



Minimising the impact of chemicals on health and environment

- **JOINT CONGRESS OF ESPE AND ESE 2025**
- **COPENHAGEN, 10-13 MAY 2025**

For the first time, **the European Society of Endocrinology (ESE)** and **the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE)** held a joint congress in Copenhagen. Under the theme “Connecting Endocrinology Across the Life Course”, the event brought together over 7,800 delegates from across the world and featured sessions tailored for both paediatric and adult endocrinologists.

INCREASING EVIDENCE

A key focus at the congress was the growing evidence from the past 20 years on the harmful effects of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). These chemicals can imitate, block, or interfere with the body's hormonal system. EDCs are commonly found in everyday products such as plastics, cosmetics, and toys, making it difficult for individuals to avoid exposure. They have been linked to serious health conditions, including obesity, infertility, certain cancers, as well as an increased risk of reduced IQ and ADHD.

Vulnerable groups, particularly children and pregnant women, are at greater risk due to the sensitivity of their developing hormonal systems.

“Over the last 20 years, the science around the negative impact of chemicals on the hormone system has developed in such a way that this needs to be reflected in improved legislation, which is needed to protect the European population.”

Dirk De Rijdt, Director of Strategic Partnerships at European Society of Endocrinology



Photo: Wonderful Copenhagen



Photo: Wonderful Copenhagen

REGULATORY GAP

As a result of these health effects, healthcare systems face a significant financial burden estimated to be in the order of hundreds of billions of euros annually in the EU. These costs, combined with health and environmental impacts, are an unsustainable burden for society. Although Denmark and the EU already have regulations addressing EDCs, they have not been updated to reflect the latest scientific findings. This regulatory gap increases the risk of continued exposure to EDCs.

To address this regulatory gap, **Copenhagen Legacy Lab** partnered with ESE, ESPE, the **Danish Society for Paediatric Endocrinology**, and the **Danish Endocrine Society** to host a high-level scientific and policy-oriented legacy event the day after the congress. With **REACH** and other key EDC legislation currently under review by European policymakers, the event provided a valuable opportunity to present the

latest scientific findings to a broad range of stakeholders and make direct links to the ongoing EU legislative debate. Under the theme “Minimising the Impact of Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals on Health and Environment”, the event aimed to:

- Create more stringent legislation around EDCs in Denmark and the EU (ban almost all EDCs from the environment with only a few exemptions for “essential use”).
- Increase national and international funding for EDC research.
- Empower the general public and sensitive groups on how to reduce exposure to EDCs.



Photo: Wonderful Copenhagen

LEGACY CASE STUDY



CONNECTING SCIENTISTS AND POLICYMAKERS

The hybrid event had more than 280 attendees in person and online, including policymakers, clinicians, scientists, industry representatives, patient organisations, journalists, and NGOs. The event, which had registrations from 79 countries, featured two sessions:

- **Session 1:** A research-oriented session where leading European scientists presented the latest cutting-edge EDC research and outlined future research needs.
- **Session 2:** A public health and policy session with representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Danish Parliament, a Danish community organisation, and EDC experts discussing health impacts and necessary policy actions.

Each session ended with a panel discussion, allowing in person and online attendees to engage with the speakers. The event concluded with a networking lunch to foster new connections among the involved groups of stakeholders. In parallel with the networking lunch, a press briefing gave national and international journalists the opportunity to question selected

speakers on political actions and practical steps to reduce EDC exposure.

Throughout the event, compelling evidence highlighted the harmful effects of EDCs. Scientists and patient groups called for immediate action, including stronger regulations, enhanced testing methods, sustainable alternatives, and greater public awareness. Danish and European policymakers acknowledged these concerns and expressed their commitment to work toward updating regulations based on current scientific evidence.

"I feel very inspired right now about doing something special to solve this problem. Of course there is already a lot of political action, but I think that we can do even more. So, I hope that my colleagues who are here today can do something, to put even more pressure on the subject from the EU side."

Karen Liltorp, Member of
The Danish Parliament

EXAMPLES OF ARTICLES ON THE EVENT

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ESE and ESPE Unite to Urge Enhanced National and EU Measures Against Endocrine Disruptors

BY BIOENGINEER — May 2, 2025 in Health Reading Time: 4 mins read

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MINIMISING THE IMPACT OF ENDOCRINE DISRUPTING CHEMICALS ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

A scientific update following the Joint Congress of ESPE and ESE 2025

In a decisive move to confront one of the most pressing environmental and public health challenges of our time, leading European scientific societies are convening an influential event focused on the detrimental impact of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs). Scheduled for 14 May 2025 in Copenhagen, with an option for online participation, this

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Reviewed

European Society of Endocrinology

May 2 2025

Addressing the urgent health and environmental threat from endocrine disrupting chemicals

Taking place on 14 May 2025, in Copenhagen and online, the event will bring together leading European scientists, policymakers and civil society to address the urgent health and environmental threat from endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs).

The European Society of Endocrinology (ESE), the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE) and the Danish endocrine community will host a high-level event titled: "Minimising the impact of endocrine disrupting chemicals on health and

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LEGACY PROCESS



Strategic goals and societal needs

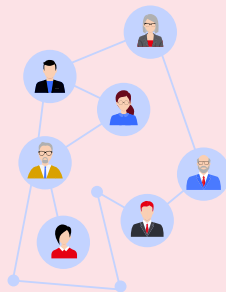
Endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) pose significant risks to both human health and the environment in Denmark and across Europe. Due to their widespread presence in everyday products, it is extremely difficult for individuals to avoid exposure. This contributes to serious health consequences and places a significant financial burden on national healthcare systems.

Addressing this challenge requires coordinated political action at both national and European levels, including the implementation of science-based legislation and efforts to raise public awareness. The health and economic impacts of EDCs make this a strategic priority for Denmark, as well as for ESE and ESPE, who are committed to raising awareness, reducing EDC-related health risks, and promoting a healthier, less toxic environment.



Objective

The objective of the legacy project was to update Danish and European stakeholders about the health risks of EDCs and advocate for stricter regulations at both the European and national levels.



Stakeholder involvement

The European Society of Endocrinology (ESE) and **the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology (ESPE)** organised the high-level event.

The Danish Endocrine Society and **The Danish Society for Paediatric Endocrinology** contributed to designing the scientific program and involving relevant speakers.

Copenhagen Legacy Lab facilitated the legacy process and offered strategic guidance on how to enhance the event's long-term impact, oversee follow-up actions, as well as securing local political engagement.



Activities

The day after the joint congress, a high-level scientific event was organised to address the urgent need to develop stricter chemical regulation in Denmark and the EU.



Outputs (immediately after the activity)

In total, more than 280 national and international stakeholders attended the event in person or online. The list of participants included various stakeholder groups such as policymakers, clinicians, scientists, industry representatives, patient organisations, journalists, and NGOs.

After the event, an online survey was conducted among 86 of the participants to evaluate the perceived legacy potential of the event:

- Over 70% believe the event will likely help increase funding for EDC-related research.
- Over 75% think the event will help strengthen regulations in Denmark and the EU to limit EDCs.
- Over 85% found the event informative for organisations that represent groups more sensitive to EDC exposure.
- Over 90% believe the event helped raise awareness and understanding of EDCs among policymakers, NGOs, and the public.
- Over 75% expect their organisations to use new ideas or knowledge gained from the event.



Outcomes (+6-12 months - changed behaviour)

In Denmark, the event contributed to raising awareness of EDCs, also on the political agenda. For instance, Danish Parliament member Karin Liltorp will continue the discussion on EDC legislation ([see Ms. Liltorp's LinkedIn post about the event](#)).

On a European level ESE/ESPE will continue the process of influencing the European legislation. As an example, the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology and the European Society of Endocrinology have written an open call for legislative measures to address endocrine disrupting chemicals to national ministries of health and environment in the EU.



Impact (+1 year – societal value)

Copenhagen Legacy Lab will assess whether the event has influenced legislation on EDCs at the national and European levels, as well as its effectiveness in raising awareness of EDCs among the Danish and European public.



Potential legacy (+1-3 years and beyond)

To be evaluated.