French standardization strategy
2011-2015
Preamble

The French standardization strategy 2011-2015 is, more than ever before, that standards and standardization should focus on consideration of users’ expectations, both current and potential. This change of direction for the standardization system is necessary to enable standards to achieve their effect: bringing about a major increase in the number and variety of users. The French standardization system should therefore be prepared to produce tools with both normative and educational value. These documents should allow even the smallest companies to understand and apply the standard in their specific case. This ability to speak the language of the activity sector and business area will make standards operational in most applications. It will also make it possible to take user feedback into account, an essential factor for improving standards and enabling all players to contribute.

The second message, inspired by sustainable development, is that beyond the economic players directly concerned, standards and standardization should serve the society challenges of public interest, such as safety, health, social cohesion, societal security and ageing of the population. Where European players position themselves as users rather than service providers, the participation of consumers is called for not only in creating standards, but also in determining needs and taking initiatives. This will allow stakeholders more familiar with regulatory procedures to be taken into account, such as environmental non-governmental organizations.

In the light of the increasingly integrated nature of global standardization, the French standardization strategy 2011-2015 is designed as a driving force to influence the strategies of international and European organizations. As it is designed as a set of projects, the French standardization strategy 2011-2015 concerns all those who commit to it and provide resources, and is therefore inseparable from the question of financing standardization.
2 main challenges

Proximity

- To foster the contribution and participation of all stakeholders, including civil society and small businesses...
- To ensure that standards are simple to use: easy identification of the content, legibility, user-friendliness...

International influence

- To support the competitiveness of industry sectors and the performance of the French economy in international markets.
- To optimise the innovation cycle in international standards.
- To offer a simple set of European and international tools for the French players to pave the way for their projects.

Find the french standardization strategy on:
www.afnor.org

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The 9 areas of the French standardization strategy

9 strategic areas have been identified to bring together the initiatives of French standardization representatives:

1. Innovation and sustainable growth for the economy and society
   “Why?”

   - To support the competitiveness of sectors and the performance of the French economy

2. To support innovation and research

3. To meet society’s challenges: social cohesion, societal security, population ageing, etc. both nationally and within Europe

4. Progress and effectiveness of standardization operators
   “How?”

   - To strengthen the effectiveness of the French standardization system

5. To optimise the added value of European and international systems

6. To establish partnerships with organizations developing reference documents

7. Change of scale in the participation and ownership of players, microbusinesses/SMEs, consumers and NGOs
   “With whom?”

   - To optimise the investment of standardization experts

8. To develop education, external communication and legibility

9. To facilitate initiative, contribution, participation and feedback of more stakeholders
Strategy implementation

Proposals for targeted action plans

Broad-scale consultations with standardization players and participants have resulted in the emergence of proposals for future projects and their expected results. These proposals have given rise to three initial action plans:

- Innovation and competitiveness plan
- Microbusinesses and SME plan
- Civil society plan

The origin of the contributions and proposals in the action plans is stated where possible. In the other cases, the proposal is the result of collective discussion, primarily by the Planning and Policy Committee – COP up to April 2010, then by the Standardization Coordination and Steering Committee – CCPN, with the collaboration of the strategic committees and sector-based standardization bureaux.

Actions to be carried out at various levels

While some projects can be carried out at a national level in France, many will be implemented in conjunction with international standardization organizations, mainly the ISO, the IEC and their European counterparts. The French representatives in these organizations will be in charge of introducing and carrying out these projects. In the plans below, the levels of action are indicated by a symbol:

- **Worldwide**: International bodies, mainly ISO and IEC
- **Europe**: European standardization system (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI)
- **National**: French standardization system (AFNOR and sector-based standardization bureaux)

Commitment of the players

The implementation of the strategy cannot be the sole responsibility of AFNOR and the sector-based standardization bureaux: all players need to work together to serve French performance in a globalised world.

Major players will therefore be called upon to take part in targeted action plans. Their implementation will be integrated in partnerships, notably with:

**Economic players:**
- Chambers of commerce and industry - ACFCI
- Chambers of trade and craft - APCM
- Medium-sized businesses - CGPME
- Businesses - MEDEF
- Craft sector - UPA

**Players in civil society:**
- Mayors - Association des maires de France
- Consumers - Conseil National de la Consommation
- Managers of local authorities - Syndicat National des Secrétaires Généraux et Directeurs Généraux des Collectivités Territoriales

**The State**, for which the French standardization strategy may be integrated in a contractual approach.
Strategy development and adoption

Integration in European and international strategies

At the turn of the decade, European and worldwide standardization organizations set new objectives through their strategies. To meet the main challenges, action plans have been put forward and will be implemented over a period of several years, through to 2015.

The French standardization strategy follows deliberately this international trail. It has been designed at the same time and in line with the ISO’s strategic plans at a global level and those of the CEN at a European level. The strategic thinking of other international and European organizations, such as the IEC, CENELEC and ETSI, has also been taken into account.

Adoption and implementation

The 2011-2015 French standardization strategy and its implementation are the responsibility of the Standardization Coordination and Steering Committee (CCPN), delegated by the AFNOR Administrative Board.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACFCI</td>
<td>Assembly of French chambers of commerce and industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFNOR</td>
<td>French standardization association</td>
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<tr>
<td>APCM</td>
<td>Standing assembly of trade and craft chambers</td>
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<td>BNS</td>
<td>Sector-based standardization bureaux</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCPN</td>
<td>Standardization Coordination and Steering Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEN</td>
<td>European Committee for Standardization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENELEC</td>
<td>European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGIET</td>
<td>General council for industry, energy and technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGPME</td>
<td>General confederation of small and medium size businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTI</td>
<td>Industrial technical centres</td>
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<td>ETSI</td>
<td>European Telecommunications Standards Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>EUROGIP</td>
<td>Public interest group leading, coordinating and developing European aspects of the occupational injuries and diseases branch of the French social security system</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIEEC</td>
<td>Federation of electrical, electronic and communication industries</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>International electrotechnical commission</td>
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<td>INPI</td>
<td>National institute for intellectual property</td>
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<td>INRS</td>
<td>National Research and Safety Institute for the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases</td>
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<td>ISO</td>
<td>International Organization for Standardization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microbusinesses</td>
<td>Microbusinesses (less than 20 employees), including the craft sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORMAPME</td>
<td>European standardization office for the craft industry and small and medium businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFN</td>
<td>French standardization system (see order no. 2009-697, chapter 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and medium businesses (20-250 employees)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNSGDGCT</td>
<td>National union of managers of local authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMB</td>
<td>ISO technical management board</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPA</td>
<td>Professional craft union</td>
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Proposals for French standardization action plans 2011-2015
To support the competitiveness of sectors and the performance of the French economy

Supporting sector policy and taking into account the increasing interdependence of sectors by streamlining and simplifying structures and processes to develop new approaches (source: Innovation forum):

- these new approaches may be based on developing and adapting the strategic steering of standardization, to take into account the emergence of company-wide themes affecting several sectors or new economic sectors\(^1\)
- this strategic thinking will make it possible to identify the main themes: ageing of the population, adaptation to disabled persons (see p.18), low-carbon vehicles, nanotechnologies, etc.

Contributing to the structuring of sectors of excellence, notably green sectors in which our economy may have comparative advantages:

- pollution control
- construction sector, energy and photovoltaic
- waste recycling, treatment and disposal, etc.

Optimising the performance of the cornerstone sectors of our economy, a guarantee of their sustainability:

- agro-food
- construction
- defence
- energy
- services
- transport, etc.

Strengthening support for French leaders, regardless of their size, to contribute in a selective manner to the chair and secretariat of European and international standardization bodies.

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\(^1\) The Standardization Coordination and Steering Committee (CCPN) may use the experience acquired at the end of 2010 when strategic projects for energy efficiency and low-carbon vehicles were launched.
To support innovation and research

Developing an economic intelligence network for emerging innovations:
- Establishing close links with competitiveness clusters, technological research institutes – IRT and other research structures (source: Innovation Forum).
- Together with INPI, proposing combined diagnoses of industrial property, standards and economic intelligence (source: CGIET).

Optimising the combination offered to innovators and users of standards:
- Offering the ability to produce standards or reference documents for innovative fields in 12 months.
- Providing users with the means to appreciate the maturity of the proposed solution, by clearly linking it to each type of document (source: Bordeaux strategy workshop).
- To do this, the range of normative documents, both in France and in international and European organizations, should be simplified and clarified (source: CTI - Industrial Technical Centres).
- Understanding and raising awareness of the innovation-standardization cycle, e.g. the contribution of standardised tests to the promotion of innovations (source: innovation workshop of the Engineering, Capital Goods and Materials strategic committee).

Developing normative documents on future topics:
- capture and storage of CO₂,
- future mobility
- intelligent networks
- life sciences
- digital society
- financial transactions
- towns of the future, etc.
To meet society’s challenges: social cohesion, societal security, population ageing, etc. both nationally and within Europe

Contributing to collective processes such as the Grenelle de l’environnement, industry convention, etc. by taking part in work and making an active contribution.

Leading sector-based thinking to explore the complementarities of standards and legislation, with a view to launching a new approach in France in fields not covered by legislation (source: FIEEC).

Supporting work to back European policy, by setting up and leading think tanks on standardization and public policy.

Developing normative documents for market surveillance, contributing to increasing the safety of products and services and ensuring that consumers are informed.
To strengthen the effectiveness of the French standardization system

- Developing feedback on standards and encouraging similar developments in Europe and internationally - introducing means of sharing and capitalising the experience of standards users online.

- Adapting the standards creation process to promote access by more stakeholders, notably by developing the use of virtual meetings.

- Aligning the structure of European standardization rules and procedures with that of international standardization - Expected result: simplification and improvement in cooperation and process synchronisation (source: Strategic Committee for Water: Environments and Usage patterns).

- Proposing, at a European level, a draft guideline for evaluating the activity of standardization bodies.

- Reinforcing governance, consultation on the French position between players in the system, through the work of the standardization coordination and steering committee, and its strategic committees.

- Better anticipating the impact of new subjects initiated by other national standardization bodies, notably through Directive 98/34 (European directive laying down a procedure for the provision of information in the field of technical stan).
5 To optimise the added value of European and international systems

Exporting know-how and developing technical assistance:
- Using all possibilities offered by technical cooperation programmes at a national, European and worldwide level, to promote the European quality, standardization and compliance evaluation system.
- Asking as many French companies as possible to take part to enable them to make the most of these opportunities.
- Encouraging the emergence of the French-speaking standardization network RNF as a stakeholder, so as to fuel mutual enhancement of positions, making them more credible and better supported.

6 To establish partnerships with bodies developing reference documents

In full respect of standardization principles, facilitating the reproduction of proven documents issued by forums and consortia, by clarifying and promoting methods for coupling their work with standardization (source: CNES).

Encouraging partnerships between international standardization and inter-governmental agencies, by fostering cooperation between French participants on either side.
To optimise the investment of standardization experts

As economic impact is one of the components that gives standardization its general interest status, providing evidence of a return on investment by implementing the methods proposed by the ISO, notably by applying them to:

- a normative feasibility guide
- acknowledgement of investment in standardization as an intangible company asset, by modelling the progress in implementation permitted by participation.

Training experts, recognising and optimising skills acquired, raising awareness among human resources functions, e.g. by testing a module for validating learning through experience – VAE (source: Nantes strategy workshop).

Improving processes for optimising time spent by experts on developing standards.

Change of scale in the participation and ownership of players, microbusinesses/SMEs, consumers and NGOs
8 Education, external communication and legibility to develop

Developing standardization training:

- Integrating standardization into technical and vocational education, while relying on academic teaching bodies - integrating standardization into programmes - training teachers.
- Reinforcing the integration of standardization in higher education, in partnership with professionals, notably in engineering and management schools and in universities.
- Developing specific teaching tools, notably online resources for teachers.
- Encouraging the development of research in standardization by research professors, notably by studying the economic impact of standardization or the standards and patents relationship.

Optimising the legibility of the various document types and the quality of the language versions:

- Defining guidelines for the creation and approval of French versions of European and international standards, implementing them and raising awareness among those concerned – Expected result: improvement in the quality and consistency of the French versions of European and international standards (source INRS/Eurogip).
Microbusinesses and SMEs plan

8 To develop education, external communication and legibility

Making standards easier to use for SMEs and the craft sector:
- Developing performance spin-off standards focusing on a given area of business, type of company or services field – Applying this principle to ISO standard 9001 – For the most common scenarios, developing descriptive application guides to make performance standards easier to implement – Expected result: adaptation of performance standards to microbusinesses (source: UPA/CAPEB, CGPME).
- Creating a standard for the networking of commitments: how to characterise a microbusiness collective, identify how they can adopt commitments, how they adhere to the system, how to control implementation and compliance, how to organise governance – Expected result: development of access by microbusinesses to quality and management systems and reduction of the cost (source: ACFCI).
- Disseminating and applying the CEN/CENELEC guide on adapting standards to SMEs – Expected result: replacement of part of the standards’ text by clear diagrams (See. Plan Europe notebooks); consideration of small series (alternative to destructive tests); consideration of the size of the organization in management standards (source: APCM, UPA/CAPEB).

Improving access to standards using available information technology:
- Optimising a search engine in order to identify the standards applying to an area of business, a product or service (source: APCM).
- Providing a summary of each standard (source: APCM).
- In the era of electronic document management, eliminating «paper» updates, notably amendments and errata (source: Strasbourg strategy workshop).

Change of scale in the participation and ownership of players, microbusinesses/SMEs, consumers and NGOs
9 To facilitate initiative, contribution, participation and feedback of more stakeholders

Reinforcing the contribution of the craft sector, microbusinesses and SMEs to European and international work through national mirror committees:
- Welcoming professional organizations representing the craft sector, microbusinesses and SMEs at a national level - the most effective and realistic level.
- Coordinating expert networks at a European level, notably with Normapme (source: APCM).

Training standardization referral agents in organizations representing microbusinesses - developing their ability to notify work, to identify experts likely to take part in work, to advise and support companies in implementing standards (source: APCM).

Systematically identify potentially concerned interests - Evaluate the balance and transparency of the interests represented (source: APCM).

With professional organizations of SMEs and craftworkers:
- proposing watch distribution lists targeted on their centres of interest, areas of business, products or services and on the opportunities for taking part in standardization (source: APCM).
- testing the legibility of draft standards at the public enquiry stage, by setting up panels of users who have not been involved in the work.

Expected result: increase in the number and effectiveness of contributions to the public enquiry.

5 To optimise the added value of European and international systems

Adapting information on work in progress at a European and international level to the expectations of the different categories of stakeholders:
- Broadening the possibilities of involvement in the preparation of draft standards at all stages of development, acquiring information, according to the centres of interest of the area of business, product or service in question, on draft standards and decisions by strategic committees (source: APCM).
Civil society plan

Innovation and sustainable growth for the economy and society

2 To support innovation and research

To support the identification of solutions for disabled persons, the elderly and in particular persons with reduced mobility, implementing standardization programmes with a view to accelerating access to the technology application market for:

- Telephony: audio-description, speech synthesis, etc.
- Websites
- Bar code readers, etc.

3 To meet society’s challenges: social cohesion, societal security, population ageing, etc. both nationally and within Europe

To support the implementation of the 2005 law on equal opportunities for disabled persons, being attentive to and formalising needs, and suggesting priorities through a forum for all stakeholders.

Implementing standardization programmes with a view to facilitating consideration of accessibility criteria, as a priority in:

- Transport: services and equipment
- Construction sector, road & urban equipment, signage

In the wake of the success of the first standard on organizations welcoming disabled persons, implementation of the approach set out in this generic standard:

- by sector
- by putting it forward to European and international standardization organizations.
9 To facilitate initiative, contribution, participation and feedback of more stakeholders

Facilitating the use of standards by local authorities and NGOs, consumer and environmental protection associations and trade unions. Facilitating their involvement in standardization work and reinforcing their ability to take the initiative in new work as soon as needs arise:

- Organising an exchange event for better participation of players in civil society, through organizations that represent them in standardization – Expected result: collective identification of needs and resources, sharing of experience in terms of organising representation of society players in standardization, outlining of priorities (source: Consumers committee, Environment strategic committee).
- Further to this first stage, creating an area for dialogue between partners in civil society, notably using information technologies: blog or forum, social network.
- Continuing the mobilisation of all players in civil society, in order to improve participation in French standardization and through French delegations in international and European groups of organizations.

With the cooperation of local authorities, NGOs, consumer and environmental protection associations and employee trade unions, selecting draft standards in the enquiry phase and setting up user panels.

Promoting language needs and the role of French among the official standardization languages.

Systematically identifying potentially concerned interests - Evaluating the balance and transparency of the interests represented.
The French standardization strategy 2011-2015 was approved by the Standardization Coordination and Steering Committee (CCPN), on may 10th 2011.

Find this document and the AFNOR Normalisation's actualities on:
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