Eurocodes
Background and Applications
“Standardization and Innovation : the Eurocodes”
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EUROCODES : part of the European standardization family for the construction sector

✔ as design standards for construction
✔ at the service of the implementation of the CPD
  • as being the standards providing presumption of conformity with ER1 and partially ER2 (resistance to fire)
  • as supporting standards for structural and load bearing construction products
INNOVATION (ultimately) is about:

- Survival
- Growth
- Profitability

effects in the two directions
Some mechanisms through which standards affect innovation:

- **STANDARDS**
  - Provide a clear and stable framework, reducing uncertainty and increasing trust and assurance between suppliers and customers (R&D and Innovation expenses)
  - Facilitate access to bigger markets (growth)
Increase competition in open markets (competitive pressure is necessary to maintain the incentive to innovate ↔ survival)

Facilitate cooperation between companies (in particular in R&D)

Induce economies of scale through increased size of companies (profitability & growth)

Induce specialisation in the bigger markets (survival, growth, profitability)
Achieving the european market for:

- **Engineering companies & architects**: Eurocodes provide a common design tool for the whole European Economic Area thereby guarantying their free movement within this area, increasing competition and cooperation and then contributing to the efficient functioning of the Internal Market. Effects on promoting and diffusing Innovation are obvious.

- **Construction companies**: same market effects. Traditionally protected construction markets will progressively become open and the important benefits of the single market will extend to the construction sector.
✓ Facilitating access to third country markets:
  • The European dimension of the market increases the third countries interest for the european solutions and gives Europe an increased power in market access negotiations.

✓ Providing a common legal interface for public procurements in Europe:
  • By the fact that they are european standards, Eurocodes must be accepted as the reference standards for the design solutions for all public works in Europe (public markets represent around 50% of the total construction business in Europe).
Conclusion:
Economic analysis shows that Eurocodes constitute an important factor for economy and innovation in Europe.
• The first objective of Eurocodes is SAFETY
• Solutions provided by Eurocodes must be the highest Technical level such that they guarantee the highest level of safety in construction.
• The survival of Eurocodes will only be possible if this requirement is fulfilled.
• The pyramidal structure of the work for elaborating the Eurocodes involves the most competent specialists in Europe, working in close cooperation. The result is the best codes in the world.
• Eurocodes have to remain open to the competition of other codes: this is an important condition for innovation and dynamic adaptation to technical and scientific progress.

⇒ Eurocodes have to preserve the voluntary nature of standards.
• Continuous dialogue between scientists and practitioners is essential for the maintenance of Eurocodes at the top level of the technology. In this dialogue, regular meetings like the one of today play an important role.
Conclusions

1. Commission is convinced that the Eurocodes play and will continue playing a decisive role in guarantying safety in construction. Recommends MS to fully integrate them in their national building codes.

2. Commission is also convinced of the important role of Eurocodes in achieving the Internal Market for architects and for construction companies and of their significant effects on innovation in these areas.

3. The role of Eurocodes in giving engineers, architects and construction companies access to third country markets is also very important.

4. For these reasons the Commission, in particular, DG ENTR and JRC, are committed to support further development and the necessary maintenance of the Eurocodes and encourage MS to do the same.

5. The dialogue within the scientific community including practitioners must be maintained and promoted. In this dialogue, CEN should play a central role with the support of the Commission and of the MS.
Thank you for your attention

More info on the Eurocodes on the Europa site of the European Commission

and on the dedicated site of the Joint Research Centre (JRC)
http://eurocodes.jrc.ec.europa.eu