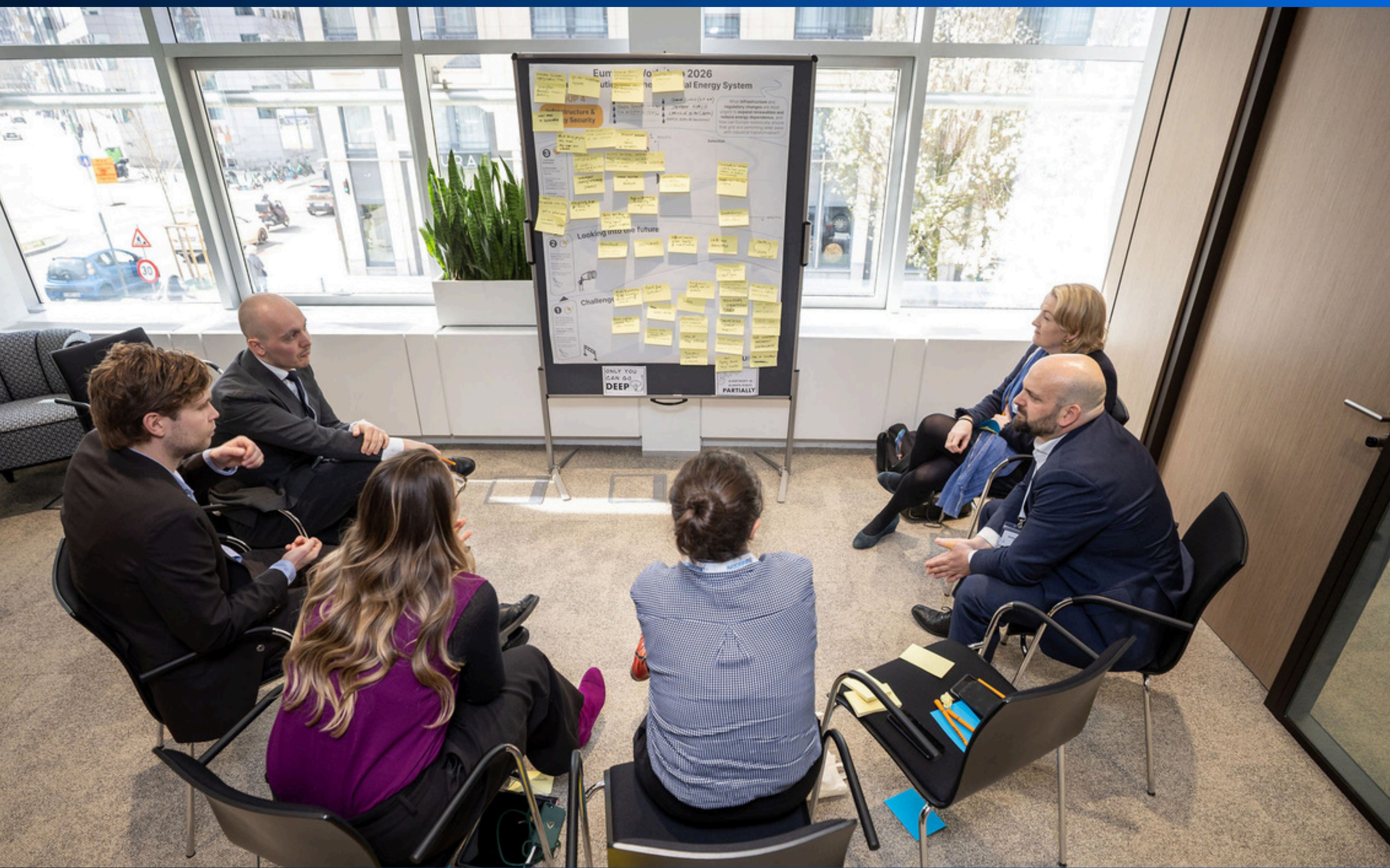
EUMICON

EUMICON Workshop 2026 on

SHAPING SOLUTIONS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL ENERGY SYSTEM

Insights Brief



eumicon.com

+32 465278293

europe@eumicon.com

TOWARDS A COMPETITIVE INDUSTRIAL ENERGY SYSTEM

The transition to a low-carbon economy is a strategic priority for Europe. The industrial sector, as one of the most carbon-intensive, plays a crucial role in this process. However, the challenges the industry faces, including regulatory barriers, high energy costs, and insufficient infrastructure, threaten both the competitiveness and sustainability of the European industrial sector. In this context, **EUMICON presents its recommendations to ensure a successful transition** toward a low-carbon, resilient, and globally competitive European industry.

To advance this transition, EUMICON, a European platform connecting stakeholders across the minerals and metals value chain, convened a workshop on 17 March 2026. Industry representatives, researchers, and policymakers discussed key topics including competitiveness, decarbonisation, circularity, and energy infrastructure. Participants identified regulatory, investment, and infrastructure challenges, while exploring practical solutions and opportunities that are directly reflected in this paper.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Europe's industry is at a crossroads. To meet the European climate goals, it is essential to significantly reduce CO_2 emissions while maintaining global competitiveness against economies with less stringent regulations. However, fragmented policies, high energy costs, and infrastructure bottlenecks hinder this transition.

Regulatory uncertainty and investment barriers are slowing the deployment of low-carbon technologies, jeopardising both Europe's economic future and its ability to lead in the global fight against climate change.

EUMICON'S POSITION

EUMICON believes that decarbonising European industry is achievable, but it requires an integrated and urgent approach. We advocate for coherent public policies at the European level, an incentive system that protects the competitiveness of energy-intensive industries, and the creation of resilient energy infrastructure to facilitate the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Acting now will enable Europe to combine economic growth with environmental leadership, turning the industrial transition into a strategic advantage.

EUMICON

KEY INSIGHTS

Through discussions with industry, policymakers, and researchers, several recurring themes and challenges emerged in shaping Europe's industrial transition:

Interconnected Insights
solving one area in isolation is insufficient

Policy and regulatory coherence

- Fragmented regulations
- Permitting processes
- Slow deployment of low-carbon technologies

Industrial competitiveness

- Loss of strategic value chains
- High energy & CO_2 costs
- Risk of relocation

Investments and innovation

- Exposure to financial risks
- Barriers to scaling
- Lack of targeted funding & de-risking mechanisms

Circularity & raw materials

- Leakage of secondary raw materials
- Underdeveloped circularity systems
- Weak raw materials resilience

Energy infrastructure and system

- Electrification constraints
- Limited interconnectivity
- Lack of coordinated planning & investments

These insights are interconnected: solving one area in isolation is insufficient. **Europe's industrial transition is a systemic and governance challenge**, not a technological one, and requires coordinated, cross-sectoral action.

CALL TO ACTION

Europe has the opportunity to lead the way in decarbonising its industry, but immediate and coordinated action is required. Implementing the following recommendations is essential to ensuring that European industry not only survives but thrives in a green and competitive future.

We urge policymakers and industrial actors to work together to implement these solutions without delay. **The path is clear, and the time to act is now.**

eumicon.com
+32 465278293
europe@eumicon.com

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the above insights, **EUMICON** recommends these targeted measures:

1. **Policy coherence**

   Harmonise energy and industrial policy frameworks across EU member states, accelerate permitting, and align planning rules.

2. **Protect competitiveness**

   Use ETS revenues for industrial decarbonisation and provide CO_2 cost compensation with conditional free allowances for energy-intensive sectors to prevent them from relocating outside of Europe or losing strategic value chains.

3. **Support investment**

   Co-finance innovative projects and de-risk investments through an Industrial Transformation Fund for low-carbon technologies.

4. **Lower energy costs**

   Ensure electricity costs are competitive (at or below 50€/MWh) and invest in energy and raw materials infrastructure to support electrification and system resilience.

5. **Boost circularity**

   Set mandatory recycled content targets, retain strategic secondary raw materials in Europe, and integrate circular practices into industrial value chains.

6. **Create low-carbon demand**

   Promote green public procurement and introduce market incentives to create lead markets for sustainable products.

7. **Drive innovation**

   Support collaboration and data sharing across industries, provide workforce training to support the green transition, and scale up low-carbon technologies throughout industrial value chains.

REACH OUR EUMICON OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION

eumicon.com
+32 465278293
europe@eumicon.com