

Newsletter

SBS signs up to the Commission's Joint Initiative on Standardisation

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Photo European Commission

On 13 June, SBS signed up to [Joint Initiative on Standardisation](#) in the presence of Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska. This initiative focuses on 15 concrete actions aimed at modernising, prioritising and streamlining the delivery of standards by the end of 2019, some of which are specifically designed for smaller companies. The signature relates to the publication by the European Commission early June of a series of documents relating to standardisation. These documents highlight the increasing recognition of standards at EU level and the importance of better integrating SMEs in the standardisation process so as to ensure that standards can be used by smaller companies.

President Gunilla Almgren emphasised that effective standards enable SMEs to more easily access markets for their products in all countries across the European Union and abroad. The EC's publication is comprised of a communication on standards, a guidance on service standards, the Joint Initiative on European Standardisation, evaluation reports on the European Standardisation System as well as the Annual Union work programme for European standardisation. The Joint Initiative on European Standardisation, which foresees a specific action to improve the representation of the interests of SMEs in international standardisation processes, is a step in the right direction.

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Standardisation national seminars take a step further in Switzerland

SBS held a national seminar in Zurich in collaboration with SNV (the Swiss standardisation body). As a first seminar in a non-EU country, SBS aimed to raise awareness among Swiss SMEs regarding the importance of standardisation and the benefits standards can bring to their businesses. SBS highlighted the fact that standards could facilitate access to the EU market for non-EU companies. Moreover, two of SBS' experts shared their experience with standards and the standardisation process – these interventions generated many questions and consequent discussions.



SBS and EFTA sign Operating Grant for 2016

At the end of 2015, SBS and EFTA signed a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) covering SBS activities for 2015 and 2016, including an Operating Grant (OP) for the 2015 activities. A new Operating Grant covering 2016 has now been signed between the two organisations. EFTA and SBS will, through their partnership, improve information towards SMEs on the use of European standards and hence show SMEs the benefits of using them.

SME concerns in the lifts sector discussed with the Commission

SBS and member association EFESME met EC Head of Unit for Advanced Engineering Luis Filipe Girao to discuss SBS' proposed amendments to the upcoming New Guide on the Application of the Lift Directive 2014/33/EU. SBS experts believe that harmonised standards, while remaining voluntary, are the generally agreed state of art for compliance with the essential requirements of the Directive. SMEs fear a distortion of the market if the other possible means for compliance allow lower safety requirements and less stringent provisions. Furthermore, SBS stressed once again the importance of explicitly underlining, in the guide and in the draft mandate on lifts and safety components, the need to have access to "special tools". It is crucial these tools and necessary information be made available by manufactures so that SMEs can be competitive in the after sale market.

SBS experts present CEN-CENELEC Guide 17

In 2015, SBS published a snapshot on the implementation of the CEN-CENELEC Guide 17 'Guidance for writing standards taking into account SME needs' at European level and continues to promote it throughout the year. The SBS objective is to present the contents of this fundamental document in at least 13 Technical Committees at European and international level. To achieve this goal, SBS recently distributed a Guide 17 presentation among its experts that focuses on the key SME aspects that have to be taken into account when developing standards.

CONSTRUCTION

CPR: current and future issues debated

The European Commission informed the Standing Committee on Construction of several issues related to the implementation of the Construction Product Regulation (CPR): **i.** the progress of delegated acts currently required to make reference to classes and/or threshold levels in standards, **ii.** the number of standards that the European Commission has recently published in the Official Journal of the European Union (8 out of the 60 assessed standards), and **iii.** the draft mandate to CEN for balustrades and railings. Moreover, Construction Product Europe presented interesting proposals for the development of a European harmonised digital format to boost the usability of the regulatory information (e.g. the Declaration of Performance of construction products) within the Building Information Modelling process.

ICT

CENELEC BT focuses on ICT issues

At the CENELEC BT, taking place in the NEN premises in Delft, there was a first time in-depth discussion on the issue of ICT. There were presentations on the joint ISO and IEC committee as well as on ICT standardisation in general. ISO-IEC/JTC1 is the international standards development environment where experts come together to develop worldwide ICT standards for business and consumer applications. CEN-CENELEC will transpose relevant JTC1 standards into European standards and the first ones to be transposed will be the ISO 27000 series.

Technical News

- **oneM2M is a global standards initiative**

Studies on Industry 4.0 show that it is essential to adopt standard rules that allow the various IoT (Internet of Things) entities (sensors, devices, gateways, communication infrastructures, applications) across different companies to be interconnected with each other. SMEs are expected to be more and more interconnected to other companies following the growth of end-to-end systems engineering across the entire value chain. Overall, the capacity of SMEs to adopt oneM2M technology in the immediate future will, most likely be more limited, than for larger companies. Therefore, the role of SBS in oneM2M will be to find means to overcome these potential issues by putting forward adequate proposals. Indeed, SMEs wanting to adopt oneM2M technology may face excessive challenges, e.g. in terms of costs, time-

to-market, skills etc. SBS also calls for other SME associations and forums to take part in the developments of this standard.

- **SMEs succeed in influencing tourism standards**

SBS positively influenced the work of ISO TC 228 (Tourism and Related Services) by extensively contributing to the standard ISO 17679 (Tourism and related services, Wellness spa, Service requirements) and sending constructive and detailed comments while the document was under consultation. The comments were well received by the TC secretariat and some crucial points for SMEs in the sector were highlighted. In particular, SBS' comments tried

to limit burdens for SMEs concerning the need for certification and for renewals of training plans, the monitoring and the reduction of strict liability when trained personnel is not available due to force majeure.

- **Glued-in rods must be considered as connectors**

The first draft standard for glued-in rods in glued laminated timber was presented at the last meeting of CEN TC193 SC1 WG6 (Adhesives for glued-in rods). The document treats glued-in rods as if they were essentially adhesives. However, glued-in rods are basically wood connectors, hence the approach should also consider the behaviour connector-wood and not only the behaviour of the glue. Furthermore, the fact that the draft standard is currently based on a specific national technical approval generates incompatibilities with the Construction Products Regulation. The SBS expert has widely commented on such issues and, as of June, will also be active at sub-committee level.

- **Eurocodes: potential creation of Task Group**

SBS experts in timber construction are currently monitoring the situation concerning the possible creation of a Task Group on the changes to the structure of Eurocode 5 (Design of timber structures). Moreover, SBS recently put forward proposals to provide additional information on the spacing rules for wood-based panels and to include reference in the document to modern screws, punched metal-plate fasteners and carpentry joints.



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.

www.sbs-sme.eu

Small Business Standards is co-financed by the European Commission and the EFTA Member States



Upcoming events

- **18 October: Experts' meeting (Brussels)**
- **19 October: Annual conference (Brussels)**