



Raising standards for consumers

POSITION PAPER

ANEC contribution to EC IIA Roadmap on Tourist services – short-term rental initiative



Contact: Michela Vuerich – mvu@anec.eu



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European Association for the Co-ordination of
Consumers Representation in Standardisation aisbl

Rue d'Arlon 80 – 4th Floor - B-1040 Brussels, Belgium
T: +32-2-7432470 / anec@anec.eu / www.anec.eu

ANEC welcomes that the European Commission continue to take interest to regulate the collaborative economy services, and especially the short-term accommodation rentals.

While the Digital Services Act brought progress with horizontal rules for platforms, this type of accommodation needs more regulation at European level, especially for the platforms which offer them, without compromising the advantage of peer-to-peer transactions.

Before the current crisis, saturation of accommodations in some destinations created problems that came as unforeseen consequences: gentrification, noise pollution, high waste accumulation, degradations, rise of prices, lack of housing... this requires asking platforms to work and be transparent with municipalities to help tourism policies and upgrade facilities. There need to be strategic aims set by local planning authorities and the method of enforcing them. With these challenges in mind, their role in shifting the demand from to less well-known destinations should also be further explored.

Back in 2017, ANEC collaborated with Consumers International on the [CI/ANEC Position paper 'Sharing Economy'](#) describing the challenges consumers face in the collaborative economy with view to our contribution to international standardisation work that was starting in that area, while waiting for European legislation in the sector.

Currently, we are involved in the development of several international standards in ISO TC 324 'Sharing economy'. Still, these standards will not answer all issues of this sector, especially when combining visions on this market that are often different from those of European consumers and stakeholders.

ANEC therefore welcomes the EU initiative on Tourist Services – Short term rental *"to ensure clear and simple rules are in place for STRs across the EU while supporting public authorities in defending public interest objectives."*

From a consumer perspective, it is crucial to address on short term accommodation rentals several elements:

- transparency of the platform on the status of the provider (individual or business);
- responsibility of the platform about the classifieds published and type of providers (individual or business);
- importance of having an efficient complaints handling system;
- responsibility of the platform about the safety of the accommodations (fire safety, security, pool safety...).

It is also important that the platforms share with public authorities' relevant information to reduce inconvenience.

The initiative's objective (i) *Access of public authorities to data on STRs* and (ii) *Market access conditions for STR players and level playing field* as described in the STR initiative roadmap can help in these matters.

An additional aspect that we suggest the EC should bear in mind is that tourism extends beyond EU boundaries, so consumer needs and rights to be considered should include:

- EU citizens using STRs to visit destinations outside the EU
- Non-EU citizens visiting destinations inside the EU

Linked to this is the fact that platforms providing STRs may not be based in the EU.



ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and the use of standards, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and is open to the representation of national consumer organisations in 34 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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Rue d'Arlon 80 – 4th Floor
B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

+32 2 743 24 70

@anectweet

anec@anec.eu

www.anec.eu

EC Register of Interest Representatives:
Identification number 507800799-30
BCE 0457.696.181