Toxic-free toys - EU legislators take action against the most harmful chemicals

Yesterday evening Parliament and Council agreed on a revised Toy Safety law, including an extension of the generic restriction mechanism to endocrine disruptors, and a ban on bisphenols and PFAS. The deal will have to be approved by Council and Parliament, after which it will become law.

The old Toy Safety Directive from 2009 needed an update, particularly as an evaluation showed it was not protecting children from a range of harmful chemicals found in toys.

A big gap has now been closed: endocrine disruptors categories 1 and 2 will be banned once they are classified under Classification Labelling and Packaging Regulation (CLP). This is a promising sign for the REACH revision later this year, for which such an extension is also under discussion.

Legislators strengthened the Commission's proposal by introducing a ban on a group of 10 bisphenols, which have been identified by the European Chemicals Agency as having concerning hazardous properties. These are not covered by the extended generic restriction, as they are not yet classified under the CLP Regulation.

Market testing data shows widespread use of bisphenols in toys. A 2023 study by the Danish consumer organisation revealed a broad range of bisphenols are being used in teethers.

The restriction has also been extended to cover PFAS, similar to what was decided one year ago on the revision of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation.

The bans on bisphenols and PFAS were a key position of the Parliament's negotiation team, based on the previous Parliament position.

Ioana Bere, EU Policy advocate comments:

This is good news for children and parents across Europe, as EU legislators agreed to step up action against the most harmful chemicals in toys. It is an encouraging signal for the revision of the REACH Regulation.

We welcome Parliament's strong leadership in tackling the risks from bisphenols and achieving a ban on concerning ones in toys. We have known for decades about their endocrine disrupting effects, yet the Commission and Member States have failed to protect people.

The PFAS restriction is a step forward in the fight against pollution from these forever chemicals. By restricting PFAS in toys, co-legislators have made the Toy Safety law future-proof and aligned with standards in other parts of the world.

Read more:

- Press release from the Commission
- Press release from the Council
- Press release from the Parliament