

10-point paper
for the foundation of the European Semiconductor Regions Alliance (ESRA)
on September 7, 2023 in Brussels (as of September 1, 2023)

European Semiconductor Regions Alliance (ESRA):

Expanding Europe as a semiconductor location - competitive, resilient, sustainable

The European Semiconductor Regions Alliance (ESRA), an alliance of European regions with proven semiconductor industries including suppliers and strong research and development, has come together to promote the importance of the semiconductor industry for the economic development of our regions, countries and Europe as a whole.

The aim of the planned alliance is to promote the growth and competitiveness of the semiconductor industry in our regions and in Europe by sharing knowledge and best practices, fostering collaboration and innovation, supporting the development of strong, integrated and resilient value chains, and reducing unilateral dependencies, especially for critical raw materials. The supply of semiconductors secures European industrial production as a whole.

The Alliance sees itself as a regional platform and partner of the European Commission in the implementation of the European Chip Act and wants to make an active contribution to strengthening Europe as a semiconductor location in global competition.

The members of the Alliance of European Semiconductor Regions adopt the following goals at their founding meeting on 07.09.2023 in Brussels:

1. Ensuring the best possible and innovative support as well as competitive framework conditions for the regions within the framework of the European Chips Act against the background of the extraordinarily high capital intensity of the semiconductor sector and long-term definition of funds to increase European semiconductor production in the Multiannual Financial Framework of the European Union; the member regions will accordingly take this stand vis-à-vis their central governments and the European Commission;
2. Achieve the greatest possible flexibility and speed in the examination and granting of state aid in the semiconductor industry for semiconductor production facilities and upstream and downstream value-added stages; the member regions call on the European Commission to interpret the "first of a kind" criterion broadly;
3. Further expansion of research and development and promotion of the networking of research institutions in and between the various regions in order to further enhance Europe as a location for research and development activities in the semiconductor industry as a whole and to expand existing unique technological features; in addition to infrastructure investments in the regions, the initiation of joint research projects is also intended to promote new technologies and innovations "Made in Europe", including those that are climate-friendly and conserve natural resources;

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4. Development and implementation of solution approaches for a more sustainable production of semiconductors within the framework of the European Green Deal; this requires the reduction of environmental impacts as well as the consumption of natural resources (water, raw materials) by the semiconductor industry as a resource-, energy- and water-intensive industry in the production process, the expansion of renewable energies on site as well as climate-friendly transport routes;
 5. Securing sufficient water and energy supply at production sites as well as supply of all necessary, in particular strategic and critical raw materials; the member regions advocate diversified procurement and recycling of raw materials and precursors and, if necessary, the establishment of interconnected networks (energy, water) at the European level, precautions against supply chain disruptions as well as an amendment of the EU chemicals regulations and its implementation. The planned ban on specific chemicals would jeopardize the continued existence of the semiconductor industry. The EU must therefore ensure reliable framework conditions in this area as well;
 6. Cooperation in the field of talent development as well as education and training of specialists through retraining and further education measures and university cooperations, in the recruitment of non-European specialists as well as European and international university cooperations to strengthen a European labour market in the field of semiconductor production, including the upstream and downstream value chains; the members are jointly committed to the establishment of a "European Semiconductor Academy" and a new Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) "Semiconductor";
 7. Maintain and intensify cooperation among existing clusters to also enable and better promote cross-regional and cross-state cooperation and industry corridors; for bundling common interests of the semiconductor sector the silicon Europe Alliance SEA should act as a bridge between the involved stakeholders and ESRA.
 8. Holding joint events in cooperation with industry players to bring together industry, research, development, educational institutions, decision-makers, talent and international stakeholders across regions, explore new collaborations and deepen mutual understanding and trust;
 9. Bundling, articulation and representation of common interests of the member regions vis-à-vis the European Commission and the EU institutions; communication vis-à-vis the public on the strategic importance of the semiconductor industry for the European Union and its member states as well as on the necessity of possible state interventions; furthermore, the alliance should further develop the international networking of the regions in a goal-oriented manner and explore possible partnerships with third countries. In the international context, the focus is on cooperation with partners and like-minded states;
 10. Networking and coordination of the participating regions at working level to support and achieve the goals of the alliance. This should include networking with other industry associations and European groups for which the semiconductor industry or even just parts of the value chain are important. An example of this is the Solar Industry Regions Europe network. The working methods of the alliance are laid down in a separate dossier.
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