

# CIRS EU and UK Successfully held their Global Chemical Regulation Conference in London

CIRS' Global Chemical Regulation Conference, held on October 5th, gathered delegates from 21 countries, representing a wide spectrum of the chemical industry. With support from five sponsors, nine industry associations, the Irish embassy in London, and the Department of Business and Trade (DBT), this conference marked a significant milestone for the CIRS Group – our largest European conference to date.

The packed agenda brought together industry experts and our global team, delivering nine comprehensive presentations covering the latest regulatory updates and challenges in the chemical industry across Europe, the UK, South Korea, and China.

Noteworthy presentations included Marko Susnik's in-depth overview of current focal points and emerging trends in EU chemical policy. Marko is the Senior Advisor at the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO) and an Advisor to the Secretary-General on chemicals policy, SMEunited. He covered the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, the REACH revision, and safe and sustainable by design. He emphasized the evolving policies' complexity and costs in chemical management. Marko noted bottlenecks, such as resource constraints, testing labs, and enforcement challenges, highlighting their growing importance in the field.

Alastair Gardner, Trade Specialist (chemical) from the Department for Business and Trade (DBT), provided an overview of global export and trade opportunities for UK companies. He summarized the work of the DBT's chemicals team in assessing new export markets for the chemical industry and shared how the DBT helps businesses overcome export barriers by offering services such as free advice, webinars, online learning tools, access to trade shows, international research, and funding opportunities.

Ian Cranshaw, Head of International Trade and Regions at the Chemical Industries Association (CIA), and Operations Manager at Chemicals Northwest, presented an overview of

the challenges facing UK chemical companies. He highlighted that CIA member companies anticipate energy costs, skills shortages, and increases in labor costs and raw material prices as key challenges for the coming year. Ian provided detailed background and figures to illustrate these issues. He also discussed some updates on DEFRA's planned consultation on UK REACH.

In a joint presentation on South Korean chemical regulations, Junho Lee, Director of CIRS Korea, covered K-REACH updates, including the December 31, 2024 registration deadline for 100-1,000-ton substances. SeoWon Kim, Chief Manager of CIRS Korea, discussed K-BPR and emphasized the upcoming deadline for Group 2 categories. She also detailed the Ministry of Environment's ongoing dialogue with industry stakeholders to enhance product regulation.

Dean Winder, Senior Regulatory Consultant at CIRS Europe, discussed Chinese chemical management. Topics included the challenges associated with MEE Order 12, the QR code system for hazardous chemicals, and GHS updates.

The conference also included two dynamic panel discussions, one focusing on the sustainable development of the chemical industry in which speakers discussed SMEs' role in consumer education, concerns about REACH chemical bans, Asia's regulatory gap, and understanding consumer interests in sustainability.

The second panel explored supply chain challenges for the global chemical industry where speakers discussed inaccuracies in forms causing delays, regulatory barriers, intellectual property concerns, global trade management, and digitalization challenges.

The insightful presentations equipped attendees with a deeper understanding of the diverse regulations and issues encountered in different regions, with ample opportunities for questions and discussions during breaks and at the end of each session.

Feedback from delegates has been overwhelmingly positive. After a brief hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we eagerly anticipate making these conferences an annual event once more, uniting professionals from the chemical industry to exchange insights and best practices.

**Register your interest for 2024 and find out more about the conference by scanning the QR code or visit the CIRS website - <https://www.cirs-group.com/en>**

