

# Revisiting the racemization mechanism of helicenes

Barroso J.

Cabellos J.L.

Pan S.

Murillo F.

Zarate X.

Fernandez-Herrera M.A.

Merino G.

Herein we propose a general mechanism for the racemization of  $[n]$ helicenes up to  $n = 24$ . It is a concerted process for  $n = 4-7$ , but a multi-step mechanism is followed for  $n \geq 8$ , involving  $2n - 14$  intermediates. The changes in the barriers are a delicate consequence of the steric hindrance and the  $\pi$ -interactions. © The Royal Society of Chemistry 2018.