

The role of the European Solvents Industry Group (ESIG), a sector group of Cefic (European Chemical Industry Council), is to support the sustainable and responsible use of oxygenated and hydrocarbon solvents through **dialogue, information sharing and delivering solutions** that address health, safety and environmental performance. ESIG brings together over 20 solvent manufacturers across Europe.

ESIG provides a single point of contact for information about oxygenated and hydrocarbon solvents in Europe. Through its work with industry and industry partners, the group cultivates best practices in solvent's usage, health, safety, and environmental protection. Its focus is to promote the responsible use of solvents and to advocate on issues that may affect solvent producers.

ESIG is a joint activity of OSPA (the Oxygenated Solvents Producers Association) and HSPA (the Hydrocarbon Solvents Producers Association).



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The ESIG Solvents Award was launched in 2019 to highlight the safe and sustainable use of solvents with respect to health and safety, environmental protection or product performance or any combination of these.

The ESIG Solvents Award replaces the ESIG Product Stewardship Award, which was first handed out in 2000 and was attributed eight times.

ESVOC CG - Established in 1992, ESVOC, the European Solvents Downstream User Coordination Group (originally European Solvents Volatile Organic Compounds Coordination Group) is a unique platform that brings together solvents' manufacturers and their downstream users trade associations to facilitate the implementation of relevant existing legislation. It is made up of representatives from almost 30 different associations that meet once a year in the CORE GROUP to review the work programme and to define strategies. In addition, two working groups work on harmonising approaches and collecting data. They also provide advice and exchange best practices in different areas. One of them deals with industrial applications, the other one with professional and consumer applications and addresses topics such as indoor air quality and secondary organic aerosol formation.

ESIG is an active member of the air quality community and is part of the UNECE Taskforce Emission Inventories and Projections (TIEIP) & Technical Economic issues (TTEI) and co-sponsors the annual [Workshop on Atmospheric Chemistry and Air Quality](#).

ESIG is a regular partner of the Healthy Workplace campaigns of the European Agency for Health and Safety at work (EU-OSHA).



FACTS & FIGURES

- Solvents manufacturers across Europe have an estimated combined turnover of about 4 billion euro and annual sold volumes total approximately 5 million tonnes.
- The European solvents industry is committed to meeting the highest safety standards and environmental protection. It spends over € 28 million per year on Research and Development.
- The solvents industry employs directly over 7,000 people throughout Europe.
- Over half a million European companies, ranging from pharmaceutical to agrochemical and paint producers, are solvent users. These companies have a combined turnover of € 200 billion and employ more than 10 million people.
- Downstream users generally tend to be SMEs and micro-SMEs.
- We all rely on solvents every day to perform a wide variety of tasks.

INFORMATION SHARING & COMMUNICATIONS

SOLVENTS @ WORK - As a key part of its continuous effort to encourage responsible and safe handling of solvents, ESIG promotes a solvents@work campaign. It consists of:

- videos and posters in several EU languages that are available to inform and advise on the safe use and handling of solvents
- ESIG Best Practice Guidelines provide technical guidance, which outlines methods that solvent users can use to create safer and more efficient work environments. The topics covered include flammability, solvent vapours and exposure.

COMMUNICATION - ESIG has a pro-active communications programme, which includes a bi-annual newsletter as well as an extensive website tailored to solvent users, regulators and the media.

DELIVERING SOLUTIONS

ESIG has developed several tools and methods for stakeholders in a variety of fields. These include:

- **ESIG volatile organic compounds (VOC) inventories** - ESIG leads research to document the decrease in VOC emissions from solvents based on sales data in EU Member States. The data is compiled into what is known as the ESIG Inventory. The Inventory is recognised as a valuable method by the **European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (EMEP)** and included in the **EMEP air pollutant emission inventory guidebook**. Member States can use those data when compiling their emission reporting.
- A **vapour pressure tool** allows users to calculate whether hydrocarbon solvents emit VOCs, as defined by the EU Solvent Emissions Directive (or VOC Directive). The tool enables users to establish vapour pressures for hydrocarbon solvents of low volatility.
- ESIG provides guidance to solvent manufacturers and importers in Europe on ways to comply with REACH. Our **Generic Exposure Scenarios (GES)** are the solvents industry standard in Europe today to ensure REACH compliance through the supply chain and form the basis for the supporting DU sectors activities on Use Mapping that is recommended by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) – [ENES website](#) and [Use Map Library](#).

- **Reciprocal Calculation Procedure (RCP)** is a method to calculate occupational exposure levels for hydrocarbon solvents. Setting occupational exposure limits for hydrocarbon solvents is challenging since these types of solvents have complex and variable hydrocarbon compositions. This means that the worker will inhale not only one but many types of hydrocarbons from the solvent at the same time. Therefore, an approach that permits the calculation of a unique occupational exposure limit for each hydrocarbon solvent, based on relatively simple compositional information has been developed by the Hydrocarbon Solvent Producers Association (HSPA).
- ESIG organises in cooperation with the Solvents Industry Association (SIA), the UK based solvents industry association, **training courses** for its members as well as non-members. They provide an introduction to the solvents industry and give information on solvents and their applications.
- ESIG also promotes the **European Single Assessment Document (ESAD)**. Accredited, independent auditors use ESAD to assess distributor compliance in-line with the Safety & Quality Assessment for Sustainability (SQAS), a system of uniform third party assessments to evaluate the performance of Logistics, and the Responsible Care Programme.



