

# ACRYLONITRILE PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

## New Acrylonitrile Occupational Exposure Limits (OELs) set by European Legislation (CMD4)

July 2022

### Summary

The Acrylonitrile Sector Group (ASG) is a sector group of Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council, bringing together the European manufacturers of acrylonitrile. ASG has been involved in the OEL Occupational Exposure Limits process since the beginning and communicated earlier about this topic to the industry. The objective of this follow-up one-pager communication is to inform the wider Acrylonitrile industry's downstream users about the new OELs that were finally set by European regulation in March 2022 and will enter into force in April 2026.

### The European legislation

The Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive of the European Union (CMD4 –Directive 2004/37/EC) aims to protect workers against risks to their health and safety from exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at the place of work. That Directive provides a framework of general principles enabling EU Member States to ensure the consistent application of minimum requirements and protection from the risks related to occupational exposure to carcinogens and mutagens. The aim of these minimum requirements is to protect workers at the European Union level. More stringent provisions can be set by Member States.

The fourth revision of CMD4 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work sets new Occupational Exposure Levels (OELs) for Acrylonitrile. The EU institutions finalised the fourth proposal amending the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive recently, and the adopted text was published by the [EU Official Journal](#) in March 2022. *It requests new OELs for Acrylonitrile of 1.8 ppm/15 minutes and 0.45 ppm/8h from April 2026 onwards.*

### Limits of measurement devices

Cefic and its member companies are committed to ensuring the best protection for workers and the environment. However, there are technical issues with measuring exactly the new OELs for Acrylonitrile. Cross-sensitivity to other chemicals, combustion engine emissions and moisture are some of the most prominent issues that complicate the OELs monitoring process daily and reduce its precision, especially for personal devices. As a consequence, frequent false alarms would reduce confidence and practical use.

Therefore, in our opinion, even though some developments seem promising, current measurement devices make it technically impossible to measure the requested OELs for 15 minutes correctly.

**Next step:** Cefic's ASG is working on identifying solutions to the measurement issue and will outreach to the European Commission (EC) in the next months to share our concerns.

In case of questions, don't hesitate to contact the Cefic secretariat.

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