

What we do for you

Second Edition

A word from the Secretary General

Few people are interested in technical standardisation and even fewer have heard of ANEC. Yet, although standardisation may not seem at all sexy at first glance, it is an essential component of modern life and the role of ANEC is key. Standards make products work: from the simplest of nuts & bolts to the most complex of smartphones.

But without effective consumer representation in the writing of standards, products need not be as safe, as interoperable, as accessible or as green as they might be.

ANEC fulfils that role in European standardisation.

Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteer experts from across Europe - supported by a secretariat in Brussels - ANEC ensures the consumer voice is heard in the setting of the standards for products (and services), as well as in the shaping of laws and public policies.



“Put simply, ANEC raises standards for consumers.”

Stephen Russell

Why should you care about standards?

Ever thought why your mobile phone works away from home? Why your bank card can be used anywhere in the world? Or why the dashboard symbols in the German car you have hired in Spain are the same as in your French car at home in Norway?

Yes, standards...

And do you know why, although the risk of accident and injury can never be eliminated, our children are better protected against hazards from the use of cords and drawstrings in their clothes? Or why you can use a juice extractor without fear of serious injury?

Standards...

Now why do we need a suitcase full of electrical adaptors when we travel abroad?

That's right - a lack of standards.

Standards provide common technical rules and guidelines for the manufacture of products and the provision of services.

For consumers, standards are important as, when they are properly developed and applied, they can make our lives easier; the products we buy safer, interoperable and accessible to people of all ages and abilities. They can also improve product performance and help reduce environmental impacts. Moreover, standards can aid the quality and safety of services.

For manufacturers, standards remove barriers to trade, allow economies of scale to be exploited and aid innovation and competitiveness. In addition, use of harmonised European standards is the easiest and most cost efficient way for a manufacturer to ensure a product meets EU legislative requirements.

DIN, the German national standards body, published a study some years ago that showed the **economic benefit of standardisation** to the German economy to be worth about **1% of Gross National Product (GNP)**. One percentage point may not sound much but 1% of German GNP is worth about **25.000 million Euros!**

AFNOR, the French national standards body, found in 2010 that **74% of companies** sampled thought that **standardisation gave them greater control over safety-related problems.**

In Canada, **17% of the growth** in national labour productivity between 1981 and 2004 is attributed to standards, as is a **9% increase in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP).**

“Standards affect us all every day and everywhere, contribute to economic growth and address societal needs.”



Standardisation in Europe: a crucial role...

In the European Union, the ambition is not only to harmonise laws and standards between countries but to use common standards to support the implementation of common laws. Under the **"New Approach"**¹, confirmed by the "New Legislative Framework"², the European legislator restricts himself to defining the essential health & safety requirements that a particular class of products must meet to be sold on the European market and leaves the technical solution for meeting these requirements to the European standards makers. There is no doubt the New Approach has been a success from the perspective of trade: it has removed many barriers that existed between the countries of the European Single Market. And the obligations on a manufacturer from Europe are the same as those placed on one from the United States. Or Japan. Or China.



Who are the European standards makers?

The three **European Standards Organisations (ESOs)** - **CEN**, **CENELEC** and **ETSI**³- are mandated by the European Commission to develop the standards that provide the technical requirements needed by manufacturers to meet the law. These European Standards are adopted and referenced in the Official Journal of the European Union as providing a "presumption of conformity" to the law. They are afterwards known as **"harmonised standards"**. A key fact is that a European Standard (abbreviated EN) is published as the national standard in at least 33 countries⁴.

But in fact, **most European Standards are proposed by industry or other stakeholders**. For example, ANEC proposed that a European standard be developed for Internet Filters in order to reassure parents that filters are effective in protecting their children from viewing inappropriate web content⁵. CEN and CENELEC have agreements with their international counterparts in order to use the results of international standardisation as far as possible within Europe. These are the Vienna Agreement between CEN & ISO⁶ and Dresden Agreement between CENELEC & IEC⁷.

1 <http://tinyurl.com/3kwrvg9>

2 <http://tinyurl.com/cl3uhk8>

3 CEN is the European Committee for Standardization (www.cen.eu), CENELEC the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (www.cenelec.eu) and ETSI the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (www.etsi.org).

4 In January 2014, the 28 EU Member States, 3 EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland), Macedonia (FYROM) & Turkey (as a potential accession countries to the EU)

5 The proposal led to the development of CEN/TS 16080 : 2013 "Internet content and communications filtering software and services"

6 International Organization for Standardization (www.iso.org)

7 International Electrotechnical Commission (www.iec.ch)



The link with ANEC?

European standards are developed by technical bodies in the ESOs. Each technical body in CEN & CENELEC comprises national delegations appointed by the national standards bodies and national electrotechnical committees. In ETSI, technical bodies tend to comprise interested ETSI members who are usually individual companies. The standards development process in ISO & IEC is very similar to CEN & CENELEC.

CEN & CENELEC rely on delegations from their national members to speak on behalf of consumers as well as business and other stakeholders. But **consumer expertise for items being standardised is often not available at national level.** Indeed, the 'Access to Standardisation' study⁸, prepared for the European Commission, found consumer interests in the standards development process to be "only marginally represented in many countries".

Hence **the European Institutions agreed to set up ANEC in 1995** to ensure a consumer voice in European standardisation. It embraces representatives of national consumer organisations from the countries that are members of CEN & CENELEC. ANEC brings together those few experts who are available at national level to agree consumer positions that can be promoted in the technical bodies of the ESOs. Reliant on the efforts of its volunteer experts, supported by a professional secretariat in Brussels, ANEC fulfils its role only through financial support from the European Union and EFTA.

“ ANEC aims to achieve the highest practicable levels of protection and welfare for all consumers, regardless of age or ability. ”



What ANEC does...

As well as championing consumer interests in the ESOs, ANEC aims to **influence European legislation and public policies** within the scope of its activities. It also represents the **consumer view in dialogues on the use of standards**.

ANEC can also be active when consumer-relevant issues are at stake in other standards development organisations, such as the **World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)** - which develops the standards that ensure the Internet works - and the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)** which is responsible for several specifications in the traffic field, including those for Child Restraint Systems (e.g. car seats for young children).

Although the consumer lead in **ISO** and **IEC** is taken by Consumers International (CI), ANEC has a co-operation agreement with CI and also participates directly in some ISO and IEC technical bodies where CI is not active.

ANEC presently focuses its activities in 8 areas of consumer interest:

Child Safety

Design for All

Domestic Appliances

Information Society

Innovation

Services

Sustainability
(including Environment)

Traffic



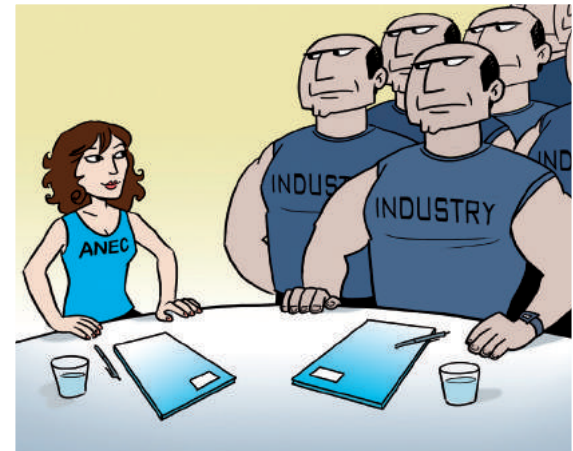
European standardisation: an activity that... ...must not be left to business alone!

Knowingly or unknowingly, the position of business interests in the development of standards can undermine the broader consumer interest. Hence **the role of ANEC is crucial in influencing the content of standards so that all consumers can benefit** from their use.

A prime example is where the first generation of **European standards⁹ for domestic electrical appliances** (everything from microwaves to dishwashers, vacuum cleaners to electric toothbrushes) focused on use of these devices by mainstream consumers. These standards contained an 'exclusion clause'. As such, the safety provisions of **the standards did not apply to the use of these appliances by young children or "infirm people"** (the elderly or those with disabilities). In other words, use of the appliances by vulnerable consumers could be considered safe only if the appliances were used under supervision.

Unwilling to accept such distinction, and aware of the risks to vulnerable consumers, **ANEC lobbied CENELEC to revise this series of European standards**, work that started in 2005. But the role of ANEC did not end there: ANEC undertook **a programme of research** with the aim of proposing improvements that would help **enable the 'exclusion clause' to be deleted from the standards**. The first six revised standards in the series were published in November 2010 and referenced in the Official Journal as harmonised standards, a considerable achievement for ANEC and the consumer movement. **As a result**, appliances such as washing machines and electrical hobs will be **safer for use by all European consumers**.

ANEC continues to be active in revision of the other European standards in the series. Moreover, we are promoting the European revisions in IEC in order to seek safer and more accessible appliances for consumers globally.



*Why can't we trust business
to look after consumers?*

ANEC in the European Standardisation System

Despite its importance in representing the consumer interest, ANEC **does not have a central role** in the European Standardisation System. CEN, CENELEC and ETSI are all private associations and are not part of the European Institutions. The foundation of the standards development process in CEN & CENELEC on delegations from national members means that the influence ANEC has as a European association is **limited**. Similarly, although a full member of ETSI, **ANEC does not have the same influence** in ETSI decisions as a multinational company.

The ANEC budget meets the expenses of more than **200 volunteer experts** in over 100 technical bodies of CEN, CENELEC and ETSI. That sounds impressive until it is remembered that there are **60.000 experts** active in CEN alone, almost all from industry.

In ETSI, ANEC has **1** vote on behalf of Europe's **500** million consumers compared with **45** votes for a multinational company.

The "Standardisation Regulation"¹⁰, implemented on 1 January 2013, does provide a more formal legal basis for the public financing of certain European associations that represent weaker stakeholders in the standardisation process. Here the Regulation builds on the European Parliament's Resolution of 21 October 2010¹¹ which noted the outcome of research, such as the 'Access to Standardisation' study, demonstrating the fragmentation (or even non-existence) of expertise in many countries.

Moreover, the Regulation sets expectations for the strengthened positioning of these European associations in the European Standardisation System, while confirming the pre-eminence of the national delegation principle in the adoption and publication of European Standards. In creating the status of "Partner Organisation", through their common Guide 25¹², and conferral of rights to these organisations through revision of their Internal Regulations¹³, CEN & CENELEC have responded to the Regulation by permitting the representatives of Partner Organisations to be part of the consensus that underpins the decisions of technical bodies at key stages in the development, review or revision of a European Standard.

¹⁰ Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of 25 October 2012 on European standardisation <http://tinyurl.com/d8fdwn5>

¹¹ Resolution of 21 October 2010 on the future of European standardisation <http://tinyurl.com/qawrcgp>

¹² <http://tinyurl.com/pc2hexe>

¹³ <http://tinyurl.com/ondajgf>

ANEC in the European Standardisation System

Although ANEC has welcomed the CEN & CENELEC initiative, it must be remembered that the ANEC representatives formally remain observers at the governance and technical levels of the two organisations.

Similarly, ANEC has welcomed the creation of a Societal Stakeholder Working Group, reporting directly to the CEN-CENELEC Presidential Committee, and development of a “toolbox” and e-learning tool on European standardisation for societal stakeholder associations and their members.

With the principles of the New Approach being extended to more products through the implementation of the New Legislative Framework, which entered into force on 1 January 2010, and with standards for services and the safety of services high on the political agenda, ANEC believes the Standardisation Regulation vital in ensuring the participation of consumers in the European Standardisation System. Nevertheless, it is essential that the public funding facilitated by the Regulation is sufficient to enable this participation to be effective, and that the European Standards Organisations act to continue to strengthen the voice of societal stakeholders in their processes. Such evolution is key if the public interest is to be adequately represented in the future.

In 2014, the ANEC budget is **1,47**M€.

That's **1**€ for every
355 European consumers.

Thanks to ANEC, the standards development process is not driven by cost and profit but for how long?
In order for everyone in society to benefit from the wealth that can be created by the use of standards, consumers must participate in and shape the development of standards. Such activities incur costs and public funding is vital to ensure consumer participation. Hence ANEC is financed by the European Union (95%) and EFTA (5%). Although the Standardisation Regulation provides a more formal legal basis for the funding of ANEC, the Regulation does not itself guarantee the provision of funds, nor at a level that ensures effective consumer participation.

ANEC at the forefront

8 working areas... and so many challenges!

As standardisation continues apace as the Single European Market evolves, our aim remains to ensure all products and services, including the newest information technologies, are safe, interoperable and accessible to all, with their impacts on the environment minimised.



1 CHILD SAFETY

from toys to potentially dangerous child appealing products, such as cords on window blinds.

We strive to:

- ★ Reduce the number and severity of accidents involving children
- ★ Guarantee a minimum quality for products intended for and/or used by children
- ★ Ensure enough information is available to enable parents to choose products complying with safety standards
- ★ Guarantee safe use of household electrical appliances by all consumers, including children

2 DESIGN FOR ALL

products and services including easy-to-open packaging, visible public signs, tactile walking surface indicators, etc.

We strive to:

- ★ Introduce design for all principles into standards and legislation, to overcome discrimination and make sure older people and people with disabilities can safely use consumer products and services
- ★ Guarantee safe use of household electrical appliances by all consumers, including elderly and disabled people.



ANEC at the forefront

3 DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

from toasters, microwave and simple ovens, to hairdryers, water heaters and garden equipment.

We strive to:

- ★ Guarantee safe use of household electrical appliances
- ★ Reduce the number of accidents and their relative severity
- ★ Encourage the environmental and performance aspects of household appliances



4 INFORMATION SOCIETY

products and services such as mobile phones, the safety of children on-line, personal music players, RFID technology and the Internet of Things.

We strive to:

- ★ Make certain ICT products are accessible, safe and of high quality for all
- ★ Ensure private data handling is performed in a clear, legal and standardised framework, with absolute respect for privacy and accessibility

5 INNOVATION

such as nanotechnologies and consumer products containing nanomaterials.

We strive to:

- ★ Obtain clear and trustworthy labels
- ★ Make sure nanomaterials used in products are safe
- ★ For the creation of a mandatory public register of the nanomaterials used in consumer products



6 SERVICES

from general interest, financial and postal services, to health, care and support services, tourism, sports and leisure activities.

We strive to:

- ★ Achieve a legislative framework for the safety of services that guarantees a consistent approach across sectors, ensuring safety, information provision & accessibility for all
- ★ See safety, hygiene, information provision, customer satisfaction, complaints handling and redress procedures, personnel competence, contracts & billing, and accessibility reflected in standards and regulations



7 SUSTAINABLE USE

of products and their environmental impacts.

We strive to:

- ★ Improve the environmental performance of products by assessing the environmental aspects over their entire life cycle
- ★ Achieve mandatory requirements for product design, such as energy efficiency, hazardous substances and waste treatment
- ★ Enable consumers to make sustainable choices, by providing them with a wider range of green products, as well as simple, reliable and easy-to-use eco-labels
- ★ Ensure consumer interests are protected in technologies such as smart meters



8 TRAFFIC SAFETY

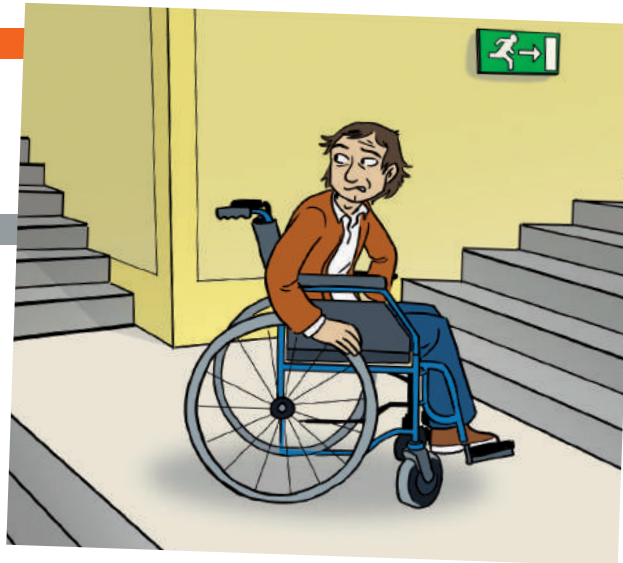
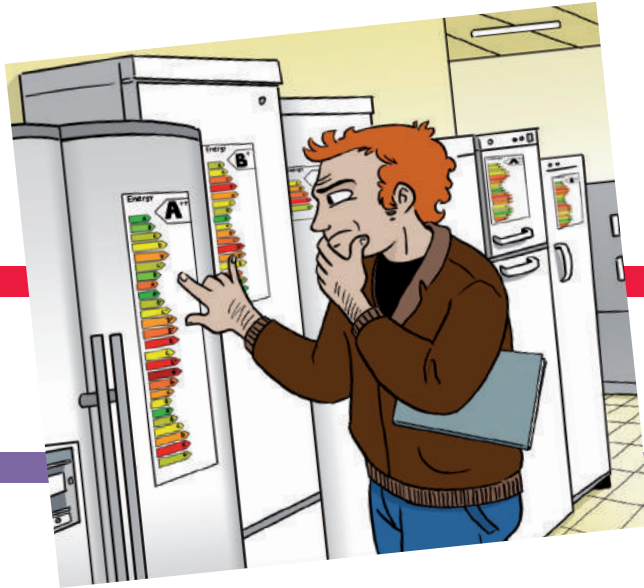
including child-restraint systems (CRS), vulnerable road users, safety and emissions of motor vehicles, eSystems and bicycles.

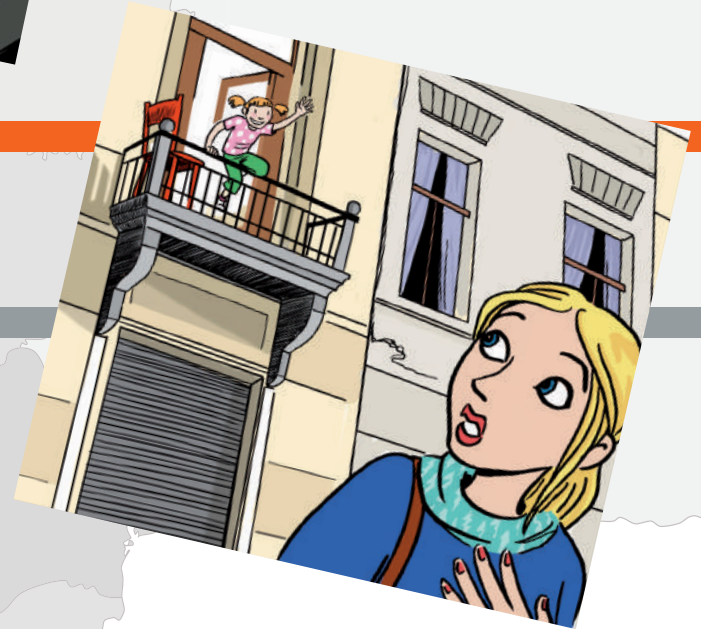
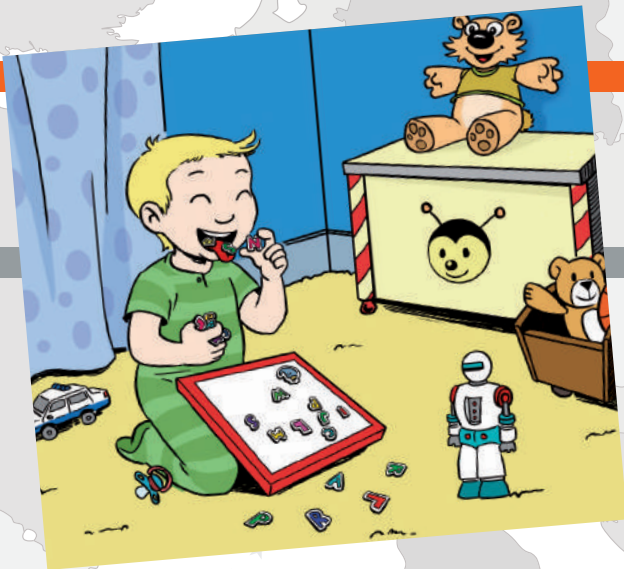
We strive to:

- ★ Provide the highest levels of safety practicable for children from CRS
- ★ Contribute to a high level of road safety for vulnerable road users
- ★ Guarantee an efficient, user-friendly and safe way of recharging electric vehicles
- ★ Ensure that environmental priorities do not jeopardise the safety of motor vehicles



A Europe without ANEC...







Raising standards for consumers

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