PRESS RELEASE

Celje, date: 18 February 2020

The European Parliament agreed to the Commission's proposal for the classification of titanium dioxide in Annex VI according to CLP legislation

The European Parliament agreed to the European Commission's proposal to place titanium dioxide (TiO_2) on the list of suspected carcinogens. The suspicion relates to the inhalation of extremely high concentrations of titanium powder dust.

In 2016, ANSES (French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety) submitted a proposal to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) for titanium dioxide to be classified as a Category 1B carcinogen. The Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) rejected this proposal and supported the classification of TiO_2 as a Category 2 carcinogen. This proposal was approved by the EU Parliament. On 18 February 2020, the Official Journal of the European Union published the classification of TiO_2 in Annex VI according to CLP legislation regulating classification, labelling and packaging of chemical substances. The publication is available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/SL/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32020R0217

TiO_2 is not toxic, but overload can be problematic

So far, expert studies have shown that TiO_2 is not toxic. This is also the opinion provided by the Risk Assessment Committee.

According to the known expert assessment, the potential suspected harm only applies to the inhalation of extremely large quantities of dust, as the lungs cannot be cleared rapidly enough in case of overload. This is not news, since such theoretical dust-related hazard exists for more than 300 other substances.

In practice, the classification of titanium dioxide means that the danger only occurs during long-term exposure to TiO_2 dust at extremely high concentration *(Note W for CLP legislation entry)*.

Cinkarna acts in a preventive way

In 2006, TiO_2 was classified as suspected carcinogen in the IARC monograph. The suspicion was based on rat studies, and rat lungs respond differently to dust compared to human lungs.

Immediately afterwards, Cinkarna began to perform every known and available measure to eliminate the risks.

What are the expected consequences?

Within 18 months after the publication in the Official Journal of the EU, all products must be labelled according to regulatory requirements.

Unfortunately, the wording of the classification is not unambiguous, which may lead to different interpretations. There has not been a similar case in the practice on which stakeholders in TiO_2 industry could rely on when implementing the requirements. The classification involves several uncertainties, including regarding the management of wastes containing TiO_2. Therefore, at the moment, there is no way to predict any potential consequences.

Being a responsible company, we will keep informing our employees and the general public when new information becomes available.

Management Board of the Company