



C M P A S S

European standardization in a nutshell



CHEMISTRY | CONSTRUCTION | CONSUMERS

ENVIRONMENT | FOOD | GENERAL STANDARDS

HEALTHCARE | HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEATING, COOLING, VENTILATION

INFORMATION SOCIETY | MATERIAL

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING | METROLOGY

SECURITY & DEFENSE | SERVICES

TRANSPORT | UTILITIES AND ENERGY

Can you imagine...



... a Europe with different credit card sizes, a Europe where you couldn't be certain that petrol was the same in every country or where you couldn't be sure that Genetically Modified Organisms in food were classified the same way? A Europe like that would be chaotic for all of its citizens and daily life would be far more complicated.

Fortunately, the Europe in which we live today is a Europe with a single market. The free movement of goods, persons, services and capital is becoming a reality. Barriers to trade are being eliminated through the development of common European Standards. It is CEN's mission to develop European Standards. In this role, it is joined by its sister European Standards Organizations: CENELEC (specializing in electrotechnical standardization) and ETSI (specializing in telecommunication standardization).

Standards belong to the knowledge economy that underpins European industry and society

Consumers and producers alike benefit from standardization through increased product safety and quality as well

as lower prices. With one common standard for 28 European countries, a product can reach a far wider market with much lower development and testing costs. Manufacturers benefit from being able to use a broader basis of external suppliers, from greater quality assurance and increased efficiency.

Customers are more likely to accept a product or service which they can trust. With its commitment to reflect innovation and the results of research and development, CEN is ready to respond to new market demands and European policies.

European Standards are founded on consensus, a consensus which reflects the economic and social interests of 28 countries channelled through their National Standards Bodies which are CEN Members.

Although most are initiated by industry, a significant number of standards have been

developed to support European legislation - the so called New approach. "Reference to standards" within a legislative text is viewed as a more effective means of ensuring that products meet the essential health and safety requirements of legislation than the writing of detailed laws.

This does not mean that European Standards are drafted in regional isolation. CEN has an agreement with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) through which common European and International Standards can be developed in conjunction. Indeed, more than 30% of the European Standards adopted by CEN are identical to International Standards and many more are closely related.

Free movement of goods and services = one of the basic freedoms of the European Union

What standards do for you:

- Standards enhance the safety of products
- Standards encourage economies of scale
- Standards enable manufacturers to comply with European legislation
- Standardization promotes the interoperability of products and services
- Standards encourage greater competition
- Standards facilitate trade by diminishing trade barriers
- Standards promote ecological safety and sustainability
- Standards safeguard the environment
- Standardization reflects research and development
- Standardization promotes common understanding

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How to participate in standardization



Standards are drafted by experts in specific fields. In building European consensus, industry, trade federations, public authorities, academia and NGO representatives are invited to contribute to the standardization process. It is this open participation which accounts for the strength of European standardization.

The usual route for participation is through the National Standards Bodies. They have a duty to send balanced delegations to represent the national interest in a standardization project. Interest groups organized at the European level – representing environmentalists, consumers and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises amongst others – also have the opportunity to contribute to the development of a standard.

Participation counts

A manufacturer, wishing to participate in the CEN process, should contact the National Standards Body, either directly or through a trade association. Through the National Standards Body, the manufacturer can become involved in a national mirror committee which is responsible for developing the national position on a particular standard and presenting this position to the relevant CEN Technical Committee. It may also be possible to become a member of the national delegation to the CEN Technical Committee or to be nominated to serve as an expert in one of the Working Groups.

One European Standard is identical from Portugal to Finland and from Cyprus to Iceland

New Standardization Initiatives

CEN has close links with all aspects of society and is open to innovation technologies. We are keen to identify new subjects and areas to which we can offer our standardization services. New fields might arise, for example, as the result of European research or innovation, the need for market harmonization or qualification requirements. If you would like to see standardization activities in your field, please address your enquiry to new.projects.line@cenorm.be.

If the company or trade association is a member of a European federation, the federation can seek 'liaison status' with the Technical Committee. This would allow the federation to participate in the CEN Technical Committee as an observer or to nominate experts to the Working Groups. About 350 organizations hold liaison status with Technical Committees.

Developing a European Standard

Starting the work

A proposal for a European Standard may come from a number of quarters. However, the usual routes are through the National Standards Bodies or, where European legislation is concerned, the European Commission or EFTA Secretariat.

Taking into account pan-European need, the timescale required for delivery of the standard and the resources available, the appropriate CEN Technical Committee takes a decision on the adoption of the proposal. An adopted standardization project is allocated to one of the Working Groups responsible to the Technical Committee for the drafting of the standard.

If the proposal is for a new field of standardization activity, a decision is first made by the CEN Technical Board. If its decision is positive, the Technical Board will send the work to an existing Technical Committee or establish a new Technical Committee, as appropriate.

One of the values of CEN is that, once a standardization project has been adopted, the National Standards Bodies may not develop a new national standard within the scope of the project, or revise an existing standard, without the permission of the Technical Board. This obligation is called "standstill" and allows efforts to be focussed on European harmonization.

A European Standard is shaped by those who contribute to its development

Public comment – a further strength

Once the draft of a European Standard reaches a mature stage, it is released for public comment, a process known in



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CEN as the CEN Enquiry. During the public commenting stage, everybody who is interested (e.g. manufacturers, public authorities, consumers, etc.) may comment on the draft. These views are collated by the National Standards Bodies and sent to the CEN Technical Committee for consideration.

One European Standard = twenty-eight national standards

A European Standard is adopted by the National Standards Bodies which make up CEN through a system of weighted votes. After publication by CEN, each of

the National Standards Bodies is obliged to adopt the European Standard as an identical national standard and to withdraw any pre-existing national standards which are in conflict with the new European Standard. Hence one European Standard becomes the national standard in the 28 member countries of CEN.

For example, the European Standard on toy safety, EN 71, has been adopted as NF EN 71 by AFNOR in France and as EVS EN 71 by EVS in Estonia. These standards are sold through the National Standards Bodies of their countries.

The CEN sectors



Standards are everywhere in daily life. Tables, doors, paper sizes, and railway tracks are all produced according to a standard. Training, for example of call centre operators, may also be carried out in accordance with a European Standard. CEN covers almost all sectors of industrial activity. As industries vary in nature, CEN can provide an individual response to sector needs. To keep ahead of new developments, CEN's Technical Committees are constituted according to sectors and sub-sectors. The CEN Management Centre in Brussels, which provides the central hub of CEN, also has specialists who can advise and support standardization activities.

Our sectors are:

Chemistry – hydrocarbon-based fuels and biofuels as well as adhesives, wood preservatives, explosives for civil use etc.

Building and civil engineering – structures, products, materials, equipment but also fire resistance, geotextiles etc.

Household goods, sport and leisure – toys, gymnastics, sports and playground equipment, textiles and fireworks etc.

Environment – water and air quality, landfill of waste and eco-labelling etc.

Food – analysis of ingredients in foodstuffs, animal feeding stuffs, quality assurance, packaging and logistics etc.

General standards – accreditation, certification, testing and lighting, acoustics and vibration etc.

Healthcare – medical devices, implants, diagnostic devices and optical and dental materials and devices etc.

Health and safety – personal protective equipment (ears, eyes and respiratory tract) etc.

Heating, cooling, ventilation – gas appliances, oil and solid fuel appliances, refrigeration and heat pumps etc.

Information Society – information and communications technologies, the eEurope programme etc.

Materials – steel, copper, aluminium, lead, zinc, and tin or paper, leather, textiles and plastic etc.

Mechanical engineering – safety standards for machinery, specifications for pressure equipment, boilers, pipes, tanks etc.

Measurement – water, gas and heat meters or pressure gauges etc.

Services – contractual and training purposes e.g. in transport, tourism and postal services etc.

Transport and packaging – interoperability of high-speed and conventional railways, aerospace, transport of dangerous goods by road and rail, packaging and packaging waste etc.

Utilities and energy – gas and water supplies, power engineering, cogeneration, waste water and thermal solar systems etc.



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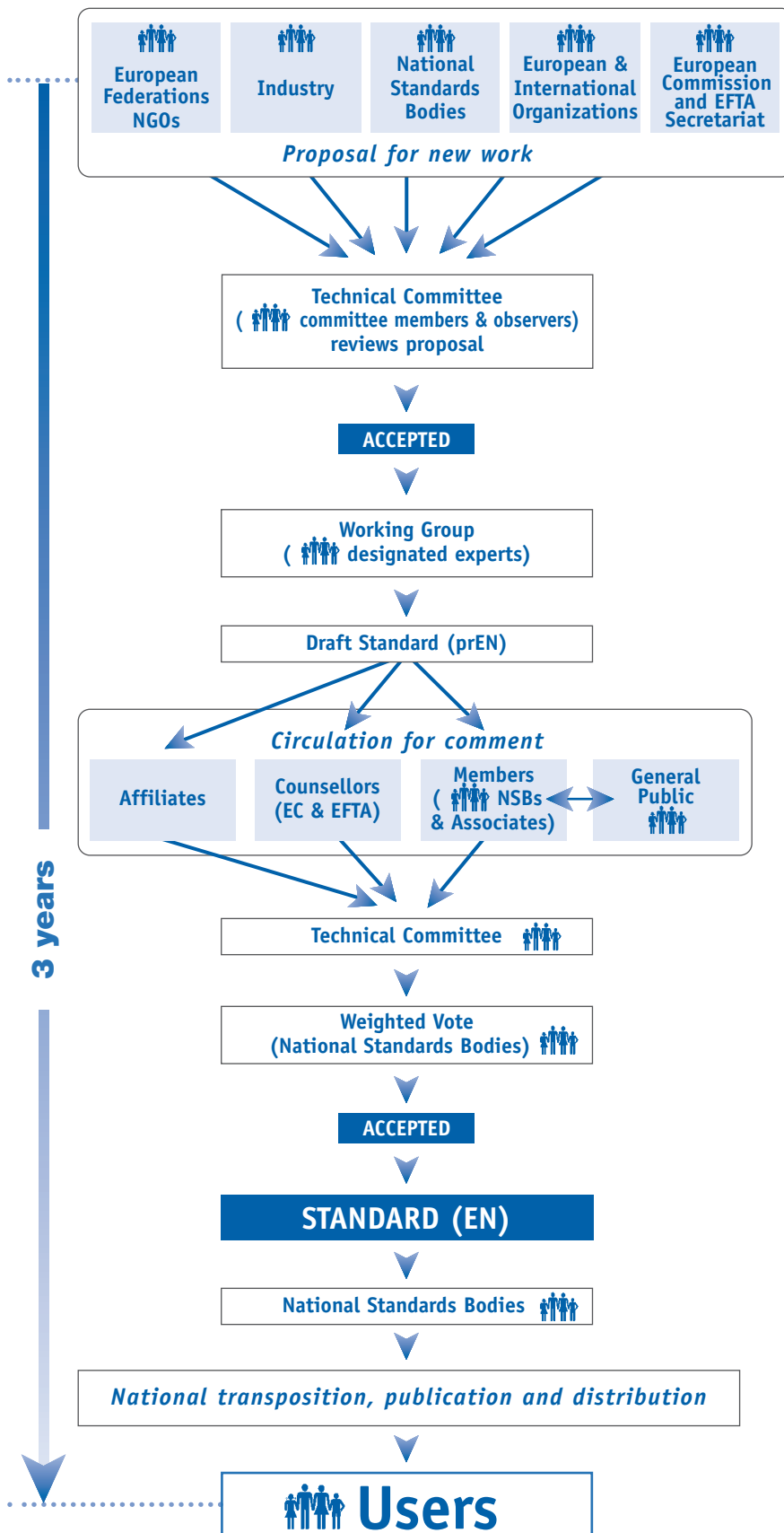


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Drafting a European Standard



The flowchart shows the typical process for the proposal, development, adoption and publication of a European Standard. Other options exist, including the parallel development of common standards with ISO.

CEN GLOSSARY

European Standard (EN) – the principal product (or “deliverable”) of CEN. Developed by a Technical Committee, approved by the CEN Members and featuring a public commenting stage in its development, an adopted European Standard must be published as an identical national standard by those National Standards Bodies which are CEN Members.

Technical Committee (TC) – the committee responsible for the development of standards in specific sectors and subsectors. TCs are comprised of delegations from the National Standards Bodies. The drafting of the standards themselves is done in Working Groups (WGs) under a TC. The WGs are comprised of experts in the product or service being standardized.

National Standards Body (NSB) – standards body recognized at the national level, that is eligible to be the national CEN Member.

CEN Management Centre (CMC) – the registered office of CEN which represents the hub of the organization. It is located in Brussels.

CEN Workshop (WS) – a standardization group open to the direct participation of any interested party, preparing CEN Workshop Agreements (CWA). CWAs do not have the status of an EN and so there is no obligation on the National Standards Bodies to adopt them.

CEN is more than Standards



Key features in the development of a European Standard, and ones from which it gains strength and legitimacy, are the representation of all interested parties and agreement through consensus.

However, these requirements mean that the process of developing a European Standard can be time consuming. Hence CEN has recently embarked on a programme which aims to deliver most European Standards in three years.

It is also possible for parties involved in the standardization process to request swifter standardization solutions which have different levels of legitimacy from the traditional European Standard. These solutions are often known as "new deliverables".

Technical Specification

CEN Technical Committees can use the CEN Technical Specification (CEN/TS) as an alternative to a European Standard when agreement on a standard cannot be reached quickly enough or where technology is not sufficiently

mature. CEN/TSs do not have the status of a European Standard and so there is no obligation for National Standards Bodies to adopt them as national standards.

CEN Workshop Agreement

A faster and more flexible solution is the CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA). The CWA was first introduced to meet the needs of the information and communications technology community for fast solutions but is now available to all of the CEN sectors. CWAs are developed in CEN Workshops by anybody with an interest in the development of the deliverable. Participation is not based on national delegations. There is no geographical limit on participation and hence participants may come from outside Europe. As with the CEN/TSs, CWAs do not have the status of a European Standard and there is no obligation for the National Standards Bodies to adopt them as national standards.

Different solutions for different needs

Technical Assistance

CEN manages several regional and national Technical Assistance programmes financed by the EU. The objective of these programmes is to facilitate trade through a system of mutually recognized bodies and procedures. The Assistance aims at building a quality infrastructure (standardization, testing and metrology, conformity assessment and certification) in the beneficiary countries. This ranges from strengthening the National Standards Bodies to strategies for developing technical regulations. CEN is currently managing programmes in Asia (ASEAN), in the Mediterranean countries (MEDA), Turkey and Malta.



Independent assessment of the conformity of products and services to standards gives greater confidence to consumers and users. In collaboration with CENELEC, CEN offers the Keymark as the European mark of conformity to European Standards. Although CEN itself does not undertake assessment and certification activities, certification bodies may apply to the National Standards Bodies which are CEN Members to use the Keymark for certification schemes in those countries.

Use of the Keymark implies:

- that the product complies with the appropriate European Standard,
- that there is an assurance of factory production control,
- that compliance is subject to periodic surveillance and audit.

CEN is a non-profit making technical organization set up under Belgian law and is composed of the National Standards Bodies of 28 European countries. In addition to the full Members, CEN has 8 Associate Members representing pan-European professional and trade federations and consumer and environmental interests. In addition, 6 National Standards Bodies from Central and Eastern European countries likely to become members of the EU or EFTA are participating in CEN with an Affiliate status. CEN also has a Partner Standardization Body programme which can link NSBs from outside Europe to CEN. The European Commission and the EFTA secretariat act as CEN's Counsellors for policy issues.



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