

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Standardisation and SMEs – from a national to a European approach

Brussels, 16th October 2015 - Yesterday, SBS (the European association representing SMEs in the standards making process at European and international level) organised its first EU Conference on “Smart standardisation for SMEs”. The first of a series of annual conferences – aiming to discuss the standardisation process, its impact on SMEs and its benefits – focussed on “From national to European standardisation in a global context”. With SMEs at centre of the discussion, the speakers addressed the importance of standards in boosting competitiveness for SMEs, the promotion of national best practices, the added value of being involved in the standardisation process, and the transition from national to European standardisation.

The event, gathering high-level speakers and stakeholders involved in the standards making process, concentrated on how the standardisation process impacts SMEs and how SMEs can benefit from it. The discussions covered the importance of standards in boosting competitiveness for SMEs, the promotion of national best practices and their transition from national to European standardisation. Highlighting the important role of SMEs in the European society, **SBS President Gunilla Almgren** reminded the audience that “*SMEs represent 99.8% of all European businesses and 66.5% of all European jobs. They therefore rightfully need to be involved in the standardisation process at all levels, one of SBS’ main goals and roles.*”

One of the main topics of discussion examined the challenges of SME representation in an international context. Putting forward once again the necessity for SME participation in the standardisation process President Almgren stated that “*SBS wants to be the bearer of the Think Small First principle in standardisation, by representing SMEs in the decision making process and hence making standards better for SMEs*”.

Furthermore, while the role of SMEs in standardisation and their relevance in contributing to influence standards was deeply discussed from different angles, including the role of national mirror committees as well as training and raising awareness among SMEs, there was also a direct reference made regarding the impacts of the Vienna Agreement on the standardisation process.

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EDITORS’ NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process at European and International levels. SBS members are national and European sectorial and interprofessional associations representing SMEs all over Europe working in and out of the EU. The work conducted under SBS is mandated and financed by the European Commission.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Jenny Manin, SBS Press and Communications Officer, Tel +32 (0)496 520 329
Email: pressoffice@sbs-sme.eu