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Brussels, 7 October 2020

SBS launches an SME compatibility test for standards

Brussels, 7 October 2020 – Small Business Standards (SBS), the association representing European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in standardisation, is launching today the SME Compatibility Test for Standards. The online test, accessible from SBS website, can be used by any standard maker who wish to assess the SME-compatibility of a standard.

This assessment, eagerly anticipated by the association's network and partners, is a historic first in the field of standardisation as it allows standards writers to measure the compatibility of standards with SME needs.

Built on CEN-CENELEC Guide 17, Guidance for writing standards taking into account micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) needs, the SME Compatibility Test for Standards is the result of a collaboration between SBS, its members and experts who worked assiduously the past years at cobbling together a methodology. The test should be the starting point for possible improvements to a standard if it appears that it imposes undue obstacles to smaller businesses.

The aim is to rank standards into broad groups, namely standards qualified as 'good' which require little or no adjustment, 'average' which would benefit from revision, and 'poor' which cause substantial challenges for SMEs, and thus require urgent improvement.

The SME Compatibility Test can be performed at any stage of the process of the development of a standard (enquiry, approval, etc.) and on any type of standards regardless of the source, i.e. international (ISO and IEC), European (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI) or national.

Commenting on the launch of the test, SBS Director Maitane Olabarria said, "SMEs is the category of businesses which can potentially benefit from standards the most. Nevertheless, they do not always have a strong voice in standardisation which may lead to standards not meeting their needs or even placing disproportionate burdens on them. The SME Compatibility Test is a significant step for SBS as it offers a concrete tool to assess standards from the SME perspective." She added that "making standards more SME-compatible can only lead to a better uptake of standards amongst smaller businesses."

>> [SME Compatibility Test for Standards](#)

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EDITORS' NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in standardisation. SBS is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA. Its 21 members are national and European sectoral and inter-professional associations representing SMEs in 32 European countries.

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