



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
ENTERPRISE DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Single Market, regulatory environment, Industries under vertical legislation  
Conformity and standardisation, new approach, industries under new approach

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**STANDARDISATION MANDATE**  
**ADDRESSED TO THE CEN**  
**IN THE FIELD OF THE POSTAL SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT**

**1. BACKGROUND**

The postal sector is at the crossroads of three vital markets of the European economy: communications, advertising and transportation/logistics. These markets are already largely open to competition and experiencing rapid development, driven by market demands and technological change (particularly in the case of telecommunications).

The postal sector, which offers a key communications infrastructure with high social and economic importance, needs to develop in harmony with the major changes taking place in these markets.

Overall in the EU, postal services are estimated to handle 135 billion items per year, generating a turnover of about 80 billion € i.e. 1.4% of the GDP approximately.

The effectiveness of the postal services of the European Union is crucial so that goods and services can flow optimally throughout the Union, thus supporting economic growth and employment. It is also important, in order to exploit fully the advantages of electronic trade, that the postal services of the European Union, which are at the heart of the business to business and home delivery in Europe, are top class.

The postal sector is undergoing a mutation process, under the combined effect of the development of technologies, of the progressive opening to competition and of the evolution of the customers' needs. It is essential that the regulatory and standardisation environments facilitate and accompany this mutation in order to ensure that the European Union benefits from fast, effective and competitive postal services, which are vital to ensure the competitiveness of European industry and to transform the internal market into reality for the postal service customers.

The regulatory framework concerning the Community postal services is defined by the 97/67 EC Directive.<sup>1</sup> The regulatory framework is in the process of evolving a proposal for Directive<sup>2</sup> amending the Directive 97/67 EC was tabled by the European Commission.

A first standardisation mandate (M/240) was issued in March 1996 by the European Commission. This mandate required the development of 16 European standards concerning the postal services. A technical Committee (TC331) was created by the CEN in order to develop the activities needed for the completion of the mandate.

The importance of the standardisation activities for the postal sector was also confirmed by the 97/67 EC Directive, in particular in its Article 20 which provides that:

- Harmonisation of technical standards shall be continued taking into account in particular the interests of users;
- The European Committee for Standardisation shall be entrusted with drawing up technical standards applicable in the postal sector on the basis of remits to it pursuant to the principles set out in Council Directive 83/189/EEC<sup>3</sup> of 28 March 1983 laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical standards and regulations;
- This work shall take account of the harmonisation measures adopted at international level, in particular those decided upon within the Universal Postal Union.

The above-mentioned regulatory framework also provides (article 20) that the “Member States shall ensure that universal service providers refer to the standards published in the Official Journal where necessary in the interests of users”. The other providers, which are not obliged to use the technical standards published in the official standards, also have the ability to use such standards.

Standardisation work undertaken within the TC331 progressed significantly and first CEN standards for European postal services have been adopted.

In view of the results obtained by the TC331 within the framework of the completion of the M/240 mandate, and in view of the importance of technical standardisation for the postal sector at the time when the regulatory framework is evolving towards a greater opening of the market of the postal services, it appeared appropriate to initiate the debate in sight the future of European standardisation work concerning the postal services. A consultation process was opened by the TC331, supported by the European Commission, in order for this debate to take place involving all industry stakeholders and allows drawing-up proposals concerning future technical standardisation activities for the sector.

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1J.O. L 15 , 21.1.1998 , p.14-25 - Directive 97/67/CE du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 15 décembre 1997 sur les règles communes pour le développement du marché intérieur des services postaux de la communauté et l'amélioration de la qualité du service

2 O.J. C 337 E , 28/11/2000 P. 0220 – 0224 - Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive amending Directive 97/67/EC with regard to the further opening to competition of Community postal services

3J.O. L 109 du 26. 4. 1983 , p. 8. replaced by Directive 98/34/EC dated 24.6.1998 (OJ L204 on 21.07.1998)

The proposals resulting from the consultation process were discussed and endorsed by the plenary meeting of the TC331 on 20 June 2000, before formally being forwarded to the European Commission by the Chairman of the TC331 on 26 July 2000 (annex B of this mandate).

These proposals were also submitted to the committee established by the directives 97/67 EC on 21/03/2001 as well as to the committee established by the directive 98/34 EC on 27/06/2001, of which they received the approval for favourable opinion.

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF MANDATED WORK**

Phase 1: elaboration of a standardisation work programme

The CEN is invited to develop a standardisation work programme for equipment, services and systems connected with the postal sector. The work programme will be based on the work items listed in the annex A of the mandate. This list was established from the above mentioned proposals, in response to the consultation process led by the CEN borne by the European Commission on the basis of the results obtained within the framework of the M/240 mandate of 15 March 1996. Work will be carried out in co-operation with the CENELEC and the ETSI where applicable. The work programme will be submitted to the Commission services for approval.

When during the work CEN is of the opinion that additional standards are necessary in the sector, such standards are in theory covered by this mandate. The CEN is invited to communicate them to the Commission services for approval in order that these can then be added to the programme. The Commission will inform the Committee of the 97/67 EC Directive. as well as the Committee of the 98/34 EC Directive.

Phase II: Execution of the work programme

CEN is requested to execute the standardisation work programme taking into account the target dates mentioned in the programme for each standard or other document.

When preparing the standards, the CEN will take account of the technical specifications, standards and regulations currently available or being prepared in the sector at the international and European levels. In particular, account will be taken of the technical work of the ISO, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), and the European Committee of Administration of Post and Telecommunications (CEPT).

## **3. ORGANISATIONS TO BE ASSOCIATED**

Standards will be developed in co-operation with the CENELEC, the ETSI if necessary; with the CEPT and, as far as possible, with UPU. Other groups can be involved such as organisations representing public and private mail service providers (e.g. Posteurop, European Express Association), postal regulatory organisations (CERP), representatives of industrial groups providing equipment or services for the postal services, representatives of the users in the process of the technical harmonisation (e.g. FEDMA, AEVPC/EMOTA), of the consumers (ANEC, EBCU) and of the workers (TUTB).

#### 4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANDATE

- (1) The CEN will inform the Commission of the provisions necessary for the completion of the mandate within three months following its acceptance.
- (2) The CEN will submit to the Commission the standardisation work programme, within three months following its acceptance of this mandate. The programme of work will be based on the list of work items mentioned in Annex A. It will include, among others, a list of standards and other documents to be developed as well as the target dates for adoption. When developing the work, if it becomes necessary to amend or complete the programme, the CEN will submit to the Commission services for approval the changes, with the new related target dates in the case of additions in the programme; the thus amended programme will, in principle, be covered by the mandate. The Commission will then inform the Committee of the 97/67 EC Directive as well as the Committee of the 98/34 EC Directive.
- (3) The CEN will present to the Commission the draft standards and reports, as well as the adopted versions, in conformity with the target dates for their adoption.
- (4) The CEN will inform the Commission of the progress of the work by means of quarterly reports which will also mention the eventual problems.
- (5) The European standards (EN) and the other documents will be adopted on the specified target dates. On these dates, they will be available in German, English, French.
- (6) The adopted European standards (EN) will be transposed into national standards and the different national standards will be withdrawn from the catalogues of the national standardisation bodies in the Member States within six months following their adoption.
- (7) At the end of the ENV period, CEN will proceed with reviewing the opportunity of transposing the ENVs into ENs in agreement with the Commission services.
- (8) The acceptance of this mandate by the CEN starts the standstill period referred to in Article 7 of the Council Directive 98/34 EC<sup>4</sup> amended lastly by the directive 98/48 EC<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> OJ N°L204 OF 21.07.1998

<sup>5</sup> OJ L217 OF 05.08.1998

## ANNEX A

### List of the standardisation work items

<b>N°</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Final document</b>
1	Measurement of the quality of access to postal services and of the quality of postal delivery (new standardisation work item)	1	EN
2	End to end measurement of the quality of service of parcel services (new standardisation work item)	1	EN
3	End to end measurement of the quality of service of hybrid mail services (preliminary study)	2	Report (+ ENV*)
4	End to end measurement of the quality of service of non-addressed mail services (preliminary study)	2	Report (+ ENV*)
5	Extension of the standards to multiple operators (extension of existing standards)	1	EN
6	Extension of the standards to new EU Members (extension of existing standards)	1	EN
7	HML reference system – test suite (new work item)	3	ENV
8	Mail switch – postal processing (new work item)	2	ENV
9	Study on reverse hybrid mail system specifications (preliminary study)	3	Report (+ ENV*)
10	Statement of mailing submission (new work item)	1	ENV
11	Track & Trace (new work item)	2	ENV

\* According to the result from the study