



Update on legislation relating to Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)

Background: Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation

The [REACH Regulation](#) came into force in the European Union (EU) on 1 June 2007. The aim was to improve protection of human health and the environment from the risks posed by chemicals, while enhancing the competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.

As part of the [Green Deal](#) and the development of a [Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability](#), the European Commission committed to review the REACH legislation, to put in place more stringent criteria for the approval and re-assessment of chemicals.

This has not yet happened and in September 2025, the REACH review was (again) delayed. Publication is expected in Q1 2026.

Why does this matter?

An ambitious revision of REACH would be a major step towards reducing the presence of EDCs in our environment. Given the proven links between EDC exposure and endocrine conditions, this would have a significant impact on population health in Europe.

A revised REACH proposal would need to:

- factor in the 'mixture effect' of combining multiple harmful chemicals
- accelerate regulatory processes which are currently very slow
- significantly reduce the current high burden of proof for national and European authorities to take precautionary actions
- encourage the replacement of harmful chemicals with safe alternatives.

However, ESE has concerns that the upcoming REACH revision will simplify the current rules without fully reflecting the need to protect populations from harmful EDC exposure. For this reason, **it is important that we (the European endocrine community) continue to share our views on REACH and EDCs in general to educate policy makers and the general public on the risks EDCs pose for our health and environment.**

Action to date

ESE and partners have taken several steps to urge the Commission to publish the REACH revision:

- In April 2023 we [presented a petition](#) to the Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, signed by 44 international and European national and specialist endocrine societies. This was followed by a similar petition signed by eight international patient associations representing circa 300 global patient organisations in the world and more than 40 national endocrine patient organisations.
- On 7 June 2023, we held a [high-level policy event on EDCs](#) in the European Parliament in association with the European Society of Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE), the European Thyroid Association and the Endocrine Society (US). This was, hosted by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) Martin Hojsík (Slovakia) and Sirpa Pietikäinen (Finland).
- In November 2024, ESE and the Endocrine Society urged MEPs to press the Commission on the REACH file during [official hearings](#) of the designated Commissioners.
- [In March 2025](#), experts affiliated with ESE and the Endocrine Society met with EU Commissioner Jessika Roswall and other policymakers to discuss REACH and present evidence-based views.
- On 14 May 2025, directly after the Joint Congress of ESPE and ESE, ESE and ESPE, in collaboration with several partner organisations, organised the Legacy Event [“Minimising the Impact of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals on Health and Environment”](#). The upcoming revision of REACH was one of the main topics for discussion for an audience of EU and national policymakers, NGOs, industry representatives and our own endocrine community. Speakers presented the latest scientific developments on EDCs and suggestions for reflecting these developments in national and EU chemicals legislation.

As a result of this engagement, EU institutions, civil society and other stakeholders at the EU and national level are increasingly recognising the views of endocrinologists and researchers in the field.

What next?

The endocrine community must continue to push for the urgent publication of the REACH revision and contribute to other ongoing EDC-related debates. These include the [proposal to reduce emissions from polyfluoroalkyl substances](#) (PFAS), where proposed exceptions may significantly reduce the impact of the ongoing PFAS restriction proposal.

More information

- ESE's [advocacy activities on EDCs](#)

- [Updated PFAS restriction proposal](#) by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)
- Information on ESE's [EndoCompass project](#), which sets out a roadmap for tailored EU research funding for endocrinology, including on EDCs
- Information on the [PFAS restriction proposal](#)

European Society of Endocrinology

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