

Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability: How can we enhance safety & competitiveness?



24 June 2020, 15:00-16:30 CEST

Hosted by MEP Maria Spyra

Co-Chair of the European Parliament Intergroup
on 'Climate Change, Biodiversity & Sustainable Development'

Under the first priority – 'A European Green Deal' – of the European Commission's new work programme published on 29 January 2020, its intention to launch A Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability is highlighted. Aiming at reducing the risks associated with producing and using chemicals, the feedback period is currently open until 20 June, while the strategy is expected to be adopted in the third quarter of 2020.

This strategy will simplify and strengthen EU rules on chemicals, and review how EU agencies and scientific bodies can work together towards a process where substances are only reviewed by one agency. The chemicals strategy for sustainability should help in protecting people and the environment against hazardous chemicals and encourage innovation in the sector to develop safe and sustainable alternatives, while building a more circular economy as well as a new sustainable product policy framework which will establish sustainability principles for all products. At the same time, the strategy should be coherent with, and complementary to the other policy objectives of the Green Deal, including the Circular Economy Action Plan, and of the New Industrial Strategy for Europe, whereas it should also outline the sectors, and ways in which the chemicals industry can contribute to these objectives, such as in clean energy, raw materials, sustainable transport, digitalization and reduced consumption.

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All in all, it is widely recognised that chemicals have an essential role to play to achieve the Green Deal objectives (e.g. carbon neutrality by 2050) and to enable circular economy while remaining globally competitive. Therefore, a chemicals strategy for sustainability as part of the Green Deal was deemed necessary. A consolidation of all relevant policies, including chemicals, trade, tax, innovation, enforcement and competition, so that they serve the same goal, which is to attract investments into Europe and create markets for circular and low-carbon products developed by the industry. As a result, the aim of this upcoming EP Intergroup event is to address the production of safe and sustainable chemicals, ensuring innovation for the transition to a circular and sustainable industry and long-term investments, for which rigorous stakeholder involvement and collaboration should be incentivized. Last but not least, the ambition of this webinar is also to discuss with relevant stakeholders how the establishment of a platform on chemicals data could support the ambitions of the Green Deal and the chemicals strategy, by making data available to EU citizens, academia, researchers, stakeholders, industry and politicians.

DRAFT AGENDA

15:00 - 15:10 – Welcome by MEP Maria Spyra

15:10 - 16:10 – Panel discussion moderated by MEP Maria Spyra

- Sylvie Lemoine, Executive Director Product Stewardship, CEPIC
- Carlo Pettinelli, Director, Chemicals and Consumer Industries, DG GROW, European Commission
- Bjorn Hansen, Executive Director, ECHA
- MEP Sven Giegold
- Dr. Violaine Verougstraete, Chemicals Management Director, Eurometaux
- Oliver Loebel, Secretary General, EurEau
- Tatiana Santos, Policy Manager for Chemicals & Nanotechnology, EEB

16:10 - 16:25 – Q&As with the audience

16:25 - 16:30 – Closing remarks and take-away messages by MEP Maria Spyra