

# CII Webinar on Standards Supporting Quality, Trade, and Women's Participation

(Gender Responsive Standards – A European case studies)

Introduction to Gender responsive standards and approach

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# Agenda

- EU Project SESEI
- European Standardisation System
- Gender Responsive Standards
  - ✓ What & Why
- Gender Responsive Standards in Europe
  - ✓ Policy & Standardisation Activities
  - ✓ Case Studies

**EU Project SESEI**

# Project is a local presence in India

***SESEI** (Seconded European Standardization Expert in India) **is a local face for the European standardization community in India: Dinesh Chand Sharma***



**Why SESEI:** India is a major trade partners for EU/EFTA, Increasing role of standards to gain market access, evolving & complex nature of regulatory and standardization landscapes, sharing best practices, and work together as partners

## **Priority Sectors/topics: Aligned with EU-INDIA TTC, Connectivity Partnership**

- **Digitization: Strategic technologies, digital governance, and digital connectivity** - Smart Cities/Urban Development, ITS, Quantum Technologies, Smart Grid/Meter, **Artificial Intelligence**, 5G/6G, Open RAN, M2M/IoT (Cyber-Physical Systems), DECT, Data Privacy, Satellite Communication, Blockchain, Digital Signature, Smart Manufacturing, e-Accessibility, cybersecurity, digital skills, digital platforms including Research and Innovation etc.
- **Green & Clean technologies** : Clean Energy, Energy Efficiency (Green ICT), Environment, Circular Economy including Resource Efficiency, Waste Management, Energy storage technologies, Electric mobility, Green Hydrogen, Advanced biofuels including R&I etc.
- **Other topics** of mutual interests such as Rail, Ropeways, Machinery Safety etc.

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# The European Standardization System

CEN, CENELEC and ETSI are three officially recognised European Standards Organizations ([Regulation EU 1025/2012](#))



Standardization in various  
business sectors



Standardization in the  
Electrotechnology sector

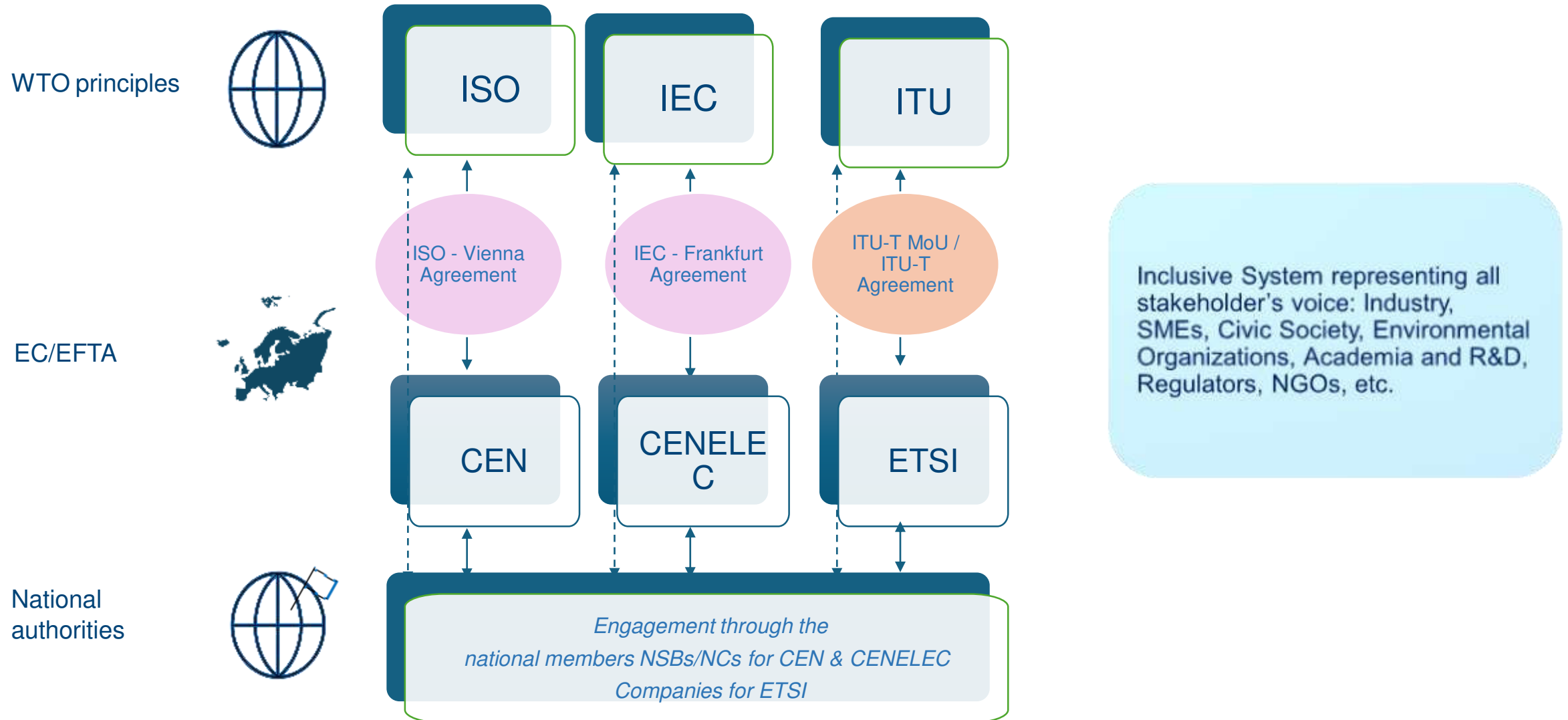


Telecommunications,  
broadcasting and other  
electronic communications  
networks and services

# 1 standard in 34 different countries



# A coherent and inclusive system




# Gender-Responsive Standards



# What are Gender-Responsive Standards (GRS)?

- **A gender-responsive standard:**

- ✓ Reflects an understanding of physical differences and gender roles of women and men;
- ✓ Integrates diverse physical, social and cultural dimensions within the design and performance of the product, process, or service being standardized;
- ✓ Equally addresses the needs, experiences, and concerns of all users, including women, men, girls, and boys;
- ✓ Ensures the standard provides the same outcomes and equal benefit to all.



A Gender-responsive approach to standardization recognizes that standards have different impacts on different individuals depending on their gender

# Why do Gender-Responsive Standards matter?

- Standards are not protecting women as they are benefiting men. In some cases, standards even further disadvantage, or even harm, women (Source [SCC study](#)).
- Standards are an important contributor to economic growth and playing an influential role in the society (source [ISO research](#) ; [UNECE](#)).
- Women represent half the world's population and contribute to 37% of the global GDP. Studies show gender equality positively impacts GDP. (Source [Worldbank](#)).
- Therefore, understanding how standardization may differently impact different genders is very essential to ensure that Standards equally protects everyone, and positively contribute to Worlds economy and Society as a whole, hence.
  - Ensure that standards do not reinforce gender inequalities
  - Equally protect and respond to the needs of all consumers and product and service users
  - Maximize the number of people that benefit from standards
  - Strengthen the competitiveness of products and services, by making them more inclusive

# Gender-responsive standards are for everyone



Take a standard for a **Personal Protective Equipment like a mask, gloves, or eye protection**. Such products must be designed to adequately fit all users to ensure their equal performance and protection. The underlying standards should consider a vast range of anthropometric and physiological differences of users to ensure any potential user's or wearer's safety: men and women of all ages, backgrounds, sizes, etc.



Standards for **handheld tools** should consider the whole spectrum of anthropometric variances and include a broad range of body sizes, heights, posture, grip strength, etc., including consideration how some of these might differ based on gender. This will ensure the products can be used equally, effectively and safely by all potential end-users.



The **ventilation temperature in office spaces** is another example of how gender differences have implications for standards. Gender differences in metabolisms lead to differences in thermal comfort, which needs to be considered to ensure a comfortable environment for all employees. In this instance, considering gender differences would not only benefit women in the workplace but also employees with chronic diseases, and research shows that colder temperatures lead to lower cognitive abilities and productivity.

# Gender-Responsive Standards in Europe

# European Initiatives

2<sup>nd</sup> CEN-CENELEC Gender Action Plan (2023-2025) aims to further **raise awareness on Gender-Responsive Standards (GRS)**, **review internal policies and regulations**, and **provide supporting tools for European standard-makers**

European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy (2020-2025) presents policy objectives and actions **to make significant progress on gender equality in the European Union by 2025**

In May 2019, CEN and CENELEC officially **signed UNECE's Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development** committing to making the standard development process, environment and deliverables more gender-responsive, and help achieving **the UN SDG 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'**

JANUARY 2023

Launch of  
CEN-CENELEC Gender Action  
Plan II

MARCH 2020

Adoption of  
European Gender Equality Strategy

MAY 2019

CEN and CENELEC sign  
the UNECE declaration on  
Gender-Responsive Standards

In 2024, CEN-CENELEC launched a new Brochure: How to be Gender-Responsive in Standardization (GRS)

- Include tips and tricks on how to ensure standards are gender-responsive
- Ensure inclusive language matters
- Makes Intersectional approach to GRS

JANUARY 2021

Launch of  
CEN-CENELEC Strategy 2030

JANUARY 2020

Launch of  
CEN-CENELEC Gender  
Action Plan I

SEPTEMBER 2014

Adoption of  
CEN-CENELEC 'Design for  
All' protocol for Standardizers

CEN and CENELEC Strategy 2030 (Goal 4) outlines a **common vision for an inclusive system ensuring that all stakeholders are appropriately represented, informed, and empowered to participate in and contribute to European standards**

CEN-CENELEC developed a **first Gender Action Plan (2020-2022)** which led to the establishment of the Informal Coordination Group on Gender Diversity and Inclusion.

**Design for All Protocol** - Inclusiveness and Diversity are core values of the CEN-CENELEC system, a system that is open to all interested stakeholders who develop standards that equally benefit everyone, considering the full diversity of the European population.

# CEN-CENELEC Gender Action Plan (GAP)

## 2nd Iteration: 2023-2025

- Built upon lessons learnt & Members' feedback from first GAP launched in Jan'20
- **3 key pillars**, having strong alignment with international activities



- CEN-CENELEC **Informal Coordination Group** further strengthened on Gender Diversity & Inclusion

# Parallel Activities at the European & International level

- In addition, CEN-CENELEC continue to actively **participate in parallel initiatives** gathering women professionals in **key sectors** of interests:

✓ **Cybersecurity:** Women 4Cyber Foundation



✓ **Energy:**

- WomenInEnergy
- EC Equality Platform for the Energy Sector

✓ **UNECE WP.6** on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies

- Advocate the use of standards in the implementation of UN-wide goals, including the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and the Sendai framework for action
  - <https://unece.org/trade/wp6/gender-responsive-standards>



# GRS case study: The case for Anthropometric diversity

Standard on measurement of thermal insulation by means of thermal manikins ([EN ISO 15831:2004](#))



Standard on manual handling of machinery ([EN 1005-2:2003+A1:2008](#))





# Case 1: Measurement of thermal insulation by means of thermal manikins

- Standard describes the requirements (size and shape) of the thermal manikin and the test procedure
- Manikin shall be  $(1.70 \pm 0.15)$  m, with a body surface area of  $(1.7 \pm 0.3)$  m<sup>2</sup>. Yes it includes quite large range of diverse body sizes, but....
  - ✓ The standard does not consider different body shapes and child body sizes
  - ✓ Industry prefers male body shape, because of comparability of test results
  - ✓ No references to anthropometric database or study

# Case 2: Manual handling of machinery

- Standard provides ergonomic recommendations for the design of machinery involving manual handling, including horizontal and vertical positioning
- Vertical: ideal height is 75 cm, maximum is 175 cm
- Recommended height is based on anthropometric data:
  - Subjects from USA army – adult men
  - Data from 1960-1980

# Examples of standards that support women's well-being across different sectors

- **EN ISO 7439:2023 on ‘Copper-bearing contraceptive intrauterine devices - Requirements and tests.**
  - This document sets out the requirements and tests for single-use, copper-bearing contraceptive intrauterine devices (IUDs) and their insertion instruments.
- **EN ISO 10993 series on ‘Biological and clinical evaluation of medical devices’** assesses the biocompatibility of medical devices to ensure they do not produce adverse biological responses.
- **Publication of a new Workshop Agreement, CWA 18062:2023** ‘Determination of trace chemicals extracted from absorbent hygiene products (AHPs) using simulated urine/menstrual fluid’.
- **FprEN ISO 14607 ‘Non-active surgical implants - Mammary implants - Specific requirements’** establishes the safety and performance requirements for mammary implants.
- **prEN ISO 53800 ‘Guidelines for the promotion and implementation of gender equality and women’s empowerment’** is currently under approval.
- **While there are no standards specifically for menstrual products yet but?**
  - Technical Committee (ISO/TC 338) exist at the international level.
  - The Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS) holds the Secretariat for this important work.
  - The TC is currently working on ISO/AWI 25130 which sets out general and safety requirements for menstrual products, covering both internally and externally used products intended for single and multiple use.

# Conclusion

- **Inclusiveness is a core value** for the CEN-CENELEC Standardization System
  - ✓ At CEN-CENELEC, gender-responsive standards are not just about fairness but as well for safety, innovation, and inclusivity.
- **Gender Responsive Standards for ALL categories/subjects:** Diversity & Inclusiveness help making high quality standards that protect everyone & reach greatest market acceptance
- **Design for All - Assume ALL standards** have gender implications
- **Existing Standards** shall be reviewed for unintended gender impacts
- **Training on gender perspectives** is crucial for technical experts and standards writers

Thank you!

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