

World Consumer Rights Day

15 March

CEN (European Committee for Standardization) and CENELEC (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization) are recognized by the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) as European Standardization Organizations responsible for developing standards in relation to a wide range of materials, processes, products and services.

CEN and CENELEC, with the support and expertise of ANEC, the European consumer voice in standardization, are strongly committed to supporting consumer rights in Europe by providing a platform for development of European Standards on various products and services.

1 The right to satisfaction of basic needs



Using European Standards ensures that basic and essential goods for consumers are **adequate, efficient and safe**. Standards help detect substances hazardous to human health, such as dangerous, carcinogenic and sensitizing chemicals, and the presence of bacteria and viruses in food, water, cosmetics and other daily products.



2 The right to safety



In 2016, more than 1200 European Standards in the field of consumer safety have been **made available to the public, manufacturers, importers and laboratories**. These standards set requirements and test methods for a variety of products used by consumers, such as toys and baby articles, sports equipment, clothing and footwear, cosmetics, furniture, household electronics and domestic appliances.

3 The right to be informed



An integral part of each European Standard is a requirement on how information concerning the safe and correct use of a product or service is provided to consumers. Use of European Standards guarantees that all information addressed to consumers is **exhaustive, understandable, coherent, and assessable**.

4 The right to choose



The main goal of European Standardization is to **produce common, voluntary, and state-of-the-art requirements for products and services**. Freedom to use standards leaves enough room for **innovation** that supplies a variety of products and services on the EU market to consumers.

5 The right to be heard



There are also procedures in place for expressing comments and opinions in order to reach a decision by consensus.

6 The right to redress



The law plays a role in protecting consumers by regulating aspects of settlement claims, including compensation for inadequate goods or services. European Standards produced by CEN and CENELEC support the regulatory context in Europe and are a main tool for checking compliances with the legal requirements. **European Standards can be used as benchmark to distinguish products or services that conform with the law**, thus adequate to consumers, from the ones that are not.

7 The right to consumer education



Education about standardization is a collaborative activity just like standardization! In order to increase consumer participation in standardization, CEN and CENELEC, ANEC as well as other societal stakeholders have developed the CEN and CENELEC **Toolbox for Societal Stakeholders**. **It provides information on how consumers can contribute to the development of European Standards and how to benefit from them**. Businesses also benefit from developing standards which take into account consumers concerns and priorities. This helps ensure products and services are made and delivered in line with their expectations.

8 The right to a healthy environment



Many consumers base their purchasing decisions not only on quality, price and availability, but also on the environmental and social aspects associated with products and services. European Standardization plays a major role in **reducing environmental impact** by influencing the choices linked to the design of products and processes. European Standards **support the implementation of EU policies** and act as a tool to **support the protection of the environment**.