

Contact: Laurens Rutten: press@beuc.eu
Date: 07/02/2023
Reference: BEUC-PR-2023-001

Proposed ban on 'forever chemicals' essential step towards toxic-free consumer lives

Today, the European Chemicals Agency published details of a request by four EU Member States [1] and Norway to restrict the use of Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). PFAS are a family of greaseproof, waterproof, and non-stick industrial chemicals used in many consumer products. Examples include clothing, carpets, cleaning agents, as well as oil-repellent and heat-resistant food packaging.

BEUC supports this restriction as some PFAS are considered toxic and have been associated with health concerns, such as cancer or harming the development of foetuses. In addition, PFAS are inert to most natural breakdown processes and persist in humans and the environment for decades – which has led them to be called 'forever chemicals'.

Monique Goyens, Director General at BEUC, said:

"The use of PFAS in consumer products should be banned, which is why consumer organisations support this proposal. We call on the EU to proceed as fast as possible with this restriction, while keeping the level of ambition high to protect people from forever chemicals."

Speaking about the process of restricting chemicals under the EU's REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) law, Monique commented:

"These chemicals should have never been put on the market in the first place. As the EU reforms its flagship law, which is expected to happen this year, it should ensure that REACH allows for early and precautionary action before the use of harmful chemicals becomes widespread in consumer products."

[1] Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, and Sweden.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please let us know.