

A.I.S.E. EVENT - OUR CLEAN FUTURE: THE INDISPENSABLE ROLE OF EUROPE'S CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

EVENT SUMMARY

On 4 December 2024, A.I.S.E., representing the cleaning, disinfecting and maintenance products industry, hosted an impactful lunchtime discussion in the European Parliament highlighting the importance of not taking cleanliness and hygiene for granted. Co-organised with *The Parliament Magazine* and hosted by MEP Maria Grapini (S&D, Romania), Vice-Chair of the IMCO Committee, the event brought together MEPs, European Commission representatives, national attachés from Member States and industry experts.

Panel highlights

We were delighted to have in our panel hygiene and regulatory experts who provided fascinating insights into how fundamental hygiene practices such as cleaning our hands and surfaces can significantly reduce the spread of infectious diseases, both in critical healthcare environments as well as at home.

- Dr. **Andreea Capilna**, infection prevention and control expert, former technical officer at Integrated Health Services in WHO and part of the Clean Hospitals platform, who emphasised the impact of inadequate hygiene in healthcare settings, stating, *“Proper hospital hygiene protocols can prevent up to 70% of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs), which lead to over 3.5 million cases and 90,000 deaths in Europe annually. Enhanced hygiene standards are crucial.”*
- Professor **Dirk Bockmühl**, a renowned expert in hygiene and microbiology, shared his insights on the science of cleanliness, saying, *“Hygiene is the science of the art of staying healthy. Good household hygiene can be easily achieved with targeted actions.”* He highlighted the importance of hygiene at home to break the chain of infection and prevent the spread of diseases.
- **Hans Ingels**, Head of Unit for bioeconomy, chemicals, and cosmetics in DG GROW, the European Commission, addressed the current revision of the Detergents Regulation, noting, *“The update will integrate the latest technical and scientific advancements, modernise the Single Market for detergents, and streamline overlapping legislation.”*

The discussions provided clarity on targeted hygiene and addressed common misconceptions about what cleaning, hygiene and disinfection truly involve. *“A.I.S.E. represents an industry that brings essential products for cleanliness and hygiene to market for domestic and professional use,”* Florian Vernay, A.I.S.E. President pointed out as he opened the afternoon.

A.I.S.E. key messages

A.I.S.E. Director General Alexis Van Maercke concluded the event with a powerful message on the importance of dialogue and collaboration. He stated, “*We don’t want to imagine a world where cleaning products fail to perform as expected,*” before leaving guests with several key points:

- **Hygiene standards save lives:** good hygiene practices prevent foodborne illnesses, healthcare infections, and ensure public safety.
- **Balancing regulation and innovation:** the Detergents Regulation must foster innovation without compromising product performance or sustainability.
- **Maintaining product efficacy:** high-performing cleaning products are crucial for public health and everyday hygiene.
- **Ethanol’s critical role:** ethanol is critical to fight healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) and it is a key ingredient for the efficacy of hand sanitisers, but not only there: it is used also in surface disinfectants, in food production and hygiene processes in hospitals.
- **Commitment to sustainability:** continued collaboration between industry and policy makers is necessary for safe, sustainable hygiene solutions.

And a final call to action: “*The responsibility to shape Europe’s future lies with all of us, and it is only through our collective efforts that we will succeed. Let’s keep talking about hygiene.*”

Read more on cleanliness & hygiene:

- [A.I.S.E. hygiene factsheet](#)
- [Joint IKW & A.I.S.E. brochure: Hygiene in the household – Healthy cleanliness made to measure](#)
- [Joint IHO & A.I.S.E. publication: Disinfection done correctly – Basic knowledge edition](#)
- [A.I.S.E. priorities: Cleanliness & hygiene](#)
- [Focus on Targeted Hygiene at Home](#)

About A.I.S.E.

A.I.S.E. represents an industry that brings essential products for cleanliness and hygiene to market for domestic and professional use. A.I.S.E. represents the detergents, disinfectants & maintenance products industry in Europe. Based in Brussels, A.I.S.E. has been the voice of the industry to EU regulators since 1952. Membership consists of 29 national associations across Europe, 19 corporate members and 23 value chain partners. Through this extensive network, A.I.S.E. represents over 900 companies supplying household and professional cleaning products and services across Europe.

