Downstream4EU coalition launches to promote fairer, more competitive European industry

Brussels, 16 November 2026

Today, 24 trade associations representing consumer and professional manufacturing sectors in Europe have launched Downstream4EU. The coalition represents 870,000+ companies and contributes 2.4tn+ annual turnover in the EU and 11.6 million direct jobs in the EU. It comprises AIM (the European Brands Association), APPLiA (Home Appliance Europe), CECIMO (the European Association of Manufacturing Technologies), CEIR (Taps & Valves Europe), CEPE (the European Council of the Paint, Printing Ink and Artists' Colours Industry), Comité Européen de l'Outillage (European Tool Committee), Cosmetics Europe, Detergents Europe, DUCC (the Downstream Users of Chemicals Co-ordination Group), EFCEM (the European Federation of Catering Equipment Manufacturers), EGMF, Euralarm, Europump, Europur, FEA (the European Aerosol Federation), FEC (the Federation of the European Cookware, Cutlery and Housewares Industries), FEICA (the Association of the European Adhesive & Sealant Industry), FESI (the Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry), LightingEurope, Orgalim (Europe's Technology Industries), Pneurop, TIE (Toy Industries of Europe), Tyres Europe and UNESDA (Soft Drinks Europe).

"*Europe's prosperity, resilience and economic strength depend on a competitive industrial value chain," said the Directors-General and Secretaries-General of the coalition members. "The discussion on European industrial competitiveness often focuses on raw materials, chemicals and other strategic inputs, which are essential to building and safeguarding a strong industrial base. Building on these foundations, Europe has an opportunity to strengthen the entire value chain by also supporting the competitive manufacturing of components, intermediate products and finished goods. Downstream4EU will give European manufacturers a coordinated voice in EU policymaking, highlighting our essential contribution to the European economy, quality jobs, skills development and Europe's strategic autonomy".*"

At a press conference in Brussels, Downstream4EU coalition members presented their **manifesto: Five Principles for a Stronger European Value Chain**. The manifesto identifies five clear areas in which members wish to work in close partnership with the EU institutions and member states to address the challenges posed by current EU legislation.

1. **Boost market demand:** Use public procurement, consumer incentives, and R&D funding to drive demand for sustainable products instead of shifting costs down the value chain.

2. **Create workable rules:** Cut overlapping regulations and reduce compliance burdens for SMEs while protecting product safety, quality, and performance.

3. **Ensure a level playing field:** Hold all imports—including direct online sales—to the same EU standards and address carbon-cost disadvantages for European producers.

4. **Enforce rules from day one:** Embed strong market surveillance and digital tracking tools into new legislation to stop non-compliant products.

5. **Prioritise material supply over new targets:** Ensure affordable, high-quality access to recycled and low-carbon materials through flexible rules rather than adding new mandatory quotas.

The coalition also presented two initiatives on which it will seek to engage the European Commission in the immediate future, namely:

1. **A Downstream Fitness Test:** A proportionate, evidence-based compatibility check, integrated into the existing Better Regulation process while legislation is drafted and at the impact-assessment stage. The Fitness Test could cover verified supply, technical feasibility, product quality, product safety, product durability, and product affordability, and in doing so accurately assess whether industry can implement on schedule and with the desired impact.
2. **A truly industry-wide EU industrial policy:** One that covers, promotes and protects mid- and downstream industries as critical elements of the industrial value chain alongside upstream manufacturing.

"*Industrial value chains work in closely connected stages. Decisions that impact one part of the value chain directly, for example upstream extraction, refining and primary production, have a very clear impact on mid- and downstream manufacturing. They fully depend on each other*", said Paolo Falcioni, current Chair of Downstream4EU and Director General of APPLiA. "*We must reverse the trend of an increasing number of EU rules that have been written without that in mind.*"

"Today, we are adding a voice that has been missing from Europe's industrial debate: the voice of the companies that turn materials, ingredients and components into the products we all use every day", said Alexis Van Maercke, current Vice-Chair of Downstream4EU and Director General of Detergents Europe.

Downstream4EU is a coalition open to all representatives of mid- and downstream manufacturing in Europe. Its membership is based on a common understanding of the contribution made by European manufacturing to Europe's prosperity, and of a willingness to engage constructively with policymakers, upstream industries and all relevant stakeholders to overcome challenges facing the sector.

Notes for editors:

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About Downstream4EU

Downstream4EU was founded in 2026 by AIM (the European Brands Association), APPLiA (Home Appliance Europe), CECIMO (the European Association of Manufacturing Technologies), CEIR (Taps & Valves Europe), CEPE (the European Council of the Paint, Printing Ink and Artists' Colours Industry), Comité Européen de l'Outillage (European Tool Committee), Cosmetics Europe, Detergents Europe, DUCC (the Downstream Users of Chemicals Co-ordination Group), EFCEM (the European Federation of Catering Equipment Manufacturers), EGMF, Euralarm, Europump, Europur, FEA (the European Aerosol Federation), FEC (the Federation of the European Cookware, Cutlery and Housewares Industries), FEICA (the Association of the European Adhesive & Sealant Industry), FESI (the

Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry), LightingEurope, Orgalim (Europe's Technology Industries), Pneurop, TIE (Toy Industries of Europe), Tyres Europe and UNESDA (Soft Drinks Europe).
It is chaired on a semester rotating basis. The current Chair is Paolo Falcioni and the Vice-Chair is Alexis Van Maercke.

Downstream4EU is recorded in the EU Transparency Register: REG 1911703107121-35.