

# REACH

## What is REACH?

"REACH" stands for the  
"Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals"

The **former EU chemicals registration legislation** is a patchwork of guidelines and regulations. Certain rules exist for so-called "existing" (on the market before September 1981) and "new" chemicals. While new chemicals must undergo intensive testing before market authorisation is granted, until now there have been no such provisions for existing chemicals. In order to end these different approaches vis-à-vis existing and new chemicals, new draft legislation with respect to chemicals authorisation was introduced at the pan-European level in October 2003. **REACH** was born and is now, after several adjustments and revisions **entered into force on 1st June 2007**.

The aim of this new legislation is to **guarantee a high level of protection with respect to human health and the environment** and **ensure the free circulation of chemicals in the EU**, while at the same time enhancing competitiveness and innovation. **REACH** is based on the principle that the producer, importer, as well as the downstream user must ensure that the chemicals they produce, introduce to the market and use are not harmful to human health or the environment. These regulations are at the base of the precautionary principle. All those who manufacture or import chemicals in volumes of 1 tonne or more per year must have their chemicals registered.

**In the absence of registration, further use or marketing is not possible.**  
Only substances of very high concern (svhc), on the other hand, will be subject to **authorisation**.

## Who is affected by REACH?

**REACH concerns the manufacturer, importer and the chemicals user**

The responsibility for registration generally is assigned to the person(s) introducing the chemicals to the marketplace, i.e. the manufacturer or importer. Businesses selling the chemicals on the European marketplace are referred to as "downstream users". In order to manage the registrations, a tiered concept with different deadlines is planned. Exceptions regarding registration exist for certain substances.

## Manufacturers and importers

are required to register all chemicals either produced or imported in excess of 1 tonne per year. Without registration, further use or marketing of the substance(s) is forbidden. In the context of registration, a technical dossier and, for substances in volumes over 10 tonnes per annum, a Chemical Safety Report must be submitted, taking into account "identified uses" known to the manufacturer.

## Downstream users

may also be responsible for registration, should they, in addition to the purchased substances, also synthesise or import their own chemicals. Further, the user must confirm whether or not his use of a chemical is already accounted for in the Chemical Safety Report (CSR). Should the latter not be the case, the user may either contact the manufacturer and request that his use of the chemical be included in the CSR or prepare a CSR himself.

## Registration under REACH

### Registration of substances – no data, no market REACH may be reduced to this simple phrase

In the case of the substance itself or in preparations, a registration dossier must be submitted when the manufacturer or importer produces or imports either the substance as such or the latter in one or more preparations in a minimum volume of 1 tonne per year.

Regarding substances in articles, any producer or importer of articles shall submit a registration to the Agency for any substance contained in those articles, if both the following conditions are met:

- the substance is present in those articles in quantities totalling over 1 tonne per producer or importer per year;
- the substance is intended to be released under normal or reasonably foreseeable conditions of use.

### A registration dossier entails:

- a technical dossier
- as well as a Chemical Safety Report, for volumes exceeding

## Authorisation under REACH

Substances of very high concern (SVHC) must be authorised under REACH and their use may be subject to restrictions. This applies to:

### CMR substances

Substances which are considered carcinogenic  
Substances which are considered mutagenic  
Substances which are considered reprotoxic

### PBT substances

Substances which are persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic according to Annex XIII

### vPvB substances

Substances which are very persistent and very bioaccumulative according to Annex XIII

### Substances with particular properties, e.g. endocrine,

which according to scientific knowledge have a likely latent effect upon humans and the environment, giving rise to the same concerns as the above-mentioned substance groups.

## Links

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)  
[http://ec.europa.eu/echa/home\\_de.html](http://ec.europa.eu/echa/home_de.html)

Umweltbundesamt (Federal Environmental Agency):  
<http://www.reach-info.de>

European Chemicals Bureau:  
<http://ecb.jrc.it/reach/>

European Commission, Environment Directorate-General (DG):  
<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/chemicals/reach.htm>

European Commission, Enterprise and Industry:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/index_en.htm)

Portal to EU environmental policy:  
<http://www.euractiv.com/en/environment/>