

# *Standards for innovation*

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## Contents:

Who? *European standards and others*

Why? *Year of innovation – but that's not all*

What? *The standards-research interface*


How? *What we're trying to do to improve it*

## The standards actors:

 European Committee for Standardization  
 European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization

 European Telecommunications Standards Institute

 European Standards Organizations (“ESOs”)

 International standards bodies (ISO, IEC, ITU-T, UN-ECE)

+ some major consortia (ASTM, IEEE, etc)

+ hundreds of industry standards consortia...

*Is this landscape too fragmented for European needs?*

## The geographical dimension:

31 National Members

✓ 27 EU Members

✓ 3 EFTA Countries

✓ 1 EU applicant

and

✓ Affiliates

✓ Cooperating Partners

✓ Associate Members



## CEN-CENELEC Innovation

- CEN-CENELEC Management Centre:
  - Combined Secretariats, common services
  - CEN and CENELEC are NOT merging!
- Common first base on all new standards topics
- Critical subject areas with wider interest:
  - Services
  - Healthcare and social services
  - Defence
  - Smart grids
  - Electric vehicles
  - ICT applications (eg RFID)

## Contrasting systems :

- European traditions in standards-making are:
  - Backed by EU legal provisions (Directive 98/34)
  - Ensuring a level playing-field (the single market)
  - Societally inclusive
- US traditions are:
  - Supporting competition
  - Industry-dominated
  - Sometimes more regulatory than Europe
- BRIC traditions?
  - China shows signs of the European approach
  - Others have less resource to participate

## High-level interest in innovation and standards

- All in a sudden, standards are critical for innovation:
  - Commission Communication to Council, spring 2008
  - Council Conclusions, autumn 2008 (29 recommendations to European Standards Organizations, Commission, Member States)

*Loss of European jobs in the global economy?*

*Panacea in a recession?*

*Lead Markets? Green agenda?*

*SMEs?*

## Research and standards – nothing new:

- EU RACE and ACTS programmes, 80s and 90s:
  - Conditional for research projects to contribute to standards-making
  - One factor in the success of the GSM
- Standards, Measurement and Testing Programme:
  - The old EU DG XII
  - Enabled standards bodies to commission research

*Why did we lose these close links?*

## Poor resourcing?

- ESOs have a fraction of the resource of research:
  - CEN budget 14m€
  - Mostly infrastructure, standards “processing” etc.
  - Project support from EU/EFTA – but nowadays hedged with nightmarish complexities
- On the other hand, thousands of voluntary experts work in standards (CEN claims 60000)

*Many may be engineers but how many are innovators?*

*Do people in research appreciate the needs?*

*Do some companies think standards are for mature markets?*

## Poor image?

- European standardization is thought to be bureaucratic and slow
- Our European single market vocation links to mature markets, less to innovation
- Company cultures seek rapid returns, maximising IPR revenues etc – they may favour easy to control informal consortia (usually US-based)

*Do people in research understand that we have offered fast, innovative standards processes for decades?*

*Is globalisation losing Europe standards opportunities? And what about European needs?*

*Do we even have the companies in Europe?*

## Standards/research – some relevant research...

- COPRAS Project (FP6) in ICT:  
CEN/CENELEC/ETSI/W3C/The Open Group
- Assessed FP6 projects under the Information Society Technologies Programme
- Tried to support some projects through the standards process
- Made recommendations, produced guidance

[www.copras.org](http://www.copras.org)



## ...and its results

- Of course for many projects, standards were irrelevant
- For those where standards were a relevant issue, roughly had have little or no idea how to go about putting their work to standards bodies
- Some projects know which standards group(s) they were targetting
- Many were completely confused given the fragmented nature of the ICT standards arena
- But even if they knew the organization, the processes and cost could be off-putting

## COPRAS conclusions

- Standardization is an essential component for boosting innovation
- Starting standards activity early provides better chances for being successful
- Still many barriers for projects to participate in standardization
- More tools needed to support projects
- Standards organizations should market the benefits
- Research programmes should provide funding for standards resources

*This was ICT related – but we think is generally applicable*

## So what should we be trying to do?

- Have more systematic dialogue between standards and research, preferably before projects start
- Ensure funding for the standards part
- Build the finance into project finance:
  - Technical manpower provided as part of project activities
  - Secretariats and maybe promotion funded out of dissemination packages (modest)
- Start standards work as soon as project outputs sufficiently mature
- Benefit from public validation and availability of consensus results

## What's available already?

- CEN and CENELEC Workshops and ETSI Industry Specification Groups:
  - Open standards platforms
  - Fast deliverables (6-18 months' duration)
  - Suited to innovative topics
  - Many link to research projects
- Just a few examples:
  - *Disaster and emergency management information*
  - *European eHealth insurance cards*
  - *Mobility management in cities*
  - *Verification of air emission abatement technologies*

## And what are we doing?

- CEN-CENELEC STAIR - **ST**Standards, **I**nnovation and **R**esearch:
- A strategic approach to the standards/research interface
- Newly established Group of CEN and CENELEC Members
- Chair Prof. Knut Blind (Professor of Standardization, Erasmus Univ., etc.)
- Links to the European Commission (DG Enterprise, DG Research)

## STAIR's tasks

- Task 1: To develop an integrated approach of research and innovation with standardization
- Task 2: To raise awareness and ensure communication of benefit (Conference 2010)
- Task 3 - To review, adapt and monitor the infrastructure and operational environment
- “Integrated approach” report on web at:  
<http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/services/innovation/stair/index.asp> (comments welcome!)
- Report to be approved by Technical Boards in March-April, assuming approval then implementation of an action plan (under development)

# Ideas

- Improve our own process – make it easier for projects to liaise with existing activities
- Provide a strategic platform – hopefully not a bureaucracy! Involve stakeholders in a dialogue concerning fundamental policy issues, meet when required
- Provide funding improvements (c/f COPRAS recommendations) for research projects to contribute
- Improve links between national research programmes and European standards
- Education/awareness/promotion

## Our links with COST?

- Maybe we neglected these in general in recent years?
- Nevertheless, some direct links:
  - Weigh-in-Motion of road vehicles (COST 323), draft European Standard based on COST document, now under national enquiry
  - Photocatalysis (COST 540) – new CEN Technical Committee TC386 under way
- We'll be pleased to dialogue closer collaboration as appropriate

## Concluding questions:

COST participants already contribute extensively to standardization at many levels, so:

- *Can COST centrally help us improve links with more projects?*
- *Are there any joint actions possible for awareness/influencing strategic agendas?*
- *The standards tools (eg Workshops) are already in place: do you think these are adequate?*
- *Do you have other specific recommendations to be addressed in the STAIR action plan?*
- *In short what are your ideas on these overall issues?*

Thank you

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