



Press Release

Juncker Commission stalls on regulating dangerous tattoo inks

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Is “better regulation” already affecting consumer safety?

After laudable progress in 2014, and despite strong support from Member States, the Juncker Commission appears to be stalling on the regulation of tattoo inks. ANEC must express its greatest disappointment at this change in political will.

Since 2010, Member States have submitted more than 100 notifications to RAPEX¹ on dangerous tattoo products posing severe risks to consumers.

Tattoo inks can contain several hazardous chemicals, including substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction (CMR), or are skin sensitizers. The inks can include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), primary aromatic amines (PAA), isothiazolinones and heavy metals.

Up to 20% of the European population has at least one tattoo. The proportion with tattoos in the age range 20 to 40 years is even higher, and the trend is upwards. This means at least 50 million people in Europe are exposed to risk.

¹ Rapid Alert System for non-food dangerous products <http://goo.gl/R0eeAE>

ANEC has addressed tattoo inks in its [position paper delineating a strategy to tackle hazardous chemicals in consumer products](#)² and, more lately, in a series of events held in collaboration with national authorities to debate priorities in this area.

There appeared agreement among Member States and other stakeholders that the Commission should proceed with an emergency measure in line with Article 13 of the General Product Safety Directive (2001/95/EC) as a first measure, based on the provisions in the Council of Europe resolution "on requirements and criteria for the safety of tattoos & permanent make-up" (Resolution ResAP (2008)1). We applauded the progress made in 2014 and welcomed that the Commission Services planned to hold a vote of Member States on the emergency measure³ in December 2014.

Nevertheless, the political wind seems to have shifted with the arrival of the Juncker Commission, and no proposal is likely ahead of further data collection, including the results of a JRC research project that are not expected for another 12 months.

ANEC Secretary-General, Stephen Russell, said, "The failure to act now continues to put the health of millions potentially at risk. We call again on the Commission and Member States to proceed with the emergency measure. If no prompt action at the European level is possible, then Member States must be free to protect the health of their citizens through national measures. Let us hope we are not seeing the first signs that better regulation (for industry) means no regulation for consumers".

ENDS

² <http://goo.gl/gUpWkt>

³ Draft Commission Implementing Decision requiring Member States to take measures to ensure that only tattoo inks which are fulfilling the requirements laid down in the Decision are placed and made available on the market

About ANEC

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and is open to the representation of national consumer organisations in 33 countries.

ANEC is funded by the European Union and EFTA, with national consumer organisations contributing in kind. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.



Raising standards for consumers

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