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EU chemicals policy landscape

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Conference Future with EMAS

From the Green Deal to the Clean Industrial Deal

- In 2019, the **EU Green Deal** made a toxic-free environment a core objective, placing chemicals policy at the heart of achieving safe, sustainable production and consumption.
- In 2020, the **Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability** (CSS) then defined how to modernise EU chemicals legislation, ensuring both innovation and stronger protection for health and the environment.
- The **Clean Industrial Deal** continues this work, focusing on simplification and efficiency so that chemicals rules remain fit for purpose and support competitiveness.
- **Chemicals policy now bridges environmental, industrial, and health goals, and is essential to the EU's ambitions for a circular economy, zero pollution, and sustainable growth.**



Policy landscape: brief overview of what has been in motion recently.

Chemicals Industry Action Plan (July 2025)

- Supports the Clean Industrial Deal on competitiveness, innovation, simplification.

CLP Revision (Dec 2022 and Dec 2024)

- New hazard classes (EDCs, PMT/vPvM), clearer rules for mixtures, etc.
- Enables digital labelling, communication of hazards for online sales.

One Substance One Assessment package (June 2025)

- Streamlines EU chemical assessments and creates a shared data platform.
- Reduces duplication and improves transparency.

VI Omnibus Package

- Simplifies and aligns several chemicals laws (CLP, Cosmetic Products Regulation, Fertilisers)
- Cuts administrative burden while maintaining protection.

ECHA Basis act

- Strengthen the governance of ECHA and increase the sustainability of its financing model.



Upcoming REACH Revision – simplifying while ensuring protection

- The 2018 REACH evaluation identified **inefficiencies**: slow and unpredictable processes, burdensome supply chain provisions, uneven enforcement, and gaps in scientific updates.
- Reform aims to make the system **faster and more predictable**, focusing more on restrictions and group approaches than individual authorisations.
- Encourages **early prioritisation** and discussion of the most suitable risk management tools.
- Introduces **digitalisation** and **reduced reporting** in others to streamline obligations.
- **Modernise** data requirements (non-animal methods, data on endocrine disruptors)
- Explores **proportionate polymer notification and registration** for the most hazardous polymers.
- **Further focus on enforcement**: exploring stronger and more coordinated enforcement mechanisms, including EU-level support and better harmonisation among Member States.



PFAS Action – addressing a group of persistent chemicals

- Comprehensive action on PFAS across EU legislation to prevent pollution and limit exposure.
 - **Soil Monitoring Law:** PFAS included on the EU list of priority contaminants; Member States to identify and monitor soil “hot spots.”
 - **Drinking Water Directive:** PFAS monitoring mandatory from Jan 2026, with remediation if limits are exceeded.
 - **Water Framework Directive and EQS Directive:** COM proposal to add 24 PFAS as priority pollutants.
 - **Packaging & Packaging Waste Regulation:** PFAS banned in food packaging from Aug 2026.
 - **Food Contaminants Regulation:** PFAS limits set for fish, eggs, meat, etc.; future monitoring to expand coverage.
 - **Toy Safety Regulation:** ban on all intentionally used PFAS in toys (except fully enclosed parts)
 - **Plant Protection Products:** non-renewal proposed for several PFAS-based pesticides.
 - **Industrial Emissions Directive:** PFAS emissions to be monitored and reported.
- REACH restrictions already adopted on PFHxA and PFAS in firefighting foams; and broader group restriction under preparation.



Universal PFAS restriction

- **Dossier:** in January 2023, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden submitted a REACH restriction dossier covering all PFAS in all uses, with limited exemptions (e.g. medicines).
- **Assessment:** ECHA's scientific committees are reviewing the dossier; over 5,600 comments received during first consultation.
- **Timeline:** RAC opinion due in Q1 2026 but SEAC one expected Q4 2026 due to complexity; Commission proposal as soon as possible after that.
- **Next steps:** Commission working with ECHA and national authorities to avoid further delays. Upcoming SEAC consultation in March 2026.
- **Policy direction:** aim to ban PFAS in consumer uses, while allowing continued use for critical industrial applications lacking alternatives until substitutes are available.



Other developments in chemicals policy

- **Restriction proposal on hexavalent chromium (Cr(VI))** aims to replace complex authorisations with a single broad restriction.
- **Implementation of the Safe and Sustainable by Design framework** to guide innovation towards inherently safer substances and materials.
- **Launch of innovation and substitution hubs** to support industry transitions and knowledge exchange.



Thank you



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