

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL THURSDAY 14 MARCH 06:00h



Towards a Europe-wide database of accidents and injuries

Brussels, 14 March 2013 – **A broad coalition of European organisations has come together to call on the European Commission to propose setting up a *Pan-European Accident and Injury Data System*¹. They are convinced that such a system would contribute to fewer accidents and injuries. Moreover, the cost of creating such a system would be more than offset by reductions in health care costs.**

Roughly 5.7 million people are admitted to hospital annually as a result of injuries sustained in accidents. 34 million others are treated as outpatients².

41 million injuries per year is not only an extraordinarily high number but also contribute to significant healthcare costs (estimated at €78 billion each year³). 73% of such accidents occur at home or while engaged in leisure, including sports.

Aiming to reduce the number of preventable injuries and also healthcare costs, European business groups, consumer organisations, standardisation bodies and safety promoters together urge the European Commission to establish an EU-wide accident and injury data system.

To mark the 15th annual European Consumer Day, 28 organisations have joined forces to stress the need to tackle the current disorder of data collection. There is a clear need for a system that allows data to be more easily compared across Europe.

Trailing more than 30 years behind a proven and successful US-system⁴, an adequately funded single European database would prompt significant decreases in the costs associated with the medical treatment of injuries.

Such a European injury and accident database would require a representative sample of emergency centres to record the cause of such accidents. Using this resource, national authorities would then pool and share the data into a European system, helping manufacturers to adapt their products, providing a basis for public awareness-raising campaigns, assisting legislators and surveillance authorities and standardisers to make more informed risk assessment decisions and developing better product standards.

¹ The Joint Call was formally presented this morning to Tonio Borg, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, at the European Consumer Day Conference in Brussels, organised by the European Economic and Social Committee.

² EuroSafe, Injuries in the EU 2008-2010, Amsterdam 2013
<http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/csi/eurosafe2006.nsf/wwwVwContent/I3reportsonidb-1.htm>

³ EuroSafe, IDB-Manual, Amsterdam 2012
[http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/csi/eurosafe2006.nsf/wwwAssets/11498398F0475DD5C1257A010052C0BE/\\$file/A.%20IDB-JAMIE%20MANUAL%207%20August%202012.pdf](http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/csi/eurosafe2006.nsf/wwwAssets/11498398F0475DD5C1257A010052C0BE/$file/A.%20IDB-JAMIE%20MANUAL%207%20August%202012.pdf)

⁴ The National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) operated by the US-Consumer Product Safety Commission. <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Research--Statistics/NEISS-Injury-Data/>

QUOTES MAIN COALITION PARTNERS:

Stephen Russell, ANEC Secretary-General: *"The efficiency of the legal frameworks for consumer products in Europe depends on the ability of the Commission and Member States to identify problems. A regular surveillance of home and leisure accident data should be key to this identification."*

Monique Goyens, BEUC Director General: *"High standards of product safety coupled with robust enforcement are the bottom line of sound policy here. The ability to access reliable data on accidents is the missing link towards major progress."*

Markus J. Beyrer, Director General of BUSINESSEUROPE: *"A Pan-European Accident and Injury Data system is key to the development of effective policies and actions in product safety and will help create a level playing field for both consumers and business."*

Elena Santiago Cid, Director General of CEN and CENELEC: *"A truly comprehensive pan-European database of accidents and injuries would provide valuable information for those who are developing and revising European standards in relation to all kinds of products. It would enable our experts to identify and assess specific risks associated with particular types of products, and then look for ways to eliminate or minimise these risks. The result should be better standards leading to safer products, which also means fewer accidents and injuries."*

Christian Verschueren, Director-General of EuroCommerce: *"Retailers are actively engaged with their suppliers to make sure that their products respect the highest standards of safety. However, challenges remain because of increasingly complex supply chains, new technologies, and changing consumer behaviour. A European database of injuries and accidents would complement the actions by business: it would contribute common knowledge, which would help our members develop even safer products for European consumers."*

Wim Rogmans, Secretary General of EuroSafe: *"In spite of these alarming statistics, only a few countries within the EU collect systematically information on home and leisure injuries. As a result, the majority of health and consumer protection authorities are in the dark as to how to reduce the ever rising burden of this category of injuries on health care budgets."*

Adrian Harris, Director General, Orgalime, the European engineering industries association: *"We are delighted to be able to count once again on objective data. We know that with the extensive body of health and safety legislation we have made enormous progress, but accidents still occur and therefore this will help consumers to be more aware of the risks that remain and which they must manage".*

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PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

ANEC, *The European Consumer Voice in Standardisation*
www.anec.eu

BEUC, *The European Consumer Organisation*
www.beuc.eu

BUSINESSEUROPE, *The main horizontal business organisation at EU level*
www.businessseurope.eu

CEN - *European Committee for Standardization*
CENELEC - *European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization*
www.cencenelec.eu

EuroCommerce, *The Retail, Wholesale and International Trade Representation to the EU*
www.eurocommerce.be

EuroSafe, *The European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion*,
www.eurosafe.eu.com

Orgalime, *The European Engineering Industries Association representing the interests of the Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, Metalworking & Metal Articles Industries.*
www.orgalime.org

WITH THE SUPPORT OF:

ACFSE, *The Alliance for Consumer Fire Safety in Europe*

www.acfse.org

AGE Platform Europe, *The largest European Older People's network*

www.age-platform.eu

CAPIEL, *The European low voltage switchgear and control gear association*

www.capiel.eu

CECAPI, *The European Committee of Electrical Installation Equipment Manufacturers*

www.cecapi.org

CECED, *The European Committee of Domestic Equipment Manufacturers*

www.cecled.eu

ECSA, *The European Child Safety Alliance*

www.childsafetyeurope.org

EFLM, *The European Federation of Lighters Manufacturers*

www.eflm.eu

EGMF, *The European Garden Machinery Federation*

www.egmf.org

ELA, *The European Lift Association*

www.ela-aisbl.org

ENPC, *The European Nursery Products Confederation*

www.enpc.eu

ESF, *The European Safety Federation*

www.european-safety-federation.org

ESTES, *The European Society for trauma and emergency surgery*

www.estesonline.org

ETUI, *The European Trade Union Institute*

www.etuc.org

EuPHA, *The European Public Health Association*

www.eupha.org

Euralarm, *the association of European manufacturers, installers and service providers of the electronic Fire Safety and Security industry*

www.euralarm.org

FENA, *The European Federation for Furniture Retailers*

www.fena-furniture.com

FSEU, *Fire Safe Europe*

www.firesafeeurope.eu

ILSE, *The International Lifesaving Federation of Europe*

www.ilsf.org

PROSAFE, *The Product Safety Enforcement Forum of Europe*

www.prosafe.org

TIE, *Toy Industries of Europe*

www.tietoy.org