



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

## ABOUT SBS

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Small Business Standards (SBS) is a European non-profit association (AISBL) co-financed by the European Commission and the EFTA Member States.

Its goal is to represent the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the standardisation process at the European and international levels. In addition, SBS aims to raise awareness among SMEs of the benefits brought by the use of standards and to encourage them to get involved in the standardisation process.

SBS represents the interests of over 10 million SMEs through 21 SME organisations.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I am pleased to present this annual report for the year 2020, a very turbulent year from a business perspective.

2020 was marked by one phenomenon which dominated the news worldwide: the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this situation, physical meetings and events were cancelled, and the safety measures implemented to limit the spread of the virus forced organisations and employees to adapt to new ways of working. Despite the climate of uncertainty caused by the health situation and the radical changes (due to lockdowns or quarantines), many SMEs have demonstrated their flexibility and have successfully adapted during the crisis.

The COVID-19 crisis has helped to raise awareness about the importance of standards. Standards played an important role for those SMEs that, seeing the shortage in supply of products such as medical devices or masks, decided to convert their manufacturing installations to meet the growing demand for these products.

Despite all these difficulties, SBS was able to adapt to the situation and to pursue its mission. 2020 marked an important change in the secretariat. In January, Maitane Olabarria was appointed as the new Director of the association. We congratulate her for having successfully steered SBS through an exceptional period marked by COVID.

Finally, 2020 also saw the official launch of the eagerly anticipated SME Compatibility Test for Standards. The assessment is a historic first in the field of standardisation, as it allows standards writers to measure the compatibility of standards with SMEs' needs.

There is still a long way to go towards the full consideration of SMEs' interests in the standardisation process. However, we can be proud of the efforts and achievements of the team and experts, the continuous support of our members, and the fruitful collaboration with our partners and the different stakeholders. While this remains a challenging period, we will continue to work intensively towards this goal in the coming months and years.

## KEY FIGURES

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**68** experts



Covering **234** TCs and WGs



**598** participants at SBS events



**8** position papers



**962** newsletter recipients



**933** Twitter followers  
**293** LinkedIn followers

# HIGHLIGHTS

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- **SME participation in technical standardisation work**

## Expert meetings

In 2020, SBS appointed 68 experts to more than 200 Technical Committees and Working Groups of CEN, CENELEC, ETSI, ISO and IEC. SBS regularly organises meetings among these experts. The aim is to allow them to share their experiences, train them and provide updates on relevant standardisation and policy developments. Meetings took place on 11 and 12 February and on 21 October. During these meetings, experts discussed the SME Compatibility Test and the circular economy, among other issues. Many external speakers were invited, including CEN-CENELEC, ETSI, ISO and the European Commission.



## **SME Compatibility Test for Standards**

On 7 October, SBS launched the [SME Compatibility Test](#) for Standards. The test is available online and can be used by any standard maker who wishes to assess the SME-compatibility of a standard.

### **Success story: India adopts oneM2M as a nationwide standard for IoT**

On 21 October, India's Telecom Engineering Centre officially adopted oneM2M specifications as national standards for the IoT/machine-to-machine (M2M) ecosystem in India. Through the work of SBS and its expert Massimo Vanetti, the perspective of SMEs is strongly reflected in oneM2M's technical specifications. Mr Vanetti also advocated the adoption of the standard on several occasions. The adoption of oneM2M is a great opportunity to access the Indian market for European SMEs who have worked with the standard for years.

- **SBS welcomes new member**

On 23 June, [Coiffure EU](#) became an official member of SBS. Coiffure EU, founded in 2005 in Frankfurt (Germany), protects and supports the hairdressing sector at the European level.

- **Engagement with standardisation bodies**

#### **CEN-CENELEC SME Working Group and ETSI 3SI Programme**

SBS participated in the SME Working Group meeting that took place on 3 February. During the meeting, the terms of reference of the group were discussed and SBS presented its main activities for 2020.

SBS continued its participation in the ETSI Societal Stakeholder Support and Inclusiveness (3SI) Programme. In this context, ETSI set up an automatic notification to Annex III organisations, including SBS, whenever a draft EN standard is in its final stage. This allows SBS to consult its members and make comments before the final approval.

### **SBS meets CEN, CENELEC and ETSI director generals**

SBS had the opportunity to meet the CEN-CENELEC Director General, Elena Santiago, and the ETSI Director General, Luis Jorge Romero, in March and July respectively. During the meetings, there were discussions about the general cooperation between ETSI, CEN and CENELEC and SBS, and about possible initiatives to support SMEs.

### **CEN-CENELEC Strategy 2030**

SBS contributed to the CEN-CENELEC consultation on their draft Strategy 2030, which was approved in January 2021. The strategy outlines the common vision, goals and objectives for CEN and CENELEC in the coming years.

### **SBS representatives elected to ETSI vice-chair and board positions**

On 1 December, SBS expert Massimo Vanetti was elected as Vice-Chair of the ETSI General Assembly and SBS member Sebastiano Toffaletti was re-elected as a member of the ETSI Board. These decisions will ensure that adequate SME representation at ETSI continues for the next mandate period.

- **Contribution to European policies and regulations**

#### **Committee on Standards and Annual Union Work Programme**

In 2020, SBS continued its active participation in the Committee on Standards. It also contributed with comments to the Annual Union Work Programme of the Commission for 2021. SBS commented on several of the future standardisation requests (e.g., the future requests under the Radio Equipment Directive, lifts, and safety of children's clothing under the General Product Safety Regulation). SBS also raised the need to work on standardisation around platform interoperability and data portability to ensure a competitive digital environment and aftersales and repairs market.



## Position papers

In 2020, SBS published eight [position papers](#). These papers covered horizontal topics such as [standardisation and conformity assessment in the context of the future UK-EU relationship negotiations](#) and the position of SBS on [ISO 26000 on social responsibility](#), as well as sector-specific topics (see section below).

- **Sectoral activities**



## Construction

The activities in the construction sector focused on the follow-up and contribution to the consultations regarding the review of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR). In this context, SBS continued to represent the interests of SMEs in relevant EC committees/groups. These include the Commission Group on the CPR Acquis, the Advisory Group on Construction, the Standing Committee on Construction, the Expert Group on Dangerous Substances, the Construction Products Advisory Group of Notified Bodies and the CPR Administrative Cooperation Group.

SBS also contributed to technical groups such as the European Organisation for Technical Assistance (EOTA) Advisory Group, the CEN Sector Forum for Construction and the CEN/CENELEC BT WG 9 “Strategy for the construction sector”.

The SBS Construction Forum took place on 20 October to discuss the revision of the CPR and digital tools to support environmental performance declaration for construction products and works.



Position papers in this sector were published on the [use of propiconazole in wood](#) and the [future of the standardisation system within the CPR](#)





## Information and communication technologies (ICT)

SBS replied to the public consultation on the eIDAS Regulation launched by the Commission in July and developed a position paper on the regulation.

The SBS ICT Forum took place on 28 September. During this event, participants discussed policies, norms and standards relating to Artificial Intelligence.

SBS continued with its participation in the Multi-Stakeholder Platform (MSP) on ICT standardisation. In 2020 it provided input for the Rolling Plan for ICT Standardisation 2020 and its COVID-19 addendum.



Position papers in this sector were published on the [data economy](#) and the [EU Cybersecurity Act](#).



## Lifts

On 3 and 11 November, SBS organised a two-day seminar on lift standardisation. During the seminar, participants discussed the current revision by CEN TC10 of the EN81 standards series, SME participation in the standardisation process and how to support this participation.

The 2020 edition of the SBS Lift Forum took place on 3 December on the topic of workplace safety in the lift industry. The aim of the event was to inform lift SMEs about national and European initiatives regarding safety in the workplace and explain how standardisation can help overcome some of the challenges.

### Success story - ETSI Technical Report on smart lifts

The ETSI TR 103 546 “SmartM2M; Requirements & Feasibility study for Smart Lifts in IoT” was published in 2020. The report, which was developed with the extensive contribution of an SBS expert, was the first step in the development of European standards in this area. Such standards are important for SMEs, as they allow them to access the information needed to provide the same services as large multinational companies.



### Personal protective equipment (PPE) and textile care

In 2020, SBS continued its active participation in the CEN PPE Sector Forum, the CEN-CENELEC Advisory Board for Healthcare Standards and relevant Commission groups such as the Commission Working Group (WG) on PPE and the WG on Medical Devices.

On 20 October, the SBS Forum on PPE and Textile Care discussed ways in which the PPE sector could be strengthened through a circular economy. Speakers presented the recent developments in this area, and looked for solutions on how to secure local supply chains with reusable PPE and how to implement circular economy aspects into standardisation.

Following the PPE supply shortages that hit Europe hard during the COVID-19 crisis, SBS published the position paper “Personal Protective Equipment during the coronavirus crisis and beyond”. The paper asked for measures to strengthen Europe’s PPE manufacturers, in order to provide an effective response to the current coronavirus crisis and any possible future crises.



Position papers in this sector were published on [PPE during the coronavirus crisis](#) and on the importance of [supporting sustainable business models for the PPE and textile care industry through legislation and standards](#).

- **Awareness-raising, visibility and communication**

### Seminar on the best practices to involve SMEs in standardisation

On 21 February, SBS organised the fourth edition of the SBS Twinning Seminar, with the support of SMEUnited. Speakers included the Belgian Bureau for Standardisation, the Royal Netherlands Standardization Institute and the Institut Luxembourgeois de la Normalisation, which shared good practices for involving SMEs in standardisation.



### Annual conference

On 29 September, SBS organised its first virtual annual conference. The conference addressed the challenges and opportunities of the data economy for SMEs. The event was an opportunity to discuss several of the points in the SBS position paper on the data economy, which sought to respond to the EU’s consultation on the European strategy for data and the white paper on artificial intelligence.

### World Standards Day video

This year’s World Standards Day (14 October) was dedicated to the topic “Standards to protect the planet”. For this occasion, SBS produced a video composed of interviews with a series of its members.





## Practical guides for SMEs

With a view to providing SMEs with all kinds of general information on standardisation, its processes, the benefits of standards, how to get involved in the drafting process and the different contact points, SBS developed a brochure entitled "[A practical guide for SMEs - Why standards matter and how to get involved](#)".

As part of its activities within the ICT sector, SBS also published a [guide on industrial IoT](#), focusing on security issues to help SMEs during their digital transformation. The goal is to raise awareness within SME management about the importance of IoT and security standards for their businesses.

## National seminars in Sweden and Slovenia

SBS organised two awareness seminars with the objective of informing local SMEs about standards and fostering an exchange of views between SMEs and the relevant national standards bodies. The first seminar was hosted by Företagarna, the Swedish business owners' federation, on 1 December, with support from SIS, the Swedish Institute for Standards and SEK Svensk Elstandard (electrical standardisation). Representatives from the furniture, electrical equipment and medical technology sectors shared first-hand experiences with standards. The second national seminar was held in Slovenia on 16 December with the support of the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia (OZS). The seminar provided examples from the wood sector and chimney sweeping services.



# MEMBERS

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**CMA France** | French Assembly of Craft Chambers [www.cma-france.fr](http://www.cma-france.fr)

**CAPEB** | French Confederation of Construction Craft and Small Enterprises [www.capeb.fr](http://www.capeb.fr)

**CNA** | Italian Confederation of the Craft Sector and Small and Medium Enterprises [www.cna.it](http://www.cna.it)

**COIFFURE EU** | European association of national employers' organisations in hairdressing [www.coiffure.eu](http://www.coiffure.eu)

**CONFARTIGIANATO IMPRESE** | Italian Confederation of the Craft Sector and Small and Medium Enterprises [www.confartigianato.it](http://www.confartigianato.it)

**CPME** | French Small and Medium-sized Employers' Organisation [www.cpme.fr](http://www.cpme.fr)

**DTV** | German Textile Care Association [www.dtv-bonn.de](http://www.dtv-bonn.de)

**EBC** | European Builders Confederation [www.ebc-construction.eu](http://www.ebc-construction.eu)

**ECAP** | European Consortium of Anchors Producers [www.ecap-sme.org](http://www.ecap-sme.org)

**EFESME** | European Federation for Elevator Small and Medium-sized Enterprises [www.efesme.org](http://www.efesme.org)

**EMM** | European Insulation Material (multifoil) Manufacturers

**EMU** | European Metal Union [www.emu-sme.eu](http://www.emu-sme.eu)

**European Digital SME Alliance** | European Association of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in ICT [www.digitalsme.eu](http://www.digitalsme.eu)

**IFD** | International Federation for the Roofing Trade [www.ifd-roof.com](http://www.ifd-roof.com)

**SME Safety** | European association of small and medium-sized enterprises that manufacture safety products [www.sme-safety.eu](http://www.sme-safety.eu)

**Timber Construction Europe** | European Timber Construction Association [www.timber-construction.eu](http://www.timber-construction.eu)

**Tischler Schreiner** | German Association of Wood Joiners [www.tischler-schreiner.de](http://www.tischler-schreiner.de)

**SMEunited** | European Association of Crafts and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises [www.smeunited.eu](http://www.smeunited.eu)

**UEG** | Union of European Scaffolding Companies [www.ueg-eu.org](http://www.ueg-eu.org)

**WKÖ** | Austrian Economic Chamber [www.wko.at](http://www.wko.at)

**ZDH** | German Association of Skilled Crafts [www.zdh.de](http://www.zdh.de)

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