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World Health Organization

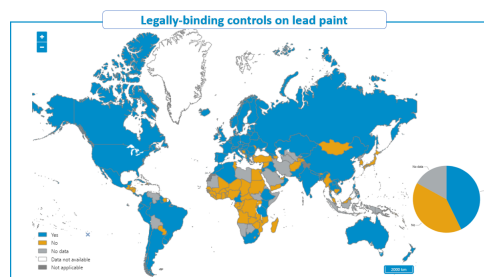
Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint

Eliminating lead paint matters! | March 2022



## Introduction

Though the COVID-19 global pandemic continues, the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (the Alliance) has made significant progress over the last year to work with countries and other stakeholders toward the phase-out of the manufacture, sale and import of paints containing lead through the establishment of laws. As of 31 December 2021, 84 countries had confirmed that they have legally binding controls on lead in paint, which accounts for 43% of all countries around the world. Visit the [Global Progress Toward Eliminating Lead Paint map](#) for the latest information about the status of laws in your country and region.



This continuing effort will prevent many future generations, in particular children, from being exposed to lead that would have been in paint used in homes, schools and playgrounds.

The Alliance's work has been featured in the [2021 United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\) Annual Report](#), and in a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and World Health Organization (WHO) which includes collaboration on protecting children by reducing exposure to toxic substances, in particular lead-based paint. Additionally, the [Toolkit for establishing laws to eliminate lead paint](#) was updated with the latest information.

In 2021, the Alliance Secretariat (UNEP and WHO) approved a new addendum to the Business Plan, committing to the goal of having 100 countries with lead paint laws by 2023. Moving toward this goal, the Alliance is pleased to present its March newsletter, highlighting new updates to support its shared efforts and recent successes, including recent and upcoming events, progress toward laws, new tools, success stories from the Alliance Advisory Council, and lead paint in the news. Below you can also learn more about how you can continue to take

action towards elimination of lead paint to make a difference at national, regional and global levels.

We hope you will use these materials to plan or promote effective programs to work towards eliminating lead paint. Wishing you all a safe and healthy year without added lead!

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## Recent and Upcoming Events

### *International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW)*

In October 2021, WHO hosted the [9<sup>th</sup> annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action](#). The theme of the week was “Working together for a world without lead paint.” Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, a strong interest in contributing to the campaign was shown by governments, non-governmental organizations, academia, the paint industry, and other institutions who were actively involved in

organizing awareness-raising events. Partners planned 104 events in 58 countries to accelerate progress toward the global phase out of lead paint. Ongoing participation from organizations and governments over multiple years shows the continuing efforts needed to eliminate lead paint.



WHO hosted a newly revamped [campaign website](#) including all the materials made available for the campaign, with a registration platform created for event organizers to inform about planned events, [campaign materials](#) that could be adapted for national/regional programmes and a [list of registered events](#). Moreover, a range of new resources were developed and updated:

- [Chemicals of very high concern: Lead](#) – This website provides tools and guidance on advocacy and awareness-raising in support to governments to build momentum in countries toward development, adoption and implementation of lead paint laws.
- [The need to eliminate lead paint](#) – This infographic and its accompanying [video](#) provide information on why lead is toxic, ways to protect against lead poisoning and how to reduce risk from lead exposure.
- [WHO’s Science in Five: Lead poisoning prevention](#) – In this episode, WHO’s Lesley Onyon answers the questions: How big a public health problem is lead poisoning? What are the sources of lead poisoning and who are at risk? What can you do to protect yourself?
- [Exposure to lead: a major public health concern](#) – This WHO document provides concise information about chemicals in general, including sources of exposure to lead, health impacts, guideline values for lead in environmental media, and risk mitigation measures.
- [Factsheet on lead poisoning and health](#) – This WHO document presents key facts on lead, the sources and routes of exposure, the health effects of lead exposure in

children and adults and the burden of diseases from lead exposure.

- [Questions and answers on lead poisoning](#) – This WHO resource provides answers to 15 questions about lead in general, lead paint and the Alliance.
- [WHO Global Health Observatory: Regulations and controls on lead paint](#) – This is an interactive map and database providing information on the status of lead paint in countries updated in September 2021 for the ILPPW and in December 2021 for the upcoming Global Status Update.



### *Lead in Paint Community of Practice (LiP CoP)*

The Lead in Paint Community of Practice brings together global practitioners from different sectors in a learning network about the elimination of lead paint. The most recent session, “[Is there lead in my paint? All about testing and labs](#),” took place on 8 December 2021. Presenters included representatives from UNEP, the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Israel’s Ministry of Health, and Mercer University. The discussion included the role of lead paint testing in eliminating lead paint: for awareness raising, for regulatory development and implementation, and for research to compare screening and compliance testing applications. A summary of the discussion with important takeaways is available in [English](#) and [French](#). [Join the LiP CoP](#) to be notified of all events and receive additional materials. The following [upcoming LiP CoP sessions](#) are available to the public.

- March 9: “Lead Paint Testing: Case Studies of Impact” at 14h00–15h30 GMT +2 [Register here](#)
- May 18: “Transitioning to paints without added lead: guidance and experience in reformulation,” at 15h00–16h30 GMT +2
- July 13: “Preparing for the 10th International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week” at 14h00–15h30 GMT +2.
- November 16: “Compliance with Lead Paint Laws,” at 14h00–15h30 GMT +2.

## Newly Released Global Tools

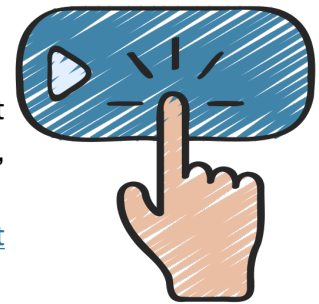
- Working with our partners from industry, civil society, inter-governmental organizations

and governments, the Alliance has updated its [Toolkit for establishing laws to eliminate lead in paint](#) hosted on UNEP's website. The toolkit provides stakeholders with useful information to galvanize action, with detailed modules on impacts of lead paint, awareness-raising, testing, legal considerations, industry involvement, and case studies from countries and regions that have adopted a lead paint law.

- [Guideline for clinical management of exposure to lead](#) – The purpose of this WHO Guideline is to assist physicians in making decisions about the diagnosis and treatment of lead exposure for individual patients and in mass poisoning incidents. It is accompanied by an [executive summary](#) and a [video](#).

## What can you do? Take Action

- Do you know the latest status of laws in your country or region? To keep up with progress about laws passed in 2021 or to see when existing laws were passed, check out the UNEP SAICM [Lead paint law status interactive map](#), based on the WHO data. You can find the results of lead paint testing in your country on IPEN's [Lead Levels in Paint Around the World](#) page.
- Ready to make progress on establishing laws in your country? The [Toolkit for establishing laws to eliminate lead paint](#) has great information to support your efforts.
- Wherever you are in the process of establishing laws, the Lead in Paint Community of Practice (LiP CoP) can help you learn the essentials and connect with like-minded colleagues! [Join the conversation](#) and [register now](#) for the March LiP CoP discussion.
- The Alliance has recently adopted a [Three-year action plan](#), focusing on four key action areas and ideas for activities for a wide range of stakeholders. Check out this great resource to see how you can be part of the action!



## Progress Towards Laws

In 2021, five countries passed new laws (Georgia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Morocco, Peru and Ukraine) and one country updated an existing lead paint law (Jordan). Results since the last newsletter are described below.



### *New Laws and Amendments*

Lao People's Democratic Republic:  
The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR established its ["Decision on the Control of Lead](#)



### *Meetings and Workshops for Law Development*

ECOWAS: In November 2021, the Economic Commission of West African

[Element in Paints or Coating Products No. 4566/MONRE](#)”, with a 90 ppm limit. The official text is gazetted here (in Laotian).



### Draft Laws Reviewed

**Jamaica:** In December 2021, the Legal Team commented on the draft Jamaican Standard Specification for the Limit of Lead Content in Paints, which sets a 90 ppm total lead limit in paints and varnishes. In January 2022, the Technical Committee of the Bureau of Standards Jamaica reviewed the public comments on the draft Jamaican Standard Specification for the Limit of Lead Content in Paints, which sets a 90 ppm total lead limit in paints and varnishes.

**Indonesia:** The Legal Team of the Lead Paint Alliance will provide comments through the WHO country office on revised drafts of four voluntary lead paint standards (decorative paint, vehicle repainting systems, paint cans and heat reflective paint). All standards establish a 90 ppm limit on lead in paint and are open for public comment from Indonesian entities until 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2022. To build support for a regulation to make the voluntary standards mandatory, IPEN NGOs *Nexus3 Foundation* and the *Indonesian Center for International Law (ICEL)* submitted a [Policy Recommendation](#) to the President Staff Office (KSP) advocating for the regulation of lead paint, prohibition of the importation of lead-based pigments; and incentivization of organic pigments and other alternatives to lead.

**States (ECOWAS)** Technical Harmonization Committee met again to discuss the initial round of comments on the ECOWAS draft standard. As an outcome, a revised standard was developed and is currently undergoing a public comment phase.

**Malaysia:** In January 2022, the Technical Working Group (TWG) of the Department of Standards Malaysia had their second meeting to develop a new Malaysian Standard for Lead-Free Paint in Architectural Coatings. The TWG agreed to set a 90 ppm limit for lead (dry weight) in architectural coatings.

**Niger:** In December 2021, a multistakeholder workshop was organized in Niger by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development together with the Ministry of Public Health, Population and Social Affairs to launch the lead paint work and to discuss a suitable approach for Niger.

**Tunisia:** In November 2021, the IPEN NGO *l'Association de l'éducation environnementale pour les futures (AEEFG)*, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health organized a workshop to discuss the latest version of the draft regulatory order, which sets a 90 ppm limit on lead in paint. The text of the draft regulatory order is currently under juridical review by the MoE.

**Zambia:** In December 2021, the IPEN NGO *Children's Environmental Health Foundation* facilitated a consultative meeting with the Zambia Environmental Management Agency, the Ministry of Health and other

Madagascar: In January 2021, the Legal Team commented on the revised draft Malagasy Experimental Standard on Paint Products–Admissible Lead Content and Specifications. The draft has already been validated by the Technical Committee in charge of the related work with the total lead content of 90ppm.

Moldova: In October 2021, Moldova shared its draft Government Decision Health Regulation restricting lead in paint and similar coating materials with the Legal Team of the Lead Paint Alliance for comments. The draft regulation is being considered by the responsible authority on chemicals management for review.

South Africa: In December 2021, the Legal Team provided comments on the draft “Regulations Relating to Lead Paint or Coating Materials” during the public comments period. In January 2021, comments on Lead Sampling and Screening Guideline for Environmental Health Practitioners were also shared.

relevant stakeholders from various local government units regarding the development of a regulatory instrument to phase out lead in paint.

## Success Stories from the Advisory Council

In October 2021, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the draft [Strategy to Reduce Lead Exposures and Disparities in U.S. Communities \(Lead Strategy\)](#) for public comment. EPA’s Lead Strategy will utilize the full suite of EPA authorities, expertise, and resources to reduce lead exposure. The strategy includes EPA’s work on the Lead Paint Alliance.



The University of Nairobi organized a series of activities during the ninth International Lead Poisoning Prevention week of action. [The events were live-streamed](#) and involved 50 key stakeholders drawn from various organizations and Institutions who participated face to face by giving keynote speeches, oral narratives, a matching walk with related awareness information, which was followed by a technical workshop.

In Republic of Moldova, a Regulation drafted by the working group was presented and debated during an [Intersectoral Workshop](#) in October. All the provisions of the Regulation were analyzed in detail and all stakeholders were informed, including domestic paint and varnish manufacturers. Following these discussions, participants supported the draft Government Decision on the Sanitary Regulation for the limitation of lead in paints with some amendments and additions for further promotion in the manner established by law, while making several suggestions for improving the draft Regulation, which was subsequently updated and sent to the Ministry of Health.

The [International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety](#) organized a series of webinars in January 2022 on lead exposure and children. The aim of this webinar was to discuss the most recent findings of lead exposure (monitoring, identification methods), the level of health effects in children (related to different forms of exposure) and the way forward to reduce this global problem.

In October 2021, 48 IPEN NGOs in 35 countries took part in the 2021 ILPPW by carrying out [awareness-raising activities](#). IPEN also organized a [webinar](#) on “*Catalyzing the Global Phase-Out of Lead Paints.*” In addition, IPEN NGOs in six Asian countries conducted [new analytical studies](#) on solvent-based paints, including industrial paints, that were sold in the local market. The studies showed that lead paints were still manufactured and sold in countries where lead paint laws exist such as in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Philippines, and Vietnam, and more so in Indonesia which has yet to adopt a legally binding lead paint law. Finally, IPEN released a [statement](#) fully committing to the goal of total lead paint elimination in all countries.

## Lead Paint in the News

*These articles do not necessarily reflect the views or work of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint.*

- [Nearly half the world's kids are exposed to dangerous levels of lead](#) (Vox, 14 January 2022)
- [Philippine Study: 37 spray paint products exceed legal lead content limit](#) (*BusinessMirror*, 11 January 2022)
- [CARPIN hails move to protect Jamaicans from lead paint exposure](#) (*Jamaica Information Service*, 5 January 2022)
- [High lead levels found in solvent-based domestic paints in Indonesia](#) (*Asia Pacific Coatings Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 4, November 2021)
- [NGO lobbies to list lead paint pigments under Rotterdam Convention](#) (*Chemical Watch*, 3 November 2021)
- [Accelerate efforts to phase out lead-based paints in Kenya](#) (*The Standard*, 2 November 2021)
- [Implementation of Standard on Lead in Paint in Nepal](#) (WHO, 30 October 2021)
- [CDC Updates Blood Lead Reference value for Children](#) (*US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, 28 October 2021)
- [South Africa: Action to Eliminate Lead Paint Hazards in SA](#) (*AllAfrica*, 25 October 2021)
- Tunisia has not banned the use of lead paint in homes and schools / [La Tunisie n'a pas interdit l'utilisation de la peinture au plomb dans les foyers et les écoles](#)

(WebManagerCenter, 30 November 2021)

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Read more about the Lead Paint Alliance on [www.unep.org/noleadinpaint](http://www.unep.org/noleadinpaint)

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