



The European Consumer Voice in Standardisation, AISBL
Rue d'Arlon 80 – B-1040 Brussels, Belgium - phone +32-2-743 24 70
e-mail: anec@anec.eu - website: www.anec.eu - TVA/VAT :BE0457696181

High-Level Forum on Standardisation

Third meeting – 29 January 2024

ANEC intervention – Dermott Jewell (ANEC President)

Vice-President. Dear colleagues.

It is an honour to address this forum again on behalf of ANEC, the voice of European consumers in standardisation. We welcome the continuation of the forum under the new Commission, and for standardisation to have become an explicit part of the portfolio of the Executive Vice-President.

In 2023, EU household expenditure reached 52.1% of GDP, marking a return to near pre-pandemic levels and underscoring a powerful truth: consumers are the backbone of Europe's economy. Their spending drives prosperity, and their confidence fuels growth. This places a responsibility on the framework of legislation and standardisation in Europe to reflect their needs and safeguard their rights, ensuring that no one is excluded or left behind.

Standards can be pivotal in helping to tackle today's global challenges. From climate change to digitalisation, they have the power to aid resilience, sustainability, and fairness into the systems that shape our lives. But we operate in a rapidly shifting, multipolar world where multilateralism is under strain and a renewed chill of protectionism hangs in the air. In this environment, European standards must serve as tools of leadership, reaffirm Europe's place in the world and underpin its values.

The role of standards is also expanding. Once focused on physical safety, they now touch on less tangible but equally vital areas such as personal data protection and cybersecurity. Consumers increasingly navigate a digital landscape where their privacy and security are at stake. Standards must evolve to safeguard these rights, ensuring trust and transparency in every corner of the virtual world. Despite this role, our experience tells us there are constraints as to what standards can do, due to their nature and means of development. As inclusive as standardisation can be, it cannot replace the rule of law set through democracy.

Nevertheless, inclusiveness must remain at the heart of the European Standardisation System. Its unique strength lies in its ability to bring together diverse stakeholders—businesses, governments, civil society and consumer representatives—around one table. This collaboration ensures that our standards are not only economically-relevant but also socially equitable, reflecting the diversity of Europe's people and the challenges they face. Inclusiveness is not just a principle—it is a necessity for building a fairer, more resilient and prosperous Europe.



ANEC is supported financially by the European Union & EFTA

EU Transparency Register No. 507800799-30

Raising standards for consumers



We ask the Commission to continue its support in these endeavours. Initiatives such as the Digital Product Passport will empower consumers with the knowledge to make informed and sustainable choices. Efforts such as those to build on the common charger and harmonise wireless-charging solutions, supported by the new Ecodesign Regulation, can add to a greener, more interconnected Europe. These examples show how standards can align innovation with the needs of people and the planet alike – but the people must be part of the process that delivers it.

Thank you for your commitment to this shared vision. Let us move to raise standards that protect consumers, strengthen Europe, and inspire the world.

ANEC-WP1-2025-G-
29 January 2025

Raising standards for consumers