The BEC is...

... a neutral and independent standardisation platform for electrotechnics and electronics in Belgium.

Through standards and other publications, the BEC offers the Belgian community systematic technical know-how in the international domain of electrotechnics and electronics.

In doing so, the BEC supports

- the development of trade, manufacturing and the use of products and services in internal and external markets;
- scientific and technological development;
- protection of environment and citizens.

In the interest of Belgian stakeholders (companies, government bodies, organisations, consumers), the BEC plays a steering/influencing as well as an implementing role in the process of electrotechnical standardisation.

The BEC ensures

- Belgian interests are represented at the European and international level;
- European and international standards in electrotechnics and electronics are implemented at the Belgian level.

stimulating innovation
1909 2009
one century at a time

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Global Gateway to Electrotechnical Standards in Belgium

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What are the benefits of standardisation?

If you're a company...

think of standardisation as **a powerful marketing tool** for realising your technical and financial goals.

For companies in the free market, the body of relevant standards constitutes a technical reference for electrotechnical products and services. Complying with relevant standards is a way to **increase focus and cost-efficiency** in activities like R&D and manufacturing.

Offering standardised products significantly increases your **market potential**, since most countries show an interest in the benefits of standardisation. In markets where this awareness is not yet established, your initiative can launch and even steer the local standardisation process.

In terms of **company branding** there is an additional factor. Your active involvement in developing certain standards sends a strong signal that you are structurally investing in **innovative** products and processes. That's a characteristic valued by suppliers as well as customers.

All these benefits apply equally to SMEs, who often target a niche product or market.

Standardisation is basically an activity by the industry and for the industry. Direct involvement in the standardisation process means direct influence on the final consensus: the agreed standard.

That standard will find its way to a large number of (end)users around the world and will help shape the future of various products and applications.

What a shame if not your ideas and technologies but your competitors' become the standard...

If you're a consumer...

you enjoy the fact that the consensus decision-making process (in which you or your organisation is free to participate) regards the **environment**, your **safety** and your **health** as crucial elements in standards development.

Power pylons and microwave ovens, wind turbines and solar panels, television sets and x-ray machines, shavers and gaming consoles, coaxial cables and electricity-powered vehicles...

Can our society even imagine a future without electrotechnical and electronic devices? Not likely. As technological development is leapfrogging, the need for technical agreements increases. It's a good thing manufacturers can rely on recognised standardisation processes to offer endusers ever more safe, high-performing and environmentally friendly devices.

If you're a government body...

think of standardisation as an **ally** in your quest for ever greater safety and comfort for the general population. After all, standardisation makes devices easy to hook up with each other (intercompatibility) and guarantees userfriendliness and safety.

The same goes for the environment. The environmental footprint of our society's and our industry's electrotechnical activity is a major issue at national level. Standardisation is a powerful way to professionalise this environmental debate.

Drafting and altering **legislation** is a lengthy, expensive and energy-consuming process for a government body. If, however, legislation refers to a documented standard for all technical specifications instead of mentioning those specifications in the legal text itself, that piece of legislation will remain valid for much longer. The technological context evolves at a dazzling pace, and it's much quicker and more efficient to update a standard than it is to update national legislation. This is exactly how the European New Approach Directives work today:

legislation stays, standards keep pace with technological evolutions.

An additional benefit of this New Approach: the standard to which the legal text directly refers, is also to a certain extent a legal reference in itself for manufacturers and other organisations. Complying with the specifications in the standard document creates the **"presumption of conformity"**. In other words, complying with this standard becomes (to a certain extent) complying with the law.

To conclude, standardisation is also a means to stimulate international trade and as a consequence national **economic growth**. An international request for quotation with a particular standard as technical reference will yield more and better bids.

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