

Newsletter Issue 1/2026

The cost of PFAS pollution for our society

An EU-commissioned study finds that, without stronger controls, the cumulative societal cost of PFAS pollution across Europe could reach €330 billion to €1.7 trillion by 2050, with emissions nearly tripling from 2020 levels, 11,500–14,200 contaminated sites, and roughly one in six Europeans (≈76.5 million) facing high exposure. It also highlights the associated health burdens (e.g., cancers, endocrine and immune dysfunctions) and frames the estimates as a conservative but urgent call to action.

In parallel, the European Commission stresses that upstream measures are economically prudent: treating polluted water alone would exceed €1 trillion, while tackling releases at the source by 2040 could avoid ≈€110 billion, with newborns, children, residents near contaminated sites and workers most at risk. Recent EU rules now require harmonised PFAS monitoring in drinking water, reinforcing the case for swift restrictions and comprehensive surveillance to curb long-term health and environmental costs.

Source: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2bcea765-fbf8-11f0-8da5-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>