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The role of standards in support of Technology Transfer

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CEN-CENELEC GUIDE 39

The role of standards in support of Technology Transfer

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CEN and CENELEC decided to adopt this new CEN-CENELEC Guide 39 through CEN/BT Decision C253/2021 and CENELEC BT Decision D170/073 respectively.



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Contents		Page
European foreword		
1	Why this Guide?	5
2	To whom is this Guide addressed?	6
3 3.1 3.2	Standards and Innovation	6
4 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4	What can CEN and CENELEC and their members offer to the innovator? The standardization landscape	10 11 11
5 5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 5.6 5.7	Intellectual Property Rights and standardization – how do they co-exist? Intellectual property – quid?	

European foreword

This document (CEN-CENELEC Guide 39:2022) has been prepared by CEN-CENELEC BT WG 3 'STAndardization, Innovation and Research (STAIR)'.

It is intended for use by the CEN and CENELEC Members in their contacts with Research and Innovation stakeholders.

Standardization and innovation are often presented by arguing that standardization can block innovation. This guide helps to counter this argument by highlighting the role of standards in promoting innovation in the market place.

NOTE Where the expression CEN-CENELEC appears it refers to CEN and CENELEC jointly.

1 Why this Guide?

Technology transfer (TT) refers to the process of conveying results stemming from scientific and technological research to the market place and to wider society, along with associated skills and procedures, and is as such an intrinsic part of the technological innovation process.

Technology transfer covers the complex value chain linking research to its eventual societal deployment.

Relevant in any such value chain are 1:

- to protect the technical invention
- to exploit it; and
- to bring it to market.

When browsing relevant material on the web, it strikes that typically the protection of intellectual property and related licensing are addressed (e.g. https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/law-and-regulations/technology-transfer en).

Yet, it is obvious that innovations, when brought on the market, also will depend on standards and have to consider standardization.

OECD in its Oslo Manual 2018² recognizes standardization as an innovation activity. A variety of opportunities of using standards and standardization as innovation indicators has been investigated³.

Nevertheless, "while increasing ground has been covered by scholars on the basic picture regarding economic impacts of standards, there is need for more granular evidence, particularly in fields like open innovation research (...) or technology and knowledge transfer research. In the context of the latter, the topic of indicator development seems a particularly pristine field. For example, [...] a variety of channels for technology transfer, but not standards or contributions to standardization."

It is fair to say though that the EC within its "EU valorisation policy"⁵ recognizes the value of standards as a crucial tool to get the most out of research results as standards "form a common language that allows researchers, people and industry to communicate, produce and commercialise products and services".

In this Guide, we therefore will address:

- the benefits of standards and standardization to innovators;
- the links of intellectual property, patents and licensing with standardization.

 $^{{1\}atop https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/technology-transfer/what-technology-transfer_en}$

² OECD/Eurostat (2018), Oslo Manual 2018: Guidelines for Collecting, Reporting and Using Data on Innovation, 4th Edition, The Measurement of Scientific, Technological and Innovation Activities, OECD Publishing, Paris/Eurostat, Luxembourg, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264304604-en

³ Standardization and Standards as Research and Innovation Indicators: Current opportunities and future challenges; Knut Blind, 2016; available from https://www.oecd.org/sti/049 - BlueSky Standards Blind.pdf

⁴ Radauer, Alfred (2020) Driving from the fringe into spotlight. The underrated role of standards and standardization in RTDI policy and evaluation. fteval Journal for Research and Technology Policy Evaluation (51). pp. 59-65. ISSN 1726-6629; available from https://repository.fteval.at/547/

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/industrial-research-and-innovation/eu-valorisation-policy_en

NOTE This Guide is intended to be of a general nature; developments such as recommended approaches to data standardization, whilst increasingly important ("industrial data is worth its weight in gold when it comes to developing new products and services. But the reality is that 80% of industrial data is still collected and never used. This is pure waste." (a), are not addressed here. How standards will support the industrial data value chain is a work in progress. For more information, one can access the discussions at the stakeholder workshop that took place on 28 September 2021.

2 To whom is this Guide addressed?

The main target audience of this Guide are the researchers and providers of new technologies who want to see their research outcome or new technology taken up by the market as well as innovators, entrepreneurs and start-ups who want their innovation to enter the market, and are interested to know whether and how standardization can help them to meet their objective.

The use of standardization in support of the uptake of an innovation by the market consists of:

- the application of existing standards on which the innovative product/service relies;
- contributions to and participation in the standardization process, to ensure the standards accommodate the innovative product/service.

Whilst both aspects will be touched upon in this Guide, most attention will go to the ways researchers/innovators/entrepreneurs can interact with standardization, and what it brings for them.

Another target audience of this Guide are policymakers in Science, Technology and Innovation, operators of funding programs and venture capitalists investing in technological innovation.

Consequently, the Guide contains information on how researchers and innovators can make initial contacts with the standardization community, as well as information on the ways that CEN and CENELEC can offer them to take advantage of standardization.

General information about how research and innovation can be addressed in European standardization activities and deliverables is provided in CEN-CENELEC Guide 23, "Research Consortium Bridge – Addressing Research and Innovation in European Standardization activities and deliverables".

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