ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Protecting workers from chemical hazards in Europe now and in the future

IOHA, Dublin

10 June 2024

Sharon McGuinness
Executive Director
European Chemicals Agency

ECHA's mandate

Implement EU chemicals laws and policy through technical, scientific, and administrative tasks

Provide independent, high-quality **scientific opinions** and **decisions** to serve as basis for EU measures

Collaborate with EU institutions, EU countries' authorities, and other bodies

Support companies, particularly smaller ones, in fulfilling their duties

Ensure stakeholders get relevant, reliable and objective **information**

Protecting Workers from Chemical Hazards in the EU - now

ECHA's role in chemical safety

→ **REACH** (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) Regulation

→ **CLP** (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) Regulation

→ **OELs** (Occupational Exposure Limits)

→ **Roadmap on Carcinogens**

REACH: processes
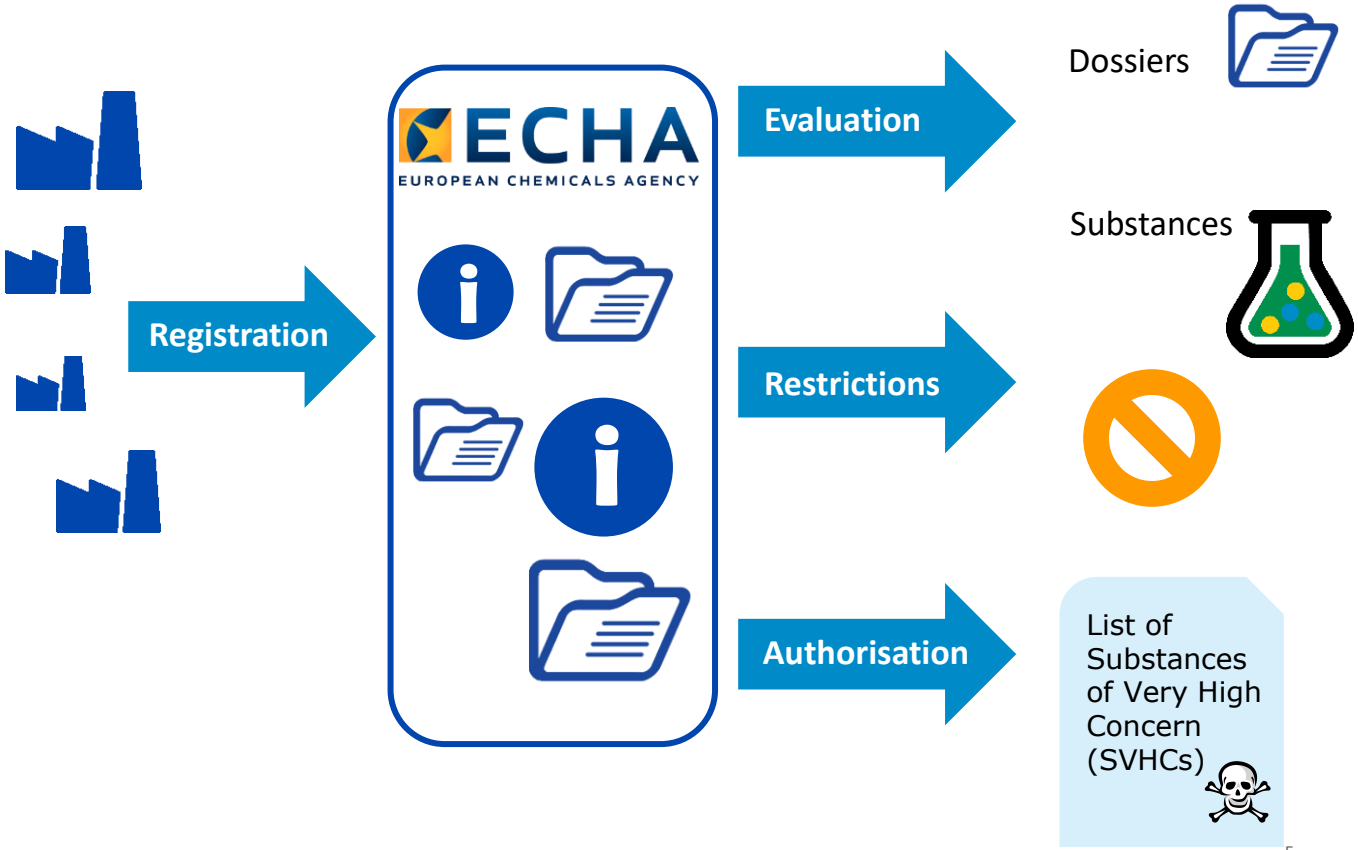
REACH Registration & information in the supply chain

→ Companies complete **chemical safety assessment (CSA),** then documented in the **chemical safety report (CSR)**

→ Outcome of the chemical safety assesment needs to be communicated in the supply chain through **safety data sheet (SDS)**

→ All hazardous substances above 10 tonnes per annum require a **chemical safety report**, hence a derived no-effect level, DNEL, for workers is available

→ Information to be integrated in the **safety data sheet** in the supply chain covering both substances and mixtures

→ ECHA has over 24 600 registered substances

Control of information in the supply chain

→ Forum REF-5 project on flow of information in the supply chain

- 29 countries; 900 companies controlled

- 18% companies non-compliant

- Flow of safe use information in the supply chain works – CSR and extended SDS are consistent

- However: Low quality of information observed in CSR → transferred down the supply chain

- Timeline: 2016-2018

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY
Forum For Exchange Of
Information On Enforcement

Forum

REF-5 PROJECT REPORT

Extended safety data sheets, exposure scenarios, risk management measures and operational conditions

Adopted on 23.11.2018

Coordinated controls of safety data sheets

2004: CLEEN

ECLIPS project on C&L and SDS

→ 12 countries

→ ~69% SDS deficient

2013: ECHA Forum

REF-2 project on SDS and DU duties

→ 29 countries

→ ~52% of SDS deficient

2019: ECHA Forum

Joint action on quality of SDS

→ 12 countries

→ ~50% of SDS deficient

2024: ECHA Forum

REF-11 project on quality of SDS

→ 30 countries

→ Results in preparation!

REACH - Authorisation

→ 240 entries on the Candidate List of substances of very high concern for authorisation

- 75% are listed for human health related concerns (Carcinogenic, Mutagenic, Reprotoxic)

→ Authorisation List has 59 entries

- 85% are listed for human health related concerns (CMR)

→ Companies stop using SVHCs – move to alternatives

→ Authorisations also result in chemical safety report updates and ultimately better information in the safety data sheet for protecting workers

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Authorisation example

→ **Hexavalent chromium** is used for surface treatment in hundreds of workplaces across the EU

→ Included in the Authorisation List 2013, together with stricter national occupational exposure limit values in various Member States

→ This led companies to invest in additional risk management measures or alternative plating techniques, leading to a steady decrease in exposure levels at workplaces

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Control of Authorisation

→ Forum REF-9 project on authorisation

- 28 countries; ~500 substances controlled (31 unique SVHCs)

- 7% substances marketed without authorisation

- 26% of substances used in breach of conditions of authorisation

- 26% of substances - downstream users failed to identify and apply risk management measures

- Risks are not managed adequately in the use of quarter of controlled SVHCs

- Timeline: 2019-2022

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Forum
REF-9 project report on enforcement of compliance with REACH authorisation obligations

Adopted at 13 February 2023

Restrictions

→ EU-wide restrictions provide greater protection for workers, consumers and the environment

→ 78 entries on the restrictions list

→ Individual substances as well as groups

Diisocyanates – a group of 14 substances

- restriction avoids 3 000 new occupational asthma cases per year from 1.44 million exposed workers

NMP (1-methyl-2-pyrrolidone)

- restriction avoids adverse effects on the children of up to 9 million exposed workers

Bisphenol A in thermal paper

- restriction avoids adverse effects on 80 000 children of exposed cashiers

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Growing number of hazard classifications

→ Companies have self-classified over 256 000 substances

→ Increased number of CMR self-classifications by companies
  - Should result in appropriate risk management measures for these substances at workplaces

→ Growing number of harmonised classifications:
  - around 50 substances per year
  - 4 400 entries of harmonised classifications, many of which are group entries

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Control of classification and labelling

→ Forum REF-6 project on C&L of mixtures

- 29 countries; 3400 mixtures controlled

- 44% of checked mixtures were non-compliant in some way

- 17% mixtures: incorrect classification

- 33% mixtures: incorrect labelling

- High non-compliance for C&L → risk from mixtures not managed correctly

- Timeline: 2017-2019

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Occupational Exposure Limits, OELs

→ Regulatory values indicating levels of exposure considered to be safe for a chemical substance in the air of a workplace

→ ECHA provides 4-5 scientific opinions per year on OELs

→ 18 scientific opinions adopted since 2019
  • Examples: asbestos, lead, benzene, diisocyanates

→ Risk Assessment Committee's work results in more stringent OELs

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Roadmap on carcinogens

→ Aim:
- raise awareness of the risks from exposure to carcinogens in the workplace
- develop and exchange good practice

→ ECHA is partner since 2019
- providing data on exposure to carcinogenic substances from REACH registrations
- reviewing and drafting of substance factsheets

REACH-OSH cooperation
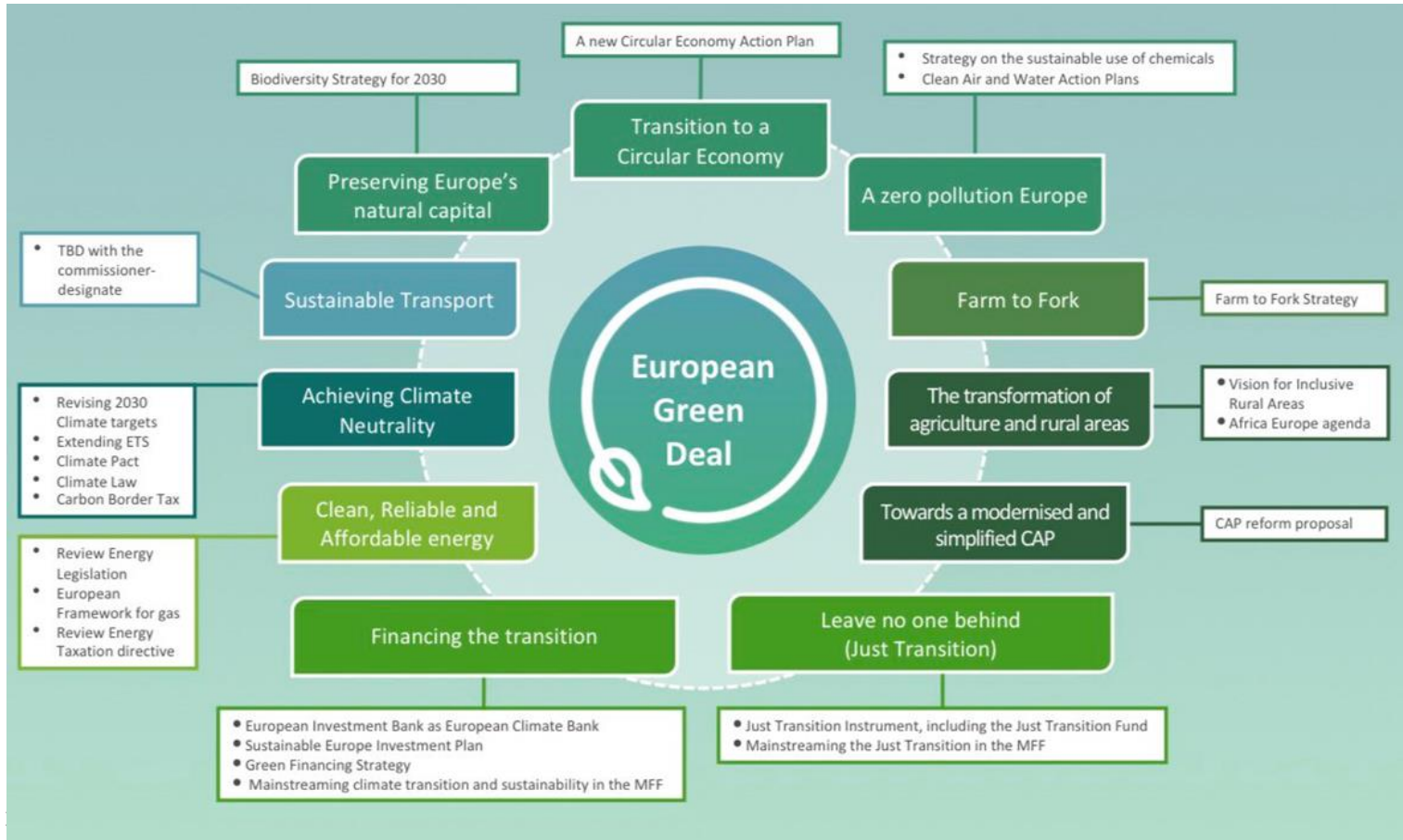
→ Report on OSH-REACH enforcement interactions

- Cooperation systems present in all countries
- Divided responsibilities
  - REACH inspectors: CSA/CSR, authorisation, strictly controlled conditions, restrictions
  - OSH inspectors: CAD/CMRD, OELs
- Shared REACH/OSH responsibilities
  - SDS, restrictions, authorisation
- Improved interaction needed for enforcement of:
  - DNEL/DMEL
  - Exposure scenarios
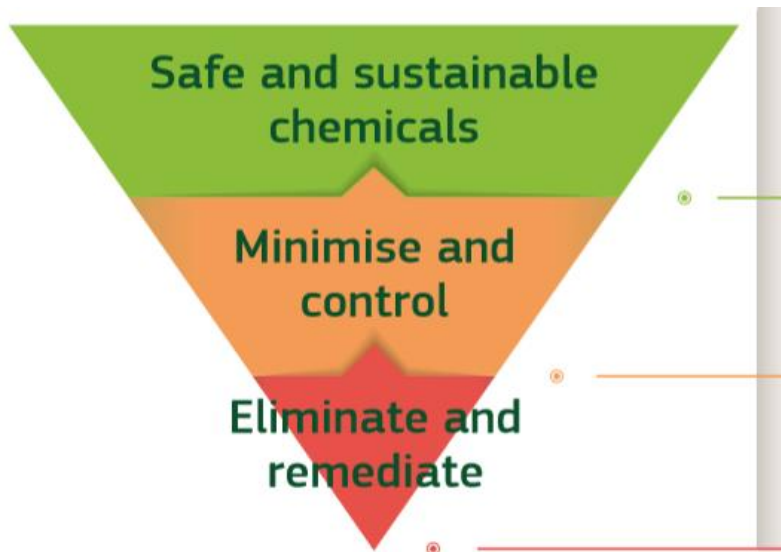 - Conditions of authorisation

European Green Deal

A new Circular Economy Action Plan

Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

- Strategy on the sustainable use of chemicals
- Clean Air and Water Action Plans

Transition to a Circular Economy

Preserving Europe's natural capital

A zero pollution Europe

- TBD with the commissioner-designate

Sustainable Transport

Farm to Fork

Farm to Fork Strategy

- Revising 2030 Climate targets
- Extending ETS
- Climate Pact
- Climate Law
- Carbon Border Tax

Achieving Climate Neutrality

European Green Deal

The transformation of agriculture and rural areas

- Vision for Inclusive Rural Areas
- Africa Europe agenda

Clean, Reliable and Affordable energy

Towards a modernised and simplified CAP

CAP reform proposal

- Review Energy Legislation
- European Framework for gas
- Review Energy Taxation directive

Financing the transition

Leave no one behind (Just Transition)

- European Investment Bank as European Climate Bank
- Sustainable Europe Investment Plan
- Green Financing Strategy
- Mainstreaming climate transition and sustainability in the MFF

- Just Transition Instrument, including the Just Transition Fund
- Mainstreaming the Just Transition in the MFF

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

European Green Deal: towards a toxic-free environment

- Chemicals are produced or used in a way that **maximises their benefits to society** while **avoiding harm to planet and people**

- **Production and use of safe and sustainable chemicals** becomes the EU market norm and a global standard

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability

| **Boosting innovation**	**Strengthening legislation for better protection**	**Simplification & coherence**	**Knowledge and science**	**Global**
• Commission recommendation on safe and sustainable by design criteria • Generic do no significant harm & substantial contribution criteria for chemicals under taxonomy	• Water Package • Eco-design regulation • Industrial emissions • CLP regulation • REACH • Guidance on essential use criteria • Cosmetics product regulation • Toy safety directive • Food additives & Food contaminants legislation	• Horizontal proposal on (re-)attribution of technical work on chemicals to EU Agencies • Horizontal proposal on improving access, sharing and re-use of chemical data • Proposal for a basic regulation of ECHA	• Research and innovation plan for chemicals • Research funding • European partnership for the assessment of risks from chemicals (PARC) • Indicator framework	• Export ban on chemicals banned in the EU • Proposal of new hazard classes to UN Global Harmonised System for Classification • Funding for developing countries

Revision of Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulation

→ Introduction of new hazard classes and criteria
  - Endocrine disruptors, PBT and PMT classes

→ At the request of the Commission, ECHA will develop proposals for harmonised classification and labelling

→ Changes to C&L Inventory

→ Adopted by the European Parliament on 23 April 2024, entry into force foreseen August – September 2024
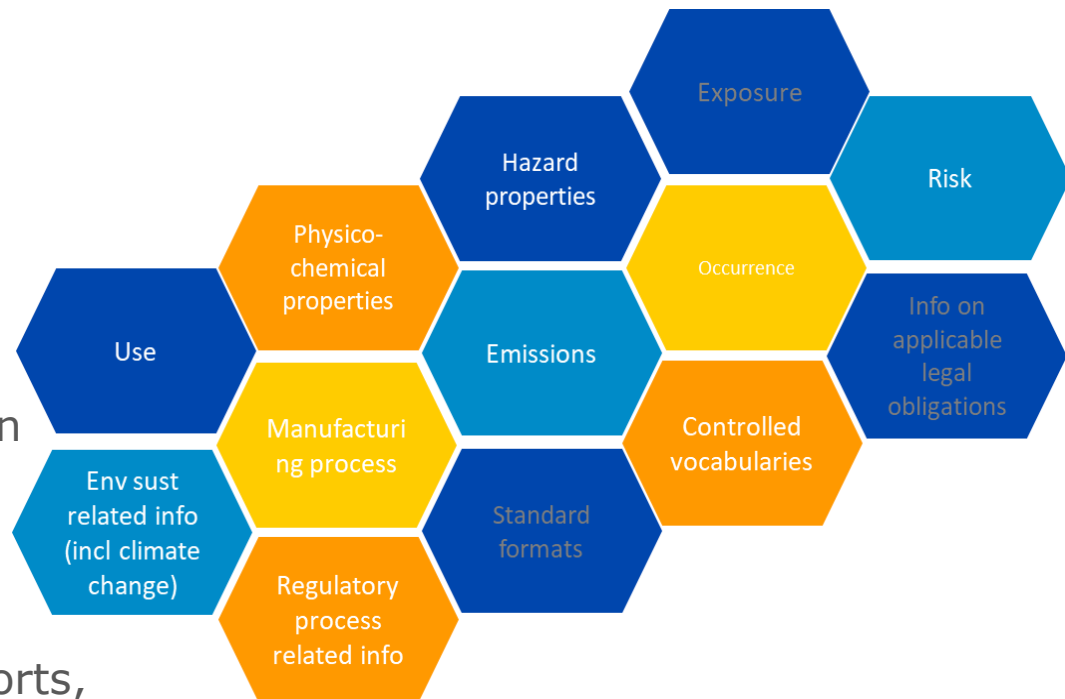
ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

EU Common data platform on chemicals

→ Proposal on improving access, sharing and re-use of chemical data – all chemicals related data into one database
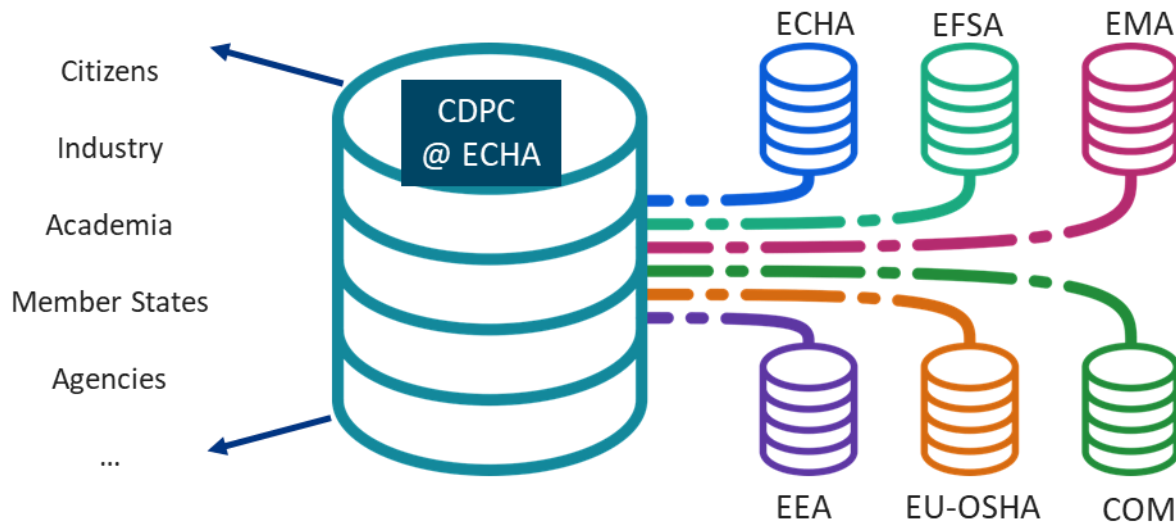
# EU Common data platform on chemicals

Sources

- EU chemicals legislation

- Monitoring data from IPCHEM

- Human biomonitoring data

- Datasets from research
  or (inter)national implementation
  programmes

- Not only 'input' data, but also
  output, such as assessment reports,
  agencies' opinions, reference values

Indicator Framework – Joint ECHA-EEA Report

→ Transition towards safer and more sustainable chemicals is progressing in some areas, while in others, it is just getting started

→ Action by authorities and industry has supported minimising and controlling risks from several groups of hazardous chemicals

→ The overall use of the most harmful chemicals (in particular carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic ones) is still growing - but more slowly than the overall chemicals market growth
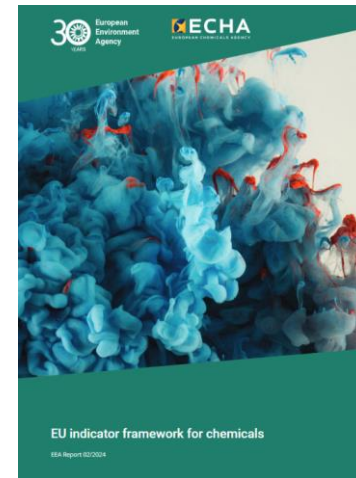
Indicator Framework – Joint ECHA-EEA Report

→ Emissions of certain chemicals to water and air have fallen following specific EU regulations (e.g., on industrial emissions) and international actions Further measures needed to reach concentration levels that are not harmful for human health and the environment

→ Emissions from industry still lead to major costs in terms of damages to human and ecosystem health

→ Human biomonitoring offers the opportunity to understand human exposure to chemicals from multiple sources and thus health risks associated with chemical pollution

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Protecting Workers from Chemical Hazards – areas of attention

To protect workers further, attention still needed on:

→ Gaps in knowledge – registration dossiers don't have all the data – gaps in the CRS result in gaps in the SDS

→ Updating information in the registration dossier

→ Information up and down the supply chain

→ New hazards coming – endocrine disruptors, effects of persistent chemicals

→ Exposure data is not available – human and environmental biomonitoring

→ Addressing chemical safety by grouping

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Our purpose and vision

OUR VISION

Chemical safety through science, collaboration and knowledge

OUR PURPOSE

We protect health and the environment through our work for chemical safety

ECHA
EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY

Thank you

name.surname@echa.europa.eu

echa.europa.eu/subscribe

Connect with us

🎧 echa.europa.eu/podcasts

in European Chemicals Agency

📷 @one_healthenv_eu

🐦 @EU_ECHA

f @EUECHA

▶ EUchemicals