ENKORE

Position Paper
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The ENKORE cluster calls for action on Endocrine Disruptors (EDs) in the REACH revision

In the scientific papers published by the ENKORE cluster thus far, the urgency of minimizing exposure to endocrine disruptors (EDs) is clear. The papers highlight that epidemiological studies report rising trends in hormone-related cancers, cognitive changes, reproductive and metabolic disorders, while animal studies confirm induction of similar effects after exposure to EDs[1 2 3 4 5 6].

Continuous low-dose exposure of EDs is inevitable since they occur in the environment, food and a wide range of products such as food packaging, cosmetics, plastic household items, construction materials, paints and medical devices[1 2 3 6]. Human biomonitoring studies continue to detect EDs in the general European population, and for some EDs, the levels exceed estimated tolerable intakes[7].

Despite this rapidly increasing knowledgebase and intensified regulatory efforts to improve the identification of EDs within the European Union over the past 15 years[5], only few substances are today regulated due to their ED properties[1 5]. The regulation of EDs remains very slow, as it typically involves substance assessment on a one-by-one basis with demand for extensive animal studies. With 26.000 substances registered under REACH and estimated 40-60.000 substances in global commerce, there is an urgent need to speed up process[1].

Beyond the impact of EDs on individual health and well-being, metabolic and reproductive disorders impose a vast societal and financial burden[1 6]. The annual costs related to effects of exposure to EDs in the EU were in 2019 estimated to be 163 billion Euros[1]. This highlights the economic incentives to prevent disease outcomes by minimizing exposure to EDs, even in a period where EU finances are under pressure and much political focus is on simplification of the EU regulation.

On this basis, **the ENKORE cluster calls** for increasing the level of protection against unwanted health effects after exposure to EDs by **including the following in the ongoing REACH revision**:

- **Extend the generic approach to risk management to include all regulatorily identified EDs.**
- **Update the REACH standard information requirements to include testing for ED effects at all tonnage levels.**
- **Propose a mixture assessment factor (MAF) to protect against combination effects.**

About ENKORE:

The ENKORE cluster https://enkore-cluster.eu/ is comprised of five projects: EDC-MASLD, ENDOMIX, HYPIEND, MERLON and NEMESIS with 65 partners across Europe. The projects are funded under the EU call HORIZON-HLTH-2023-ENVHLTH-02-03 (Health impacts of endocrine-disrupting chemicals: bridging science-policy gaps by addressing persistent scientific uncertainties). The ENKORE cluster's policy goal is to inform current and future policy processes in the EU to ultimately improve the health and well-being of European populations.

Funded by the European Union

References:

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The contents of this position paper do not necessarily reflect the views of all partners of the ENKORE cluster.

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