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### Digital transformation and resource efficiency among top priority topics for SMEs in standardisation

Brussels, 10 January 2022 – According to a study carried out by Small Business Standards (SBS), topics related to digital transformation, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Building Information Modelling (BIM) or cybersecurity, and to sustainability, such as ecodesign and resource efficiency, are among the top ten priority topics of standardisation for European SMEs.

SBS just published the results of a study conducted by [Knowledge](#) on its behalf to identify priority standardisation sectors and topics of relevance to European SMEs. Considering the variety of sectors in which SMEs are involved and the increasing number of European and international standards developed or revised each year, it is essential to identify the core strategic topics for SMEs. The results will allow SBS to focus its activities, which aim at raising SMEs' awareness about standards and their participation in standardisation at the European and international levels, in the next years.

The criteria used to rank SMEs' priority areas included factors such as whether standards are being used to support EU policies and legislation, the relevance of the sector and topic in view of the presence of SMEs, the added value and employment generated by SMEs or the relevance in relation to the 14 recovery ecosystems identified by the European Commission.

The top five priority sectors identified by the study are construction (and the mining and metal industries used for construction products), mechanical and machinery, ICT, transport and textiles and fashion. At the top of the priority topics list feature digital transformation, BIM, AI, cybersecurity, smart houses and domotics, along with ecodesign and resource efficiency.

Another conclusion of the study is that some horizontal standardisation activities may produce 'collateral damage' for SMEs in certain sectors if not properly followed-up. It therefore advises SBS to pursue its efforts in following horizontal standardisation activities related to management systems standards, accessibility, circular or data-driven economy.

The study confirms the important role of SBS and other industry associations in representing SMEs' interests in standardisation, especially at the European and international levels. Nevertheless, SMEs are still considered to be underrepresented. SBS currently counts more than 60 experts participating in Technical Committees at the European (CEN, CENELEC, ETSI) and international (ISO, IEC) levels and follows approximately 500 work items. The results of the analysis show that SBS' current funding would have to more than double to be able to cover the additional top priority sectors and the European Commission standardisation requests issued to develop standards in support of EU policies and legislation.

The study can be found via the following [link](#).

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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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