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- Sort: Sort by date
- Keyword: "carcinogenic substance"

17 result(s)

Creation date: 16-09-2019
Limits on exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work: Second proposal

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 15-03-2019
Author: Nicole SCHOLZ
Policy area: Employment | Public Health | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council
Keyword: mineral oil | safety standard | occupational disease | carcinogenic substance | drafting of EU law | toxic substance | disease prevention | occupational health
Summary: The European Commission has proposed to amend Directive 2004/37/EC, by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational exposure limit values for a number of cancer- or mutation-causing chemical agents. The initiative is proceeding in steps. The first proposal, submitted in May 2016, covered 13 priority chemical agents. The current (second) proposal addresses a further seven agents. Broad discussions with scientists and the social partners fed into both proposals. On the whole, trade unions and employers welcomed the current proposal. Trilogue agreement was reached on 11 October 2018. As proposed by the European Parliament, diesel engine exhaust emissions were not included in the scope of the directive. After completion of the legislative procedure, the final act was signed by the presidents of the co-legislators on 16 January 2019. Directive (EU) 2019/130 entered into force on 20 February 2019 and is to be transposed into national laws within two years, by 20 February 2021 at the latest. Third edition. The 'EU Legislation in Progress' briefings are updated at key stages throughout the legislative procedure.

Limits on exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work: Third proposal

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 18-02-2019
Author: Nicole SCHOLZ
Policy area: Employment | Public Health | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council
Keyword: safety standard | carcinogenic substance | industrial hazard | dangerous substance | working conditions | occupational health | ordinary legislative procedure | impact study | adoption of a law by vote | occupational disease | legislative drafting | toxic substance | health risk | hazardous waste | proposal (EU)
Summary: The European Commission has proposed to amend Directive 2004/37/EC by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational exposure limit values for a number of cancer- or mutation-causing substances. The initiative is proceeding in steps. The first proposal of May 2016 covered 13 priority chemical agents, the second, of January 2017, a further seven. The current (third) proposal addresses an additional five. Broad discussions with scientists and the social partners fed into all three proposals. Reacting to the Commission’s set of measures as a whole, trade unions have acknowledged the importance of further improving the existing framework. Actors on the employers’ side have underlined the need to ensure that values are proportionate and feasible in terms of technical implementation. Parliament’s Employment and Social Affairs Committee voted its report on 20 November 2018. It includes the call to bring cytotoxic medicines, which are used in the treatment of cancer, within the scope of the directive, as well as to grant incentives to businesses that comply. Council agreed on its position on 6 December 2018. Trilogue negotiations gave rise to a provisional agreement in January 2019. Once endorsed by the Council, it will be voted in Parliament’s plenary. Second edition. The ‘EU Legislation in Progress’ briefings are updated at key stages throughout the legislative procedure.

Protection of workers from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens: Third proposal

Publication type: Study
Date: 17-12-2018
Author: STEFANO VETTORAZZI
Policy area: Employment
Keyword: safety standard | carcinogenic substance | industrial hazard | dangerous substance | working conditions | occupational health | impact study | beryllium | occupational disease | legislative drafting | toxic substance | health risk | hazardous waste | cadmium | proposal (EU)
Summary: This detailed appraisal focuses on the process and evidence base used in the IA for setting the limit values for cadmium and beryllium, notably in light of some knowledge gaps and methodological challenges identified in the IA in relation to the number of workers exposed and the estimation of the burden of disease. The appraisal concludes that the IA has relied on a vast and updated amount of information, including scientific journals, guidelines, manuals, surveys, published by authoritative research centres, publishers and international organisations, making the overall analysis sufficiently convincing and robust. As regards the limitations of the analysis, which are transparently acknowledged, the analysis carried out by the external contractors and endorsed in the IA recognises that the full current and future disease burden deriving from historic exposures to cadmium and beryllium is not captured; consequently, the disease burdens may be underestimated. As regards the estimated number of workers exposed to cadmium, the value of 10 000 workers considered by the external contractors for their modelling (in addition to a higher value of 30 000), and taken over in the IA, is coherently justified in light of the recognised wide divergences among the different estimates. This value appears to be reasonable, based on the availability of data at national and EU level, and the way some of them were gathered. As regards the estimated number of workers exposed to beryllium, the figure of 54 071 workers exposed in the EU 28 (excluding the construction sector) identified by the external contractor and used in the IA appears to be plausible, based on the justifications provided. However, it is acknowledged that higher exposure levels would imply higher costs and benefits at all target OEL values.

Study EN
Protection of workers from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens: third proposal

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 27-06-2018  
Author: STEFANO VETTORAZZI

Policy area: Employment  
Keyword: impact study | safety standard | occupational disease | carcinogenic substance | cancer | health risk | occupational health | proposal (EU) | chemical compound

Summary: The impact assessment (IA) accompanying the proposal for a third revision of the carcinogens and mutagens Directive 2004/37/EC clearly defines the problem to be addressed. However, it would have benefited from providing more comprehensive explanations of its evolution without EU action. The objectives appear to be relevant, sufficiently measurable, achievable, though not time-bound. The IA considers a wide range of options, and those retained for further assessment appear to be reasonable, and consistent with the approach followed in two previous amendments of the directive. The analysis of impacts focuses on the economic and social dimension, mainly health, consistently with the manner in which the problem has been defined. Environmental impacts are assessed to be broadly negligible: considering that the IA is dealing with carcinogenic chemical substances, this would have perhaps required further justification. The IA acknowledges a general issue regarding, inter alia, the availability of data on the number of workers exposed, and the scarce and not always sufficiently robust epidemiological evidence. The methodological annex does not provide information regarding how the multi criteria analysis has been performed. Finally, the IA appears to have addressed most of the RSB’s recommendations and the legislative proposal appears to be consistent with the analysis carried out in the IA.

Health and safety at work

Publication type: EU Fact Sheets  
Date: 01-05-2018  
Author: STEFAN SCHULZ

Policy area: Employment | Public Health  
Keyword: safety standard | occupational disease | European Agency for Safety and Health at Work | EU action | carcinogenic substance | powers of the EP | occupational accident | environmental risk prevention | working environment | occupational health

Summary: Improving health and safety at work has been an important issue for the EU since the 1980s. The introduction of legislation at European level set minimum standards for the protection of workers, while allowing Member States to maintain or introduce more stringent measures. When the Lisbon Treaty entered into force, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union became legally binding, making health and safety policy an even more important area of EU legislation.

Authorisation of pesticides in the EU: With a focus on glyphosate

Publication type: Briefing  
Date: 01-02-2018  
Author: Didier BOURGUIGNON

Policy area: Environment | Public Health  
Keyword: plant health control | carcinogenic substance | European Food Safety Authority | European Chemicals Agency | mutual recognition principle | dangerous substance | pesticide | market approval | health risk | agri-foodstuffs | EU statistics | scientific report

Summary: In the European Union, plant protection products, often referred to as ‘pesticides’, are subject to a dual approval process: active substances are approved at European Union (EU) level, provided they meet a number of criteria. Commercial plant protection products containing one or more active substances are subsequently authorised at Member State level if they satisfy certain conditions. A controversy has emerged since 2015 over the renewal of the approval of glyphosate. One of the active substances most commonly found in broad-spectrum herbicides in the world, glyphosate is mainly used in agriculture. The controversy started as a result of diverging assessments of its carcinogenicity: the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a branch of the World Health Organization, classified glyphosate as probably carcinogenic to humans, while the European Food Safety Authority found it unlikely to pose a carcinogenic hazard to humans. The European Chemicals Agency later concluded that glyphosate did not classify as a carcinogen. Several national authorities outside the EU also came to the same conclusion. The European Commission eventually renewed the approval of glyphosate for five years in December 2017. The views of stakeholders and Member States on the topic have been strongly divided. The European Parliament has called for phasing out all uses of glyphosate by the end of 2022. Parliament is expected to vote, in February 2018, on the creation of a special committee on the Union’s authorisation procedure for pesticides.


**Limits on exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work**

Publication type Briefing  
Date 22-01-2018  
Author Nicole SCHOLZ  
Policy area Employment | Public Health | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council  
Keyword safety standard | carcinogenic substance | industrial hazard | dangerous substance | working conditions | occupational health | ordinary legislative procedure | impact study | adoption of a law by vote | occupational disease | legislative drafting | toxic substance | health risk | hazardous waste | proposal (EU)  
Summary The European Commission proposes to amend Directive 2004/37/EC by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational exposure limit values for a number of cancer-causing chemical agents. According to the Commission, this would improve workers' health protection, increase the effectiveness of the EU framework and promote clarity for economic operators. Overall, the proposal received a broad welcome from stakeholders. After completion of the legislative procedure at first reading in the European Parliament and the Council, the presidents of the co-legislators signed the final act on 12 December 2017. The directive applies as from 16 January 2018.

**Protection of workers from carcinogens or mutagens at work: Exposure limit values**

Publication type At a Glance  
Date 23-10-2017  
Author Nicole SCHOLZ  
Policy area Public Health  
Keyword safety standard | occupational disease | semi-metal | carcinogenic substance | drafting of EU law | occupational medicine | toxic substance | disease prevention | health risk | dust | occupational health | technical ceramics  
Summary The European Commission proposes to amend Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work (the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive, CMD) by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational exposure limit values for 13 cancer- and mutation-causing chemicals. Parliament is due to vote on the proposal during the October II plenary.

**Protection of workers from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens: second proposal (CMD 2)**

Publication type Briefing  
Date 13-07-2017  
Author STEFANO VETTORAZZI  
Policy area Employment  
Keyword impact study | safety standard | occupational disease | carcinogenic substance | cancer | used oil | health risk | occupational health | proposal (EU)  
Summary The IA defines the problem clearly, and its evolution without EU action is comprehensively outlined. The objectives appear to be relevant, sufficiently measurable, achievable, and consistent with the manner in which the problem has been defined, as well as with other EU policies; however, they are not time-bound. The methodology used to compare the scope of impacts is well-developed, even though it is not always clear how the reported figures were obtained. However, the proposed range of options limits the scope of the analysis, and some of those retained for consideration are not entirely convincing. Environmental impacts are claimed not to be significant, without any explanation being provided. There is also a general issue regarding the availability of timely and reliable data, as well as the scarcity of available epidemiologic evidence. The Commission has consulted a broad range of stakeholders, and the replies received were highly representative of all national-level social partner organisations of employers and trade unions. Finally, the IA seems to have addressed the RSB's recommendations.

**Limits on exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work**

Publication type Briefing  
Date 02-02-2017  
Author Nicole SCHOLZ  
Policy area Employment | Public Health | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council  
Keyword impact study | safety standard | carcinogenic substance | chemical product | health risk | occupational health | economic sector | World Health Organisation  
Summary The European Commission proposes to amend Directive 2004/37/EC by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational exposure limit values for a number of cancer-causing chemical agents. According to the Commission, this would improve workers' health protection, increase the effectiveness of the EU framework and promote clarity for economic operators. Overall, the proposal has received a broad welcome from stakeholders. The Council reached a general approach on 13 October 2016. The European Parliament's EMPL Committee rapporteur has presented her draft report, which was considered in December. A total of 196 amendments have been tabled on the Commission proposal. The Committee vote is scheduled for 27-28 February 2017.
Protection of workers from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens

Publication type: Briefing
Date: 18-07-2016

Author: Alina Alexandra GEORGESCU
Policy area: Ex-ante Impact Assessment | Employment | Public Health
Keyword: impact study | carcinogenic substance | industrial hazard | dangerous substance | toxic substance | working conditions | hazardous waste | occupational health

Summary: Overall, the Commission appears to have provided sound reasoning and justification for the initiative. The methodology used to compare the scope of impacts is well-developed, but the proposed range of options limits the scope of the analysis. As Option 3 is barely considered, and Option 4 does not seem to be consistent with the objectives, the added value of these options is not evident. Moreover, both the IA and the Explanatory Memorandum of the proposal are not explicit about the preferred option. More information on the consultation with SCOEL and ACSH would have been welcomed in order to understand the way in which the OELs were set. Finally, it is not entirely clear why the Commission has come forward with this proposal before the ex-post evaluation of the OSH Framework undertaken within the remit of REFIT has been completed. Indeed, including the results of the ex-post evaluation in the IA might have strengthened the Commission's evidence base as well as further clarified the monitoring and evaluation arrangements and the interaction between the various pieces of legislation under the OSH Framework.

Briefing: DE, EN, FR

EU's Pesticide Risk Assessment System: The Case of Glyphosate

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-09-2016

External author: Yoline KUIPERS CAVACO, Matteo MASCOLO, Alicia McNEILL and Rachel DEMPSEY
Policy area: European Added Value | Agriculture and Rural Development | Public Health
Keyword: carcinogenic substance | European Food Safety Authority | European Chemicals Agency | precautionary principle | cancer | pesticide | herbicide | toxic substance | health risk

Summary: This report summarises the presentations and discussions of the workshop on the "EU's pesticide risk assessment system: the case of glyphosate", held at the European Parliament in Brussels on Tuesday, 24 May 2016. The aim of the workshop was to provide background information and advice for the Members of the ENVI Committee on the effects of glyphosate on human health. During the first part of the workshop, the EU policy context and the state of play of the issue were presented. An update on the environmental effects of glyphosate on biodiversity was also given. Moreover, the status of the precautionary principle, a legal principle which underpins the use of this substance, was discussed. The second part of the workshop focused on the challenges and options based on the available research and evidence. The different findings of the IARC and EFSA were presented. In particular, the different methods of the evaluation, as well as the difference between hazard assessment and risk assessment, were covered during this session. Furthermore, the ongoing ECHA’s evaluation of glyphosate, which is being carried out under the CLP Regulation, was illustrated. Finally, the perspectives from civil society and doctors were also taken into account. While the divergences during the sessions showed how polarised the issue is, it was outlined that a decision on the glyphosate matter would be crucial in order to bring to an end a situation of uncertainty. This workshop and the respective document were prepared by the Policy Department A at the request of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Study: EN

Lindane (Persistent Organic Pollutant) in the EU, Best Practices of De-Contamination Exchanged

Publication type: Study
Date: 15-11-2016

External author: Milagros Vega, Dolores Romano and Elina Uotila
Policy area: Petitions to the European Parliament
Keyword: carcinogenic substance | petition | EU Member State | environmental liability | plant health product | chemical industry | health risk | waste management | organic pollution

Summary: This study was commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Committee on Petitions (PETI). Lindane and technical-HCH were extensively produced in the EU until the 1990s and used as a broad spectrum insecticide until 2008. The use and production of lindane is now banned in most countries around the world. However, it unfortunately continues to make itself known. Its persistence, bioaccumulative and toxic properties, spillages from former production sites and the illegal dumping of HCH-waste, have given rise to serious concerns as understanding grows about the ability of HCH-polluted-spots to widely disperse HCH pollution into surface and groundwater.

This report presents an updated mapping of the lindane production plants and HCH-waste dumping sites in the EU. Potential remediation techniques, including laboratory and field experiences, are also provided with a selection of best practices regarding the restoration of contaminated sites and the participation of stakeholders. The information on lindane from official websites is also analysed.

Study: ES, EN
Limits on exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work

Publication type Briefing
Date 23-06-2016
Author Nicole SCHOLZ

Policy area Employment | Public Health | Adoption of Legislation by EP and Council
Keyword impact study | safety standard | labour law | occupational disease | carcinogenic substance | drafting of EU law | chemical product | occupational health

Summary The European Commission proposes to amend Directive 2004/37/EC by expanding its scope and by including and/or revising occupational limit exposure values for a number of cancer-causing chemical agents in the light of new scientific data. According to the Commission, this would improve workers’ health protection, increase the effectiveness of the EU framework and promote clarity for economic operators. The initiative would proceed in two steps, with the current proposal and another to follow later in the year. Broad discussions with scientists and the social partners fed into the proposal, and it has received a broad welcome from stakeholders. Trade unions nonetheless regret that certain substances are not included, and some on the employers’ side oppose the limit value for respirable crystalline silica. The legislative process is in its initial stages, with the EMPL Committee to consider the proposal in the coming months.

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Exposure to carcinogens and mutagens at work

Publication type Briefing
Date 03-06-2016
Author Milan REMAC

Policy area Employment
Keyword labour law | occupational mortality | occupational disease | carcinogenic substance | application of EU law | toxic substance | disease prevention | occupational health | proposal (EU)

Summary Despite wide-ranging European legislation, not all substances that can increase the risk of occupational cancers are necessarily covered by existing pieces of legislation. Various studies point to a continuous increase in cancers attributable to working conditions and to a need to improve the protection of workers. Although Directive 2007/34 is the main legislative act setting the standards for the protection of workers against work-related cancers, several studies and stakeholders have called for the scope of the directive to be broadened by adding chemical substances that were not originally covered by the directive, thus decreasing workers’ exposure to them. Similarly, Parliament has on numerous occasions asked the Commission to amend the existing legislation on the prevention of work-related cancer and to increase workers’ protection against occupational diseases, including cancer. Although the May 2016 Commission proposal intends to increase the protection of workers by broadening the scope of Directive 2007/34 by setting exposure limit values for 13 additional chemical substances, there are still various substances that are not included on the list and that can potentially have an adverse impact on the health of workers. The European Commission has promised to conduct a further impact assessment for the additional 12 chemical substances by the end of 2016. These subsequent actions may lead to future legislative proposals updating the existing legislation.

Renewing authorisation for glyphosate

Publication type At a Glance
Date 07-04-2016
Author Didier BOURGUIGNON

Policy area Environment | Public Health
Keyword food safety | carcinogenic substance | precautionary principle | plant health legislation | herbicide | market approval | health risk

Summary A scientific controversy has recently erupted over diverging assessments of the carcinogenicity of glyphosate, one of the world’s most widely used active substances in herbicides. Against this backdrop, the European Commission has proposed to renew the authorisation of glyphosate for 15 years. A motion for a resolution adopted by the ENVI Committee calling on the Commission to reconsider its proposal is expected to be tabled for plenary vote in April.

Can processed and red meat cause cancer? The World Health Organization’s classification raises concerns

Publication type At a Glance
Date 30-10-2015
Author Nicole SCHOLZ

Policy area Public Health
Keyword medical research | carcinogenic substance | cancer | food hygiene | research results | disease prevention | meat product | World Health Organisation | eating habits | scientific report

Summary On 26 October 2015, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), which is part of the World Health Organization (WHO), announced that it has classified processed meat as ‘carcinogenic to humans’, and red meat as ‘probably carcinogenic to humans’. Stakeholder responses have varied from putting things into perspective, to criticising the decision, to cautioning against alarmist reactions.