

Commissioner Sinkevičius had a meeting with industry representatives on PFAS on 4 July 2023 (16h00 to 17h00)

Organisations/companies represented: Apple; Dupont; Polestar; Carl Zeiss AG; Solarge; Hanon Systems Deutschland; Chemours; Cefic; Hydrogen EU; EPEE; FPG; Ionysis.

Also present: Staff from Cab Breton; Cab Vestager; Cab Von der Leyen; Cab Sinkevičius; DG ENV.

Commissioner said he had invited the participants to listen to their concerns on the PFAS restriction, in particular on their views on alternatives to PFAS, and the uses the participants considered essential. He highlighted we could not pre-empt the outcome of the work of the European Chemicals Agency, but that the Commission would continue to dialogue with the different sectors about this restriction. Transparency is needed for derogations, and therefore we need details, which can be supplied in the public consultation (open until 25 September). The EU is not alone, US and Canada are also taking actions. The chemicals industry has a lot of innovative power. This will establish leadership. He expressed appreciation for the innovative start-ups that were present.

Participants took the floor in a “tour de table”. The following comments were made:

1. Some uses of PFAS are still needed, as there are no alternatives.
2. Some participants stressed that fluoropolymers can be safely used.
3. A number of participants stressed that there are alternatives to PFAS which can be used in critical applications, and there is support for the restriction .
4. General comments:
 - We need a full inventory of where PFAS is used and we are working on it.
 - ECHA needs sufficient resources to deal with all the replies to the public consultation.
 - The restriction should be staggered, starting with consumer products and separate between consumer uses and industrial applications.
 - Investments for EU production and critical technologies should be strongly looked into.
 - What to do with waste from PFAS from water treatment– this needs to be taken into consideration.
 - It is important to increase the volume of alternatives. Speed up the money for research (including from Horizon).
 - Derogations must be well designed and encourage innovation.
 - Connect economic/financial support to developing alternatives, we need a pathway.
 - We must be smart, avoid relying on a few global PFAS suppliers.

The Commissioner clarified the process and the next steps, and committed to ensure that dialogue continues on such a broad restriction.