

1995 ANEC is set up by national consumer organisations in 18 EU and EFTA countries and takes over the coordination structure of its predecessor SECO with six working groups: Child Safety, Electrical Appliances, Machinery, Gas Appliances, Traffic Safety and Environment

1996 ANEC starts using email, the coordination structure is reviewed and expanded to new priorities: Information and Communication Technologies, Services, and Consumers with Special Needs

1997 ANEC provides technical assistance to the European Commission under the framework mandate for consumer interests in standardisation. With standardisation mandates, the European Commission assigns the three European standards bodies to elaborate, for instance, a standard to support EU policy goals

1998 ANEC starts working on consumer participation in international standardisation and participates in the first meeting of the newly established Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue

1999 ANEC conducts training courses for consumer representatives from accession countries, with funding from the European Commission under the PHARE Programme

2000 ANEC becomes a member of the Consumer Consultative Committee (now ECCG), appoints a new Secretary General, and the current coordination structure evolves with seven areas of priority and standing working groups: Child Safety, Design for All, Safety of Domestic Appliances, the Environment, the Information Society, Services, and Traffic Safety

2001 ANEC adopts guidelines for a systematic approach to research, given the importance of scientific data to underpin consumer argument, and launches a project on child-resistant packaging for pharmaceuticals

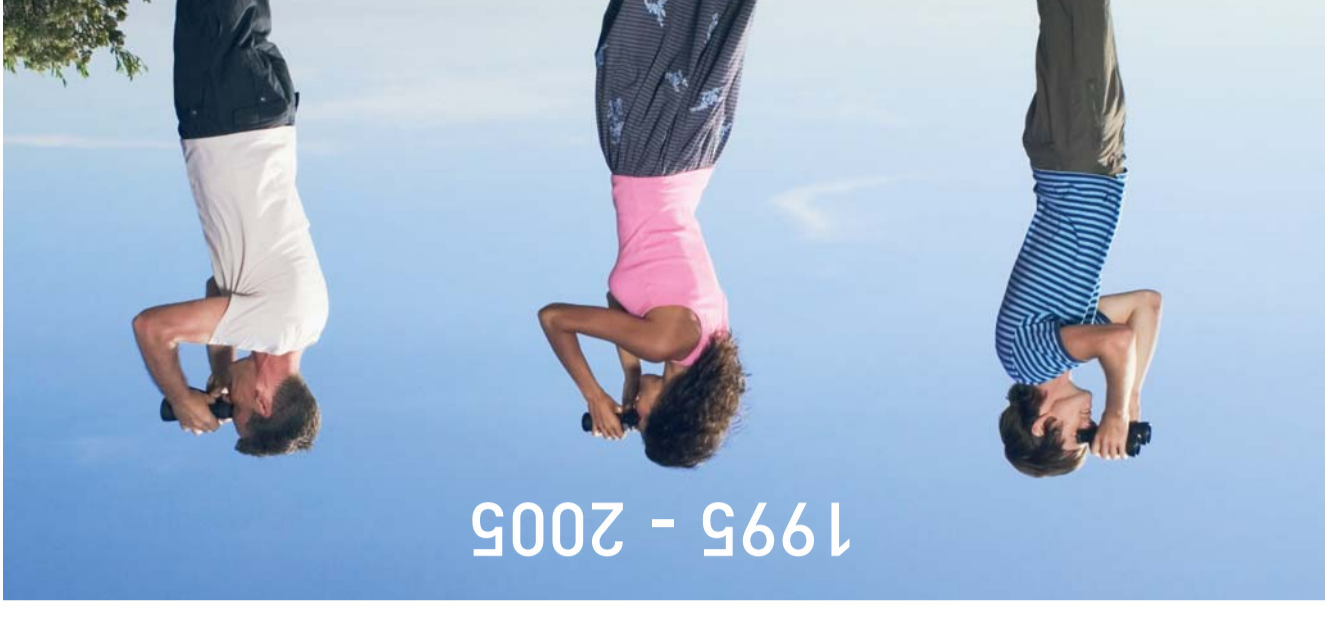
2002 ANEC conducts an extensive training seminar for our representatives, and begins commissioning three to four research projects each year in line with the new guidelines

2003 ANEC signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Consumers International to improve consumer participation in international standard setting; www.anec.org is launched as an accessible website

2004 ANEC agrees on a new Strategy for 2004-2007 and the General Assembly expands to 28 members, ANEC is now a Europe-wide network of more than 200 consumer experts, with direct involvement in around 70 technical and political bodies of CEN, CENELEC and ETSI. ANEC joins the World Wide Web Consortium and thus becomes involved in non-formal standard setting

2005 We celebrate our 10th anniversary, now representing consumers in Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom

1995 - 2005



**A decade of
consumer involvement
in standardisation**



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TEN YEARS OF PROGRESS

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, representing and defending consumer interests in standardisation and certification. ANEC is funded by the European Commission and EFTA, with consumer organisations contributing in kind. In the last ten years, our organisation has grown both in terms of membership and range of activities.

Consumer participation in standardisation is crucial. Consumer representation counterbalances the industry view, and goods and services based on standards developed with consumer participation may be more easily accepted in the market place. In the EU context, consumers ensure that the public interest is represented in standardisation work that complements European legislation under the New Approach to Technical Regulation.

Our work is underpinned by a set of core values: passion for consumer protection, professionalism, creativity, responsibility, integrity, and teamwork.



RAISING STANDARDS FOR EUROPE'S CONSUMERS - SUCCESS STORIES

Taking into account older people and people with disabilities

It is a basic consumer right to have access to safe products and services. Therefore, ANEC took an active role in contributing to the elaboration of ISO/IEC Guide 71: 'Guidelines for standards developers to address the needs of older persons and persons with disabilities'. We welcomed that the European standards bodies CEN and CENELEC adopted this document as their deliverable in 2002, and CEN/CENELEC Guide 6 was born, which is identical to the ISO/IEC Guide 71. This was triggered by the European Commission's standardisation mandate asking for a guidance document to address the needs of older people and people with disabilities in product standards. The same mandate also requested a mechanism to ensure that the guide is used and continuously improved. It took two years to develop this implementation mechanism, which was adopted by CEN members in December 2004, following intensive lobbying by ANEC.

Juice extractors

Several people were injured due to the rotating disk of their juice extractors breaking. ANEC suggested that a chemical test should be undertaken. The results of this test revealed that cracks in the plastic and corrosion of the rotating disk appear when concentrated solutions of citric acid are used together with dishwasher detergent. Thanks to ANEC's lobbying efforts, the standard for juice extractors was revised in order to make the product safer.

Environmental requirements for products

ANEC's study on eco-labels has shown that it is possible to recycle eco-label criteria and other related information to set environmental minimum performance requirements for products. Although the eco-label system applies to the top range of products, the information can be used at the other end of the scale to eliminate products with the poorest environmental characteristics. Such environmental baseline requirements would have to be less stringent than eco-label criteria but sufficiently demanding so that not every product complies with them. ANEC's study demonstrates how the methodology can be applied, using dishwashers, detergents for dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, textiles and paints as examples. It has been presented in various forums, including the EU Eco-Labeling Board, where it was well received. In addition, ANEC has commissioned a follow-up study to develop a detailed set of rules for dishwashers.



Improving the European standardisation system

Since 2001, ANEC has called for a reform of the European standardisation system to ensure more balanced representation of interests and stronger consumer influence. A key factor for the openness of any standardisation process is a readily available appeals mechanism for the impartial handling of complaints. On ANEC's request, CEN agreed to give all CEN associated members, such as ANEC, access to the formal CEN Appeals Procedure. ANEC also argued for an early conflict-resolution mechanism within the European standards bodies. In 2004, ANEC was given the opportunity to contribute to the elaboration of a model for early conflict-resolution, which was finally adopted by CEN as an internal procedure.

Limits for noise levels in toys

National consumer organisations and ANEC have been fighting in support of stringent noise limits for toys for almost a decade. High level impulsive noise, for instance, that emitted by toy pistols or guns, is of particular concern because one shot fired close to the ear can irreversibly damage the hearing capacity of a child. CEN's committee responsible for toy safety established a noise limit value that exceeded the noise level that European legislation allows at a workplace. Therefore, some Member States opposed the provisions of the standard. ANEC supported this opposition and argued that children deserve the same protection against noise exposure as adults. The Commission finally rejected the proposed noise levels, with the result that toys emitting dangerous impulsive noise levels are no longer allowed to be sold in Europe.