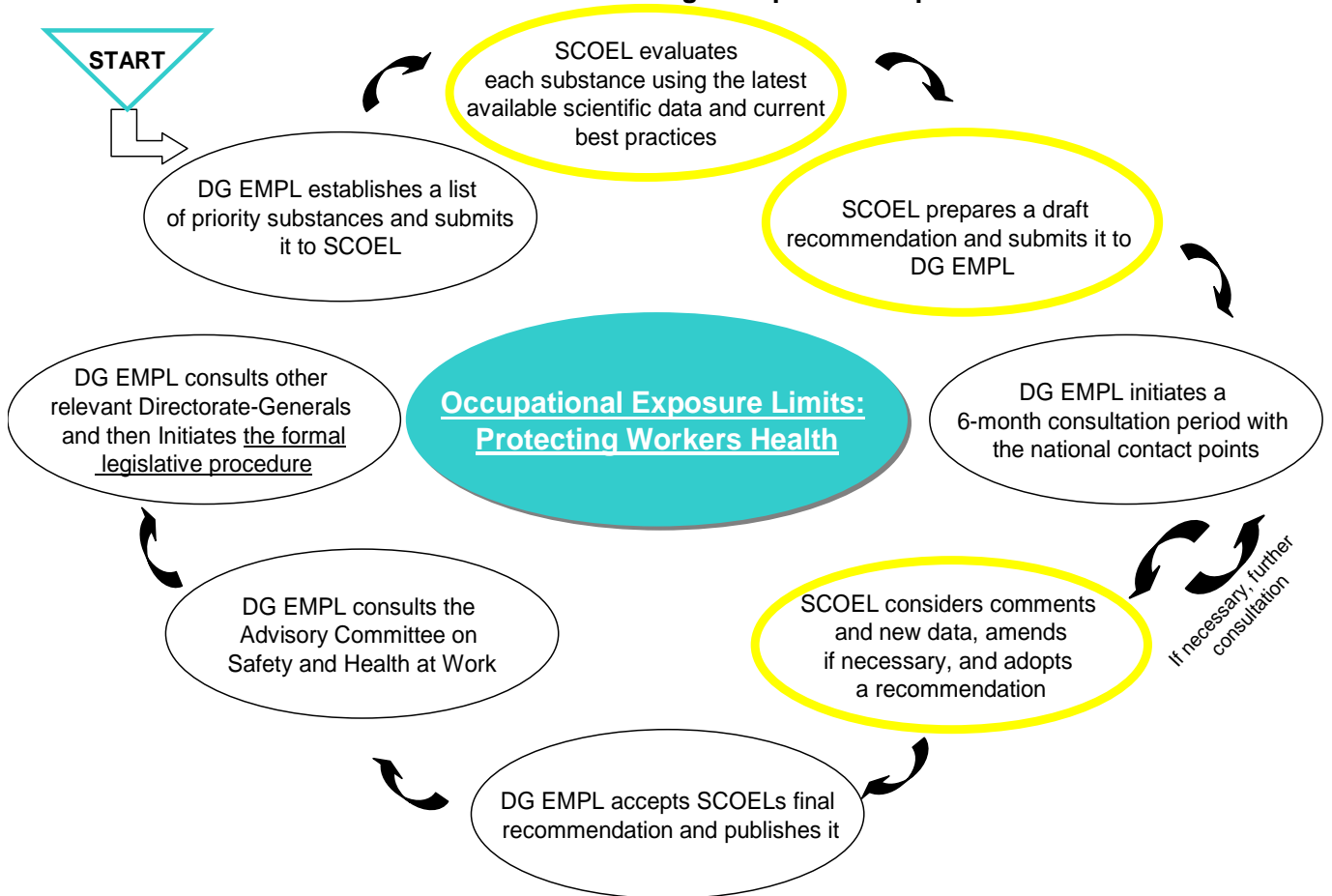




SCOEL's involvement in setting Occupational Exposure Limits



Occupational Exposure Limit Values: Protecting Workers Health

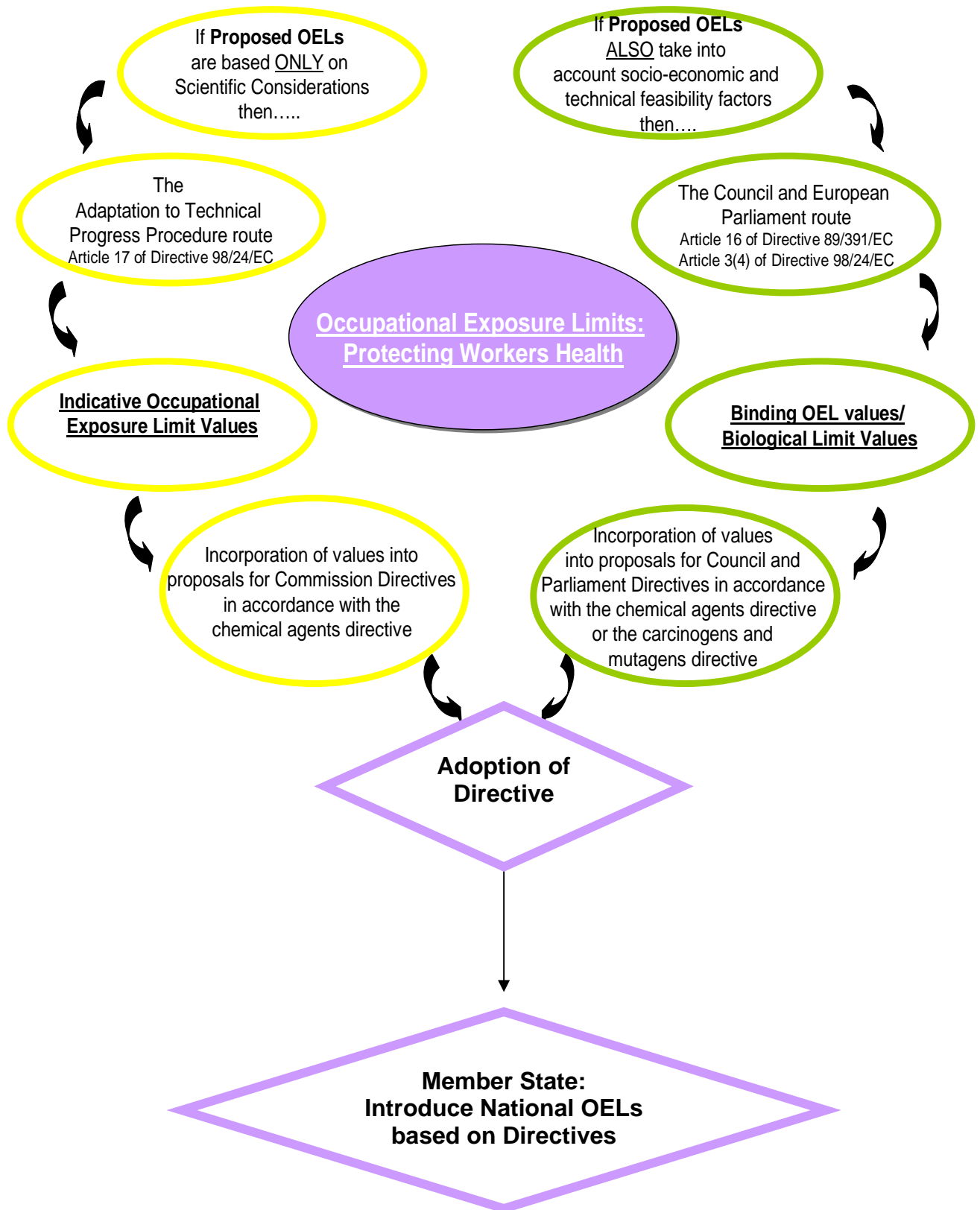
There are three main types of limit values:

- Indicative Occupational Exposure Limit Values (IOELVs)
- Binding Occupational Exposure Limit Values (BOELVs)
- Biological Limit Values (BLVs)

DG EMPL consults with the Advisory Committee of Safety and Health at Work (ACSH) in developing OELs.

When an OEL is proposed by DGEMPL, the legislative procedure for its adoption can take one of two routes:

The Formal Legislative Procedure for developing EU OELs



Significance of EU- Indicative Occupational Exposure Limit Values (IOELVs)

Community IOELVs are health-based, non-binding values, derived from the most recent scientific data available and taking into account the availability of measurement techniques. They set threshold levels of exposure below which, in general, no detrimental effects are expected for any given substance after short term or daily exposure over a working life time. They are European objectives to assist the employers in determining and assessing risks.

Socio-economic and technical feasibility factors are not taken into account when establishing IOELVs.

Art 3 Council Directive 98/24/EC

For any chemical agent for which an indicative OEL value is established at EU level, Member States must establish a national exposure limit value, taking into account the Community indicative limit value, determining its nature in accordance with national legislation and practice.

Art 3 (3) Council Directive 98/24/EC

The Directives:

- [Council Directive 98/24/EC](#)
- [Directive 2000/39/EC](#), establishing a first list of IOELVs
- [Directive 2006/15/EC](#), establishing a second list of IOELVs.
- [Directive 91/322/EEC](#), which was based on an earlier legal framework ([Directive 80/1107/EEC](#)), is still in force.
- [Directive 89/391/EC](#)

Aiming at a better support in protecting the health and safety of workers exposed to chemicals, a consolidated unofficial list of the current IOELVs is given below.

Significance of EU- Binding Occupational Exposure Limit Values (BOELVs)

BOELVs take account of socio-economic and technical feasibility factors as well as the factors considered when establishing IOELVs. Therefore, when setting a BOELV policy considerations are of major importance.

Art 3 (4) Council Directive 98/24/EC

For any chemical agent for which a BOELV value is established at EU level, Member States must establish a corresponding national binding OEL value which can be stricter, but cannot exceed the Community limit value.

Art 3 (5) Council Directive 98/24/EC

Biological Limit Values (BLVs)

A Biological Limit Value is a reference value presented as the concentration in the appropriate biological medium of the relevant agent, its metabolite, or indicator of effect.

Art 2 (e) Council Directive 98/24/EC

For any chemical agent for which a Binding BLVs is established at EU level, Member States must establish a corresponding national binding BLV based on, but cannot exceed the Community limit value.

Art 3 (7) Council Directive 98/24/EC

To date there is only one binding BLV, that of inorganic lead and its compounds.

Annex I Council Directive 98/24/EC

Criteria for the selection of priority substances

When selecting candidate priority substances for setting OELs, the following criteria are taken into account:

- Epidemiological evidence including reported cases of ill-health in the workplace
- Availability of toxicological data
- Severity of effects
- Number of persons exposed
- Availability of data on exposure
- Availability of measurement methods