

EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND THEIR ROLE IN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES OF STANDARDIZATION

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Abstract:

Standards are essential for Small and Medium Enterprises. They make life easier and safer. They create a game level area in which to compete, they allow access to the state-of-art technology. Standardization allow Small and Medium Enterprises to increase productivity and to reach wider markets in Europe and the world. Standards are driven out of business, and developed by technical experts in the field. Standards provide the authorities and companies with the tool to develop sound policies and harmonized. Standardization helps to regulate the market, is complementary tool for the legislation and is committed to providing effective support for European policies in many areas. Standards development is an area in the service of the Small and Medium Enterprises. They can influence the standardization process, whether at the national, European or international level.

Keywords: standard, business, SMEs, technical rules

Introduction

Small and Medium Enterprises play a vital role in European economy. Almost 99 percent of the European companies are Small and Medium Enterprises, employing almost 81 million people, ensuring 66 percent of total employment of Europe. As a main actor in European market, it is important that Small and Medium Enterprises are aware of the good of standards for their business and different manners to participate in the standardization process. European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC), agreed to combine its efforts with its sister organization CEN (European Committee for Standardization), to facilitate the access of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) with labor standards. Small and Medium Enterprises make up 99,8 percent of enterprises in Europe and employ more than 90 million people. Despite of this, Small and medium Enterprises and especially micro-enterprises will not play a leading role in establishment or by using standards. However, standardization allows companies to have access in the state of art in technology and in this manner it strengthens their capacity as innovation. It creates a playfield of the level to enter in the market of companies and introduction of the products and new services.

Awareness raising

Awareness raising related to the standardization is the first and the most important step in the process to help companies and organizations to be known in the world of standards. The rising awareness of standards will help Small and Medium Enterprises to understand how they can be used as tools to achieve their business objectives.

Why should it be aware for standards of Small and Medium Enterprises?

Because this will enable them buying and selling in the European market alone or to stand in one competitive position, in order to bring and take actual information about the products, other services and in accordance with regulations.

Who should raise awareness?

- a) Standards organizations,
- b) Business associations
- c) Chambers of commerce
- d) Sectoral organizations
- e) Governments with Public Authorities.

How can this be achieved?

Efforts aiming the awareness raising, of Small and Medium Enterprises of standardization must be focused in their needs and practical profits for businesses using standards. Awareness raising requires investment on time and sources in order to explain and demonstrate how standards can be used in practice. Regional and/or local events are especially useful to achieve abroad for Small and Medium Enterprises. General information on standards and standardization must be combined with specific information and examples which are relevant for a special audience.

Measures to be undertaken:

Encouragement of standardization by using different communication tools

Giving information through business associations and other channels

Development of educational materials and giving information for students.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPILATION OF STANDARDS? BUSINESS

Standards are pushed by business, and compiled by technical experts in this field. In building of European consensus, industry, market federations, of public authorities, academic and representative of nongovernmental Organizations are invited to contribute in standardization process. It is an open participation, that it is responsible for the power of European and international standardization.

How to participate?

The way to participate for development of European standards is by national members. The balancing delegation shall be sent to represent the respective interests in one standardization project by which state is represented. European market associations and groups of interest –representing by environmentalists, consumers, unions, and also Small and Medium Enterprises, among others – have also possibility to contribute in the development of a standard.

Why they participate?

Participation in process allows an actor to foresee changes in standards in its sector and to have a role in content. **For example a manufacturer who wants to participate in European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization, direct or through a market association.** Through National Committee, the manufacturer can be included in one national committee, which it is responsible

for the development of national position in one determinate standard and it presents this position to the respective technical Body of the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization. It is possible for him to become a member of the national delegation of the Technical Body of the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization, or to be appointed to serve as technical expert in one the working groups.

Why standardization for Small and Medium Enterprises?

Standards are essential for Small and Medium Enterprises. They make life easier and safer, they create a field of play level in which to compete, they allow access in state-art-technology, and they help the more effective distribution of hard time sources. But, despite all these benefits, it is clear that at this moment Small and Medium Enterprises not always benefit as much as they can by 2. creation or by using standards. Standardization allows Small and Medium Enterprises to increase productivity and 3. to achieve wider markets. Initiatives for Small and Medium Enterprises are taken in national and European level in order to enter in the standardization process, but also to facilitate the identification and the use of proper standard for their business. European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization agreed to combine its efforts with its sister organization European Committee for Standardization, to facilitate the access of Small and Medium Enterprises with labor standards.



Figure 1 Machinery equipments produced by European standards for European and international market Standards development is a zone available to Small and Medium Enterprises. They can influence in the standardization process, whether at national, European and international level. Standardization allows Small and Medium Enterprises to increase productivity and to achieve wider markets. Small and Medium Enterprises frequently are not aware for the role they can play within the

European Standardization System. Hereupon, the European Committee for Standardization and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization set up a series of tools and information to raise their awareness and to understand standardization, by inviting Small and Medium Enterprises to hear their voices in the standardization process.

European Committee for Standardization has developed a Source Package to facilitate the involvement of small businesses in standardization work. If you are a part of the community European Committee for Standardization and European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization, (Standards package), these instructions are offered:

- 1. Awareness raising;
- 2. Information given for standardization in Europe for Small and Medium Enterprises,
- 3. Promoting the participation of Small and Medium Enterprises in the European Standardization System.

EUROPEAN STANDARDS

The objective of European standards is to agree on mutual specifications and/or procedures that respond to business needs and to meet consumers' expectations. Standards are part of the knowledge economy that support European industry and society. They facilitate innovation and stimulate the adaptation of new technologies. European standardization is a key instrument to consolidate a unique Market and to strengthen the competition of the European companies, by creating conditions for economic growth. European standards are a valuable tool to facilitate cross-border market – within the European single market but also to the rest of the world. Standards can be used to improve Safety and Performance, to increase the levels of Energy Efficiency, and to protect consumers, workers and environment. They fulfil European and national policies in these fields, and they make it easier to the companies and other actors to respect respective legislation. European Committee for Standardization and European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization are international non-profit organizations. They are officially known as European standards Organization together with European Telecommunication Standards Institute- (ETSI). Most of the European standards have been initiated by business and developed in partnership with other actors. About 30% are mandated by the European Commission within EU legislation. European Standardization system is unique in the world. After publication of a European standard, every national standards body or commission is obliged to revoke any national standard that conflicts with new European standard. For this reason, a European Standard becomes the national standard in all 33 member states of the European Committee for Standardization and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization.

Standardization

Standardization is all safety around us of a more secure world for citizens, responding to the industry needs, fulfilling consumer's expectations and contributing to the

consolidation of unique market. What are European standards? ➤

- European Standards (EN) is a key of success in a social and economic level. European Standards take care for public interest on the aspects such as: **health and safety, protection of workers, consumers and environment,** ➤
- Clever Business, providing those companies with a strategic tool to raise their competitive value and the place of widely accepted products and services in the market, ➤
- Economic benefits of standardization contributing to the growth of all economic and social actors, ➤
- Standards belong to the knowledge economy that supports European industry and society. European standardization is a key instrument for the recovery of the European economy, ➤
- Standards provide authorities and companies with tools in order to compile sound policy. Standardization helps to regulate the market, it is a supplemental tool for legislation and it is engaged to provide effective support for European policies in many fields, ➤
- Look at work, in the environment you live and in the workplace, why standardization is a part of your life, essential for your safety and crucial for your business.



Figure 2 Private business based on European standards Standardization process

European standards (EN) are based on a consensus, which reflects economic and social interests of 33 member states of the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization lined through their National Electrotechnical Committees (NCS). Most of Standards are initiated by the industry. Other projects of standardization can come from consumers, Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) or associations, or also by European lawmakers. Except European standards, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization produces other reference documents, that can be developed quickly and easily which are:

- technical specifications,
- technical reports and agreements,
- workshops etc.

What are Standards

Standards are voluntary documents compiled by consensus and approved by a recognized standardization body, which provides joint and repeated use, technical rules, instructions or characteristics for activity or their results, in a given contest. Standards are voluntary and not mandatory. Also standards are local and international and they are used to raise the value and the quality of a commodity or product for domestic and foreign sale.

What is a standard?

A standard includes technical documents, which:

Contain technical specifications for services or products of different fields,

Are prepared with proposal of the interested parties for technical issues

Are based on results of contemporary technology developments,

Are approved by the senior state body for standards and technical rules and

Are available for everybody.

Technical specifications – are the specifications given in a document which provide characteristics required for a product such as: quality level, technical, main, secondary features, safety, dimensions, measurements, analyses methods, labeling, procedures on confirmed assessment, etc.

European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization

European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization is responsible for standardization in the Electrotechnical Engineering field. European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization prepares voluntary standards, which help to facilitate market between countries, creating new markets, to reduce compatibility costs and to support the development of a European single market. European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization creates access in market of the European level, but also in international level, approval of international standards wherever possible, through its close cooperation with the International Electrotechnical Commission I (IEC), according to the Dresden Agreement.



Figure 3 Alternative energy in the European market In an increasingly global economy, the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization stimulates

innovation and competition, making the technology available with wide industry through production of voluntary standards. Through the work of its members together with its experts, of industry federations and consumers, European standards are created in order to encourage technological development, to ensure interaction and to guarantee safety and health of consumers and to ensure environmental protection. Determined as a European Standards Organization by the European Commission, the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization 1. is a non-profitable technical organization established under 2. Belgian law.

ENERGY AND ENERGY STANDARDS
Standardization activities in the field of energy

Standardization can play a role in fulfillment of the European energy challenges by promoting best practices, helping the development of the renewable energy, improving the energy efficiency and providing the selection tools of installations and systems. The standards are being developed by the European Committee for Standardization and the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization in the following aspects of energy:

1. Gas supply,
2. Energy management,
3. Water supply,
4. Power engineering,
5. Solar systems,
6. Smart grids.

EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEALING WITH COMPILATION OF THE STANDARDS IN DIFFERENT FIELDS



Figure 4 European and international organizations dealing with compilation of the standards in different fields

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Taking into consideration the continuous and increased importance of Small and Medium Enterprises in European standardization, the European Committee for Standardization and European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization, and some other member organizations of the EU are working together on 2 package-projects to strengthen and to promote connections between Small and Medium Enterprises and standardization in conditions of **Awareness**, Information and Participation,
- European standards are created in order to encourage technological development, to ensure interaction and to guarantee Safety and Health of consumers and to ensure Environmental Protection.
- To require access to European and international standards organizations and to offer cooperation with these organizations for domestic and foreign market.
- To identify and adopt all European standards in local standards and to work based on those standards in order to have a more reliable and wider European market, because only by application and licensing with European and international standards, we can achieve our goals in European market,
- To respect European laws and directives of standardization and to raise awareness to Small and Medium Enterprises how to implement them for market and society,
- From the paper, the forms come out how we should approach European Standards in market in order to promote our production with quality and higher European services in the European market taking for example, electricity market, alternative energy, local productions, etc.
- To require the possible manners how to get involved Kosova Small and Medium Enterprises in these standards organizations of Balkan, European and international level.

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