



**Pesticide
Action
Network**
Europe

Press >>>>>>> Release <<<<<<<<

Brussels, date 16/01/2019

European Parliament votes to improve the pesticide authorisation system

Europe must urgently improve its pesticide authorisation system to ensure protection from harm caused by pesticides is the message sent by the European Parliament today, who adopted the PEST Committee report calling for independence, objectivity, transparency and better use of science in the whole procedure. This is a milestone in the long-needed pesticide risk assessment reform in Europe, highlights PAN Europe.

In an effort to re-build citizens' trust, today a great majority of Members of the European Parliament voted in favour (526 in favour, 66 against) of [the PEST Committee report](#) that highlights the shortfalls of the current pesticide authorisation system and calls for substantial improvements in the process to ensure that pesticides used in agriculture and management of green/urban areas cause no adverse effects to humans, animals and the environment, as the EU law demands.

Following the exposure of misconducts in the assessment of glyphosate in Europe and the Europeans Citizens' Initiative calling to ban glyphosate and reform the risk assessment procedure, the European Parliament set up a Special Committee last year to investigate the authorisation procedure for pesticides (PEST committee). After 9 months of investigations, hearings, missions to EFSA, IARC and INRA as well as the commissioning of studies, [the Committee reported](#) that the current system is failing to achieve its purpose, highlighting the need for urgent change, which received a clear support from the Parliament today. The Parliament also opposed to all European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) amendments aiming to "destroy" the report.

"This is a step forward" states Angeliki Lysimachou, Science Policy Officer of PAN Europe. "PAN Europe has been advocating for years that the EU law is not respected in the pesticide authorisation system: science is misused, conflicts of interests persist and industry is dominating the whole process by carrying out its own assessment studies and even designing the methods used in the assessment procedure. We have no idea about how many pesticides we're exposed to and how these mixtures impact the environment, ourselves and the health of our children. Today the Parliament decided to listen to the European citizens' concerns and demand an improvement in the whole authorisation system."

Among the recommendations, the PEST report calls for lack of a strong conflict of interest policy in the whole process and to set up an EFSA committee to investigate the independence and expertise of all European experts involved in the procedure. The report also calls for post-market vigilant system of pesticide exposure, taking into account real-life exposures as well as a full implementation of the sustainable use of pesticides directive giving priority to sustainable and ecological alternatives. Finally, the report calls to ban the use of pesticides in areas used by the general public or vulnerable groups (schools, hospitals) as well as for crop desiccation that speeds up cereals' maturation.

Health Commissioner Andriukaitis on Monday, welcomed the report and confirmed that the recommendations should be taken into account in the current [REFIT process](#) of the Pesticide Regulation.

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Europe is a network of NGOs working to reduce the use of hazardous pesticides and have them replaced with ecologically sound alternatives. We work to eliminate dependency on chemical pesticides and to support safe sustainable pest control methods. Our network brings together 40 consumer, public health, and environmental organisations, and women's groups from across Europe.



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Further material :

- Email sent to Members of the Parliament by the European Coalition “Citizens for Science in Pesticide Regulation” highlighting the main elements of the report. [Read here>>](#)
- Expert report, on how EU regulators plagiarised large sections of their glyphosate assessment from industry, was written by Dr Stefan Weber and Dr Helmut Burtscher-Schaden. [Read here>>](#)
- How did the US EPA and IARC reach opposite conclusions about glyphosate’s genotoxicity? [Read here>>](#)

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