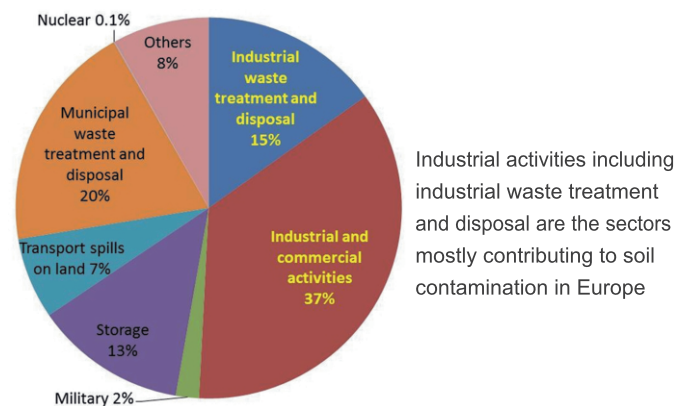


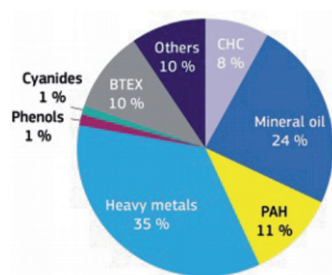
Background

Industrially contaminated sites (ICSs) are of high concern from a public health perspective, due to the presence of hazardous contaminants and their potential health effects on local populations. About 5.7 CSs per 10,000 citizens has been estimated in Europe.

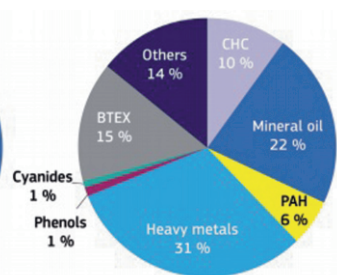


Around CSs similar pattern of contaminants are measured in soil, sludge, sediment, and ground and surface water

Soil, sludge and sediment



Ground and surface water



Progress in the Management of Contaminated Sites in Europe. Report EUR 26376. Luxembourg, JRC- 2014.

The health dimension

The health impact (HI) of some ICSs has been ascertained and can be substantial, especially in vulnerable subgroups like children. However, the overall HI of ICSs in Europe is still unknown. Characterizing the HI of ICSs is very challenging:

- Multiple sources and heterogeneous hazards (soil, air, water and food chain)
- Complex exposure scenarios
- Multiple aetiology of most diseases
- Complexity of the socioeconomic context, including Issues of environmental justice and inequalities

“Contaminated sites” are one of the complex factors described by the Road Map towards the 6th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health led by WHO (World Health Organization).

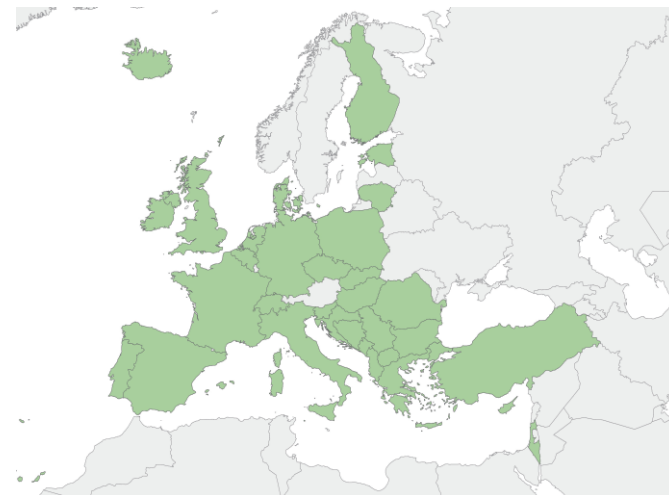
Work in the Action is also aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

The Action objectives

The main objective of the Action is to establish and consolidate a European network of experts and institutions, and develop a common framework for research and response on environmental health issues related to ICSs. These goals will be reached through conferences, workshops, training and dissemination activities. Specific information materials (fact sheets, leaflets, brochures, reports and publications) will be disseminated with special attention to the main target groups who will have major benefit from the Action: local communities, governments at various levels (national, regional, local), government agencies, health authorities, environmental protection agencies, and the research community.

Participation to COST Action IS1408

The Action IS1408 involves about 120 researchers, and experts from environment and health sectors representing 32 countries (June 17, 2016).



The Action is officially supported by:

- WHO, Regional Office for Europe
- European Commission (DG Environment and DG JRC)

Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, FYR Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom

Work plan of the COST Action IS1408

The Action is articulated in four interconnected Working Groups, characterized by a multidisciplinary and multinational participation.

WG1. Environmental and health data

WG1 Chair: Piedad Martin-Olmedo, ES

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Environment and health data in ICSs are sometimes not available, and can be sparse and not well organized. WG1 addresses this critical issue by highlighting what is needed and how data should be validated and organized to make feasible the study of the health impact of ICSs.

WG2. Exposure assessment

WG2 Chair: Kees de Hoogh, CH

c.dehoogh@unibas.ch

How much of the environmental contaminations caused by industrial activities do result in relevant human exposure? WG2 identifies the best suitable methodologies and strategies to estimate the exposure in populations residing in or close to ICSs.

WG3. Health risk and impact assessment

WG3 Chair: Otto Hanninen, FI

otto.hanninen@thl.fi

Residents in industrially contaminated sites and other stakeholders often ask whether a health risk exists and how much of the disease burden is attributable to such residency. WG3 addresses this complex issues by identifying the best available methods applicable to the variety of ICSs across Europe.

WG4. Risk management and communication

WG4 Chair: Roberta Pirastu, IT

roberta.pirastu@uniroma1.it

How credible is the claim of the existence of a problem, either in terms of environmental contamination or health effects in ICSs? Are vulnerable groups (children, women and disadvantaged communities) most affected? WG4 lists criteria and methods for evaluating the credibility of the evidence; it develops guidance on risk management and risk communication on environmental health risks in ICSs.

What can we do?

In response to ICSs involved parties can evaluate exposure and risk, communicate effectively on environmental health risk and measures, remediate to clean up, adapt to cope with existing ICSs and prevent any more contamination.

Procedures for the transfer of scientific findings into the policy making process will be proposed by the Action, that will ultimately provide Governments and local Authorities with resources and guidance on how to contribute to effective communication with the local populations, media and other stakeholders.

Contacts with the Country representatives involved in the Action can be found at:

www.cost.eu/COST_Actions/isch/IS1408?management

Contacts



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Stakeholder Dialogue Coordinator

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Action's website (<http://www.icshnet.eu/>)



Industrially Contaminated Sites
and Health Network

www.icshnet.eu



The environmental performance of European industry has improved in recent decades. However, the sector is still responsible for significant amounts of pollution to air, water and soil, as well as generation of waste
European Environment Agency
(<http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2015/europe/industry>)



WHO Collaborating Centre
for Environmental Health
in Contaminated Sites