

Enhanced Child Restraint Systems (R129)

After the adoption of the new Regulation 129 (i-Size) by UNECE WP 29 in November 2012 and coming into force on 9 July 2013, ANEC was addressed by journalists, professionals, manufacturers of Child Restraint Systems (CRS) and consumers/parents to obtain more information.

We hope that the below compilation of questions and answers will provide you a better understanding of this new regulation.

FAQs



What is the i-Size regulation?

It is a new safety regulation for child car seats, known as Regulation 129 (R129) that will ultimately replace the current UN Regulation 44, which has been in place since over 30 years.

The phases and current state of the i-Size regulation are:

- **Phase 1 (i-Size)** : Integral harness ISOFIX (CRS for younger children, Isofix attached) - Finalised and adopted by WP 29 in November 2012, came into force on 9 July 2013.
- **Phase 2:** Non-integral child restraint system (booster seats and booster cushions) (CRS for older children) - Under development. The Mandate to deliver a draft for phase 2 is December 2014; vote will then be in June 2015 at the earliest.
- **Phase 3:** Belted integral harness CRS - is still an open cogitation

Once all 3 Phases of the new Regulation 129 are finalised, old style CRS will disappear gradually from the market.

Since the new i-Size does not permit forward-facing transport before 15 months, if parents buy the new i-size seat as of summer 2013, they will use it until their child is at least 15 months old in rearward facing position.

What are the major improvements for the transportation of children in cars?

Submitted by the expert from Consumer International

CRS that are produced based on the new I-size Regulation provide the following major improvements for the transportation of children in cars:

- ✓ Reduces misuse (there is less risk of incorrect installation)
- ✓ Requires rearward-facing transport until the child is 15 months of age
- ✓ Simplifies classification based on stature (height) of the child, not mass (weight)
- ✓ Provides side impact protection
- ✓ Better compatibility car-CRS: I-size CRS will fit in any I-size ready seating position in a car (a vehicle fitting list will no longer be required). Both CRS and seating position can be recognised by the i-Size logo.

What are the main differences between the two regulations?

UN R44

- No side-impact protection
- Forward-facing allowed as of 9 kg
- Mass based classification
- Isofix & belt use
- Requires checking of vehicle lists for semi-universal, space requirements etc.

vs

1st phase R129 (i-size)

- Side impact protection
- Rearward-facing mandatory until 15 months
- Stature based classification, not mass
- Use of Isofix only (prevents misuse)

What will happen during the transitional period?

During the transitional period CRS approved according to UN R44 and R 129 will be sold alongside each other. Once all 3 Phases of the Regulation 129 are finalised, old style CRS will disappear from the market as no new R44 approvals will be granted anymore.

ANEC hopes this period will be as short as possible because this might be confusing for consumers, with two different regimes operational alongside each other, one being more demanding than the other.

The first i-Size systems are on the market since end-2013. These include seats with integral harness that can be used rearward facing as well as forward facing. The latter mode is only allowed for children older than 15 months (note that RWF is mandatory till 15 months, but as many accident studies have confirmed, the longer the better!).



Enhanced Child Restraint Systems (R129) FAQs

Will parents be obliged to replace their current CRS approved under UN R44?

Regulation 129 does not replace Regulation 44, nor will it lead to the replacement of any car seat available at the moment on the market approved under the current regulation UN R 44.

Furthermore there is neither need nor obligation for consumers to replace their current car seat for an i-Size car seat.

With the introduction of i-Size, consumers are given an extra option (that complies to the new safety standard) to choose from when buying a car seat for their baby/toddler, while the current standard UN R44/04 will remain in effect for all belt installed child seats during a certain transition time, which is under discussion still at the UNECE where the new Regulation has been developed.

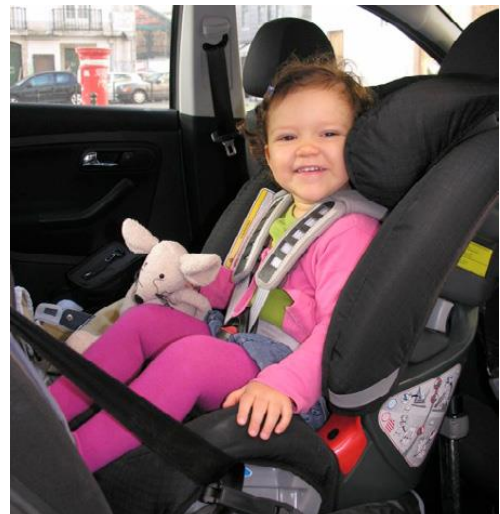
What will happen after the transitional period?

After the transitional period –for which no date has been set yet- no new R44 approved seats will be admitted to the market. Children will be transported more and more rearward facing until 15 months in R129 approved products.

Will the i-Size CRS fit in all cars?

Car manufacturers can already choose whether to design cars to be i-Size ready. If a car's seating position is i-Size ready, the consumer can use an i-Size CRS without a need to check vehicle lists.

Besides in i-Size ready cars, it will be possible to install the new i-Size CRS in older vehicles with ISOfix under certain conditions (e.g. ability to accommodate R44 approved semi-universal CRS with support leg).



Submitted by the expert from Consumer International



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ANEC is the European consumer voice in standardisation, defending consumer interests in the processes of technical standardisation and conformity assessment, as well as related legislation and public policies.

ANEC was established in 1995 as an international non-profit association under Belgian law and represents consumer organisations in 33 European countries.

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