SESEI Newsletter

SECONDED EUROPEAN STANDARDIZATION EXPERT IN INDIA

European Committee for Standardization | European Committee for Electro Technical Standardization | European Telecommunications Standards Institute | European Commission | European Free Trade Association

Dear Readers,

We welcome you to the "SESEI Newsletter – India", for the Month of March 2026. In this edition we bring to you, the recent developments across European standardisation, digitalisation, green technologies, and international partnerships reflecting a strong push toward innovation-driven, standard based, secure, and sustainable economic systems, with growing collaboration between Europe and India.

At the core of European standardisation reform is the SMART project led by CEN-CENELEC, which marks a major shift from traditional text-based standards to structured, machine-readable formats. With the completion of its second phase, SMART enables Technical Committees to publish standards that are easier to draft, interpret, and implement.

In the digital domain, Europe is advancing efforts to shape next-generation communication systems, particularly 6G. ETSI has released key reports addressing Integrated Sensing and Communications (ISAC), highlighting critical challenges related to security, privacy, trust, and sustainability. These reports outline requirements for safeguarding data, preventing unauthorised sensing, and ensuring responsible AI integration, along with environmental and energy considerations. ETSI's Open Operator Platform introduces an open-source framework to enable telecom cloud federation & experimentation for 5G-Advanced and 6G technologies.

Global standardisation efforts are also progressing through 3GPP, which has initiated foundational studies on 6G use cases and architecture. At the same time, cybersecurity remains a priority, with European stakeholders aligning standards with evolving legislative frameworks such as the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA). The European Commission is also working on guidelines for labelling AI-generated content, aiming to enhance transparency while reducing compliance burdens.

Sustainability remains a central pillar of EU policy. The European Commission is advancing reforms to simplify the EU taxonomy for sustainable finance, encouraging greater adoption and investment in green projects. New State aid rules are promoting sustainable transport modes, including rail and multimodal logistics, while major investments are being directed toward clean energy infrastructure to enhance energy independence and affordability. Additionally, over €103M has been allocated to strategic environmental and climate projects under the LIFE programme, targeting resilience, biodiversity, and circular economy goals.

India–EU collaboration continues to deepen across trade, technology, and sustainability. The India–EU Free Trade Agreement is expected to significantly boost bilateral trade, supported by Most Favoured Nation (MFN) framework and streamlined regulatory processes. The India–EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement further enhance market access and technology exchange, particularly benefiting MSMEs and high-value sectors. Bilateral engagement with Finland has also been elevated to a strategic partnership focusing on digitalisation and sustainability, including cooperation in emerging technologies & clean energy.

In the green mobility sector, the India–EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) WG-2 is driving collaboration on advanced EV charging technologies, including smart and bidirectional charging and megawatt systems. Overall, these developments highlight a coordinated global effort to integrate digital innovation, sustainability, and international cooperation, positioning both Europe and India for resilient and future-ready growth.

The newsletter also provides details of upcoming events organised by European Standards Organisations which may be of interest to you.

We hope that you will find this newsletter informative.

Happy Reading,

Best regards,
Dinesh Chand Sharma

IN THIS ISSUE

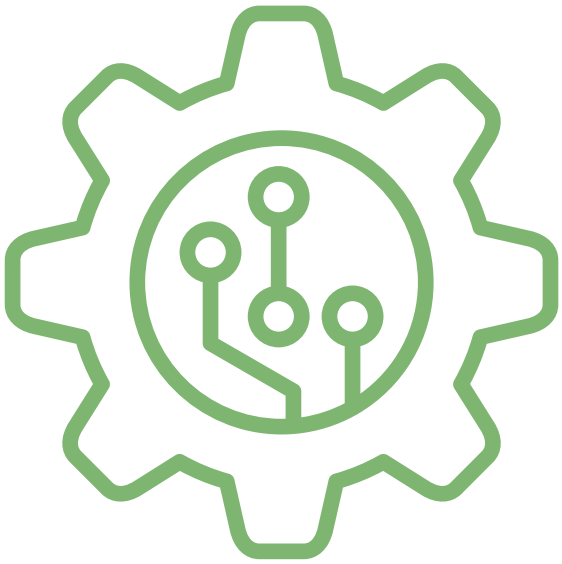
Generic/ Standards

Transforming European Standards with the SMART Project - Second Phase

CEN and CENELEC are reshaping standardization with the SMART project! This groundbreaking project has now delivered its second phase which allows Technical Committees to publish their SMART standards.

The Minimum Viable Product (MVP) of SMART was delivered in January 2025 which allowed standards to be developed in SMART up to the Enquiry stage.

SMART provides an innovative tool to draft new standards. It streamlines the drafting process by providing a pre-structured layout. This allows drafters to focus fully on the content rather than formatting. Drafters will be able to tag requirements, enabling end users to extract them easily.



In the past, standards were essentially written as a simple free text. SMART changes this and helps drafters structure the content of standards. For example, the type of information (requirements, permissions and so on) will need to be clearly identified and tagged, and provisions will need to be SMART (Standards that are Machine Applicable, Readable and Transferable).

But the real objectives of SMART are to provide benefits to standard users. Using a variety of tools such as wizards, imports/exports or data integrations that may be provided by Members, standard users will be able to automatically extract a structured list of the elements which were tagged. This will improve clarity and simplify implementation for standard users.

SMART standards mark a pivotal shift in European standardization, offering innovative tools for more efficient drafting and implementation. By integrating advanced functionalities, SMART addresses the evolving needs of both drafters and users, paving the way for a more effective standardization process.

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Digitization

ETSI Issues New Report on Security, Privacy, Trustworthiness and Sustainability For 6G Integrated Sensing and Communications

The ETSI Industry Specification Group on Integrated Sensing and Communications (ISAC) has published ETSI GR ISC 004, a comprehensive report addressing security, privacy, trustworthiness, & sustainability considerations for Integrated Sensing and Communications (ISAC) in future 6G systems.

The report identifies 19 key issues, including 15 related to security and privacy and 4 focused on sustainability, reflecting the growing importance of responsible design in next-generation networks. As ISAC enables 6G systems to simultaneously communicate and sense their environment, new technical, ethical, and regulatory challenges emerge—particularly around unauthorised sensing, data confidentiality, human privacy, AI-based data processing, and secure handling of sensing data. The ETSI Report addresses the following main topics:

- Protection against unauthorised use of 6G systems for sensing
- Safeguards against target-based eavesdropping and over-the-air signal manipulation
- Secure transport, storage, and immutability of sensing data
- Consent, transparency, and privacy-preserving mechanisms for sensing humans (connected and non-connected)
- Confidentiality in non-public and sensitive spaces
- Sustainability challenges including power consumption, spectrum efficiency, environmental footprint, and health considerations

The report consolidates potential technical and non-technical requirements that future 6G systems should meet to ensure ISAC services are secure, privacy-preserving, trustworthy, & environmentally sustainable.

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Shaping Europe's Cybersecurity Standards: Highlights from the 10th Cybersecurity Standardization Conference

The European Standardization Organizations (ESOs) CEN, CENELEC, and ETSI, together with European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA), successfully co-hosted the 10th Cybersecurity Standardization Conference on 12 March 2026 in Brussels.

The conference, titled ***"European Standardization Supporting New Legislative Cybersecurity Landscape,"*** explored the state of play of the global standardization ecosystem, the landscape of legislative proposals and how they affect standardization, updates on the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA), and the way forward for European standardization. The goal of the event was to facilitate collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders to strengthen the critical role of standards in supporting EU cybersecurity.

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New Wave of Regional Innovation Valleys Confirms Continuous Interest from Member States and Associated Countries

The Commission has unveiled a **second wave of** Regional Innovation Valleys (RIVs), expanding the initiative to new regions, while underscoring its growing appeal across the EU. The scheme continues to bolster **innovation, economic cohesion and inclusive growth,** reinforcing the EU's commitment to bridging regional disparities through targeted support.

Regional Innovation Valleys, a flagship action of the New European Innovation Agenda, aim to harness the full innovation potential across European territories, including the deployment of cutting-edge technologies, to address key societal challenges and reduce the innovation divide. The 2025 call for proposals under the European Innovation Ecosystems Work Programme (EIE WP) and the WIDERA Work Programme, which has led to the launch of the second wave of RIVs, is backed by **nearly €43 million in funding from Horizon Europe**. The cumulative funding for the Regional Innovation Valleys has reached **nearly €160 million of EU contribution.**

The initiative, implemented by the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA), is designed to strengthen and connect innovation ecosystems across Europe, enabling regions to connect and work together on shared strategic challenges, while fostering greater cohesion.

This year, **six projects** will start being implemented that **address five of the EU's most pressing challenges:** accelerating the green transition by reducing dependence on fossil fuels; strengthening global food security; advancing digital sovereignty, with a focus on cybersecurity and AI; enhancing healthcare innovation; and promoting a circular economy to boost sustainability. The selected projects bring together nearly 100 participants, from **16 EU Member States and 5 Associated Countries** under Horizon Europe.

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ETSI Releases First Version of Open-Source Operator Platform to Enable Telco Cloud Network Federation & 6G Experimentation

ETSI announced the first release of the ETSI Software Development Group OpenOP (Open Operator Platform). ETSI SDG OpenOP was established to develop an open-source Operator Platform for the Telco Cloud, enabling operator network and testbed federation alongside capability exposure.

OpenOP provides a collaborative platform for network service providers and application developers to experiment with 5G-Advanced & future 6G technologies. OpenOP Release 1 delivers the first fully integrated version of an open-source Operator Platform. It provides a framework that enables telecom network capabilities to be consumed by vertical application providers and developers through developer-friendly CAMARA APIs.

OpenOP Release 1 main components include:

- The **Open Exposure Gateway (OEG)** to expose telecom network capabilities through CAMARA APIs.
- The **Service Resource Manager (SRM)**, responsible for application lifecycle management, orchestration of deployments across edge cloud zones. It includes transformation functions for the integration with underlying network exposure mechanisms such as NEF.
- The **Federation Manager (FM)** to enable industry standards-based federation and resource discovery across distributed edge domains and multiple operator environments.
- The **Transformation Functions Software Development Kit (TF-SDK)** provides the tools and runtime framework required to implement and deploy transformation functions that adapt telecom network capabilities and infrastructure resources (e.g. Kubernetes) to CAMARA API exposure.
- The **OpenOP Portal** to enable vertical application providers and developers to discover and experiment with available CAMARA APIs through a live catalogue and integrated UI.
- The **AI Integration (AI²)** exposing a Model Context Protocol (MCP) server and AI Agent that enables intent-based interaction using Large Language Models (LLMs), translating natural language prompts into CAMARA API operations and the corresponding southbound primitives.

Validated through end-to-end integration scenarios across all components, this release aims to deliver a transparent and reproducible baseline for the community. A key achievement is the integration of OpenOP with an open-source 3GPP Network Exposure Function (open-exposure NEF from EURECOM) for the CAMARA Location and Quality on Demand (QoD) APIs.

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Commission Publishes Second Draft of Code of Practice on Marking and Labelling of AI-Generated Content

To help providers and deployers meet the marking and labelling requirements for AI generated content under Article 50 AI Act, the Commission is facilitating the development of a voluntary code of practice.

The newest draft of the code **has been streamlined and simplified**, providing more **flexibility** for the signatories, **reducing the compliance burden** and incorporating further technical considerations to improve legal clarity and practicality. It promotes the use of open standards for AI content marking and an EU icon for labelling to simplify compliance and reduce costs.

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3GPP: First Study, New Generation

The 3GPP Organizational Partners TTC and ARIB were the joint hosts of the 3GPP TSGs#111 meetings, held in Fukuoka from March 9 to 13, 2026. Although 5G Advanced specification work remains the primary focus, two new reports caught the eye during the week.

First up was the approval of the first TSG SA study on 6G Use Cases and Service Requirements (TR 22.870), with over 590 pages on the motivation for a 6th Generation where "anywhere" is expected to become "everywhere" connectivity.

In addition to new work on Immersive communication, Hyper reliable and low-latency, more Massive IoT, Ubiquitous connectivity, new AI/ML & AI applications and Integrated sensing and communications (ISAC), there is strong support for features that meet market pressure to reduce CAPEX and OPEX, including the system performance improvements delivered in 5G Advanced.

Following close behind the Architecture study, the TSG RAN group has made great progress on their radio study on 6G Scenarios and requirements (TR 38.914), which now stands at 90% completion, at the end of the 111th Plenaries in Fukuoka. Topics completed in the 6G RAN study so far:

- Key technical principles
- Deployment scenarios
- Other operational requirements (RAN sharing, ease of operations and self organization, network resilience, service characteristics awareness in RAN)

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ETSI Issues New Report on ISAC System and RAN Architectures

ETSI's Industry Specification Group on Integrated Sensing and Communications (ISG ISAC) has released ETSI GR ISC 003, a Report defining the architectural foundations required to integrate advanced sensing capabilities into future 6G systems. Building on earlier ISAC work, the report examines 17 key challenges across system architecture, RAN architecture, and lower-layer RAN, & proposes potential approaches to address them.

The ETSI Report introduces a 6G ISAC system reference model supporting all sensing modes identified in a former Report on use cases and requirements, including monostatic, bistatic and multi-static configurations, involving both the network and the UEs. It outlines necessary functionalities such as sensing service control, sensing data collection and processing, mobility management of sensing entities, charging, and the exposure of sensing results in a secure and privacy-preserving framework.

On the RAN side, the report highlights new functionalities required to support RF sensing—such as sensing task coordination, measurement configuration, data processing, and optional sensing data storage—while outlining challenges related to interference mitigation, power control, sensing signal design, and flexible resource allocation for ISAC operations.

The publication also recognises the need for further studies on multi operator sensing, CN–RAN coordination, & the integration of computing, security, privacy, and sustainability considerations—topics which are being addressed in upcoming work in the group.

This new ETSI report provides timely guidance and feeds 3GPP work as they begin exploration of 6G ISAC system and RAN architecture. ETSI, one of the founding members of 3GPP, is a leading contributor to the global partnership project and helps shaping next generation wireless capabilities where communication and sensing converge.

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Green and Clean Technologies

India-EU Trade and Technology Council 2nd Workshop on EV Charging Technologies: Advanced Cooperation on Standardisation, Smart & Bidirectional Charging, Megawatt Charging Systems, and Wireless Charging

The 2nd India-EU Workshop on Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Technologies was held at the Joint Research Centre (JRC), Ispra, Italy, from 15 to 17 March 2026 under the auspices of the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) Working Group 2 on Green and Clean Energy Technologies. The workshop was jointly organised by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (OPSA) to the Government of India, and the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) of the European Commission in partnership with Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission, the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), and EU Delegation to India.

The India and the European Union continue to deepen their strategic partnership under the India-EU TTC, with growing cooperation in green and clean energy technologies contributing meaningfully to sustainable mobility, resilient innovation ecosystems, and future-ready industrial partnerships.

The workshop brought together policymakers, technical experts, standards bodies, testing and research institutions, and industry representatives from India and EU to deliberate on pathways for developing harmonised, interoperable, & future-ready EV charging ecosystems. The programme included updates on policy and standards, strategic industry perspectives, technical sessions on megawatt charging systems, vehicle-to-grid integration and bidirectional charging, and wireless power transfer, along with laboratory visits to JRC's EV and smart grid testing facilities.

The workshop addressed a wide range of strategic and technical themes. These included developments in research, standards & legislative frameworks in India and Europe; evolving charging infrastructure requirements; communication and interoperability protocols including the Open Charge Point Protocol (OCPP); industry perspectives on harmonised charging solutions; the status of international standards and implementation pathways for Megawatt Charging Systems (MCS) for heavy-duty vehicles; Vehicle-to-Grid (V2G) integration and multi-brand interoperability; the recently published ISO 15118-21 conformance test plan for vehicle-to-grid communication; and ongoing pre-normative research on Wireless Power Transfer (WPT) charging systems.

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India and Finland Renew MoU on Environmental Cooperation

The Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Minister of Climate and the Environment of Finland, renewed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Environmental Cooperation between India and Finland in New Delhi.

India had renewed the MoU signed in 2020, deepening cooperation on pollution prevention and control, waste management, climate change, forests and natural resource management through knowledge and technology cooperation.

The renewed MoU will continue to provide a structured framework for collaboration and exchange of best practices between the two countries on, inter alia, prevention and control of air and water pollution (including remediation of contaminated soil); waste management (including hazardous waste, waste-to-energy and recycling); circular economy and low-carbon solutions in the use of natural resources and forests; climate change mitigation and adaptation; environmental and forest monitoring (including data management); and conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources and integrated water resources management.

The two sides also discussed the opportunities for collaboration on the circular economy, through focused dialogue and joint initiatives.

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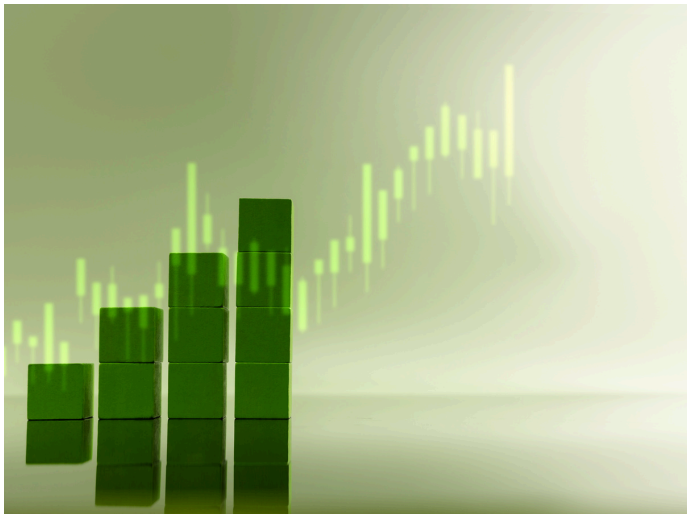
Commission Seeks Feedback on Revision of Criteria for Sustainable Economic Activities



The European Commission is seeking feedback on possible revisions to the criteria of the EU taxonomy, the classification system for sustainable economic activities. The goal of the revision is to make the framework simpler and easier to use.

The EU Taxonomy Regulation is a cornerstone of the EU's sustainable finance framework, steering investments towards sustainable projects. Its 'technical screening criteria' define the conditions that economic activities must meet to be considered sustainable.

The review builds on extensive stakeholder input gained from consultations, workshops, and a call for evidence. The draft revisions published include streamlined criteria and clarifications on how to demonstrate compliance. The proposals would also align the criteria with updated EU legislation and better reflect technological advances.

The aim is to boost taxonomy adoption through easier use, improve access to green finance in the EU, and enhance market transparency through clearer disclosures. The changes cover most activities under the Climate and Environmental Delegated Acts, including forestry and environmental protection, manufacturing, energy, transport and construction, as well as for all the generic 'do no significant harm' appendices.

In February 2025, the Commission's Omnibus I package introduced changes to the EU taxonomy, primarily focusing on disclosures, with only very targeted adjustments to the technical screening criteria. Following this, the Commission conducted a broader review of all technical screening criteria throughout 2025, which resulted in today's draft changes. The objectives pursued under this review are the same as those for the Omnibus package, namely, to simplify the rules and reduce burden.

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Commission Adopts New State Aid Rules to Boost the Use of More Sustainable Ways of Transport

The European Commission adopted the State aid Land and Multimodal Transport Guidelines (LMT Guidelines) and the State aid Transport Block Exemption Regulation (TBER). These instruments support more sustainable transport modes for both passengers and freight and update the EU State aid framework for land and multimodal transport. They will enter into force on 30 March 2026. The TBER will be in place until 31 December 2034. There is no end date for the LMT Guidelines.

The new rules replace the **2008 Guidelines on State aid for railway undertakings**. The LMT Guidelines and the TBER establish a **coherent State aid framework** covering a broad range of sustainable transport modes and aid measures, while maintaining safeguards to prevent undue distortions of competition.

The **LMT Guidelines** set out the conditions under which State aid that has to be notified to the Commission for approval before it can be granted may be declared compatible with the internal market. The new Guidelines include the following provisions:

- They cover **all land transport modes that are more sustainable than road transport.** These include rail, inland waterways and sustainable multimodal transport. When it comes to multimodal transport, at least one of the used transport modes has to be **rail or inland waterways, or combine land transport** with short sea shipping;
- They clarify the possibilities for several **operating and investment aid measures**, such as aid for the **construction and upgrade of railway service and inland waterways facilities,** aid to **launch new commercial connections on rail and inland waterways**, and they clarify the possibilities for aid in the form of **reimbursement for the discharge of public service obligations** in the rail freight sector.
- They introduce **more flexible rules for aid measures that directly contribute to the green and digital transitions.** This includes aid aimed at **reducing the external costs of transport**, as well as aid promoting **interoperability**, like aid for safer and more efficient operation across national rail systems. These provisions are designed to support a shift from road to more sustainable ways of transport, while ensuring that aid remains targeted and proportionate.

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Commission Presents Measures to Increase EU's Energy Independence and Affordability

The European Commission presented first initiatives to boost investment in homegrown clean energy solutions, increase resilience and reduce energy prices. The current geopolitical context again reminds us of the risks related to Europe's reliance on imported fossil fuels. Citizens and industries are rightly concerned about high energy prices. Clean energy sources remain the most affordable and safe, and the only mid-term response to reduce our exposure to price volatility.

To make the most of energy sources, Europe needs a step change in its energy system and infrastructure. The Commission´s **Clean Energy Investment Strategy** will help bridge the gap between the private capital currently available and the investments needed. It will help de-risk projects and mobilise private finance for grids, innovative clean energy technologies and energy efficiency. The Commission will deliver this Strategy in close partnership with the **European Investment Bank Group** which intends to deliver more than €75 billion of financing over the next 3 years in support of the objectives of clean energy transition. In particular, the EIB Group will make a commitment with an indicative amount of up to €500 million to the Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund. This will provide anchor capital to invest in specific energy infrastructure projects, providing a financial boost to the objectives of the European Grids Package.

Cheaper energy is key to support industry and competitiveness. But Europe also needs an energy system that puts citizens at the centre - to deliver more affordable energy and support most vulnerable consumers. With the **Citizens Energy Package**, the Commission proposes concrete actions to reduce energy bills, empower citizens to produce and share their own clean energy and fight against energy poverty. Consumers can benefit from faster supplier switching, lower taxes and levies on their electricity bills, and more transparent information on energy bills and contracts.

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Commission Invests Over €103 Million in European Strategic Environment & Climate Projects

The European Commission is investing **more than €103 million in seven strategic projects** across Europe with funding under the **LIFE programme**. They will contribute to strengthening the EU's prosperity, reinforcing economic stability, food systems and environmental ecosystems, while also improving public health and quality of life across the continent.

The selected projects are in **Finland, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia** and **Spain.** Supporting and accelerating the implementation of EU environmental and climate policies, the projects are focused notably on climate and water resilience, nature restoration, circular economy and sustainable land use. These are expected to mobilise additional national public and private investment. Seven strategic projects awarded in seven EU Member States:

- In **Finland,** ACWA LIFE aims to **restore and protect streams, lakes, coastal waters, river basins and groundwater** to secure water resources & ecosystem health. It will receive €16.5 million from the EU.
- The LIFE ADAPT EST in **France** will **strengthen climate resilience** in the Grand Est region through more expertise on climate, water governance & infrastructure that can withhold extreme weather events. The EU will provide €15.6M to this project.
- In **Greece,** LIFE SIP GR Blue focuses on **restoring marine ecosystems and reducing pollution**, marine litter and underwater noise across coasts and islands, strengthening ocean health and coastal livelihoods. The EU will provide €8.9 million to the project.
- In the **Netherlands,** CEL4LIFE will support Limburg's **transition to a circular economy**. Aiming to halve raw material use in chemicals, manufacturing and construction by 2030, the project will receive €6.9 million from the EU.
- In **Portugal**, the LIFE IP AGRILOOP will **implement circular solutions** in the Azores, across agroforestry, agrifood and tourism, strengthening resource efficiency in the islands. It will receive €15.8 million of EU funding.
- NatAdaptSK in **Slovakia** includes **nature-based solutions** for water, agriculture, forests & biodiversity to reduce climate risks for affected communities. The EU will provide €10.1 million to the project.
- In **Spain**, LIFE HumedalES is the **largest project ever financed under the LIFE Programme**. The project aims to **restore** around 26,200 hectares **of wetlands** across 107 Natura 2000 sites, improving flood protection, water security and biodiversity. It will receive €29.7 million of EU funding.

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EU/EFTA-India

'India-EU FTA a Turning Point in Ties': Jaishankar Concludes 'Productive' Brussels Visit

Minister of External Affairs, India Minister S Jaishankar recently concluded a two-day official visit to Brussels. There, he met the Presidents of the European Council and European Commission. He also met EU High Representative Kaja Kallas and foreign ministers of EU member states. The meetings focused on advanced implementation of the recently concluded India–EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Security and Defence Partnership. They agreed on shared approaches to connectivity, supply chains, and major regional issues. Key highlights including:

- The finalisation of the proposed India-EU Free Trade Agreement both sides discussed ensuring the agreement translates into practical outcomes through greater trade promotion and deeper business cooperation.
- Collaboration in emerging technologies, the India-EU Trade and Technology Council could play a larger role.
- The Trade and Technology Council can be upgraded and repurposed to facilitate collaboration in critical and cutting-edge technologies.
- Mobility of skilled professionals and stronger supply chains were also important priorities for both sides. Mobility of skills and talent flows are very important. Initiatives such as the Legal Gateway Office in India and the promotion of Global Capability Centres (GCCs) could strengthen economic ties.
- Connectivity initiatives, including the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, were also discussed during the meetings.

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India, European Union to Give Each Other Most Favoured Nation Status For 5 Years in Trade Deal

The European Union and India plan to grant each other Most Favoured Nation status after their trade deal takes effect, preventing either from offering better tariff terms to other partners for five years. India and the European Union struck a long-delayed deal last month aiming to slash tariffs on most goods and boost two-way trade amid growing global trade tensions elsewhere.

The deal, likely to be effective in a year after legislative ratification, is expected to double EU exports to India by 2032 by eliminating or reducing tariffs on 96.6% of traded goods by value and will lead to savings of 4 billion euros in duties for European companies. India and the EU have said agriculture-related items like soya, beef, sugar, rice and dairy have been left out of the purview of the trade deal.

Both sides have agreed to lock in commitments not to impose new import or export restrictions beyond World Trade Organization rules and to deepen cooperation on digital trade under a proposed free-trade agreement.

To ease trade flows, New Delhi and Brussels will align food safety and plant health measures with WTO standards and streamline certification and audit procedures. The text also envisages enhanced customs cooperation and faster clearance of goods, with commitments becoming binding after ratification.

The two sides will begin exchanging annual import data one year after the pact takes effect to monitor implementation and the use of tariff preferences. They also agreed to ensure non-discriminatory and accessible appeal procedures for customs decisions affecting imports, exports or goods in transit.

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India – Finland Joint Statement on the State Visit of President of the Republic of Finland

At the invitation of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, President of the Republic of Finland, H.E. Dr. Alexander Stubb, was on a State Visit to India from 4-7 March 2026. Prime Minister Modi and President Stubb held wide-ranging discussions during a bilateral meeting and jointly addressed the media.

The Leaders emphasized their shared commitment to continue expanding and deepening the cooperation between the two nations. In this spirit, the leaders agreed to elevate the India-Finland relations to a Strategic Partnership in Digitalization and Sustainability, based on converging interests and mutual benefits.

Digitalization: Recognizing the transformative power of digitalization as a key driver of inclusive social and economic development, the Leaders identified digital transformation, including new and emerging technologies such as 5G, 6G, high-performance and quantum computing and Artificial Intelligence, as priority areas where collaboration based on mutual trust and benefit can be strengthened. The Leaders noted India's experience in Digital Public Infrastructure, including digital payments such as the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), and discussed possibilities for cooperation in this area.

Against this backdrop, the Leaders asked the relevant ministries to establish a cross-sectoral Joint Working Group on Digitalization to define priorities and foster work on concrete and substantial actions driving the digital transition.

The Finnish President emphasized the positive impact of the considerable number of Indian professionals in the Finnish R&D and tech innovation ecosystems, contributing to social and economic development by means of digital transition and sustainability for the benefit of all.

Sustainability: On sustainability, both Leaders underlined the great potential in advancing clean energy solutions, notably in areas such as low carbon transition, energy efficiency, biofuels, smart grids, and green hydrogen. In addition, they highlighted the importance of cooperation in circular economy, sustainable water management and meteorology.

Leaders welcomed the establishment of a Joint Working Group on Sustainability, bringing together relevant actors from both countries to enhance collaboration on sustainability-related issues.

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India–EFTA TEPA Marks Two Years, Strengthening Trade, Investment and Technology Collaboration

Two years since the signing of the Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement between India and the member States of the European Free Trade Association, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, the partnership has moved from negotiation to implementation with effect from 1 Oct 2025. The Agreement brings together India and a group of advanced European economies in a framework that supports trade, investment, services, technology collaboration & long-term industrial growth.

The India-EFTA TEPA is one of India's most significant trade arrangements with a group of high-income and innovation-driven economies. Along with India's other trade agreements and ongoing trade negotiations, it forms part of a wider effort to expand opportunities for farmers, fishermen, MSMEs and start-ups, while supporting investment and job creation across sectors. For MSMEs and start-ups in particular, the Agreement can open pathways for technology transfer, joint ventures and collaboration with niche technology firms from EFTA countries, helping Indian enterprises move up the value chain and strengthen their global competitiveness. Within TEPA, EFTA's commitments cover 92.2 per cent of tariff lines, accounting for 99.6 per cent of India's exports, including full coverage of non-agricultural products and tariff concessions on processed agricultural products. India's commitments cover 82.7 per cent of tariff lines, accounting for 95.3 per cent of EFTA exports. Sensitive sectors, including dairy, soya, coal and select agricultural products, are protected, while the effective duty on gold remains unchanged.

For India, the significance of TEPA lies in both market access and capability building. The Agreement strengthens India's export presence in high purchasing power markets securing binding commitments across pharmaceuticals, textiles and garments, engineering goods, chemicals, processed foods and marine products. At the same time, it improves access to specialised intermediate goods, advanced machinery, precision components and selected high-standard industrial products that can support production efficiency, product quality and integration with global supply chains.

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Whitepaper/Publication

Proper Energy Label Display at the Points of Sale: Results of New Monitoring Activity Indicate Room for Substantial Improvement

Energy labels are a well-known tool and trusted commonly used by consumers to choose products which consume less energy and have appropriate performance parameters. Proper display of energy labels on respective product categories is one of the key preconditions for making the energy related information, as well as other parameters, such as e.g. noise, water consumption, available to consumers at the points of sale – both in physical shops and in online commerce. The Compliance Services project, which is conducted by a team of various expert and stakeholder-led organisations from across the EU, has therefore carried out an exercise to monitor the proper presence of energy labels in e-commerce platforms.

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EU Commission Work Programme 2026

The 2026 Commission work programme sets out the key strategies, action plans and legislative initiatives that will lay the foundation for the work ahead during this mandate and help deliver on our ambition to build a strong, secure, and prosperous Europe.

The Commission aims to building a more sovereign and independent Europe and reduce its dependencies regarding critical technologies. Therefore, the Commission plans to propose the Cloud and AI Development Act, the Chips Act 2.0 and the Quantum Act in the first half of 2026. Simplification agenda holds significant relevance for the innovative digital sector, with upcoming initiatives including 28th Regime, a European Research Area Act, and a European Innovation Act to facilitate business and access to financing for all innovative companies, including SMEs.

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ETSI Work Programme 2025

The ETSI Work Programme 2025 provides an overview of our current standardisation projects.

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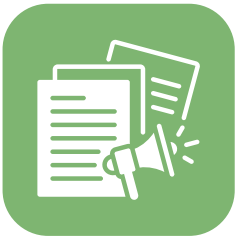


Whitepaper/Publication

CEN and CENELEC Work Programme 2026!

CEN and CENELEC announced the Work Programme 2026. The Work Programme is one of the flagship publications of CEN and CENELEC; it outlines the key priorities and actions that will shape European standardization in the year ahead. 2026 will be a pivotal year for European standardization. Against a backdrop of rapid technological, industrial, and global change, CEN and CENELEC remain clear in our mission: to make Europe's Single Market stronger, more digital, and more sustainable through standards.

Read More/Download

New Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026-27

The European Commission Work Programme for 2026-2027 sets out the R&I funding opportunities under Horizon Europe.

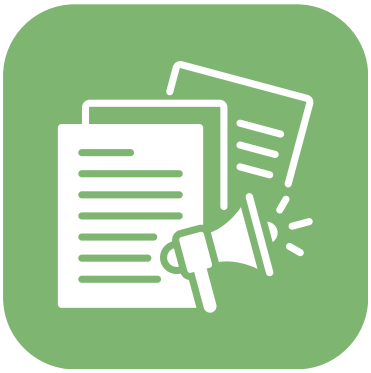
Read More/Download

ECOS Work Programme 2026 – Environmental Coalition on Standards

The renewed focus on competitiveness and global competition must go hand-in-hand with environmental ambition. A true green industrial transformation will help with safeguarding of natural resources, biodiversity, social justice, and environmental health.

As the only environmental NGO systematically at the table where standards are developed, ECOS is perfectly placed to drive, define and assess how to drastically improve the environmental sustainability of key sectors and products.

Read More/Download



Upcoming Events

12th UCAAT - User Conference on Advanced Automated Testing

When: 14-16 April 2026
Where: Sophia Antipolis, France

ETSI's UCAAT conference, now in its 12th year, is dedicated to all aspects of automated testing including model-based testing, cloud testing, mobile testing, test methodologies, test management and standardised test specification by focusing on the practical challenges that are often faced in industry and standardisation.

More Information

'New Recommendations for Monitoring and Follow-up of Energy Efficiency Measures Implementation'

When: 15 April 2026
Where: Online

A new CEN-CENELEC Workshop is being planned as part of the activities of the EU project 'Enhancing energy audit schemes in energy intensive industries with practical approaches' (LIFE22-CET-LIFE AUDIT-PLUS). The aim of this project is to examine in detail the Energy Efficiency (EE) of several Energy Intensive Industries (EII) across Europe and provide tailored guidance and long-term support.

More Information

Webinar 'Insurance Standardization Project in the context of the EU Regulation on Financial Data Access'

When: 21 April 2026
Where: Online

The European standards committee CEN/TC 445 finalised draft European standards for the customer data access and portability in the insurance sector in the context of the requirements of the proposed EU Regulation on a Framework for Financial Data Access (FIDA) and also the data portability of GDPR Article 20.

More Information

Electronic Attestation of Attributes (EAA) Plugtests

When: 4 May-1 June 2026
Where: Online

ETSI's Centre for Testing and Interoperability, with the support of ETSI's Technical Committee for Electronic Signatures and Trust Infrastructures (TC ESI), is organising the Electronic Attestation of Attributes (EAA) Plugtests event. This event is co-funded by the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The aim of this event is to check the interoperability of EAA, a key component of the European Digital Identity Wallet (EUDI Wallet). The testing will cover the ETSI Technical Specification TS 119 472-1, with a special focus on the formats built on SD-JWT VC and ISO 18013-5.

More Information

Upcoming Events

ETSI OpenOP – Enabling Telco Cloud Network Federation & 6G Experimentation

When: 12 May 2026
Where: Online

This webinar introduces the Open Operator Platform (OpenOP), an open-source initiative developed within ETSI Software Development Group OpenOP (SDG OOP) to support experimentation with telecom capability exposure, edge cloud application deployment, and network federation. During the session, we will present the platform architecture and key components, including the Open Exposure Gateway, Service Resource Manager, Federation Manager, Portal and the AI² module

More Information

10th MCX PLUGTESTS

When: 18-22 May 2026
Where: Sophia Antipolis, France

ETSI, with the support of the Critical Communications Association (TCCA) and the Union Internationale des Chemins de fer (UIC), is organising the tenth MCX Plugtests. Co-funded by the European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA), this Plugtests event will take place in the ETSI premises in Sophia Antipolis, France.

More Information

TFS#9 Hackfest

When: 19-22 May 2026
Where: Castelldefels, Barcelona

The ETSI TeraFlowSDN (TFS) community is organising theTFS#9 Hackfest which will take place on 19-22 May 2026. This Hackfest will be hosted by CTTC in their premises in Castelldefels, Barcelona, Spain. The event will explore the latest ETSI TeraFlowSDN developments, focusing on managing P4 devices via Barefoot Runtime (BfRt) APIs.

More Information

AI in evolution of Autonomous Networks

When: 21 May 2026
Where: Online

The webinar will present the values added by AI in the evolution of Autonomous Networks and the importance for the industry to move to AN level4 thanks to the support of AI technologies (e.g. AI for Networks, Network digital twin, AI agents, GenAI for Network, AN for sustainability, AN API, Security in AI).

More Information

Upcoming Events

Expert Chats Standards and Market Access in India

When: 28 May 2026
Where: Online
Time: 10:00–11:30 CEST/13:30-15:00 IST

This webinar will offer a practical, reality-based look at entering one of the world's fastest-growing markets. Experts from SESEI India, DG TRADE and the Standardization sector share insights on standards, regulation and certification—highlighting what differs from the EU, why it matters, and how companies can prepare strategically.

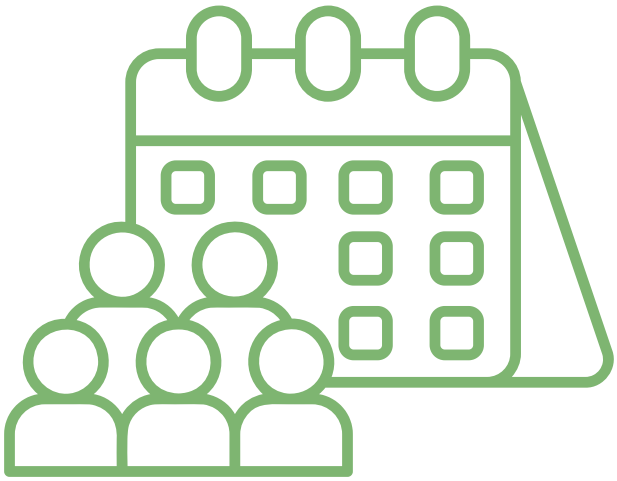
More Information

ETSI/IQC Quantum Safe Cryptography Conference 2026

When: 16-18 June 2026
Where: Ottawa

Designed for members of the business, government, and research communities with a stake in cryptographic standardisation, this forward-looking conference facilitates the knowledge exchange and collaboration required to transition cyber infrastructures and business practices to make them safe and resilient in an era with quantum computers. It will showcase both the most recent developments from industry and government and cutting-edge potential solutions coming out of the most recent research.

More Information



ABOUT PROJECT

The SESEI project (Seconded European Standardization Expert in India) is a project cofunded by five European partners, operating from New Delhi, India, with the objective to increase the visibility of European standardization in India and to promote EU/EFTA-India cooperation on standards and related activities. The SESEI Project (http://sesei.eu/) is managed by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI - http://www.etsi.org/ and is further supported by two other EU recognized Standards Organization, namely the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC) – http://www.cencenelec.eu, as well as by the European Commission (www.ec.europa.eu) and the European Free Trade Association (http://www.efta.int/). It is a Standardization focused project, with a priority emphasis on the sectors falling under Digitization and Clean & Green Technologies etc.

SESEI | Seconded European Standardisation Expert in India

Enabling Europe-India Cooperation on Standards

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