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SBS' 10th anniversary year ends with a successful "Meeting Standards" campaign wrap-up

2023 marks a significant milestone for SBS: in October 2023, SBS hit its 10th anniversary. This anniversary is not only a cause for celebration but also a time to reflect on what the organisation has accomplished since its creation in 2013. If anything, it challenges us to envision an even greater outlook, an even greater dream. In this respect, [Meeting Standards](#) can be seen as a successful wrap-up of the work team's efforts which has been carried out throughout the years by the experts, members and partners of the SBS network.

Launched this year in spring, the campaign aims to rally SME representatives and standardisation stakeholders across Europe around SME standardisation topics and activities. By visiting meetinstandards.eu, any individual or organisation could submit a proposal for an activity aimed at raising the awareness of SMEs in Europe within the campaign's period which this year took place between 14 and 21 November 2023. Coinciding with the European SME week, this campaign significantly contributed to enhancing SME awareness about the crucial role of standards in Europe.

Different research projects ([STAND4EU](#), [HSB booster](#), [StandCT](#), [Blocksstand](#)), organisations ([COSMED](#), [EBC](#), [SMEunited](#)) and experts participated in the campaign by organising activities on a variety of standards-related topics such as blockchain technologies, smart manufacturing, cosmetics, AI, construction and the new Construction Products Regulation or innovation management.

The campaign kicked off with a [workshop](#) organised in the context of the SME Assembly in Bilbao dedicated to standards and their role in the 30 years of the EU single market. In parallel, SBS launched the ["Meeting Her Standards"](#) podcast highlighting the work of women in standardisation in various key sectors. The campaign continued with a [workshop](#) led by the Horizon Europe project STAND4EU, focusing on primary findings regarding the identified bottlenecks hampering standardisation efforts in some key SME areas. The same day, the [Standards Academy workshop](#) offered participants the opportunity to acquire knowledge and the skill set required for European standardisation stakeholders. On 16 November, a [workshop](#) was held to discuss the needs and difficulties of SMEs when using blockchain technologies and their related standards. In the afternoon, an information session was organised to explain the purpose of a Commission initiative called the ["EU Standardisation Panel Survey"](#). SBS was also glad to count COSMED among its Meeting Standards partners which organised a [seminar](#) about standards in the cosmetic industry. Furthermore, the [SBS Construction Forum](#), which recorded high attendance, was held on 20 November. The campaign ended on 21 November with SBS' flagship conference, a prime annual forum for discussing standardisation and related policies. This year's theme, ["SMEs and smart manufacturing – Standards as accelerators of industry change"](#), was especially relevant, reflecting the significant presence and importance of SMEs in Europe's manufacturing sector.

Thanks to the strong mobilisation of diverse collaborators, this initiative recorded more than 350 registered participants. As the campaign progressed, SBS engaged with an impressive 5000 SME and standardisation stakeholders across Europe through its different platforms and channels. SBS is already eager to extend and increase the impact of the event in November next year by achieving an even higher outreach.

Want to find out more or get involved?

- [Discover the 2023 edition activities](#)
- [Join us in November 2024 for the next edition of the campaign!](#)



SBS celebrates its 10th anniversary

On 14 December SBS organised a cocktail reception in Brussels to celebrate its 10 years of

existence and the achievements of the association contributing progressively to a more inclusive European standardisation system where the needs and interests of SMEs are properly considered.

SBS had the pleasure of welcoming DG GROW Deputy Head of Unit Standards Policy Mattias Bergdahl, CEN-CENELEC Director General Elena Santiago and ETSI Director Membership Development Claire Desclercs who delivered the keynote speeches stressing the important role and accomplishments of SBS.



SBS Construction Forum discusses digitalisation and sustainability

The [SBS Construction Forum](#) held on 20 November provided a crucial platform for industry stakeholders allowing them to delve into the ongoing revision of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR).

The discussions highlighted the impact of proposed changes emphasising the vital role of standards in navigating the dual transition toward environmental sustainability and the digitalisation of construction processes. The forum underscored the imperative for collaboration and understanding, especially acknowledging the need for inclusive approaches that ensure SMEs are adapting to these transformative shifts.

Speakers discussed the importance of SMEs preparing for these transformative changes and recommended minimising administrative burdens for a smoother transition. The event concluded with a resounding call for industry collaboration and a recognition of the connected nature of digitalisation and sustainability in shaping the future of construction.

The forum's outcomes stress the difficulties faced by SMEs in navigating these changes and the need for a supportive ecosystem. As the construction sector evolves, collaboration, understanding, and proactive preparation will be vital for ensuring a resilient and sustainable future for all stakeholders.



ETSI Board 2023-2026: SBS representative elected to represent SME voices

During their last General Assembly held on 28 and 29 November, members of the European Telecommunication Standards Institute (ETSI) elected the new Board for 2023-2026. Nominated by SBS, Justina Biellauskaitė was elected to the Board to represent user members of ETSI.

The representation of SBS in ETSI's Board aims to ensure a representation of smaller businesses in the ICT standardisation sector but it will also guarantee that ETSI remains open and democratic and build its strengths on core European values, as Ms Biellauskaitė stated after her election. Additionally, it is hoped that her nomination will encourage the interest of more female professionals in Europe to get involved in standardisation processes which are still highly dominated by men.



SBS meets high-level delegation of Vietnamese standards body

On 29 November, SBS received the visit of a high-level delegation of STAMEQ, the Directorate for Standards, Metrology and Quality of Vietnam. SBS had the opportunity to present its activities and the work of its experts representing SMEs' interests in European and international standardisation. SBS also outlined its policy priorities to increase the participation and impact of European SMEs in standardisation. Lastly, it provided an outline of the European legislative framework on standardisation and its position in the early stages of the evaluation of Regulation 1025/2012 on European standardisation. During the meeting, STAMEQ offered interesting views on the set up of the Vietnamese standardisation system and the challenges facing SMEs and discussed their participation at the ISO and IEC levels.



SBS Brochure "30 years of the single market: The role of standards in SME growth"

On the occasion of the 4th Meeting Standards workshop "Setting the standards for the single market"

On the occasion of the meeting standards workshop "Setting the standards for the single market: How to include SMEs" organised in the context of the SME Assembly in Bilbao, SBS released a new brochure celebrating the three decades of the EU single market. The brochure aims to highlight the pivotal role of European standardisation as a key driver of SME competitiveness and economic growth.

[Click here to discover our new brochure!](#)



The Vienna Agreement

The Vienna Agreement is the cooperation agreement between the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It was signed in 1991 and provides three main modes of cooperation between ISO and CEN.

- Cooperation by correspondence/exchange of information between CEN and ISO Technical Committees (TCs);
- Cooperation by mutual representation at meetings of ISO and CEN/TCs; and
- Cooperation by parallel approval of standards at the international and European levels, leading to the publication of common EN ISO standards.

The aim of the agreement is to avoid duplication of standardisation work whilst diminishing timeframes. Whenever appropriate, priority is given to cooperation with ISO provided that international standards meet European legislative and market requirements and that non-European global players also implement these standards. The Agreement's terms and specifications are further explained in the jointly developed Guidelines supporting the practical implementation of the Vienna Agreement.

Latest developments in standardisation

- [New CEN-CENELEC Joint Technical Committee \(JTC\) on Horizontal topics for PPE](#)

The creation of the CEN-CLC JTC on Horizontal topics for PPE was approved in August. It aims to deliver outcomes encompassing horizontal matters applicable to various types of PPE and not to produce specific product standards. The initial work program proposes four working groups: WG1 general, WG2 sustainability and circular economy, WG3 integrated smart elements and electronics, and WG4 dual function PPE. However, the horizontal JTC will discuss and finalise the structure after the first plenary in March 2024. The call for experts and the nominations for chair are ongoing.

- [SBS participation in CEN-CENELEC "Road towards Net Zero" workshop](#)

On 5 December, Petter Isaksson, CEO of Ahlins i Håbo AB, a Swedish SME active in the aluminium industry that implements innovative energy reuse and management methods in their production process, spoke on behalf of SBS in the "Road towards Net Zero" workshop organised by CEN, CENELEC and DKE (German Commission for Electrical, Electronic and Information Technologies). The presentation highlighted the importance and potential opportunities for energy-efficient production for SMEs.

- [New CEN/TC 474 on CO₂ capture, transportation, utilization, storage established](#)

In November, CEN/TC 474, a new technical committee (TC) on CO₂ capture, transportation, utilisation, storage (CCUS) and carbon accounting, was established. The new TC will reinforce the international standardisation work on this subject developed in ISO/TC 265. The new TC 474, whose secretariat will be managed by NEN (Dutch standardisation body), will hold its kick-off meeting on 5 and 6 February 2024.

- [New ISO/TC 347 on data-driven agrifood system established](#)

In November, ISO/TC 347, a new TC on data-driven agrifood systems was established. The TC aims at improving interoperability in the agricultural sector and focuses on areas such as agrisemantics; Sustainability models, metrics and data in agrifood systems; Livestock activities data management, Greenhouse, controlled environment, and urban farming. Standardisation areas already covered by ISO/TC 34 "Food Products" and ISO/TC 23 SC 19 "Agricultural Electronics" are excluded from the scope of the new TC, ISO/TC 347, whose secretariat will be held by DIN (German standardisation body), will start its activities in April 2024.

- [Proposal for a new ISO/TC on Cultural Heritage Conservation](#)

In November, SAC (Chinese standardisation body) submitted a proposal for the creation of a new ISO TC on Cultural Heritage Conservation. The scope of the new TC would be to pursue standardisation work in the areas of terminology, technologies, materials and equipment for monitoring, evaluation, preservation and restoration of tangible cultural heritage. Comments on the proposal can be submitted by ISO members until 30 January 2024.

Publication of new harmonised standards

- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2023/2752](#) of 7 December 2023 amending Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/941 as regards harmonised standards for mountaineering equipment, helmets for equestrian activities and gloves drafted in support of Regulation (EU) 2018/425 of the European Parliament and of the Council
- [Commission Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2023/2584](#) of 15 November 2023 on harmonised standards for the interoperability of the rail systems drafted in support of Directive (EU) 2016/797 of the European Parliament and of the Council

The latest list of harmonised standards referenced in the Official Journal including the consolidated list of references can be consulted on the [European Commission website](#).

LATEST POSITION PAPERS

- [SBS Position paper on the Green Claims Directive](#)



The SBS Secretariat wishes you a joyous holiday season and a very happy New Year!



Small Business Standards (SBS) is a European non-profit association established in 2013 with the support of the European Commission devoted to representing and defending Small and Medium-sized Enterprises' (SMEs) interests in the standardisation system at European and international levels. Its 22 members are national and European sectoral and inter-professional associations representing SMEs in 32 European countries.

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