

**Question for written answer E-001818/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Dominique Bilde (ENF)

Subject: Phenoxyethanol and other preservatives

In 2013, the French consumer group UFC-Que Choisir conducted a study to determine which of 30 preservatives and other substances were present in 27 types of baby wipe and seven types of cleansing lotion for babies.

One or more of the substances in question were found in 94% of the products. Even more worryingly, phenoxyethanol, a preservative which is toxic to the liver and has also been linked to reproductive and developmental impairments, was found in at least 14 of the baby wipes and three of the cleansing lotions.

The French national medicines safety agency recommends limiting the concentration of phenoxyethanol in products intended for children below the age of three to 0.4%. In one quarter of the products tested, however, the concentration exceeded that amount, which is permissible because EU rules set a limit value of 1%.

UFC-Que Choisir recently repeated its criticism of the presence of 'undesirable' substances in a variety of cosmetic products. This problem seems to be becoming more widespread: the organisation's 2016 study identified 186 such cosmetic products, while its most recent one singled out 400. What is more, 26 products, a dozen of which were specifically intended for babies, contained phenoxyethanol.

What steps can the Commission take to protect infants and restrict the use of phenoxyethanol?