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News from the Communication Directorate General's midday briefing

Nouvelles du rendez-vous de midi de la Direction Générale Communication

### **Consumers/Health: the EU strengthens consumer protection with respect to tooth whitening products**

The Commission welcomes the adoption today by the Council of a directive on tooth whitening products which strengthens consumer protection with respect to these products in Europe. Currently the European Cosmetics Directive only fixed a maximum authorized concentration of hydrogen peroxide – the main active ingredient in tooth whitening or bleaching products – at the level of 0.1%. However, in reality tooth whitening or bleaching products containing levels of hydrogen peroxide higher than the maximum authorised concentration are being used widely. The new Directive sets out differentiated rules according to the level of hydrogen peroxide in line with the advice from the European Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety. Tooth whitening or bleaching products containing up to 0.1% hydrogen peroxide will continue to be freely available to consumers on the market. Products containing concentrations higher than 0.1% and up to 6% will only be sold to dentists. For each cycle of use of the product, the first use will be by a dentist who will have performed a clinical examination. The dentist will then provide access to these products for the remainder of the cycle of use. Persons under 18 years of age will not be allowed to use these products, even under the supervision of a dentist. Products containing more than 6% are banned. The Member States will now have 12 months to implement the Directive into their national legislations.

[http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/sectors/cosmetics/index_en.htm)