

SBS Newsletter

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SBS holds its first European SME Seminar

SBS organised its first European seminar on standardisation for SMEs in Brussels on 1st July. The event brought together major stakeholders from the standardisation world as well as associations representing SMEs in the process, at European and national levels.

One of SBS' main missions is to enhance SMEs and national associations' involvement in the standardisation process. The aim being to familiarise SMEs with the benefits they can gain from using standards in their daily business life, e.g. reduce costs, better market access, ...



To do so, SBS invited the European Standardisation Organisations ([CEN](#), [CENELEC](#) and [ETSI](#)) and the European Commission, to present aspects of the standardisation mechanisms to member SME associations directly affected by standards usage.

Information topics discussed range from an overview of the European Standardisation System, its process and legislation to the existing support for SMEs as well as why it is important to attract SME representatives to standardisation.

The fundamental conclusion of the meeting was that *“if SMEs do not actively participate to the standardisation process, no one will do it for them”*. This was the common thread that emerged from the discussions, from the audience as well as from the speakers.

Standardisation is very important and can represent up to 1% GDP; this is essential at a time where trust in the market needs to be re-established.

SBS jointly organises French SME Seminar on standardisation

SBS jointly organised the French Seminar on awareness raising on standardisation with [APCMA](#) and in collaboration with [AFNOR](#), on 26th June in Paris. This first national seminar focused on fostering closer collaboration between organisations and SBS, increasing awareness of SBS activities towards SME organisations and broadening SMEs' use of standards as well as their access to the European Standardisation System through various collaborations. Indeed, the 27 participants – composed of sectoral standardisation bureaux, national authorities and SMEs organisations – exchanged views on SMEs issues as well as on specific cases (i.e. windows, ISO 90001 and the ongoing work for the benefit of SMEs). SBS Vice-President Gérard Bobier stressed the importance of standards and recognised that many SMEs are aware that standards are a source of growth and development. “However, standards must serve the actors and not the other way around,” he stated. Also, according to EU Head of Delegation in Paris, Anne Houtman, “SMEs are at the core of innovation and standards are a bridge between innovation and market access.”



While standards constitute a major opportunity for access to markets and innovation, taking into account the specific SME needs in standardisation work remains a priority. Through practical cases of construction products, and ISO 9001, participants identified the main difficulties for SMEs within the standardisation process as well as practises in place. Costs, insufficient provision of information and representativeness of the organisations are the major obstacles raised.

Questions about the alignment of SMEs' position in Technical Committees also came up. The SBS approach requiring each SBS expert to have an effective Mirror committee was very much appreciated. Mirror committee members receive information pertinent to their field of expertise so as to discuss and develop SME positions to then be presented by the SBS expert in the Technical Committee. Last but not least, this seminar put forward the fact that, in France, the system is still perfectible. However, many advantages exist such as the consultation forum for SMEs with [AFNOR \(CCNA\)](#), the relationships between standardisation bodies and SME business organisations and the tools for benefit of SMEs.

SBS holds its first expert training meeting

On 30th June, SBS organised its first training session for experts. The general objective of the meeting was to ensure that all experts had the opportunity to meet their SBS counterparts and align with SBS methodology in terms of 2014 strategy, composition and role within Technical committees.

The three European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) – [CEN](#), [CENELEC](#) and [ETSI](#) – provided an overview of the European Standardisation System and gave pragmatic input as regards access to TCs, to technical information and to SBS experts' activities.

The European Commission actively participated in the seminar, presenting Standardisation Policy to the experts. SBS' aim was to ensure a similar level of knowledge for all experts regarding the European Standardisation System, drafting procedures, as well as the importance of SME representatives in the drafting process of new and revised standards.



SBS as observer in Committee on Standards

On 20th June, SBS participated as observer in the 5th meeting of the Committee on Standards. This committee was set up pursuant to Article 22(1) of Regulation No 1025/2012 on European Standardisation. During the meeting, mandates were presented to Member States for voting, including those previously circulated for comments to SBS and the other Stakeholder Annex III Organisations. The EC also informed Member States on other forthcoming draft mandates on e-Invoicing, textile fibre names and labelling, privacy management of security technologies, on laser products, on alternative fuels infrastructure.

The meeting was also a unique opportunity as the European Commission provided information on the Revision of the Vademecum on European Standardisation. The handbook is a very important document that focuses on mandates and mandating processes. The European Commission is keen to finalise the Vademecum through completion with references to harmonised standards and the formal objection procedure in 2015.

Others issues raised were ‘Standardisation in the field of services’ as well as the ‘Multi-stakeholder Platform for ICT standardisation’. Finally, [Ernst & Young](#) presented the approach, methodology, time schedule and planned activities for the Independent Review – to be carried out in two phases. Currently, the first phase is about to be completed and focuses on fact finding and data collection through desk research and interviews. It also includes process mapping and identification of certain key performance indicators as a way to measure the performance of the system. The second phase will focus on the analysis of the collected data and will result in findings, conclusions and recommendations. The second phase should also include a series of case studies on selected subjects. Last but not least, the Chair offered to organise a special meeting of a working group on the Independent Review prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

Coordination meeting between ESOs and Annex III Stakeholders

Hosted by [EFTA](#), the first coordination meeting between the Annex III organisations ([SBS](#), [ANEC](#), [ECOS](#), [ETUI](#)) and the ESOs ([CEN](#), [CENELEC](#), [ETSI](#)) was organised by the European Commission on 8th July.

EC Acting Head of Unit Hein Bollens opened the session and presented the next steps to be taken by the European Commission which will lead to the adoption of the annual Union work programme for European standardisation at the end of July. The work programme will include a policy letter to be sent in advance to the relevant stakeholders in order to launch a written consultation. SBS called on the ESOs to recognise Annex III organisations as having a specific status, given the role that Regulation 1025 has attributed to them and also asked to establish a clear and substantial distinction in rights between Annex III organisations and other stakeholders in the standard-making process. SBS reminded the spirit of Regulation 1025, enforcing the ESOs to actively engage and facilitate the participation of Annex III organisations. SBS suggested elaborating a joint document to be the background of a joint Annex III organisations’ [reply](#) to the written consultation on the policy letter.

The meeting was also the occasion for the EC to present the work of the Commission Inter-Service Group on Standardisation, a coordination group on standardisation of Commission DGs. Mr Bollens explained that DG Enterprise has obtained a positive response to the nomination of a standardisation coordinator in every concerned DG. The Commission invited Annex III organisations to join future meetings of this group.

The Commission also made an interesting update on the Independent review [Ernst & Young](#) are carrying out on the European Standardisation System (ESS). The goal of the review is to evaluate and assess the functioning of the ESS by making desk research with relevant players (SBS has already been interviewed in this framework) and selecting 10 case-studies, including one on access and participation of standardisation stakeholders. In September 2014, the study will enter its second phase, featuring the case studies, and the final report should be presented to the Commission by the end of the year. A future ad-hoc meeting of the 1025 Committee on Standardisation will be held to discuss the Independent review.

Last but not least, SBS will host the next meeting of the Annex III Stakeholders coordination group to evaluate the steps taken by the ESOs and suggest a way forward.

A more thorough report of the meeting is available for SBS members upon request at the [secretariat](#).

SBS participates in CENELEC SME Working Group

On 3rd July, SBS participated in the [CEN-CENELEC](#) ad hoc SME Working Group. This WG was set up to select proposals of activities for 2014-2015, based on the input received from the members. During the meeting, members selected and put forward five priorities to be decided upon at the next session of the WG. The creation of an automated “alert” system for SMEs on standards and standardisation, the revision of the CEN-CENELEC Guide 17 to increase awareness and use of the Guide, the promotion of e-learning tool, the inventory of national SME advisory groups, and the Engage trade associations will be further discussed in the near future.

SBS at the Standing Committee on Construction

The last meeting of the Standing Committee on Construction (SCC) took place on 16th June, bringing together Member State representatives and experts. SBS sits on this Committee set up to examine any questions posed by the implementation and the practical application of the Construction Products Regulation in order to act in an advisory function vis-à-vis the European Commission.

Participants were informed that, following the signature of the contract between the European Commission and the European Standards Organisations (ESOs), the work of the new approach consultants will be restarted with a simpler administrative structure of lump-sums. This is a fundamental verification process of the compliance of harmonized standards with the EU regulation.

Additionally, the EC is planning a general evaluation of the impacts of Internal Market policy on the construction sector activities. Indeed, the Commission published a call for a study on the implementation of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR), as well as another on the overall evaluation of the internal market. The latter will be followed by a series of workshops in autumn 2014 and will feed into the Single Market Forum meetings in February-March 2015.

Last but not least, concerning the implementation of the CPR, the idea of an electronic handbook destined to manufacturers was discussed by certain stakeholders and supported by the EC. SBS will follow its preparation so as to disseminate the information. Furthermore, the implementation of the new Basic Work Requirement 7 on the sustainable use of natural resources was also addressed: the European Commission is looking for macro-targets within autumn 2014, with a more structured framework foreseen by end of 2015.

SBS collaborates with German standards organisation

SBS had a bilateral meeting with [DIN](#) in their Berlin headquarters on 16th July. The aim of this meeting was to get an overview of DIN activities and tools – particularly related to SMEs and specific SME sectors – as well as identify good practises in place at national level for SMEs. Moreover, access to the drafting process of standards, to standards themselves and to information related to standardisation were discussed between SBS and DIN. The meeting particularly focused on the activities related to innovation and to [KOMMIT](#) (DIN's "SME Commission", a sector-based database, helpdesk and different products with particular appeal to SME). The second part was dedicated to discussing critical aspects for SMEs at national level and to enhancing collaboration and finding common ground for promoting SMEs within the standardisation community through SBS activities.

In preparation of the 2015 strategy and following the discussions with [AFNOR](#) during the French SME Seminar, it was important for SBS to work more closely with DIN as a basis for a successful future cooperation. The German institute is one of the most active National standardisation organisations. Additionally, SBS plans to visit other NSOs in order to ensure optimal identification of existing best practises and strengthen future collaborations.

Technical news

Construction

◆ Metal structures – developments on application of EN 1090

After raising issues of interpretation and implementation, there has been a recent interesting development concerning the European standard 'hEN 1090 – Metal structures'. This standard has been at the centre of long-lasting discussions at the Standing Committee on Construction and was followed by SBS as requested by [EMU](#) (European Metal Union - SBS member representing SMEs in the metal manufacturing sector). The European Commission recently published an official reply to a very relevant question: 'When does the CE marking have to be affixed on the basis of EN 1090-1:2009+A1:2011?' The reply is now part of the website with all FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about the implementation of the Construction Products Regulation (CPR).

The full text of the reply to FAQ 31, found [here](#), is reported below:

The [CE marking](#) has to be affixed on a construction product on the basis of the harmonised standard EN 1090-1:2009+A1:2011 when all the following conditions are satisfied:

- the product is covered by the scope of EN 1090-1:2009+A1:2011 (refer to the indicative, non-exhaustive list of products not covered by the scope of EN 1090-1:2009+A1:2011 as provided by CEN),
- the product is a structural construction product within the meaning of the Construction Products Regulation (EU) 305/2011,
- the product is intended to be incorporated in a permanent manner in construction works (buildings or civil engineering works),
- the product has a structural function in relation to the construction work (i.e. its failure will affect the satisfaction of Basic Work Requirement 1 as detailed in Annex I of Regulation EU 305/2011),
- the product is not covered by a dedicated European product specification (because if a specific harmonised EN, or a European Technical Approval Guideline (ETAG) or a European Technical Approval, or a European Technical Assessment (ETA) for this product exists, the basis for the CE marking is the relevant specific harmonised EN, or the ETApproval, or the ETAssessment).

◆ **Timber Construction: EN 14732 raises concerns for SMEs**

In a letter to the Standing Committee on Construction, SBS member [Timber Construction Europe](#) presented a request for modification on a specific point of Mandate 112 on "Structural timber products". This European Mandate is a burden for SMEs in the development of standard 'hEN 14732 Timber structures – prefabricated wall, floor and roof elements'.

Timber Construction Europe explains that Mandate 112 requires the intervention of a notified body for the CE Marking of low-prefabricated structural elements which are mechanically-fixed on one side, such as a wooden panel nailed on a wooden frame. This creates additional costs and complexities for SMEs, which is contrary to the principles of simplification of the CPR. Moreover, these additional requirements and third-party interventions are unnecessary as there is no question of additional safety elements. Prefabricated mechanically-fixed elements with one-sided sheeting are indeed onsite products that can be checked by engineers or construction supervisors on the building site. Timber Construction Europe, thus, asks for the redirection of low prefabricated mechanically-fixed elements with one-sided sheeting to AVCP-level 4 instead of the current AVCP-level 2+, or their exclusion from the Mandate.

SBS is liaising with the European Commission's construction unit, which ensures the chairmanship and secretariat of the SCC, in order to support this request and verify its discussion and adoption process.

◆ **Market Surveillance of CE Marking –nails and screws**

[Danish Standards](#), in cooperation with the [Danish Energy Agency](#), will carry out a comprehensive surveillance of the Danish market of nails and screws in August and December 2014. Inspections will take place all over Denmark to inspect the CE marking and accompanying documentation of the nails and screws sold, manufactured and imported.

Retailers, manufacturers/producers or importers of nails and screws should pay attention to the rules for [CE marking](#). Nails and screws for gypsum plasterboards must be CE marked if they are covered by the standard 'EN 14566:2008+A1:2009 Mechanical fasteners for gypsum plasterboard systems – Definitions, requirements and test methods'. Moreover, nails and screws for timber structures must be CE marked if they are covered by the standard 'EN 14592:2008+A1:2012 Timber structures – Dowel-type fasteners – Requirements'.

The purpose of the market surveillance is to ensure that all construction products marketed, sold and used in Denmark are safe and not detrimental to health, and are traded in a market of fair competition.

<i>Distributors/retailers should ensure that:</i>	<i>Manufacturers/producers are responsible for:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the construction product is CE marked; • a declaration of performance has been prepared; • instructions for use/information on the packaging have been prepared; • CE marking, a declaration of performance and instructions for use accompany the construction product; • they assist the authorities in connection with market surveillance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the technical documentation, e.g. determination of product characteristics; • the CE marking; • the declaration of performance; • the instructions for use.

To read more about the market surveillance of nails and screws, visit www.byggevaereinfo.dk

ICT

SBS is quite active in the field of ICT related standardisation for the benefit of SMEs. Indeed, an SBS expert participated to the ICT Standardisation Platform, another is present in ETSI ATTM and a third participated in the TC related to Cloud ICT.

ICT Platform

The ICT platform met in Brussels on 22nd May to discuss about the ICT rolling plan, Cyber Security, e-invoicing and the European Cloud Partnership ([ECP](#)). SBS expert Sebastiano Tofalietti, collected information on the ICT rolling plan and participated to the task force (created in order to deal with the ICT Standardisation Rolling Plan). The document Addendum (doc 208) already published was discussed, including the comments received on the Rolling Plan. The ESO Cyber Security Coordination Group (CSCG) presented a paper where it recommends the EC to mandate the ESOs for standards on Cyber Security. Directive 2013/55/EU requests the ESO to develop a standard for semantic data model for e-invoicing and compels Member States to use such a European standard, which should be ready by 2017. Finally, the European Cloud Partnership was presented to the audience.

ETSI TC ATTM

SBS expert Georgi Babinov is appointed to ETSI TC ATTM (Access, Terminals, Transmission and Multiplexing). This TC consists of three Working Groups (WG AT2 – Infrastructure, Physical Networks & Communication Systems, WG TM4 – Fixed Radio Systems, and WG TM6 – Wireline Access Network Systems) and covers:

- preparation of an abstract (including key objectives of the standard), spreading this information to SMEs with the aid of SBS and members as well as the Mirror Committee;
- drafting preliminary positions (if possible) to be sent for discussion to the Mirror Committee;
- collection of feedback information from interested SMEs.
- As ETSI standards become accessible after publication, the preliminary information gives the following benefits:
- reduction of the delayed SMEs presence on the market;
- SMEs have the opportunity to optimise their solutions in cost and energy efficiency during the standard approval and publication.

ETSI TC Cloud

Grid and cloud computing environments should consist of interoperating elements ranging from small devices up to supercomputers, to serve communities ranging from individuals to whole industries, and should cover data, information and knowledge. Standardisation is essential to enable many different pieces of hardware, software, operating systems, databases etc, to potentially spread all over the world. Grid and cloud computing technology is widely regarded as a key element in tomorrow's 'network of networks', and is expected to drive the creation of both jobs and commercial products.

SMEs do not have the necessary resources to tackle with complexity of Cloud based services – especially to maintain and control the SLA (Service Level Agreement). Thus the solution for this situation is building and implementing a set of standards to guarantee information security.

The lack of standards' support for SLA definitions and vocabulary is likely to make it harder for SMEs to choose appropriate cloud services and may slow adoption of cloud services by SMEs. From the perspective of cloud service providers, adopting clear standards for the description of cloud services and their SLAs could become a selling point once standards for SLA definitions and vocabulary become available.

CEN-CENELEC and national SME helpdesks

To help European SMEs wishing to better understand and contribute to European Standardisation, [CEN](#) and [CENELEC](#), have set up a dedicated [SME Helpdesk](#). This Helpdesk is the one stop service point to introduce SMEs to the benefits of European Standards and to the business tools required to access the European Standardisation System.

The CEN-CENELEC SME Helpdesk offers:

- Free information;
- Free first-line advice and rapid response by e-mail;
- Monthly news through the [SME Newsletter](#);
- Direct link to [national SME standardisation experts](#);
- Investigation of other support measures, including training, mentoring, etc.

In addition, all CEN and CENELEC members have set up their national SME Helpdesks, service centres to provide direct support to SMEs in their national language. The national SME Helpdesks will help you understand the standardisation system and identify the standards you need to become more competitive at national and/or European level.

Contact your national [SME Helpdesk](#)

Upcoming events

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|---|---|
|  23-24.09.14 | CEN-CENELEC StandarDays |
|  30.10.14 | EU Conference - Standards: Your Innovation Bridge |
|  13.11.14 | CEN-CENELEC seminar on Pressure Equipment Codes |



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Small Business Standards (SBS) is a European non-profit association established in 2013 with the support of the European Commission. SBS is exclusively devoted to representing and defending SME interests in the standardisation system at European and international levels.

Its 21 members are national and European sectoral and inter-professional associations representing SMEs all over Europe. The membership is thus open to all associations matching these criteria.

SBS was created to meet the European Union's aspiration to make the standardisation system as inclusive, transparent and open as possible, by strengthening the participation of "weak" stakeholders such as SMEs.



The work conducted under SBS is mandated and financed by the European Commission