

Discussion Paper

Call for Evidence on the Revision of the New Legislative Framework September 2025

Executive Summary

CEN and CENELEC welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the upcoming Revision of the New Legislative Framework (NLF). The NLF is at the heart of the success of the European Single Market and standardization has played a fundamental role in supporting this success. As two of the European Standardization Organisations, CEN and CENELEC would like to emphasise the following key messages for this Call for Evidence:

- CEN and CENELEC recommends that the NLF Revision upholds its core principle of public-private partnership. This would ensure the continued balance between regulatory requirements set by the European institutions and harmonized standards developed by the European Standardization Organisations.
- CEN and CENELEC stresses the need for the Revision of the NLF to be complementary to the upcoming Revision of the Standardization Regulation and Omnibus on aligning product legislation with the digital age. This will ensure regulatory consistency and ease of understanding for standardization stakeholders.
- CEN and CENELEC call for the European Commission to ensure that the implementation of the Digital Product Passport (DPP) is fully aligned with the revised New Legislative Framework (NLF) to preserve the clarity and legal certainty provided by the CE marking. This includes avoiding overlapping regulatory requirements, ensuring coherence with harmonized standards, and promoting a mutually reinforcing relationship between the DPP and CE marking.

Safeguarding the European Single Market through a Clear Legal Framework

The New Legislative Framework (NLF) is the backbone of the European Single Market for products. Built on a public-private partnership, it clearly separates the role of legislators from that of standards: the former set out essential requirements, while the latter, through the work of experts via European Standardization Organisations (CEN, CENELEC, ETSI), provide the technical specification on how to respond to these requirements.

The specialist knowledge that experts contribute to standardization is put to optimum use, and the legal framework remains efficient. This facilitates free movement of goods across

Europe by offering both legal certainty and technical flexibility. The NLF is well suited to legislate in areas of rapid technological innovation as it allows for a technology neutral regulatory framework via the division of tasks between the legislators and technical experts. The separation between legal provisions and harmonized standards is also what makes the system resilient. Standards are reviewed every five years and can adapt as technologies evolve, without legislative reform. This is crucial as legislation takes much longer to adapt to new market conditions.

This is further supported by the practice of '*presumption of conformity*', meaning that by using a harmonized standard, a manufacturer is deemed to comply with the requirements of regulation. This has been a key asset for industry, in particular SMEs, as it enables easier routes to market including self-declaration of conformity. Presumption of conformity is a tremendous time and cost-saver for industry as it offers an alternative to third-party testing and certification.

In addition, within the broader framework of the Vienna and Frankfurt Agreements between ISO-CEN and IEC-CENELEC respectively, it remains crucial to support the capacity of European companies to operate and compete globally. A coherent and well-enforced regulatory framework at the European level is key to preserving industrial competitiveness and sustaining Europe's role in shaping international standards.

- **CEN and CENELEC recommends that the NLF Revision upholds its core principle of public-private partnership. This would ensure the continued balance between regulatory requirements set by the European institutions and harmonized standards developed by the European Standardization Organisations.**

Alignment with other Legislative Initiatives on the Single Market

It is essential that the Revision of the NLF is in line with other legislative initiatives relating to Single Market Policy to prevent contradictory outcomes and misinterpretations among stakeholders. It is also important that the right topics are tackled in the right legislative initiative. Currently there are two legislative initiatives related to standardization that should be considered during the Revision of the NLF to ensure they are complementary to each other, the Revision of the Standardization Regulation and the Omnibus on aligning product legislation with the digital age.

- [The Revision of the Standardization Regulation](#)

CEN and CENELEC have put forward six priorities to enhance the European Standardization System (ESS). First, we stress the need for more timely development and citation of standards, urging the European Commission to improve the speed of citation to match ongoing efforts by CEN and CENELEC. There is also a need to make better use of the full range of standardization deliverables and greater clarity from the Commission on which instruments support legal compliance. International engagement is another key area, with CEN and CENELEC highlighting the importance of European influence in ISO and IEC to ensure global market

access and alignment.

Further, we reaffirm the importance of the NLF, which underpins the Single Market by clearly defining the roles of legislators and standardizers. CEN and CENELEC support increased transparency through free access to harmonized standards but caution that this shift must be managed to protect the financial sustainability of the system. Finally, while faster standardization processes are needed, this should not come at the cost of inclusiveness, consensus, or trust in the system—values that are essential to the ESS.

- Omnibus on aligning product legislation with the digital age

The New Legislative Framework (NLF) has been key to the success of the Single Market. However, the use of common specifications undermines this advantage. A reliance on EC common specifications could undermine the New Legislative Framework. Harmonized standards should remain the preferred choice, while resorting to common specifications should be only considered in narrowly defined and duly justified cases. The recent Omnibus IV proposes an article on common specifications that has less conditions than the article used in the Machinery Regulation, the Artificial Intelligence Act and the agreement on the Toy Safety Regulation. This leads to inconsistencies between legislation and can cause confusion for stakeholders in the standardization community e.g. industry, SMEs, societal actors, public authorities, etc. This could have a potentially negative effect on the New Legislative Framework.

- **CEN and CENELEC stresses the need for the Revision of the NLF to be complementary to the upcoming Revision of the Standardization Regulation and Omnibus on aligning product legislation with the digital age. This will ensure regulatory consistency and ease of understanding for standardization stakeholders.**

Bridging the CE Marking and circularity requirements to adapt the New Legislative Framework to the digital age

The Digital Product Passport (DPP) initiative represents a strategic lever in Europe's transition toward a more circular and sustainable economy. It aims to empower consumers, support regulatory compliance, and facilitate reuse, repair, and recycling. Standards act as the operational link between regulatory intent and practical implementation. They enable manufacturers, market surveillance authorities, and other stakeholders to comply with evolving requirements under the NLF, such as the ESPR, and GPSR efficiently and consistently.

CEN and CENELEC are supporting this transition by developing the harmonized standards ([M/604](#)) for the DPP framework and system. Standards for product information accessibility and security (e.g., ISO/IEC 27001 for information security management) will be important to ensure that DPPs support both regulatory compliance and protect sensitive data. Traceability standards (e.g., ISO 22005 on traceability systems) and data-sharing protocols can support the implementation of the DPP as a recognized tool within conformity assessment and market surveillance frameworks.

The CE marking and Digital Product Passport (DPP) should be seen as complementary tools that work together to strengthen the Single Market by enhancing transparency, competitiveness, and sustainability. The CE marking confirms that a product meets key European legislative requirements for safety, health, and environmental protection, serving as a trusted and consistent regulatory tool across the Union.

The DPP adds a new layer of information, improving traceability and supporting sustainability by including data on circularity, environmental impact, and product features like reparability and use of critical materials. To ensure coherence, the DPP must be integrated into the NLF in a way that maintains the clarity of the CE marking, avoids overlapping obligations, and aligns with harmonized standards. Together, they can reinforce each other and drive innovation and sustainability without complicating the regulatory landscape.

- **CEN and CENELEC call for the European Commission to ensure that the implementation of the Digital Product Passport (DPP) is fully aligned with the revised New Legislative Framework (NLF) to preserve the clarity and legal certainty provided by the CE marking. This includes avoiding overlapping regulatory requirements, ensuring coherence with harmonized standards, and promoting a mutually reinforcing relationship between the DPP and CE marking.**

About 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, as per European Regulation 1025/2012. The members are the National Standards Bodies (CEN) and National Electrotechnical Committees (CENELEC) from 34 European countries. European Standards (ENs) and other standardization deliverables are adopted by CEN and CENELEC, are accepted and recognized in all of these countries. These standards contribute to enhancing safety, improving quality, facilitating cross-border trade and strengthening of the European Single Market. They are developed through a process of collaboration among experts nominated by business and industry, research institutions, consumer and environmental organizations, trade unions and other societal 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).