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Unsafe consumer goods on EU market call for stricter controls

Over 2,000 dangerous non-food consumer products were reported to the EU's rapid alert system (RAPEX)¹ in 2016. Such a number denounces again the blatant need for a more effective market surveillance, and one way to do so is to finally beef up the General Product Safety Directive². Importantly, the 2.000 figure is only the tip of the iceberg as each notification may represent thousands of faulty products, and many products are possibly not found at all.

Toys, motor vehicles, clothing, electric appliances and child care articles are the categories that Members States have most notified to the EU Commission. Due to an increase in vehicle safety notifications, risk of injuries has overtaken chemicals, which were top risk in 2015.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"This year's figures confirm that manufacturers and retailers keep failing to sell only safe products to consumers, both online and in physical shops. Consumers expect not only their foods and medicines to be safe but also all other goods such as toys, electric appliances and textiles.

"The safety of products that consumers use every day is covered by an outdated legislation. Rules need to keep up with the pace of developments, such as the digitalisation of our society. The EU and Member States need more competences and resources to properly monitor the market. It is time political talks move forward, consumers' safety cannot wait."

ENDS

1. For more info on the report: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-602_en.htm
2. The package has been stuck at the Member States level since 2013, while the EU Commission and the Parliament found a common ground.

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