



PRESS RELEASE

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CEN AND CENELEC: EUROPEAN STANDARDS PLAY A STRATEGIC ROLE IN THE EU'S RECOVERY

The European Committee for Standardization ([CEN](#)) and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization ([CENELEC](#)), together with their national members, welcome the European Commission's Recovery Plan, and highlight the crucial contribution that European standards play in supporting the EU's economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a serious toll on the European economy: [according to the European Commission](#), the EU economy is expected to contract by 7,5% in 2020. Swift and decisive action at the European level is therefore essential to address this historic downturn and relaunch the economy as soon as possible. The [European Recovery Plan](#) presented on 27 May by the European Commission, with its new Recovery Instrument 'Next Generation EU' and its objective to strengthen the Single Market and 'invest in a green, digital and resilient Europe' provides a much needed holistic approach.

The European Standardization System constitutes one of the foundations of the Single Market, by working in support of European market harmonisation and making it more sustainable, easier and safer for citizens, companies and public institutions to buy and sell goods and services, travel across borders and rely on the same high level of services across Europe. These benefits are highlighted by the [CEN and CENELEC Declaration "Standards Build Trust"](#), and were in full display in recent months, when CEN, CENELEC and their members made available for free [a series of European Standards \(ENs\)](#) for medical devices and personal protective equipment used to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, CEN and CENELEC affirm their belief that European standardization can and should represent a reliable solution to counter the unexpected fragmentation of the Single Market, which appears to be one of the main economic effects of the ongoing crisis. Re-establishing the efficiency of the Single Market is of strategic importance and requires a forward-looking approach. The European Standardization System provides a powerful tool to

support Europe in meeting current challenges: European Standards help dismantle barriers to trade and support companies to bring to market competitive products and services.

As the lockdown has shown, with its unprecedented reliance on remote working and IT tools, and as the Recovery Plan itself acknowledges, one of the main areas with the biggest potential to unleash Europe's growth is **digitalisation**. CEN and CENELEC are committed to help Europe reap the benefit of new technologies such as IoT and 5G, by working to make the standardization system fit for the digital age. Some examples of CEN and CENELEC's efforts regarding digitalization and new technologies are the recent establishment of CEN-CLC/JTC 19 on [Blockchain and DLTs](#), the ongoing work in CEN-CLC TC XXX on [cybersecurity](#) and in the Focus Group on AI or the implementation of the [Strategic Plan for Digital Transformation](#).

Another priority area identified for the EU's recovery is **sustainability**, in the framework of the recently announced European Green Deal. The commitment of CEN and CENELEC to protect the environment is strategic: two dedicated special bodies, the CEN-CENELEC [Strategic Advisory Body for Environment](#) (SABE) and [CLC/TC 111X 'Environment'](#), have recently been set up to ensure that environmental considerations are always taken into account in standardization work.

Furthermore, in a moment of crisis it is even more important for the EU to defend its position in the global economy and strengthen its **resilience**. European Standards support **international trade**, reducing trade barriers and helping European goods and services access the global market. The strength of the European standardization system lies in its agreements with the international standardization organizations (ISO & IEC) and in the fruitful work undertaken to promote global standards.

CEN and CENELEC are developing a detailed response to the Recovery Plan. The paper will outline the specific contributions that we are already offering at technical level in the areas identified by the Commission, together with potential further standardization work, envisaging a smoother and more dynamic collaboration amongst all the actors involved: European Institutions, the European Standardization Organizations (ESOs) and their members, industry players and Member States.

CEN and CENELEC

CEN (European Committee for Standardization) and CENELEC (European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization) are recognized by the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) as European Standardization Organizations responsible for developing standards at European level. These standards set out specifications and procedures in relation to a wide range of materials, processes, products and services.

The members of CEN and CENELEC are the National Standardization Bodies and National Electrotechnical Committees of 34 European countries. European Standards (ENs) and other standardization deliverables adopted by CEN and CENELEC, are accepted and recognized in all of these countries.

European Standards (ENs) contribute to enhancing safety, improving quality, facilitating cross-border trade and strengthening the European Single Market. They are developed through a process of collaboration among experts nominated by business and industry, research institutes, consumer and environmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders. CEN and CENELEC work to promote the international alignment of standards in the framework of technical cooperation agreements with ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission).

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