

What is this about?

The rules for manufacturing, importing and using chemicals in the European Union are designed to meet the business and societal needs for safer chemicals.

REACH aims to manage the risks of chemicals, and also to promote competitiveness and innovation through registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction processes.

CLP facilitates global trade and improves worker and consumer safety by implementing the United Nations' globally harmonised system for the classification and labelling and packaging of chemicals in the EU.

These regulations put a common system in place to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment in the EU.

What do I have to do?

This depends on your role in the supply chain, how hazardous the substances you use are and how you use them.

ECHA's Navigator tool can help you identify what applies in your case.

<https://echa.europa.eu/identify-your-obligations>

Know your chemicals



Supplying chemicals? - You need to collect information to classify, label and register the substances you manufacture or import and to advise your customers how to use them safely.

<https://echa.europa.eu/regulations/reach/registration>
<https://echa.europa.eu/regulations/clp/understanding-clp>

Using chemicals? - You have to implement the risk management advice provided by your suppliers or inform them if it is not appropriate.

<http://echa.europa.eu/downstream>

Pay attention to "substances of very high concern"



The most hazardous chemicals are placed on the list of "substances of very high concern". These chemicals can cause cancer, disrupt hormonal systems, accumulate in nature and living organisms and cause irreversible effects for human health and the environment.

The list is updated twice a year. Look at:
<https://echa.europa.eu/candidate-list-table>

If your substance is included in this list, it can be selected for authorisation, which means that you will have to apply for permission to continue using it.

What are the costs?

REACH requires the payment of fees and charges to ECHA. The smaller your company, the lower the fees and charges. Look at:

<https://echa.europa.eu/sme>

Other costs may exceed the fees. These will depend on your specific obligations, the need to generate or buy data, your choice of using consultants or the need/decision to find safer chemicals in place of hazardous ones.

What about information and help?

Use ECHA's website as a source of news, guidance, answers to questions and support.

<https://echa.europa.eu/subscribe>

Legal terminology and key information for companies is provided in 23 official EU languages.

<https://echa-term.echa.europa.eu/>

You can also search ECHA's website for information on the properties, classification and safe use of chemicals on the EU market.

Contact:

- Your suppliers and customers regarding specific substances or products;
- Your industry organisation for sector specific advice and information;
- Your national REACH and CLP helpdesk for questions on compliance;
- ECHA's Helpdesk for support with the tools you have to use.

<https://echa.europa.eu/support>

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What does this mean?

Free movement of chemicals

The same rules apply to all companies in the EU.

No data, no market

Manufacturing, importing, marketing and using non-registered substances is illegal. This applies to substances on their own or in mixtures.

Communication in the supply chain

Every actor in the supply chain has a role to ensure communication of the hazardous properties and the safe use of chemicals: manufacturers, importers, formulators, distributors and retailers.
<https://echa.europa.eu/communication-in-the-supply-chain>

Consumers have the right to ask and receive information if their products contain substances of very high concern for their health and the environment.

Gain business advantage

REACH and CLP are designed to promote substitution of the most hazardous chemicals. You can turn legal obligations into business opportunities by moving away from these substances at an early stage.

Based on the information you have on the substances you manufacture, import or use, can you find a safer alternative ahead of your competitors and gain a business advantage?

Respond to ECHA's public consultations if you have developed or use alternatives to substances of very high concern.

<https://echa.europa.eu/public-consultations>

Does it apply to my business?

Does your company:



Formulate chemical mixtures?
e.g. dyes, motor oils, soaps and detergents



Manufacture or import chemical substances or mixtures?
e.g. acetone, phenol, paints, lubricants



Manufacture or import consumer articles?
e.g. furniture, clothing, electrical appliances



Use chemicals?
e.g. for coating or cleaning

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes", this leaflet is for you.

It is about your rights and responsibilities under REACH and CLP, which apply to all industrial sectors and to all companies dealing with chemicals in the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Complying with the legal requirements will help you to manage chemical risks in your business and to play your part in the protection of human health and the environment.

You will be able to respond to the expectations of your customers for safer chemicals and products, which can also enhance your brand.

Start at: <https://echa.europa.eu/sme>

Chemical safety and your business

