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TiO2 Classified as Carcinogen by Inhalation Cat. 2



The ECHA Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) has released its [opinion](#) on the classification proposal from France. As expected the RAC is of the opinion that TiO₂ should be classified as a Class 2 Carcinogen by Inhalation; H351 (inhalation). The [harmonised classification procedure](#) specifies that now that the RAC has adopted its opinion, it is up to the European Commission to draft a legislative proposal which will be voted upon by the European Commission's

REACH Committee, where member states vote based on comitology procedure with scrutiny.

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EuPC General Assembly passes resolutions to launch two new European platforms



Lead stabilisers have been voluntarily phased out under the VinylPlus Voluntary Commitment. However, in the coming decades lead will be found in PVC recyclate that is being introduced into new products. Furthermore, Extra-EU article producers can still use lead to produce articles for import into the EU. To put a legislative barrier to protect the EU population from such potential lead exposure sources, the European Commission has asked the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to prepare a REACH restriction dossier to limit the use of lead stabilisers in articles.

The [Restriction Proposal](#) contains specific exemptions enabling the use of recyclate in non-consumer sensitive applications (e.g. Co-Extruded Pipes and Window Profiles). The **European Plastics Converters**, together with the European Plastics Recyclers and VinylPlus have actively contributed evidence to enable the provision of stronger and more effective derogations for the use of recyclate.

The dossier is now being discussed in the ECHA Risk Assessment Committee and Socio Economic Assessment Committee, which are expected to adopt their opinions in the coming months. Those opinions will be forwarded to the European Commission which will incorporate their opinions in a legislative proposal for a vote in the REACH Committee ([Comitology Procedure](#) - Examination Procedure). Once approved, the restriction will be incorporated into REACH Annex XVII.

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Launch of Fire Information Exchange Platform



The first meeting of the newly established Fire Information Exchange Platform (FIEP) took place on the 16th October 2017 at the European Commission. The meeting was attended by 25 Member States and 25 stakeholders. Whereas the Commission was represented by DG GROWTH, no Members of the European Parliament attended.

At the meeting, various positions were presented by Member States as well as by 8 other stakeholders, such as FireSafeEurope, FEEDS, EAE, FEU, EFFUA, Euralarm, CPE, and PU Europe on behalf of plastics associations.

The main topics mentioned in the presentations were the following: harmonized data and definitions, large scale testing, smoke toxicity, fire prevention, domestic fires, construction materials, building contents, firefighters, energy efficiency, fire safety engineering, awareness raising and high-rise buildings. The Commission touched upon the status of the two studies currently underway, i.e. Smoke Toxicity of construction products and Fire performance of facades. The Commission identified 5 main work streams for future work of the platform: 1. Data; 2. Fire prevention; 3. Lessons learned; 4. New products; 5. Fire Safety engineering. The FIEP meetings will be taking place once a year.

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Construction Products Regulation Revision



In October, a draft version of the Plastics Strategy of the European Commission has been leaked in the media. The document appears to be not far from the issues raised in the Roadmap on the Strategy, published earlier this year.

Content wise, the draft Strategy appears very ambitious, taking into account some of the main issues and regulatory bottlenecks currently affecting plastics production and

consumption, while also taking into account the heterogeneous nature of plastics, partially superseding the initial equation of the Commission that plastics is mainly consumer goods' plastics packaging.

The calls for harmonisation, efficient use of EPR systems, standardisation and promotion of recycled plastics quality are welcomed by **EuPC**. Other proposals seize issues that need a firm regulatory action: improve chemicals traceability, LCA approach in green claims and reduction of micro-plastics release in the environment.

It has to be kept in mind that this leaked document is still a draft and it may be subject to last minute additions or deletions. Its official publication is now expected on January 16th, 2018. That day, in a separate document, the Strategy on the Interface of chemical, product and waste legislation will also be made available. You can find the leaked draft version of the European Strategy on Plastics at the following external [link](#).

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Construction Products Regulation Revision



During the summer, the Commission held a public consultation with regard to possible revision of Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products (CPR). The Commission is now analysing the large number of comments received during the consultation period by stakeholders and interested parties and will take them into consideration for the evaluation of the CPR.

During the 4-week public consultation, in total 111 comments were submitted by participants, including among others business organisations, trade associations, academic and research institutions, NGOs, public authorities, EU citizens, as well as a number of anonymous contributions. Comments were submitted in various EU official languages. The vast majority of comments received argue clearly against a possible repeal of the CPR (Option III). However, they make certain recommendations for improvement or agree for a limited revision of the CPR (policy Option II). A significant number of participants also support policy Option I (no legislative change).

Among the main arguments were those of Construction Products Europe who proposed the following: a) Revision of article 9(2) on CE Marking; b) Improvement of the procedure of citation of harmonised standards in the Official Journal of the EU; c) The rules for setting new classes and thresholds or for modifying them should be clarified and the procedure should be simplified.

The Commission is expected to launch another 3-month long public consultation and consequently draft an Impact Assessment of possible changes to the CPR.

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European Commission introduces LEVEL(s)



The European Commission launched the LEVEL(s), which is a common framework of indicators to assess environmental performance throughout the life cycle of a building, and promotes its use for project construction.

This work began in 2015, following the Commission's Communication on the Circular Economy Action Plan, with the aim of creating a flexible indicators' system so that they can be incorporated into programs or used as such by stakeholders, including public authorities, design teams and real estate investors.

In Autumn 2017, this new framework has been opened for testing which will last for two years. Companies, associations and public authorities are invited to participate in this testing of LEVEL(s).

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European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform



In the context of the well-known Circular Economy Package, another initiative has been recently launched by the Commission, in order to accelerate the transition towards a circular economy: the Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. It is supported in its tasks by a Secretariat run by the European Economic and Social Committee, with the patronage of DG Growth and DG Environment.

This Platform aims at engaging with stakeholders through existing fora and supporting the exchange of good practices. In this regard, companies and associations are welcome to provide information about good practices, ranging from different sectors to raise awareness about existing national or regional strategies, to identify challenges and opportunities for the transition to a circular economy among policy makers, businesses.

After the first conference at the presence of all relevant stakeholders, as well as **EuPC**, earlier this year, the second conference is now scheduled for **February 21st, 2018 in Brussels**.

If you wish to submit your own good practice, go to this [link](#).

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2018 EuPC Annual Meeting



The **European Plastics Converters Association (EuPC)**, together with the Italian plastics association Federazione Gomma Plastica (Unionplast), is organizing its Annual Meeting on 24-25 May in Milan, Italy. The theme of next year's conference will be: A circular future with plastics.

During the first day, on the 24th of May, three market division meetings are organised, focussing on packaging, building & construction and automotive & transport. During these meetings, experts from the three sectors come together to present and discuss the most important recent developments. In the evening, the gala dinner is organised in a prestigious location and in combination with it, the awards ceremony of the Best Polymer Producers Awards is held. The awards are an initiative of the Polymers for Europe Alliance, whose members annually vote for the best suppliers in 8 different polymer type categories.

During the second day, on the 25th of May, the main conference will be organised, where high level speakers will present issues related to the conference's theme A circular future with plastics. **EuPC** is glad to announce that the European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elżbieta Bieńkowska, has confirmed her participation to the conference.

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EU Education Policy



Several important developments concerning the EU education and training policy have recently taken place. On the 14th November, the European Commission released a new Communication about education and training, called "Strengthening European Identity through Education and Culture". The communication, envisioned by Vice-President Katainen and Commissioner Navracsics was drafted as a contribution to the meeting of EU leaders at the Gothenburg Social Summit and introduces the idea of a European

Education Area that could be reached through a number of diverse measures by 2025. [Click here to read the full text.](#)

Additionally, the European Commission released the last version of the Education and Training Monitor. The monitor provides data on all aspects of the education policy in Europe and the member states, including vocational training. [Find the report here.](#) **EuPC** is currently working on the development of a European education project in the Erasmus+ framework.

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Upcoming Meetings

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|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| EuPC Members Executive Forum & EuPC NPA Meeting | 7 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| EuPC B&C and Packaging Division Executive Committee | 14 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| EuPC Senior Executives Forum | 14 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| EuPC Steering Committee | 15 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| EuPF Meeting | 15 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| EuPC A&T Division Executive Committee | 19 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |
| Plasfuelsys | 22 March 2018 <i>Brussels</i> |

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