

AGENDA of the event

„Improving health care waste and pharmaceuticals waste management in Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries”

Date: 8th June 2021, CET time

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMqduhrzIsEtCA1ZaQHksJ8v9vPvzeQVzs>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

EU Green Week 2021

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| 09:45-10:00 | Connection of participants to online platform. |
| 10:00-10:10 | Opening of the event. Welcome the participants.
<i>Vassilis Maragos, Head of Unit for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus & Eastern Partnership, DG for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission</i>

<i>Ruslan Havryliuk, EaP Coordinator of Working Group 3 „Environment, climate change and energy security”, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum</i> |
| 10:10-10:30 | Presence of pharmaceuticals in surface waters in the EaP countries: Results from EU-funded projects.
<i>Jaroslav Slobodnik, Environment Institute Slovakia; Team Leader of EMBLAS project (tbc)</i> |
| 10:30-11:30 | The state of play in health care waste management. Pharmaceuticals management. Overview of EaP countries.
<i>Representatives of ministries from EaP countries</i> |
| 11:30-11:50 | Health care waste management in EaP countries. Civil society perspective.
<i>Ina Coşeru, Working Group 3 „Environment, climate change and energy security”, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum</i> |
| 11:50-12:20 | EU Pharmaceutical Strategy and Management of pharmaceuticals in EU Member States
<i>DG Environment, European Commission (tbc)</i>
<i>Representatives of Member States</i> |
| 12:20 – 12:30 | Concluding remarks |

The goal of the partner event **„Improving health care waste and pharmaceuticals waste management in Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries”**, organised in the framework of the EU Green Week 2021, is to bring into discussion the report **„Presence of pharmaceuticals in surface waters in the EaP countries: Results from EU-funded projects”**, by Jaroslav Slobodnik from Environment Institute Slovakia. The speakers of the partner event are also representatives of the line Ministries in the field of environment of the EaP countries who will present the information about the situation with medical waste and pharmaceutical waste in the EaP countries. Civil society will present an alternative opinion about the situation with medical waste in the certain EaP countries and the speakers will be asked to make conclusions on the next steps to be taken to improve the situation in this field.

In EU, Guidelines on Separate Collection of Household Hazardous Waste are prepared in view of Article 20 of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste (hereafter ‘the Waste Framework Directive’) which requires the Commission to adopt guidelines on separate collection of hazardous waste fractions produced by households to assist and facilitate Member States in the implementation of the separate collection obligation set out in Article 20 of the Waste Framework Directive. According to Guidelines, a variety of pharmaceuticals such as analgesics, antibiotics, hormone replacement drugs, oral chemotherapy drugs and antidepressants are commonly found in households and, according to some estimates, a significant proportion of them become waste. Directive 2001/83/EC on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use (Article 127b) requires that Member States ensure that appropriate collection systems are in place for medicinal products that are unused or have expired. Member States implement this obligation by requiring pharmacies or civic amenity site to accept waste pharmaceutical products. Collection periods vary from one-day collection events, continuous collection, or periodic collection.

Separate collection of pharmaceutical waste is important, regardless of the classification of specific products as hazardous or non-hazardous waste, as it can reach the environment from households. For example, the discharge of effluent from urban wastewater (sewage) treatment plants contains excreted pharmaceuticals as well as unused pharmaceuticals which are thrown away into sinks and toilets. Wastewater treatment plants are designed primarily to treat excreta and other conventional organic matter, and not for the removal of pharmaceuticals. Consequently pharmaceuticals, along with their residues, are increasingly found in surface waters.

In France, an extended producer responsibility scheme for pharmaceutical products is implemented through the organization ‘Cyclamed’ which coordinates the separate collection of pharmaceuticals. Cyclamed organises awareness campaigns for patients and partnerships with all actors in the pharmaceutical supply chain. Over 21 000 pharmacies, 200 distributors and 190 laboratories participate in the system. Cyclamed succeeds in collecting 62 % of the unused medication. The total collected volume is 10 500 tonnes, or 162 g per inhabitant per year. The total cost of the collection system is around EUR 10 million which comes from a contribution by the producers of EUR 0,0032 per medication box, excluding VAT. About 50 % of the cost is related to waste disposal (250 EUR/tonne) including the incineration cost (120 EUR/tonne), storage and transport. The procurement of the collection boxes given to the pharmacy’s accounts for about 25 % of total costs, communication for 10 % and overall management for 5 %. The remainder covers studies, research, and miscellaneous costs.

The European Green Week 2021 is dedicated to the ‘zero pollution ambition’. EU Green Week 2021 is an opportunity to engage with all stakeholders and interested citizens on how to work together to make the ambition for a zero pollution and toxic-free environment a reality. It also looks at other relevant European Green Deal initiatives, such the climate initiatives, the upcoming Chemicals Strategy, as well as initiatives in the field of energy, industry, mobility, agriculture, fisheries, health, and biodiversity.