

THURSDAY 20 APRIL 2023, STRASBOURG

# PREVENTION AND PROTECTION AGAINST ENDOCRINE DISRUPTING CHEMICALS (EDCS)

WHAT ROLES FOR AN ALLIANCE OF CITIES  
AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN EUROPE?

SYMPOSIUM IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, ROOM WIC 100  
13H15 - 17H30

ORGANISERS:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[contact@reseau-environnement-sante.fr](mailto:contact@reseau-environnement-sante.fr)



*This symposium is organised by the Réseau Environnement Santé (RES), in partnership with the EDC-Free Europe coalition and the Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) Germany; and with the financial support of the triennial contract Agora Strasbourg European Capital.*

*It will highlight the important role that local authorities can play in reducing exposure to chemical pollution and will aim to initiate in Strasbourg the construction of a European Alliance on this issue.*

*As the improvements of EU legislation on chemicals are progressing slowly, people and nature continue to be exposed everyday to harmful chemicals including endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) present everywhere in our daily life.*

*This symposium aims at promoting and sharing information on the initiatives taken at the national, regional, and local levels to increase awareness, prevention, and actions at different levels to inform citizens, and help reducing exposure to EDCs and other harmful chemicals, in particular for vulnerable groups. We will also explore the opportunities to increase synergies and networking between local authorities across Europe to contribute to this goal.*

*This initiative builds in particular on the experience developed in France with the network of cities and territories striving to be free of endocrine disrupting chemicals (VTSPE) and the experience of the Baltic Interreg project Non Hazardous Cities (NonHazCity). These initiatives have been highlighted in the European Parliament Resolution of 10 July 2020 on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability (2020/2531(RSP)) and in the policy recommendations of the 2019 Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions: Towards a Comprehensive EU Framework on Endocrine Disruptors.*

## Interpretation FR/EN

Invitation-only event (no live and no replay), proceedings will be published

### 13:15 | Welcome and opening

**Agnès Firmin Le Bodo**, Minister Delegate to the Minister of Health and Prevention, in charge of Territorial Organisation and Health Professionals, France [tbc]

**Jeanne Barseghian**, Mayor of Strasbourg, France

**Dr. Alexandre Feltz**, City Council member in charge of public health and environmental health, City of Strasbourg, France

### 13:30 | Introduction: why this symposium?

**André Cicoella**, President, Réseau Environnement Santé, France

**Heidrun Fammler**, Chief Executive, BEF Germany

### 13:45 | [Panel 1] State of play to strengthen EU regulations on EDCs and necessary complementary actions at (sub)national level

**Moderator: Sandra Jen**, Coordinator, EDC-Free Europe Coalition

**MEP Jutta Paulus**, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), Greens/European Free Alliance, Germany

**Nadège Hornbeck**, Vice-president in charge of health, prevention and disability, Grand Est Region, France

**Jordane Wodli**, Sustainable Chemicals Unit, DG ENV, European Commission, EU

**Hélène Moraut**, Administrator at the Secretariat of the Commission for Natural Resource, European Committee of the Regions, EU

**Arne Jamtrot**, Head of unit of the Chemicals centre Environment and Health Department, City of Stockholm, Sweden

### 14:30 | [Panel 2] Prevention and protection: focus on non-persistent endocrine disruptors

**Moderator: André Cicoella**, President, Réseau Environnement Santé, France

**Prof. Anne-Simone Parent**, Paediatrician endocrinologist, University of Liège, and representative of the European Society of Endocrinology, Belgium [tbc]

**Dr. Marike Kolossa-Gehring**, HBM4EU coordinator, Head of section toxicology at the German Environment Agency (UBA)

**Dr. Aleksandra Rutkowska**, Biotechnologist at the Medical University of Gdansk and member of the Polish Society of Endocrinology, Poland

**Sandrine Jouan**, Senior regulatory toxicologist and coordinator of the Belgian national plan on EDCs (NAPED), SPF Public Health, Belgium

**Yann Wehring**, Vice-President in charge of the Ecological Transition, Climate and Biodiversity, Île-de-France Region, France

15h15 Break

### 15:45 | [Panel 3] Local actions, learnings from the Baltic Interreg project NonHazCity

**Moderator: Véronique Bertholle**, City Council member in charge of cross-border, European and international relations, City of Strasbourg, France

**Arne Jamtrot**, Head of unit of the Chemicals centre Environment and Health Department, City of Stockholm, Sweden

**Mairita Lūse**, City Council member in charge of the working group on waste reduction and management, City of Riga, Latvia

**Esa Nikunen**, Director General of environment services, City of Helsinki, Finland

**Lisa Kern**, Member of the parliament of the City of Hamburg, Spokesperson for consumer protection for the green party at Hamburg, Germany

**Heidrun Fammler**, Chief Executive, BEF Germany

### 16:30 | [Panel 4] Local actions, learnings from 6 years of implementation of the EDC-Free Charter in France

**Moderator: Heidrun Fammler**, Chief Executive, BEF Germany

**André Cicoella**, President, Réseau Environnement Santé, France

**Nadine Rivet**, City Council member in charge of public policies towards young children, City of Limoges, France

**Ludivine Quintallet**, Councillor of Alsace and founder of the plastic-free canteen initiative in Strasbourg, European Collectivity of Alsace, France

**Jean-François Bridet**, Vice-President in charge of the Ecological Transition, Climate and Biodiversity, Centre-Val de Loire Region, France

**Céline De Laurens**, City Council member in charge of health, prevention and environmental health, City of Lyon, France

**Dr. Richard Chemla**, City Council member in charge of health, City of Nice and Vice president of the French Network of WHO Healthy Cities, France

### 17:15 | Conclusion and ways forward

**André Cicoella**, President, Réseau Environnement Santé, France

**Sandra Jen**, Coordinator EDC-Free Europe coalition

Closing: 17:30

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## More about the organizers

### Réseau Environnement Santé (RES)

RES was created in 2009 with the aim of putting environmental health at the heart of public policies. Its first campaign led to the banning of Bisphenol A in baby bottles in France and in the European Union as a whole. RES's action also led in France to the banning of perchloroethylene in dry cleaners, the adoption of the national strategy on endocrine disruptors, and the charter for cities and territories without endocrine disruptors.

After six years, the campaign is focusing on the construction of practices showing that it is possible, by reducing exposure to these substances, particularly phthalates, to reduce the associated pathologies, starting with childhood diseases. In particular, reducing phthalate contamination by 50 % at the population scale can reduce preterm birth by 12 % within a relatively short time frame. In other words, more than 7.200 cases could thus be avoided each year in France by acting on everyday sources such as plastics, cosmetics and ultra-processed food.

#### Press contact:

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### Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) Germany

BEF Germany was founded in Hamburg in 2003 as a non-profit association and chairs the "BEF Group", an international network with offices in Riga (Latvia), Tallinn (Estonia) and Vilnius (Lithuania). BEF Germany has 18 years of experience in developing and managing projects, mainly funded by the EU. Since its foundation BEF Germany has implemented 45 projects (250 for the whole BEF Group) in the fields of chemicals and waste management, water quality, nature, species and marine protection, energy efficiency, sustainable mobility and climate change.

- The Interreg project NonHazCity 1 (2016-2019) enabled nine municipalities around the Baltic Sea to develop their chemical action plans for hazardous substances entering the Baltic Sea, and trained dozens of small businesses and households to reduce their emissions.
- The Interreg project NonHazCity 2 (2019-2021) built municipalities' capacity in chemicals management and campaigned on the dangers of plastics in our everyday life.
- The project NonHazCity 3 (2023-2025) helps municipalities, entrepreneurs and individuals construct and renovate buildings with tox-free materials in order to protect health and the environment.

#### Press contact:

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### EDC-Free Europe coalition

EDC-Free Europe is a coalition of public interest groups representing more than 70 environmental, health, women's and consumer groups across Europe who share a concern about hormone disrupting chemicals (EDCs) and their impact on our health and wildlife. The coalition is currently campaigning for the timely implementation of the REACH and CLP revisions as outlined in the European Commission's Chemical Strategy for Sustainability.

#### Press contact:

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## The EDC-Free Charter in France

Signing this charter opens a framework that offers local authorities to build and exchange practices. It is up to local authorities to define their actions. RES encourages actions on public procurement as well as on awareness-raising actions for health professionals, early childhood professionals, teachers and construction professionals.



Since 2018, the **City of Strasbourg** has been a signatory of this charter and has committed to carrying out various activities aimed at limiting the population's exposure to endocrine disruptors, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

As of November 2022, around 800 pregnant women were welcome to join the **"Green Prescription"** scheme; which consists in receiving free awareness-raising sessions on EDCs and a free weekly basket of vegetables from local organic farming.

<https://www.strasbourg.eu/ordonnance-verte>

Today, four regions (Île-de-France, Occitanie, Centre-Val de Loire, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, and soon Normandy), eight départements (Tarn, Haute-Garonne, Bouches-du-Rhône, Aude, Seine-Saint-Denis, Paris, Val-de-Marne, Saône-et-Loire, Aisne and soon Dordogne) and nearly 300 towns are involved in the initiative.

Some examples of actions:

→ **City of Limoges:**

<https://www.limoges.fr/pratique/lutte-contre-les-perturbateurs-endocriniens>

→ **Île-de-France Region:**

<https://www.iledefrance.fr/la-region-combat-les-perturbateurs-endocriniens>  
<http://www.reseau-environnement-sante.fr/category/projets/pelif/>

→ **Centre-Val de Loire Region:**

<https://www.centre-valde Loire.fr/comprendre/developpement-durable/sante-et-environnement/agir-au-quotidien-contre-les-perturbateurs>

→ **Department du Tarn**

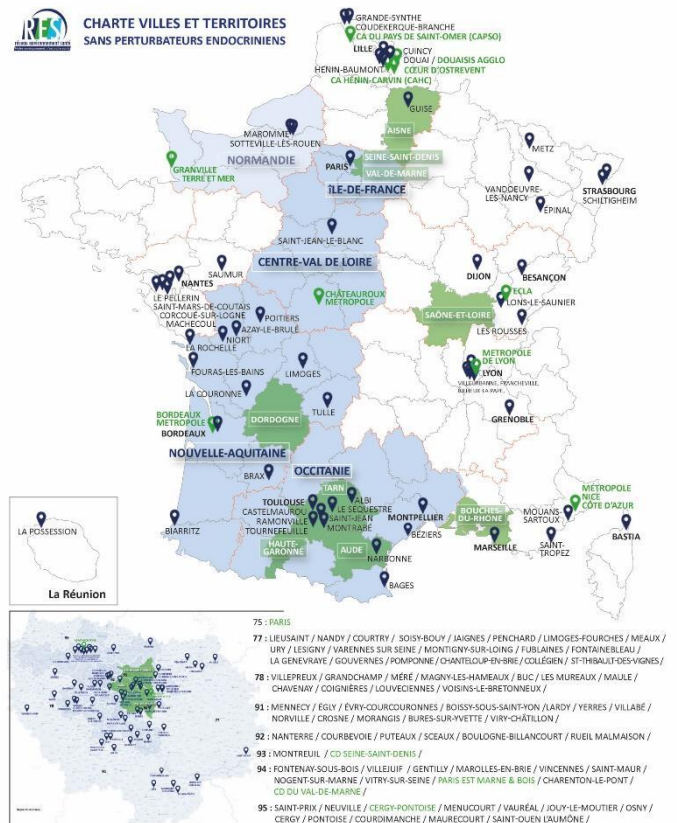
<https://www.tarn.fr/actualites/plan-departemental-de-prevention-et-de-lutte-contre-les-perturbateurs-endocriniens-bilan-des-actions-menees-en-2019>

→ **City of Lyon:**

<https://www.lyon.fr/le-contrat-local-de-sante>

→ **City of Nice:**

<http://www.reseau-environnement-sante.fr/vtspe-signature-metropole-nice-cote-dazur/>  
<https://www.nice.fr/fr/environnement/recueil-des-actes-des-journees-sante-environnement-10-11-decembre-2021>



To raise awareness of the invisible and odourless risks of endocrine disruptors, RES has launched a "zero phthalates" campaign as part of the charter. This campaign aims to assess the presence of nine phthalates in the daily environment of volunteers by wearing a simple silicone bracelet for a week. These actions are carried out at the individual level, but the ideal is to trigger behavioural changes on a wider scale, by involving partners such as the public health insurance (CPAM).

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## The Baltic Interreg project NonHazCity

### Small scale emitters with big impact

Industrial wastewaters, municipal sewage and stormwater are the source of hazardous substances and pollutants entering the Baltic Sea waters. Although emissions from industrial sources are formally regulated, emissions coming from small-scale businesses or households usually are not. However, in cases of substances like phthalates, Bisphenol A, alkylphenols and PFAS smaller sources account for 50 % of emissions in the region.

So far, the exact emitters have not been identified because of low concentrations of the substances of concern. They have not been addressed either due to the high number of emitters. Consequently, people running small-scale businesses or households have little knowledge of which chemical products to select and which to avoid in order to protect both their own health and the environment.

**SAFER PRODUCTS, CLEANER CITIES!**

NonHazCity project wants to address the small-scale emitters directly and try to reduce the consumption of hazardous substances at the source. Municipalities, small and medium sized enterprises and private households will be addressed by various means, adapted to each specific target pollutant with the main goal to prevent hazardous substances ending up in the sewer and, ultimately, in the Baltic Sea.

### Lacking tools to tackle emissions from small-scale emitters

Another challenge is related to the municipal wastewater treatment facilities, which are unable to effectively treat the pollution coming from small-scale businesses and households. People responsible for wastewater management in municipalities need to learn about new techniques to reduce emissions of hazardous substances and other pollutants that cannot be reached by traditional water treatment and enforcement techniques.

- One of the main achievement of **NonHazCity 1** (March 2016 - February 2019) was to develop the “**household check**” tool. 50 private households in ten municipalities in Poland, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Sweden, Lithuania and Belarus were checked on hazardous substances, for example in cleaning agents, toiletries, kitchenware and toys. The households received information about the products in their home and advice on how to reduce the amount of hazardous substances used. During a second home visit, the households showed what changes they had made as a result, for example they had exchanged kitchenware such as non-stick pans and plastic food containers as well as reduced the number of detergents. Volunteer households in Gdansk provided urine samples BEFore and after these behavioural changes: After avoiding certain plastic products, there was a decrease in concentrations of bisphenol A, phthalates and nonylphenol. The participants claim to reported an increase in awareness and confidence about hazardous substances after taking part in the household check.  
<https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/nonhazcity/>
- **NonHazCity 2** (August 2019 - July 2021) is the extension stage project of NonHazCity and helps to implement the earlier developed tools for the reduction of hazardous substances in various environments. The exchange on smart procurement praxis facilitated by the project allows decision-makers, suppliers and end-users to improve their chemical assortment. <https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/nonhazcity-2/>
- **NonHazCity 3** (January 2023 - December 2025) **tackles the challenge of hazardous substances in buildings, building sites and building materials.** We will develop four solutions and pilot them, elaborate usable protocols to get these chemicals out of our homes and workplaces, and out of the (aquatic) environment, including the Baltic Sea.  
<https://interreg-baltic.eu/project/nonhazcity-3/>

For more information please visit: <https://thinkBEFore.eu/>

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## The LIFE ChemBee Project: A new example to show the relevance of local actions

We generally associate hazardous chemicals with heavy industry and polluted hotspots in the vicinity of chemical plants.



However, we encounter many hazardous chemicals even in our homes. This is because cleaning products, cosmetics, and consumer products are responsible for countless pollutants in our own households.

From the products, the chemicals make their way into our bodies and the environment, where they sometimes cause irreversible damage. LIFE ChemBee is now tackling this issue. (Start Date: 01/10/2022 - End Date: 31/03/2026)



zero.



The Project LIFE ChemBee (No. LIFE21/GIE/DE/101074245) is co-funded by the LIFE Programme of the European Union.

The project is looking for committed volunteers who will help us reduce exposure to hazardous chemicals. The volunteers will receive training on harmful substances found in households. The knowledge they gain will then be passed on in face-to-face consultations to their friends and family. The goal of the project is simple: to inform as many people as possible about which products and substances should be removed from their households. The range of substances used in everyday products is huge: From hormonally active substances in cosmetics, to toxic substances in cleaning agents, to billions of particles of microplastics found in almost every home.

The project is funded by the EU through the LIFE programme. Participants are Germany, Portugal, Austria, Greece, Sweden, Poland, France, Czech Republic and Finland. 2 of the main expected results are:

- Training of 2.300 volunteer 'chemical ambassadors', who will 'swarm' like bees to check 43.000 households;
- Training of 210 inhouse eco-supporters in 37 city administrations, leading to the detoxification of 2.900 offices.

For more information please visit: <https://thinkBEFore.eu/en/life-chembee/> or <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/101074245>

## Towards an Alliance of Cities and Territories without EDCs / NonHazCities?

While pushing for urgent and ambitious REACH and CLP reforms, and in line with the European Commission's roadmap published on 25 April 2022 to eliminate thousands of toxic substances from consumer products by 2030, this symposium will highlight the important role that local authorities can play in reducing exposure to chemical pollution and will aim to initiate in Strasbourg the construction of a European Alliance on this issue.

In order to carry out this discussion, this symposium stems in particular from a proposal from the European Parliament, adopted by a large majority in a resolution in July 2020, which invites the European Commission to support the creation of such a network. This proposal is also in line with an opinion of the European Committee of the Regions, adopted in June 2019, explicitly mentioning the Baltic Interreg project NonHazCity and the EDC-Free Charter network initiated by RES in France.

These two examples show the essential role of NGOs in conjunction with local authorities in catalysing local actions in response to strong demands from consumers as well as from various local stakeholders, starting with health professionals. The discussion will focus in particular on non-persistent endocrine disruptors (phthalates and bisphenols) with a view to obtaining, by reducing exposure, measurable beneficial results in terms of health within a relatively short time frame (preterm birth and childhood diseases).

The symposium will also address how synergies could be supported and amplified to local authorities in the EU where the awareness on the subject is still extremely low and as a result people are simply not even informed.

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