

CIVIL SOCIETY

IMPROVING, STRENGTHENING AND LEGITIMISING THE EUROPEAN STANDARDIZATION SYSTEM



Standards are everywhere, from the products we buy and the places we live, to the services we receive. With standards playing a key role to protect consumers, workers and the environment, it is easy to see why civil society is needed in their development. Add to this the ability standards have to support the implementation of laws and policies, including in areas of public interest, and you quickly realise that civil society must be involved in standardization.

Three organizations have a special role in promoting the interests of civil society in the development of standards in Europe, and internationally:

ANEC: The European consumer voice in standardization.

ECOS: The European Environmental Citizens' Organization in Standardization.

ETUC: The European Trade Union Confederation.

Three organizations represent a wide range of national civil society organizations across the European Union, European Free Trade Association, and beyond.

ANEC, ECOS and ETUC ensure the expertise needed for better standards and bring balance to a standardization system which they legitimise through their participation and contributions.

THE RIGHTS OF ANEC, ECOS AND ETUC

ANEC, ECOS and ETUC are Partner Organizations of CEN and CENELEC, and are recognised as “Annex III Organizations” under Regulation (EU) 1025/2012. The regulation requires that the participation of ANEC, ECOS and ETUC is supported and facilitated by the European Standardization Organizations. Through this regulation, the Annex III Organizations also receive European public financing.



THE THREE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS WITHIN THE STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:

- > Join any CEN and/or CENELEC Technical Body, including Technical Committees and Working Groups without having to apply.
- > Take part in CEN and CENELEC Technical Committees as Observers and in Working Groups as Experts with equal rights.
- > Nominate one observer at Technical Committee level and three experts at Working Group level.
- > Use the online document-exchange platforms to access standardization documents.
- > Make New Work Item proposals and formulate advice on standards programmes.
- > Participate in CEN and CENELEC governance bodies as observers, including the General Assemblies, Technical Boards and Policy Groups.
- > Submit comments and express a “Favourable” or “Not Favourable” Opinion during the Public Enquiry and Formal Vote on standardization deliverables.
- > Lodge an appeal on matters associated with work carried out by CEN and CENELEC Technical Bodies to which they have contributed.
- > Have their participation at the international level supported by CEN and CENELEC.

PROVIDING EXPERTISE

ANEC, ECOS and ETUC bring a wealth of technical expertise to the standards development process. Through their participation, the standards development process benefits from perspectives that are otherwise often missing.

LEGITIMISING THE STANDARDIZATION SYSTEM

Not only do ANEC, ECOS and ETUC enhance the quality of standards, they also contribute to building confidence in the standardization system. This has long been recognised by policy makers and cemented with the adoption of Regulation (EU) 1025/2012 on European Standardization.

CONTRIBUTING TO BALANCED REPRESENTATION

ANEC, ECOS and ETUC ensure civil society is heard at European level and complement the 'national delegation principle' in CEN and CENELEC. This is crucial as civil society is commonly weak in the standardization process at national level, or even completely absent.

CIVIL SOCIETY AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Standards drafted by the international standards bodies ISO and IEC are increasingly adopted as harmonised standards in Europe. At the same time, more and more European standards are being revised at international level. Supporting the effective participation of ANEC, ECOS and ETUC in the international standards development process is key to ensure that these standards benefit from the unique expertise that civil society brings. By doing so, both European and international standards can be valuable for businesses and society at large.



For more information about the role of ANEC, ECOS and ETUC in European Standardization, please visit

- www.cencenelec.eu/societal



ABOUT CEN AND CENELEC

CEN (European Committee for Standardization) and CENELEC (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization) are recognized by the EU and EFTA as European Standardization Organizations responsible for developing standards at European level. These standards set out specifications and procedures in relation to a wide range of materials, processes, products and services.

The members of CEN and CENELEC are the National Standardization Bodies and National Electrotechnical Committees of 34 European countries. European Standards (ENs) and other standardization deliverables adopted by CEN and CENELEC are accepted and recognized in all of these countries.

European Standards contribute to enhancing safety, improving quality, facilitating cross-border trade and strengthening the European Single Market. They are developed through a process of collaboration among experts nominated by business and industry, research institutes, consumer and environmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders.

CEN and CENELEC work to promote the international alignment of standards in the framework of technical cooperation agreements with ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission).

- www.cencenelec.eu
- www.cen.eu
- www.cenelec.eu

ABOUT ANEC

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardization, open to the representation of national consumer organizations in 34 countries. ANEC defends consumer interests in standardization and the use of standards, and in the setting of policy or legislation that intends to refer to standards.



- www.anec.eu

ABOUT ECOS

ECOS is the European Environmental Citizens' Organization in Standardization. Supported by over 40 members across Europe and beyond, ECOS defends the environmental interests in European and international standardization.



- www.ecostandard.org

ABOUT ETUC

ETUC is the voice of European workers in standardization. With 45 million members from 89 trade union organizations in 39 European countries, plus 10 European Trade Union Federations, ETUC promotes high quality working conditions for workers in the standardization process.



- www.etuc.org/issue/standardisation

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