

Brexit and Standards Update

Follow-up to Theresa May's Speech

You will no doubt have heard the Prime Minister's speech last week on Brexit and her intention for the UK's future relationship with the EU. She plans to trigger the process for the UK's exit from the EU at the end of March, subject to Parliamentary agreement.

We expect now that Brexit will probably include the UK's departure from the Single Market and the Customs Union, but this does not affect our ambition that BSI, for the UK, will continue to be part of the European Standards System (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI). That would mean that UK experts will continue to contribute to the development of European Standards. Those European Standards will still be adopted as British Standards, and conflicting standards withdrawn.

CEN and CENELEC are independent, private organizations that have a broader membership than just the EU, including non-EU countries such as Switzerland, Serbia and Turkey. European Standards are used voluntarily as tools to improve business performance and enhance consumer safety. While some of these standards also enable companies to comply with EU laws, and are cited in the EU's Official Journal for that purpose, they are not regulations.

We have been engaging since the referendum with business groups, companies, consumers and other stakeholders, including through a webinar that can still be seen on our website (www.bsigroup.com/EUReferendum/) and through a Brexit stakeholder event in November last year. We have been told consistently that continued CEN and CENELEC membership is essential to secure UK businesses' interests, through the development of European Standards that set out good business practice and enable reciprocal market access across 34 countries.