

WELMEC 1  
Issue 6

# WELMEC

European cooperation in legal metrology

## WELMEC – An Introduction



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# **WELMEC**

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Published by:  
WELMEC Secretariat  
MIRS  
Grudново nabrežje 17  
SI – 1000 Ljubljana

Tel: +386 1 244 27 18  
Fax: +386 1 244 27 14

# WELMEC

European cooperation in legal metrology

## Introduction

WELMEC is the European cooperation in the field of legal metrology. Its Members are representative national authorities responsible for legal metrology in European Union and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states.

WELMEC was created by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a meeting in Bern in June 1990. Eighteen countries in the European Community and EFTA signed the original MoU, which set out objectives and tasks for WELMEC and identified rights and obligations arising from membership. Since 1990, several countries have joined WELMEC as Associate Members, one of a number of developments not foreseen when WELMEC was formed. To reflect these changes, and following extensive discussion during 1998 and 1999, a number of amendments to the MoU were agreed by the WELMEC Committee at its meeting in Warsaw in September 1999.

In May 2004 the ten new EU member countries Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia signed the MoU during the 20th Committee meeting in Casta-Papiernicka, Slovakia. In 2005 Turkey was unanimously accepted as Associate Member and a year later Croatia was welcomed. In 2007 Romania and Bulgaria became Full Members due to their change of status in the European Union. In 2008 and 2009 six European countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) which have signed the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union and its Member States have been accepted as Welmec Associate Members.

WELMEC has at present 30 Members and 7 Associate Members.

The MoU is of an exclusively recommendatory nature, however, and does not in any way bind its signatories. WELMEC remains a free cooperation in which agreement is sought on a range of issues of mutual interest and wide importance. The full text of the MoU is given in Annex 1 and the signatories are listed in Annex 2.

## Vision (what we aim to be)

WELMEC's vision is to be the primary source for trusted advice on legal metrology issues in Europe.

## Mission (what we aspire to achieve)

WELMEC's mission is to develop and maintain mutual acceptance among its members and to maintain effective cooperation to achieve a harmonised and

consistent approach to the societies needs for legal metrology and for the benefit of all stakeholders including consumers and businesses.

## **Objectives**

The following objectives are listed in the WELMEC Memorandum of Understanding:

- (i) to develop and maintain mutual confidence between legal metrology services in Europe;
- (ii) to achieve and maintain the equivalence and harmonisation of legal metrology activities taking into account the relevant guidelines;
- (iii) to identify any special features of legal metrology which need to be reflected in the European metrology, certification and testing framework;
- (iv) to organise the exchange of information for legal metrology applied at national and local level;
- (v) to identify, and promote the removal of, technical or administrative barriers to trade in the field of measuring instruments;
- (vi) to promote consistency of interpretation and application of normative documents and propose actions to facilitate implementation;
- (vii) to identify specific technical problems which might form the subject of collaborative projects;
- (viii) to maintain working links with all relevant bodies and promote the infrastructure relating to harmonisation of legal metrology;
- (ix) to debate trends and establish criteria for the scope of legal metrology and maintain channels for a continuous flow of knowledge.

## **The WELMEC Committee**

The WELMEC Committee is the central controlling and decision-taking forum in the cooperation. Each WELMEC Member and Associate Member is entitled to nominate one representative in WELMEC Committee.

The role of WELMEC Committee is to:

- evaluate and approve strategy documents and associated action plans, as well as all the other documents which create obligations for WELMEC;
- review the finances, approve the yearly financial report and decide on the annual membership contributions;
- evaluate and approve WELMEC guides, annual reports and programmes of WGs;
- provide clear guidance to the convenors of Working Groups (functioning rules, terms of reference, working program including deadlines and eventually the life time of the WG in connection with the outcome of the feedback information);
- follow the work of WGs to be prepared to vote on a guide;
- survey the usefulness of all WELMEC documents.

WELMEC Committee meetings are held once a year.

The Committee elects a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for a period of three years (with the possibility of one re-election). The body which the Chairperson represents normally supplies the secretariat for WELMEC, preparing papers for

Committee meetings and handling correspondence with other interested bodies. A small group, called »Chairperson's Group« provides advice to the Chairperson on strategic matters.

More detailed information on WELMEC Procedures is available at:  
[http://www.welmec.org/fileadmin/user\\_files/pdf/07-ch-WELMEC\\_Procedures\\_Final\\_2010.pdf](http://www.welmec.org/fileadmin/user_files/pdf/07-ch-WELMEC_Procedures_Final_2010.pdf)

## **Working Groups**

Working Groups are established by the WELMEC Committee for the detailed discussion of issues of interest and concern to WELMEC Members and Associate Members.

WELMEC Working Groups meet regularly to discuss a range of important subjects and make recommendations to the Committee.

The current activities of WELMEC are particularly focused on the operation of the Nonautomatic Weighing Instruments Directive and on the implementation and operation of the Measuring Instruments Directive.

Guidelines for Working Groups are available at  
[http://www.welmec.org/fileadmin/user\\_files/pdf/08-ch-Guidelines\\_for\\_Working\\_Groups\\_Final\\_2010.pdf](http://www.welmec.org/fileadmin/user_files/pdf/08-ch-Guidelines_for_Working_Groups_Final_2010.pdf)

WELMEC currently operates the following Working Groups:

- WG 2 Directive Implementation (2009/23/EC)
- WG 4 General Aspects of legal metrology
- WG 5 Metrological supervision
- WG 6 Prepackages
- WG 7 Software
- WG 8 Measuring Instruments Directive
- WG 10 Measuring equipment for liquids other than water
- WG 11 Utility meters

## **Links with the European Commission**

In developing a strategy to achieve its declared objectives, WELMEC has forged a close link with the European Commission.

During the 20th Meeting of the WELMEC Committee the European Commission acknowledged that through WELMEC national authorities have set up an effective networking system, active in a number of fields that are directly relevant for the implementation of the MID. Therefore, in organizing work at the level of the Commission services, WELMEC will be taken into consideration as effective means of cooperation between Commission and national authorities in the field of legal metrology.

There are a number of areas where such cooperation can take place, such as

- market surveillance,
- cooperation regarding conformity assessment, including the operation of Notified Bodies,
- identification of relevant OIML documents,
- development of guidance documents,
- the wider area of administrative cooperation.

So good communication with the European Commission is very important, and WELMEC is likely to work increasingly closer with the Commission in the future.

### **Links with EURAMET (European Association of National Metrology Institutes)**

EURAMET and WELMEC realized the importance of increased collaboration within the field of metrology in Europe. As a result WELMEC and EURAMET Memorandum of Understanding was signed on the occasion of 20th Anniversary of WELMEC in May 2010 in Bled, Slovenia. The MoU recognizes the role played by each organization in European metrology and the intention to collaborate closely in the future for the benefit of European metrology.

### **Joint EURAMET-WELMEC Focus Group on Facilitating National Metrology Infrastructure**

Based on this MoU the Joint EURAMET-WELMEC Focus Group has been formally established at its last meeting which was held in December 2010 in Budva, Montenegro. The Focus Group is concerned with facilitating cooperation and acceleration of the integration process of EURAMET members and associates and WELMEC associates into existing EURAMET and WELMEC structures.

The major tasks and activities within this focus group are as follows, to

- organize joint training and comparisons,
- facilitate joint use of facilities and collaboration between NMIs and between the national authorities responsible for legal metrology,
- support networking and awareness,
- establish exchange of experience and information between the NMIs and between the national authorities responsible for legal metrology,
- assist associates to prepare for full membership in EURAMET and WELMEC.

### **Links with EA (European co-operation with Accreditation)**

The Memorandum of Understanding between EA and WELMEC was signed in Luxembourg in May 2009. WELMEC has a status of "Recognized Stakeholder" and is a member of EA Advisory Board (EAAB).

### **WELMEC Observers**

In developing a strategy to achieve its declared objectives, WELMEC has forged in addition close links with other bodies interested in metrology and quality

infrastructure: the International Organisation of Legal Metrology (OIML), European Standardisation Bodies (CEN/ CENELEC) and regional metrology organisations (RMOs) with an interest in legal metrology (AFRIMETS, APLMF, COOMET, EMLMF). They are invited to attend WELMEC Committee meetings.

### **WELMEC Corresponding Organisations**

WELMEC particularly welcomes close contacts with European trade associations representing manufacturers of measuring instruments or users of measuring instruments and consumer association.

### **WELMEC activities**

The 2010 Strategy Document has defined the following goals:

- analyse and respond to the challenges of legal metrology,
- raise the profile of legal,
- facilitate the application of Regulation 764/2008/EC on Mutual Recognition,
- achieve and maintain the equivalence and harmonisation of legal metrology activities,
- facilitate to meet Member States obligations in relation to the exchange of information under MID and NAWI,
- to seek support/assistance for WELMEC activities,
- support EU in helping EU neighbouring countries planning to align with EU legislation,
- improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of WELMEC work,
- facilitate the application of Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market

Besides the main goals WELMEC internal aim is to expand the knowledge among its members in order to enable them to participate actively in the work of WGs.

The strategies and initial actions for implementing the above goals were defined as well. The 2010 Strategy Document will be reviewed regularly and a new version is to be issued in 2012.

### **Publications**

WELMEC has published a number of important information and guidance documents. These are all available free of charge on the WELMEC website (<http://www.welmec.org/latest/guides.html>).

**Annex 1: WELMEC Memorandum of Understanding  
(As amended and agreed on 24 September 1999)**

**SECTION 1 – CONSTITUTION**

(A) The Members of WELMEC (the European cooperation in legal metrology) are the representative national legal metrology authorities (in European Union and EFTA member States) on behalf of whom this Memorandum of Understanding has been signed. They declare their common intention to participate in the work and activities of WELMEC.

(A1) National legal metrology authorities in those countries which are in transition to membership of the European Union may become Associate Members of WELMEC, subject to criteria established by the WELMEC Committee.

(B) The WELMEC Committee is charged with ensuring that specific tasks are pursued in accordance with the objectives of WELMEC. The Committee consists of:

- one Delegate representing each of the Member and Associate Member authorities;
- representatives of the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Secretariat;
- observers from:
  - EUROMET;
  - the European cooperation for Accreditation (EA);
  - the Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale (OIML); and
  - other regional cooperations with an interest in legal metrology.

Each Delegate, with the agreement of the Chairman, may be accompanied at Committee meetings by one or more observers. The Chairman may also invite observers from other appropriate organizations.

(C) The WELMEC Committee shall meet at least once each year. The Committee shall decide its own rules of procedure. The Committee shall elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman from its Member Delegates for a period of three years. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman may be re-elected for one further period of three years. The authority of which the Chairperson is a delegate may, if it so wishes, appoint an additional delegate to WELMEC Committee meetings.

(C1) The WELMEC Secretariat is responsible for carrying out or monitoring (as appropriate) the decisions of the Committee. The authority of which the Chairman is a delegate will normally supply the Secretariat. The Committee may approve alternative arrangements for the maintenance of a Secretariat following a recommendation from the Chairman.

(D) An authority on behalf of whom this Memorandum has been signed may invite other relevant bodies from its country to participate in the activities of WELMEC and shall monitor their participation.

(E) WELMEC also recognises European trade associations (of manufacturers or users of measuring instruments) as Corresponding Organisations. These



organisations are kept informed of all WELMEC discussions, decisions, and activities, but are not entitled to attend WELMEC Committee meetings.

## **SECTION 2 - OBJECTIVES**

- (i) to develop and maintain mutual confidence between legal metrology services in Europe,
- (ii) to achieve and maintain the equivalence and harmonisation of legal metrology activities taking into account the relevant guidelines,
- (iii) to identify any special features of legal metrology which need to be reflected in the European metrology, certification and testing framework,
- (iv) to organise the exchange of information for legal metrology applied at national and local level,
- (v) to identify, and promote the removal of, technical or administrative barriers to trade in the field of measuring instruments,
- (vi) to promote consistency of interpretation and application of normative documents and propose actions to facilitate implementation,
- (vii) to identify specific technical problems which might form the subject of collaborative projects,
- (viii) to maintain working links with all relevant bodies and promote the infrastructure relating to harmonisation of legal metrology,
- (ix) to debate trends and establish criteria for the scope of legal metrology and maintain channels for a continuous flow of knowledge.

## **SECTION 3- RIGHTS**

In order to achieve the objectives of WELMEC, each Member and Associate Member shall have the following rights:

- (A) to request information on the operation of the other participating authorities,
- (B) to participate in expert working group meetings organised on behalf of WELMEC (only representatives of full Members may chair Working Groups),
- (C) to participate in WELMEC interlaboratory test comparisons and if appropriate to organise such exercises,
- (D) to request reports and results of pattern evaluation, compliance assessment and verification relating to measuring instruments.

## **SECTION 4 - OBLIGATIONS**

Each Member and Associate Member commits itself to the pursuance of the objectives of WELMEC. In particular the obligations of each of these authorities are:

- (A) to make available to other participants in WELMEC activities on reasonable request its current non-confidential working documents, details of new improvements introduced and its annual report,
- (B) to promote the acceptance of recognised styles of certificate:

- (C) to preserve the confidentiality of type approval reports, test results, and other confidential information supplied by another Member or Associate Member.

## **SECTION 5 - VALIDITY OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

- (A) The Memorandum of Understanding shall immediately come into operation. It shall remain open for signature on behalf of national legal metrology authorities of other states within the European Union and the European Free Trade Association.
- (B) This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time by arrangement between the Members, subject to there being dissent by no more than one fourth of them.
- (C) If an authority on behalf of whom this Memorandum has been signed, for any reason whatever, intends to terminate its participation in this Memorandum of Understanding, the authority shall notify the Chairman of the WELMEC Committee of its intention not later than three months beforehand.
- (D) This Memorandum of Understanding is of an exclusively recommendatory nature. It does not create any binding legal effect on the authorities on behalf of whom this Memorandum has been signed.

## **Annex 2: Signatories of the WELMEC Memorandum of Understanding**

**Austria** Bundesamt für Eich- und Vermessungswesen, Vienna  
**Belgium** Administration of Quality and Security, Brussels  
**Bulgaria** State Agency for Metrology and Technical Surveillance, Sofia  
**Cyprus** Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of the Republic of Cyprus, Lefkosia  
**Czech Republic** Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing, Prague  
**Denmark** Danish Agency for Trade and Industry, Copenhagen  
**Estonia** Technical Inspectorate of Estonia, Tallinn  
**Finland** Safety Technology Authority, Helsinki  
**France** Sous-direction de la Métrologie, Paris  
**Germany** Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, Braunschweig  
**Greece** Ministry of Development, Athens  
**Hungary** Országos Mérésügyi Hivatal, Budapest  
**Iceland** Löggildingarstofa, Reykjavik  
**Ireland** Legal Metrology Service, National Standards Authority of Ireland, Dublin  
**Italy** Ministero industria e commercio, Rome  
**Latvia** Latvian National Metrology Center, Riga  
**Lithuania** State Metrology Service, Vilnius  
**Luxembourg** Direction des Contributions Directes et des Accises, Luxembourg  
**Malta** Malta Standards Authority, Valletta  
**Netherlands** Ministry of Economic Affairs, Den Haag  
**Norway** Norwegian Metrology and Accreditation Service, Oslo  
**Poland** Główny Urząd Miar, Warsaw  
**Portugal** Instituto Portugues da Qualidade, Lisbon  
**Romania** The Romanian Bureau of Legal Metrology, Bucharest  
**Slovakia** Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing, Bratislava  
**Slovenia** Metrology Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Celje  
**Spain** Centro Español de Metrologia, Madrid  
**Sweden** SWEDAC, Borås  
**Switzerland** Swiss Federal Office of Metrology, Wabern  
**United Kingdom** National Weights & Measures Laboratory, Teddington

## **Annex 2a: Associate Members of WELMEC**

**Turkey** Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ankara  
**FYROM** Bureau of Metrology  
**Serbia** Directorate of Measures and Precious Metals  
**Montenegro** Bureau of Metrology  
**Bosnia and Herzegovina** Institute of Metrology of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Albania** General Directorate of Metrology  
**Croatia** State Office of Metrology