



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**MEMO**

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## **61% of Europeans think that chemicals are now safer than 10 years ago**

Three out of five Europeans say that chemical substances on the EU market today are safer than they were 10 years ago. That is one of the main results of the [Eurobarometer on public's perception of chemicals and people's attitudes to their safety in Europe](#). Five years after REACH entered into force, Europeans not only believe that the safety of chemical products has improved, but 65 % respondents also agree that products containing chemical substances have been tested properly in the EU.

Views on chemicals are divided on who currently has responsibility for ensuring the safety of chemical substances – most of the respondents (48 %) think this power is held by the European authorities, 42 % believe that the manufactures are responsible for this issue and only 35 % is convinced that the safety is a matter of national authorities. Aggregate results from the 27 Member states show that three fifths think the safety of chemical products should be the manufactures' responsibility.

## **The main results of the Eurobarometer survey can be summarised as follows:**

- The majority of people think that there are chemicals in articles of daily use. **96% of respondents** believe that **cleaning products and paint** contain chemical substances, **90%** think that chemicals are also in **cosmetics or beauty products**. However, only **56% express certainty on this issue**
- **Food** is the product that people **are most likely to check**, with a large majority (81%) saying that they look at the ingredients before buying. On the contrary, **only 23% would check electronics**
- **69% of Europeans disagree** that it is possible to completely **eliminate chemical** substances from daily life
- **Over 52% of respondents** disagree that new chemical substances can help in contributing to **a better environment**
- Three quarters of Europeans agree that new chemical substances are involved in most industrial innovations
- **46% of Europeans** would wait until a newly launched product containing new chemical substances had been **proven to be working and safe** over a long period of time before buying it
- **Only 2%** of respondents would buy a new **product immediately**
- **Three in five** (61%) of Europeans say that the chemical substances on the EU market today are **safer than they were 10 years ago**.
- Half (49%) of Europeans think that EU manufactured products containing chemical substances are safer compared to those imported from outside the EU
- **Two thirds (65%)** of Europeans agree that in the EU, products containing new chemical substances have been **properly tested**
- **48% think** that the authorities of the European Union authorities are responsible for the products' safety, 42% think it is currently carried out by the manufacturers themselves and a third (35%) think it is carried out by the national authorities.
- **Three fifths (60%)** think that the **manufacturers themselves should have that role**.

## **About the Eurobarometer Survey on Chemicals**

This survey contributes to the Commission's Review of REACH, providing information on the general public's perception and understanding of chemical substances, as well as attitudes towards their safety and awareness of regulations. The target sample size in most countries was 1,000 interviews; in total, 25,557 interviews were conducted.