

IARC Monographic on the Identification of Carcinogenic Hazards to Humans

On 3 July 2026, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) published news on the Agency's on-going work on [Volume 142: Butyl benzyl phthalate \(BBP or BBzP\), dibutyl phthalate \(DBP\), and diisononyl phthalate \(DINP\)](#). The full report will be available in 2027, as part of Volume 142 of the IARC Monographs.

According to the IARC statement, the Working Group evaluated BBP (or BBzP), DBP, and DINP as possibly carcinogenic to humans (Group 2B). The classification Group 2B is the third of IARC's four classification categories and is assigned when there is **limited evidence in humans** and/or **less than sufficient evidence in experimental animals**. It is a lower category than Group 1 ('Carcinogenic to humans') and Group 2A ('Probably carcinogenic to humans').

The categories of the classification indicate the strength of the evidence that an agent may be capable of causing cancer, technically referred to as 'hazard'. They do not assess the likelihood that cancer will occur at a specific level of exposure, technically referred to as 'risk' (see: [IARC Monographs Q&A](#)). As such, an IARC classification does not in itself establish that a substance poses a cancer risk under normal conditions of use or exposure. The evaluation by IARC does not have an impact on the regulatory status of BBP, DBP and DINP, including regulatory risk assessments and classification and labelling. IARC classifications are not legally binding.

IARC concluded that the evidence for cancer in humans was inadequate for BBP, DBP and DINP. In parallel, scientific and regulatory assessments consider whether effects observed in laboratory animals are relevant to humans. For DINP, key tumour findings have been linked to rodent-specific mechanisms that are not generally considered predictive of human cancer risk.

In the European Union, BBP and DBP, which are low-molecular weight ortho-phthalates, are already subject to significant regulatory controls. DINP, a high-molecular weight ortho-phthalate, is used as an alternative to low-molecular weight ortho-phthalates in a range of applications. The substance itself is also evaluated by relevant competent authorities on the basis of an extensive dataset prepared under REACH Regulation. DINP is not classified for any hazard class according to UN-GHS and EU CLP.

European Plasticisers will continue to follow the IARC process and contribute to science-based discussions through constructive dialogue with relevant stakeholders. The sector remains engaged in supporting the safe use of plasticisers and contributing to the EU's sustainability goals.

For any questions, please contact the European Plasticisers Secretariat.

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