



Zero PM

Zero pollution of Persistent, Mobile substances

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The present document has not yet received final approval from the European Commission and may be subject to changes.



Note about contributors

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Project information

Project period: October 2021 to September 2026
 Duration (no. of months): 60
 Web-site: www.zeropm.eu
 Project coordinator: Stiftelsen Norges Geotekniske Institutt (NGI), (NGI project no.: 20210423)

Project partners:



Summary

This report is deliverable 9.1 in the H2020 ZeroPM project. It provides information about the research involving human participants to be carried out by beneficiary 14 The University of Vienna. In ZeroPM work will be carried out to evaluate psychological aspects such as perceptions and intentions via the use of surveys, interviews and follow-up experiments. All human participant data collection and processing will be in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (GDPR).

For interviews, all participants will be sent an information sheet and consent form before the proposed interview date so that they can decide whether or not they want to take part in advance. They will be given the option to withdraw from the study at any point during or shortly after the interview before their responses have been anonymised. For survey and follow-up experiment participants, the information sheets and consent forms will be provided at the start of the online task. Participants can withdraw from the study at any time simply by closing their web-browser and not submitting their responses. All data will be anonymised by the survey company before being sent to the University of Vienna.

No part of the study will be started until full ethical approval for the relevant aspect has been granted. All templates of the informed consent/assent forms and information sheets (in language and terms intelligible to the participants) will be kept on file. Copies of opinions/approvals by ethics committees will be kept on file.



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1 Phase 1 interviews

Interviews will be targeted at a few dozen individuals (i.e., key stakeholders and some members of the public) to get a better understanding of their “mental models” of ZeroPM's core substances of interest, and to understand how different groups reason about ‘essential use’ – that is, cases in which the use of PM substances (more specifically PFAS) is deemed necessary. As personal data (such as telephone or email addresses) is needed to set up the interviews and because interviews will be recorded, these data are more sensitive than the other phases of data collection and are subject to further ethical requirements and management.

Participants will firstly read a participant information sheet (in advance; Appendix A) which explains in full the aims of the interview. The information sheet also informs participants of their right to withdraw, and the confidentiality of the data they provide.

They are then presented with a consent form (Appendix B). In line with the University of Vienna’s guidance on conducting online research, participants will be required to tick 11 boxes indicating that they consent to the conditions of the study.

The debrief page (Appendix C) will remind the respondent of the aims of the interview which they were introduced to on the participant information sheet as well as the contact information of the lead researcher and ethics board should they wish to know about the results of the study or have a complaint. All documentation shared with participants as well as Ethical Approval Notices will be kept on file.

The data will be stored on a secure server within the European Economic Area. After a period of data cleaning and preliminary analysis the anonymised dataset will be published as open data (in line with the requirements of open data policies).

The documents for the first phase of the study will be submitted to the University of Vienna Ethics Committee no later than 20/12/2021 for consideration by the Committee at the next meeting on 20/01/2022.

2 Phase 2 interviews

For the online survey, we will commission an international market research company to collect the data (through a sub-contract) to ensure the collection of representative samples of the adult population of targeted countries. We will ensure in the tendering process that the company chosen complies with data collection/data storage legislation in all countries that the data are collected in. Each participant responding to the online survey, regardless of which country they reside in, will consent to participate in the same way.

Similar templates for survey information (Appendix D), consent (Appendix E) and debrief sheets (Appendix C) will be produced for the survey with some adjustments due



to any specific requirements for survey data (to be confirmed with the relevant ethics committee).

Participants will be adult members of an online consumer panel (e.g., IPSOS, TNS Kantar, YouGov). These companies have worldwide panels of participants who sign up to websites which reward participation in surveys with small amounts of money. Eligible participants are emailed about the availability of a study (the format of this invitation email differs dependent on the website the respondent is signed up to) and can then proceed to complete it online until quotas of completed responses for each country are reached (i.e., to ensure representativeness). It will be primarily the responsibility of the market research company to ensure that all participants are aged over 18 by not sending any survey invitation to any panellist registered under this age. Additionally, we will ask participants to check a box on the consent form to indicate that they are aged over 18. No participant should complete more than one survey during the recruitment period, and the company will be instructed to only accept one completed survey from each IP address to avoid multiple entries by the same individual.

Use of a market research company to collect survey responses will avoid one of the weaknesses of survey methodologies (i.e., having a low response rate). The invitation to tender document will set out that as part of the contractual agreement, the market research company must collect 1000 nationally representative responses from each country by a date to be confirmed and that they provide detailed evidence of how representativeness is achieved. Only completed responses are recorded and rewarded with monetary payments (in differing instalments dependent on the specific website used to access the survey). Thus, it is not currently possible to determine how many participants exited the survey without completing it.

Once the raw data are provided by the third-party market research company, it will be destroyed by the company and only retained by ourselves. Thus, the University of Vienna will have overall control of the data generated. As with the interview data, all survey data will be stored on a secure server within the European Economic Area. All documentation shared with participants as well as Ethical Approval Notices will be kept on file. As the follow-up experiments will directly build upon the results of the interviews and survey, templates of follow-up experiment tasks will be provided at a later stage.

3 Phase 3 interviews

The third and final phase will involve the design and testing of labels and messages associated with products containing PM substances. We will aim to investigate what sorts of labels and messaging are effective in different societal groups (e.g., to raise awareness, trigger action), with the ultimate aim of reducing the consumption of products containing PM substances.



As in the prior phases, participants will firstly read a participant information sheet which explains in full the aims of the study. The information sheet also informs participants of their right to withdraw, and the confidentiality of the data they provide.

They are then presented with a consent form as described above and a debrief page. Again, participants will be adult members of an online consumer panel (e.g., IPSOS, TNS Kantar, YouGov). Then, people will be randomly assigned to one of several conditions (e.g., high detail labels/messaging vs. low detail labels/messaging) for comparison of effects on people's perception of PM substances. The results of Phase 3 will be twofold in: a) ascertaining what kinds of information to include about PM substances in products, and b) what sort of information works best for specific societal groups (e.g., varied by age, gender, education, nationality, etc.). As the generation of Phase 3 tasks will directly build upon the results from Phases 1-2, templates of Phase 3 tasks will be provided at a later stage.

Again, once the raw data are provided by the third-party market research company, it will be destroyed by the company and only retained by the University of Vienna. Again, the data will be stored on a secure server within the European Economic Area. After a period of data cleaning and preliminary analysis the anonymised dataset will be published as open data (in line with the requirements of open data policies). All documentation shared with participants as well as Ethical Approval Notices will be kept on file.

4 Documentation

Templates of the informed consent/assent forms and information sheets (in language and terms intelligible to the participants) will be kept on file and submitted to the REA upon request. Copies of opinions/approvals by ethics will be kept on file and submitted to the REA upon request.



APPENDICES: EXAMPLE STRUCTURE FOR INFORMATION, CONSENT AND DEBRIEF SHEETS USED IN DATA COLLECTION WITH HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

(THESE ARE FOR DEMONSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY AND THE FINAL DOCUMENTS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ETHICS COMMITTEE AND RETAINED ON RECEIVING CLEARANCE)

Appendix A: SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEWEES

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF COMMON CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering.

What is the aim of the project?

Chemicals like per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) play a role in many industries, including aerospace, automotive, construction, electronics, and the military, and can enhance the performance of everyday items in affordable ways, such as with non-stick cookware and rainproof clothing. However, several international groups have reported health risks associated with these persistent and mobile (PM) substances in people, animals and the environment (e.g., water sources). That is, these chemicals are very difficult to destroy or filter out using most common technologies (e.g., water filtration) and are very mobile, in that they can pass through water, land and air, and accumulate in animals and humans over time. Our project aims to find out what different groups of people know and think about PM substances (more specifically PFAS), in relation to their risks and benefits, and to understand in what cases people think these substances might be deemed necessary, despite the risks (that is, the 'essential use' concept). Ultimately, we aim to discover what sorts of information people require to make informed decisions about whether to buy and use products which contain PFAS.

What will participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to take part in a 20-30 minute long interview with a member of our research team.

The interview will cover:

1. Your thoughts on chemicals in daily life and where you think they are found.
2. Whether you have any concerns about specific chemicals for you/your family.
3. Your knowledge of and experience with PFAS substances.
4. Your ideas about cases of 'essential use' of PFAS substances.
5. Your thoughts on the benefits and risks of PFAS chemicals in daily life.

There are **no right or wrong answers** – we are genuinely interested in your views and beliefs.

Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the Project?

You can withdraw from the study at any point should you wish to do so without having to give a reason without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. To withdraw prior to or after the interview, please contact a member of the team telling us you no longer wish to take part, using your preferred means of communication. Any information/data relating to your participation will be destroyed. To withdraw during the interview, simply let the interviewer know that you would like to stop, and the interviewer will stop recording and terminate the session, and will destroy any audio data recorded up to that point. If you wish to withdraw after you have conducted the interview please contact the research team, and we will be destroy any information and data from your participation.

What data or information will be collected, how will it be kept confidential and what use will be made of it?

During the session, we will record audio only from the interview, and will then transcribe the recording. These transcriptions will be stored on a secure server at the University of Vienna. Following transcription, all audio recording will be destroyed to protect anonymity. We may wish to use quotes from the interview in dissemination of our findings (e.g., at conferences), but these quotes will be anonymous and non-identifiable. If you discuss any identifying information during the interview, we will not transcribe this information, but will destroy it when the audio recordings are destroyed.

Your transcript will only be identifiable by a code number that can be cross-referenced with your contact details, which will be stored in a separate secure location. This indirect and secure link to you contact details will be maintained only in case you wish to withdraw your data at a later point. Your personal data will not be used for any other purpose.

The results from the study will be communicated on the ZeroPM project website (<https://zeropm.eu>), and in policy reports, academic publications, meetings/conferences, press releases and media. The results may also be used in teaching or training materials for use in University activities and public engagement activities.

What if participants have any questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:

Prof Sabine Pahl
Urban and Environmental Psychology Group
University of Vienna
Tel: +43-1-4277-47150
Email: sabine.pahl@univie.ac.at



Complaints

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of University of Vienna Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints about the way in which this study has been carried out please contact the University of Vienna Research Ethics Committee:

Simone Kostenzer

T: +43-1-4277-18001

simone.kostenzer@univie.ac.at



Appendix B: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM FOR INTERVIEWEES

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF COMMON CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Having read the information on the information sheet, please tick every box below to acknowledge your understanding and proceed.

- | | Please
check box |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. I confirm that I have read the preceding page of information for this project. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected, by letting the researcher know. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by members of the project research team, including individuals from the University of Vienna where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I understand that the data collected during the study will be anonymised and retained in secure storage, except for an indirect and secure link to my contact details, should I wish to withdraw following my participation in the study. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. A fully anonymised dataset (i.e., all information gathered by the survey) including my responses will be made publicly accessible after (TBC) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I am aged 18 or above. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I agree to take part in the above project. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

I understand that taking part involves providing anonymised interview responses to be used for the purposes of:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Reports published in academic publications, the project website and media publications | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Inclusion in a digital archive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Shared with other researchers for use in future research projects | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Teaching or training materials for use in University activities and public engagement activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |

You are only able to take part in this interview if you have agreed to all the points on the preceding page. You will be compensated (TBC) for your participation in the study. The interview will take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in confidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society and it will not be possible to identify any particular individual or address in the results.



Appendix C: SAMPLE DEBRIEF

This is the end of the study. Thank you for taking part.

This study was conducted on behalf of the University of Vienna. Its aim is to better understand beliefs about common chemical substances found in everyday items, in particular those which contain persistent and mobile chemicals. These chemicals perform lots of useful functions in industry and daily life. However, scientific work has demonstrated that there may be health risks associated with exposure to these chemicals. In addition, their persistence and mobility make them difficult to remove from the environment, leading to bioaccumulation in animals and humans. As such, organizations are looking for solutions for and alternatives to the use of persistent and mobile substances. The information from this study will be used to inform partners across the ZeroPM project about what different groups of people across the EU think about these issues, and to ensure that a range of voices are heard in the discussion about the management of these chemicals.

What if participants have any questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:

Prof Sabine Pahl
Urban and Environmental Psychology Group
University of Vienna
Tel: +43-1-4277-47150
Email: sabine.pahl@univie.ac.at

Complaints

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Simone Kostenzer
T: +43-1-4277-18001
simone.kostenzer@univie.ac.at



Appendix D: SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET FOR ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF COMMON CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering.

What is the aim of the project?

Chemicals like per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) play a role in many industries, including aerospace, automotive, construction, electronics, and the military, and can enhance the performance of everyday items in affordable ways, such as with non-stick cookware and rainproof clothing. However, several international groups have reported health risks associated with these persistent and mobile (PM) chemicals in people, animals and the environment (e.g., water sources). That is, these chemicals are very difficult to destroy or filter out using most common technologies (e.g., water filtration) and are very mobile, in that they can pass through water, land and air, and accumulate in animals and humans over time. Our project aims to find out what different groups of people know and think about PM substances (more specifically PFAS substances), in relation to their risks and benefits, and to understand in what cases people think these substances might be deemed necessary, despite the risks (that is, the 'essential use' concept). Ultimately, we aim to discover what sorts of information people require to make informed decisions about whether to buy and use products which contain PFAS substances.

What will participants be asked to do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to complete a **15-20 minute survey**.

There are four sections to the survey:

- Section 1) **Your familiarity** with different everyday chemicals.
- Section 2) Your thoughts and beliefs about the **benefits and risks** of these substances.
- Section 3) What you think is meant by the term '**essential use**'.
- Section 4) Your beliefs about how everyday chemicals are/should be **managed**.
- Section 4) **Background information** to help us make sure we have listened to many different parts of society.



There are **no right or wrong answers** – we are genuinely interested in your views and beliefs.

Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the Project?

You can withdraw from the study at any point should you wish to do so without having to give a reason without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind. To withdraw, simply close the internet browser. Only completed questionnaires will be used in the final survey data.

What data or information will be collected, how will it be kept confidential and what use will be made of it?

Your survey responses will be collected and then turned into an aggregated and anonymous dataset that will be given to the research team at: The University of Vienna, Austria. The data sent to the research team will not contain any data that the research team could use to identify you. Your data will be stored on a secure server.

The results from this survey will be communicated on the ZeroPM project website (<https://zeropm.eu>), and in policy reports, academic publications, meetings/conferences, press releases and media. The results may also be used in teaching or training materials for use in University activities and public engagement activities. As we are not collecting any personal data from you, we will be unable to provide any personal feedback on your responses.

What if participants have any questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:

Prof Sabine Pahl
Urban and Environmental Psychology Group
University of Vienna
Tel: +43-1-4277-47150
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Appendix E: SAMPLE CONSENT FORM FOR ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND RISKS OF COMMON CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Having read the information on the previous page, please tick every box below to acknowledge your understanding and proceed.

- Please check box**
1. I confirm that I have read the preceding page of information for this project.
 2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time by closing my browser window without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected.
 3. I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by members of the project research team, including individuals from the University of Vienna where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data.
 4. I understand that the data collected during the study will be anonymised and retained in secure storage.
 5. A fully **anonymised** dataset (i.e. all information gathered by the survey) including my responses will be made publicly accessible after (TBC).
 6. I am aged 18 or above.
 7. I agree to take part in the above project.

I understand that taking part involves providing anonymised survey responses to be used for the purposes of:

1. Reports published in academic publications, the project website and media publications
2. Inclusion in a digital archive
3. Shared with other researchers for use in future research projects
4. Teaching or training materials for use in University activities and public engagement activities

You are only able to take part in this survey if you have agreed to all the points on the preceding page. Please click the back button below to review your answers or the forward button to exit the survey.



Your [survey company] Account will be credited with (TBC) points for completing the survey. The survey will take about 15-20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be treated in confidence in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society and it will not be possible to identify any particular individual or address in the results. Please click forward to continue...





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