

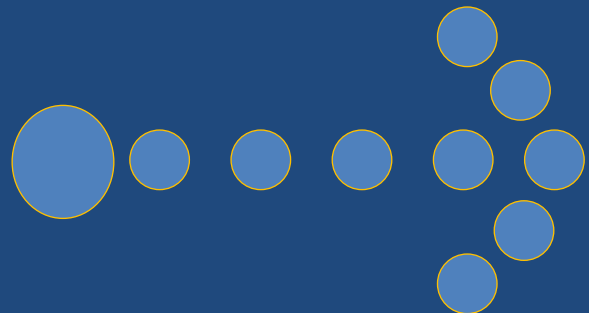


Raising standards for consumers



ANEC STRATEGY *2014 to 2020*

**ANNUAL
ACTION
PLAN 2014**



ANEC Strategy 2014 to 2020 **Annual Action Plan 2014**



I. Introduction

In June 2013, the ANEC General Assembly adopted the ANEC Strategy 2014 to 2020, comprising a Vision and Mission supported by ten Strategic Objectives¹.

As indicated during the development of the Strategy, including during its public consultation phase, the actions intended to implement the Strategic Objectives are set out in Annual Action Plans. These are developed by the ANEC Steering Committee (the Board of ANEC) and approved by the General Assembly. The management of the execution of the Plan rests with the Steering Committee.

Each Plan is a publicly-available annex to the Strategy 2014 to 2020. It needs to be taken into account in operations of the association at all levels, including by the ANEC Working Groups & Project Teams.

Naturally, the parameters of each Action Plan reflect the environment in which the Strategy itself was developed and adopted:

- ANEC is an international non-profit association established under Belgian law, and has to comply with the corresponding rules and regulations (eg: social and labour law).
- Its statutory objective is to promote, defend and represent the collective consumer interest in the work of the European Standards Organisations and any similar bodies concerned with standards that directly or indirectly affect consumers. This is because consumer expertise for standardisation work is weak or non-existent in most countries.

¹ <http://tinyurl.com/nqel9z5>

- ANEC is dependent upon funding from the European Commission (95%) and EFTA (5%). During the Consumer Programme 2007 to 2013, the sum made available by the Commission was typically 1,3M€ annually. The time of the volunteer experts engaged by ANEC is considered by the Commission to be a notional contribution in kind (calculated to be worth 260.000€ in 2007).
- This funding is reliant on the acceptance by the Commission and EFTA of an annual work programme that explains the contribution of ANEC to the policy objectives of enhanced consumer protection and welfare, and a budget. In its selection as the European association representing the consumer interest in standardisation, ANEC needs to respond to a public call for proposals that leads to an annual Specific Agreement or multiannual Framework Partnership Agreement.
- The members of the General Assembly are individuals who represent all national consumer organisations in their countries, chosen by the consensus of those national consumer organisations.
- The General Assembly defines the policy of the association, supported by the Steering Committee. The technical work is executed through a network of consumer experts, co-ordinated and briefed by committees active in areas of priority chosen by the General Assembly:

Child Safety, Design for All, Domestic Appliances, Information Society, Innovation, Services, Sustainability (ex-Environment), and Traffic.

- Due to its constrained financial and human resources, including its reliance on volunteer experts, ANEC must set clear priorities.
- Standardisation is a consensual process that aims to reflect the views of all interested parties. Standardisation in CEN & CENELEC (and ISO & IEC) is based on the “national delegation principle”, through which delegations of experts sent by their national members take the lead in drafting European standards. But these delegations often lack consumer expertise or advice. European Standards are adopted through the route of national standards bodies and exist only when implemented as identical national standards.



- Although its representatives in CEN or CENELEC technical committees still do not have a vote, in common with other European “Partner Organisations”, from 1 January 2014, ANEC has the right to be part of the consensus that underpins the decisions of a technical committee at key stages in the development (or the review) of a European Standard. ANEC has also liaison status in several ISO or IEC technical committees.

II. Latest developments

This first Annual Action Plan is drafted during the transition in the management and funding of ANEC from the European Commission’s DG Health & Consumers (as part of the Consumer Programme) to DG Enterprise & Industry (under the Standardisation Regulation, EU 1025/2012). It has been elaborated in parallel with the response of ANEC to a public call for proposals for the representation of the consumer voice in standardisation that closed on 13 November 2013.

The Action Plan does not reflect any recommendations that may be made by the Commission in the wake of an external evaluation of ANEC for the period 2007 to 2011, conducted between January and September 2013.

III. ANEC’s strategic priorities in 2014

For 2014, it is proposed that actions in support of strategic objectives 2 to 9 are prioritised, while actions in support of other priorities may be taken, especially where these represent a continuation of “business as usual”. For an organisation that has only limited resources at its disposal, such as ANEC, priority setting is an on-going exercise (Objective 1). Each year, an annual review of the activities in the ANEC areas or sectors of priority is undertaken by the ANEC Secretariat and the ANEC Working Groups to check the continued relevance of the work programmes, and in helping decide whether resource should be transferred from an existing work item to a new work item.

IV. ANEC's Strategic Actions in 2014

OBJECTIVE 2 Within these areas of priority, and recalling the pre-eminence of legislation over standardisation, ANEC will aim to ensure the balance of standards and legislation that best meets the expectations of consumers, and achieves its vision of better protection & welfare for consumers of all ages and abilities.	Evidence of success	Key assumptions
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 2		
<p>2.a Consumer Product Safety Regulation</p> <p>By the end of 2013 or beginning of 2014, the European Parliament and Council of Ministers should adopt the European Commission's "Product Safety Package", comprising a proposal for a Consumer Product Safety Regulation (CPSR) to replace the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD), a proposal for a Market Surveillance Regulation and a multiannual market surveillance plan.</p> <p>In October 2013, the Internal Market & Consumer Protection (IMCO) Committee of the Parliament adopted its legislative report on the proposed CPSR. In line with the ANEC position, this report <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -called for the precautionary principle to be maintained as an explicit pillar, as it is of the present legal framework; -called for development of a comprehensive framework for the safety of services; -called for more prescriptive warnings and instructions for use; -called for measures to ensure the safety of products that appeal to children and to protect vulnerable consumers. <p>We intend to continue to lobby the European Legislators throughout the adoption process to ensure the new CPSR provides a high level of consumer protection. (WP 2014, table 7.9.7)</p>	<p>Adoption of the CPSR, by EP and Council, in line with the ANEC position.</p>	<p>Proposal proceeds to adoption in present mandate of the EP (elections in May 2014).</p>

<p>2.b Union Standardisation Work Programme</p> <p>Article 22 of the Standardisation Regulation sets up a Committee (“Committee on Standards”) to assist the Commission in implementation of the Regulation. Its role includes giving opinions on draft decisions on mandates, formal objections, consultation on the work programme for standardisation, and draft decisions on formal objections. ANEC is an observer member of the Committee on Standards.</p> <p>The Union Standardisation Work Programme should be issued every year in the form of a Communication and published in the Official Journal. It is important for consumer-relevant issues to be prioritised in this context. (WP 2014, table 7.9.2)</p>	<p>Union Standardisation Work Programme in 2014 reflects ANEC’s priorities</p>	<p>Union Standardisation Work Programme is adopted in 2014 (the mandate of the present Commission ends in 2014).</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 3</p> <p>In a climate of long-term financial uncertainty, and reduced public expenditure, ANEC will intensify its work to demonstrate that effective consumer participation is an investment with high returns to society and to business, and is not a cost on national or European public finances with few returns.</p>	<p>Evidence of success</p>	<p>Key assumptions</p>
<p>ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 3</p>		
<p>3.a Study on benefits of standardisation</p> <p>ANEC intends to undertake a preliminary study on the economic & societal benefits of standardisation for consumers, which could be the precursor to further research and actions by the European Commission. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the societal benefits of standardisation at the national and European levels, with a particular focus on the benefits of consumer participation. Much work has been done on macro-economic and micro-economic benefits of standardisation, but little on the societal benefits or the benefits to consumers in particular. Also relevant for objective 9. (WP 2014, table 7.9.3)</p>	<p>Preliminary study on benefits of standardisation for consumers is adopted by ANEC Steering Committee by end 2014.</p>	<p>A contractor qualified for the study is found through a restricted call for tender.</p>
<p>3.b Monitoring implementation of the Standardisation Regulation</p> <p>According to Article 24.2 of the Standardisation Regulation, the European stakeholder organisations that receive Union financing in accordance with the</p>	<p><i>During the lifetime of this ANEC Strategy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evidence of the improved 	<p>Reporting under the Regulation is effective in allowing conclusions</p>

<p>Regulation shall send an annual report on their activities to the Commission. The European Standardisation Organisations are also required to report about their activities, with special focus on stakeholder participation in standardisation. ANEC will use the opportunities provided by this reporting, and its positioning in the European Standardisation System (ESS), to ensure consumer representation is being strengthened at both European and national level. (WP 2014, table 7.9.2)</p>	<p>engagement of consumer representatives in the policy and technical committees of the national standards bodies and national (electrotechnical) committees;</p> <p>- evidence that ANEC has influenced European standards considered to be key for improved consumer protection and welfare.</p>	<p>to be drawn.</p>
<p>3.c Review of European Standardisation System</p> <p>Before the end of 2013, the Commission should launch an independent review of the governance of the standardisation system to evaluate whether the strategic objectives of the Standardisation Regulation are being achieved. It will assess whether the ESS is proving able to adapt to a quickly-evolving environment and can contribute to Europe’s strategic internal & external objectives, especially the fields of industrial policy, innovation & technological development. It will also examine whether the ESS is adequate from the perspective of market needs, of inclusiveness and of representativeness. The results will be assessed by the Commission to identify options that could further improve the ability of the ESS to support Europe’s strategic policy objectives. ANEC will contribute to the review, calling for an evaluation of whether consumers (and other societal stakeholders) can effectively participate in the standardisation process. Also relevant for objective 9. (WP 2014, table 7.9.2)</p>	<p>EC review to show the fitness and relevance of the ESS is being improved through the more effective representation of societal stakeholders, at the national and European levels, or to identify the need for measures to ensure more effective representation.</p>	<p>EC review is concluded within the mandate of this Commission.</p>

OBJECTIVE 4 Noting that perceptions are increasingly used as a driver in forming policy, ANEC will ensure it develops positions that respond to the real threats and risks to the health, safety & welfare of consumers.	Evidence of success	Key assumptions
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 4		
4.a EC Green paper on Safety of Consumer Services DG SANCO Green Paper on Safety of Consumer Services, initially planned for 2012, is planned in the Commission Work Programme of 2013 for the second semester. The Green Paper will open a public consultation, to take place in 2014, directed to all interested parties on the safety of certain categories of services which involve injury and health risks for consumers. ANEC will reiterate its call for a European legislation on the safety of services, underpinned by standards, and based on accidents and injury data (European Injury Data Base, also relevant for actions 5.a and 7.a) (WP 2014, table 7.6.1)	Legislation on safety of services is on the EU political agenda	Green Paper is published in 2014
4.b Cross-borders consumer services complaints data Further to safety, it is recognised there are other areas of consumer detriment with respect to services that are of importance to consumers and should be considered when developing standards. In 2013, ANEC commissioned a study on the "Collection of complaints data on cross border services". The study, to be released in 2014, aims at providing ANEC representatives in the services Technical Committees with evidence about consumer problems and complaints. ANEC will make use of the data collected on practical examples of (cross border) consumer complaints in the consumer services area also in the work related to the implementation of Mandate M/517 on the programming and development of horizontal services standards. (WP 2014, tables 7.5.2)	Evidence that consumer representatives in services standardisation use the results of the 2013 Services R&T study on "Collection of complaints data on cross border services".	Consumer relevant aspects in services standards are considered in the implementation of the first part of M/517 due to be delivered by end of 2014.

OBJECTIVE 5 In order to strengthen the promotion of its positions and leverage its influence, ANEC will look to build “coalitions of the willing” among those who have common interest in its goals, and to position itself as a thought leader.	Evidence of success	Key assumptions
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 5		
5.a European Injury Database coalition In 2013, ANEC & EuroSafe co-led a coalition of 30 European associations calling for the creation of an EU-funded pan-European database of accidents & injuries. Such a database is seen as key in identifying the need for a preventive measure (be it a legislative instrument or a standard) and assessing effectiveness of the measure. The call stresses that most national databases have been abandoned in recent years, often due to austerity measures, and notes that the USA has had a representative database in place for 20 years. The legal basis for the setting up of the database was supported by IMCO in its report on the Market Surveillance Regulation (also relevant for action 7.a) (WP 2014, table 7.9.6)	Adoption of a legal basis for European Injury Database in the Market Surveillance Regulation	Proposal proceeds to adoption in present mandate of EP (elections in May 2014)
OBJECTIVE 7 Given that the health, safety & welfare of consumers is critically dependent on the effective implementation of pre-market actions (e.g. legislation & standards, conformity assessment & accreditation), ANEC will seek to strengthen political support for post-market actions (e.g. public market surveillance & enforcement).		
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 7		
7.a Market Surveillance Regulation By the end of 2013 or beginning of 2014, the European Parliament and Council of Ministers should adopt the European Commission’s “Product Safety Package” comprising a proposal for a Consumer Product Safety Regulation (CPSR) to replace the General Product Safety Directive (GPSD), a proposal for a Market	Adoption of the MSR, by EP and Council, in line with the ANEC position.	Proposal proceeds to adoption in present mandate of the EP (elections in May 2014).

<p>Surveillance Regulation and multiannual market surveillance plan.</p> <p>ANEC welcomed the Commission proposal, made in February 2013, as it met our call for a harmonised European framework for market surveillance. We were also able to welcome the draft IMCO legislative report, published in June 2013, which foresaw a coherent and properly-resourced system of surveillance & enforcement within a European market. In October 2013, IMCO adopted its legislative report on the proposed MSR. In line with the ANEC position, this report <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - called for an explicit reference to the precautionary principle to remain; - called for consumers to be informed immediately in case of danger; - called for penalties to be proportionate and dissuasive; - called for cooperation between market surveillance authorities and consumer organisations to be facilitated; - called for internet sales to be included in the scope of the MSR; - called for a pan-European accident & injuries database to be established. <p>It is important for ANEC to continue to lobby for the adoption of the MSR by the Parliament and the Council of Ministers. (WP 2014, table 7.9.6)</p>		
<p>7.b PROSAFE joint-actions</p> <p>PROSAFE market surveillance actions on child care articles as well as ladders, lawnmowers, CO detectors and several other consumer-relevant products are on-going. A joint action on wheeled child conveyances and bathing aids started in 2012; another on highchairs started in 2013. ANEC participates as a stakeholder in these joint actions. More market surveillance actions are planned. ANEC intends to monitor these future actions. (WP 2014, table 7.1.9, 7.1.7, 7.3.10, 7.9.6)</p>	<p>Joint actions result in the removal of unsafe products from the European market, and in feedback and recommendations to the ESOs in order to improve existing standards.</p>	
<p>7.c Marketwatch project</p> <p>Insufficient market surveillance is one of the main obstacles to the full realisation of energy saving potential of the EU Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives. The Marketwatch project, launched in 2013, aims at increasing the involvement of civil society in market surveillance activities related to</p>	<p>Improved compliance of products with the Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Directives by the end of this ANEC Strategy.</p>	

<p>Ecodesign and Energy Labelling. The project includes a number of specific activities and operations that civil society organisations will conduct towards this objective. ANEC is part of this project with environmental, consumer & energy non-profit organisations in several countries. (WP 2014, table 7.9.6)</p>		
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<p>OBJECTIVE 8</p> <p>In a globalised goods and services market, and with the advent of new consumer markets, ANEC will seek to ensure European standards stay effective in meeting the needs of European consumers, European legislation and public policies.</p>	<p>Evidence of success</p>	<p>Key assumptions</p>
<p>ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 8</p>		
<p>8.a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)</p> <p>It is possible negotiations on the planned EU-US free trade agreement (TTIP) will require ANEC to become involved in discussions on the role and use of standards. Collaboration with the Trans-Atlantic Consumer Dialogue (TACD) is foreseen. (WP 2014, table 7.9.3)</p>	<p>ANEC facilitates the consumer contribution to TTIP negotiations on the role, development & use of standards.</p>	<p>TTIP negotiations proceed and address standards in 2014.</p>
<p>8.b ANEC involvement in International Standardisation</p> <p>Organisation of brainstorming meeting between ANEC Steering Committee and ANEC's WGs Chairs on the scope and priorities for ANEC's work in standardisation at international level.</p>	<p>Brainstorming report adopted by ANEC Steering Committee.</p>	

OBJECTIVE 9 Noting the continued predominance of the national delegation principle in formal standardisation, ANEC will seek to strengthen interaction between the consumer movement and standardisation nationally, through working to build relationships between consumers, national standards organisations and national authorities in the recruitment & training of experts, within a framework of support that is both tailored and sustainable.	Evidence of success	Key assumptions
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 9		
9.a Standardisation toolbox and e-learning modules for consumers ANEC will continue to support sustainable capacity-building activities, such as the e-training tool being developed by CEN/CENELEC on European standardisation. CEN/CENELEC and the Commission have agreed for an SME tool to be adapted for use by societal stakeholder organisations. At its December 2012 meeting, the CEN/CENELEC Societal Stakeholders Group created two Task Forces the develop and adapt the SMEs e-training tool on standardisation, and to develop and adapt an SME "toolbox". The initiatives reply to ANEC proposals to provide its members with sustainable training. ANEC is committed to helping adapt the modules and beta-test the tool, as well as revising the SME toolkit to societal stakeholder needs. Both should be finalised in 2014 or start of 2015. (WP 2014 table 7.9.3)	CEN/CENELEC training tool and toolbox available for use by the societal stakeholder representatives. Public launch of toolbox in 2014.	
9.b Capacity building To explore practical actions to build consumer participation in standardisation, at both the national and the European levels, with the European Commission, the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) and their members.	Identification and agreement on actions (short-term).	Shared vision and commitment among the EC and ESOs

Annex 1

Achieving the ANEC Vision: Ten Strategic Objectives for 2014 to 2020

Objective 1

ANEC will set areas of priority that reflect both established and emerging threats to the health, safety & welfare of consumers; the needs of consumers as voiced by the ANEC members; the availability of experts and of resources to ANEC; and the potential for ANEC to achieve change.

Objective 2

Within these areas of priority, and recalling the pre-eminence of legislation over standardisation, ANEC will aim to ensure the balance of standards and legislation that best meets the expectations of consumers, and achieves its vision of better protection & welfare for consumers of all ages and abilities.

Objective 3

In a climate of long-term financial uncertainty, and reduced public expenditure, ANEC will intensify its work to demonstrate that effective consumer participation is an investment with high returns to society and to business, and is not a cost on national or European public finances with few returns.

Objective 4

Noting that perceptions are increasingly used as a driver in forming policy, ANEC will ensure it develops positions that respond to the real threats and risks to the health, safety & welfare of consumers.

Objective 5

In order to strengthen the promotion of its positions and leverage its influence, ANEC will look to build “coalitions of the willing” among those who have common interest in its goals, and to position itself as a thought leader.

Objective 6

ANEC will seek to use the provisions of the EU Standardisation Package, as well as the expectations of other legislation and European public policies (such as the Single Market

Acts), to ensure the effective participation of the consumer voice in the European Standardisation System at the strategic and technical levels.

Objective 7

Given that the health, safety & welfare of consumers is critically dependent on the effective implementation of pre-market actions (e.g. legislation & standards, conformity assessment & accreditation), ANEC will seek to strengthen political support for post-market actions (e.g. public market surveillance & enforcement).

Objective 8

In a globalised goods and services market, and with the advent of new consumer markets, ANEC will seek to ensure European standards stay effective in meeting the needs of European consumers, European legislation and public policies.

Objective 9

Noting the continued predominance of the national delegation principle in formal standardisation, ANEC will seek to strengthen interaction between the consumer movement and standardisation nationally, through working to build relationships between consumers, national standards organisations and national authorities in the recruitment & training of experts, within a framework of support that is both tailored and sustainable.

Objective 10

Noting the particular pressures on the resourcing of the consumer movement, and impact of the convergence of technologies on the identification of experts, ANEC will strive to ensure consumer participation in European Standardisation remains viable and effective in the years after 2020.

Raising Standards for Consumers
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ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and represents consumer organisations in 33 European countries.

ANEC is funded by the European Union and EFTA, with national consumer organisations contributing in kind. Its Secretariat is based in Brussels.



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