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European Parliament approves reform of market controls

Today, the European Parliament's plenary gave its approval to a reform of market controls (surveillance)¹ in the European Single Market. This reform should improve the [currently fragmented & underfunded](#) system as from 2021.

MEPs have agreed to:

- **Better trace products in the supply chain.** For example, the full name and address of a product's manufacturer will have to be displayed on the product. Every company selling certain products, such as toys and electric appliances, online directly to consumers in the Single Market will need a contact person present in the EU who can act on behalf of a manufacturer if a product breaches EU safety laws.
- **Intensify controls of products sold online.** Member States will have to make resources – funding and staff – available for this. Such controls can take the form of online mystery shopping, for example.
- An EU-wide network will be set up to **coordinate joint enforcement actions** by national market surveillance authorities. These national authorities will now also be able to partake in more joint testing through a network of EU-designated laboratories.

Monique Goyens, Director General of BEUC, commented:

"This reform has been long overdue. Every year thousands of products slip through the safety net, with our regulatory system slow in catching up. Today's vote might improve things but let us not cheer too quickly. We need to see Member States dedicate more resources, carry out more controls and catch up with market realities because products can be bought online in a few clicks from countries with less advanced safety laws."

Stephen Russell, Secretary-General of ANEC, added:

"Consumers expect that products sold in shops and on-line are safe, respecting relevant laws and standards. We welcome that public authorities will have more tools to stop and take off the market unsafe products. However we regret that not all consumer products (such as baby cribs and bicycles) will benefit from more stringent rules on market surveillance. Consumers expect a uniform set of rules for all consumer products to be established."

ENDS

¹ It is important to note this reform only covers products where there are sector-specific rules. This includes for instance toys, medical devices (contact lenses, blood pressure meters) and household appliances (refrigerators). Sectors without sector-specific rules – furniture, textiles and child care products – are left out. For these sectors to benefit from state-of-the-art supervision, a reform of the General Product Safety Directive is needed.

