

**Question for written answer E-008608/2011  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Stephen Hughes (S&D)**

Subject: Restrictions on the manufacture, placing on the market and use of asbestos fibres

According to entry 6 in Annex XVII of REACH (Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006), the manufacture, placing on the market and use of asbestos fibres, and of articles containing these fibres added intentionally, is prohibited.

However, Member States may exempt the placing on the market and use of diaphragms containing chrysotile (point (f)) for existing electrolysis installations until they reach the end of their service life, or until suitable asbestos-free substitutes become available, whichever is the sooner.

By 1 June 2011, Member States making use of this exemption had to provide a report to the Commission on, inter alia, the source and quantities of diaphragms containing chrysotile, and the envisaged date of the end of the exemption.

From the report provided by Germany, it appears that chrysotile fibres are still imported into the country to renew the fibres in diaphragms used in existing electrolysis installations.

Could the Commission confirm that the import of chrysotile fibres into Germany for that use is in total breach of the provisions of entry 6 of annex XVII which only allow the placing on the market and use of articles containing these fibres (e.g. diaphragms containing chrysotile)?

Could the Commission also inform the Parliament about the situation in the other EU countries, and in particular in Sweden? When will the Member States' reports be publicly available?

Has the Commission already asked ECHA to prepare a dossier in accordance with Article 69 with a view to prohibiting the placing on the market and use of diaphragms containing chrysotile? If not, when does the Commission plan to request the dossier and when will it be available to the Parliament?