emphasis on the social partnership as a key element for social cohesion and designing a sustainable future. Policy makers should take into account that social partners' agreements offer solutions that are practical and needs-based. Especially in regards to the labour law, national or sector-specific approaches should therefore take precedence over a European "one-size-fits-all" approach. Moreover, we strongly oppose interference in wage setting mechanisms. Any new legislative proposal needs to aim at respecting the autonomy of the social dialogue while, in the meantime, ensuring competitiveness of chemical companies and the functioning of the single market.

### **Employment**

The chemical industry offers high-quality jobs, secured income, safe and healthy workplaces and assures well-being for all workers. Moreover, it provides sustainable employment and advocates for access to necessary skills and specialisms, amongst others, by facilitating qualified migration. We need to be competitive on a global market and consequently, any legislation must ensure our sector's competitiveness as well as its attractiveness for future generations, where we will continue putting focus on quality training, lifelong learning, stimulating vocational education and training (VET) and promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

### **RDI**

We, as employers' representatives, advocate for more investments in Research, Development and Innovation, for ensuring the EU's leading position in the face of digital transformation and AI. Any legislation in this field must safeguard continuous cutting-edge technologies for production, logistics, new business models etc. along the supply chain in the chemical sector. RDI has a direct impact on the sector's performance and competitiveness, which-in its own turn-has an immediate effect on many downstream companies and jobs, especially if seen in the global context of sharp competition among other regions.

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth 'chemical industry' refers to the chemicals, pharmaceuticals, rubber and plastic industries.