

PRESS RELEASE

REACH: Simple exposure categories a must for SMEs, Chambers say

At the public European Parliament hearing on REACH tomorrow, Chambers will point out the need to introduce simple exposure categories in the new chemicals policy. Particularly, EUROCHAMBRES calls on the Members of the European Parliament to take into consideration the situation of SMEs which represent the majority of downstream users and would suffer significantly under the current proposal.

SME downstream users will also be heavily affected by REACH in terms of increased administrative work, costs, staffing and will face major difficulties:

- SME downstream users must submit information of all uses of a substance by disclosing confidential information on how they use each chemical substance. If a company does not want to reveal this business know how, it has to produce its own Chemical Safety Report – which means a heavy burden for an SME either way.
- Additionally, the REACH proposal will force producers to withdraw some substances (especially produced in low volumes) from the market because of costs. A large company will be able to diversify – but for an SME this could mean a vital chemical substance is not supplied anymore. Consequently, the downstream user SME will be out of the market or will have to undertake significant testing on how to introduce a new chemical into its product.

Request for simple registration procedures and exposure categories

Chambers urge the European Parliament to implement a model of exposure categories in order to simplify the process and to protect operational know-how. Exposure categories, e.g. based on the kind of exposure (oral, dermal, inhalative etc.) would minimise administrative burden. Mountains of data on their own do not create safety nor do they protect human health and environment. EUROCHAMBRES asks for a risk-oriented approach that focuses on substances of highest concern.

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