

EN
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Answer given by Mr Mimica
on behalf of the Commission
(19.12.2013)

The EU Cosmetics Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009¹ authorizes the use of Phenoxyethanol as preservative in cosmetic products for up to 1%. According to that Regulation all cosmetic products placed on the EU market must be safe for human health.

Existing scientific research on Phenoxyethanol is inconsistent because research data either apply to exposure to Phenoxyethanol in isolation or to products containing high levels of this substance as ingredient.

The Commission has received assessment studies by the French authorities² which raised concern about the use of Phenoxyethanol as preservative in cosmetic products. Based on these studies, the French authorities have recently issued new recommendations for concentration of Phenoxyethanol in products destined for children under the age of three years. They contain a full ban of the Phenoxyethanol for products used in the "diaper area" and a new 0.4% restriction for all other cosmetic products destined for children of the same age.

In response, the Commission published in October 2013 a call³ for data on the safety of Phenoxyethanol in view of assessing this preservative by the EU Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety. Following the outcome of the call and depending on the conclusions of the subsequent scientific opinion, the Commission will propose all appropriate measures to ensure full protection of consumers.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on cosmetic products, OJ L 342, 22.12.2009, p. 59

² L'Agence nationale de sécurité du médicament et des produits de santé (ANSM)

³ http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/files/pdf/cfd_phenoxy_en.pdf