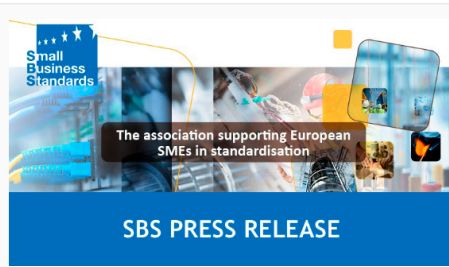


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Brussels, 9 March 2020

## Textile services: SBS calls for the implementation of circularity principles in standardisation and public procurement

Renting textiles is a sustainable alternative to owning textiles or using disposable products. SBS has published a position paper asking to introduce circular economy principles in standards and public procurement to support sustainable business models in the textile services industry. This is in line with the principles of a circular economy and the European Commission Green Deal.

The textile services sector is an industry driven by SMEs where local and regional players supply, clean and redistribute textiles, workwear and protective clothing to a variety of sectors. This includes, for example, corporate business wear, restaurant and hotel linen, surgical gowns and hospital linen or hand-drying towels, etc.

A circular economy aims to retain as much value as possible for as long as possible in the economy. The aim is to allow for the long life, optimal reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling of products and materials. The principles of reuse, repair and recycling are at the core of the textile services sector business model. This business model is based on these products having a long lifespan and being re-processable as often as possible.

This month, SBS published a position paper asking for European legislation, standardisation and public procurement to support sustainable business models for the personal protective equipment and textile care industry. They should be designed to support the move towards the circular economy and the objectives of the EU Green Deal.

European legislation in the areas of Personal Protective Equipment (Regulation (EU) 2016/425) and Medical Devices (Regulation (EU) 2017/745) focus on health and safety requirements. Both pieces of legislation foresee the development of voluntary harmonised standards to support businesses to comply with the requirements of the legislation. So far, no circular economy principles have been integrated into European standards supporting the application of these pieces of legislation, missing the opportunity to promote more sustainable business models. SBS calls for European standards to support the move to more sustainable business models by introducing product requirements related to reuse, reprocessing, reparability and recyclability. This would encourage value chains to develop products designed and fitted for a circular use.

Andreas Schumacher, Managing Director of the German textile cleaning association and SBS Board member, added: "Our efforts to ensure that circular economy aspects are considered to a greater extent in standards have so far proven impossible because the standards committees often have a very narrow technical perspective. With this paper, we hope to raise awareness and drive change."

SBS is also asking for public procurement processes to include more elements of circularity. Procurement processes focused on price and services do not consider the costs associated with the limited lifecycle of some products or the environmental costs and loss of resources along production chains. Protective clothing or disposable surgical drapes and gowns that cannot be re-processed properly consume much more natural resources.

The SBS position paper can be accessed through the following [webpage](#).

\*\*\*END\*\*\*

**EDITORS' NOTES:** Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process. SBS is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA.

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