

Contact: Johannes Kleis: +32 (0)2 789 24 01
Date: 17/02/2017

German regulator bans spying doll Cayla

An internet-connected doll has been banned by German regulators because it can be used to spy on people. The agency is asking parents to destroy the toy.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) welcomes the decision to ban the toy from the market. But the consequences are not satisfactory: consumers are now being left empty-handed and will struggle to get compensation.

In December 2016, research by the Norwegian Consumer Council, a BEUC member organisation, revealed that the internet-connected toys 'My Friend Cayla' and 'i-Que' failed basic consumer, security, and privacy rights. The case illustrates the striking lack of up-to-date EU legislation in protecting consumers effectively from unfair commercial practices and the new security and privacy breaches that are emerging through connected products.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"If connected toys, such as this speaking doll, can be hacked to spy on or talk to children, they must be banned. Cayla illustrates how unprotected consumers are in an increasingly connected world.

"Other EU countries should follow the example of the German regulator and ban this product from the market.

"This is not an isolated case. Many of these connected products are being sold to EU consumers and more will hit the market. We are concerned EU legislation is not fit enough for the challenges of the digital age. EU product laws need to catch up with digital developments to deal with threats such as hacking, data fraud or spying."

More about the connected toys report:

<http://www.beuc.eu/publications/consumer-organisations-across-eu-take-action-against-flawed-internet-connected-toys/html>

The press release from the Bundesnetzagentur:

https://www.bundesnetzagentur.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/2017/14012017_cayla.html?nn=265778

ENDS