



European Association for Chemical and Molecular Sciences

A brief history of
what we were,
what we are,
and an outlook, towards
what we want to be



Federation of European Chemical Societies

- The Federation was founded in 1970 in Prague by 17 chemical societies, based on an initiative of the GDCh and the RSC
- Objective: to promote cooperation in Europe between non-profit-making scientific and technical societies in the field of chemistry
- Strategy: to organise pan-European conferences, establish networks, promote curriculum development



Federation of European Chemical Societies

- At the time of founding FECS, the world was divided, and the division ran through the middle of Europe.
- The aim of the founders: to provide a means to establish exchange of knowledge and experience in chemistry across all Europe.
- In 2000, FECS member societies represented some 200,000 individual chemists in academia, industry and government in Europe from 50 societies in 36 countries.



Federation of European Chemical Societies

- From 1970 to 2000, the FECS Divisions and Working Parties have organised more than 250 conferences
- Despite the strong scientific activities FECS as an organisation was unknown to individual chemists
- The Executive Committee had difficulties to define its role other than a talking shop
- Division Chairs and the Executive Committee wanted to find a way to influence European research policy
- This called for a thorough and fundamental reorganisation of FECS



Federation of European Chemical Societies: the Turning Point

- 2000, GA and Presidents' meeting, Rimini:
 - ❖ FECS is not visible! Nobody knows FECS!
 - ❖ Discussion groups produced first ideas to improve status and visibility: a large congress, political presence, advising EU government, newsletters...
 - ❖ The central question:

„FECS: a club or a business?“



Federation of European Chemical Societies: the Change

- 2001, GA Porto:
 - Action plan:
 - Develop visibility for individual scientists
 - Strengthening the science base
 - Develop political visibility through AllChemE
(AllChemE members: EuCheMS, CERC3, COST, EFCE, CEFIC, ECTN)
- 2002, GA Poznan:
 - Standing Committees, absorption of ECCC, initiation of the first Chemistry Congress 2006



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- 2003, GA Barcelona:
 - Decision to register as a legal entity in Brussels
- 2004 GA Bucharest:
 - Approval of the new constitution and continuation towards registration in Belgium as *Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif AISBL* (international non-profit organisation)
 - Approval of the new name - EuCheMS
 - GA acknowledges the necessity of a budget, based on contributions from member societies



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- 2005:
 - Discussions with legal advisers Ashurst to ensure new constitution meets Belgian requirements for AISBL
 - Discussion with Alain Perroy, Director General, CEFIC, on a Service Agreement for EuCheMS Brussels office
- October 2005, GA Nicosia:
 - Approval of budget to fund our legal responsibilities
 - Vote to enable establishment of EuCheMS as a legal entity
 - Executive Committee members provide personal details to enable them to be registered as the EuCheMS „Board“



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- November – December 2005
 - EuCheMS legal adviser and Belgian notary submit the final draft of the constitution to the Belgian ministry for approval on 24 November
 - EuCheMS becomes a partner of CEFIC and a Service Agreement for Brussels office is signed at CEFIC on 24 November
- 2006
 - EuCheMS opens a bank account in Belgium on 25 Jan 2006
 - Publication of the Notarial Deed, signed by 29 societies, in the Belgian Royal Gazette in March



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- 2006
 - First meeting of the Executive Committee of the legal entity held on 26 April
 - Extraordinary General Assembly of the legal entity on 26 April re-incorporated 15 further societies
 - First EuCheMS Newsletter published in May
 - First EuCheMS Policy Consultant appointed in May



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- 2006, continued
 - First EuCheMS policy position published in July
 - Associated lunch meeting with MEPs on 13 July
 - First EuCheMS Chemistry Conference in Budapest draws over 2300 participants
 - Second EuCheMS Newsletter published in September
- 2008
 - Second EuCheMS Chemistry Congress in Torino draws > 2000 scientists



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- 2006 – 2009 has seen the initiation of a number of projects:
 - EuCheMS Chemistry Congresses
 - European Energy Conference
 - Regular EuCheMS Newsletters
 - Regular Brussels Updates
 - EuCheMS Networking Scheme
 - European Sustainable Chemistry Award
 - Revitalisation of European Chemist designation



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- BUT: 2006 - 2009 has also shown, that with the present structure, EuCheMS
 - cannot efficiently act and react on the policy level
 - finds it difficult to create awareness in policy making circles in Brussels
 - has not sufficient funds to run an efficient representation
 - is not, in fact, finding it possible to fulfill its legal obligations with respect to financial management and visibility at the place where it is registered



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- As an "a.i.s.b.l." (association internationale sans but lucratif), registered in Belgium, we must be fully compliant with the legal framework governing this type of organisation, e.g.
 - Having a physical presence in Brussels (not just a letter-box!)
 - Having legal and tax compliant records at the disposal of inspectors at any time, in Brussels
 - Having a transparent governance structure with identifiable persons, visible in Brussels

💣 So far, we have not been fully compliant!