Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs): Summary of current and upcoming EU health policy debates

A new European Commission and Parliament – what are they working on in 2025?

- The **European Health Data Space** **(EHDS)** regulation (adopted on 21 January 2025) will facilitate the exchange of data for the delivery of healthcare across the EU and aims to benefit medical research by providing a new system for the processing and re-usage of health data. Now that the legislation has been adopted, we can expect a rather lengthy and probably complex implementation process within the different Member States.

- The **Pharmaceutical Package** aims to make the European pharmaceutical industry more competitive and to strengthen investment in medicinal products where research is most needed, but investment is riskier. Debates are ongoing at the EU level around data exclusivity, market access for generics and unmet medical needs. ESE has been contributing to the hard work of the Biomed Alliance in Europe to monitor and influence this file where needed, especially when it comes to unmet medical needs.

- The negotiations for the new **Toy Safety Regulation** are in their final stage with negotiations being expected to be finalised in the first or second quarter of 2025. While the European Parliament is supportive of a comprehensive ban on EDCs in toys, the Council, consisting of the EU Member States, is more hesitant. ESE has been actively supporting the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology to help change the course of the debate and ensure children are better protected from harmful chemicals.

- The European Commission is expected to publish the proposal for the next **research framework programme FP10** on 1 July 2025, after which the European Parliament and Council will start the legislative debate. Along with our partners, ESE plans to actively engage with the different stages of the negotiations towards FP10 through meetings with key stakeholders and public statements explaining the importance of endocrine research. At the core of its efforts will be the upcoming publication and dissemination of EndoCompass – Research Roadmap for Better Hormone Health.

- The second upcoming legislative debate crucial for endocrine health, is the long overdue publication of the **REACH – Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals** revision. While it is positive that a revision may finally be published, there are concerns that the revision would mainly be a simplification of the current rules and focus less on protecting human and animal health from harmful chemicals. ESE and partners have frequently shared their views with policy

makers as how our community thinks such a revision should look like. We will continue to do so this year through meeting with different departments of the European Commission and several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). We also intend to publish a position paper in close collaboration with ECAS and other partners. (A more detailed summary of the REACH debate is in ESE's Policy Toolkit, which provides materials to support the endocrine community in engaging with policymakers.)

- The European Commission is assessing a PFAS restriction proposal initiated by the national authorities of Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, which aims to **reduce PFAS emissions in our environment**. The proposal has been met with an extensive lobby by the industry who are seeking exemptions to any potential ban. ESE and its partners are of the view that the Commission should only provide exemptions to individuals and for society-critical products, rather than entire sectors. Thorough measures are essential to reduce the number and impact of PFAS "hotspots" in Europe – currently estimated at 2,300 – where high levels of pollution pose a threat to human health.

To stay up to date with the latest policy developments at the EU level relevant for the European endocrine community, consider subscribing to the three times yearly EARS Newsletters.

For more information, please contact:

- Dirk De Rijdt, Director of Strategic Partnerships – dirk.derijdt@ese-hormones.org
- Mischa van Eimeren, EU liaison Officer – mischa.vaneimeren@ese-hormones.org

European Society of Endocrinology
March 2025