



CENELEC GUIDE

13

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions on
the Frankfurt Agreement

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FAQ to the IEC-CENELEC Cooperation Agreement - CENELEC Guide 13

QUESTION 1: What is the purpose of the frankfurt agreement? Why is it needed?

The main objective of the Frankfurt Agreement is to ensure that we make the best use of the resources available for standardization. It helps IEC and CENELEC in exchanging information and increasing the transparency of IEC work to CENELEC members, as well as helping to make sure work does not have to happen twice, i.e. at the regional (European) and international level.

The Agreement underlines the fact that (as stipulated in the WTO Code of Conduct) international standardization has primacy over regional and national standardization. This is because International Standards are designed to support the harmonisation of national standards, and national or regional technical regulations, reducing non-tariff technical barriers to trade. Where an International Standard is adopted as a European Standard, there is an obligation of the CENELEC Members to implement it as a national standard and withdraw any conflicting standards.

However, the Agreement also recognizes that the European stakeholders could have particular needs that cannot be accommodated at international level e.g. in supporting Single European Market.

QUESTION 2: What are the main provisions of the frankfurt agreement?

The Frankfurt Agreement consists of three main pillars of cooperation between IEC and CENELEC:

- Offering CENELEC New Work items for European Standards to IEC
- Parallel vote on draft International Standards
- Offering European Standards to IEC for possible conversion into an International Standards

Note: This also applies to Harmonization Documents (HD).

QUESTION 3: Can publications other than standards such as technical specifications or technical reports be processed under the frankfurt agreement?

The Frankfurt Agreement applies to standards. The European adoption of IEC/TS or IEC/TR is approved by CENELEC BT on a case by case basis. The adoption of CENELEC TS or TR at IEC is decided by the TC/SC concerned.

QUESTION 4: What is the purpose of Annex ZA "normative references to international publications with their corresponding european publications"?

The Annex ZA replaces the normative references of the IEC standard with their European counterpart where these exist i.e. either (a) in referring to a possible existing European standard with the same scope or (b) in replacing the IEC standard referred to by its European adoption. This can be done even if common modifications exist. These replacements are outlined in the correspondence table of the Annex ZA.

QUESTION 5: What is the purpose of Annex ZZ, and can such an annex be included in IEC documents?

When European Standards are developed under a standardization request in support of European legislation, the foreword of the standard is required to contain an indication that it has been prepared accordingly. That link between the standard and the concerned European legislation is reflected in the informative Annex ZZ, which gives information as to how the standard supports the mentioned legislation. Such Annex ZZ has to be included in drafts issued for the CENELEC enquiry and formal vote (and UAP), parallel voting and in final European Standards.

When such standards are being developed under IEC lead in accordance with the Frankfurt Agreement the corresponding CENELEC committee or reporting secretariat (with support of relevant experts delegated by CENELEC NCs to the IEC) shall draft the Annex ZZ. The development of an Annex ZZ shall start as early as possible in order to be delivered in due time to CCMC to include it for CENELEC procedures.

QUESTION 6: What are European common modifications?

A European common modification to an International Standard is an alteration of, addition to or deletion from its content. It is approved by CENELEC NCs and forms part of the EN.

QUESTION 7: What are New Approach (NA) consultants and what is their role?

A part of the CENELEC programme of work aims at supporting European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) legislation. In this context, where CENELEC accepts standardization requests of European Commission (EC), these set out conditions for the development of the standards concerned. These standards are known as harmonized European Standards (hEN), when offered to the EC for citation in the Official Journal (OJ) of the European Union. When cited in the OJ those standards will provide presumption of conformity to the essential requirements they aim to cover of the concerned European legislation.

The NA Consultants are independent experts sub-contracted by CENELEC in the execution of a specific grant for action by the European Commission and EFTA. Their role is to facilitate the work of the committee drafting such standards and to help CENELEC ascertain that these standards are in line with the requirements of the relevant legislation and the related standardization request.

The NA consultants advise the committees during the drafting of the standards (as from the creation of the work item). This advice can take the form of, but is not limited to, indicative assessments.

They will provide (formal) assessments on the conformity with the conditions of the relevant legislation and standardization request at approval stages (CDV/Enquiry and FDIS/Formal Vote):

Disagreements on assessment of the NA Consultants will be dealt with by the CENELEC TC or reporting secretariat (SR) in consultation with CENELEC BT when necessary.

QUESTION 8: Are IEC standards developed under the Frankfurt Agreement required to support European Legislation (EC Directives etc.)?

No they are not. However for their acceptance as ENs, they cannot go against European Legislation. Compliance can be achieved by creating common modifications. If this not possible, the IEC standard should be exempted from parallel procedure.

QUESTION 9: What is the purpose of the exemption list and what is the difference between its part 1 and 2?

All CDV and FDIS circulated for vote in IEC are automatically submitted for enquiry and vote within CENELEC. But there are exceptions not following this parallel procedure. Exceptions are listed in the document “exemptions from parallel procedure“ and regularly distributed to the CENELEC and IEC members.

Part 1 - This lists all the IEC projects that the CENELEC Technical Board has decided shall not be submitted to parallel procedures in CENELEC.

The reasons not to go in parallel with IEC are given by the CENELEC Technical Committee and are mainly due to technical aspects specifically pertaining regional requirements.

These exemptions are either temporary or permanent.

Part 2 - This includes IEC projects for which the CENELEC Technical Board declined a parallel procedure in CENELEC, but nevertheless approve the use of the IEC document in Europe by the CENELEC Members in their capacity as IEC Members. For CENELEC members standstill applies to these standards.

QUESTION 10: (IEC System Committees) Are standards of an IEC SyC automatically in the parallel voting procedure?

The parallel procedure also applies to a Work Item for IS of an IEC SyC, unless the BT decides to exempt it.

QUESTION 11: How are standards taken over from IEC referenced?

Adoption procedures are done with the usual referencing, e.g. prEN 6xxxx, and if the deliverable is still identical to IEC when published it will change name into EN IEC 6xxxx, i.e. only the final document changes name. However, should there be an identified need for common modifications, the numbering should switch from EN IEC 6xxxx to EN 6xxxx.

QUESTION 12: Are standards of ISO/IEC JTC 1 Information Technology under the Frankfurt Agreement?

Yes, ISO/IEC JTC 1 standards are covered by the Frankfurt (and Vienna) Agreement but permanently exempted from parallel procedures. This means that a CENELEC adoption of an ISO/IEC JTC 1 standard will only be started on an ad-hoc basis by a CENELEC BT decision.