



The Consumer Voice in Europe

EVP Stéphane Séjourné
 Commissioner Jessika Roswall
 European Commission
 Rue de la Loi 200

BE – Brussels

By email

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Subject: PFAS are widely present in everyday products, new findings by European consumer groups show

Dear Executive Vice-President Séjourné,
 Dear Commissioner Roswall,

In follow-up to the High-Level Strategic Dialogue on the Chemicals Industry Package, we would like to share with you recent test findings by consumer groups within the BEUC network on the prevalence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in everyday products. Overall, our members' results indicate that PFAS are present in almost 30% of tested products including notably some substances that are illegal under EU regulations. These findings highlight the urgent need to protect current and future generations against PFAS and to step up enforcement of existing EU rules meant to safeguard consumers and the environment.

The Political Guidelines rightly commit the Commission to provide clarity on the REACH restriction process for PFAS. In support of this commitment, eight BEUC members¹ decided to investigate the presence of PFAS in consumer goods. In total, the test sampled 221 everyday products available on the European market, either from physical stores (189 products) or from online marketplaces (32 products) such as Amazon, TEMU or Shein where consumers are likely to buy products directly from traders based outside Europe.

In brief, the test results show that:

- 65 out of the 221 tested products had total organic fluorine levels above the limit foreseen in the proposed universal PFAS restriction. Through targeted analysis, the test detected specific PFAS substances such as fluorotelomers in many of these products.
- Almost all 16 product types covered in the test contained PFAS. This includes adhesive bandages, aprons, baking paper, cushions, kinesiology tape, menstrual underwear, microwave-popcorn, placemats, and tea bags.

¹ Altroconsumo (Italy), Consumentenbond (the Netherlands), Forbrugerrådet TÆNK (Denmark), Forbrukerrådet (Norway), Testachats / Testaankoop (Belgium), UFC-Que Choisir (France), Verein für Konsumenteninformation (Austria), and Zveza Potrošnikov Slovenije (Slovenia). The test was coordinated through International Consumer Research & Testing (ICRT).

- 46 products (21%) contained specific PFAS substances above current or upcoming EU restrictions. This included:
 - o 19 products – or 9% – which contained illegal amounts of either PFOA-related substances or C9-C14 PFCA-related substances.
 - o 27 products which contained PFHxA-related substances. These substances will be restricted in consumer products as of October 2026.
- 16% of products bought via online marketplaces were non-compliant with current EU regulations. The prevalence of substances addressed by upcoming restrictions were in contrast comparatively lower than in products bought in physical stores.

Taken together, these findings underline the evident need to better safeguard consumer health and the environment by banning PFAS in everyday products. Encouragingly, the test shows that this is already feasible today as there are products without PFAS in almost all product categories meaning alternatives are available. Simultaneous EU action is also needed to phase-out all non-essential industrial applications to effectively minimize PFAS exposures via the environment including through air, food, and drinking water.

We therefore urge the European Commission to ensure the swift adoption of the universal PFAS restriction to effectively protect people and our planet against these harmful substances. Also, we encourage you to support Member States step up their efforts to enforce existing EU PFAS regulations including at customs and on online marketplaces.

A broader lesson of our members' findings is finally the need to simplify the REACH regulation to avoid another PFAS-like regulatory failure in future. This should include enabling authorities to take faster, protective action against harmful chemicals before their use becomes widespread across society. The REACH revision likewise needs to provide Member States with enhanced enforcement tools to address online sales and imports including by regulating the role and responsibilities of online marketplaces.

We would warmly welcome an opportunity to discuss our members' findings with your services, as well as to present our recommendations for how REACH can be simplified and strengthened to prevent consumer exposure to harmful chemicals in their daily lives.

Yours sincerely,

Agustín Reyna
Director General