

Can REACH obligation help occupational cancer prevention ?

Aïda Ponce, Laurent Vogel & Tony Musu
EWHN seminar on prevention of occupational cancers
Torino, September 30th 2011

Overview

- ETUI activities
- Data on occupational cancers in the EU
- EU legislations on carcinogens
- REACH and occupational carcinogens
- Trade Union Priority List
- Conclusions

ETUI activities

Active research of all work-related cancers.

Involvement of more trade unions.

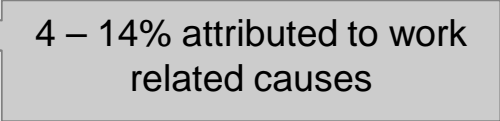
Book 2012 Editor: Laurent Vogel: Authors October 2011

Draft: Table of contents

- Scientific evidence: production, use and misuse in a regulatory or judiciary context.
- Active research of work related cancers
- Data on exposure
- Strategy for improving the situation
- Substitution
- Minimisation
- Limit-values
- Case studies

Data on occupational cancers in the EU-27 ?

Statistics of recognised cancers:

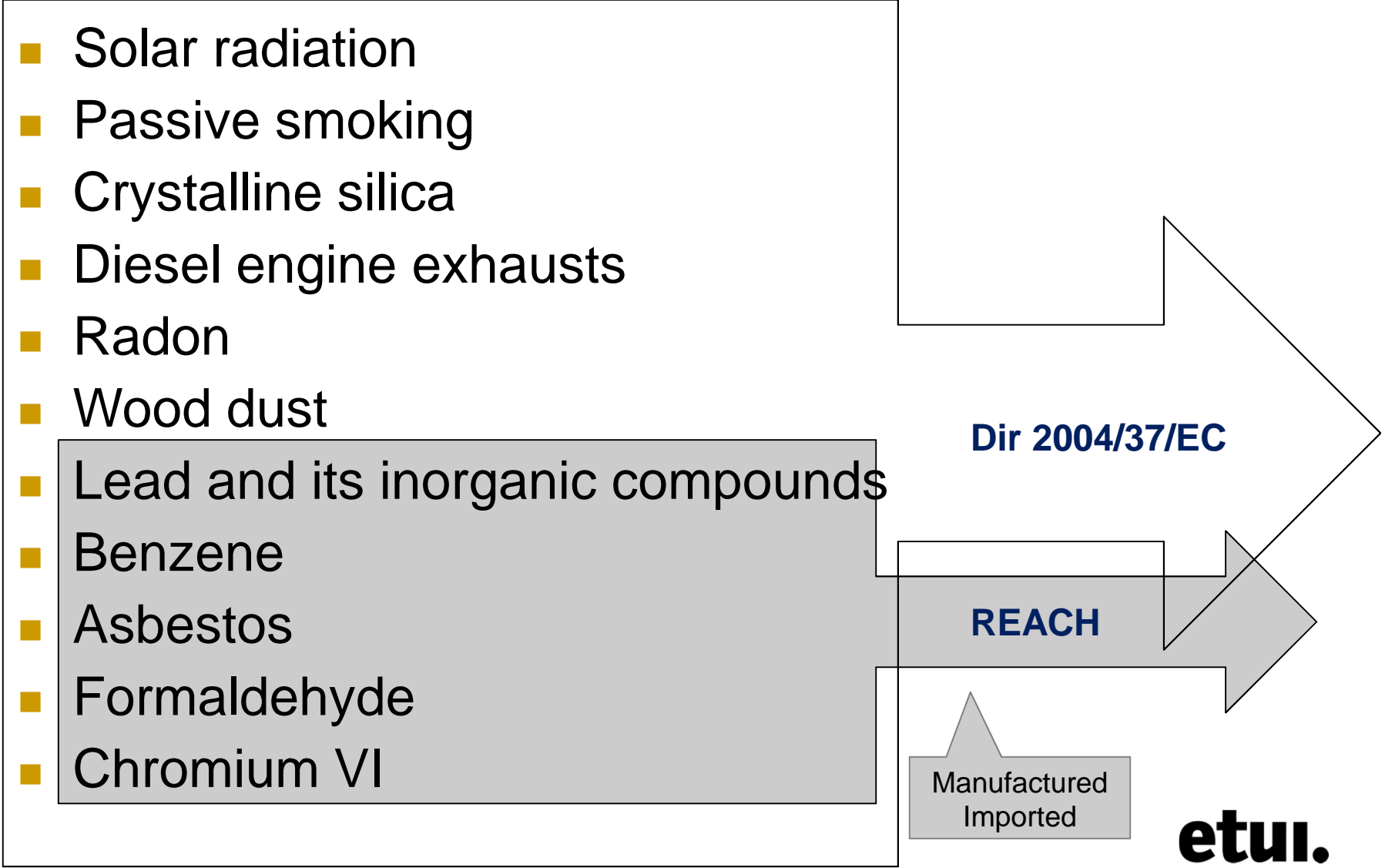
- New cases of cancer : > 2,5 million/year (IARC,2006)
- Cancer mortality : > 1,2 million/year (IARC,2006)
- Occupational cancer : ~ 8 %. Probably higher among male workers (ETUI, 2007)
4 – 14% attributed to work related causes
- In the EU, 23 % of the workforce exposed to carcinogens on a daily basis (Carex)
- Occupational cancer: main cause of working conditions-related deaths in Europe (ETUI, 2007)

EU legislations on carcinogens ?

- Two categories:
 1. Workers' protection
 2. Marketing & use of carcinogens

- **The Carcinogens & Mutagens Directive (2004/37/EC) :**
 - Hierarchy of obligations for employers:
elimination, replacement, control
 - Binding Occupational Exposure Limit Values: benzene, hardwood dust, vinyl chloride monomer
 - Under revision since 2004 :
 - Extension of scope to reprotoxic substances
 - Update of existing BOELVs
 - Additional limit values

Most widespread carcinogens at the workplace



REACH= Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation of Chemicals



REACH: basic principles

- **Shifting the burden of proof:** Manufacturers of chemicals will have to prove that their substances can be used safely
- **No data = No market**
Manufacturers will have to register their substances and provide data if they want them to stay/be on the market
- **Substances of very high concern (e.g. CMRs)**
to be progressively replaced by suitable alternatives where these are economically and technically viable
- **Competiveness through innovation**
market of tomorrow = safer chemicals for human health and the environment

REACH in a nutshell

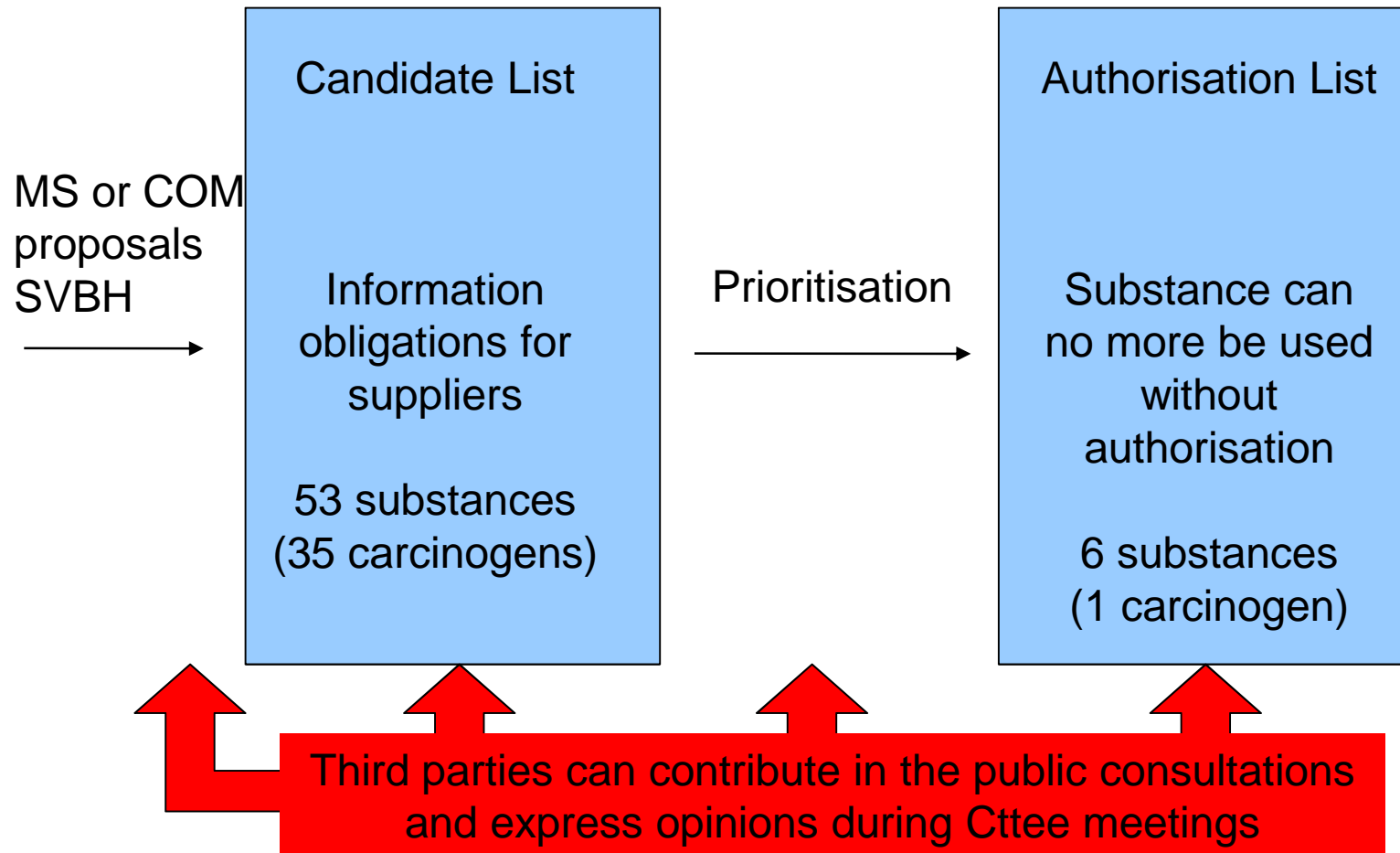
- **Registration:** Manufacturers and importers of chemicals > 1 tpy are required to register their substances to demonstrate they can be used safely.
- **Evaluation** of some substances by Member States / European Chemicals Agency.
- **Authorisation** only for substances of very high concern.
- **Restrictions** when risks are unacceptable.

Authorisation (SVHC) only allowed by Authorisation

- Industry has to request an authorisation for each use of substances of very high concern included in Annex XIV (the authorisation list)
- Authorisation is granted by the Commission if
 - **Route 1** : Industry can prove the risk is adequately controlled
 - **Route 2** : Socio-economic benefits > risks & No suitable alternatives are available
- No Authorisation granted if:
 - Use is not considered to be adequately controlled
 - Benefits are smaller compared to risks
 - Suitable substitutes are available (for route 2 only)
- All authorisations will be reviewed (case-by-case)

How a carcinogen can be included in Annex XIV?

Authorisation for: Substances of very high concern:
PBTs, vPvBs, CMRs (1&2), equivalent concerns



Restriction: safety net when risks are unacceptable

- Manufacture, use and placing on the market of substances on their own, in preparations or in articles.
- Proposals for restrictions are prepared by Member States or ECHA on behalf of the European Commission
- ECHA gives opinion on each proposal.
- Interested parties can comment (public consultation).
- European Commission takes final decision.
- REACH takes over existing restrictions from previous EU legislation (Annex XVII)

Trade Union Priority List for REACH Authorisation

- Constructive contribution to the choice of SVHC
- The TU List has 334 high production volume chemicals
 - widely used at the workplace
 - ranked according to their eco-toxicological properties
 - linked to EU recognized occupational diseases

If they are included in Candidate and Authorisation List

workers will get better information on their uses
development of safer alternatives will be promoted
occupational diseases will be reduced

- The TU list is available on line: www.etuc.org/a/602



Impact of the TU Priority List ?



Trade Union Priority List for REACH Authorisation

- 45 out of 53 substances currently on the ECHA Candidate List are also on the TU list.
- 5 out of 6 SVHCs included in the Authorisation list are also on the TU list.
- 131 substances in common with the Member States List.
- Many inquiries from industry

for REACH Authorisation



etui.
european trade union institute



■ Version 2.0, June 2010
With main uses indicated in each entry



Conclusions

- The data generated by REACH registration dossiers will foster a better knowledge of the properties of chemicals, their effects on human health and ways of reducing risk during their use.
- Authorisation and Restriction procedures in REACH will promote the substitution of the most harmful substances by safer alternatives.
- Information on actual uses/exposure of carcinogens at the workplace are needed in the REACH authorisation and restriction procedures.
- Any data you may have on a particular occupational carcinogen can help us to phase it out from the EU workplaces

Eg: acrylamide, arsenic compounds, cadmium, Cr (VI), etc...

Thank you, further info on:

<http://www.etuc.org> > Our activities > REACH

<http://hesa.etui.org> > Dossiers > Chemicals