



CEN-CENELEC ‘New Normal’ meeting Guidelines

Recommendations for an effective virtual, hybrid or Face-to-Face meeting

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1. Background

CEN and CENELEC strive to improve the flexibility, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of standardization processes, also supported by the use of technology. The use of virtual platforms as a sole solution for the continuity of many activities during the pandemic has fostered the digital transformation as well as users' knowledge of the IT tools. In this regard, in April 2020, CEN and CENELEC provided 'Guidelines for remote participation in meetings'.

This document provides complimentary information to the 'Guidelines for remote participation in meetings'. It includes recommendations for an effective meeting, whether face-to-face, virtual or hybrid, and intends to help technical committees, bodies and working groups to select the proper meeting mode.

This is a living document and if required will be revised taking into consideration the experience gained and feedback received.

2. Meeting modes

Three main meeting modes are described in these Guidelines:

Face-to-Face meeting (F2FM): either all or most participants are attending physically.

NOTE Exceptions can be considered for the observers, CCMC project managers ... who attend the meeting remotely.

Virtual meeting (VRM): all participants are attending remotely.

Hybrid meeting (HYM): a combination of certain participants attending physically and other participants attending remotely.

These definitions of the meetings modes apply to all committees or plenaries, working groups, project teams, ad hoc groups, advisory groups, etc.

3. Planning a meeting

3.1 General

In order to conduct an effective meeting, in this section, some recommendations are provided to both meeting leaders and participants.

3.2 Selecting a meeting mode

The group leaders should propose a meeting mode that is the most appropriate (taking into account the meeting goal, travel cost, technical equipment, ability of participants to travel ...). The selected meeting mode should be communicated not later than eight weeks before the meeting (in line with the deadline for circulation of the draft agenda in [CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations – Part 2](#), section 12.4.1).

3.3 General considerations for the different meeting modes

3.3.1 Recommendations for Face-to-Face meetings (F2FM)

- The group leaders should check if the TC members/WG experts are in favour of a F2FM and have the means to participate physically. If not possible, group leaders should consider a VRM or HYM.
- The group may find it crucial to schedule a F2FM when it is important for the group members to meet in person, e.g. the first meeting of a new group.
- If participants are not able to travel due to a force majeure¹, they should inform the group leaders as soon as possible.

3.3.2 Recommendations for all online meetings (Virtual or Hybrid)

Some considerations are common for both remote (VRM) and hybrid (HYM) online meetings. They are discussed below.

For the group leaders and hosts:

Before the meeting, the group leaders are recommended to do the following:

- Prepare the meeting access code and circulate it to all the participants.
For CEN only: add the meeting access code in the CEN Meeting Management tool.
- Circulate the meeting agenda including the following:
 - o the option to participate remotely,
 - o a list of all items for decision,
 - o an executive summary/expected outcome for each agenda item.
- Make efforts to accommodate the remote participants with regard to their time zones.
- Circulate these Guidelines to the TC members/WG experts.
- Foresee a moment to introduce the first-time participants to the rest of the group.
- Allocate different responsibilities before the meeting, to support the group leaders during the online meeting. For example, discuss who will:
 - o manage raised hands queue/other reactions,
 - o capture the discussions in the chat,
 - o keep minutes of the discussions.
- Consider additional measures such as break-out rooms, to support the consensus building.

A good preparation is necessary to properly manage an online meeting. To this end, the group leaders can follow the below recommendations:

- Enter into the remote meeting tool (i.e. Teams, Zoom) as host, 15 minutes before the meeting.
- Internally, prior to the meeting, test your equipment and facilities in order to ensure you master all basic technical requirements.

¹ Any circumstances such as new government travel restrictions, natural disasters, an energy blackout, strikes ... are considered as Force Majeure. Personal matters are not considered as Force Majeure.

- Ensure that those participating remotely are authorized individuals and that their attendance is noted in the attendance sheet.
- Ensure that a Roll Call is conducted at the beginning of the meeting so that everyone knows who is participating remotely and physically when applicable (including the name of each participant, as well as the NSB, NC or organization that s/he is representing).
- Take care of the signs (raised hand, etc.) from the remote participants and request the remote participants to comment appropriately.
- Make time at the beginning of the meeting (or preferably prior to the actual meeting) to make sure everybody is familiar with the meeting procedure. For example, remind participants of the following:
 - o The recording of the meetings is acceptable provided that at the outset of the meeting all participants are made aware that the meeting will be recorded and there are no objections. Individual participants shall have the right to require that the recording is switched off during a particular intervention if s/he desires. Such recordings are solely intended to aid the meeting secretary in preparing the minutes/report of the meeting and are not intended to be shared with the TC, WG or a third party.
 - o The meeting will continue even if the remote connection breaks.
 - o Every time they speak, individuals should start by identifying their name and the NSB, NC or organization they represent.
 - o Speakers are to speak one at a time, speak slowly, and be brief and clear.
 - o Just before a vote, the Chair will summarize the points on which participants are expected to vote.
 - o Those participating remotely should not require that the votes be revisited, for example in case of a faulty connection.

For the online participants:

- Register to the meeting to obtain the link needed to join the meeting.
- Use a computer, rather than a phone, in order to see the screen and the slides.
- Test your connection well in advance of the remote participation.
- Minimize distractions by closing your door, other web browsers and e-mail applications, and turn off your mobile phone.
- Store away wireless data devices, such as phones, because of the potential interference with the conference line.
- Make sure that you are connected to the meeting at the starting time of the meeting.
- Before the meeting, coordinate with your national representatives to select a communication plan to be used during the meeting, to avoid using the meeting chat (important for meetings with a large number of participants).
- During the meeting remain on mute, and if you wish to speak use the means communicated by the meeting leaders at the beginning of the meeting (raised hand button, write in the chat ...).
- Introduce yourself and the organization you are representing.
- Live captioning is possible in IT tools such as Teams, and it can be activated by the participants if needed.

3.3.3 Recommendations for virtual meetings (VRM)

Before the meeting, it is recommended that the group leader ensures all participants will join the meeting remotely. The recommendations from 3.3.2 are applicable here.

The duration of the remote meeting session is recommended to be no longer than 3 hours including a short break around midway into the meeting. Groups may choose not to have more than two sessions of 3 hours per day (maximum 6 hours).

It is also recommended to designate an acting convenor or chair, in case the group leader loses connection.

Depending on the available resources and the importance of the meeting, it can be recommended that the national delegations of an NC/NSB select a location to meet physically, and to connect to the virtual meeting together. This can strengthen the consensus building both at national and European levels.

3.3.4 Recommendations for hybrid meetings (HYM)

For the HYM, the needs of both physical and virtual participants should be carefully considered as much as possible in order to manage the meeting in a fair and equitable manner. In addition to 3.3.2, the following considerations are recommended:

- The host should have the necessary technical equipment to conduct a HYM.
- At least one of the group leaders (chair, convenor or secretary) is able to participate at the physical location of the HYM.
- Group leaders should ensure applying the same rules to remote participants and physical participants.
- The starting time and the duration of the meeting should be organized to accommodate, as much as possible, both virtual and physical participants' needs.
- Physical participation of the Heads of Delegations at the location of the HYM is recommended.

4. After the meeting

The group leader collects the relevant materials used during the meeting and shares them by correspondence with all participants.

In order to evaluate if the selected meeting mode was the appropriate mode, and to improve the efficiency of future meetings, the group leaders are invited to ask the participants for their feedback. Possible questions could include:

- Did you find the meeting mode appropriate?
- Was the meeting well conducted?
- Were group leaders well prepared?
- Was the meeting conducted in a fair and equitable manner with respect to both virtual and physical participants? (in case of a HYM)

- Did you (as an online participant) face any technical issues during the meeting?
- Do you have any recommendations?

5. Issuance of meeting notices, agendas and working documents

The rules defined in [CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations – Part 2](#), section 12.4.1 are applicable here for both technical body/committee meetings and working group meetings.

6. IT tools and relevant trainings

Active Chairpersons and their support teams, active Secretaries, Convenors, their Assistants, Acting Secretaries and support teams (TC, SC, WG level) are eligible to get a CEN-CENELEC Web Conferencing account in Zoom. Each person and their role need to be correctly registered in the ISO/CEN Global Directory or the IEC/Expert Management System.

The detailed steps to follow to request a **ZOOM** account can be found on our dedicated web page (see [Web Conference Services](#) section "**Web Conferencing account creation**").

Information on training materials and support is available directly from the CEN-CENELEC **ZOOM** portal (<https://cencenelec.zoom.us>) and from [Web Conference Services](#) web page.

See also [CEN-CENELEC Quick Help](#) to **Zoom** meetings.