



## PRESS RELEASE

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### SUSTAINABLE EUROPE, SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: EUROPEAN STANDARDIZATION SUPPORTS THE FINNISH PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL

On the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 Finland took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the third time since its EU accession in 1994. During the next six months, Finland's aim is to foster a competitive and socially inclusive EU, under the official claim "Sustainable Europe, sustainable future".

The key objective at the heart of the Finnish Presidency's program is **sustainability**. The focus will be on efforts to position the EU as the leader in the fight against climate change, by integrating climate policy considerations in all decisions fostering the transition towards a full circular economy.

Finland's government also identified the following priorities - the Single Market, rules-based free trade and up-to-date regulations - that make the EU collectively competitive. To achieve this, emphasis should be put on fully developing Europe's capabilities of research, development, innovation and digitalization.

The [European Committee for Standardization \(CEN\)](#), the [European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization \(CENELEC\)](#) and their Finnish national members [SFS](#) and [SESKO](#) congratulate Finland for this historic opportunity to contribute to the EU's development and are duly committed to contributing to the Presidency's priorities by developing standards promoting research, development and innovation while reaping the benefits of digitalisation.

European standards have always made a key contribution to developing and strengthening the Single Market, making it more sustainable, easier and safer for citizens, companies and public institutions to buy and sell goods and services, to travel across borders and to rely on the same high level of services across Europe: more than 90.000 experts working within the European Standardization System shape harmonized European standards (hENs), which

contribute to implementing EU legislation, ensuring citizens' wellbeing and mitigating climate change.

This role lies at the heart of [the CEN and CENELEC Declaration “Standards Build Trust”](#). The Declaration underlines how standards can help make Europe a competitive, smarter and more sustainable economy for the benefit of all its citizens.

### **Standards support a comprehensive and future-oriented Single Market and a safe Europe**

Ensuring the efficiency of the Single Market is of strategic importance for the EU and its 500 million citizens: deepening the Single Market requires an increasingly holistic and forward-looking approach bringing together digital, competition, industrial and trade policy. The European Standardization System, thanks to its inclusiveness and consensus-based approach, has a big contribution to make to all priorities within the Single Market.

One of the main areas for the continuation and deepening of the Single Market to unleash Europe's growth potential is the service sector. In the digital and data-driven age, servitisation, with the integration of products and services, is causing the fast evolution of many business models towards a service-based mechanism instead of a product-based one. To improve the Single Market for services, particular focus is needed on promoting digital services and eliminating barriers to cross-border trade in services. This work has been undertaken in recent years by CEN under the stewardship of SAGS (the CEN Strategic Advisory Board on Services), which has the task to implement a Strategic Plan on Services Standardization.

Another area in which standards can contribute to achieve the EU's priorities is security. CEN and CENELEC, through their many dedicated technical committees, enable European experts across all areas to develop consensus-driven security standards, which complement European legislation. Some examples of the standardization work undertaken on the field are the recently created Sector Forum on Security and the [Joint CEN and CENELEC TC 13 'Cybersecurity and Data protection'](#).

### **European standardization supports an ambitious, open and rules-based trade policy**

Current international trade tensions are causing growing uncertainty for the global economy and Europe's place in it. In this context, it is essential for the EU to defend multilateralism and common rules and to resist inward-looking approaches and new trade barriers.

European Standards support free trade, reducing trade barriers and helping European goods and services access the global market. Indeed, 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. In their cooperation with ISO and IEC, CEN, CENELEC and their National Members recognize the need to converge and strengthen efforts to ensure rapid and cost-efficient standardization solutions for all stakeholders. Notable progress has been made on aligning CEN with ISO and CENELEC with IEC to make the system more coherent and accessible for all European stakeholders. Furthermore, five [Priority International Partnerships](#) were launched with Africa, China, Japan, India and Gulf in 2018 in order to facilitate international trade.

“The European Standardization System, based on a voluntary and inclusive approach, has already shown its strength in supporting the EU’s policy making efforts”, commented Elena Santiago Cid, CEN and CENELEC Director General. “The standardization community is ready to cooperate, in the full spirit of the [New Legislative Framework](#): CEN and CENELEC, together with their Finnish members SFS and SESKO, look forward to engaging with the Finnish Presidency to help Europe deliver on its promise”.

## **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.

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. 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).

CEN website: [www.cen.eu](http://www.cen.eu)

CENELEC website: [www.cenelec.eu](http://www.cenelec.eu)

CEN-CENELEC website: [www.cencenelec.eu](http://www.cencenelec.eu)

### Media contact:

#### **Giovanni Collot**

Project Manager Strategy & Governance

CEN-CENELEC Management Centre

T: +32 474 98 21 17

Email: [gcollot@cencenelec.eu](mailto:gcollot@cencenelec.eu)

Twitter: [@Standards4EU](https://twitter.com/Standards4EU)

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## **Finnish Standards Association SFS**

The Finnish Standards Association SFS is the central standardization organization that controls and co-ordinates national standardization work in Finland. SFS develops, approves and publishes national SFS standards. It also sells standards and communicates information about the standards and standardization to the public. SFS is a member of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Website: [www.sfs.fi](http://www.sfs.fi)

Twitter: @standardeista

### Media contacts:

**Helena Vänskä**, Managing Director from 12.8.2019

T: +358 40 581 6786

Email: [Helena.vanska@sfs.fi](mailto:Helena.vanska@sfs.fi)

**Antti Karppinen**, Technical Director

T: +358 40 545 2214

Email: [antti.karppinen@sfs.fi](mailto:antti.karppinen@sfs.fi)

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## **SESKO – Finland's Electrotechnical Standardization Organization**

SESKO is the National Electrotechnical Standardization Organization representing Finland in the electrotechnical engineering field as a member of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC). SESKO's responsibility is to implement international electrotechnical standards in Finland. SESKO is also involved with several certifying systems.

SESKO is an independent non-profit association with its members widely representing the Finnish society as a whole: business life and associations in the field, along with electrotechnical industries, research institutes, testing organizations and authorities.

Website: <https://www.sesko.fi>

### Media contact:

#### **Pia Rouste**

Office Manager

SESKO – Electrotechnical Standards in Finland

T: +358 50 532 39 87

Email: [pia.rouste@sesko.fi](mailto:pia.rouste@sesko.fi)

Twitter : @etechsesko