



AN EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION OF SOCIETAL STAKEHOLDERS TO ENSURE GOOD QUALITY STANDARDS

A joint proposal from ANEC, ECOS and ETUC (September 2015)

Societal stakeholders' organisations representing the interests of the consumers, the workers and the environment are seldom involved in standardisation the national level in Europe.

Nevertheless, the participation, knowledge and perspective of experts from these communities is much needed in order to ensure standards for products and services are representative of all interested parties, including both industry and the society. As the EXPRESS report documented, in order to address the weaknesses at national level, it has been recognised since the 1990s that it is essential to facilitate the participation of these stakeholders directly at European level.

Regulation 1025/2012 on European standardisation has confirmed the important role our organisations play in the representation of consumer, environmental and workers' interests. Our participation will also be all the more needed with the increasing use of standards to support European legislation and public policies affecting societal welfare. In this context, we are convinced that the effective participation of European societal stakeholders is mutually beneficial to the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs), the European institutions and the society at large.

The participation of societal interests is a political precondition for the use of European standards in support of Union legislation and policy. Moreover, it sustains the legitimacy and credibility of standards initiated by market actors in a context where standardisation is increasingly addressing societal topics such as services, social responsibility or sustainability. By conveying the views of workers, consumers and environmentalists, our participation ensures that standards address broader civil society concerns and priorities.

ANEC, the European Association for the Co-ordination of Consumer Representation in Standardisation

Av. de Tervueren 32, box 27, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium - Tel: +32-2-743 24 70 - Fax +32-2-706 54 30

e-mail: anec@anec.eu - internet: www.anec.eu

ECOS, the European Environmental Citizens' Organisation for Standardisation (asbl)

Mundo B, Rue d'Edimburg, 26, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium - Tel: +32 2 894 46 55 - Fax: +32 2 894 46 10

e-mail: info@ecostandard.org - internet www.ecostandard.org

ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation

Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 5, B - 1210 Brussels - Tel: +32 (0)2 224 04 11 - Fax: +32 (0)2 224 04 54

e-mail: etuc@etuc.org - internet: www.etuc.org

Noting the increasing use of European standards in addressing issues of societal welfare, we believe our organisations need to be granted a more central role in the standardisation process, supported by the following rights and supporting activities being in place within all three ESOs (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI):

- **Establishment of a separate category of membership/partnership** for societal stakeholders, especially granting the following specific rights:
 - o Unlimited access to technical bodies, and advisory groups,
 - o Unlimited and strictly confidential access to all existing standards and other deliverables (for non-commercial purposes),
 - o A “voting” right, even if symbolic, allowing societal organisations to provide a formal opinion on a draft standard, which would create awareness about the position of these organisations on specific topics and trigger some mechanisms within the ESOs (e.g. require advice from the Technical Committee on the reasons for the negative opinion and possible corrective action of the TC is in agreement),
 - o An unrestricted right of appeal, allowing these organisations to launch an appeal against any standard that they consider would pose risks to the society or the environment,
- **Access without charge to ESOs and National Standards Bodies (NSBs)** for the Annex III societal stakeholder organisations and their members active at national level,
- **Publication of information** on new work item being developed within existing WG, including foreseen scope,
- **Publicly available and user friendly information** on standards under development for screening/monitoring purposes, i.e. gathering all information on: name of standard, scope, responsible TC and WG, WG secretariat and convenor contacts, stage of development, next WG meeting, link with EU legislation (if relevant),
- **Support from CEN and CENELEC for actions in ISO/IEC** that can ensure the effective participation of the Annex III societal stakeholder organisations in the development and revision of International standards responding to a mandate or request from the European Commission (or EFTA),
- **Tailored-made training sessions** for the staff and representatives of these organisations, complemented by supporting tools, including a regularly updated and interactive online toolbox and an e-learning tool,
- **Awareness raising actions** on the role and tasks of the recognised European societal stakeholder organisations targeting European technical bodies, NSBs and National Electrotechnical Committees,
- **Identified contact persons** for societal stakeholders in all standardisation organisations, including national ones.

These rights and actions are certainly not intended to undermine the national delegation principle, but are intended to complement this principle which is still largely unable to reflect the interests of societal stakeholders.