



**THE KEYMARK  
THE CEN/CENELEC MARK  
OF CONFORMITY**



**How it is implemented  
in CEN**

## WHAT IS THE KEYMARK?

The Keymark is the European mark, jointly owned and offered by CEN, the European Committee for Standardization and CENELEC, the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization.

The Keymark, also called CEN/CENELEC European Mark, is a voluntary third-party certification mark providing assurance that a product complies with specified requirements of the relevant European Standard(s) issued by CEN or CENELEC.

For the time being, in so far as a Keymark scheme has been created and accepted by CEN, the Keymark is only licensed for use in combination with the marks of existing national certification systems and schemes, demonstrating conformity of products with CEN Standard(s) and operated by empowered Certification Bodies.

## WHAT ARE THE ADDED VALUES OF THE KEYMARK?

The Keymark is a European conformity mark, providing assurance relating to the conformity of products to European Standard(s).

It is a sign for the 'Europeanization' of the national marks and in some cases it constitutes a step to harmonizing the national certification schemes and marks.

It improves confidence in the national marks of all countries concerned and acceptance of the equal quality of the national certification schemes.

Finally, once a product is tested and certified to obtain the Keymark in one country, there should be no need for re-testing in other countries participating in the scheme. The manufacturers and retailers should be able effectively to market their products. The Keymark will also act as a market-opener, a key to the Single Market. Consumers and users will be confident that it addresses all the social concerns which are defined in a European Standard and that it will be recognized in Europe by those with an interest in requirements relating to safety, health, and environmental protection, thus maximizing value.

## WHO CAN USE IT?

The Keymark can be applied for by the manufacturers (and importers, retailers in collaboration with manufacturers). In this respect the mark aims to provide sufficient value so that they can effectively market their products.

Governments, in the framework of EU directives such as the directive on general product safety and in the framework of recommendations such as those relating to mutual recognition, are expected to rely on the Keymark as evidence that the products concerned are suitable for use, taking into account all the established requirements of the reference standard(s).

The Keymark must not be confused with CE marking which is a mandatory declaration of the manufacturer/supplier that the product fulfills and demonstrates respect for the essential requirements of the relevant EU directives.

Consumers support a single European mark, which has to fulfill specific requirements such as third party testing and precise information in order to provide transparency on safety, performance and environmental aspects of the product.

The Keymark delivers products to the European market with the required confidence using the fewest possible resources.

## WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KEYMARK CERTIFICATION SCHEMES?

In principle, the basic components of such a scheme are:

- proof of conformance of the product(s) against the CEN European Standard(s), taking account of, if applicable, the specific rules approved by the CEN Certification Board;
- initial conformity assessment, especially by type testing and evaluation of the factory production control of the manufacturer taking into account the elements of the EN ISO 9000 series;
- decisions on certification and licensing, including maintenance, extension, suspension and withdrawal;
- periodic surveillance.

## WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CERTIFICATION BODIES INVOLVED?

To deliver/grant the Keymark, the certification bodies have to be empowered by the CEN Certification Board on the advice of the National Member Bodies of CEN1.

They shall:

- operate well recognized certification schemes of their own for the product categories for which they apply;
- be accredited by a member of the European Accreditation Cooperation (EA) or have a recognition agreement with the EA;
- abide by the rules of the Keymark;
- pay royalties to the CEN Certification system;
- subcontract laboratories and inspection bodies accredited or, in specific cases, positively evaluated on the basis of the EN 45000 series and/or EN ISO/IEC 17000.

1. Affiliates, which are the National Standards Bodies of Central and Eastern Europe likely to become members of the EU or EFTA, and which are recognized by CEN, may participate in the system if they have published the relevant European Standards covered by the relevant Keymark scheme for the product.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

The precondition for establishing a Keymark scheme is a set of relevant requirements in the CEN European Standard(s) to which conformity of a product can be evaluated.

If national marks (or a national mark) exist, granted on the basis of national standards transposing the European Standard(s) involved, the CEN Certification Board can decide, after evaluation, on the acceptance of the existing national schemes as conforming to the Keymark requirements and allow the Keymark to be licensed for use in combination with those national marks.

Another possibility exists for launching a new Keymark certification scheme. If necessary, and at the request of representative groupings from the market, the CEN Certification Board can create a Keymark group under the terms to be accepted by the Board for elaborating specific rules complementary to CEN/CENELEC European Certification Mark System Rules for implementation in CEN. Finally the CEN Certification Board has to decide on the proposal. Combination with national marks has to be assured.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR THE KEYMARK?

The manufacturer submits the application to a certification body empowered for the scheme relevant for his products. Attention is drawn to the fact that his/her choice implies also the choice of the national mark in combination with which the Keymark is granted.

The descriptions and documentation pertaining to the product to be provided by the manufacturer may, at least in detail, vary from country to country.

The applicant should address the empowered certification body addressed for information on the details required with the application, as well as on the terms by which the Keymark is licensed.

## WHERE TO GET MORE GENERAL INFORMATION ?

More general information can be obtained from the Secretariat of the CEN Certification Board, the CEN National Members and Affiliates (see over).



## MORE INFORMATION

The contact points for all CEN National Members can be found by clicking on National Members here:

The contact points for Affiliates are found under 'About CEN' - 'Affiliates'.



[www.cenorm.be](http://www.cenorm.be)

Information about empowered bodies, European Standards being used and products on which it will appear can be found here:

[www.cenorm.be/conformity-assessment.htm](http://www.cenorm.be/conformity-assessment.htm)



The address of the Secretariat of the CEN Certification Board is found below.

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