



EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

Brussels, 6 October 2010

CE marking makes Europe's market yours. We often see the "CE marking" on some of the products we buy, but what does it really mean? Under the slogan "CE marking makes Europe's market yours!", the European Commission and EFTA are carrying out an information campaign on CE marking. The marking signals that a product is in compliance with all relevant EEA legislation, making it eligible to be marketed and sold throughout the EEA. By affixing the CE marking on a product, a manufacturer is declaring, on his sole responsibility, conformity with all relevant legal requirements, in particular those which ensure health, safety, and environmental protection. Legal and economic repercussions of non-conformity abuses are so great that it will deter the vast majority of legitimate businesses from not respecting these laws. This campaign is directed primarily to economic operators, to raise their awareness and understanding of CE marking.

Industry and Entrepreneurship Commissioner, Vice-President Antonio Tajani said: "We need to boost the visibility of and public trust in the CE marking. Our campaign aims to promote a better understanding of the meaning behind the marking and the purpose of its use. However, this confidence is also dependent on the reliability of the system on which the CE mark is based. Thus it will boost consumer's confidence and benefit producers and distributors."

Not all products sold in the EEA **need to bear CE marking**. It applies to approximately 23 different product categories, such as toys, electrical products, machinery, personal protective equipment and lifts.

CE marking does not indicate that a product was made in the EEA, but merely states that the **product is assessed before** it is placed on the market and therefore satisfies the legislative requirements (e.g. a harmonised safety level). It means that the manufacturer has verified that the product complies with all relevant essential requirements (e.g. health and safety requirements) of the applicable directive(s), or had it examined by a notified conformity assessment body.

For products manufactured in the EEA, it is the **manufacturer's responsibility** to carry out the conformity assessment, to set up the technical file, to issue the EC declaration of conformity and to affix CE marking on a product. Distributors must verify the presence of both the CE marking and the necessary supporting documentation. For products imported from a third country, the importer has to verify that the manufacturer outside the EEA has undertaken the necessary steps and that the documentation is available upon request.

The CE marking is also relevant to Switzerland and Swiss economic operators in accordance with the rules established in the bilateral agreement on mutual recognition of conformity assessment between the Swiss Confederation and the European Community.

The CE marking makes life easier for enterprises and national authorities:

- For **European industry**, the marking provides enterprises with access to the entire single market without having to acquire 30 individual approvals from national authorities, thereby reducing the cost and burden of conformity while maintaining high standards.
- For **national authorities**, it facilitates controls to be handled by each agency at a time when the range of goods available on the EEA market is growing exponentially, without compromising standards.

However, **strengthening the control** of notified bodies and **improving market surveillance** is improving the reputation of CE marking and increasing consumers' trust.

With the entry into force of the revised internal market package of legislation for goods, the role and credibility of CE marking has been reinforced.

The procedures, measures and sanctions applying to counterfeiting/abuse of CE marking are laid down in the respective Member States' national administrative and penal laws. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, economic operators may be liable to a fine and in some circumstances, imprisonment. However, if the product is not regarded as an imminent safety risk, the manufacturer may be given a second opportunity to ensure that the product is in conformity with the applicable legislation, before being obliged to take the product off the market.

The communication campaign consists of, among other initiatives, thirty CE marking educational events/seminars for economic operators, professional associations, consumers' associations and journalists.

For more information:

- [MEMO/10/257](#)
 - <http://www.ec.europa.eu/cemarking>
 - [Agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment](#)
-