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CEB-BEC 2020 Report under Article 6(3) of the EU Regulation on Standardization (1025/2012)

Introduction

The CEB-BEC is recognized as the sector operator in Belgium for electrotechnical standardization activities by NBN. The CEB-BEC is also the national member of, and operator for, CENELEC (the *European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization*) and IEC (the *International Electrotechnical Commission*). Almost all electrotechnical standards distributed in Belgium by the CEB-BEC are in fact the result of collaboration with the European and international levels.

As of September 2014, the CEB-BEC is referenced in the [Official Journal of the European Union](#) as being one of the two National Standards Bodies (NSBs) in Belgium. As such, Regulation 1025/2012 applies to the standardization activities carried out by CEB-BEC.

Through its article 6(3), Regulation 1025/2012 requires NSBs to establish annual reports on how they have encouraged and facilitated the access of SMEs to standards and standards development processes and how they have exchanged best practices aimed at enhancing SME participation, with other NSBs.

CEB-BEC and SMEs

SMEs are important actors and stakeholders of the standardization activities carried out by CEB-BEC.

As such, all CEB-BEC activities are performed with our stakeholders in mind and aim to ensure their access to standards and facilitate their participation in the standards development processes.

The CEB-BEC uses opportunities such as seminars and similar events as well as face-to-face meetings to present its activities and spark the interest of new potential experts. CEB-BEC organized for example in 2020 such a videoconference on 'Impact of a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic on standardization and market legislation' where participation was for free. In 2021, CEB-BEC will continue to further develop its outreach activities to increase the representation of Belgian expertise in the European and international standardization arenas.

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Access to Standards and the development process

CEB-BEC aims at providing as much information as possible to its stakeholders and customers about the standards made available through the CEB-BEC website, in order to help them find the documents relevant to their activities. To achieve this, CEB-BEC provides information such as the title, scope, any reference documents, document history, ICS codes, responsible committee, as well as a CEB-BEC contact point for any inquiries.

In addition, to help companies stay up to date with the standards applicable in their field and to help reduce the related costs, CEB-BEC also provides the ability to establish collections of standards which are available at reduced rates and are kept up to date.

To participate actively in the CEB-BEC standardization activities, companies are asked for a small fee to cover the induced administrative costs. The revision of its membership model in 2016, resulting in the reduction of membership fees by nearly 25% and the possibility to register up to three experts versus one previously, for the same cost, have resulted in an increase in the number of participating experts and technical committee meetings.

To accommodate this increase in technical activities, CEB-BEC has invested in its meeting room facilities which are made available free of charge to its national mirror committees.

Finally, despite best efforts, some standards can be complex to understand or to apply in a national context. To support Belgium's industry and in particular its SMEs (noting that 99.8% of Belgian companies are SMEs¹), CEB-BEC develops supporting Technical Notes aimed at facilitating the implementation (e.g. with regard to other additional national requirements) or understanding of specific standards, eventually supported by specific training events.

Best practices

As member of CENELEC and IEC, CEB-BEC is in regular contact with other NSBs across Europe and beyond. As the challenges faced by NSBs in the different countries are often quite similar, the exchange of best practices can indeed lead to the improvement of certain activities at national level.

CEB-BEC has continued, throughout 2020, the screening of national technical committees in view of categorizing current stakeholders and identifying potential new ones. This has resulted in the increase in technical activities mentioned above and will be pursued during 2021.

As mentioned above, CEB-BEC's key role is to ensure the representation of Belgium's electrotechnical industry, which includes its SMEs, in the European and international standardization arenas. Improvements to the ways it can achieve this are, and will continue to be, regularly assessed, and implemented where possible.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/sme-strategy/performance-review_en#annual-report