

# [Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Syrian ceasefire](#)

The Foreign Secretary said:

I am deeply concerned by the continued military campaign against the civilians of Eastern Ghouta and credible reports that Russian aircraft are actively participating alongside the Assad regime, contrary to the Security Council's demand in UNSCR 2401 for a 30-day ceasefire in Syria. The areas suffering from bombardments are civilian populated areas.

There are reports of a death toll of more than 600 civilians in the last two weeks, including 200 airstrikes and over 100 killed since Russia voted in favour of the ceasefire. All this in an area that, lest we forget, Russia itself announced as a de-escalation zone through the Astana Process.

The main Opposition armed groups on the ground are involved in the UN-led Geneva process and Russia's own Astana process and have clearly committed to full implementation of the UNSCR. These groups are not terrorists – they support a negotiated political solution to the crisis in Syria. Having voted for UNSCR 2401 less than a week ago, Russia has a responsibility to ensure implementation of the ceasefire.

The people of Eastern Ghouta have endured enough, among broken promises of ceasefires and humanitarian pauses. We demand that Russia and the regime cease hostilities immediately and ensure the sustained delivery of humanitarian aid to Eastern Ghouta and medical evacuations, as called for by the UN Human Rights Council this morning in a UK-proposed Resolution. The people of Eastern Ghouta can wait no longer.

## **Further information**

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@BorisJohnson](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Follow the Foreign Office on [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

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## [Speech: Sajid Javid's speech at the National Planning Policy Framework conference](#)

Everyone remembers their childhood home.

Mine was the flat above the family shop.

With my parents – who had come to Britain from Pakistan with almost nothing – and my 4 brothers.

Nothing fancy, but an important rung on the ladder for our family.

I won't lie.

It was a struggle at times, with the 7 of us sharing 2 bedrooms.

And my mum and dad – like so many immigrants before and since – working all hours to make our money go further.

But it was nonetheless a stable, loving home that gave us all a great start...

...a start that's undoubtedly the reason that I'm standing here today.

And I never forget that.

We didn't have many luxuries, but I could count on having a safe, warm place to play – and fight! – with my brothers.

Do my homework. Enjoy family meals and fun times together.

I know how lucky I am.

And how, today, there are many families and other people who are not so fortunate.

Who are growing up without that strong foundation because, over the years, we've simply failed to build enough homes.

The result – soaring house prices and rents – has effectively locked a generation out of the housing market.

Which is why – as the Prime Minister has just said – this government is taking urgent action on all fronts to turn this situation around.

Work that is starting to pay off.

Since 2010, we have delivered more than a million homes.

And thanks to your efforts, we've seen 217,350 homes added to our housing stock last year.

The highest level of net additions in all but one of the last 30 years.

We've also helped hundreds of thousands of people on to the housing ladder through Help to Buy.

We're cracking down on rogue landlords, abuse of leaseholds, taking steps to make renting fairer and tackle homelessness through earlier intervention.

We're working to encourage landlords to offer longer, family friendly tenancies.

We've launched a new, more assertive national housing agency, Homes England.

And we are putting billions into affordable housing and delivering essential infrastructure through the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

But there's still a long way to go to deliver 300,000 homes a year in England by the middle of the next decade.

Your role as planners and developers is absolutely vital in helping us get there.

I often say that local government is the frontline of our democracy.

If that's true, then you, as planners, are in many ways the frontline of our housing challenge.

Informing crucial decisions that give the go ahead for new homes.

Ensuring that these are supported by the right infrastructure.

Doing the best for your local areas and creating, quite simply, great places to live.

Places that will still be here in a hundred years' time as well-established and much-loved parts of the community.

So the part that you play in helping us turn the consultations we're

launching today...

... on the [revised National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) and the [reform of developer contributions](#)...

...into more homes and stronger communities could not be more important.

These measures implement the planning policy reforms in:

- last February's [Housing white paper](#)
- in the [Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation](#) in September
- those announced at [Budget](#)
- and some further reforms

And set out a bold, comprehensive approach for building more homes, more quickly, in the places people want to live.

Homes that embody quality and good design.

That people are happy to live in – and happy to live next door to.

Knowing that there's the infrastructure to support them.

As we all know, this point about getting communities on board is vital if we're to deliver homes at the scale and pace that's needed.

So how are the proposed changes going to help us achieve this?

And what are they going to mean for you in practical terms?

I know that many of you have been keenly anticipating the answers to these questions.

And have wanted greater clarity and certainty, so that you can make a real difference in your communities.

And that's exactly what our reforms deliver.

A simpler, more robust system that sets much clearer expectations – for local authorities and developers alike...

...about meeting your commitments – unlocking land, fulfilling planning permissions and providing essential infrastructure.

And a system that, frankly, tolerates fewer excuses for failures to deliver.

Starting first with the revision of the National Planning Policy Framework...

This implements around 80 reforms announced last year.

There's still quite a lot in there that you'll recognize, with a continued emphasis on development that's sustainable and led locally.

But the changes it does propose are significant.

Offering councils flexibility to build more.

But also greater responsibility for really delivering for their communities.

Which means, firstly, working with your communities to get plans in place as quickly as possible...

...so that development is dictated by what local people want and not by speculative applications.

In many ways, these proposals will make this process of putting together a plan much easier.

For the first time, all local authorities will be expected to assess housing need using the same methodology...

...a big improvement on the current situation where different councils calculate housing need in different ways...

...with expensive, or time wasting consulting and opaque methodology.

I know that this issue – of how we establish what numbers of homes we need and where – has become muddled at times.

Ultimately, we must be guided by where people want to live.

And a standardized approach will help us do this – by establishing a level playing field and giving us a much clearer...

...more transparent understanding of where the need for housing is most acute.

Areas will also be able to agree a 5-year land supply position for a year...

...reducing the need for costly planning appeals involving speculative applications.

But perhaps one of the biggest shifts is a change in culture.

Towards outcomes achieved – the number of homes delivered – rather than on processes like planning permissions

And as it becomes easier to make plans more streamlined and strategic...

...this culture change will also encourage authorities to work together to meet their communities' needs.

I know that many of you will already be doing this – and you are to be commended for it.

It's now time for others to follow your example.

The standardised formula is a guide to planning the minimum number of homes that are needed.

But ambitious councils, who have clear and robust plans for growth, may want to plan for more.

Indeed, this kind of ambition is key to unlocking housing deals that support growth at a strategic level so that they're not just delivering new homes but creating communities.

And it's because we want to champion this ambition that we're going further.

Councils will have much more scope to make the most of existing land, thanks to extra reform beyond those previously consulted on.

These include an even stronger drive for increasing density -particularly in areas where housing need is high...

...and supporting authorities to build upwards.

But not, I must stress, at the expense of quality – with high design standards that communities are happy to embrace remaining a priority.

You only have to look at mews street developments such as The Echoes in Thurrock and Goldsmith Street in Norwich...

...or urban mansion blocks and traditional terraces to see that well-designed homes with high densities come in all shapes and sizes.

These reforms also include more flexibility to develop brownfield land in the Green Belt...

...to meet affordable housing need where there is no substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

Now I know that even the mention of the words "Green Belt" may cause some concern in some quarters.

This is about building homes on sites that have been previously developed – not about, in any way, undermining the Green Belt.

Our green spaces are precious and deserve our protection.

Which is why for example the government is delivering on its manifesto commitment to give stronger protection to ancient woodland.

Safeguarding assets that cannot be replaced for generations to come.

And ensuring that planning policies promote net gains for biodiversity,

including strengthening networks of habitats.

So there are unprecedented opportunities here – to not only improve the environment, but to deliver the homes we need.

With ambitious planners and local authorities leading the way.

And with developers also stepping up – to help close the gap between planning permissions granted and homes built.

Knowing what contributions they're expected to make towards affordable housing and essential infrastructure...

...and, vitally, knowing that local authorities can hold them to account.

Unfortunately, we all know of instances where developers make these promises and later claim they can't afford them.

This is totally unacceptable.

It cheats communities of much-needed housing and infrastructure and gives new development a bad name.

Which is why we're addressing this issue head on in our consultations, with proposals for reforms to the system.

These include a new approach to developer contributions – so that everyone is clear about what affordable housing and infrastructure will underpin new development.

More standardised viability assessments and greater transparency.

Leaving developers in no doubt of what's expected to them

In no doubt that councils will hold them to their commitments.

And leaving communities in no doubt that that their needs will be met.

We will also be looking at what more we can do to support build out informed by Sir Oliver Letwin's independent review...

...into the gap between planning permissions granted and homes built – which is due to report by this year's Autumn Budget

And there's the potential, over the long term, for more, significant reform of developer contributions.

And there are also other areas in which we're ready to go further to take the delivery of housing up a gear.

Including a new permitted development right for building upwards to provide new homes.

Finding more effective ways of bringing agricultural land forward for

housing.

And ensuring that swift and fair decisions are made at appeal.

That's why I will shortly announce an end-to end review of the planning inquiries process.

This review will have one objective: to determine what it would take to halve the time for an inquiry on housing supply to be determined...

...ensuring swift and fair decisions are made

So with a strong focus, throughout, we're leaving no stone unturned to meet everyone's housing needs.

Be that:

- implementing an exception site policy to help more people onto the housing ladder
- promoting Build to Rent
- giving older people a better choice of accommodation
- encouraging local policies for affordable homes catering for essential workers, such as nurses and police

So with all these tools at your disposal, there's no time to lose in getting your plans in place and really delivering for your communities.

You'll have heard me express my frustration about some local planning authorities that are still lagging behind on this score.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: these plans are absolutely key to helping us build the right homes in the right places.

So it's vital that you get them in place quickly and keep them up to date to ensure that permissions turn into homes.

The alternative – speculative development and neighbourhoods that are poorly planned, lacking strong communities – is something that none of us want to see.

The truth is that, for too long, we've failed to plan for the future.

To really get to grips with the number of homes we need.

Whether we're building them in the places where people want to live.

Whether they're of the right type – and serving the families, young people,



older generations...

And whether they're of the right quality and in keeping with the local area.

We need to think big about the kind of communities we want to live in, not just now, but for years to come.

That changes today with the reforms we're proposing to the NPPF and developer contributions.

Measures that raise the game in every regard to get Britain building as never before.

Starting this summer, when we'll begin implementing the new Framework.

Help us build a better system.

A system that ensures that everyone – councils, developers, local communities – knows where they stand.

Knows what's expected of them.

And knows what they need to do to deliver the great homes and the stronger communities that the people of this country need and deserve.

Thank you.

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## **The Tories are letting young people down but the SNP will continue to lead the way**

Last week marked a decade since the SNP government scrapped university tuition fees in Scotland. The SNP's policy of free university education, based on your ability to learn not your ability to pay, has enabled around 270,000 Scottish students to graduate free of charge since 2007.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

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## Daily News 05 / 03 / 2018

### **Ten years of REACH: making chemicals safer for consumers, workers and the environment**

Chemicals are present in every aspect of our lives, at work and also in consumer goods such as clothes, toys, furniture and electrical appliances. But certain substances may pose risks to human health and the environment. The [REACH review](#) published today shows that thanks to the Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) EU companies and authorities are ensuring the safe use of chemicals and the phase-out of dangerous substances. For the last 10 years, the key EU law on chemicals has indeed significantly enhanced the protection of human health and the environment and promoted alternatives to animal testing. Internal Market and Industry Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska said: *“REACH is the most advanced and comprehensive chemical legislation in the world. We need to build on this success and ensure that EU manufacturers do not face competitive disadvantages compared to non-EU manufacturers.”* Environment Commissioner Karmenu Vella said: *“A majority of Europeans are worried about being exposed to hazardous chemicals. Through REACH, the EU is successfully addressing their concerns, generating knowledge about chemicals and banning harmful ones on the EU market. REACH is already inspiring chemical legislation in other countries and further improvements will allow us to protect our citizens’ health and the environment even better.”* Building on this, the Commission today proposes actions to further facilitate its implementation by companies, including SMEs, and Member States. More information [here](#) and [here](#). (For more information: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229-80379; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040)

### **Startup Europe Week begins: hundreds of events all over Europe to inform entrepreneurs of available support**

Today began the third edition of the [Startup Europe Week](#), combining hundreds of events all over Europe and beyond. The Startup Europe Week is now organised in more than 50 countries, with additional global events taking place in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The initiative aims to inform entrepreneurs of the support and resources available at city and regional level. Vice-President for the Digital Single Market Andrus **Ansip** said: *“Investments in digital companies and access to capital are always needed for helping startups to grow. But startups also need supportive policies. Linking and networking them will unlock more of their potential, and offer the scale necessary to compete with other ecosystems around the world.”* Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya **Gabriel** added: *“This grassroots movement helps those interested in entrepreneurship to make the first steps to bring their dream projects to life. The initiative fosters creativity as well as more entrepreneurial spirit for continuing the success story of the European startup scene.”* In 2017, Startup Europe Week

reached with the help of more than 280 co-organisers in more than 40 countries over 100,000 entrepreneurs across Europe. More information about this year's Startup Europe Week is available [here](#), various events can be found [here](#). Read also a recent blog post about the initiative in Vice-President Ansip's [blog](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

### **One Oscar and 15 Césars for EU supported films**

[Creative Europe MEDIA programme](#) supported films won over the weekend numerous awards. Last night in the 90<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards “Call me by your name” (directed by Luca Guadagnino) won the Oscar for Adapted Screenplay, which was written by James Ivory. On Friday night, five MEDIA-supported films celebrated its success in Césars Awards. “120 Battements par minute/BPM” (directed by Robin Campillo) won six awards: Best Film, Best Male Newcomer with Nahuel Pérez Biscayart, Best Supporting Actor with Antoine Reinartz, Best Editing by Robin Campillo, Best Original Score by Arnaud Rebotini, and Best Original Screenplay by Robin Campillo. “Au revoir là-haut” (directed by Albert Dupontel) received five Césars: Best Director, Best Costumes by Mimi Lempicka, Best Set Decoration by Pierre Quefféléan, Best Cinematography by Vincent Mathias, and Best Adapted Screenplay by Albert Dupontel and Pierre Lemaitre. “Barbara” (directed by Mathieu Amalric) won Best Actress with Jeanne Balibar and Best Sound by Olivier Mauvezin, Nicolas Moreau and Stéphane Thiébaud. “I Am Not Your Negro” (directed by Raoul Peck) received the Best documentary César. “Le brio” (directed by Yvan Attal) was acknowledged with Best Female Newcomer award for Camélia Jordana. Further details about MEDIA programme supported films in Academy Awards and Césars Awards can be found [here](#) and [here](#). More information on the MEDIA programme is available in the [factsheet](#). (For more information: Nathalie Vandystadt – Tel.: +32 229 67083; Inga Höglund – Tel.: +32 229 50698)

### **Mergers: Commission clears acquisition of a newly created joint venture by Singapore Airlines and CAE**

The European Commission has approved, under the EU Merger Regulation, the acquisition of joint control over a newly created full function joint venture by Singapore Airlines Limited (“SIA”) of Singapore and CAE International Holdings Limited (“CAE”) of Canada. The joint venture will establish, develop and operate a commercial flight training centre in Singapore. SIA supplies passenger and cargo air transportation, engineering services, training of pilots, air charters and tour wholesaling and related activities. CAE is an investment holding company of the CAE group which designs, manufactures and supplies simulation equipment, provides training, and develops integrated solutions for defence and security markets, commercial airlines, business aircraft operators, helicopter operators, aircraft manufacturers and for healthcare education and service providers. The Commission concluded that the proposed acquisition would raise no competition concerns given that the joint venture has no actual or foreseen activities within the European Economic Area. The operation was examined under the simplified merger review procedure. More information will be available on the Commission's [competition](#)

website, in the [public case register](#) under the case number [M.8768](#). (For more information: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

### **Concentrations: la Commission autorise l'acquisition de Albéa par PAI Partners**

La Commission Européenne a approuvé, en vertu du règlement européen sur les concentrations, l'acquisition de Albéa S.A., basée au Luxembourg par PAI Partners S.A.S, basée en France. Albéa fabrique des solutions d'emballage pour le secteur des cosmétiques. PAI Partners gère et conseille plusieurs fonds détenant des entreprises présentes dans divers secteurs d'activité tels que les services aux entreprises, les denrées alimentaires et les biens de consommation, les industries généralistes et les soins de santé. La Commission a conclu que la concentration envisagée ne soulèverait pas de problème de concurrence dans la mesure où les entreprises ne sont pas actives sur le même marché ou sur des marchés verticalement liés. L'opération a été examinée dans le cadre de la procédure simplifiée de contrôle des concentrations. De plus amples informations sont disponibles sur le [site internet concurrence](#) de la Commission, dans le [registre public](#) des affaires sous le numéro d'affaire [M.8779](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Ricardo Cardoso – Tel.: +32 229 80100; Maria Sarantopoulou – Tel.: +32 229 13740)

### **Eurostat: Janvier 2018 comparé à décembre 2017 – Le volume des ventes du commerce de détail en baisse de 0,1% tant dans la zone euro que dans l'UE28**

En janvier 2018 par rapport à décembre 2017, le volume des ventes du commerce de détail corrigé des variations saisonnières a diminué de 0,1% tant dans la zone euro (ZE19) que dans l'UE28, selon les estimations d'Eurostat, l'office statistique de l'Union européenne. En décembre 2017, le commerce de détail avait reculé de 1,0% dans la zone euro et de 0,9% dans l'UE28. En janvier 2018 par rapport à janvier 2017, l'indice corrigées des effets de calendrier des ventes de détail s'est accru de 2,3% dans la zone euro et de 2,7% dans l'UE28. Un communiqué de presse est disponible [en ligne](#). (Pour plus d'informations: Lucía Caudet – Tel.: +32 229 56182; Victoria von Hammerstein – Tel.: +32 229 55040; Maud Noyon – Tel. +32 229 80379)

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **First Vice-President Timmermans visits Portugal and France**

On Sunday afternoon, First Vice-President Frans **Timmermans** travelled to Lisbon where he met with Mr Antonio Costa, Prime Minister of Portugal. This morning he met with Mr Augusto Santos Silva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and shortly after 12.00 he will deliver a keynote speech on Defending European Democracy at a conference on '[Invigorating and Strengthening European Democracy](#)' at the Institute Jacques Delors with the Gulbenkian Foundation. The First Vice-President's speech will be livestreamed [here](#) and will be published on his website later. From Lisbon, the First Vice-President travels to Paris tonight, and will meet with President Emmanuel

Macron on Tuesday afternoon. In Paris, First Vice-President Timmermans will also meet Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for European and Foreign Affairs and Sabine Thillaye, President of the European Affairs Committee of the National Assembly. (For more information: *Natasha Bertaud – Tel.: +32 229 67456; Tim McPhie – Tel.: +32 229 58602*)

### **Future of EU finances – Commissioner Oettinger visits Ireland and Croatia**

Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger**, in charge of Budget and Human Resources, is visiting Ireland and Croatia on 6 and 8 March respectively, as part of his tour across EU Member States (#MFFtour27) aimed at gathering views on the future of EU finances and the EU's multiannual budget post-2020 (#EUBudget). In Ireland, the Commissioner meets *Tánaiste* (Deputy PM) and Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade, Mr Simon Coveney. He is also meeting with *Taoiseach*, Mr Leo Varadkar and Minister for Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, Mr Paschal Donohoe. The Commissioner participates in an event to promote career opportunities in the EU institutions, with Minister of State for Gaeilge, Gaeltacht and the Islands, Mr Joe McHugh. He also addresses the Oireachtas Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform Committee and delivers a speech at a European Chamber of Ireland event. In Croatia, Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger** is meeting with the President of the Republic of Croatia, Mrs Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. He is also meeting Prime Minister, Mr Andrej Plenković, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, Minister of Economy, Ms Martina Dalić, Minister of Finance, Mr Zdravko Marić and Minister of EU Funds, Ms Gabrijela Žalac. He also meets representatives of the European Affairs Committee, Finance and Central Budget Committee and Committee on Regional Development and European Union Funds at the Croatian Parliament. Last but not least, the Commissioner is planning to meet with representatives of women's organisations. The Commission kicked off this debate on 28 June 2017 with the publication of its [Reflection paper on the future of EU finances](#), available in all EU languages. Then, on 14 February 2018, the Commission presented the Communication "[A new, modern Multiannual Financial Framework for a EU that delivers efficiently on its priorities post-2020](#)". Stakeholders' views will be taken into account when preparing the next MFF, to be presented in [May 2018](#). See a speech "[A Budget Matching our Ambitions](#)" given by Commissioner Günther H. **Oettinger** at the conference "[Shaping our Future](#)" on 8 January 2018. (For more information: *Alexander Winterstein – Tel.: +32 229 93265; Maria Tsoni – Tel.: +32 229 90526*)

### **Commissioner Moscovici in Hamburg, Germany**

Pierre **Moscovici**, Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs will be in Hamburg tomorrow, 6 March 2017. In this, the 50th year of the EU's Customs Union, the Commissioner will tour the Port of Hamburg's customs centre and visit Airbus' manufacturing facility. He will also participate in a number of meetings, including with Mr Olaf Scholz, the First Mayor of Hamburg. (For more information: *Vanessa Mock – +32 229 56194; Johannes Bahrke – Tel.: +32 229 58615; Enda McNamara – Tel.: +32 229 64976*)

## REACH Review

### What is REACH?

REACH stands for Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals ([EC 1907/2006](#)). This key EU legislation on chemicals aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment, promote alternative methods to animal testing as well as ensure the free circulation of substances in the internal market while enhancing innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.

The four processes of REACH are the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals:

- **Registration:** Manufacturers and importers of chemicals must identify and manage risks linked to the substances they produce and market. By 31 May 2018, all existing chemicals manufactured, imported or placed on the EU market above 1 tonne per year will have to be registered. Without registration, substances cannot be manufactured or imported into the EU.
- **Evaluation:** The information submitted to register chemicals can be checked by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Member States evaluate substances for specific concerns regarding human health and the environment.
- **Authorisation:** This procedure ensures that the risks of substances of very high concern (SVHC, for example carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic substances) are properly controlled and that those substances are progressively replaced by suitable alternatives. Those substances may be listed on Annex XIV of the REACH Regulation and then companies need to obtain an authorisation to continue to use these substances.
- **Restrictions:** Restrictions on the manufacturing, use, or placing on the market of substances are designed to manage unacceptable risks to human health or the environment that are not addressed by the other REACH processes or by other EU legislation. EU countries or the European Commission may propose EU-wide restrictions.

### How has REACH helped protect human health and the environment to date?

So far, the REACH **registration procedure** allowed gathering information on more than 17,000 substances. 65,000 registration dossiers of the main chemicals manufactured and used in the EU were submitted since 2010 and allowed the EU to build the most comprehensive database on chemicals in the



world. It improved the protection of human health and environment through a better knowledge and risk management of chemical substances by industry.

As regards the **REACH authorisation** procedure, a recent [study](#) published by the Commission, shows substantial results. So far, 181 chemicals that can have serious effects on human health and the environment have been identified as such and 43 are included in the "REACH authorisation list". This also means that companies are progressively replacing them when suitable alternatives become available.

For example, the **substitution** of arsenic trioxide used for the production of traditional glass in the Venice area was triggered by the REACH authorisation requirement. The traditional glassmakers had to find safer alternatives to arsenic trioxide, while maintaining the quality of their glassware. Joint efforts have led to alternatives that cover 95% of the production and that have reduced workers' exposure. Moreover, this has also improved air quality in the region, as arsenic concentrations in the air have decreased substantially.

Finally, the **restriction procedure** has led, between 2012 and 2016, to banning or limiting further the use of 18 chemical substances, including groups of substances, benefitting directly to people's health and environment. As an example, the restriction of chromium VI in leather articles enabled an estimated 1.3 million people with chromium allergy to use leather articles and reduces the number of new cases of chromium allergy by approximately 10,800 per year.

Another concrete example is the restriction of the use of lead in the EU. Lead causes damage to the central nervous system and is therefore banned in jewellery since October 2013 and, in many other consumer products, since June 2016. In particular children are at danger as they might put products directly in their mouth. Thirteen million children below the age of 3 have today a reduced exposure to lead which will have positive long-term effects for their neurological development.

In addition, the restriction of groups of substances such as perfluorocompounds, protects the environment (and wildlife) as well as humans (exposed through the environment) from the risks associated with toxic substances that are persistent and accumulate in living organisms.

### **Can REACH be further simplified and what is the Commission proposing?**

The second REACH review has identified a number of areas which could be further simplified, including information requirements, extended safety data sheets, the authorisation process and the requirements for substances in products. The Commission therefore proposes the following:

- **Improving compliance of registration dossiers:** data gaps in registration dossiers need to be addressed through improved compliance and evaluation procedures.
- **Simplification of the authorisation process:** authorisation is still a relatively new process under REACH that has faced challenges as it

became operational and it needs to become easier and predictable for companies.

- **Ensuring a level playing field between EU and non-EU companies:** EU manufacturers are at a disadvantage compared to non-EU companies when producing products containing Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) that are subject to authorisation. The Commission is looking into ways of addressing this disadvantage.
- **Enhancing enforcement** by national authorities, including import controls by customs authorities.
- **Coherence** by clarifying the interface between REACH and the worker protection legislation (OSH) as well as with waste legislation.
- **Supporting compliance by SMEs:** There are concerns about the vulnerability of SMEs. The Commission requests ECHA and Member States to step up their efforts to develop tailored guidance and support instruments focused on the needs of SMEs to help them comply with the REACH requirement.

### **I am an entrepreneur. How does REACH affect my company?**

In line with “the polluter pays principle”, REACH shifted the burden of proof to industry, making it responsible for the safety of chemicals along the supply chain.

To comply with the regulation, companies must identify and manage the risks linked to the substances they manufacture and market in the EU. They have to demonstrate to ECHA how the substance can be safely used, and they must communicate the risk management measures to the users. REACH requires new forms of cooperation among companies, enhancing communication along the supply chain, as well as developing tools to guide and assist companies and public authorities in its implementation.

Companies also need to comply with the requirements resulting from the evaluation, authorisation and restriction chapters of REACH.

### **How do costs and benefits of REACH compare?**

The main direct costs for companies incurred under REACH so far are associated with registration and the communication of information along the supply chain. These are estimated at €2.3-2.6 billion for the first two registration deadlines. The estimated scale of potential benefits for human health and the environment are estimated at €100 billion over 25-30 years (since the entry into force of REACH).

The Commission assessment of the first ten years of REACH acknowledges the costs related to its administration and the impact on companies, especially on SMEs. This is why it adopted and encourages further measures to help companies comply with REACH requirements such as ECHA and Member States tailored guidance and support instruments for SMEs.

**What has been the effect of REACH on the internal market and in the competitiveness and innovation of EU industry? What does the Commission envisage?**



REACH aims to ensure the free movement of chemicals in the internal market, as well as to promote the competitiveness and encourage innovation, by for example facilitating the development of safer chemicals to replace hazardous substances. While REACH has further harmonised the internal market for chemicals, its effects on the competitiveness and innovation of EU industry are complex and depend on other factors, such as global market trends. The actions proposed by the Commission will further improve the implementation of REACH, easing compliance by companies and ensuring that EU manufacturers do not face competitive disadvantages.

### **What is the public perception of chemicals in Europe?**

The Commission ran a Eurobarometer survey on the public perception of chemicals at the end of 2016. Europe's citizens are concerned about being exposed to hazardous chemicals in their daily life and REACH responds directly to these concerns. The perception of chemical safety has improved in the last 10 years, although the perceptions of safety vary also between Member States and citizens will need further reassurance.

- 44% of EU citizens consider that safety of chemicals contained in products has improved in the last 10-15 years.
- They also have more confidence in products manufactured in the EU compared to those imported from outside.
- The main sources of information used by the public to get such information are product labels and media.

### **What are the overlaps identified by the review between REACH and other EU legislation dealing with chemical risk?**

The REACH Review did not identify major incoherencies between REACH and other EU legislation. Some inconsistencies have already been addressed in the past years on the interface between REACH and POP and REACH and ROHS, while others are still requiring attention.

Although there are some synergies between REACH and the Occupational, Safety and Health (OSH) legislation, efforts are needed to address the diverging ways in which the two Scientific Committees, (RAC and SCOEL), provide opinions on workplace exposure limits.

The issue of determining when recycled materials cease to be waste and become subject to REACH again is being tackled in the context of the Circular Economy.

### **Can the role of the European Chemicals Agency evolve in the implementation of REACH?**

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), founded in 2007, has a key role in the successful implementation of all REACH processes. ECHA hosts the world's largest database on chemicals and enables an easy online access to chemical safety data. Efficiency has improved over time both within ECHA and how ECHA works with Member States and other stakeholders.

ECHA has built-up a significant competence in chemicals management and is

expected to become a European and global reference centre for the sustainable management of chemicals, capable of serving the implementation of other EU legislation should the Commission make a proposal to this effect.

### **What can REACH help to achieve at a global level?**

The implementation of REACH positions the EU as a global frontrunner towards achieving the 2020 World Summit on Sustainable Development Goals. REACH concretely implements the SDG target “to achieve by 2020 sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous waste in ways that lead to minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment”.

### **For More Information**

[Press release](#)

[Chemicals and the Environment](#)

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