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Dangerous consumer goods once again found in high numbers in EU

In 2018, [more than 2,200 notifications](#) of non-food products were made to the EU's rapid alert system (Safety Gate, formerly known as RAPEX) as failing safety requirements. Toys, motor vehicles and clothing were the product groups with the most notifications. The 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.

Consumer groups see the fragmented, underfunded and patchy market surveillance system of the European Single Market as an obstacle to bringing this number down. A proposed reform could revamp the situation from 2021. It awaits approval by the European Parliament later this April.

If adopted, EU Member States should be able to improve their efforts to weed out unsafe products from the market. For example, an EU-wide network would be set up to coordinate joint enforcement actions. The performance of individual countries would also come under peer-review. An existing database that centralises information from across Europe on non-compliant products would be expanded by adding information about accidents and injuries that are suspected to have been caused by products.

The reform also tackles the monitoring of products sold online. For example, every company selling certain products, such as toys and electric appliances, online directly to consumers in the Single Market would need a contact person present in the EU who can act on behalf of a manufacturer if a product breaches EU safety laws. This person would be tasked to provide information about a product to the authorities or to organise a product recall.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"This year's figures confirm that unsafe products continue to reach consumers. National authorities are not managing to stop this flow. To make headway on mitigating this, we urge the European Parliament to swiftly approve the proposed improvements to the market surveillance activities of the EU and its Member States."

Stephen Russell, Secretary-General of ANEC, added:

"Although we think the Safety Gate data allow for better collaboration between national market surveillance authorities and the European Commission, and potentially with product safety regulators around the world, we need further information on the products that cause accidents and injuries to make sure our laws and standards address the right problems and priorities."

ENDS

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