OVERVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON STANDARDISATION

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LEGAL AND POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

* Directive 98/34/EC laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations and of rules on information society services (OJ L 217, 05.08.1998)


* Partnership framework agreement between Commission/EFTA and ESOS
* Adopted in 1983

* Objectives:
  * to eliminate technical barriers to trade between EU Member States
  * to support the EU-wide harmonisation of standards and technical regulations with the aim of creating a single European market
Provides for an information procedure for national standardisation projects.

**Goal**: transparency of national standardisation activities

* Gives recognition to the European standards bodies CEN, CENELEC and ETSI (ESOs) as autonomous and independent bodies
* Empowers the European Commission to address requests for the elaboration of European standards to the ESOs (« mandates »)

* Obliges the Member States to observe a stand-still for the elaboration of national standards in the case of a Commission mandate

* Provides for a framework between Member States, European Commission and standards bodies to co-ordinate standardisation policy matters
Standardisation mandates from the European Commission to the European standards bodies:

* policy instrument aiming at inviting the ESOs to elaborate European standards or standardisation deliverables in support of European legislation or policies for a given area (e.g. on safety of toys)

* mandates determine the terms of reference for the elaboration of European standards and provide for a political endorsement of relevant standardisation activities
European standards elaborated under a mandate do not become mandatory.

A mandate does not preclude the elaboration of relevant standards at international level.

**Important to note**: mandated work represents only 20-25% of European standards; overwhelming part of European standards is being initiated by stakeholders.
* Agreement signed between the parties in 2003
* European standardisation organisations are independent partners to the EU and EFTA
* Commitment to common policy objectives:
  = role of European standards in support of the Internal market and of New Approach legislation
  = promotion of sustainable development
  = support of international standardisation
* ESO remains accountable to all interested parties and take into account the broadest possible range of views in drawing up standards

* The principles of transparency, access, openness, efficiency, coherence and voluntary work should be followed

* Public interests, in particular safety and health, the protection of workers, consumers and environment will be taken into account


* Forthcoming Commission Communication: Towards an increased contribution from standardisation to innovation in Europe – March 2008
CONCLUSIONS

* Due to the generally favourable framework the European standardisation bodies CEN, CENELEC and ETSI were able to make a substantial contribution to the Internal Market and the economic integration in Europe

* There has been a shift from national to European and international standardisation to the extent that now about 85% of standards needed in Europe are covered by international and European standardisation

* Voluntary standardisation has increasingly become a recognised and successful means in support of European legislation and EU policies
* The level of European commitment to and involvement in international standardisation has continuously been strengthened throughout the evolution of the system.
MORE INFORMATION

* **Vademecum on European standardisation** :

* **European standardisation action plan** :

* **Mandate database** :
IMPORTANT INTERNET SITES TO REMEMBER

DG Enterprise

Harmonised standards

New Approach ........
http://www.newapproach.org

www.cenorm.be

www.cenelec.org

www.etsi.org
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