

EU Monitoring Report

8–15 October 2020

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Chemicals

➤ REACH

- **Call for evidence: restriction of bisphenol A**

Source: [ECHA](#)

Germany is preparing an Annex XV restriction dossier on 4,4'-isopropylidenediphenol (bisphenol A, BPA) and structurally related bisphenols of similar concern (EC -, CAS -) where it will assess the associated risks to the environment.

Interested parties are invited to submit any relevant information to help with the dossier preparation. The deadline is 15 January 2021.

- **Consultations start on authorisation substitution plans**

Source: [ECHA](#)

The substitution plans of four applications for authorisation to use a substance of very high concern will open for consultation on 21 October 2020. ECHA's Committee for Socio-economic Analysis (SEAC) will evaluate the plans and the information received during the consultation to provide scientific underpinning for the European Commission to decide whether or not to grant the authorisations.

- **Deadlines for updating registration dossiers clarified**

Source: [ECHA](#)

The European Commission has clarified when companies need to update their REACH registration dossiers. The requirement to update 'without undue delay' is in most cases specified as three months and, in more complex cases, up to 12 months.

Background

Under the REACH Regulation, companies are responsible for collecting information on the properties and uses of the substances they manufacture or import above one tonne a year. They also have to assess the hazards and potential risks presented by the substance.

This information is communicated to ECHA through a registration dossier containing the hazard information and, where relevant, an assessment of the risks that the use of the substance may pose and how these risks should be controlled.

Registration is based on the 'one substance, one registration' principle. This means that manufacturers and importers of the same substance have to submit their registration jointly.

- **Limit fluoropolymers to essential uses, says international PFAS science panel**

Source: [Chemical Watch](#)

Fluoropolymers should be limited to "essential" uses, unless manufacturers and users can eliminate certain emissions from their lifecycles, according to an international group of scientists.

The substances are members of the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) class, which is under intense scrutiny by regulators. Industry stakeholders say fluoropolymers are safer than other members of the class, mainly because of their higher molecular weights, and have taken steps to encourage regulators to consider them separately.

However, the scientists suggest that benefits may not outweigh their impact on human health and the environment.

The group includes experts from the US EPA and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) and is affiliated with the Global PFAS Science Panel, a loose collective of scientists involved in PFAS research.

Scientists affiliated with the panel previously called for PFASs to be limited to essential uses. The current group says that fluoropolymers should be restricted to such uses if emissions of PFASs cannot be eliminated.

Fluoropolymers such as polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE), used as a non-stick coating in cookware, are ubiquitous.

The scientists decided to review scientific evidence after a 2018 industry review described them as "distinctly different" from other PFASs, recommending that they should be treated separately for hazard assessment or regulatory purposes.

The industry review, led by Barbara Henry from fluoropolymer company W L Gore, concluded that fluoropolymers satisfy "widely accepted assessment criteria" to be considered as "polymers of low concern" (PLC). According to OECD criteria, PLCs have "insignificant" environmental and human health impacts.

"We wanted to evaluate the evidence concerning the impacts of fluoropolymers throughout their lifecycle, to see if they are indeed PLC," said lead author Rainer Lohmann from the University of Rhode Island, US, in a press release.

"The proposals from some manufacturers that fluoropolymers are polymers of low concern are misleading in that they focus only on the use phase and ignore the harmful impacts that occur during production and disposal," added Ian Cousins from Stockholm University in Sweden.

The science panel's review did not find a "scientific rationale" for concluding that they are of low concern for environmental and human health.

Writing in *Environmental Science and Technology*, the panel raises particular concerns over PFASs used as fluoropolymer processing aids, [such as GenX](#), listed as substances of very high concern (SVHCs) in the EU because of environmental persistence and mobility.

It is also concerned about leaching of low molecular-weight PFASs during fluoropolymer processing, use and disposal.

The panel suggests that fluoropolymer assessments should consider the complete lifecycle, including emissions during production and disposal. Monitoring emissions of volatile and particulate PFAS at manufacturing and incineration sites is "urgently needed", it adds.

If PLC is part of a regulatory framework, their assessment should be performed on a "product-by-product basis". This is "because various grades and commercial products of fluoropolymers may or may not meet the PLC criteria".

In July, consultancy groups Wood and Peter Fisk Associates (PFA) compiled a [report](#) for the European Commission on criteria for identifying and grouping polymers for registration under REACH. The report references the study by Dr Henry and colleagues, reiterating that fluoropolymers are highly stable, with "limited low molecular weight leachates" and "no reactive functional groups of concern". There is, however, "concern" for some polymers with perfluorinated side chains, it adds.

The European Commission's [chemicals strategy](#), published on 14 October, confirms that it will "make a proposal" to extend the duty of registration under REACH to "certain polymers of concern". However, "there is much knowledge to be acquired by authorities on the intrinsic properties of a vast majority of chemicals, including polymers," it adds.

In May, US trade association the FluoroCouncil split its PFAS unit to create a [Performance Fluoropolymer Partnership](#) and an Alliance for Telomer Chemistry Stewardship. A press release from the American Chemistry Council (ACC) said that fluoropolymers meet OECD criteria for PLCs, "indicating that they do not present a significant concern for human health or the environment".

➤ CLP

- RAC adopts harmonised classification and labelling opinions on 10 substances

Source: [ECHA](#)

The Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) adopted CLH opinions on 10 substances during its virtual meeting which was held from 6 to 8 October 2020. Five of the substances do not have an existing harmonised classification, while for the other five RAC recommends additional classifications or amending existing classifications. The relevant substance included is bisphenol A.

The European Commission takes into account the RAC opinions when deciding whether to include the proposal for harmonised classification and labelling in Annex VI to the CLP Regulation, where all hazardous substances with harmonised classification and labelling are listed.

- New proposals and intentions to harmonise classification and labelling

Source: [ECHA](#)

A new proposal has been received for sulfur.

- 4th Meeting of REACH and CLP Competent Authorities Sub-Group on Information Requirements

Source: [European Commission](#)

The draft agenda of the meeting of October 22nd has been published. It contains the following items:

- 2. [Update of REACH Annex VI](#)
- 3. Aquatic toxicity
 - o [Section 9.1. Annex VII – X](#)
- 4. Degradation, Bioaccumulation and Terrestrial toxicity testing
 - o [Section 9.2. Annex VIII - X](#)
 - o [Section 9.3. Annex VIII](#)
 - o [Section 9.4. Annex IX – X](#)
 - o [Section 9.5. Annex X](#)

The annexes were uploaded and made available [here](#).

➤ Occupational exposure limits

- RAC opinions on occupational exposure limits for two substances available

Source: [ECHA](#)

Diisocyanates are widely used in different applications in industry, most notably in the manufacturing of polyurethanes (that are used for various purposes) and as hardeners in industrial paints, glues, varnishes and resins.

The opinions on scientific evaluations of occupational exposure limits for [diisocyanates](#) and [lead and its compounds](#) are now available on our website. The deadline is 12 November 2020.

- EU chemicals legislation finder

Source: [ECHA](#)

EUCLEF will be updated with 16 additional pieces of EU chemicals legislation in 2021. These include general product safety laws, recycled plastic materials, aerosol dispensers and many

more. With this addition, you will be able to search for altogether 51 EU laws to find out what substances they regulate and how.

EUCLEF comes with a regulatory support service that helps you with the content of different legislation and regulatory obligations.

- **Article 95 update**

Source: [ECHA](#)

Article 95 has been updated and includes new suppliers of biocides as surface disinfectants such as around swimming pools (biocidal product type 2):

- Active chlorine generated from sodium chloride by electrolysis (Redefined from Active Chlorine: manufactured by the reaction of hypochlorous acid and sodium hypochlorite produced in situ), by BASU/ POWERQUELL GmbH, added on 8 October 2020
- Active chlorine released from hypochlorous acid (Redefined from Active Chlorine: manufactured by the reaction of hypochlorous acid and sodium hypochlorite produced in situ), by BASU/ POWERQUELL GmbH, added on 8 October 2020
- Active chlorine released from hypochlorous acid (Redefined from Active Chlorine: manufactured by the reaction of hypochlorous acid and sodium hypochlorite produced in situ), by Pureclean.eu ApS, added on 15 October 2020

Sustainability

➤ Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability

- Green Deal: Commission adopts new Chemicals Strategy towards a toxic-free environment

Source: [European Commission](#)

The European Commission adopted on 14 October 2020 the [EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability](#). The Strategy is the first step towards a zero pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment announced in the [European Green Deal](#).

The Strategy will boost innovation for safe and sustainable chemicals, and increase protection of human health and the environment against hazardous chemicals. This includes prohibiting the use of the most harmful chemicals in consumer products unless proven essential for society, and ensuring that all chemicals are used more safely and sustainably.

The strategy was [announced](#) at a press conference, where the Commission's Executive Vice-President Timmermans delivered [opening remarks](#) to introduce the initiative. The EU Commission also published a set of [Questions and Answers](#).

Stakeholders reaction to the publication of the Chemical Strategy:

- [European Environmental Bureau](#): Time to ensure the EU is on the path to a toxic-free environment – letter on EU chemicals strategy
- [European Environmental Bureau](#): Time to ensure the EU is on the path to a toxic-free environment – letter on EU chemicals strategy
- [EurEau](#): Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability: Chance to protect our water resources
- [Cefic](#): Cefic welcomes new enforcement and innovation proposals in new Chemical Strategy For Sustainability, warns 'missed opportunity' and uncoordinated approach risk undermining EU 'Green Deal' and climate goals
- [Covestro](#): Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability hand in hand with Industrial Strategy
- [BEUC](#): Consumers place high hopes on EU gearing up fight against harmful chemicals
- [ChemSec](#): letter to EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

Press articles

- [EURACTIV](#): Europe aims for ‘zero pollution’ in upcoming chemicals strategy
- [EURACTIV](#): EU’s new chemical strategy aims to prohibit hazardous substances until proven safe
- [ECHA ready to help the EU achieve its ambitions for safe and sustainable chemicals](#)

Source: [ECHA](#)

The European Commission has published its Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability as part of the European Green Deal. ECHA welcomes the strategy and looks forward to supporting its implementation.

The chemicals strategy highlights that chemicals are fundamental for society and that a robust framework is needed to make the legislation stronger and more coherent.

It presents several actions for a toxic-free environment to protect people and the environment from hazardous chemicals. ECHA can play a key role in many of these areas with its scientific and technical competences.

Bjorn Hansen, ECHA’s Executive Director says: “European citizens are concerned about chemicals, and we need to make sure these concerns are addressed. At ECHA, we can play our part in making this strategy a success by supporting the Commission and EU Member States together with our stakeholders. We can particularly contribute in three areas: collecting, publishing and evaluating data on chemicals to stimulate innovation towards safer alternatives; ensuring that laws are implemented more efficiently and consistently; and speeding up chemicals risk management in the EU.”

ECHA’s vision is to be the centre of knowledge on the sustainable management of chemicals, serving a wide range of EU policies and global initiatives, for the benefit of citizens and the environment.

- **European Commission publishes radical, wide-ranging chemicals strategy**

Source: [Chemical Watch](#)

The European Commission's keenly-awaited and controversial chemicals strategy for sustainability, published on 14 October, lays out more than 50 wide-ranging actions that will have a direct impact on industry and are listed for completion by 2024.

The adopted 25-page Communication text includes commitments, some of which were [contested](#) by DG Grow, that are largely [unchanged](#) from the initial DG Environment draft [leaked](#) to Chemical Watch in July.

The Commission published several documents to accompany the Communication, including staff working documents on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), a progress report on the assessment and management of combined exposures to multiple chemicals, and a fitness check on endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs).

Key draft proposals on EDCs, PFASs, new hazard classes to fully address environmental toxicity, persistency and mobility (PMT and vPvM), and REACH registration for polymers remain in the Communication text.

However, the published version waters down some pledges for concrete action on the promotion of non-toxic material cycles.

The Communication lays out key measures on safe and sustainable-by-design criteria with plans to develop these criteria. Speaking at Chemical Watch's Key Regulatory Updates conference on 14 October, which coincided with the publication of the strategy, Cefic product stewardship director, Sylvie Lemoine, said "one of the first things we should do is define 'sustainable by design'", adding that a definition is important because "my sustainability could be very different to your sustainability".

The strategy also pledges to establish an EU-wide safe and sustainable-by-design support network to promote cooperation and sharing of information, and "ensure the development, commercialisation, deployment and uptake" of safe and sustainable-by-design substances, materials and products through financial support under various initiatives, including Horizon Europe.

New proposals

While the action plan for PFASs as outlined in the draft remains unchanged, the final Communication text goes further on EDCs by assuring that they will be banned in consumer products as soon as they are identified, "allowing their use only where it is proven to be essential for society".

It will also "strengthen" workers' protection by introducing endocrine disruptors as a category of SVHC under REACH.

And as expected, the text includes a specific commitment to "immediately" launch a comprehensive impact assessment to define the modalities and timing for extending the generic approach to risk management to ensure consumer products do not contain harmful chemicals that cause cancers, gene mutations, affect the reproductive or the endocrine system or are persistent and bioaccumulative. Such assessments, NGOs have said, could lead to "[paralysis](#) by analysis".

Until the generic approach to risk management is in place, the Commission says it will prioritise restricting these substances "for all uses", and by using grouping instead of regulating them one by one.

Many high level discussions have taken place recently on the definition of "essential use". In the strategy, the Commission pledges to "define criteria for essential uses to ensure that the most harmful chemicals are only allowed if their use is necessary for health, safety or is critical for the functioning of society and if there are no alternatives that are acceptable from the standpoint of environment and health. These criteria will guide the application of essential uses in all relevant EU legislation for both generic and specific risk assessments".

As the Communication is not a legislative proposal, it will not be subject to scrutiny by the European Parliament or the Council of Ministers. The Commission will make legislative and non-legislative proposals to implement the strategy, which are due to be presented next year, and will be carried out within the framework of existing legislation.

- **Why As European Industry And Citizens We Must Strive To Make The European Green Deal A Success**

Source: [Cefic](#)

The New President of Cefic appointed on 15 October 2020, Martin Brudermüller, CEO of BASF, launches his Presidency with an open letter explaining why his industry supports the EU Green Deal and why chemistry is the key to unlocking its solutions.

I write this today as the new President of Cefic, the voice of Europe's chemical industry, but above all, as a fellow European citizen who cares about our next generation. I am honoured to have been elected Cefic President by my peers and I take this responsibility seriously, both in representing our industry and in ensuring we can continue to serve society to the very best of our abilities. The European Commission has recognised the chemical industry for its "indispensable" role to help society achieve the new European Green Deal objectives. Cefic has clearly expressed our industry's support for the Green Deal and Europe's ambition to go climate neutral by 2050.

And we are not alone. China's recent pledge to become carbon neutral by 2060 is encouraging and can be a key driver for a truly joint global effort!

This transition will bring huge challenges, but it also brings a set of opportunities for industry. In being successful, Europe must therefore show its leadership in innovating and deploying competitive new technologies for delivering a climate neutral, circular and digital transition. Whether it is chemistry for solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, building insulation, medicines, chemical recycling technologies or the huge variety of other solutions we provide, our European chemical industry can excel and thrive in delivering its innovation-led contributions to the Green Deal.

- **EEB Event on the EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability: reflections for a EU toxic-free environment**

Source: [EEB](#)

On the 14th October 2020, as a first step towards the EU's Zero Pollution Ambition, the European Commission is expected to present the long-awaited Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability that aims to ensure a toxic free environment for the EU. The strategy is the EU's flagship initiative under the Green Deal to take the next steps to better protect citizens

and the environment against hazardous chemicals and encourage innovation for the development of safe and sustainable alternatives.

Currently, the EU has the most advanced and comprehensive chemicals policy framework in the world. At the same time, major challenges remain.

Large scale incidences of pollution such as the mercury disaster portrayed in the soon to be released movie 'Minamata' are still a reality around the globe today. Europe reacted fast to the Minamata disaster and became a global front runner on mercury control. However, mercury remains a serious threat to human health and the environment, as do newer substances such as PFAS. What lessons have we learned from the past and how do we reflect these in the EU chemicals policy framework we need for the future?

Join us on the 19th of October for a high-level policy dialogue on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. In this interactive online discussion, bringing together key policy makers and stakeholders, we will reflect on lessons learned from the past and how the new Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability could effectively address the challenges we face moving forward.

The first 100 registered participants for this event will be given a unique sneak preview of the soon to be released movie 'Minamata' by director Andrew Levitas. Minamata, portrays war photographer W. Eugene Smith (Johnny Depp) and his wife Aileen Mioko Smith (Minami) documenting the devastating effect of mercury poisoning in Minamata, a coastal community in Japan. The film's premiere was at the Berlinale earlier this year and will be released in cinemas across the EU next year.

➤ Energy

- EU Commission's Presentation on the Energy Efficiency Directive

Source: [European Parliament](#)

On 12 October, the ITRE Committee invited the European Commission for a presentation on the progress made towards the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive and the EU 2020 energy efficiency target.

Mr Hans van Steen, Director in DG ENER of the European Commission, kept a presentation on the progress made by Member States towards the implementation of the Energy Efficiency Directive and the attainment of the EU 20% energy efficiency targets for 2020.

- CEN/TC 182 provides updates on standards for pump equipment, refrigerating systems

Source: CEN

CEN provided an update on technical specifications for heat pump equipment ([source](#)): The document provides technical specifications and guidance for the installation of refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump equipment, containing flammable refrigerants, complementing existing standards.


CEN also provided an update on refrigerating systems, safety and environmental requirements ([source](#)). It specifically concerns operation, servicing, maintenance, repair and decommissioning of refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump equipment containing flammable refrigerants, complementing existing standards

- Don't stress over the new EU Energy Labels!

Source: [European Commission](#)

To support the smooth introduction of a [new generation of EU energy labels](#), H2020Energy Efficiency funded projects [BELT](#) and [Label 2020](#) are rolling out their campaigns at full speed. To inform and help the different market actors, they are preparing handy and tailored material: e-learning, [guidelines for retailers](#) and [manufacturers](#) as well as a [factsheet](#) and web tools for consumers. The projects' combined outreach covers majority of EU Member States and the communication material developed is at the disposal of national public authorities, interested in undertaking related activities.

The first set of new energy labels for dishwashers, washing machines, refrigerators, and electronic displays, including televisions, will be visible in shops and online as of 1 March 2021 and for lamps, as of 1 September 2021. These labels will spur the innovation of even more energy efficient products, while [helping save energy](#) and reducing energy bills.

In addition, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre has prepared a report on “  [Good practices for joint Market Surveillance actions](#) ”, including on energy and tyre labelling rules. The report draws particular attention to the developed data management app and [training videos](#) as well as best practices introduced from a number of H2020EE projects ([MSTYR15](#), [EEPLIANT1-2](#) and the [EEPLIANT3 Concerted Action](#)).

➤ Waste

- International E-Waste Day marked around the world

Source: [WEEE Forum](#)

In 2019 only 17,4% of global e-waste was collected and properly recycled, which means that 44,3 million metric tonnes of e-waste, valued at US \$57 billion, was either placed in landfill, burned or illegally traded and treated in a sub-standard way, and this is despite 71% of the world's population being covered by e-waste legislation.

International E-Waste Day has been developed by the WEEE Forum to help to address this huge issue and promote global e-waste recycling. 112 organisations from 48 countries across the world got involved in the last year's International E-Waste Day by arranging their own activities to unite in tackling the e-waste challenge.

➤ Construction

- Renovation Wave: doubling the renovation rate to cut emissions, boost recovery and reduce energy poverty

Source: [European Commission](#)

The European Commission has published today its [Renovation Wave Strategy](#) to improve the energy performance of buildings. The Commission aims to at least **double renovation rates in the next ten years and make sure renovations lead to higher energy and resource efficiency**. This will enhance the quality of life for people living in and using the buildings, reduce Europe's greenhouse gas emissions, foster digitalisation and improve the reuse and recycling of materials. By 2030, **35 million buildings could be renovated and up to 160,000 additional green jobs created** in the construction sector.

Buildings are responsible for about 40% of the EU's energy consumption, and 36% of greenhouse gas emissions from energy (*). But only 1% of buildings undergo energy efficient renovation every year, so effective action is **crucial to making Europe climate-neutral by 2050**. With nearly 34 million Europeans unable to afford keeping their homes heated, public policies to promote energy efficient renovation are also **a response to energy poverty**, support the health and wellbeing of people and help reduce their energy bills. The

Commission has also published today a Recommendation for Member States on tackling energy poverty.

Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, Frans **Timmermans** said: *“We want everyone in Europe to have a home they can light, heat, or cool without breaking the bank or breaking the planet. The Renovation Wave will improve the places where we work, live and study, while reducing our impact on the environment and providing jobs for thousands of Europeans. We need better buildings if we want to build back better.”*

Commissioner for Energy, Kadri **Simson**, said: *“The green recovery starts at home. With the Renovation Wave we will tackle the many barriers that today make renovation complex, expensive and time consuming, holding back much needed action. We will propose better ways to measure renovation benefits, minimum energy performance standards, more EU funding and technical assistance encourage green mortgages and support more renewables in heating and cooling. This will be a game changer for home-owners, tenants and public authorities.”*

The strategy will prioritise action in three areas: decarbonisation of heating and cooling; tackling energy poverty and worst-performing buildings; and renovation of public buildings such as schools, hospitals and administrative buildings. The Commission proposes to break down existing barriers throughout the renovation chain – from the conception of a project to its funding and completion - with a set of policy measures, funding tools and technical assistance instruments.

The strategy will include the following lead actions:

- Stronger **regulations, standards and information on the energy performance of buildings to set better incentives for public and private sector renovations**, including a phased introduction of mandatory minimum energy performance standards for existing buildings, updated rules for Energy Performance Certificates, and a possible extension of building renovation requirements for the public sector;
- Ensuring accessible and **well-targeted funding**, including through the ‘Renovate’ and ‘Power Up’ Flagships in the Recovery and Resilience Facility **under NextGenerationEU**, simplified rules for combining different funding streams, and multiple incentives for private financing;

- **Increasing capacity** to prepare and implement renovation projects, from technical assistance to national and local authorities through to training and skills development for workers in **new green jobs**;
- Expanding the market for **sustainable construction products and services**, including the integration of new materials and nature-based solutions, and revised legislation on marketing of construction products and material reuse and recovery targets;
- Creating a **New European Bauhaus**, an interdisciplinary project co-steered by an advisory board of external experts including scientists, architects, designers, artists, planners and civil society. From now until summer 2021 the Commission will conduct a broad participatory co-creation process, and will then **set up a network of five founding Bauhaus in 2022** in different EU countries.
- Developing **neighbourhood-based approaches** for local communities to integrate renewable and digital solutions and create zero-energy districts, where consumers become prosumers selling energy to the grid. The strategy also includes an **Affordable Housing Initiative** for 100 districts.

The review of the Renewable Energy Directive in June 2021 will consider strengthening the renewable heating and cooling target and introducing a minimum renewable energy level in buildings. The Commission will also examine how the EU budget resources alongside the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) revenues could be used to fund national energy efficiency and savings schemes targeting lower income populations. The Ecodesign Framework will be further developed to provide efficient products for use in buildings and promote their use.

The Renovation Wave is not only about making the existing buildings more energy efficient and climate neutral. It can trigger a large-scale transformation of our cities and built environment. It can be an opportunity to start a forward-looking process to match sustainability with style. As announced by President von der Leyen, the Commission will launch the New European Bauhaus to nurture a new European aesthetic that combines performance with inventiveness. We want to make liveable environments accessible to everyone, and again marry the affordable with the artistic, in a newly sustainable future.

Background

The COVID-19 crisis has turned the spotlight on our buildings, their importance in our daily lives and their fragilities. Throughout the pandemic, the home has been the focal point of daily life for millions of Europeans: an office for those teleworking, a make-shift nursery or classroom for children and pupils, for many a hub for online shopping or entertainment.

Investing in buildings can inject a much-needed stimulus into the construction sector and the macro-economy. Renovation works are labour-intensive, create jobs and investments rooted in often local supply chains, generate demand for highly energy-efficient equipment, increase climate resilience and bring long-term value to properties.

To achieve the at least 55% emissions reduction target for 2030, proposed by the Commission in September 2020, the EU must reduce buildings' greenhouse gas emissions by 60%, their energy consumption by 14%, and the energy consumption of heating and cooling by 18%.

European policy and funding has already had a positive impact on the energy efficiency of new buildings, which now consume only half the energy of those built over 20 years ago. However, 85% of buildings in the EU were built over 20 years ago, and 85-95% are expected to still be standing in 2050. The Renovation Wave is needed to bring them up to similar standards.

- **Opening remarks by Executive Vice-President Timmermans and Commissioner Simson at the press conference Building a Climate Neutral Europe**

Source: [European Commission](#)

Presentation of the latest proposals for matching the EU's energy policies to our climate ambitions. The European Council later this week will discuss a new climate target for 2030. It is in this context of particular importance to highlight where we already are, and how we will deliver on this new ambition. In this context the Commission presented the Renovation Wave, its Methane Strategy, and the State of the Energy Union report. The European Commission also published [Questions and Answers on the Renovation Wave](#).

➤ Endocrine Disruptors

- Commission launches phase two of fight against hormone disruptors

Source: [EURACTIV](#)

After conducting a review of the current legislation on endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs), the European Commission is now proposing a set of actions to step up its approach to these hazardous substances.

A commitment to reduce the exposure of humans and the environment to endocrine disruptors was included in the [EU chemicals strategy](#), unveiled by the Commission on Wednesday (14 October).

EDCs are a class of chemicals commonly found throughout our environment in children's products, food containers, personal care products, pesticides, furniture and more.

These substances alter the functioning of the hormonal system, having a negative effect on the health of humans and animals.

The issue started being discussed in the EU as early as 1996 and the Commission recognised EDCs as a health and environmental hazard in its "Community Strategy for endocrine disruptors" in December 1999.

The interest in tackling EDCs was revamped in November 2018, when the Commission published a new strategy for endocrine disruptors and launched a comprehensive screening of the legislation applicable to EDCs through the so-called 'fitness check' process.

The cross-cutting fitness check has been finalised in the first half of 2020, as scheduled, and the outcomes [are an annex to the Chemical Strategy](#) itself.

The assessment concluded that the EU regulatory framework on the matter "is overall fragmented, limited and needs to be consolidated and simplified to ensure that endocrine disruptors are recognised in a timely manner and that exposure of humans and the environment is minimised."

The Commission has proposed a comprehensive set of actions in the new strategy to cope with loopholes highlighted in the fitness check. First, it will establish legally binding hazard

identification of endocrine disruptors based on the definition of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and apply it across all EU legislation.

“It’s a huge horizontal action,” Environmental Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius told EURACTIV. In addition to this, the Commission will commit to ensuring that endocrine disruptors are banned in consumer products as soon as they are identified, allowing their use only where it is proven to be essential for society.

“We are already working together with experts from EU member states over the proposal to include the identification of endocrine disruptors under the [Classification, Labelling and Packaging regulation \(CLP\)](#),” said Sinkevičius.

He added that the EU is in parallel working at the global level to include the identification in the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), an international agreement on labelling schemes standards managed by the United Nations.

German MEP Sven Giegold for the Greens welcomed the renewed ambition to take precise actions against the group of hormone disruptors.

“I am glad that Virginijus Sinkevičius has kept his public promise to me and that endocrine disruptors like carcinogenic substances will soon be largely eliminated from everyday products,” he said in a comment.

Natacha Cingotti, Senior Policy Officer for Health and Chemicals at the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), said that initiatives to better categorise and strictly regulate chemicals of concerns such as endocrine disruptors and PFAS are particularly pressing.

Commenting on the release of the strategy, Monique Goyens for the European consumers association BEUC urged further action “to ensure that loopholes such as on endocrine disruptors in cosmetics, toys and food packaging are closed without delay.”

Barbara Demeneix, chair of Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals Task Force at Endocrine Society, welcomed this “significant first step” towards further protecting the public from EDCs exposure but expects further details and concrete actions. Close to 800 chemicals are known or suspected to be capable of interfering with hormone receptors, hormone synthesis or hormone conversion, according to a report drafted in 2012 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the WHO. The health costs of exposure to EDCs is estimated to be at least €163 billion per year in Europe alone.