



COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE
PRESS RELEASE

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ANEC/BEUC inventory exposes a game of roulette

"Nano whitening", "Using the newest Nanotechnological ingredients", "Uses the Nano Silver technology which protects the baby's skin". . .

Products claiming to contain nanomaterials are already widely available on the European market and these are just some of the boasts that can be found in shops or online.

Nanotechnologies use materials on an incredibly small scale. One nanometre is a millionth of a millimetre. Materials on this scale present different properties compared with 'bigger' particles (e.g. greater reactivity and mobility in the body) and are increasingly being used to create new products.

As consumers know very little about products containing nanomaterials, in 2009 BEUC and ANEC started to monitor the availability of such products and their evolution. The results are very clear: while our 2009 inventory listed 151 products, this year we found 475. We selected product categories representing those most often consumed in everyday life such as child products, food & drink, cosmetics, products for cars and electronic devices. Worryingly, some nano-claims relating to a specific product can be found in an online shop, but not on the website of the brand itself.

"In the absence of independent safety assessment, and given the unconfirmed nature of the claims, we believe action needs to be taken urgently", commented Stephen Russell, ANEC Secretary-General. "Legislation relevant to nanotechnologies must be adapted to safeguard consumer health and safety. Public awareness must be raised through the creation of a public inventory where it would be mandatory for manufacturers to register products on the European market claiming to contain nanomaterials. We also want to see a legal requirement introduced for the labelling of some nano-products."

Monique Goyens, BEUC Director-General, added: "Our inventory shows that hundreds of products are on sale today to European consumers without assessment of their claims or the risks these nanomaterials may pose to public health. This game of health and safety roulette must end. That is why we support the Belgian Presidency's initiative on mandatory traceability of nanomaterials and presented our inventory to the European Commissioner for Health & Consumer Policy, John Dalli".

ENDS

The inventory and explanatory leaflet can be found on www.beuc.eu and www.anec.eu

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