



The European consumer voice in standardisation
Norwegian Consumer Council | Standards Norway

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Stephen RUSSELL
ANEC Director-General



Hallo

THE SINGLE MARKET

The Free Movement of Goods





The Legislative Environment

- ★ Under the 'New Approach' of 1985, the European legislator sets essential safety requirements through horizontal & sectoral European laws ('directives').
- ★ The three European Standardisation Organisations (CEN, CENELEC, ETSI) are invited (through a 'standardisation request' or 'mandate') to develop the European Standards (ENs) that provide the technical detail to support implementation of the directives.
- ★ These 'mandated' ENs are called 'harmonised standards' when their references are published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).
- ★ Although use of harmonised standards remains voluntary, a manufacturer can presume that the product complies with the law if it complies with the harmonised standard(s).
- ★ A product in compliance with the law is free to circulate throughout the European Economic Area (or 'Single Market').
- ★ The New Approach was the catalyst for the development of ENs not directly supporting legislation. Of today's total of about 20.000 ENs, only some 25% are 'harmonised standards'.
- ★ **KEY FACT** - All ENs are adopted as identical national standards in 34 countries.

The economic case for standardisation

- Menon Economics (2023, commissioned by Standards Norway + five Nordic/Dutch peer bodies): standardisation associated with **25% of labour-productivity growth** (1970–2019) and **~9% of export growth** (1995–2019). Norway alone: projected **NOK 4.8bn annual GDP contribution** and **NOK 2.1bn in exports** per year if current pace continues.
- BSI (UK): standards supported **37.4% of annual labour-productivity growth** over the period studied, equivalent to **28.4% of annual GDP growth**.
- DIN (Germany): stabilising effect of standards estimated at **0.7–0.8% of GDP**, equivalent to approximately **€16.8bn annually** in the period studied.
- ISO (company level, international case studies): contribution of standards to gross profit typically **0.15%–5% of annual sales revenue**.
- Conclusion: the question is no longer **whether** standards create value — they do. The real question is whether we govern that value wisely, and whether the standards generating productivity and market access also reflect the **wider public interest**.



The problem for consumers

- ★ The New Approach is a model of 'co-regulation' (a private/public partnership). So too is the New Legislative Framework that incorporated the New Approach from 1 January 2010
- ★ European standardisation is a private activity and is based on the **national delegation principle** (as in ISO & IEC)
- ★ Yes, participation of all national stakeholders is encouraged in the development of European Standards . . . but (bigger) business has most to gain from influencing the content of standards and has the economic interest, knowledge and resources to participate.
- ★ Business also tends to focus on meeting the needs of the "mainstream" or "average" consumer (costs lowest, profits highest)
- ★ Moreover, national consumer expertise in standardisation is fragmented in many countries or simply does not exist
- ★ Access to Standardisation study (March 2009):
 - ✓ "consumers are seen - even by themselves - as having both low commitment to national standardisation and insufficient knowledge"
 - ✓ "consumer interests are only marginally represented in many countries"

This is still true almost two decades later. . .

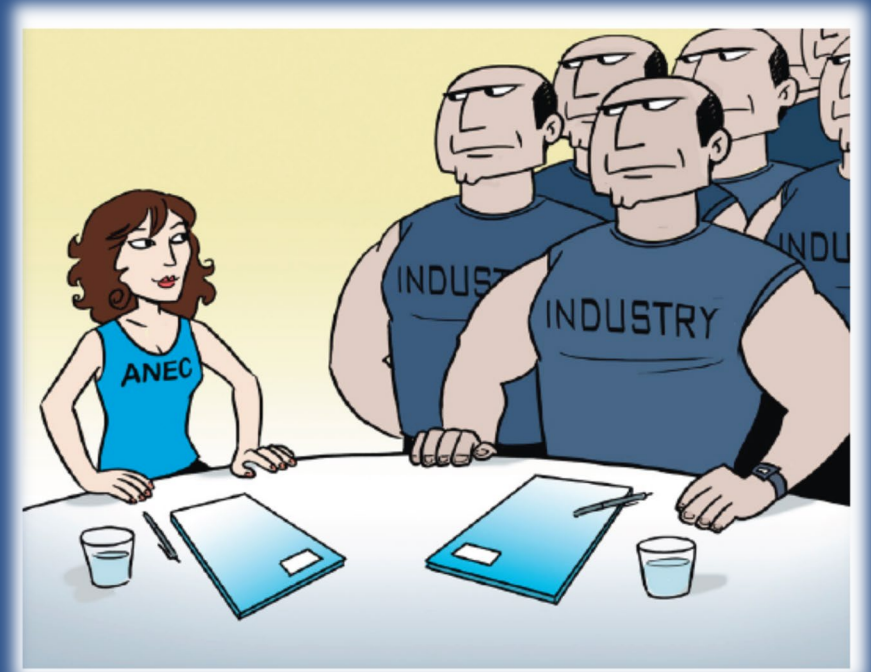
What consumers add to standards

- Consumers bring something no producer interest can fully supply: the reality of use.
- They see what happens in homes, schools, hospitals, stations and digital platforms.
- They spot where something is technically compliant yet practically **confusing, inaccessible or unintelligible**.
- ISO says consumer input improves **quality, reliability, service consistency, transparency, suitability for vulnerable users** and the credibility of standards.
- Hear consumers early and problems are more likely to be solved upstream — not as ceremonial inclusion, but as **better standards**.

So ANEC...

has provided the collective European consumer voice since 1995:

"The European consumer voice in standardisation"



ANEC Mission & Vision Statements

Our mission

We raise standards for European consumers through the work of our members, experts and Secretariat, in order to achieve optimal levels of consumer protection, welfare and sustainability.

Our vision 2030 is to achieve, principally through legislation and standards,

- a Europe where consumers can make choices which are sustainable, both for their welfare and the environment;
- a Europe where the safety, security and well-being of consumers is ensured in both traditional and digital environments;
- a Europe where use of products and services does not discriminate among consumers;
- a Europe where its values and principles are upheld in a globalised world;
- a Europe where the engagement of consumers at national, European and international level is welcomed and supported, politically and financially.



ANEC General Assembly welcomed mid-term evaluation in June 2025

The value of ANEC

- Membership is open to 34 countries (mirroring CEN-CENELEC)
- Aims to represent and defend the European consumer interest in a **continuum** of consumer protection and welfare
 - ✓ the development and revision of European **policies & laws** related to standards, consumer protection & welfare (often in liaison with BEUC)
 - ✓ (key mission) of **standardisation** (governance & technical levels of CEN, CENELEC & ETSI; sometimes technical level in ISO & IEC; UNECE, with CI)
 - ✓ the **use of standards** (conformity assessment, accreditation, market surveillance & enforcement)
- ANEC brings together almost **170** experts from the countries of its membership, of whom **65** represent ANEC in technical bodies. We pay only expenses and a nominal daily allowance (110€)
- In 2024, ANEC participated in around **275 technical bodies** of CEN, CENELEC & ETSI, and in over **35 technical bodies** of ISO & IEC, attended **850 meetings** and sent **500 sets of comments** on draft standards.

ANEC facts & figures

- ANEC is an independent, private and not-for-profit association (AISBL).
- Membership mirrors CEN-CENELEC (34 countries) with national consumer organisations in each country nominating a national representative to the ANEC General Assembly.
- Supported by funding from the EU (95%) and EFTA (5%) through annual grants made under Framework Partnership Agreements to 2024.
- **1,778M€** total budget in 2026 for its core mission (fall of **15%** in real terms since 2007):
 - employs a central secretariat in Brussels as hub of the association
 - reimburses the costs of a network of 170 experts from across Europe
 - funds a technical studies programme of 80.000€ (e.g. "Exclusion Clause")
- Other income from projects and foundations around **150.000€** to **200.000€** annually
- Added value of experts in 2021 was **560.000€**
- Seven areas of priority agreed by the ANEC/GA:

The governance of ANEC

- The General Assembly (ANEC/GA) is the supreme body.
- 34 countries are eligible for membership (27 EU Member States and the United Kingdom; 3 EFTA countries; North Macedonia, Serbia & Turkey). Each country has one vote.
- Each country may nominate **ONE** person to represent **ALL** national consumer organisations in that country. The nomination is chosen by consensus at national level.
- He/she serves a four-year term as member of the ANEC/GA with re-appointment possible (present term ends June 2027).
- There is **no** membership fee.
- The ANEC/GA is supported by the ANEC Steering Committee (ANEC/SC), the board of the association (**at least one reserved seat for an EFTA country**).
- *Olav Kasland is the Norwegian member of ANEC and the (formidable) ANEC Treasurer.*

Our thanks to the Consumer Council for Olav's time!



ANEC STRUCTURE

General Assembly (ANEC/GA)
(one individual from each of 34 countries)
Strategic lead and link to NSBs/NCs

Steering Committee (ANEC/SC)
(up to 10 members from GA)
Political lead and board oversight

Secretariat
(11 persons)
The Hub

Working Groups (ANEC/WGs)
(7 WGs comprising experts drawn from member countries)
Accessibility, Child Safety, Digital Society, Domestic Appliances, Services,
Sustainability, Traffic & Mobility
Technical lead

The Standardisation Regulation

- **Standardisation Regulation (EU) 1025/2012** was implemented on 1 January 2013. Consolidates all previous legislative and financial instruments related to the European Standardisation System (ESS). **Has EEA relevance**
- Sets out a new legal basis for financing the representation of weaker stakeholders and outlines political expectations. **'Inclusiveness'**
- Annex III of the Regulation sets out categories of 'under-represented' stakeholders whom the European Commission may support through financing a representative European association. These **'Annex III Organisations'** are presently:
 - ✓ **Consumers (ANEC)**
 - ✓ **Environmental interests (ECOS)**
 - ✓ **Social (i.e. employee) interests (ETUC)**
 - ✓ **Small and medium-sized enterprises (SBS)**

Revision of the Standardisation Regulation

- EC Impact Assessment to be submitted to the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (**RSB**) by **mid-May 2026**; legislative proposals expected in **Q3/2026** (packaged with NLF and Market Surveillance Regulation revisions).
- EC diagnosis: average of **~6.1 years** from standardisation request to referencing – shared responsibility across policy, delivery and publication phases.
- Key **policy dilemmas** under debate: openness of the standardisation system; public access to harmonised standards; EU autonomy from international standards.
- ANEC position: standardisation must remain a **technical tool** that follows political decisions; the revision is an opportunity to reinforce an **inclusive, reliable and legally robust** system.
- ANEC calls for **stable EU/EFTA funding** for **Annex III organisations** and improved tools for participation; **speed must not sacrifice quality or inclusiveness** – alternative deliverables only as a last resort.

EC “Competitiveness Compass”

- Communication issued in 01.2025: to “**enhance economic growth & global standing**”.
- Builds on recommendations from the **Draghi Report (“EU is uncompetitive”)**.
- Identifies revision of **Standardisation Regulation** as a key action to streamline and modernise the standardisation process. To be revised as a package with the NLF and Market Surveillance Regulation; adoption of legislative proposals in **Q3/2026**.
- Reducing **administrative burdens on businesses**, with target of 35% cost reduction for SMEs and 25% for other companies.
- ANEC is concerned standards could be used as a form of “**soft law**” as an alternative to regulation, returning to the old truth “**set by industry for industry**”
- Linked to the **Omnibus Simplification Package** (end 02.2025), which seeks to streamline sustainability reporting obligations (CSRD, CSDDD, EU Taxonomy). ANEC’s **Strategy 2030 mid-term evaluation (June 2025) identifies EC Omnibus proposals as a risk to consumer protection standards.**

A call to action!

- Consumer participation must work as one connected chain — national, European and international.
- National level: complaints, incidents, testing, accessibility experience and market surveillance reveal problems first.
- European level: those concerns must be coordinated, because one EN can become the national standard in 34 countries.
- International level: the public-interest voice must stay present, because global standards shape supply chains and the technologies entering Europe.
- If the chain is weak anywhere, the system becomes unbalanced — and the ISO Council noted that more than 99% of ISO technical bodies lacked a consumer voice.

ANEC priorities – Accessibility WG

Ensuring safety and accessibility for all consumers

European Accessibility Act

- e.g. prEN 18339 (non-digital product info), prEN 18340 (support service accessibility), EN 17210 (built environment) – targeting OJ citation mid-2027

Horizontal approach to accessibility in standardisation

Access and usability of the built environment and safety of lifts

- M/599 Lifts Sreq; Lifts Directive evaluation highlighted disability access gaps; EN 81-70 revision

Assistive products and services for persons with disabilities

Ergonomics

Safety and performance of domestic appliances for all (with ANEC DOMAP WG & Child Safety WG)

Accessibility of services (with ANEC Services WG)

e-Accessibility and electronic communications (with ANEC Digital Society WG)

ANEC priorities – Child Safety WG

Ensuring safety of the most vulnerable of consumers

Policy and regulation affecting child safety

- Regulation (EU) 2025/2509 on Toy Safety (from 2030); new M/XXX Sreq for children's products under GPSR (expected 2026); EU Decision 2023/1338

Sports, playground and other recreational equipment

Childcare articles

Children's furniture

- e.g. Learning towers (CEN TC 364)

Toy safety

Products worn by children

Broader child safety

- Oil lamps, coin batteries, lighters, blind cords, medical treatment tables. . .

Market surveillance actions

ANEC priorities – Digital Society WG

Ensuring consumer protection and welfare in the digital world

Artificial Intelligence

- CEN-CLC JTC 21; AI Act likely delayed 1 year (EC Digital Omnibus); AI Task Force expanding; EAISF funding renewed to December 2027

Cybersecurity and privacy standardisation

- CRA M/606 Sreq; prEN 40000-1-4 in 2027; ANEC on EC CRA Expert Group; CEN-CLC JTC 13

Biometrics

e-Recognition (e.g. Digital Identity Wallet)

Electronic communications and safety of ICT products & services

E-Accessibility (with ANEC Accessibility WG)

Broader ICT policy and standardisation

Smart and sustainable cities & communities

- FprCEN/TR 18260 on Smart Cities approved December 2025

ANEC priorities – Domestic Appliances WG

Ensuring the safety of appliances for all consumers

Electrical household appliances (Low Voltage Directive)

Safety and performance of electrical appliances for all (with ANEC Accessibility WG)

- CENELEC TC 61 & IEC TC 61 AG4; button cell battery access prevention in household appliances

Child appealing (electrical) products

Gas Appliances

Safety of Machinery

- New Machinery Regulation (EU) 2023/1230 applies 14 January 2027; garden equipment (CEN TC 144 WG 7)

Domestic Appliances under the GPSR

- Ethanol fireplaces (CEN TC 46 WG 2), barbecues (CEN TC 281), ladders (CEN TC 93). . .

Market surveillance actions

- CASP, JACOP, JAHARP

ANEC priorities – Services WG

Safety and quality for consumer services

Horizontal services standardisation & policy

Health & well-being services

- CEN TC 403; European Health Data Space Regulation (EU) 2025/327

Tourism, leisure and sports services

- ISO TC 228; CEN TC 329; luggage standardisation (BEUC collaboration)

Fire safety

Citizen security and disaster management

Postal services

- CEN TC 331; EU Delivery Act (new initiative reforming postal rules)

Cross-border online services

Financial services

- New CEN/TC 475/WG1 “Basic financial analysis for private households”

ANEC priorities – Sustainability WG

Enhancing sustainable production & consumption

Hazardous chemicals in consumer products

Sustainable consumption & production (SCP) including Resource Efficiency

- Ecodesigned4LIFE (BEUC/ECOS) & REaLIFE standards (ECOS) – expected to continue as one joint project; Digital Product Passport (CEN-CLC JTC 24); new ESPR product groups

Addressing climate change factors in standardisation

- EC 2040 target: 90% net GHG reduction; Clean Industrial Deal; CEN TC 467; climate vulnerability

Sustainability of the built environment and cities

Environmental labelling

- EU Green Claims Directive COM(2023)166; Directive (EU) 2024/825 empowering consumers; ISO 14020 series revision

Integration of environmental aspects into product standards

Packaging, packaging waste and Electronic Waste

- New Packaging Regulation (EU) 2025/40; WEEE Directive revision upcoming;

ANEC priorities – Traffic & Mobility WG

Safe, Sustainable and Smart Mobility

Child Restraint Systems

- ANEC works with Consumers International in setting UNECE Regulations (WP 29)

Children in buses & coaches

Children left in vehicles

Protection of pedestrians and vehicle passengers

Bicycles, e-bikes and accessories

Safety and emissions of motor vehicles

Intelligent Transport Systems (including e-tolls)

Automated driving

Ha Det!

Some references

- www.anec.eu
- www.twitter.com/anectweet
- “ANEC raises standards for consumers” (an introduction to ANEC in 2 mins 15 secs)
<https://bit.ly/3txybBf>
- ANEC “What we do for you” brochure (due for revision but still helpful)
<https://bit.ly/2QCBj08>
- CEN-CENELEC & ANEC-ECOS-ETUC e-learning course on European standardisation
www.standards4all.eu
- CEN-CENELEC training for technical body officers (for those who want to go deeper into the standardisation process) <https://bit.ly/3tDSHAS>



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