

## ANEC in brief

ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the process of technical standardisation, 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. In 2016, we celebrated our 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary (#ANEC21)!

ANEC has signed the European Transparency Register and accepted its Code of Conduct: Identification Number 507800799-30

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

Avenue de Tervuren 32, box 27  
B-1040 Brussels, Belgium  
Phone +32 2 743 24 70  
Fax + 32 2 706 54 30

[anec@anec.eu](mailto:anec@anec.eu) – [www.anec.eu](http://www.anec.eu)

 [www.facebook.com/ANEC.Standards](https://www.facebook.com/ANEC.Standards)

 [@anectweet](https://twitter.com/anectweet)

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***Raising Standards for Consumers***

**The consumer views on the  
proposal for a European  
Accessibility Act**



## Background

The European Commission adopted on 2 December 2015 the long-awaited proposal for a Directive on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States as regards the accessibility requirements for products and services (COM(2015) 615final)- the **European Accessibility Act**. The EAA aims to improve the functioning of the EU internal market for accessible products and services by removing and preventing barriers created by divergent legislation.

ANEC welcomed the proposal, since February 2012 already, when we first commented on the future EAA, as we support the elaboration of legal basis on the accessibility of products and services to be underpinned by standardisation. We believe however, that the freedom allowed to industry to self and co-regulate through standards needs to be accompanied by an obligation to provide the highest level of protection and accessibility to consumers that is economically and reasonably possible.

**This is our expectation and *conditio sine qua non* for the EAA to benefit consumers!**

## Our Position

While welcoming the EAA, ANEC has some proposals for its improvement, regarding namely the scope of the Directive. The products and services covered in the scope have been identified as having the highest risk of being affected by diverging accessibility requirements. ANEC believes additional products and services should be included in the currently limited scope, especially considering that accessibility to goods and services requires a seamless chain of accessibility. The scope should include in our opinion payment terminals, household appliances, built environment and audio-video services.

**For more information, check the ANEC website!**  
**[www.anec.eu](http://www.anec.eu)**



## What is ANEC calling for at a glance...

- A reworded definition of accessibility in Article 2
- Modification of Article 12 on Fundamental alteration and disproportionate burden
- Replacement of CE marking of products (Article 16) with a mark to inform consumers (e.g.: "No or partial access") to be affixed on products which are not accessible.
- Strong market surveillance and collection of complaints and accidents statistics about the lack of accessibility of products and services.
- The setting up of a standing Expert Group composed of relevant EU stakeholders (including economic operators and societal stakeholders) to provide input and feedback.
- Shorter transposition and reporting period.