

## EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

### European standardization committees CEN/CENELEC Addressing climate change adaptation in standards

#### Overview

In Europe, standards are considered essential for ensuring climate resilience of long-term infrastructure investments. After consulting several technical committees, the Strategic Advisory Body on Environment (SABE) of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) concluded that technical committees are not aware of the importance of climate change adaptation and don't know how to address it when developing or revising standards that may require climate adaptation measures.

As a result of this study, SABE decided there was a need for guidance that would help standards writers identify and address climate change adaptation provisions in European standards. CEN-CENELEC Guide 32, *Guide for addressing climate change adaptation in standards*, is designed to address the consequences and implications of climate change on standards development. It includes a simple checklist to help establish whether climate change adaptation is relevant to a particular standardization activity and a decision tree to help identify which actions should be taken.

The Guide was developed by a project team in consultation with many technical committees, and CEN and CENELEC members and technical committees were involved or consulted. The draft then successfully underwent a pilot phase whereby standard writers were called upon to revise a dozen infrastructure standards governing the safety and performance of infrastructure in a changing climate.

The CEN-CENELEC guide was scaled up to ISO for adoption as an International Standard and served as a basis for the development of ISO Guide 84, *Guidelines for addressing climate change in standards*, which was subsequently published in 2020.

CEN-CENELEC Guide 32 is now referenced in the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change adopted in 2021.

## Outcomes and benefits

Standards such as CEN-CENELEC Guide 32 are important instruments to support local governments in their adaptation actions as well as to help them achieve tangible improvements in sustainability. They do so by facilitating the integration of climate adaptation into planning and policy making and help local authorities identify which procedures to implement and tools to use. Guide 32 will provide assistance for the revision of all infrastructure standards and speed up the standardization of climate adaptation solutions.

## Partners involved

Originally developed under CEN lead, with the participation of national standards bodies and representatives of environmental non-governmental organizations, the document was then adopted as a CEN-CENELEC guide.

## Timeline

CEN-CENELEC Guide 32 was developed by a dedicated project team working in close cooperation with technical committees. It took about one and a half years to complete and was published in 2016.

### References

- *Forging a climate-resilient Europe – The new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change* – [COM\(2021\) 82](#)