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Dangerous change on cosmetics safety in pipeline: Member States must stop European Commission

On 22 June, Member State experts¹ will be voting in Brussels to change the way the EU protects consumers against harmful substances in cosmetics. The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) is extremely concerned this change could create unacceptable health risks. BEUC calls on all national representatives to reject the Commission's stance. Eight Member States have previously opposed this potential change in the past.²

The substances concerned - called Carcinogenic, Mutagenic, Reprotoxic, (CMR) - may cause cancer, change DNA, or harm reproductive health.

The current system ensures that once a substance is classified as CMR by the European Chemical Agency, it is banned by default. But with the new approach proposed by the Commission, banning it will require a special legal act. The Commission is indeed planning to build in an additional layer of decision-making (of up to 1.5 year) before a toxic substance is banned from consumers' cosmetics.

These substances can be used in creams, hair colouring agents, nail hardeners, and shampoos.

BEUC is concerned that such an approach could create avoidable and unacceptable health risks for consumers since toxic ingredients will stay longer in cosmetic products before protective action is finally taken. Moreover, the Commission has failed to present evidence that could justify such a radical departure from the established approach.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, has commented:

"This move from the Commission lowers the level of consumer protection. The Commission would effectively give toxic substances a second chance to remain in cosmetic products. This is very dangerous when we're talking about people's health. Given that consumers apply on average 9 personal care products every day, it is essential these toxic substances are kept out of creams, shower gels and other care products out of precaution.

"We count on Member States to use their voice to reject this flawed approach when they vote. The automatic ban on CMR-substances must remain in place."

Background:

[BEUC letter](#) to EU Commission, April 2018

1. The Standing Committee on cosmetic products comprises of national experts from each Member States. They will be voting on a legal act (an 'Omnibus act') updating the substances concerned by the Cosmetic regulation.
 2. Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Lithuania, Portugal, Sweden.
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