

European Parliament resolution on Protecting EU consumers against the practices of certain e-commerce platforms: the case of child-like sex dolls, weapons and other illegal products and material 2025/2971(RSP)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the report of 31 March 2022 by the Wise Persons Group on the Reform of the EU Customs Union entitled ‘Putting More Union in the European Customs: Ten proposals to make the EU Customs Union fit for a Geopolitical Europe’,
- having regard to its position of 13 March 2024 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 952/2013^[1],
- having regard to the Commission communication of 5 February 2025 entitled ‘A comprehensive EU toolbox for safe and sustainable e-commerce’ (COM(2025)0037),
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 on prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937^[2],
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2024/1760 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on corporate sustainability due diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 and Regulation (EU) 2023/2859^[3],
- having regard to the report of April 2024 by Enrico Letta entitled ‘Much more than a market: Speed, Security, Solidarity – Empowering the Single Market to deliver a sustainable future and prosperity for all EU Citizens’^[4],
- having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the opinion of the Committee on International Trade,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (A10-0133/2025),¹
 - Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act),
 - Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/988 on general product safety (GPSR),

^[1] OJ C, C/2025/1035, 27.2.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/1035/oj>.

^[2] OJ L, 2024/3015, 12.12.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/3015/oj>.

^[3] OJ L, 2024/1760, 5.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1760/oj>.

^[4] Letta, E., ‘Much more than a market: Speed, Security, Solidarity – Empowering the Single Market to deliver a sustainable future and prosperity for all EU Citizens’, April 2024, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/ny3j24sm/much-more-than-a-market-report-by-enrico-letta.pdf>.

- Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 on market surveillance and compliance of products (MSR),
- Having regard to Directive (EU) 2024/2853 on liability for defective products (PLD),

A. Whereas since 31 October 2025 a major controversy has emerged in France, rapidly extending across Europe, concerning the sale of child-like sex dolls and other illegal products, including weapons, on the Chinese platform SHEIN; whereas the French consumer watchdog (DGCCRF) transmitted reports of “the sale of sexual objects resembling children” to the Paris Public Prosecutor’s Office, which consequently opened, on 3 November 2025, an investigation into SHEIN and three additional non-EU online marketplaces, namely Temu, AliExpress and Wish;

B. Whereas following initial enforcement action by the French authorities, SHEIN claimed to have withdrawn all related advertisements and visuals and to have temporarily delisted its ‘adult products’ category; whereas significant doubts persist regarding SHEIN’s capacity or willingness to take effective and decisive action against illegal content, and to guarantee that only compliant products are made available on its platform; whereas these doubts were reinforced by evidence that the contested products remained accessible in other Member States, including through VPN access, two days after the alleged suspension of their sale in France;

C. Whereas in light of these revelations the French Government publicly warned that repeated violations would lead it to request disabling access to the SHEIN platform on the French market; whereas in response, SHEIN appears to have removed all “child-like sex dolls” from its global platforms, announced a worldwide ban on all sex dolls, delisted the relevant items and initiated an internal investigation into how such products were able to appear on its online marketplaces;

D. Whereas the significant public reaction in France is linked to earlier controversies involving SHEIN, including findings in July 2025 that the company engaged in misleading discount practices, as well as unjustified environmental claims; whereas those unfair practices shed light on the business models of these platforms and question our consumption patterns;

E. Whereas the French case has brought renewed and significant attention to the broader problem of unsafe and illegal products circulating via online marketplaces throughout the EU, and sparked a wider debate on consumption patterns, unfair competition from non-EU online platforms, the regulation of online marketplaces and consumer rights;

Introductory remarks

1. Condemns the recent events in France concerning the availability on Shein of child-like sexualised objects and other illicit or dangerous goods, such as weapons, which were accessible throughout the Union; stresses that these practices constitute a severe breach of EU law and a direct threat to the safety of consumers and the protection of minors;

2. Underlines that Shein is not an isolated case but reflect a systemic pattern of inadequate oversight and insufficient preventive mechanisms; highlights recent findings from consumer

organisations indicating that a significant proportion of products offered by major non-EU platforms fail to meet EU safety requirements, with a substantial share posing serious risks to consumers;

3. Notes the ongoing inquiries launched by the Commission into the practices of very large online platforms, including the recent requests for information addressed to Shein, yet calls on the Commission to move from dialogue to decisive enforcement;

4. Stresses that most unsafe and illegal products are shipped to the EU in large volumes of individual, and often small, parcels sold to EU consumers via online platforms from non-EU countries, in particular China; warns that the exponential increase in small consignments, coupled with limited control capacity, results in inadequate interception of dangerous goods; stresses that this situation endangers consumers, distorts competition;

5. Expresses deep concerns on the documented practices that the increasing share of non-compliance of Shein and other non-EU online platforms are exacerbated by the business model driven by speed, profit maximisation and excessive consumption, at the expense of human rights, environmental protection, consumer safety and fundamental values; deplores that behind artificially low prices lie serious concerns, including underpaid labour, unlawful imitation of designers' work, the marketing of unsafe and non-compliant products, and the accumulation of textile waste;

Compliance challenges

6. Recognises that the EU has established a robust compliance framework, including the DSA, the DMA, the MSR, the GPSR, consumer protection rules and various product and environmental laws, which also applies to products sold online; recognises, however, that greater efforts are still needed for the full and coordinated enforcement of the compliance framework;

7. Considers that rigorous, consistent and timely implementation of the Union's regulatory acquis is indispensable to prevent unsafe, non-compliant and counterfeit products from entering the internal market and to uphold a high level of consumer protection; calls on all the relevant authorities within the Member States to use all the enforcement tools available in order to respond in a timely and effective manner;

8. Recalls that the DSA provides clear legal bases for intervention, including the power under Article 74 to impose fines and under Article 9 to order the removal of illegal products; urges the Commission to make full and timely use of these instruments to ensure that platforms comply with their obligations; underlines that citizens must see that the Union is capable of guaranteeing their safety online and expects coordinated, robust enforcement across the internal market;

9. Warns that major enforcement shortcomings persist due to the chronic under-resourcing and insufficient digital capacities of customs and market surveillance authorities, the shortage of specialised personnel, and the absence of harmonised and interoperable technological tools across Member States, exacerbated by limited data exchange and weak operational coordination between customs, market surveillance and consumer protection authorities;

10. Stresses that the sheer volume of e-commerce consignments entering the Union renders physical controls inherently insufficient; calls for urgent measures, including the introduction of a harmonised EU-level WTO compliant handling fee to cover the increased supervisory costs of custom authorities and clearly defined responsibility for platforms and sellers established in third countries for the safety and compliance of products they target at EU consumers that should accompany the removal of the VAT and customs duty exemption for low-value consignments that has been recently agreed in Council; urges the Commission for a significant increase in financial and operational support for customs and market surveillance authorities, including through increased allocations under the upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework, ensuring sufficient resources and adequate staffing;

Investigations on online platforms and further actions

11. Deplores the slow progress of the investigations initiated by the Commission and the CPC network against non-EU online platforms for potential violations of EU product safety and consumer laws and against very large platforms, in particular under the DSA; regrets that investigative procedures often extend over many months or even years, thereby eroding citizens' trust and hampering lawmakers' capacity to respond to rapidly emerging online risks; insists on the urgency for these investigations to come to conclusion and address the structural reasons for this damageable slowness; underlines that, in practice, suspending platform operations, as currently sought in France, remains largely unattainable, even in cases of manifest and repeated non-compliance; stresses that European action is necessary to provide a coherent enforcement of the legislation as well as to prevent any internal market distortion;

12. Calls, therefore, for stronger, faster and more operational enforcement instruments to ensure that EU rules can be applied effectively in the digital environment; insists that the implementation of commitments made by online platforms be subject to continuous, systematic scrutiny;

13. Emphasises that the recent findings concerning Shein demonstrate systemic failures rather than isolated incidents and cannot be remedied merely through product withdrawal or public apologies;

14. Urges the swifter and easier activation of interim measures under the DSA and of other measures under the GPSR and MSR, including the temporary suspension of the operation of online marketplaces in cases of repeated, serious or systemic breaches of EU law, such as the case concerning Shein in France, in order to ensure that non-compliant platforms do not evade consequences; stresses that the suspension of the operation of online marketplaces should no longer be treated as an exceptional, last-resort measure;

15. Underlines the need to apply more effective sanctions in a timely manner, making full use of all instruments provided under EU legislation; stresses that such sanctions need to be sufficiently dissuasive to ensure that non-compliant platforms fully comply with EU law;

16. Notes that the current system is more reactive than preventive, as authorities intervene only after dangerous products have already been sold to consumers, rather than preventing their distribution; recalls that, under the GPSR, online marketplaces have to remove the offer of the dangerous product within 2 days if they are aware that the product is dangerous or if they have to follow-up to a removal order from a governmental body, or within 3 days if they have to follow-up from a recognised third-party; stresses, moreover, that online marketplace providers

are encouraged to check products against the Safety Gate Portal before listing them on their interfaces; emphasises that random sampling and testing can serve as an effective deterrent only when carried out systematically and with sufficient frequency;

17. Calls on the Commission and the national competent authorities to strongly enforce the DSA with regard to the responsibility of online marketplaces, in particular their obligations in terms of recommender systems, interface design, right to information, the compliance by design rules to increase the overall traceability, and their ‘know your business customer’ obligation; stresses the need for a DSA-based network of trusted flaggers for illegal products and e-commerce to ensure that platforms fulfil their obligations effectively; recalls that Shein and other online platforms, such as Temu and AliExpress have been designated as very large online platforms and are subject to reinforced obligations;

18. Notes that the Commission is examining certain non-EU online marketplaces for the use of manipulative techniques, including dark patterns, addictive design features, deceptive influencer marketing, and the dissemination of fake or misleading online reviews; recalls that the Digital Fairness Fitness Check estimates consumer losses of nearly EUR 8 billion each year due to unfair commercial practices, and stresses that such exploitative methods, which particularly affect vulnerable users and minors, drive impulsive purchasing behaviour and fuel unsustainable consumption; urges the Commission to ensure that the forthcoming Digital Fairness Act addresses these practices by closing regulatory gaps in existing legislation;

19. Calls for all sellers operating on online marketplaces to be required to provide a verifiable return address and contact point within the Union, ensuring that consumers can enforce effectively their rights under EU consumer law, such as right to withdrawal when buying online, as well as return non-compliant goods without additional burdens and that competent authorities can carry out inspections effectively; insists that online marketplaces should be responsible for checking this and should be held accountable for enforcement;

The need for regulatory reforms

20. Urges the Commission to take effective measures against unsafe and illegal products on online platforms, including legislative measures where legal loopholes are clearly identified, without delay to ensure legal certainty and a level playing field for European companies, placing particular emphasis on SMEs; stresses the need to implement the existing compliance framework and evaluate these measures when considering new legislation, including new obligations for online marketplaces;

21. Highlights the fact that the information of a responsible economic operator in the EU under the GPSR, acting on behalf of a non-EU trader or platform, is often wrong or missing; stresses, however, that if sellers are based outside the EU or are not traceable and if fake addresses are used for responsible persons, there is no liable legal entity and it is impossible for market surveillance authorities to take enforcement actions, and for consumers to access to compensation or remedies; notes that even when this information is available, the responsible person in the EU may not be accountable;

22. Believes that consumer redress must be ensured in all cases; underlines, in this respect, that where the manufacturer is established outside the EU and no importer, authorised representative, or fulfilment service provider can be identified, online marketplaces should

provide adequate and proportionate remedies to consumers where they fail to comply with the DSA, particularly with Articles 30 and 31 or with Article 22 of the GPSR;

23. Notes the Commission's intention to revise the Market Surveillance Regulation, and stresses that this process must enable a prompt and thorough assessment of the current rules on the 'responsible person for products placed on the Union market', particularly those of non-EU traders, building on the results of the evaluation report on Article 4 of the MSR; calls on the Commission to speed up the assessment of the introduction of a mandatory requirement for non-EU traders to appoint a responsible person in the EU with increased legal and financial liability;

24. Considers that the revision of the MSR offers a critical opportunity to strengthen the EU's regulatory framework by more clearly distinguishing the responsibilities of platforms that place products on the market from those whose activities are limited to hosting non-product content, such as videos, images or articles; recalls that this differentiation is already inherent in the GPSR, the MSR and the Customs code, which introduce specific provisions for online marketplaces selling products; believes, however, that strengthen responsibilities for online marketplaces selling products would be necessary to further protect consumers;

25. Urges the Commission to proceed without delay with a comprehensive revision of the CPC Regulation, as this constitutes a prerequisite for achieving robust cross-border enforcement of EU consumer rules and curbing the circulation of unsafe goods; insists that the review must introduce concrete provisions enhancing enforcement capacities vis-à-vis non-EU traders and platforms, while ensuring closer coordination and structured information-sharing between EU and national authorities, and, where relevant, with competent bodies in third countries; underlines the need to grant the Commission with direct investigatory and sanctioning powers for serious, high-impact infringements of consumer law, in order to secure coherent, simultaneous and deterrent enforcement throughout the Union;

26. Considers that the conduct of mystery-shopping operations by market surveillance authorities, as outlined in the Commission's communication on e-commerce, constitutes a crucial means of assessing the legality and safety of products offered via online platforms; calls for these checks to be drastically expanded and carried out with greater regularity to ensure meaningful enforcement, together with other coordinated enforcement actions such as sweeps and peer-reviews; reminds that corrective measures targeting repeated or previously documented non-compliance in relation to comparable products foreseen in GPSR should be used more systematically;

27. Calls on the Commission to assess the feasibility of developing clear and harmonised definitions of 'fast-fashion' and 'ultra-fast fashion' to address the specific risks associated with these business models, ensuring a level playing field for all market participants and preventing regulatory fragmentation within the internal market; further calls on the Commission to assess provisions that would ensure the availability of fully effective tools to address the challenges posed by the proliferation of 'ultra-fast' and low-quality products, including more robust conformity assessment procedures and enhanced enforcement tools, to secure an internal market which guarantees the highest levels of consumer protection, while allowing the growth of innovative products and ideas and reducing any unnecessary administrative burden on responsible businesses and compliant products;

28. Urges the Member States, furthermore, to considerably accelerate the digitalisation of import procedures in customs administrations, supported by the EU data hub, in order to ensure the effective application of existing legislation and to speed up customs clearance, in particular given the exponential growth in parcel flows; calls on the Member States to increase the use of automated processes, such as automatic label scanning during parcel processing at customs; stresses that the wide use of the digital product passport would allow ex ante compliance verification for all products imported via e-commerce, containing detailed quality and compliance information and to be integrated directly into the EU customs data hub; calls on the Commission to cover, as soon as possible, with the digital product passport all physical goods placed on the EU market;

29. Urges the Member States to significantly step up customs controls and enhance risk-analysis capacities, supported by risk management tasks of the Commission and the EU Customs Authority to be introduced in the reform of the Union Customs Code, so that non-compliant goods are swiftly detected and intercepted, thereby limiting harm to EU consumers and safeguarding the economic interests of EU businesses; stresses the need to strengthen customs centres so that they can effectively manage the very high volume of small parcels that escape traditional control methods, including through the deployment of advanced screening technologies capable of identifying suspicious consignments at entry points; calls for more stringent compliance checks, complemented by random inspections on high-tonnage transport;

30. Underlines that, in view of the pressing need to reinforce customs controls, the timeline for implementing core obligations under the revision of the Union Customs Code should be brought forward, notably the creation of the EU Customs Data Hub; urges the Commission to launch without delay all preparatory steps required for its establishment, ensuring that the Hub's e-commerce functionalities are fully operational ahead of the 2026 target; welcomes the political agreement reached in the Council to abolish the EUR 150 customs duty relief threshold, as this constitutes a crucial measure to curb systematic abuse in low-value consignments;

31. Notes that in some cases non-EU traders and platforms bring non-compliant and sometimes dangerous goods on the EU market without facing consequences; notes that the reform of the Union Customs Code should contribute to address liability loopholes for non-compliant products entering the EU customs territory;

32. Calls for consumer authorities, organisations, industry bodies and chambers of commerce to intensify joint information efforts aimed at equipping consumers with clear and accessible guidance on their rights and the risks associated with online purchases, particularly from non-EU platforms; urges that such initiatives prominently highlight the availability of redress pathways, including collective redress, to ensure that consumers can effectively pursue remedies when confronted with unsafe or unlawful products;