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Press release:

**A new – but hopefully not last – step towards
a more inclusive standardisation system in Europe**

ANEC, ECOS & ETUI welcome CEN-CENELEC's initiative to create an online Toolbox for Societal Stakeholders. We feel that this is a vital step towards fully integrating all stakeholders including civil societal ones in the European standardisation process, and we celebrate its launch. We hope that National Standards Bodies will continue to develop these tools and implement country-specific toolboxes to facilitate involvement at national level, where societal input is equally beneficial.

Laura Degallaix, ECOS Secretary-General remarks, “The complexity, and the perception of a ‘closed’ process are some of the main reasons that environmental organisations are put off working with standards. This toolbox is a first step to change these perceptions but European and national standards bodies now ought to engage in active outreach with national NGOs. Additional efforts will also be needed to make the standardisation system in Europe truly inclusive”.

Stephen Russell, ANEC Secretary-General, comments, “There is an unfortunate, but understandable, disconnect between consumers and the European Standardisation System. Put simply, standards are unsexy, even though they are key to the interoperability, accessibility and safety of products placed on the European market. ANEC welcomes the CEN-CENELEC initiative as a first step in strengthening the links between the consumer movement and the standards development process, especially in the identification of new experts able to participate in standardisation at the national and European levels. Nevertheless, we believe further steps need to be taken to forge a common commitment among national standards bodies, national consumer organisations and national public authorities”.

Stefano Boy, ETUI, says “The disproportion between the investment capacity (and negotiating power) of some stakeholders and that of societal stakeholders affects the quality of the consensus achieved in Working Groups and Technical Committees. The fact that societal stakeholders do not share the economic benefits from their participation in standardisation makes things worse. The CEN-CENELEC toolbox can help correct this situation by raising trade unions’ awareness of the need to be more active in contributing to standards work so as to achieve more balanced representation in the groups developing standards of interest to trade unions”.

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