

EIOPA updates representative portfolios to calculate volatility adjustments to the Solvency II risk-free interest rate term structures

Today, the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) published updated representative portfolios that will be used for calculation of the volatility adjustments (VA) to the relevant risk-free interest rate term structures for Solvency II.

EIOPA will start using these updated representative portfolios for the calculation of the VA end of March 2020, which will be published at the beginning of April 2020.

EIOPA publishes the updated representative portfolios now, i.e. three months in advance in order to allow (re)insurers sufficient time to prepare for this change.

The updated portfolios are based on the end-of-2018 annual reporting templates as reported by European (re)insurance companies to their national supervisory authorities. The updated portfolios enable more accurate reflection of the impact of market volatility under the Solvency II framework.

EIOPA is revising the representative portfolios on a yearly basis with the next update being scheduled for the end of 2020 according to art. 194 of the [Technical Documentation](#).

The representative portfolios are available on EIOPA's website under [Background Material / Updated representative portfolios for the calculation of the volatility adjustment \(applicable end-of-March 2020\)](#).

Background

The volatility adjustments are derived from spreads of representative portfolios of assets. The representative portfolios are derived in accordance with Article 49 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/35.

The volatility adjustment is a measure to ensure the appropriate treatment of insurance products with long-term guarantees under Solvency II. (Re)insurers are allowed to adjust the RFR to mitigate the effect of short-term volatility of bond spreads on their solvency position. In that way, the volatility adjustment prevents pro-cyclical investment behaviour of (re)insurers.

[EU4MD bursaries for the 2020 NIDA International Forum](#)

Professionals, academics and experts from European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries will have the opportunity to participate in the [2020 National Institute on Drug Abuse International Forum](#), thanks to five bursaries being offered through the [EU4Monitoring Drugs \(EU4MD\)](#) project. The three-year EU-funded project – launched by the EMCDDA in January 2019 – supports national and regional readiness in the ENP area to identify and respond to drug-related health and security threats.

The forum – organised by the [National Institute on Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#) – will take place in Hollywood, Florida, USA from 19–22 June 2020. The event will bring together international experts on various topics in the addiction research field.

As forum collaborator, the EMCDDA will be present at the meeting to share its work and the EU experience, as well as foster global discussions on the future of addiction. In order to apply for the bursary, the candidates will need to submit an abstract for oral or poster presentation through [an online application form](#).

Deadline for applications: **6 January 2020**.

[44 % of hazardous mixtures not compliant with classification and labelling obligations](#)



44 % of hazardous mixtures not compliant with classification and labelling obligations

ECHA/PR/19/17

An EU-wide Forum enforcement project has found significant non-compliance in the classification and labelling of mixtures.

Helsinki, 17 December 2019 – The sixth EU-wide Enforcement Forum project (REF-6) focused on the **classification and labelling of mixtures**. The most common mixtures checked were washing and cleaning products; biocidal products; coatings, paints, thinners and paint removers; adhesives and

sealants; room fragrances and air freshener products – these are known to commonly contain hazardous ingredients.

Altogether, inspectors in 29 countries checked 3 391 mixtures and inspected 1 620 companies (manufacturers, importers, downstream users and distributors).

The project also looked at **exemptions from labelling and packaging** requirements, harmonised classification, **biocides** obligations and specific rules for **liquid laundry detergent capsules**.

The main findings of the project were:

- **43** % of all reported companies were found to have at least one non-compliance and **44** % of reported mixtures were non-compliant in some way.
- **17** % of reported mixtures were using an incorrect classification, which may result in incorrect labelling on the mixtures, and thereby incorrect safe use advice.
- For certain substances that have hazards of highest concern (carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, reproductive toxicity and respiratory sensitisers), classification and labelling is harmonised throughout the EU to ensure adequate risk management. For **9** % of those substances checked in the project, the required harmonised classification and labelling were not applied.
- **33** % of reported mixtures had incorrect labelling.
- **33** % of the checked safety data sheets were non-compliant with the requirements checked in the project.
- Inspectors checked the requirements for packaging and labelling liquid laundry detergent capsules (LLDCs). The most significant finding is that for **22** % of the checked LLDCs, the closure of the outer packaging did not maintain its functionality when repeatedly opened and closed during the life span of the packaging.
- For checked biocidal products, around **7** % of them lacked either valid authorisation according to the Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR) or to national legislation during the transitional period. For **17** % of the biocides, labels were non-compliant.

Manufacturers, importers and downstream users have to put more effort into deriving the right classification for mixtures and communicating it down the supply chain. This will prevent incorrect information being disseminated in safety data sheets and on labels. Industry should also work on improving the quality of safety data sheets which will in turn lead to improved information flowing through the supply chain.

Furthermore, the understanding of biocides legislation should be improved to minimise breaches caused by a lack of knowledge of the BPR.

For liquid laundry detergent capsules, industry is advised to improve packaging to ensure that closures function correctly throughout the lifespan of the products as required by legislation.

Background

The main scope of the REF-6 project was checking compliance of the classification and labelling of chemical mixtures. The project also included additional optional modules for:

- exemptions from labelling and packaging requirements;
- harmonised classification and labelling of substances;
- specific rules applicable to liquid laundry detergent capsules (LLDC);
and
- biocides.

The aim of the project was to check compliance with and raise awareness of a variety of legal provisions under the CLP Regulation, the most relevant of which were Articles 4, 17, 29, 35 and 37 of CLP, as well as Article 31 of REACH and Articles 17 and 69 of BPR.

Chemical products used by consumers are mixtures of different substances. To make sure that consumers can use them safely, information on safe use is passed onto them on labels on products that communicate the hazards and inform how to use them safely.

To prepare the correct information on safe use, the mixture must first be classified to identify hazardous properties and on the basis of such hazard classification an appropriate CLP label is prepared.

[embedded content]

[Press release – Opening – December plenary session](#)



Changes to the agenda

Tuesday

The debate on the Commission statement on the “EU disability strategy post 2020” will be wound up with a resolution, to be voted on at a later stage.

The Council and Commission statements on the “Outcome of the COP25” will be added on Tuesday afternoon.

Wednesday

The vote on the resolution winding up the debate on the “Rule of Law in Malta, after the recent revelations around the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia” is advanced from Thursday to Wednesday.

A statement by EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell on the “Violent crackdown on the recent protests in Iran” will be added in the afternoon, as the fifth item. The debate should be wound up with a resolution, to be voted on Thursday.

Outgoing Members

Alyn SMITH (Greens/EFA, UK) as of 13 December

Requests by committees to start negotiations with Council and Commission

Decisions by several committees to enter into inter-institutional

negotiations (Rule 69c) are published [on the plenary website](#).

If no request for a vote in Parliament on the decision to enter into negotiations is made by Tuesday 12.00 midnight, the committees may start negotiations.

Asylum applications reached a new peak in October

More than 71 000 applications were lodged in EU+ countries in October, the highest number since the end of 2016.

Approximately 587 000 applications have been lodged in the EU+ since the beginning of 2019, up by 11% from the same period last year.

Afghanistan, Syria, Venezuela, Colombia and Pakistan were the top five countries of origin in October – **each lodging record levels of applications**, even compared to upward trends in the past few months. In particular, Pakistanis lodged the most applications since the beginning of 2017, Afghans since late 2016, Venezuelans and Colombians since – at least – 2014. Record applications were also lodged by nationals of **Turkey, Bangladesh, Algeria, Congo (DR) and Moldova**, among others.

Some 52 725 decisions were issued at first instance, up by 13% from September, the highest output in the past year and a half. This might be seen as an attempt to cope with the growing backlog. However, despite these efforts there were still **many more applications than case closures at first instance** (including decisions, discontinuations due to withdrawals, plus administrative and Dublin closures).

At the end of September 2019, there were some 889 525 cases pending at all instances. Of these, EASO estimates that about 517 100 cases were pending at first instance, indicating that even though a considerable part of the open cases had been transferred from asylum authorities to judicial bodies, the pressure was still higher at the first-instance authorities.

For more information and an interactive data-visualisation, please visit the [Latest Asylum Trends](#) page.

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