EU exported more than 700 000 tonnes of PIC chemicals in 2018

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**ECHA’s report on the exports and imports that took place in 2018 under the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Regulation shows benzene as the most traded PIC chemical, both for exports and imports.**

**Helsinki, 2 December 2019 –**The latest annual report on exports and imports under PIC lists benzene as the EU’s most exported and imported chemical in 2018, with approximately 228 000 tonnes exported and 445 000 tonnes imported.

The amount of benzene being exported has increased by more than 80 000 tonnes compared to the 2017 figures. Benzene is predominantly used to make plastics, resins, synthetic fibres, rubber lubricants, dyes, detergents, drugs and pesticides.

The quantity of the next most exported PIC chemical, ethylene dichloride decreased significantly by more than 200 000 tonnes, with the numbers for the third most exported chemical, chlorate, remaining steady compared to exports in 2017.

Overall, the total amount of exported PIC chemicals has dropped significantly by around 120 000 tonnes compared to 2017 figures, from approximately 829 000 tonnes in 2017 to less than 708 000 tonnes in 2018.

**Three most exported PIC chemicals:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Substance** | **Quantity in 2018 (tonnes)** |
| **Benzene** | 228 084 |
| **Ethylene dichloride (1,2-dichloroethane)** | 136 171 |
| **Chlorate** | 118 730 |

More than 445 000 tonnes of benzene were also imported into the EU in 2018, making it the most imported chemical that year, too (representing more than 80 % of all PIC chemicals imports into the EU). This was a significant increase of around 200 000 compared to 2017 (+82 %). Benzene was imported to Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

After a decrease of approximatively 30 % between 2016 and 2017, the total amount of PIC chemicals imported into the EU has risen by more than 246 000 tonnes compared to the figures for 2017 (mainly due to the imports of benzene), to reach approximatively 547 500 tonnes in 2018.

**Four most imported PIC chemicals:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Substance** | **Quantity in 2018 (tonnes)** |
| **Benzene** | 445 333 |
| **Ethylene dichloride (1,2-dichloroethane)** | 62 872 |
| **Arsenic compounds; Ethylene oxide1** | 17 616 |

*1The data on some chemicals is merged to ensure data confidentiality for companies involved or to ensure compliance with competition law.*

Article 10 of the PIC Regulation requires exporters and importers to give information about annual trade of Annex I chemicals to their designated national authorities (DNAs) by 31 March of the following year. Each EU Member State then has to provide the aggregated information to ECHA so that it can be summarised at Union level and non-confidential information can be made publicly available.

The report is available as a PDF, accompanied by searchable lists of the exported and imported chemicals.

**Background**

467 exporters from 22 Member States provided data to ECHA on exports of PIC chemicals from the EU in 2018; six Member States declared that they had not exported PIC chemicals.

153 importers from 20 Member States provided data on imports of PIC chemicals into the EU in 2018; eight Member States declared that they had not imported PIC chemicals.