



Joint declaration

by

ANEC & the ASI Consumer Council

Hazardous chemicals in products

The need for enhanced EU regulations

Draft 7th Environmental Action Programme

ANEC and the ASI Consumer Council warmly welcome that the text of the 7th Environmental Action Programme, agreed by the EU institutional dialogue in June 2013 and approved by the European Parliament on 24 October, identifies chemicals in products as an action point: *"The EU will (...) set out a comprehensive approach for minimising adverse effects of hazardous substances, including chemicals in products,...."*(point 50).

It also states that *"it shall be ensured that risks for the environment and health associated with the use of hazardous substances, in particular for children, and including chemicals in products, are assessed and minimised. Long-term actions with a view to reaching the objective of a non-toxic environment will be identified."* (point 52 d).

Present European regulatory provisions are insufficient

The present specific European regulatory provisions for chemicals in (consumer) products do not go far enough. They are either:

- *inadequate* because of serious gaps - as in food contact materials where only plastics materials are comprehensively regulated; or in the absence of clear limits (medical devices) or lack of a high level of protection (toys);

or

- *(almost) non-existent* for many everyday products, such as clothing, furniture, floor coverings, personal protective equipment, child care articles, sports equipment, construction products, car interiors, ...

REACH is not a substitute for product regulations

REACH does not, and will not, compensate for these deficits because articles – particularly imported ones - are barely covered, and the process of restriction is laborious and related to single substance risk assessments: for example, generic bans of CMR substances in articles are not possible. An approval system for chemicals in articles - similar to the positive lists in cosmetics and food contact legislation – is not possible. Non-toxic effects or parameters cannot be addressed (e.g. organoleptic parameters, such as smell or taste).



Strengthening the legal framework for chemicals in products

A systematic approach to address chemicals in (consumer) products needs to be developed. It should cover overarching principles and basic strategies for all kinds of products, identify priorities, elaborate on product specific requirements (including information provision) as well as monitoring and market surveillance.

We urge the European Commission:

- to establish a platform to elaborate a strategy to address chemicals in products in a comprehensive manner;
- to explore opportunities for enhancing the legal framework for chemicals in products including the establishment of a horizontal framework;
- to identify major gaps and how they can be closed in priority areas
- to strengthen chemical provisions in existing product regulations e.g. for toys and food contact materials;
- to consider implementation of new regulations for chemicals in products in priority areas, e.g. child use & care articles, products releasing substances into the indoor air, water supply materials, textiles and tattoos;
- to consider specific provisions for nano-materials in product regulations;
- to ensure that proper declaration and registration requirements for (nano) chemicals in products are in place to provide full transparency;
- to review, and reinforce, monitoring and market surveillance practices.

We believe these actions are key in contributing to the laudable aim set for the European Union to achieve a “non-toxic environment” as soon as practicable.



About ANEC

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 is open to the representation of national consumer organisations in 33 countries.

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



Raising standards for consumers

**European association for the coordination
of consumer representation in standardisation aisbl**

Avenue de Tervuren 32, box 27, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: +32 2 743 24 70

E-mail: anec@anec.eu

EC Register of Interest Representatives:

Identification number 507800799-30

www.anec.eu

<http://companies.to/anec/>

About Austrian Standard Institute Consumer Council

ASI Consumer Council is a special committee of the managing board of ASI, the Austrian Standard Institute. It was established in 1991 to represent the consumer interests in the field of standardisation and is financed by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection. Please find more information on the <http://www.verbraucherrat.at/en/>



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