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European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

REACH obligations: trade unions again help to raise awareness in companies

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the industriAll-European Trade Union are launching another extensive information campaign aimed at companies that market or use chemicals. The objective is to call European firms' attention, especially SMEs, to their obligations under REACH, the EU regulation on chemicals.

REACH says that companies manufacturing or importing chemicals into the EU in quantities of 100 tonnes or more per year have to register them by 31 May 2013 and that companies using hazardous substances registered under REACH have to take steps to use them safely.

Too many European firms still do not know about these obligations, and could end up being penalised by national enforcement authorities if they do not fulfill them on time. To address this situation, the ETUC and industriAll Europe plan to draw on their member organisations' networks and resources, particularly through dissemination of material to elected worker representatives in companies across Europe. Two information leaflets addressed to employers have been prepared, in collaboration with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. These will be channeled through the union and worker representation routes. The first leaflet provides a simple checklist on the actions to be undertaken by companies importing, producing or using chemicals to ensure they comply with EU legislation.

The second leaflet specifically addresses the steps to be taken by companies using hazardous substances to guarantee safe use. The ETUC and industriAll Europe are convinced that the effective implementation of REACH will not only help enhance the competitiveness of the European chemical industry, but also guarantee better protection for workers, consumers and the environment.

For further information: the two information leaflets on REACH aimed at workers' reps are available in all EU languages on the ETUC website (<http://www.etuc.org/r/830>) and the industriAll Europe website (<http://www.industrial-europe.eu/>)

The ETUC exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 85 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 10 industry-based federations.

The ETUC is also on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#). If you would like to subscribe to the [ETUC newsletter](#), please [click here](#).

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