

# Belgium



## Key Links and publications from public authorities

- The regional Flemish government has published a [website](#) on which information is available on the projects and studies ongoing in Flanders regarding PFAS
- A subset of the site and the reports have been translated into English, which can be consulted [here](#)
- Specific links that can be highlighted in this respect are those on the [Flemish PFAS Action plan](#), and the [‘PFAS Verkenner’](#)
- Additional new information on innovative techniques will be added or announced on the mentioned general website, which will also be the case for reports following studies, etc.

## Recent Initiatives

### **National level:**

#### **Federal Public Service (FPS) of Health, Food Safety and Environment**

- Under the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility the FPS Health and Environment together with the FPS economy is developing a project call on chemical substitution under the so-called Belgian Builds Back Circular action plan. Projects that develop alternatives to PFAS will be under the scope of this call. The call will be launched in 2023 and projects will run for a maximum of 2 years.
- The services of Chemical Risk Management of the Federal Public Services of Health and Environment are working on a literature study regarding the use of PFAS in the household textile industry of Belgium. This study was commissioned to CENTEXBEL in 2022 and the results of this study are expected in the first half of 2023.
- In 2023, the service of Product Policy is looking at developing a national restriction on the use of PFAS in packaging.

#### **Federal Public Service of Economy**

Under the Belgium Builds Back Circular Plan, the Federal Public Service of Economy will organise a PFAS inventory study. In this study, Belgian Industry will be questioned on their use of PFAS substances in their activities. Furthermore, there will be a questionnaire on the knowledge of alternatives to PFAS, as well as the need for support considering the oncoming actions under EU REACH restrictions. This questionnaire will be started in 2023.

## Overview of Risk Reduction Approaches

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In the Walloon Government Soil legislation is enforced through the first Soil Decree passed in December 2008 and further renewed in March 2018. The Soil Decree provides trigger values for 50 usual pollutants (metals, BTEX, PAH, TPH and chlorinated solvents). When a chemical is targeted and quantified but not considered as a usual pollutant, the Soil Decree requests two public institutes specialized in the environmental field, ISSeP and SPAQuE, to be in charge of developing soil and groundwater screening values for these chemicals. The screening levels are chemical-specific concentrations for individual contaminants in soil and groundwater that warrant further investigation or site clean-up.

These screening levels are currently provided for 2 PFAS: PFOA and PFOS. All these screening levels and the associated data (physicochemical and toxicological properties as well as analytical methods) are available in a database published on the administration website. Some guidelines for soil experts are also available on the same website. These guidelines identify PFAS-risk activities, analytical methods, investigation strategy and risk analysis. Go to the [website](#).

## Policy approaches

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On the national level, Belgium has been putting forward an ambitious position on EU and international level in promoting the complete phase-out of PFAS substances, except for so-called essential uses, until alternatives have been found.

Belgium has been promoting this position in the following ways:

- Elements for an EU-strategy for PFASs” paper of September 27<sup>th</sup> 2019 has been signed by Belgium.
  - AOB point October 10<sup>th</sup> 2021 meeting
  - AOB point October 24<sup>th</sup> 2022 meeting
- Belgium has submitted a [statement on the Council Conclusion](#) of March 15<sup>th</sup> 2021.

Furthermore, Belgium has been submitting information on monitoring projects and studies regarding PFAS to ECHA and the EU Member States working on a universal PFAS ban.