

Europe as a world leader in chip technologies: new approaches, new resources

From Strategy to Implementation – Southern Austria as a European Model Region

(Graz, 7 October 2026) Europe stands at a turning point when it comes to semiconductors, AI and strategic technologies. The key question is no longer whether Europe must respond, but how quickly technological expertise can be transformed into tangible industrial strength and value creation. **EBSCON 2026** is now addressing this central question under the motto **‘Crossroads – Europe at a Turning Point’**. Europe sees itself as a global market leader in chip technologies – EBSCON brings together various levels: European strategy, regional location policy, innovation, start-ups and industrial implementation. The key question is how quickly Europe can transform technological expertise into tangible industrial strength and value creation. International interest is high: with more than 500 participants from 24 countries for the first time, EBSCON 2026 – taking place as part of EBSCON Week – has set a new attendance record.

*“Europe is well on its way to becoming the global market leader in chip technologies. The technological expertise is there – in research, industry and start-ups,” reports **Robert Gfrerer**, Managing Director of the Silicon Alps Cluster and President of the Silicon Europe Alliance. “The key now is to scale up innovation more quickly, tap into new markets and secure industrial value creation in Europe. Southern Austria can play a key role in this, as it is a hub where expertise from microelectronics, the automotive sector, security, power electronics, research and industry converge,” says Gfrerer. “EBSCON brings these levels together: European strategy, regional location policy, innovation, start-ups and industrial implementation.”*

A strong location with globally successful companies

Styrian Provincial Councillor for Economic Affairs **Willibald Ehrenhöfer** defines Carinthia and Styria not as two separate technology hubs, but as a *“shared South Austrian high-tech region. Here, strong industrial and scientific expertise are closely intertwined. We must now pool these strengths even more effectively and use them to create new opportunities for innovation and growth. Particularly in fields such as microelectronics, semiconductors, sensor technology, power electronics, the automotive sector, security and advanced manufacturing, our companies and research institutions possess excellent expertise that is in high demand internationally. If we work together to further develop this potential, our companies can grow, develop new technologies and tap into international markets. In doing so, we will strengthen Southern Austria as a major technology hub in Europe.”*

The companies within the Silicon Alps Cluster form the heart of Southern Austria’s strong business location. *“Leoben is proof that Europe can be a world leader in key technologies,” says **Hannes Voraberger**, Head of R&D at **AT&S**. “AT&S has created a unique innovation ecosystem here that combines research, development and industrial implementation. What we have built up in Leoben demonstrates how Europe can develop, industrialise and secure critical technologies in the long term. This approach can serve as a blueprint for other strategic technology sectors and help to retain value creation and technological know-how in Europe.”*

“The next wave of innovation arises where hardware, software, safety and security interact seamlessly. This is fundamentally changing the role of semiconductor companies: today, the demand is no longer just for individual components, but for integrated system solutions. Austria is making an important contribution to this. With our sites in Gratkorn and Vienna, we combine expertise in security, embedded systems and software, thereby strengthening both the innovative capacity of the region and Europe’s technological competitiveness,” reports **Wolfgang Steinbauer**, CTO of NXP Austria and SVP Global Crypto and Security at NXP Semiconductors.

“Europe’s strength in the semiconductor sector extends far beyond the chip itself. It encompasses the entire technological value chain, from research and process development through to manufacturing and market-ready solutions. Semiconductor manufacturing plant and equipment lie at the heart of this value chain and form the bridge between innovation and industrial production. Southern Austria is home to a highly concentrated ecosystem of research institutions, technology companies and industrial partners that enables this development. EBSCON brings these areas of expertise together, fosters collaboration and drives forward the next generation of semiconductor technologies,” says **Peter Strutzmann**, Senior Manager, Innovation, Funding & Research Cooperation, **Lam Research AG**, Villach.

From **Infineon’s** perspective, too, southern Austria plays an important role in the European semiconductor ecosystem – here, universities, research institutions, industry and start-ups work together to foster international competitiveness and innovation. **Stefan Rohringer**, Country R&D Officer at Infineon Technologies Austria AG, comments: *“Semiconductors form the basis of many future technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and quantum computing, and are therefore a crucial driver of innovation and competitiveness. The future is not created in silos, but where research, industry and entrepreneurship successfully work together. Innovative start-ups also make an important contribution to this. We are therefore all the more delighted to be represented at EBSCON with the **Infineon Start-up Challenge** on the topic of robotics, providing a platform for promising ideas. As Infineon, we have been part of the Austrian tech ecosystem for more than 55 years and are helping to sustainably strengthen the region’s innovative capacity and international competitiveness.”*

As part of EBSCON 2026, Austrian **entrepreneur** and **investor Hermann Hauser** will deliver a **keynote** address on ‘**The Scale Up Europe Fund**’ – exploring how innovations can be scaled up more quickly and how the transition from technological excellence to global competitiveness can be achieved. In doing so, Hauser adapts Bill Clinton’s famous phrase “It’s the economy, stupid!” to the present day, putting forward the thesis **“It’s technology, stupid!”**.

Big days in the south: EBSCON Week

Taking place for the second time this year, EBSCON is also part of the **EBSCON Week** series of events from 6 to 9 October 2026, kicking off with the **Infineon Startup Challenge Demo Day** (Tuesday, 6 October) in Graz, followed by **EBSCON** on Wednesday, the first **Carinthia Applied Systems Day ‘Robotics’** (Thursday 8 October) in Klagenfurt, and company visits for **international delegations** from Sweden, the Netherlands and Japan in Carinthia and Styria on 8 and 9 October 2026.

"With this year's EBSCON, hosted in the European model region of Southern Austria, we are sending a strong signal that, in future, global markets can and must depend on Europe's technologies – and not the other way round," says Cluster Director Robert Gfrerer, looking ahead to the future.

Website: <https://www.ebscon.eu/>
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Print-quality press photos from EBSCON 2026 available for download:
<https://www.ebscon.eu/press/>

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- **Winners** of the Infineon Startup Challenge