

HOW TO ADDRESS ACCESSIBILITY IN STANDARDIZATION





HOW TO ADDRESS ACCESSIBILITY IN STANDARDIZATION

Introduction

This information leaflet is produced as an introduction to guide Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs) of CEN and CENELEC on how to include accessibility aspects in your work on standards development.

The background for this document is [Mandate 473 of the European Commission](#) to the European Standardization Bodies to develop a Protocol on how to address accessibility in standardization. The work was carried out by the CEN BT/WG 213 Strategic Advisory Group Accessibility (SAGA). The Mandate endeavored to achieve long-standing policy objectives surrounding inclusion and equality.

Which tools to use for which purpose	
Tool	Purpose
CEN-CENELEC Guide 6	To use when writing and producing standard text; requirements and recommendations
European standard EN 17161	To understand concepts and how organisations can work to ensure accessible outcomes. It is developed for organisations wanting to deliver accessible outcomes as a result of adopting Design for All in its processes, in particular design and development processes
The SAGA Protocol	To have as a reference in standardization work
European Standard EN 301549 European Standard EN 17210	Sector-specific standards, which may serve as support for related committees



The principle of Accessibility, Universal Design and Design for All

Accessibility is one of the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), a precondition of equal access to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Convention. Moreover, Universal Design or Design for All is defined in the UN CRPD as “the design of products, environments, programs and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. ‘Universal Design’ shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed”. Thus, by applying a Universal Design or Design for All approach, in their process, organisations of all kinds can achieve greater accessibility outcomes.

In the European Standard  **EN 17161** ‘Design for All - Accessibility following a Design for All approach in products, goods and services - Extending the range of users’, the same definition from the CRPD is used. “Accessibility” is there defined as “extent to which products, systems, services, environments and facilities can be used by people from a population with the widest range of user needs, characteristics and capabilities to achieve identified goals in identified contexts of use”.

Questions to ask to estimate if accessibility issues are relevant for the standard that the TC/WG will work on

The basic questions to ask are:

1. Does the standard include human user interface with something?
2. Who makes up the proposed target group and the potential or actual users of the products and services that the standard will cover?
3. Will the standard include clauses on design and processes concerning a product or service?

Firstly, if the standard includes a human user interface, there is a good chance that clauses regarding accessibility are relevant. The next main point is to have an overview of the target group, especially focusing on user needs and characteristics. Then, you should establish if the standard will include clauses on the design and processes concerning a product or service. If so, discuss how to include requirements for Accessibility, as part of the relevant design and processes, applying a Design for All approach, or by referring to relevant existing accessibility standards.



HOW TO ADDRESS ACCESSIBILITY IN STANDARDIZATION

How to include accessibility requirements in the standardization document, based on the Protocol

The Protocol provides detailed advice on how to include accessibility in standards that are otherwise not specifically focusing on such issues. The 'Protocol' process is explained by a series of documents [↗ available to the public](#) to understand when accessibility following a Design for All (DfA) approach is relevant, with examples of context of use, environmental and human limitations.

The Protocol may be used at any stage in the standardization process. As a guide, four suggested stages for using this Protocol have been identified:

1. During the 'scoping phase' of a New Work Item (NWI)
2. Prior to Enquiry
3. Post Enquiry following submission of comments
4. During the revision of an existing standard

NOTE: the CEN NWIP template includes a question for Technical Committees to answer about accessibility

The necessity for repeated use of this Protocol will depend on the outcome, each time the Protocol is used.

The Protocol supports the work through guiding the TC or WG step by step, following the following issues:

- Step 1: Establish if people will access and use a product, good or service;
- Step 2: Understand the people who will access and use the product, good or service;
- Step 3: Establish if the standard will include content on the design or development process of a product, good or service;
- Step 4: How to address accessibility following a DfA approach in standardization;
- Step 5: Protocol outcome – is a DfA approach relevant “yes” or “no”.

The necessity for repeated use of this Protocol will depend on the outcome, each time the Protocol is used.



Some examples of good practice

- National standard, on design of buses – urban, district buses – that deals with technical requirements and includes clauses on getting the bus level with the pavement at bus stops, real-time information aboard the bus in several formats etc.



- A standard, developed by ISO/TC 314, on ageing workforce, which covers a lot of concerns regarding recruiting or keeping elderly persons in employment, has also introduced accessibility to work premises and tools in separate clauses.

- CEN/TC 293 'Assistive products and accessibility' has enlarged their scope to cover accessibility to technologies (e.g. home appliances) and established a special WG to deal with this.



For more information

Technical Committee's or Working Group's concerns regarding the evaluation of accessibility can be brought to the CEN and CENELEC Management Centre (CCMC), contact person: Ms Christina Thorngreen, E-mail: CThorngreen@cencenelec.eu.