

Finland

## Overview

Established in 1924, the central body for standardization in Finland is the Finnish Standards Association - SFS ([www.sfs.fi](http://www.sfs.fi)). It is an independent, non-profit making organization cooperating with trade federations and industry, research institutes, labor market organizations, consumer organizations, and governmental and local authorities. Members of SFS include professional, commercial and industrial organizations, and the State of Finland represented by the ministries.

SFS Standards are voluntary documents. SFS and its standards-writing bodies coordinate the national standardization work. The total number of SFS Standards amounts to over 20,000. All SFS Standards are mentioned in the annual bilingual (Finnish and English) SFS Catalogue (see SFS website). It is continuously updated. SFS Standards are mainly originally drawn up by CEN, CENELEC, ISO, IEC and ETSI, and can be downloaded from the online shop of SFS (<http://sales.sfs.fi/sfs/index.jsp?setLang=1>). The Finnish Standards Association SFS and its standards-writing bodies, the SESKO (Electrotechnical Standardization in Finland) - [www.sesko.fi](http://www.sesko.fi)) and the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority ([www.ficora.fi](http://www.ficora.fi)) are members of the European standards organizations CEN, CENELEC and ETSI.

SFS promotes the use of standards in Finland by giving information on international, foreign and Finnish standards and drafts. The WTO Enquiry Point has operated at SFS by mandate of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy since 1980. National SFS Standards are sold in Finland only by SFS. Distribution of SFS standards abroad is handled by national ISO member bodies.

SFS is the Finnish source for all international standards and drafts of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), for European standards and drafts of CEN and for publications of ISO member bodies. SFS also distributes other foreign standards and technical regulations.

Products tested and certified in the United States to American standards are likely to have to be retested and re-certified to EU requirements as a result of the EU's different approach to the protection of the health and safety of consumers and the environment. Where products are not regulated by specific EU technical legislation, they are always subject to the EU's General Product Safety Directive as well as to possible additional national requirements.

European Union standards created under the New Approach are harmonized across the 27 EU member states and European Economic Area countries to allow for the free flow of goods. A feature of the New Approach is CE marking. For a list of new approach legislation, go to [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index_en.htm)

. The concept of new approach legislation is likely to disappear as the New Legislative Framework (NLF), which entered into force in January 2010, was put in place to serve as a kind of blueprint for existing and future CE marking legislation. Since 2010/2011 existing legislation has been reviewed to bring them in line with the NLF concepts.

While harmonization of EU legislation can facilitate access to the EU Single Market, manufacturers should be aware that regulations (mandatory) and technical standards (voluntary) might function as barriers to trade if U.S. standards are different from those of the European Union.

## *Agricultural Standards*

The establishment of harmonized EU rules and standards in the food sector has been ongoing for several decades, but it took until January 2002 for the publication of a general food law establishing the general principles of EU food law. This Regulation introduced mandatory traceability throughout the feed and food chain as of Jan 1, 2005. For specific information on agricultural standards, please refer to the Foreign Agricultural Service's website at: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/about.html>

There are also export guides to import regulations and standards available on the Foreign Agricultural Service's website: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/useu/about.html>

## **Standards Organizations**

EU standards setting is a process based on consensus initiated by Industry or mandated by the European Commission and carried out by independent standards bodies, acting at the national, European or international level. There is strong encouragement for non-governmental organizations, such as environmental and consumer groups, to actively participate in European standardization.

Many standards in the EU are adopted from international standards bodies such as the International Standards Organization (ISO). The drafting of specific EU standards is handled by three European standards organizations:

1. CENELEC, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (<http://www.cenelec.eu/> )
1. ETSI, European Telecommunications Standards Institute (<http://www.etsi.org/>)
1. CEN, European Committee for Standardization, handling all other standards (<http://www.cen.eu/cen/pages/default.aspx>)

The only organization that develops standards in Finland is the Finnish Standards Association (<http://www.sfs.fi/en>).

To know what CEN and CENELEC have in the pipeline for future standardization, it is best to visit their websites. CEN's "sectors" page provides an overview by sector and/or technical committee whereas CENELEC offers the possibility to search its database. ETSI's portal ([http://portal.etsi.org/Portal\\_Common/home.asp](http://portal.etsi.org/Portal_Common/home.asp)) leads to ongoing activities. With the need to adapt more quickly to market needs, European standards organizations have been looking for "new deliverables" which are standard-like products delivered in a shorter timeframe. While few of these "new deliverables" have been linked to EU legislation, expectations are that they will eventually serve as the basis for EU-wide standards.

Key Link: <http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/products/cwa/index.asp>

## **NIST Notify U.S. Service**

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

## **Conformity Assessment**

Conformity Assessment is a mandatory step for the manufacturer in the process of complying with specific EU legislation. The purpose of conformity assessment is to ensure consistency of compliance during all stages, from design to production, to facilitate acceptance of the final product. EU product legislation gives manufacturers some choice regarding conformity assessment, depending on the level of risk involved in the use of their product. These range from self-certification, type examination and production quality control system, to full quality assurance system. Conformity assessment bodies in individual member states are listed in NANDO, the European Commission's website.

Key Link: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newapproach/nando/>

To promote market acceptance of the final product, there are a number of voluntary conformity assessment programs. CEN's certification systems are the Keymark, the CENCER mark, and CEN workshop agreements (CWA) Certification Rules. CENELEC has its own initiative. ETSI does not offer conformity assessment services.

## **Product Certification**

Product certification is voluntary in Finland.

To sell products in the EU market of 27 member states as well as in Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland, U.S. exporters are required to apply CE marking whenever their product is covered by specific product legislation. CE marking product legislation offers manufacturers a number of choices and requires decisions to determine which safety/health concerns need to be addressed, which conformity assessment module is best suited to the manufacturing process, and whether or not to use EU-wide harmonized standards. There is no easy way for U.S. exporters to understand and go through the process of CE marking, but hopefully this section provides some background and clarification.

Products manufactured to standards adopted by CEN, CENELEC and ETSI, and published in the Official Journal as harmonized standards, are presumed to conform to the requirements of

EU Directives. The manufacturer then applies the CE marking and issues a declaration of conformity. With these, the product will be allowed to circulate freely within the EU. A manufacturer can choose not to use the harmonized EU standards, but then must demonstrate that the product meets the essential safety and performance requirements. Trade barriers occur when design, rather than performance, standards are developed by the relevant European standardization organization, and when U.S. companies do not have access to the standardization process through a European presence.

The CE marking addresses itself primarily to the national control authorities of the member states, and its use simplifies the task of essential market surveillance of regulated products. As market surveillance was found lacking, the EU adopted the New Legislative Framework, which went into force in 2010. As mentioned before, this framework is like a blueprint for all CE marking legislation, harmonizing definitions, responsibilities, European accreditation and market surveillance.

The CE marking is not intended to include detailed technical information on the product, but there must be enough information to enable the inspector to trace the product back to the manufacturer or the local contact established in the EU. This detailed information should not appear next to the CE marking, but rather on the declaration of conformity (which the manufacturer or authorized agent must be able to provide at any time, together with the product's technical file), or the documents accompanying the product.

### **Accreditation**

Independent test and certification laboratories, known as notified bodies, have been officially accredited by competent national authorities to test and certify to EU requirements.

"European Accreditation" (<http://www.european-accreditation.org/content/home/home.htm>) is an organization representing nationally recognized accreditation bodies. Membership is open to nationally recognized accreditation bodies in countries in the European geographical area that can demonstrate that they operate an accreditation system compatible with EN45003 or ISO/IEC Guide 58.

Please contact the Finnish Accreditation Service (FINAS) for further information (see <http://www.mikes.fi/frameset.aspx?url=finas.aspx%3FpageID=0%26categoryID=2&langID=uk>)

### **Publication of Technical Regulations**

The Official Journal is the official gazette of the European Union. It is published daily on the internet and consists of two series covering draft and adopted legislation as well as case law, studies by committees, and more (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOIndex.do?ihmlang=en> ). It lists the standards reference numbers linked to legislation

([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index_en.htm) ).

National technical Regulations are published on the Commission's website [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index_en.htm) to allow other countries and interested parties to comment.

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that

could affect trade with other member countries. **Notify U.S.** is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL: <http://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyUS/data/index/index.cfm>

## **Labeling and Marking**

Manufacturers should be mindful that, in addition to the EU's mandatory and voluntary schemes, national voluntary labeling schemes might still apply. These schemes may be highly appreciated by consumers, and thus, become unavoidable for marketing purposes. Manufacturers are advised to take note that all labels require metric units although dual labeling is also acceptable. The use of language on labels has been the subject of a Commission Communication, which encourages multilingual information, while preserving the right of member states to require the use of the language of the country of consumption. The EU has mandated that certain products be sold in standardized quantities. Council Directive 2007/45/EC harmonizes packaging of wine and spirits throughout the EU. Existing national sizes will be abolished with a few exceptions for domestic producers. Key Link: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/prepack/packsizes/packsizes\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/prepack/packsizes/packsizes_en.htm)

### *The Eco-label*

The EU eco-label is a voluntary label, which U.S. exporters can display on products that meet high standards of environmental awareness. The eco-label is intended to be a marketing tool to encourage consumers to purchase environmentally friendly products. The criteria for displaying the eco-label are strict, covering the entire lifespan of the product from its manufacture, use, and disposal. These criteria are reviewed every three to five years to take into account advances in manufacturing procedures. Applications to display the eco-label should be directed to the competency body of the member state in which the product is sold. The application fee will be somewhere between €200 and €1200 depending on the tests required to verify if the product is eligible. The eco-label also carries an annual fee with a maximum of €1500.

Key Links:

[Eco-label Home Page](#)

[Product Categories eligible for the Eco-label](#)

[Eco-Label Catalogue](#)

[List of Competent Bodies](#)

[Revision of the Eco-label](#)

[The Eco-label and Carbon Footprint](#)

### The Swan Label

Besides the CE Mark, which is required across the European Union, the Swan Label is a neutral and reliable Nordic Environmental Label. It directs products, their production and consumption into a more environmentally friendly direction. The Swan Label indicates that the products burden the environment less than other corresponding products - without compromising performance characteristics.

<http://www.ymparistomerkki.fi/english>

## **Contacts**

Finnish Standards Association - SFS ([www.sfs.fi](http://www.sfs.fi))

SESKO (Electrotechnical Standardization in Finland) - [www.sesko.fi](http://www.sesko.fi))

Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority ([www.ficora.fi](http://www.ficora.fi))

Finnish Accreditation Service (FINAS)

<http://www.mikes.fi/frameset.aspx?url=finas.aspx%3FpageID=0%26categoryID=2&langID=uk>

The Swan Label - <http://www.ymparistomerkki.fi/english>

### **Trade Agreements**

For a list of trade agreements with the EU and its member states, as well as concise explanations, please see [http://tcc.export.gov/Trade\\_Agreements/index.asp](http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp)

### **Membership in Free Trade Arrangements**

Finland joined the European Union on January 1, 1995, which means that Finland complies with trade agreements that the EU has made with third countries. Finland is also a member of the European Free Trade Association, and the European Economic Area.

## **Bilateral Investment Agreements**

Finland has concluded bilateral investment agreements with the following 64 countries: Azerbaijan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Mexico, Namibia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Lebanon, Republic of Moldova, Republic of Slovenia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

In September 1989, Finland and the U.S. signed a convention (TIAS 12101) for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and on capital. The convention entered into force December 30, 1990. The tax convention was amended on 31 May 2006 under a protocol signed in Helsinki. The protocol changes the rules that apply to people falling within the area to which the convention applies, domicile, taxation of dividends, interest and royalties, restrictions on benefits, a method for eliminating double taxation and an exchange of tax information.

For a list of trade agreements with the EU and its member states, as well as concise explanations, please see [http://tcc.export.gov/Trade\\_Agreements/index.asp](http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp).

### **Web Resources** [Return to top](#)

Finnish Tax Authority, [http://www.vero.fi/en-US/Companies\\_and\\_organisations/VAT](http://www.vero.fi/en-US/Companies_and_organisations/VAT)

USTR Reports, Document library; reports & publications, <http://www.ustr.gov>

The Finnish Consumer Agency & Ombudsman, <http://www.kuluttajavirasto.fi/en-GB/>

Finnish Food Safety Authority, <http://www.evira.fi/portal/en/>

Environmental Administration, <http://www.ymparisto.fi/default.asp?node=4032&lan=en>

Finnish Customs, [www.tulli.fi](http://www.tulli.fi)

National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, <http://www.valvira.fi/en/>

Import Requirements and Documentation (EU):

#### *EU websites:*

Online customs tariff database (TARIC):

[http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/customs/customs\\_duties/tariff\\_aspects/customs\\_tariff/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_duties/tariff_aspects/customs_tariff/index_en.htm)

The Modernized Community Customs Code MCCC):

[http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/customs/do0001\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/customs/do0001_en.htm)

ECHA: <http://echa.europa.eu>

Taxation and Customs Union:

[http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/customs/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/index_en.htm)

International Level:

What is Customs Valuation?

[http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/customs/customs\\_duties/declared\\_goods/european/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/customs_duties/declared_goods/european/index_en.htm)

Customs and Security: Two communications and a proposal for amending the Community Customs Code

[http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/customs/policy\\_issues/customs\\_security/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/customs/policy_issues/customs_security/index_en.htm)

Contact Information at National Customs Authorities:

[http://ec.europa.eu/taxation\\_customs/taxation/personal\\_tax/savings\\_tax/contact\\_points/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/personal_tax/savings_tax/contact_points/index_en.htm)

Cenelec, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization:

<http://www.cenelec.eu/>

ETSI, European Telecommunications Standards Institute:

<http://www.etsi.org/>

CEN, European Committee for Standardization, handling all other standards:

<http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/homepage.htm>

Standardisation – Mandates:

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/standardisation-requests/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/standardisation-requests/index_en.htm)

Nando (New Approach Notified and Designated Organizations) Information System:

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newapproach/nando/>

European Co-operation for Accreditation:

<http://www.european-accreditation.org/content/home/home.htm>

Standards Reference Numbers linked to Legislation:

[European Standards](#)

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/harmonised-standards/index_en.htm)

What's New

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/news/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/european-standards/news/index_en.htm)

National technical Regulations

[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tris/index_en.htm)

NIST - Notify U.S.: <http://tsapps.nist.gov/notifyU.S./data/index/index.cfm>

European Union Eco-label Homepage:

[http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/ecolabel/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/comm/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm)

U.S. websites:

National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers:

<http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/reports-and-publications/2009/2009-national-trade-estimate-report-foreign-trad>

Agricultural Trade Barriers:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/posthome/Useu/>

Trade Compliance Center:

<http://www.trade.gov/tcc>

U.S. Mission to the European Union:

<http://useu.usmission.gov/>

The Latest on REACH:

<http://export.gov/europeanunion/reachclp/index.asp>

WEEE and RoHS in the EU:

<http://export.gov/europeanunion/weeerohs/index.asp>

Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/default.htm>

EU Marking, Labeling and Packaging – An Overview

[http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x\\_4171929.pdf](http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4171929.pdf)

The European Union Eco-Label:

[http://buyusainfo.net/docs/x\\_4284752.pdf](http://buyusainfo.net/docs/x_4284752.pdf)

Trade Agreements

[http://tcc.export.gov/Trade\\_Agreements/index.asp](http://tcc.export.gov/Trade_Agreements/index.asp)