

## REPORTING PERIOD:

16 August 2017 to 31 December 2020

### ▼ INFORMATION ON THE PARTY

#### 1. Information on the party

**Name of party**

Cyprus

**Date on which its instrument of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance was deposited**

25 February 2020

**Date of entry into force of the Convention for the party**

25 May 2020

#### 2. Information on the national focal point

**Full name of the institution**

Department of Environment – Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Affairs and Environment

**Title of National Focal Point**

Environment Officer A'

**Name of National Focal Point**

Ms. Chrystalla Nisiotou

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#### 3. Information about the contact officer submitting the reporting format if different from the above

**Focal Point is submitting the national report**

- ☒ Information is submitted by the national focal point
- ☐ Information is submitted through the national focal point by the contact officer

**▼ ART. 3: MERCURY SUPPLY SOURCES AND TRADE**

**3.1. Does the party have any primary mercury mines that were operating within its territory at the date of entry into force of the Convention for the party?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

**Additional information on this question if needed**  
{Empty}

**3.2. Does the party have any primary mercury mines that are now in operation that were not in operation at the time of entry into force of the Convention for the party?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

**3.3. Has the party endeavoured to identify individual stocks of mercury or mercury compounds exceeding 50 metric tons and sources of mercury supply generating stocks exceeding 10 metric tons per year that are located within its territory?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

**If the party answered No above, please explain.**

Have not endeavored to identify the above since the Cypriot authorities know that we do not have in our territory such quantities of mercury.

**3.4. Does the party have excess mercury available from the decommissioning of chlor-alkali facilities?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

**3.5. \*Has the party received consent, or relied on a general notification of consent, in accordance with article 3, including any required certification from importing non-parties, for all exports of mercury from the party's territory in the reporting period?**

- ☐ Yes, exports to parties
- ☐ Yes, exports to non-parties
- ☒ No

**Additional information if needed**

{Empty}

### 3.6. Has the party allowed the import of mercury from a non-party?

- ☒ No
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ The importing party has relied on paragraph 7 of article 3

### Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so

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#### ▼ ART. 4: MERCURY-ADDED PRODUCTS

### 4.1. Has the party taken any appropriate measures to not allow the manufacture, import or export of mercury-added products listed in Part I of Annex A of the Convention after the phase-out date specified for those products?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (implementing paragraph 2 of article 4)

**If yes, please provide information on the measures.**

1. The provisions of the European Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on mercury apply in Cyprus. Under this Regulation, the Competent Authority in Cyprus is prohibiting the export, import and manufacturing of mercury-added set out in Annex II. The provisions are monitored in close collaboration with the Customs Authorities.
2. Also, REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 provisions apply. Hence, the Cyprus Competent and Enforcing Authority prohibits the manufacture, placing on the market and use of specific phenylmercury compounds known to be used as catalysts in the production of polyurethane, as well as, the use of other mercury-containing catalysts also used in polyurethane production. Mercury is also restricted under REACH (point 18a) in relation to the use of fever thermometers and other measuring devices.
3. Under the PIC Regulation (EU) 649/2012 the export of mercury containing pesticides is banned.
4. Cyprus legislature provides for sanctions in cases of infringements and ensures their effective implementation.

### 4.3. Has the party taken two or more measures for the mercury-added products listed in Part II of Annex A in accordance with the provisions set out therein?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

**If yes, please provide information on the measures.**

In compliance with the EU Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on Mercury the following measures were taken:

1. Setting national objectives aiming at dental caries prevention and health promotion, thereby minimizing the need for dental restoration.
2. Setting national objectives aiming at minimizing its use.
3. Encouraging representative professional organizations and dental schools to educate and train dental professionals and students on the use of mercury-free dental restoration alternatives and on

promoting best management practices.

4. Restricting the use of dental amalgam to its encapsulated form.

5. Promoting the use of best environmental practices in dental facilities to reduce releases of mercury and mercury compounds to water and land.

During the year 2020, an information campaign for the dental facilities was performed by Cypriot authorities, about their liabilities against European Regulation (EU) 2017/852 and the ban on use of dental amalgam.

An information leaflet was also published for the ban on use of dental amalgam.

**4.4. Has the party taken measures to prevent the incorporation into assembled products of mercury-added products whose manufacture, import and export are not allowed under article 4?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**4.5. Has the party discouraged the manufacture and the distribution in commerce of mercury-added products not covered by any known use in accordance with article 4, paragraph 6?**

☒ Yes

☐ No

**If yes, please provide information on the measures.**

The provisions of the European Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on mercury apply in Cyprus. Under this Regulation, the Competent Authority in Cyprus is prohibiting the export, import and manufacturing of mercury-added set out in Annex II.

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ **ART. 5: MANUFACTURING PROCESSES IN WHICH MERCURY OR MERCURY COMPOUNDS ARE USED**

**5.1. Are there facilities within the territory of the party that use mercury or mercury compounds for the processes listed in Annex B of the Minamata Convention in accordance with paragraph 5 of article 5 of the Convention?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ I do not know

**5.2. Are measures in place to not allow the use of mercury or mercury compounds in manufacturing processes listed in Part I of Annex B after the phase-out date specified in that Annex for the individual process?**

**CHLOR-ALKALI PRODUCTION**

☐ Yes

☐ No



☒ Not applicable (do not have these facilities)

**ACETALDEHYDE PRODUCTION IN WHICH MERCURY OR MERCURY COMPOUNDS ARE USED AS A CATALYST**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable (do not have these facilities)

**5.3. Are measures in place to restrict the use of mercury or mercury compounds in the processes listed in Part II of Annex B in accordance with the provisions set out therein?**

**VINYL CHLORIDE MONOMER PRODUCTION**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable (do not have these facilities)

**SODIUM OR POTASSIUM METHYLATE OR ETHYLATE**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable (do not have these facilities)

**PRODUCTION OF POLYURETHANE USING MERCURY-CONTAINING CATALYSTS**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable (do not have these facilities)

**5.4. Is there any use of mercury or mercury compounds in a facility using the manufacturing processes listed in Annex B that did not exist prior to the date of entry into force of the Convention for the party?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

**5.5. Is there any facility that has been developed using any other manufacturing process in which mercury or mercury compounds are intentionally used that did not exist prior to the date of entry into force of the Convention?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ **ART. 7: ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE GOLD MINING**

**7.1. Have steps been taken to reduce, and where feasible eliminate, the use of mercury and mercury compounds in, and the emissions and releases to the environment of mercury from, artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing subject to article 7 within your territory?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ There is no artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing subject to article 7 in which mercury amalgamation is used in the territory

**7.2. Has the party determined and notified the secretariat that artisanal and small-scale gold mining and processing within its territory is more than insignificant?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ **ART. 8: EMISSIONS**

**8.1. Identify any Annex D source categories for which there are new sources of emissions of mercury or mercury compounds as defined in paragraph 2 (c) of article 8.**

For each of those source categories describe the measures in place, including the effectiveness of such measures, to implement the requirements of paragraph 4 of article 8.

☐ Coal-fired power plants

☐ Coal-fired industrial boilers

☐ Smelting and roasting processes used in the production of non-ferrous metals

☐ Waste incineration facilities

☐ Cement clinker production facilities

**Has the party required the use of best available techniques or best environmental practices (BAT/BEP) to control and where feasible reduce emissions for new sources no later than 5 years after the date of entry into force of the Convention for the party?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Please explain**

Cyprus has not in its territory new sources in any of the source categories listed in Annex D.

**Attach relevant documentation**

{Empty}

**8.2. Identify any Annex D source categories for which there are existing sources of emissions of mercury or mercury compounds as defined in paragraph 2 (e) of article 8.**

For each of those source categories, select and provide details on the measures implemented under paragraph 5 of article 8 and explain the progress that these applied measures have achieved in reducing emissions over time in your territory:

**▼ COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS**

- ☐ A quantified goal for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Emission limit values for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Use of BAT/BEP to control emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Multi-pollutant control strategy that would deliver co-benefits for control of mercury emissions
- ☐ Alternative measures to reduce emissions from relevant sources

**Measures**

{Empty}

**Progress**

{Empty}

**▼ COAL-FIRED INDUSTRIAL BOILERS**

- ☐ A quantified goal for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Emission limit values for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Use of BAT/BEP to control emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Multi-pollutant control strategy that would deliver co-benefits for control of mercury emissions
- ☐ Alternative measures to reduce emissions from relevant sources

**Measures**

{Empty}

**Progress**

{Empty}

#### ▼ SMELTING AND ROASTING PROCESSES USED IN THE PRODUCTION OF NON-FERROUS METALS

- ☐ A quantified goal for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Emission limit values for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Use of BAT/BEP to control emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Multi-pollutant control strategy that would deliver co-benefits for control of mercury emissions
- ☐ Alternative measures to reduce emissions from relevant sources

##### Measures

{Empty}

##### Progress

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#### ▼ WASTE INCINERATION FACILITIES

- ☐ A quantified goal for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☒ Emission limit values for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☒ Use of BAT/BEP to control emissions from relevant sources
- ☐ Multi-pollutant control strategy that would deliver co-benefits for control of mercury emissions
- ☐ Alternative measures to reduce emissions from relevant sources

##### Measures

BAT 31 is required with starting date 31.3.2020. The facility adopted BAT as required.

##### Progress

The effectiveness of the measures is illustrated at the following table:

A/A Date Hg (mg/Nm<sup>3</sup>)

1 15.10.2020 0.000384

\* Emission limit values (0.05 mg/Nm<sup>3</sup>)

#### ▼ CEMENT CLINKER PRODUCTION FACILITIES

- ☐ A quantified goal for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources
- ☒ Emission limit values for controlling and, where feasible, reducing emissions from relevant sources

☒ Use of BAT/BEP to control emissions from relevant sources

☐ Multi-pollutant control strategy that would deliver co-benefits for control of mercury emissions

☐ Alternative measures to reduce emissions from relevant sources

#### Measures

The installation adopted the BAT Conclusions for the production of cement, lime and magnesium oxide as required.

The periodic measurements of mercury that were held in the installation from 2017 to 2021 are shown below.

#### Progress

A/A Date Hg (mg/Nm<sup>3</sup>)

1 4.10.2017 0.002

2 16.10.2018 0.0019

3 6.11.2019 0.0119

4 17.10.2020 0.000186

5 23.10.2021 0.00287

\* Emission limit values (0.05 mg/Nm<sup>3</sup>)

Have the measures for existing sources under paragraph 5 of article 8 been implemented no later than 10 years after the date of entry into force of the Convention for the party?

☒ Yes

☐ No

**8.3. Has the party prepared an inventory of emissions from relevant sources within 5 years of entry into force of the Convention for it?**

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Have not been a party for 5 years

**If yes, when was the inventory last updated?**

Tue, 11/30/2021 – 00:00

**Please indicate where this inventory is available**

1. CDR Eionet portal at the following link:

<https://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/cy/un/clrtap/inventories/envyeskca/>

Last updated : 12/03/2021

2. Pollutant Release and Transfer Register

<http://www.prtr.dli.mlsi.gov.cy/>

Last updated : 30.11.2021

**Attach**

{Empty}

**8.4. Has the party chosen to establish criteria to identify relevant sources covered within a source category?**

☒ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please explain how the criteria for any category include at least 75 percent of the emissions from that category and explain how the party took into account guidance adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

Relevant sources are identified by the implementation of the national laws harmonizing the IED and EIA EU Directives.

**8.5. Has the party chosen to prepare a national plan setting out the measures to be taken to control emissions from relevant sources and its expected targets, goals and outcomes?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

Regarding 8.5, measures are taken in order to control emissions from relevant sources under the implementation of Industrial Emissions Law (harmonizing IED EU directive) and the National Air Pollution Control Law.

**▼ ART. 9: RELEASES**

**9.1. Are there, within the party's territory, relevant sources of releases as defined in paragraph 2 (b) of article 9?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ I do not know

**Please explain**

Not reported since there are less than three years since the entry of Cyprus into force of the Convention (5.2020).

**9.2. Has the party established an inventory of releases from relevant sources within 5 years of entry into force of the convention for it?**

☒ Yes

☐ Relevant sources do not exist in the territory

☐ Have not been a party for 5 years

☐ No

**When was the inventory last updated?**

2021-11-30

**Please indicate where this inventory is available**

Pollutant Release and Transfer Register was established due to Cyprus obligations under the PRTR protocol. It is referred to all the releases, including Mercury.

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ ART. 10: ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND INTERIM STORAGE OF MERCURY, OTHER THAN WASTE MERCURY

**10.1. Has the party taken measures to ensure that the interim storage of non-waste mercury and mercury compounds intended for a use allowed to a party under the Convention is undertaken in an environmentally sound manner?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ I do not know

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

Cyprus does not have locations that store mercury and mercury compounds in its territory.

▼ ART. 11: MERCURY WASTES

**11.1. Have measures outlined in article 11, paragraph 3, been implemented for the party's mercury waste?**

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

**Please describe the measures implemented pursuant to paragraph 3, and please also describe the effectiveness of those measures.**

1. Cyprus is member of Basel Convention, following its provisions.
2. Cyprus follows the provisions of European Regulation (EU) 2017/852 on mercury.
3. According to article 22A of the National Law on Waste 185(I)/2011, treatment of mercury waste and waste mercury compounds from any of the major sources referred to in paragraphs a), b), c) and d) of Article 11 of Regulation (EU) 2017/852 shall be carried out in a manner that does not lead to any recovery of mercury.

**11.2. Are there facilities for final disposal of waste consisting of mercury or mercury compounds in the party's territory?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ I do not know

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ ART. 12: CONTAMINATED SITES

### 12.1. Has the party endeavoured to develop strategies for identifying and assessing sites contaminated by mercury or mercury compounds in its territory?

☐ Yes

☒ No

#### Please elaborate

The party has not endeavored to develop such a strategy as there are not facilities such chlor-alkali facilities, artisanal and small-scale gold mining sites. Moreover, there is no evidence regarding waste management activities, stack emissions, fugitive emissions and/or spills and emergency incidents that could lead to mercury contamination of a specific site.

### Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so

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## ▼ ART. 13: FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISM

### 13.1. Has the party undertaken to provide, within its capabilities, resources in respect of those national activities that are intended to implement the Convention in accordance with its national policies, priorities, plans and programmes?

☒ Yes

☐ No

#### Please specify

Financial, technical, capacity-building, technology transfer, in the frame for the following activities:

A. Human Biomonitoring of Mercury at European / national level

The State General Laboratory (SGL) of the Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Cyprus (SGL/MOH-CY) participates in the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative (HBM4EU, 2017–2022), which is co-funded by national governments of 30 European countries, including Cyprus, and the European Commission. Mercury was selected as a priority substance for research and investigation by HBM4EU in 2018. Cyprus (specifically, the reporting officer at the SGL) serves as the Chemical Group Leader for mercury (CGL-Hg) in the frame of HBM4EU. Cyprus provides co-financing at a rate of 30–50% for HBM4EU activities on mercury engaging the SGL/MOH-CY. This includes “HBM4EU-MOM” (“Methylmercury-contrOl in expectant Mothers through suitable dietary advice for pregnancy”), a harmonized intervention study in Cyprus, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Iceland, running from 10/2020–4/2022, which is coordinated by SGL/MOH-CY.

European human biomonitoring of mercury is expected to continue in the frame of the European Partnership for the Risk Assessment from Chemicals (PARC, Horizon Europe, 2022–2028, national co-financing at a rate of 50%). The SGL/MOH-CY participated in the Steering Board for the preparation of PARC and supported the European efforts. It also secured the necessary national approvals, collaborations and co-funding for Cyprus’ participation in the partnership.

The Ministry of Health approved in 2020 the inclusion of Human Biomonitoring in the Public Health areas for which a strategy will be developed in the frame of its restructuring.

B. Monitoring of mercury at the sources of exposure.

The 2020 Annual Official Monitoring and Control Programs of mercury in the different sources (e.g., food chain, water bodies, air) were competed by the State General Laboratory and the national competent authorities, in the frame of the implementation of related legislations (at national and/or



European Commission level), using national funding, capacities and expertise.

C. Risk Assessment / development and communication of dietary guidelines to pregnant women for prenatal control of mercury exposure.

Mercury occurrence data in foodstuff (emphasis on fish/seafood) and consumption habits of Cypriots from the harmonized European project EU-MENU were used to perform preliminary assessment of the risk from the diet for pregnant women and for preparing dietary guidelines for Cypriot pregnant women. These guidelines are being tested in the frame of the HBM4EU-MOM study, mentioned above (§13.1 – A).

**Please provide comments, if any.**

{Empty}

### **13.2. Supplemental: Has the party, within its capabilities, contributed to the mechanism referred to in paragraph 5 of article 13?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Please specify**

Cyprus contributed for the General Trust Fund, but not for the Special Trust Fund.

**Please provide comments, if any.**

{Empty}

### **13.3. Supplemental: Has the party provided financial resources to assist developing-country parties and/or parties with economies in transition in the implementation of the Convention through other bilateral, regional and multilateral sources or channels?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Please specify**

As Cyprus is a small country and new member of Minamata Convention has not provided any financial resources.

**Please provide comments, if any.**

{Empty}

### **Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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## **▼ ART. 14: CAPACITY-BUILDING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER**

### **14.1. Has the party cooperated to provide capacity-building or technical assistance, pursuant to article 14, to another party to the Convention?**

☒ Yes

☐ No

**Please specify**

**1. Harmonized, quality-assured human biomonitoring**

The following relevant policy questions on mercury in the frame of the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative, HBM4EU, were identified by the Cypriot Chemical Group Leader for mercury (CGL-Hg) and were addressed by HBM4EU partners:

–How effective are policy actions (including the Minamata Convention) to reduce human exposure to mercury in Europe?

–How can harmonized, validated and comparable information be collected and transferred to support and evaluate current policies?

The CGL-Hg and the European Environment Agency presented the HBM4EU work on mercury during a “Knowledge Lab” (on “Mercury in the European Environment and Population”) at the Minamata COP2 (November 2018). They also discussed with WHO how HBM4EU could contribute towards the global harmonization of mercury biomonitoring in humans and had bilateral discussions with interested non-European parties about possible provision of training or other support.

Though the provision of direct trainings by HBM4EU to non-partners was not feasible, the tools, which were developed by HBM4EU to support the implementation of harmonized, quality assured human biomonitoring of mercury are available for free to all interested Parties, on the HBM4EU webpage (<https://www.hbm4eu.eu/>). These tools include Standard Operating Procedures (e.g., for recruitment, samplings, development of communication materials), Standardized Documents (e.g. Questionnaires, communication materials for participants, including informed consent), Lists of qualified laboratories, information about preferred biomarkers and matrices for human biomonitoring, etc.). The results of HBM4EU activities on mercury are also made available to interested parties on the HBM4EU webpage and in open access publications. Human biomonitoring data on mercury, developed in the frame of HBM4EU are accessible on the Information Platform for Chemical Monitoring of the European Commission, “IPChem” (<https://ipchem.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>).

**2. Dietary exposure assessment**

The State General Laboratory of the Ministry of Health (SGL/MOH-CY) developed a user-friendly a web application tool for the conduction of dietary exposure assessment (“Improrisk”, <http://www.improrisk.com/>). Improrisk works with FoodEx2, a standardized system for classifying and describing food. The tool has been used at SGL/MOH-CY for the assessment of the risk for Cypriots from the diet. The tool is available for free to all interested parties, upon request and associated training can be arranged. In 2020, a virtual training workshop was provided by the SGL/MOH-CY to Montenegro.

3. Actions were taken by the competent authorities, in compliance with the European Regulation (EU) 852/2017 on Mercury, regarding the dental amalgams.

**14.2. Supplemental: Has the party received capacity-building or technical assistance pursuant to article 14?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

**Please specify**

Cyprus has not received capacity-building or technical assistance from another party.

**Please provide comments, if any.**

{Empty}

**14.3. Has the party promoted and facilitated the development, transfer and diffusion of and access to, up-to-date environmentally sound alternative technologies?**

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Other

Please specify

## Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so

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### ▼ ART. 16: HEALTH ASPECTS

#### 16.1. Have measures been taken to provide information to the public on exposure to mercury in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 16?

☒ Yes

☐ No

**Supplemental: If yes, describe the measures that have been taken.**

In the frame of the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative, the following policy questions were identified by the (Cypriot) Chemical Group Leader for mercury (CGL-Hg), which were addressed by HBM4EU partners:

–How can the public be informed and how can public awareness and education be raised regarding the effects of mercury on health and the environment and about management options?

–What advice should be given regarding dietary recommendations to vulnerable Europeans (e.g., pregnant women, infants, high sea-food consumers) and other stakeholders (e.g., health practitioners, policy makers) to reduce exposure to mercury while in keeping with nutritional requirements and cultural dietary preferences? Ideally, this should consider the different types of foodstuffs (e.g., types of seafood) consumed in different parts of the EU, the toxicity and occurrence of the different mercury species in different foodstuff and the positive effects of n-3 long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids in fish and of micro nutrients (e.g., selenium) in the diet.

Cyprus coordinates the HBM4EU-MOM study (“Methylmercury-control in expectant Mothers through suitable dietary advice for pregnancy”) in Cyprus, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Iceland, from 10/2020 – 04/2022. Cyprus also serves as Leader for “Communication with participants in HBM surveys” and as partner in the overall communication actions, in the frame of HBM4EU.

To prepare the HBM4EU-MOM study, the (Cypriot) CGL-Hg communicated with the National Hubs of the HBM4EU partner countries to assess their needs and interests related to the aims of the study and prepared a research plan, which was approved and co-financed by the European Commission and national governments. In 2020, the implementing countries prepared the study (including ethical approvals) and developed the harmonized dietary intervention for the pregnant women participants. In the case of Cyprus, because dietary guidelines for control of mercury didn’t exist at national level, national data on mercury data in fish / seafood (from the Official Monitoring & Control Programs of the government) and data on the consumption of fish / seafood by Cypriots (including pregnant women) were used to develop the first ever national guidelines, which would be tested in the frame of the study. According to the study plan, the personal results of participants will be communicated to them at the end of the study and where necessary, personalized guidance will be provided with the engagement of their health care provider. Furthermore, Cypriot gynecologists and pediatricians were contacted, with the aim to get engaged with the HBM4EU-MOM study.

Cyprus also participated in the following awareness actions in the frame of HBM4EU:

–preparation of a factsheet and a video to raise awareness of citizens on mercury

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KO3FSDf4RA>)

–Organization of a focus group discussion with Cypriot citizens and an online survey of European citizens, where their awareness and concerns about chemical exposures, including mercury, and their opinions about the usefulness of HBM to control chemical exposures, were assessed

–Preparation of scoping reviews for health professionals, on the association of environmental exposures to manifestation of specific noncommunicable diseases

#### 16.2. Have any other measures been taken to protect human health in accordance with article 16?

☒ Yes

☐ No

**Supplemental: If yes, describe the measures that have been taken.**

–The SGL/MOH-CY collaborates with the competent national authorities for the implementation of the official governmental programs for mercury monitoring and control in the food chain and the environment (implementation of European and national legislations).

–The following additional policy questions on mercury, of relevance to health, were identified by the (Cypriot) Chemical Group Leader for Mercury (CGL-Hg) and were addressed by different partners of the European Human Biomonitoring Initiative, HBM4EU:

–What biomonitoring and exposure data on mercury (and its species), relevant to the European population, are currently available and what new data are needed to address policy-related questions?

–Existing studies with relevant data were identified and the study leaders were contacted for data sharing / exploitation

–What is the geographic spread of the current exposure and how does it relate to different exposure sources (environmental; contaminated sites; dental amalgams; dietary, including different species of sea-food)? Ideally, this should capture the exposure of highly exposed populations (e.g., high seafood consumers with distinction of populations consuming predator fish from those with low/no consumption of such fish, such as Southern & Northern Europeans, European arctic populations), but also of low-exposure populations for comparison.

–Existing data are collated, integrated and made available on the IPCHeM open-access platform

–A statistical plan was developed for analysis of existing European data

–New data on current exposures of pregnant women and contributing factors in CY, GR, ES, PT, IS are collected in the frame of the “HBM4EU-MOM” study

–Which populations remain vulnerable to health impacts from mercury exposure and how can they be protected?

–Dietary exposures of pregnant women from fish consumption need to be better investigated and controlled in ways that the nutritional benefits from fish are not compromised. This is the goal of the HBM4EU-MOM study.

–Under HBM4EU an integrated exposure modelling platform was optimized by updating the exposure model parameterization for mercury using available data. The toxicokinetic behavior differences in internal dose of mercury species were characterized; Internal exposure to different mercury species and to total mercury were identified for various age groups; optimized sampling schemes were defined.

–At what level of exposure to different mercury species and to total mercury are health effects likely to occur? Current guidance values were based studies of the Faroese people, who have a diet that is unique and does not relate to food consumption patterns in the EU. This important issue has not been given proper attention to date.

–A critical review of the scientific literature, published since EFSA’s 2012 risk assessment, was initiated to determine if recent findings on the health effects of mercury are consistent with the previously assessed evidence.

–Work was planned to re-evaluate the HBM-Based Guidance Values for the general population

–How does exposure relate to the manifestation of adverse health effects? – What are possible health effects resulting from chronic low exposure to mercury and its organic compounds (such as from food consumption and dental amalgams)? This type of exposure is the most relevant for Europeans and can be addressed by speciation analysis of bio-banked samples from existing cohorts and associations with adverse health effects. – What factors make people more susceptible to the development of health effects due to mercury exposure?

–Work was planned to investigate allele frequencies of relevant Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) across Europe and how this might contradict exposure/health found so far, since inherited factors of individuals seem to play a role in determining toxic effects of mercury and to use the available Mediterranean cohort to (a) examine the impact of mercury on neurobehavior while taking into account co-exposure to other neurotoxic contaminants and to beneficial elements and (b) explore relevant genetic polymorphisms.

–the most suitable biomarkers of effect for mercury were identified through a focused literature search of mercury-related human studies and reported health endpoints

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ ART. 17: INFORMATION EXCHANGE

**17.1. Has the party facilitated the exchange of information referred to in article 17, paragraph 1?**

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

**Please provide more information, if any**

As a partner and Chemical Group Leader for Mercury (CGL-Hg) in the frame of HBM4EU, Cyprus engages with the collection and exchange of relevant epidemiological information on mercury exposure and associated health impacts.

In response to the Call of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury for Information on Gender and Mercury (MC/ES/2020/55, dated 30.11.2020), the Cypriot CGL-Hg submitted relative information on behalf of the HBM4EU partnership.

The Cypriot CGL-Hg contacted the World Health Organization Region for Europe in 01/2020 and received valuable feedback and information, which was taken into consideration for the preparation of the research plan or the implementation of the HBM4EU-MOM study.

As a Member State of the European Union, Cyprus works closely with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The SGL/MOH-CY participates in EFSA's Advisory Forum, it houses the National Focal Point to EFSA and participates in the relative scientific – and communications experts – networks. Data on mercury in the food chain (and relative consumption data) are communicated to EFSA in a harmonized way.

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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▼ ART. 18: PUBLIC INFORMATION, AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

**18.1. Have measures been taken to promote and facilitate the provision to the public of the kinds of information listed in article 18, paragraph 1?**

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

**If yes, please indicate the measures that have been taken and the effectiveness of those measures**

- Development of pollutant release and transfer registry according to the EU regulation.
- Development and exchange of educational and public awareness materials at the national and international level by informative leaflet publication.
- Please see under §16.1. The dietary guidelines for pregnant women, which were developed in 2020 are now being evaluated in the frame of the HBM4EU-MOM study, using mercury biomonitoring in scalp hair of participating pregnant women and detailed interviews using harmonized questionnaires. The study engaged Cypriot health care providers in the Cypriot cohort of HBM4EU-MOM. Their opinions about the usefulness of the study are also being explored. The results of the study are expected to be available in 2022.

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

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**▼ ART. 19: RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING**

**19.1. Has the party undertaken any research, development and monitoring in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 19?**

☒ Yes

☐ No

**If yes, please describe these actions**

(a) Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) was established, which is an Inventory of Emissions to Air, Releases to land and Transfer of waste.

(b) Modelling and geographically representative monitoring of levels of mercury and mercury compounds in vulnerable populations in the frame of existing European studies and the new MOM study of HBM4EU. Also monitoring in environmental media, including biota such as fish, in the frame of CYY governmental monitoring and control programs.

(c) Assessments of the impact of mercury and mercury compounds on human health

(d) Harmonized methodologies for the activities undertaken under subparagraphs (b) and (c);

Activities build in the frame of existing European networks (HBM4EU), planned networks (PARC)

**Part E – Additional comments on the article in free text if the party chooses to do so**

{Empty}

**▼ COMMENTS**

**Part C: Comments regarding possible challenges in meeting the objectives of the Convention (Art. 21, para. 1)**

{Empty}

**▼ SUPPLEMENTAL – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**Supplemental: Part D: Comments regarding the reporting format and possible improvements, if any**

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