



PRODUCT SAFETY

Content



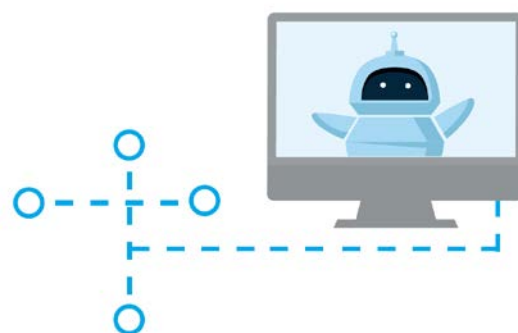
©BLG/UVB

Lead topic

- 04 The new EU Product Safety Regulation
- 06 Fall-protection barriers on railway wagons for car transport

Themes

- 08 Three questions for: Dr Michael Stephan, responsible for DIN's Standardization Division
- 09 Use of artificial intelligence to improve workplace safety: INRS research study
- 10 Occupational safety and health institutes in several countries adopt position on standardization
- 11 ANEC: The collective voice of European consumers in standardization



©INRS



©OceanProd - stock.adobe.com

13 In brief

- Consultation on revision of the EU Standardisation Regulation
- Eighth EUROSHNET Conference in 2024 in Kraków
- New Head of KAN's European Representation in Brussels
- Change of leadership at EU-OSHA
- Publications

14 Events

Stay up to date:



www.kan.de



Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung (KAN)



[KAN_Arbeitsschutz_Normung](https://www.instagram.com/KAN_Arbeitsschutz_Normung)



KAN – Kommission Arbeitsschutz und Normung



Benjamin Pfalz
Chairman of KAN
German Metalworkers' Trade Union
(IG Metall)

Product safety: new arrangements have an impact upon occupational safety and health

The debates surrounding repeal of the EU Product Safety Directive by the Product Safety Regulation did not attract the same prominence as those concerning the EU Machinery Regulation. However, the Product Safety Regulation clarifies a number of important aspects, for example with regard to substantial modifications of a product. Further amendments provide greater legal certainty, strengthen consumer rights and take account of safety risks associated with new technologies. In addition, the obligation to carry out and document a safety assessment now explicitly extends to all consumer products. Overall, the obligations of economic operators will increase. The new Product Safety Regulation will replace the existing Directive as of 13 December 2024, and will apply directly.

Although the Regulation is aimed at consumer products, occupational safety and health also benefits in cases where safe products are used as work equipment and the requirements set out in the Regulation are appropriately supported in standards. It is clear that as is to be expected within the New Legal Framework, standardization plays an essential role. This is also evident from the fact that a product is to be considered safe when it complies with harmonized standards or national legal requirements, provided these do not conflict with European law.

The major involvement of occupational safety and health experts in standards development to date must continue in the future in order for a high level of protection to be assured. KAN supports the process as a platform and a strategic partner, especially under the new framework conditions of the Regulation. «

The new EU Product Safety Regulation

As of 13 December 2024, the Product Safety Regulation (EU) 2023/988 of 10 May 2023 will replace the existing Product Safety Directive 2001/95/EC. As a regulation, it applies directly in all Member States without having to be transposed into national law.

The Product Safety Regulation¹ is based on the New Legislative Framework², which harmonizes market surveillance, accreditation, conformity assessment and CE marking for products. The enacting terms, which include procedures and catalogues of obligations, have grown significantly. The core of European product safety law nevertheless remains unchanged.

Scope of application, definitions and general safety requirement

Although Article 2 of the Product Safety Regulation appears at first glance to suggest otherwise, the Regulation's scope is no different from that of the Directive. Its declared aim is to guarantee a high level of consumer protection and to implement the border-free Single Market. Definitions of terms such as risk, importer and fulfilment service provider, which have long been established in European product law, have now been included for the first time, however. Definitions of various standardization terms such as European standard and European standardisation organisation have also been included. They make reference to the definitions of the European Standardisation Regulation and thus ensure clarity for application of the regulation. All economic operators are now explicitly obliged to place or make available on the market only products that are safe. This was not previously the case. As before, a product is any item intended for consumers, or likely to be used by them under reasonably foreseeable conditions.

Product safety assessment

The safety assessment procedure has not changed significantly. However, the new Articles 6 to 8 of the Product Safety Regulation govern this procedure in much greater detail. The presumption of conformity in Article 7 (1) is decisive in the first instance. This states that a product is presumed safe if it conforms to the relevant European standards the references of which have been published in the Official Journal, or in the absence of such standards, to national statutory requirements, provided that these are in compliance with EU law. For the purposes of harmonization, the European Commission is empowered to determine, by means of implementing acts, what specific safety requirements are to be governed by European standards.

In addition, Article 6 lists numerous aspects to be included in the assessment procedure. Cybersecurity features of a product that are necessary to protect it against external influences are significant, for example. To these are added evolving, learning and predictive functions of the product, i.e. artificial intelligence. Finally, should the presumption of conformity not apply, provision remains for secondary codes to be taken into account in accordance with Article 8.



Obligations of economic operators

It is evident from the length of Chapter III of the Product Safety Regulation that the European legislator was keen to produce a conclusive regulation. As before, the obligations under product safety legislation are linked to the economic operator's relationship to the product. As a result, the obligations are addressed in the first instance to the **manufacturer** of a product. However, a manufacturer is also deemed to be any party selling a product under its own name or trademark. The new Regulation sets out in legislation for the first time that any party substantially modifying a product is also deemed to be a manufacturer; in addition, "substantial modification" is now defined.

The status of the **authorised representative**, which is familiar from the Market Surveillance Regulation, is now also regulated; however, the authorised representative's role is modified by the addition of obligations such as review of the technical documentation. Manufacturers must notify the competent authorities of any accidents caused by one of their products. Importers and distributors must report such information to the manufacturer.

All economic operators must put internal processes in place to ensure that their obligations are met (Article 14). For certain products and product categories, the Commission may set up a traceability system for the collection and storage of data "enabling the identification of the product, its components or of the economic operators involved in its supply chain". Although these internal conformity assessment obligations already existed, they were not placed as strongly in the focus of market surveillance, and reinforce the impression that the European legislator is increasingly focusing on systems and not solely on the legal compliance of products.

Distance sales, online marketplaces

Any party distributing a product by distance sales must provide contact details of the manufacturer or party responsible for the product, a picture of it and all necessary warning and safety information. The new obligations for providers of online marketplaces under Article 22 of the Product Safety Regulation are governed in detail in 12 paragraphs. They include, for example, the designation of **points of contact** for market surveillance authorities and consumers, arrangements concerning notifying orders, product safety recalls and obligations to cooperate.

Market surveillance

Market surveillance is based on Regulation (EU) 2019/1020, parts of which are declared applicable. Member States continue to report unsafe products through the Safety Gate rapid alert system (formerly RAPEX). The Safety Business Gateway is also being set up, which is intended to facilitate communication between economic operators and online marketplace providers on the one hand and market surveillance authorities and consumers on the other.

Concluding remarks

Cooperation among market surveillance authorities in Europe and between them and the Commission is to be stepped up. A consumer safety network is to be set up for communication and coordination with the authorities. Coordinated measures are also planned for checks of specific products or product categories. Where risks to the safety and health of consumers emanate from a product, the Commission may also take measures in the form of implementing acts, including prohibitions on placing on the market. It may do so on its own initiative or in response to an initiative by a Member State.

Philipp Reusch

*Lawyer; partner and founder
of reuschlaw*

p.reusch@reuschlaw.de

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/988/oj>

² Comprising: Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008, Decision No. 768/2008 and Regulation (EU) 2019/1020

Fall-protection barriers on railway wagons for car transport

Open double-decker car transporters have been used for many years to transport passenger cars by rail. During loading and unloading operations, workers must perform activities on the upper deck of these railway wagons. However, the barriers on these decks are substantially less than one metre in height. The recently published Fachbereich AKTUELL FBVL-011 aims to minimize the risks to workers and support affected companies in taking effective safety measures to prevent falls from a height.

Workers are at risk of falling when loading and unloading open car transporters, for example when walking adjacent to passenger cars or attaching/removing load securing equipment. Risks arise owing to the upper deck being at a height of approximately 2.6 metres above the top of the rails, and the horizontal ropes attached to the sides of the wagons being only 0.6 metres above the deck floor on which the workers walk.

The reason for this low height is the requirement for the German railway building and operation regulations (EBO) governing shunting and train movements to be observed. In the past, higher barriers have been rejected owing to the risk of incorrect use, potentially leading in turn to incalculable risks to rail operations during movement of the wagons (for example if the barriers are not lowered prior to travel). In addition, the legal requirements concerning railway operations must be observed. These often do not permit the use of fixed equipment with barriers to prevent falling, owing to the clearance between adjacent tracks being inadequate.

In the past, organizational and personal safety measures have been defined to reduce the risk of workers falling to a minimum. These measures include the assignment of suitable personnel who have received specific instruction, or the wearing of slip-resistant footwear.

Review following amendments to the statutory requirements

Loading and unloading tasks on open car transporters continue to be carried out in accordance with the provisions described above, at least in some cases.

Surveys reveal that passenger cars manufactured in Europe and loaded on these wagons have increased in width and length by an average of ten and 20 centimetres respectively over the last 20 years. The dimensions of the car transporters, however, have remained unchanged. As a result, the available space and gaps for workers on the car transporters have decreased, further increasing the workers' risk of falling.



Car transporter during loading and unloading, with barrier raised

Legally speaking, railway wagons constitute work equipment. Car transporters thus also fall within the scope of the German Ordinance on industrial safety and health (BetrSichV). The TRBS 2121 Technical Rules for industrial safety and health governing risks to employees presented by falls from a height (general requirements) specify how hazards are to be assessed, and how measures to prevent falls from a height are to be taken. This means that the freight handling enterprise concerned is required to set out suitable safety measures to prevent falls from a height for the activities performed during the handling of passenger cars. However, occupational safety and health measures are hampered by the fact that a number of different companies are involved, directly and indirectly, in transport of the cars. These include the manufacturers of the rolling stock, track system operators, rail transport companies, the companies dispatching the road vehicles, and the terminal operators and their subcontractors carrying out the freight handling work.

Suitable solutions: an overview

Owing to the high cost and practical obstacles of putting suitable fall-protection equipment such as scaffolding in place, priority should be given to the use of safe work equipment, i.e. car transporters with sufficiently high barriers to safeguard against falling.

A number of manufacturers now offer car transporters with swing railings. These have a height of at least 1.00 metre in the upright position, and significantly increase the protection for workers. Such barriers constitute the state of the art, thereby also satisfying the requirements of the German Ordinance on Industrial Safety and Health (BetrSichV) with regard to the risk of falling.

In conjunction with the labour inspectorate of the state of Bremen, the German Federal Railway Authority (EBA) and KAN, the Railways (railbound transport systems) Subcommittee of the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV) is working on drawing attention to the risk of falling during tasks on open car transporters and reducing the risks to employees as swiftly as possible. For this reason, the subcommittee has drawn up an FB AKTUELL document, which was published by the DGUV's Transport and Landscape Expert committee (FB VL) in March 2023¹. The FB AKTUELL describes the issues and outlines suitable solutions.

In this context, it should be noted that manufacturers of work equipment – including rolling stock – are required to assess the safety risks associated with their use, lay down appropriate safety measures and take these risks and measures into account during manufacturing. Other stakeholders must be involved and their obligations to ensure worker safety and health observed. This aspect must be taken into account in the procurement of car transporters.

*Gerhard Heres
(graduate engineer)*

*UVB (German Social Accident
Insurance Institution of the
Federal Government and for the
railway services)*

Unit Prevention – Railways

*Member of the DGUV Railways
(railbound transport systems)
Subcommittee*

gerhard.heres@uv-bund-bahn.de

¹ <https://publikationen.dguv.de>, Search: FBVL-011

Fachbereich AKTUELL FBVL-011 has the purpose of supporting the companies involved in the transport of passenger cars on car transporters in taking effective safety measures to prevent falls and thus enabling workers performing tasks on the decks of car transporters to do so safely and without accidents.



For more information on the complex interaction of railway legislation and occupational safety and health, see: www.kan.de/en/what-we-do/transport-and-traffic/railways/rail-transport

Three questions for: Dr Michael Stephan, responsible for DIN's Standardization Division

Dr Michael Stephan has been a member of the DIN management board since 2016, after holding various positions in industry. He has been responsible for the Standardization Division since 2018.

Several new items of EU legislation grant the European Commission the power to define requirements for products in Common Specifications. What does this mean for standardization?

In all likelihood, it will increase the effort entailed by orientation and compliance. It could also result in competing technical requirements emerging. A clear framework exists for the development of harmonized European standards. The EU Standardisation Regulation is among the instruments defining this framework. It assigns both rights and obligations to the European standards organizations. For example, they must put transparent procedures in place, and ensure the broadest possible participation by stakeholders, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, consumers and environmental protection organizations. Common Specifications are not subject to specific requirements concerning the development process or transparency and broad stakeholder participation, nor need their content necessarily be consistent with the existing body of European standards. My view is therefore that Common Specifications can only ever constitute a stopgap measure, and that priority should always be given to developing harmonized European standards.

An EU Advocate-General recently called for harmonized standards to be made available free of charge. What is DIN's position on this?

The call was made during legal proceedings currently in progress before the European Court of Justice (ECJ). It remains to be seen whether, and if so to what extent, the ECJ will follow the Advocate-General's call in its judgement. This step could have a considerable negative impact on the European economy and the European standardization system.

The issue would not merely be whether, and if so how, harmonized European standards developed within this system would have to be published free of charge in future; most significantly, the ruling could lead to European standardization being decoupled from that at international level, since if the content of standards were no longer protected by copyright, it is likely that ISO and IEC would no longer make the content of their international standards available to European standardization activity as they have done to date. Such a decoupling would render our current well-functioning standardization system inoperative, potentially leading to the creation of trade barriers.

In my view, the synergy between EU legislation and standardization guarantees that technical details are regulated in a way that adapts them practically and continuously to the state of the art. For over 30 years, this task has taken the form of standardization activity organized by the private sector, which has facilitated access by companies to the Single Market. Conversely, legislation is limited to regulating the essential requirements. The call by the Advocate-General could therefore ultimately also be regarded as termination of this successful partnership between the public and private sectors.

The baby boomer generation will soon be retiring. Is standardization work facing enormous problems as a result, like other sectors?

This challenge is as great for us as it is for society and the economy as a whole. We're already noticing it, both during our efforts to recruit employees ourselves for DIN, and with regard to the experts who ultimately develop the content of the standards. We're responding to this challenge on four levels:



Dr Michael Stephan

1. We're stepping up our scheme for universities, in which trainees and students learn more about standardization at an early stage, because we'll need them on the standards committees later on in their working lives.
2. The DIN Young Professionals network makes it easier for new skilled professionals to take their first steps in standardization, and offers them a platform for dialogue.
3. Further digitalization of the sphere, up to and including the creation of smart standards, is to make the use of standards efficient. With these measures, we're creating opportunities for standards to be applied automatically and for AI to be used to simplify access to them.
4. It goes without saying that as an employer, we aim to appeal to new employees by offering attractive working conditions and topical subjects. Standardization continues to be extremely important for the economy and society as a means of describing a state of the art that is safe and engenders confidence.

Use of artificial intelligence to improve workplace safety: INRS research study

Investment in AI technologies has increased significantly in recent years. Scientific publications¹ show the field of occupational safety and health to be among the potential growth markets for AI. In 2022, the French OSH institute INRS launched a prospective study² that examined possible areas of application for AI in occupational safety and health for the period up until 2035.

The purpose of the study was to explore the potential of new AI technologies for the prevention of work-related hazards. It addressed both the benefits of this development, and aspects that must be monitored with particular vigilance. Ultimately, the study was to formulate strategies for action in the field by which the opportunities offered by artificial intelligence for all parties to preventive activity can be exploited to the full.

Three areas of application have been selected as foci of the study:

- Analysis by AI systems of very large volumes of data that can be used for epidemiological studies or accident research
- Improvements to the safety of the working environment by means of sensors and systems controlled by AI
- Advanced robotics enabling human beings and robots to work side by side, or machines to replace human beings for physically demanding or dangerous tasks

Technologies that may well contribute indirectly to improving working conditions but primarily serve economic interests have been excluded from the study. This was a recommendation made by a working group of AI experts, company representatives and OSH experts convened specifically for the purpose of the study.

Results of the study

The most important findings of the study have been defined in the form of core messages that are intended to assist OSH experts in gaining a better understanding of the topic and to provide them with tools with which to address future developments.

The key message is that these technologies are of great importance for preventive activity: technologies for recognition based on the analysis of

field data have made spectacular progress. This appears to offer considerable potential for the development of systems for safeguarding the working environment. In addition, the automation of certain tasks that is made possible by these technologies may make it unnecessary for employees to perform hazardous tasks in the future.

However, the strategy pursued by developers and distributors of AI systems may deviate considerably from the fundamental values of occupational safety and health acknowledged in France and the rest of Europe. It is important to ensure that during further development of the systems, they are consistent with these values. Since these technologies have yet to prove themselves fully in the field, the OSH community must not rely on them exclusively. Despite all the benefits, a considerable risk also exists of these technologies becoming the focus of work organization for reasons of economic expediency, and of the importance of humane work consequently being sidelined. It should also be borne in mind that occupational accidents often occur in atypical situations, such as during exceptional working conditions, technical malfunctions or maintenance work. AI systems cannot always predict these exceptional circumstances, which limits the scope for their application.

Recommendations for action

One result of the study is a series of recommendations for action formulated by the working group.

In view of the technical complexity and opacity of AI systems, efforts should be directed first and foremost towards initial and ongoing training of the various parties involved, in order to equip them with comprehensive knowledge of how the systems work, the associated ethical

challenges, the legal framework and the possible risks. This initiative should begin at an early stage in the process and should include the parties developing and designing the systems concerned. Training is needed to make these parties aware of the risks associated with the technologies and to urge them to ensure that their algorithms comply with the principles of prevention.

Besides the training measures, particular attention should be paid to the creation of standards and regulations addressing AI technologies. The new arrangements must systematically take into account the principles of occupational safety and health, thereby contributing to the development of safe work equipment.

Finally, particular vigilance is required with regard to the use made of the data that are gathered to enable AI systems to function. The protection of workers' personal data must be ensured at all times. In addition, the data must be selected and processed in a way that prevents distortions from occurring during the systems' learning phase.

In summary, it can be said that the advances in AI also open up new perspectives for occupational safety and health, but that at the same time, like any change, they entail risks. Occupational safety and health bodies must therefore not delay in developing and disseminating methodological tools that provide guidance for all parties involved in these innovations.

Jennifer Clerté

INRS

jennifer.clerte@inrs.fr

¹ www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/18/13/6705

² Summary of the study: <https://en.inrs.fr/inrs/strategic-plan/foresight-exercise.html>

Occupational safety and health institutes in several countries adopt position on standardization

In 2014, KAN joined the French OSH institutes EUROGIP and INRS in signing a joint declaration on standardization policy in the field of occupational safety and health. The declaration dealt with issues that were emerging at that time, such as the role of new forms of standardization document, standardization in the area of services and the standardization of management systems. The declaration has now been updated.

The position paper, jointly adopted in 2014 as the “Bonn Declaration”, addresses topical occupational safety and health issues in European standardization. CIOP-PIB, the Polish OSH institute, also signed the declaration in 2016. In the years since its adoption, many new topics have arisen in standardization. For this reason, the signatory institutions have launched a revision process to bring the document up to date and add further aspects that will have a significant impact on current and future standardization work.

An additional objective was to garner the support of further European OSH institutes for the declaration. An invitation to participate was extended to other institutes through the EUROSH-NET network. The first drafts met with a positive response, leading to INSST in Spain and FIOH in Finland also participating in the update.

Declaration updated and extended

The positions on some issues that were already present in the first declaration have been adapted to the developments over recent years. These include positions on product standardization, standardization documents and standardization concerning the safety and health of workers at work.

With regard to product standardization, the signatory institutions call for safety levels in Europe to be upheld when international ISO and IEC standards are adopted as European harmonized standards. The system by which HAS Consultants review harmonized standards for their compliance with EU legislation is generally regarded favourably; however, the harmonized standards should be listed in the Official Journal of the European Union more swiftly following review.

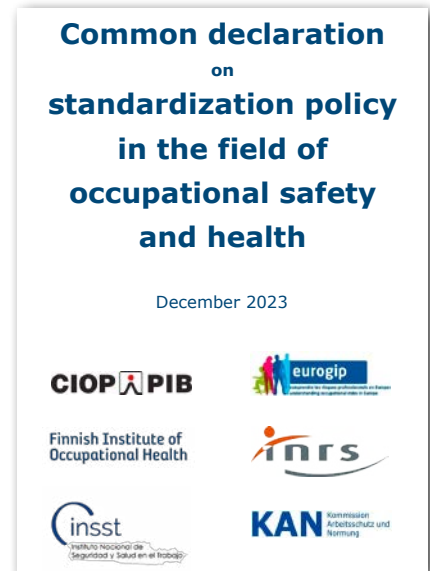
Standardization documents such as CWAs, IWAs and PASs are not suitable for addressing matters of occupational safety and health. These document formats should also be clearly indicated as such to distinguish them from standards in the strict sense. Technical Specifications (TSs) can be used for time-critical projects, whereas Technical Reports (TRs) are suitable for projects with purely informative occupational safety and health content.

The joint declaration emphasizes the distinction between the role of standards in product safety on the one hand and in the safety and health of workers at work on the other. With regard to the latter, the declaration calls on the standards bodies to evaluate new standardization projects in advance and to develop standards in this area only if they actually improve occupational safety and health and do not conflict with national regulations.

New aspects: digitalization, artificial intelligence, standardization strategy

Certain completely new aspects have been included in the declaration. One consequence of digitalization for standardization is that many meetings are now held in virtual form. This has the advantage of increasing participation and reducing the travel overhead. The declaration notes that personal contact on standards committees is still important for consensus-building, and that face-to-face meetings should therefore not be discontinued altogether.

Standardization in the field of artificial intelligence also poses a challenge for occupational safety and health. How occupational safety and health issues are addressed in the standards is crucial to the successful standardization of AI technologies. This requires OSH



experts to be involved closely in the standardization processes. The AI standards must also be compatible with the risk assessment methods used in product and occupational safety.

The political significance of standardization is demonstrated by EU Commission initiatives, such as the standardization strategy published in 2022. The joint declaration states that standardization work must continue to be based on consensus and follow democratic principles. It is also important that all stakeholders in occupational safety and health are sufficiently involved in the standardization processes.

The joint declaration was published in December 2023:

www.kan.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/Dokumente/Basisdokumente/en/EU/2023-Common-declaration-en.pdf

Freeric Meier
meier@kan.de

ANEC: The collective voice of European consumers in standardization

ANEC is one of the Annex III organizations under the Standardisation Regulation whose involvement in standardization is particularly supported by the European Commission. In this interview, Director General Stephen Russell talks about the organization, its working methods, and current developments affecting it.



What is ANEC's mission and how is it organized?

ANEC¹ represents national consumer organizations in countries that are members of CEN-CENELEC. Our members are not organizations, but individuals appointed with the support of a consensus among the national consumer organizations. Liaising between ANEC and the grass-roots consumer movement at national level, they play a key role in setting ANEC's strategic vision, one that responds to future needs for standardization in order to raise consumer protection and welfare. Similarly, our members are asked to present collective ANEC positions on standards and legislative proposals to national standards bodies, national public authorities and local MEPs as needed. This relationship is of great value, considering the significance of the national delegation principle in shaping European and international standardization.

An objective for 2024 is for ANEC to be a catalyst in strengthening the relationship between the consumer movement, standardization bodies and public authorities in specific countries. It is to the detriment of both economic and social interests if the consumers' voice is not properly heard in standardization. Just before the pandemic, consumer spending accounted for 54% of EU Gross Domestic Product. We believe that the demand for products and services of European businesses, including SMEs, will not be optimised without consumers who are confident and empowered, aided by inclusive standards. Unfortunately, the focus of the national authorities invariably tends to be on strengthening the supply side, in line with the old mantra "standards for industry, by industry".

How is ANEC involved in the standardization process?

At the technical level, ANEC's positions on draft standards and elements of the standardization process – such as the Standardization Request at European level – are set out by ANEC Working Groups, which comprise experts drawn from across the member countries. The ANEC Working Groups number seven in total, each reflecting an area of priority for ANEC as determined by the members: Accessibility, Child Safety, Digital Society, Domestic Appliances, Services, Sustainability, and Traffic & Mobility. The Working Groups' positions are conveyed directly to CEN-CENELEC, ETSI and ISO/IEC (and UNECE in the case of automotive standards) by experts chosen by the Working Group, and to the ANEC members for dissemination as appropriate. In this way, we can mitigate the weakness – or even complete absence – of consumer expertise in the technical bodies and mirror committees of the national standardization bodies in many countries. Germany is the most notable exception, where the DIN Consumer Council is a dedicated resource. Of course, this long-term under-representation of the consumer voice elsewhere is the reason for ANEC being chosen as an Annex III organisation in the framework of Regulation (EU) 1025/2012, the Standardisation Regulation.

What role does standardization play for consumer protection?

With its combination of regulation and standardization, the New Approach has not only removed technical barriers for business, but also unquestionably improved the protection and welfare of many millions of consumers. Although it is not in the interests of consumer-facing businesses to ignore their customers, their focus tends to be on the average or mainstream consumer, where costs are lowest and profits highest. Without ANEC, the needs of vulnerable consumers (young children, older people and persons with disabilities) in particular would often be overlooked. One of our greatest successes was advocating – and then leading – revision of the first generation of the EN 60335-2 series of standards for domestic appliances: over one hundred standards dealing with a host of everyday products. These excluded use of the appliances by vulnerable consumers except under supervision. Our work here over 20 years has made literally millions of products sold each year safer and more accessible to consumers of all ages and abilities.



Stephen Russell

What are your views on the High-Level Forum on European Standardization?

The creation of the Forum has been timely. The New Legislative Framework, the successor to the New Approach, is now being extended to fields far removed from those that were the building blocks of the Single Market. Standardization as we know it today started with the standardization of nuts and bolts in 1901. Now it has also been identified as necessary to support legislation such as the AI Act², and elements of legislation concerning fundamental human rights. But can a process that historically brings together technical experts, where decisions are taken by consensus and participation is so often unbalanced, be the right process to address fundamental human rights?

Thanks to the creation of the Forum, we and our colleagues in BEUC – the mainstream European consumer organisation – are able to lead a workstream to consider these questions and indeed ask whether there should be a limit to what is standardizable. We see that DIN 820-1, addressing the principles of standardization, excludes several fields from standardization in Germany, including ideological matters and topics that fall within the scope of a social partner. Perhaps the scope of European and international standardization should be limited similarly.

What are your thoughts on the review of the EU Standardization Regulation?

In common with many stakeholders, we do not believe that a full revision is needed, but a “targeted amendment”³. Apart from setting limits to what is standardizable, we believe that the regulatory framework should leave it to the Commission to decide on a case-by-case basis whether development of a harmonized standard – considered after all a part of law by the European Court of Justice – can be offered by CEN-CENELEC to ISO/IEC. The environment at international level is very different from that in Europe, not least the approach of some countries to ethics, and the inclusiveness of the standardization process.

We also believe the extension of the New Legislative Framework, even if ultimately limited, is such that the system of HAS consultants is no longer enough. It should be replaced by a “Standardization Scrutiny Board” comprising not only technical experts but experts in a far wider range of relevant disciplines.

¹ www.anec.eu

² Study commissioned by ANEC and BEUC on “The Role of Standards in Future EU Digital Policy Legislation” (7/2023), www.anec.eu/images/Publications/other-publications/2023/ANEC-DIGITAL-2023-G-138.pdf

³ We shall discuss these thoughts further in a position paper on the revision of the Standardisation Regulation that we will publish jointly with BEUC in the coming weeks.

Consultation on revision of the EU Standardisation Regulation

On 1 September 2023, the European Commission published the first part of its consultation on revision of Standardisation Regulation (EU) No. 1025/2012. As announced in the EU Standardization Strategy 2022, the Regulation is to be reassessed and reviewed to determine whether it is still fit for purpose after over ten years in application, and whether it is still keeping pace with developments in technical standardization at national, European and global level. The Standardisation Regulation sets out the procedure for cooperation between the EU institutions, the Member States and the European standards organizations in the development of harmonized standards in the EU.

The general public and relevant stakeholders will now be consulted in several stages regarding the efficacy, efficiency, coherence and relevance of the Regulation, and its added value for the EU. The Commission is currently planning to complete the entire process by the third quarter of 2024. A concrete legislative proposal could then be published in the fourth quarter of 2024.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13446-European-standardisation-evaluation_en

Eighth EUOSHNET Conference in 2024 in Kraków

The EUOSHNET occupational safety and health network is to hold the eighth European conference on standardization, testing and certification in the field of occupational safety and health on 13 and 14 June 2024 in Kraków (Poland).

European policy and legislation are constantly evolving, not least in response to global developments. Experts from the fields of occupational safety and health, standardization and regulatory activity will consider the impact upon occupational safety and health of new political and regulatory spheres of activity in the EU, such as the EU Green Deal, the circular economy, the AI Act, the Cyber Resilience Act and the Machinery Regulation. Enhance your network and discuss with other experts at the conference how standardization should respond to these far-reaching changes and challenges and whether new testing and certification instruments are needed.

For more detailed information, visit:
www.euroshnet.eu/conference-2024

New Head of KAN's European Representation in Brussels

On 15 August 2023, Ronja Heydecke assumed responsibility for KAN's European Representation in Brussels. After completing a bachelor's degree in European legal linguistics and the German first state examination in law, Ms Heydecke worked for almost two years at the EU liaison office of the

German Federal Chamber of Tax Advisers in Brussels, where she represented the interests of German tax advisers at EU level.

KAN's European Representation is one of its key instruments. At Brussels level and in conjunction with a number of different interest groups, it serves as the concerted voice of the German occupational safety and health lobby in the sphere of standardization. It has the task of actively monitoring developments in European standardization policy, and also EU legislation where the latter impacts upon occupational safety and health and standardization.

Change of leadership at EU-OSHA

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) has a new director. William Cockburn Salazar, until now the interim Executive Director, was appointed as the new Director on 2 October 2023 by decision of the Administrative Board. He succeeds Dr Christa Sedlatschek, who led the agency through the period from 2011 to 2021.

William Cockburn Salazar has worked at EU-OSHA since 1998. He assumed responsibility for the Prevention and Research Unit, which develops and implements research and information projects concerning occupational safety and health, in 2012. He was appointed interim Executive Director in September 2021.

EU-OSHA is the EU body with responsibility for occupational safety and health. Through its activities, it supports the European Commission's Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work, and relevant EU strategies and programmes.

Further information on EU-OSHA's structure and tasks:
<https://osha.europa.eu/en/about-eu-osha>

Publications

Understanding ICT Standardization

ETSI, the European Telecommunications Standards Institute, has published a comprehensive textbook covering numerous topics including the role of standards, the standards development process, the standardization landscape in Europe and strategic aspects of standardization. The textbook is intended to raise awareness among students and teaching staff in a range of disciplines for the significance of standards. Each chapter concludes with a summary, a quiz, a glossary and links to further information. In addition to the textbook, an accompanying lecture slideset is available for download on the ETSI website.

www.etsi.org/education/teaching-material

Events



15.-18.01.24 » Online

Crashkurs

EU-Maschinenverordnung vs. Maschinenrichtlinie

VDI Wissensforum

www.vdi-wissensforum.de/weiterbildung-maschinenbau/eu-maschinenverordnung-vs-mrl

16.-17.01.24 » Frankfurt/ Main

Seminar

Produktsicherheitsgesetz (ProdSG) und Produkthaftung

VDI Wissensforum

www.vdi-wissensforum.de/weiterbildung-maschinenbau/prodsg-und-produkthaftung

18.-19.01.24 » Bonn

Workshop

DKE IEC Conformity Assessment Bootcamp

DKE/IEC

www.vde.com Bootcamp conformity

23.01.24 » Online

Seminar

DKE/ZVEI-Onlineseminar zur elektrotechnischen Normung

DKE/ZVEI

www.vde.com elektrotechnische Normung

24.-25.01.24 » Essen/hybrid

Fachkonferenz

Arbeitsschutztagung

Haus der Technik

www.hdt.de/arbeitsschutztagung-h020011286

21.-22.02.24 » Langenhagen

Fachveranstaltung

Technical Safety Dialogue: Opportunities and risks of digitalisation for the safety of machinery and process plants

ISSA

www.safe-machines-at-work.org dialogue

06.-08.03.24 » Stuttgart

GfA-Frühjahrskongress

Arbeitswissenschaft in the loop:

Mensch-Technologie-Integration und ihre Auswirkung auf Mensch, Arbeit und Arbeitsgestaltung

Gesellschaft für Arbeitswissenschaft e.V.

www.gesellschaft-fuer-arbeitswissenschaft.de

13.03.24 » München

Arbeitsmedizinisches Kolloquium

Klimawandel und gesundheitliche Auswirkungen am Arbeitsplatz

DGUV

www.dguv.de/de/praevention/kampagnen/arbmed_kolloquium/index.jsp

16.-17.04.24 » Online

Seminar

CE-Kennzeichnung im Maschinen- und Anlagenbau

VDI Wissensforum

www.vdi-wissensforum.de/weiterbildung-maschinenbau/ce-kennzeichnung

05.-06.06.24 » Zürich

Fachmesse

ArbeitsSicherheit Schweiz 2024

Arbeitssicherheit Schweiz

www.arbeits-sicherheit-schweiz.ch

13.-14.06.24 » Krakau (PL)

8th EUROSHNET Conference

World in transition – Europe in adaptation – OSH under pressure

EUROSHNET

www.euroshnet.eu/conference-2024

22.-25.09.24 » Dresden

12th International Working on Safety Conference

Building a resilient future towards sustainable safety in a rapidly changing world

Working on Safety network / DGUV

<https://wos2024.org/home.html>

Ordering

www.kan.de/en » Publications » KANBrief » KANBrief subscription (free of charge)



Gefördert durch:



Publisher

Verein zur Förderung der Arbeitssicherheit in Europa e.V. (VFA) with the financial support of the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Editorial team

Commission for Occupational Safety and Health and Standardization (KAN), Secretariat
Sonja Miesner, Michael Robert
Tel. +49 2241 231 3450 · www.kan.de · info@kan.de

Responsible

Angela Janowitz, Alte Heerstr. 111, D – 53757 Sankt Augustin

Translation

Marc Prior

Publication

published quarterly

ISSN: 2702-4024 (Print) · 2702-4032 (Online)