

General Assembly Endorses EuCheMS Position Paper on Brexit

Earlier in September, the EuCheMS General Assembly endorsed the position Paper *Research and Education Without Borders After Brexit* thus making clear the unity of chemists regarding the need to continue UK-EU collaboration after Brexit. This position was signed already by the representatives of 22 EuCheMS Member Organisations: Royal Flemish Chemical Society; Czech Chemical Society; Finnish Chemical Society; German Chemical Society; German Bunsen Society for Physical Chemistry; Hungarian Chemical Society; Institute of Chemistry of Ireland; Israel Chemical Society; Italian Chemical Society; Society of Chemists and Technologists of Macedonia; Royal Netherlands Chemical Society; Norwegian Chemical Society; Polish Chemical Society; Portuguese Chemical Society; Romanian Chemical Society; Russian Scientific Council on Analytical Chemistry; Serbian Chemical Society; Slovak Chemical Society; Catalan Chemical Society; Swiss Chemical Society; Royal Society of Chemistry; and the European Federation of Medicinal Chemistry. The text of the position paper is the following:

“Culture, education and science know no borders. The EU has grown to be a world-leading provider of research and innovation, especially through the Framework programmes. They have provided leadership through fostering collaboration (including developing the European Research Area), supporting excellence, tackling societal challenges, supporting industrial development throughout Europe, improving shared international research infrastructure and building capacity across the region. The framework programmes represent a unique kind of international research programme with respect to their scale and breadth – there is nothing else quite like them in the world. Many of their actions require expertise from a variety of different Member States and third parties and some of them cannot be carried out by individual states. The main beneficiaries are societal and industrial throughout the EU and beyond. There is no doubt that the whole is very much greater than the sum of the individual parts.

It is widely recognised that the highly competitive funding streams and the ability to select collaborators from a wide range of different backgrounds across the EU has driven the quality of research and innovation throughout the EU and has enhanced the competitiveness of EU industry. As one of the most advanced research and industrial nations within the EU, the UK has, both through its input into planning bodies and its participation in programmes, contributed strongly to these improvements at all technology readiness levels from very fundamental research to industrial exploitation. Research and industrial competitiveness across the EU greatly benefit from the input of UK researchers and *vice versa*. Withdrawal of the UK from the many funding schemes would remove some of the key quality drivers and fundamentally damage research and innovation in Europe as well as in the United Kingdom.

Some of the key positive features of the current arrangements are:

- The ability of UK academic and industrial researchers to participate in all aspects of Horizon 2020 and its successor Framework programmes, including taking leading roles;
- The ability of UK researchers to participate in all forward planning for the remainder of Horizon 2020 and new Framework programmes;
- The ability of EU nationals to live/work/study freely in the UK and the ability of UK nationals to live/work/study freely in the EU.
- Access to major facilities based in the EU and in the UK to all researchers from the EU and the UK;
- A compatible regulatory system for research and innovation within the EU and the UK.

As negotiations proceed to determine the relationship between the EU and the UK following the latter's withdrawal, EU scientists urge the negotiators to retain as strong as possible a relationship between EU and UK researchers. Continued collaboration without borders will improve research across all European countries for the benefit of mankind.

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(Previously approved by EuCheMS Executive Board, Liverpool, June 2017)"

About EuCheMS

EuCheMS, the European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences, coordinates the work of 47 Chemical Societies and other chemistry related organisations, representing more than 160,000 chemists. Through the promotion of chemistry and by providing expert and scientific advice, EuCheMS aims to take part in solving today's major societal challenges.

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