

REACH – an overview

REACH is an acronym for Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals.

It is a policy adopted by the European Union to improve the protection of human health and the environment against the risks that may be associated with chemicals, while strengthening the competitiveness of the European chemical industry. It also promotes alternative methods of risk assessment of substances and thereby reducing the need for animal testing.



In principle, REACH applies to all chemical substances, not only substances used in industrial processes but also products that we use daily, e.g. cleaning products, paints and items such as clothes, furniture and electrical household appliances. That is why the regulation is important for most companies in the EU.

According to REACH, the responsibility for providing sufficient information and taking effective risk management measures lies principally with manufacturers or importers of chemicals. To comply with the regulation, a company must identify and manage the risks of the substances it manufactures and markets in the EU. They must demonstrate to ECHA (the European Chemicals Agency) how the substance can be used safely, and they must communicate the risk management measures to users.

If the risks cannot be managed, the authorities can restrict the use of the substance in various ways. In the long run, the most dangerous substances should be replaced by less dangerous substances.

REACH is responsible for the registration, assessment and approval of and restrictions on chemicals. The Regulation entered into force on 1 June 2007.

RS provides a REACH declaration for products where this is required.