

CHAIR'S WELCOME



Happy New Year, and welcome back! The first ENVI meeting of 2019, the last year of the current legislature, will take place on the 21st - 22nd of January, in Brussels.

The first ever Romanian presidency of the Council of the EU started on 1 January this year. On 21 January we will welcome to the ENVI Committee the Romanian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Ms Gavrilăscu, and the Minister of Waters and Forests, Mr Deneş, to discuss the priorities of the Presidency in the areas of interest for our Committee. Similarly, on 22 January, we will exchange views with the Romanian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Daea, and with the Minister of Health, Ms Pinteă.

2018 was another busy year during which ENVI members continued their work to ensure high standards for EU citizens in our policy areas. We will vote on the provisional agreement resulting from interinstitutional negotiations on a number of files, including the CO₂ in cars file; the agreed package provides a 15% reduction in CO₂ emissions from cars and vans by 2025, and a 37.5% cut for cars by 2030. We will also vote on the provisional agreement on the new Single-Use Plastics Directive, based on which several single-use plastic items, such as plates or cutlery will be banned in the EU. The text sets out a number of other measures, including targets for recycled content in plastic bottles. Plastic residue is found in marine species, including in fish and shellfish, thus ultimately in the human food chain. According to the European Commission's estimates, more than 80% of marine litter is plastics, and the products covered by the new EU restrictions represent around 70% of all marine litter items.

We will continue with votes on key files. ENVI Members will thus vote on provisional agreement on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. In the context of complex and sadly, frequent natural disasters, that have seriously affected many European countries over recent years, a new instrument is set at European level, to assist Member States hit by disasters when national capacities are overstretched.

In the ENVI Committee, Members constantly call for sustainable farming and for a circular bioeconomy in Europe. In December last year, the EU institutions found agreement on new EU rules on fertilisers. Fertilising products are used to feed plants and improve plant growth, mainly in agriculture. However, challenges in terms of the environment, public health and food safety are associated with their use. The new EU rules will facilitate the access of organic and waste-based fertilisers to the EU; limits on heavy metals and contaminants present in fertilising products are also set, including for cadmium, a chemical that can accumulate in soils, transfer to foodstuffs and potentially lead to adverse effects on health or soil biodiversity. ENVI Members are set to vote on the provisional agreement on this file – on which the IMCO Committee has the lead but some important provisions fall under ENVI responsibility - on 21 January.

We will close the ENVI meeting of 22 January with an exchange of views with the Commission on the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR), which aims to support the delivery of EU environmental policies objectives and legislation through country-specific reports to be published every two years, followed by high-level discussions between the Commission and the Member States concerned, on implementation matters. Member States

play an essential role in the correct application of existing legislation and such initiatives that stir exchanges of good practices and come with recommendations specific for each Member State are most welcome by our Committee.

Follow our discussions live and get involved in the debate at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/envi/home.html>

Adina-Ioana Vălean,

Brussels - 21 January 2019

MEETING ITEMS

Results of the votes of the last ENVI meeting are available [here](#).

Votes:

-) Laying down rules on the making available on the market of CE marked fertilising products
-) Emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles (recast)
-) Reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment
-) Alignment of reporting obligations in the field of environment policy
-) Union Civil Protection Mechanism
-) Definition, presentation and labelling of spirit drinks
-) Minimum requirements for water reuse
-) Implementation of the cross-border Healthcare Directive
-) Implementation of Directive 2009/128/EC on the sustainable use of pesticides
-) Strategy for long-term EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction in accordance with the Paris Agreement
-) Implementation of the legal provisions and the Joint Statement ensuring parliamentary scrutiny over decentralised agencies
-) Discharges 2017: General budget of the EU – European Commission, EFSA, EEA, ECHA, EMA, ECDC
-) Objections pursuant to Rule 106: genetically modified oilseed rapes Ms8, Rf3 and Ms8 × Rf3; genetically modified maize 5307 (SYN-Ø53Ø7-1); genetically modified maize MON 87403 (MON-874Ø3-1); genetically modified cotton GHB614 × LLCotton25 × MON 15985.

Considerations:

-) Future EU framework for determining environmentally sustainable financial activities (joint ENVI/ECON procedure)
-) Discontinuing seasonal changes of time

Exchange of views:

-) with Ms Grațîela Leocădia Gavrilăscu, Romanian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment and Mr Ioan Deneş, Minister of waters and forests
-) with Mr Petre Daea, Romanian Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
-) with Ms Sorina Pinteă, Romanian Minister of Health
-) with the Commission representatives on endocrine disruptors
-) with Mr Schwarz, rapporteur for the EESC exploratory opinion on the implementation of EU environmental legislation in the areas of air quality, water and waste
-) with the Commission representatives on the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) and progress on greening the European semester

ENVI IN NEXT PLENARY

Draft agendas of the Plenary are available [here](#).

VOTES

Laying down rules on the making available on the market of CE marked fertilising products

Vote on the provisional agreement resulting from interinstitutional negotiations (parts under ENVI exclusive competences) (see [meeting documents](#))

In March 2016, the Commission put forward a legislative proposal on fertilising products, as part of the Circular Economy package. The proposal covers a wider range of fertilising products (including those manufactured from secondary raw materials) compared to the existing 2003 Fertilisers Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003), and also sets limits on heavy metals and contaminants present in fertilising products.

During the fourth trilogue on 20 November 2018, a provisional agreement was reached on the main outstanding issue on the file: the cadmium limits allowed in EU fertilising products, for which ENVI has exclusive competence. Cadmium, present mostly in mineral phosphate fertilisers, raises particular concerns as it can accumulate in soils, transfer to foodstuffs and potentially lead to adverse effects on health, soil biodiversity and groundwater quality. The outcome of the agreement was that a cadmium limit value of 60mg/kg would be set at the date of application of the regulation, and this limit value would be reviewed 7 years after the date of entry into force of the regulation, with a view to lowering it further. In addition, voluntary labelling would be allowed for fertilisers with a cadmium content lower than 20mg/kg and Member States already having lower cadmium limits would be able to maintain them.

Rapporteur: [Gardini \(EPP\)](#)

Shadows: [Poc \(S&D\)](#), [Nicholson \(ECR\)](#), [Federley \(ALDE\)](#), [Eck \(GUE\)](#), [Häusling \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [Evi \(EFDD\)](#)

Emission performance standards for new passenger cars and for new light commercial vehicles (recast)

Vote on the provisional agreement resulting from interinstitutional negotiations (see [meeting documents](#))



The Commission proposal sets new CO₂ emission standards for passenger cars and light commercial vehicles (vans) in the EU for the period after 2020. The proposed targets are set for the EU-wide average emissions of new cars and vans in a given calendar year from 2025 on, with stricter targets applying from 2030- these are not defined as absolute values (in g CO₂/km), but expressed as percentage reductions compared to the average of the specific emission targets for 2021.

The file was negotiated in 5 trilogues, last held on 17 January 2018. The final package on the targets included an increase in ambition for the 2030 figures of 37.5% for cars and 31% for vans, compared to the Commission's proposal; the 2025 were maintained as per COM proposal at 15%. For zero- and low-emission vehicles (ZLEVs) incentives, the COM figures of 15% and 30% benchmarks for both cars and vans for 2025 and 2030 were maintained. As part of the whole deal, texts were agreed on important issues introduced by the EP such as just transition (earmarking of premiums), real driving emissions, lifecycle analysis, car labelling. The niche derogation was extended only till 2028 instead of 2030

as Council initially proposed.

Rapporteur: [Dalli \(S&D\)](#).

Shadows: [Gieseke \(EPP\)](#), [Procter \(ECR\)](#), [Torvalds \(ALDE\)](#), [Harms \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [Konečná \(GUE\)](#), [Evi \(EFDD\)](#)

Reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment



Vote on the provisional agreement resulting from interinstitutional negotiations (see [meeting documents](#))

On 28 May 2018, the Commission adopted a proposal for a new Directive on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment, which is part of the wider approach announced in the Plastics Strategy and of the Circular Economy Action Plan. The proposal included new EU-wide rules targeting the ten single-use plastic products most often found on Europe's beaches and seas, as well as lost and abandoned fishing gear.

The two co-legislators reached a provisional agreement on 18 December 2018. They agreed on the key political points, including the following: products made of oxo-degradable plastic and food containers made of expanded polystyrene will be banned from 2021 - other banned items include cotton bud sticks, cutlery, or balloons sticks; the requirement for recycled content: 25% by 2025 for PET bottles, 30 % by 2030 for all bottles; mandatory labelling on the negative environmental impact of cigarettes with plastic filters thrown in the street, as well as for other products, such as plastic cups, wet wipes and sanitary napkins.

Rapporteur: [Ries \(ALDE\)](#)

Shadows: [Florenz \(EPP\)](#), [Paolucci \(S&D\)](#), [Demesmaeker \(ECR\)](#), [Boylan \(GUE\)](#), [Auken \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [Pedicini \(EFDD\)](#)

Minimum requirements for water reuse

Vote on draft report (see [meeting documents](#))



On 28 May 2018, the Commission put forward a legislative proposal seeking to incentivise the reuse of treated waste water (also called 'reclaimed water'). The Rapporteur considers the proposal a useful tool to guarantee security and a greater diffusion of the recovery activity. The Rapporteur supports the obligation of a risk management plan for the recovery of recovered waters, but believes that this task

should be coordinated by the competent authority, which can ensure a more accurate and independent assessment of the whole supply chain of waters. With regard to the minimum requirements for the quality of the water recovered, the Rapporteur considers it necessary to include the additional "Salmonella" parameter to ensure even greater food security for citizens. The Rapporteur also believes that it is essential to focus on the need for awareness-raising measures to highlight the savings in water resources deriving from the reuse of urban waste water and the control system capable of guaranteeing the healthiness of the recovered waters.

366 amendments were tabled. 15 compromise amendments have been negotiated.

Rapporteur: [Bonafé \(S&D\)](#)

Shadows: [Gambús \(EPP\)](#), [Dohrmann \(ECR\)](#), [Huitema \(ALDE\)](#), [Boylan \(GUE\)](#), [Škrlec \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [Evi \(EFDD\)](#)

Implementation of the cross-border Healthcare Directive

Vote on draft report (see [meeting documents](#))

The report intends to analyse the current shortcomings in the implementation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive and to make recommendations for the improvement of the directive.

The Rapporteur welcomes the actions taken by the Commission to assess whether Member States have transposed the directive correctly, including in the recent 2018 Commission report on the operation of the Cross-Border Healthcare Directive. In respect of funding, the Rapporteur expresses serious concerns about the proposed reduction in funding for the health programme. In respect of patient mobility, he notes that the reasons for low patient mobility are threefold: i) some Member States were quite late implementing the directive; ii) citizens' awareness about their general rights to reimbursement is extremely low and iii) Member States have transposed the directive in ways that could be construed as limiting cross-border healthcare, and asks the Commission to continue the structured dialogues with Member States.

Rapporteur: [Belet \(EPP\)](#)

Shadows: [Wölken \(S&D\)](#), [Krupa \(ECR\)](#), [Ries \(ALDE\)](#), [Konečná \(GUE\)](#), [Metz \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [Pedicini \(EFDD\)](#), [Mélin \(ENF\)](#)

CONSIDERATIONS

Discontinuing seasonal changes of time

Consideration of draft opinion (see [meeting documents](#))



The system of bi-annual clock changes has been increasingly questioned in the last years, by citizens, by the European Parliament, and by a growing number of Member States. Following a public consultation in August 2018, which generated around 4.6 million replies, of which 84% were in favour of discontinuing the bi-annual clock changes, the Commission presented in 2018 a proposal on the discontinuation of seasonal time change, which has been taking place in Europe since the WWI. Studies have shown that time change may have an impact on human health. Human health was the main reason given by respondents wishing to abolish the current system in the public consultation of last August.

The rapporteur for the ENVI Opinion considers that one must take into account the empirical evidence related to health issues; that a genuine and sincere consideration and gathering of all accessible data of that particular dossier does not allow making a decision that is clearly supported by proven arguments, in other words that it is not yet scientifically proven that time change does undoubtedly have an impact on human health. As a result the Rapporteur included in his amendments references to chronobiological findings and proposes the postponement of the entry into force of the Directive for the end of March 2020.

Rapporteur: [Piecha \(ECR\)](#).

Shadows: [Liese \(EPP\)](#), [Dance \(S&D\)](#), [Mazuronis \(ALDE\)](#), [Konečná \(GUE\)](#), [Mélin \(ENF\)](#)

EXCHANGE OF VIEWS



Exchange of views with:

Ms Grațiela Leocadia Gavrilescu, Romanian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment

Mr Ioan Deneș, Minister of waters and forests

Mr Petre Daea, Romanian Minister for agriculture and rural development

Ms Sorina Pinteă, Romanian Minister of Health

On 1 January, Romania took over the Council Presidency from Austria and will steer the work of Member States for the next six months. Members will debate the priorities of the Romanian Presidency in all policy areas under ENVI's remit with Ms Grațiela Leocadia Gavrilescu, Romanian Vice Prime Minister of the Environment, Mr Ioan Deneș, Minister of Waters and Forests, with Mr Petre Daea, Romanian Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development, and with Ms Sorina Pinteă, Romanian Minister of Health.

The priorities of the Romanian Presidency in the area of environment include the implementation of the Paris Agreement, of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and strengthening the environmental dimension of sustainable development, promoting the benefits of biodiversity at European and international level. The Romanian Presidency will focus on finalising the negotiations with the Parliament on the file regarding CO2 emissions standards from HDVs as well as advancing the negotiations in Council on dossiers such as the re-use of water and the quality of drinking water.

The priorities in the area of food safety include the negotiation of the file on Transparency and sustainability of the EU risk assessment in the food chain.

As regards public health, promoting universal access to treatment for all those who need it, fighting antimicrobial resistance, improving vaccination coverage, reducing medication abuse and improving the control of transmissible diseases are among the objectives of the Romanian Presidency. At the same time, patient mobility will be a special topic of the Romanian Presidency, and among other things, an exchange of views will be held on the implementation of Directive 24/2011/ EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare.

NEWS FROM THE POLICY DEPARTMENT

Recent Publications

-) Study on [International Climate Negotiations in view of COP24 in Katowice](#)
-) Briefing on [China's climate policies with an emphasis on carbon trading markets](#)
-) Study on [Guidelines for submission and evaluation of applications for the approval of active substances in pesticides](#)
-) Briefing on the [Global Climate Action Summit](#), San Francisco (12-14/09/2018)

Upcoming Publications

-) 'Briefing on European energy and climate policies towards 2020, 2030 and 2050.
-) Workshop proceedings on Cardiovascular diseases and lifestyle
-) Workshop proceedings on Brain, A New Approach to Brain Diseases

Upcoming Workshops

-) On robots in healthcare: a solution or a problem?" (19/02/2019 15-17h)

NEWS FROM THE AGENCIES

European Environment Agency (EEA)



Renewable energy in Europe-2018. The share of renewable energy sources in the European Union's (EU) energy use has doubled since 2005 but this growth has been slowing down in recent years, especially due to increasing energy consumption and lack of progress in the transport sector.

The new report shows that EU Member States need to step up their efforts to reach the 2020 target on renewable energy [More info](#)

In addition for your meeting in Strasbourg to day please find a link to a recent EEA briefing on forest [More info](#).

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)



ECHA's new strategy. The Management Board adopted [ECHA's strategic plan for 2019-2023](#), which will guide the agency to focus its efforts on where it matters the most, when it comes to the safe use of chemicals. The [new organisational structure](#) of ECHA will support the implementation of the new strategy.

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)



A new report from ECDC shows that influenza vaccination coverage rates are still insufficient across EU Member States. None of Member States could demonstrate that they reach the EU target of 75% influenza vaccination coverage for vulnerable groups. The coverage remains low in many countries, and leads to severe disease, hospitalisations and premature deaths, as well as to

significant burden on the healthcare systems. Only a few of the EU Member States that participated in the survey come close to achieving the target. More encouragingly, approximately half of the EU Member States reported

increased use of newer influenza vaccines that provide broader protection during the 2017/18 season. [More info](#).

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)



EFSA has proposed to revise the tolerable intakes of two chemical contaminants to which humans are exposed through the food chain as a result of environmental pollution. This first scientific opinion concerns the main PFAS, known as perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), two man-made chemicals, which have been used widely in industrial and consumer applications since the mid-20th century. They persist in the environment because they degrade slowly. Furthermore, they can accumulate in the human body, meaning it can take many years to eliminate them. [More info](#).

European Medicines Agency (EMA)



Human medicines / veterinary medicines – highlights of 2018

EMA published an overview of all the key recommendations made by the EMA in 2018 on the authorisation and safety monitoring of medicines in the EU. As regards human medicines, in 2018 the EMA recommended 84 medicines for marketing authorisation, of which 42 had a new active substance which has never been authorised in the EU before. Many of these medicines represent a significant improvement in their therapeutic areas; they include medicines for children, for rare diseases and advanced therapies, e.g. the first two chimeric antigen receptors (CAR) T-cell therapies in the EU intended for the treatment of certain blood cancers. More info on [human](#) and [veterinary](#) medicines

Next meeting of the ENVI Committee : 29 January 2019, 20-21 February 2019 (Brussels)
Future meetings: [2019 meeting dates](#).

Watch online the Committee meeting on the [EP web site](#) or on [EuroParl TV](#). Past meetings are available: [EP Live multimedia library](#) and you can also download the extracts of speeches.

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