The European consumer voice in standardisation

ANEC

"Is openness always good for consumers?"

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ANEC facts & figures

- **Established in 1995 to represent national consumer organisations in the EU and EFTA countries**

- **Supported (co-funded) by the European Commission and EFTA, Consumer Organisations contribute 'in kind'**

- **Promotes, defends and represents the European consumer interest in:**

    - *the development of standards*

    - *the use of standards (conformity assessment)*

    - *the development of legislation related to standards or their use*

Societal challenges

Share of the total EU population over 80 years of age will rise from 4.1% in 2005 to 6.3% in 2025 and to 11.4% in 2050

And with age, comes disabilities (eg: visual impairments)

Societal challenges

The "baby boomers", born between 1945 and 1965, will start retiring soon, bringing about a major shift in the balance between the active and the retired European population

Consumers' challenges

Accessibility of ICT products and services for consumers of all ages and abilities

More and more education, health, social protection services are delivered online, because it is cost effective to do so, but inaccessible websites increase the 'digital divide'

Example

A blind person can access websites using text-to-speech screen reader software

For this to work websites need to designed in an accessible manner, according to recognised web accessibility standards

And interoperability plays a very important role

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Consumers position

Digital Agenda for Europe Communication from the European Commission: "Based on a review of options, make proposals by 2011 that will make sure that public sector websites (and websites providing basic services to citizens) are fully accessible by 2015"

Joint AGE/ANEC/EBU/EDF campaign "Access Denied"

"Access Denied"

It is now time to deliver web accessibility legislation because disabled and older consumers continue to face great difficulties accessing websites

W3C WCAG standards exist

eAccessibility fostered by openness and innovation

Energy challenges

EU "*20/20/20 objectives*":

- 20% CO2 emissions' reduction
- 20% of the energy demand from renewable sources
- 20% increase in energy efficiency by 2020

Energy challenges

Smart energy systems (Smart Grids and Smart Meters) will play an increasingly important role

The energy system will still be built of steel and copper, but with an additional ICT layer allowing management of the system functionalities as well as the consumer interfaces

Digital Agenda for Europe 2010-2015

Consumers' challenges

With smart energy systems come new opportunities for consumers, but as with any new technology, increasingly sophisticated functionalities can result in unintended consequences

Key will be consumer acceptance through enhanced consumer protection and empowerment

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Consumers' challenges

Consumer privacy, together with ensuring a fair division of the cost, is one of the most important aspects of the change towards smart energy systems

Data access and ownership, permission to gather data and the optimum frequency of data are all issues to carefully consider and address

Consumers' position

Privacy should be designed into smart meter systems right from the start as part of the compliance life-cycle and include easy to use privacy-enhancing technologies

Principle of "privacy by design" to be mandatory, including principles of data minimization and data deleting

Open standards and interoperability are the driving forces for good implementation of roll out to smart energy systems

Consumers' threats

Can the principles of private data protection, informed consent and data minimisation survive in an open and interoperable environment?

ANEC expectations of the Standards Package

ANEC does not favour (permanent) recognition of ICT fora & consortia deliverables, as it will encourage a fragmentation of the European standardisation landscape

We prefer the three ESOs to remain the gateways to recognition (so offering the guarantee that the criteria of openness and impartiality are met)

Accessibility, security & data protection are as important for consumers as the interoperability the Standardisation Package proposal aims to facilitate through public procurement

Thank you for listening

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