

STANDARDS WORK FOR SMEs

SME Newsletter – October 2013

➤ **CEN and CENELEC aim at more targeted approach to support to SMEs**

The SME Working Group (SME-WG) seeks to ensure a coherent approach to support participation of SMEs in the European Standardization System and to increase SMEs awareness to standardization, improve their access to and use of standards and increase their participation in the development of standards.

Nearly 4 years after its creation, the Working Group, led Dr. Scott Steedman, was proud to conclude that nearly all of 58 recommendations from the study on 'SME Access to European Standardization'¹ are either fulfilled, or part of ongoing initiatives, resulting in a wide range of tools and services that support SMEs to benefit from standards and standardization.

• **More targeted and individual support**

Building upon the products and services already developed by CEN and CENELEC, and capitalizing on the experience and understanding gained in recent years, the WG-SME considered the time ripe for developing more targeted solutions, adapted to individual SME needs e.g.:

- ✓ SMEs in the service sector have different needs than SMEs e.g. in the machinery or healthcare sector;
- ✓ start-ups require different support than established companies,
- ✓ the market approach of local business is different than of those SMEs wanting to export,

Such tailor-made approach will save SMEs valuable time and resources.

• **Cooperation with key European and national organizations and networks**

Despite the significant achievements to date of the CEN and CENELEC actions to support European SMEs, reaching out effectively to the 23 million European SMEs, is a hugely ambitious task for CEN, CENELEC and the national members alone. Therefore, CEN and CENELEC will collaborate with key European and national organizations, networks, structures, initiatives, business centres, service support bodies, etc. relevant to SMEs in order to reach larger numbers of the European SME population to support them to benefit from standards and standardization.

• **Strengthen cooperation with trade associations**

European and National trade associations – for many of whom SMEs comprise a

¹ 'SME Access to European Standardization Study - Enabling SMEs to achieve greater benefit from standards and from involvement in standardization' (2009, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University)

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significant part of their membership – have an immense potential to reach large numbers of SME, to inform and educate them about standardization and guide them to the tools that are already available from CEN and CENELEC and their feedback on the tools may lead to more and improved tools.

In 2014, links with Trade Associations will be strengthened and ways of mutual support and understanding developed, so that SMEs benefit even more from standardization.

➤ **Celebrating World Standards Day 2013 in CEN and CENELEC**

14 October = World Standards Day! This year's highlight was "International standards ensure positive change". Watch the video from the celebration at the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre (with delicious ice cream ☺) and the dedicated speech from Mrs Elena Santiago Cid, Director General.

[video](#)

➤ **New CEN-CENELEC booklet 'Standards and your business – How your business can benefit from standards and participate in standardization activities'**

This booklet provides a brief introduction to the world of standards. It explains how businesses of all sizes can benefit from standards and participate in standardization activities.

It provides answers to FAQ such as:

- What are standards?
- Who makes standards?
- How can standards help my business?
- Why and how participate in standardization?
- Where can I find support?

The [booklet](#) is freely available and can be distributed and made available as you wish.

➤ **CEN-CENELEC Guide 17 also translated in Icelandic**

The aim of the CEN-CENELEC Guide 17 'Guidance for writing standards taking into account micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) needs' is to raise awareness on the issues that may be of importance to SMEs in the development of standards and to facilitate the increased participation of SMEs in standardization work.

To make it easier for standard writers and SMEs to read and apply the Guide, 26 language versions are made freely available, now also including the Icelandic version.

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You can download the [Guide](#) in 26 languages from the CEN-CENELEC website.

➤ Enterprise Europe Network - Annual Conference

The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) Annual Conference 2013 was held on 15 and 16 October in Vilnius, Lithuania and attracted some 700 participants, all of them supporting SMEs to be more successful. Being more successful also implies using standards and contribute to the development of those standards that will affect your business.

The representatives from the CEN and CENELEC Management Centre were pleased to be given the opportunity to promote the benefits of standards and give reassurance that SMEs do have a say when it comes to standard development.

Have a look at our cartoon and you will understand the quote from one of the participants: 'Wow, I had no idea that standards are really everywhere. That is so fascinating!'



More cartoons on standardization:

[standards@play](#): standards in everyday lives, even during leisure time

[standards@work](#): standards to ensure protection and quality of work activities

➤ European SME week

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The European SME Week 2013 will take place from 25 - 30 November and aims to:

- provide information on what the EU and national, regional and local authorities are offering as support to micro, small and medium-sized businesses;
- promote entrepreneurship so that more people, and in particular younger ones, seriously consider becoming an entrepreneur as a career option;
- give recognition to entrepreneurs for their contribution to Europe's welfare, jobs, innovation and competitiveness

Some of the CEN and CENELEC national standards organizations may organize special events during this week to bring standardization in the spotlight. Check the website of your national standards organization to find out: [CEN](#) - [CENELEC](#).

Some national initiatives:

Croatia:

The Croatian Standards Institute (HZN) organizes a workshop for SMEs titled "HZN at the service of SMEs". The event will take place on 28 November 2013 in Zagreb, Ulica grada Vukovara 78, within the European SME Week 2013 campaign. The aim of the workshop is to inform SMEs on contact points at HZN, government authorities and public institutions that support micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Among others, the following contact points will be presented: Product Contact Point, SME Contact Point and WTO/TBT Inquiry Point at HZN, Product Contact Point for Construction at the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, European Consumer Centre Croatia and SOLVIT Centre at the Ministry of Economy, results of the Poduzetnički impuls (SME impulse) project at the Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts, and the Single Point of Contact and the Business Information Centre at the Chamber of Economy.

At the event, awards for the exceptional contribution to standardization will be awarded to HZN members.

The workshop programme and accompanying materials will be available at HZN web site www.hzn.hr.

Bulgaria:

BDS published on its web-site seven brochures in Bulgarian, following the recommendations to raise awareness and to encourage SMEs to participate in the standardization process. The brochures represent the vast world of standardization and cover a wide range of standards of interest for Bulgarian companies. They are targeted to SMEs and their associations, but are also useful for everyone interested in the most popular standards in the relevant sectors.

- **"Standards - Benefits and Achievements"**: general information on standards and standardization and it explains the benefits of using standards.
- **"Management Systems"**: basic information about the main series of standards dealing with management systems, environment, information

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security, safety of supplies, risk management, energy management, sustainable events, etc.

- **"Construction Standards"**: Eurocodes and National Annexes regulating construction and it explains the benefits of their implementation.
- **"Services Standards"**: standards applicable to the most popular for Bulgaria types of services – translation, postal, tourism, financial and consultancy services, real estate, etc.
- **"Standards and Food"**: the importance of applying standards in the food industry and is targeted to the businesses involved in or related to the food production sector.
- **"Energy Efficiency"**: basic issues related to Directive 2006/32/EC on energy end-user efficiency and energy services, ISO 50001 international standard, definitions and requirements on services for energy efficiency, etc.
- **"Standards and IT"**: the use of standards in IT and scrutinizes important topics such as IT and service management systems, standards and information security, etc.

[Download the brochures](#)

➤ **"SMEs in Horizon 2020": European Commission Information Days**

The European Commission hosts two Information Days on SME participation to Horizon 2020, specifically directed towards SME support organisations (governmental and non-governmental). The first event took place on 18 October and [presentations](#) are available. The next event will take place on 25 November. The live event is however fully booked, yet interested parties will be able to follow via web-streaming ([details](#) will be announced around mid-November).

➤ **National SME Helpdesks**

To facilitate direct contact at national level between SMEs and the CEN and CENELEC members, a network of 42 SME Helpdesks is in place - more [here](#).

➤ **New publications**

Consult the list of new European Standards, CEN Workshop Agreements and other CEN and CENELEC publications published in September 2013 [here](#) and [here](#). In addition, don't forget you can access the scope statements of **ALL** European Standards (ENs) on the [CEN](#) or [CENELEC](#) websites.



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