

I. CEN TC 53

The technical work has been completed. However, as reported in the last UEG-Report and in the "European Regulations" working group in Bern, some nations voted against the PWI, so it is now necessary to convince them. WG 16 consists of specialists for these products, but due to national differences, there are still differing opinions on the use of the same parts of the standards. The project is particularly relevant for SMEs because the work simplifies the use of the TC 53 standards for temporary work.

At the meeting of the European Regulations Working Group in Bern, Karsten Weise took the opportunity during the UEG meeting to speak to all members of countries that had not voted at all. He emphasised how important it is to vote in favour of this new core standard. All members who attended the UEG meeting promised to read the entire core standard again and to convince other national representatives to vote in favour of the core standard next time.

At the WG 16 meeting in Berlin, the chairman, Prof. Hertle, sought to reach a consensus within TC 53 on whether such an interface standard was necessary. France and Italy took the view that the current version of the core standard did not reflect any pressing need.

Mr Hertle went on to explain that the Eurocode testing procedures include numerous checks, such as tolerances or permissible deviations from the ideal value, for example misalignments, tolerances in contact connections or diameter differences in screw connections. While the Eurocodes for structures are more relevant for determining the approaches to be followed due to their anchoring in a recognised legal framework, TC 53 should continue to be responsible for determining safety requirements and load assumptions specifically for temporary structures.

WG 16 was tasked with reviewing the comments, updating the draft accordingly and submitting it to CEN/TC 53. All relevant experts should participate in this meeting, which will take place in Berlin in March in order to coordinate perspectives and harmonise approaches. Particular attention must be paid to emphasising the crucial interface character of the core standard for other TC 53 standards.

On the basis of this revised document, CEN/TC 53 will take a new decision on the core standard. In addition, it was agreed that, based on the results of WG16's update work on the core standard, a correspondingly updated proposal for the overall structure of future TC 53 standards must be submitted to the TC before the next plenary meeting. Prof. Dr. Hertle, the Chairman of WG 16 and the Secretariat will submit a corresponding proposal in due course.

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II. General Assembly in Bern

This year's General Assembly took place in Switzerland. Bern was chosen as the venue because SwissSkills was taking place there at the same time. Following the 2012 event in Lucerne, the SGUV once again put together a fantastic programme. Many thanks to Renata Xavier from the SGUV for her excellent organisation on site!



Thursday, participants were able to visit SwissSkills. Trainees who are enrolled in dual training programmes in Switzerland compete here for the title of master craftsman in their respective fields.

The general meeting was held on Friday. 90% of full members and 70% of associate members attended. Three new associate members were admitted to the UEG: AT-PAC (DE), PlusEight (SWE) and Scaffcalc (SWE).

The majority required to amend the statutes to admit a single scaffolding contractor from Denmark as a full member was not achieved.

In future, associate members may also be granted a reduction in membership fees if they can plausibly demonstrate that they cannot afford the full fee for operational reasons.

This will enable smaller start-ups, for example, to become members of the UEG.

The necessary overnight stays for the Board will be paid for by the UEG in future, while the sending national associations will continue to bear the other costs.

After a lively debate, the UEG guideline project "Recommendations for the Initial and Regular Inspections of Scaffolding" was also completed.

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In the late afternoon, Renata Xavier guided the participants through the fairytale-like old town of Bern. Finally, in glorious weather, they were able to enjoy the view of the picturesque town from the Rosengarten. The day ended with a festive dinner together, stimulating conversations and the farewell to Ken Johnson. After Ken Johnson had already been bid farewell as a representative of NASC in 2018, the UEG now had to say goodbye with a heavy heart to Ken Johnson as its long-standing expert on the European standardisation committee (CEN TC 53).



The absolute highlight was the construction site tour led by Jonas Burn on the Schilthorn the following day: with crystal-clear visibility and beautiful sunshine, the participants enjoyed a



fantastic and unforgettable day. Jonas Burn explained that the biggest challenges for the cable car stage scaffolding on the Schilthorn are wind and weather.

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Jochen Gebauer, who had calculated the statics, was also there.

According to the operator, the new Schilthorn cable car will be the "steepest gondola lift in the world" once it is completed.

At this point, we would like to once again express our sincere gratitude to Jonas Burn and his team for making it possible to visit this very special and unique construction site!

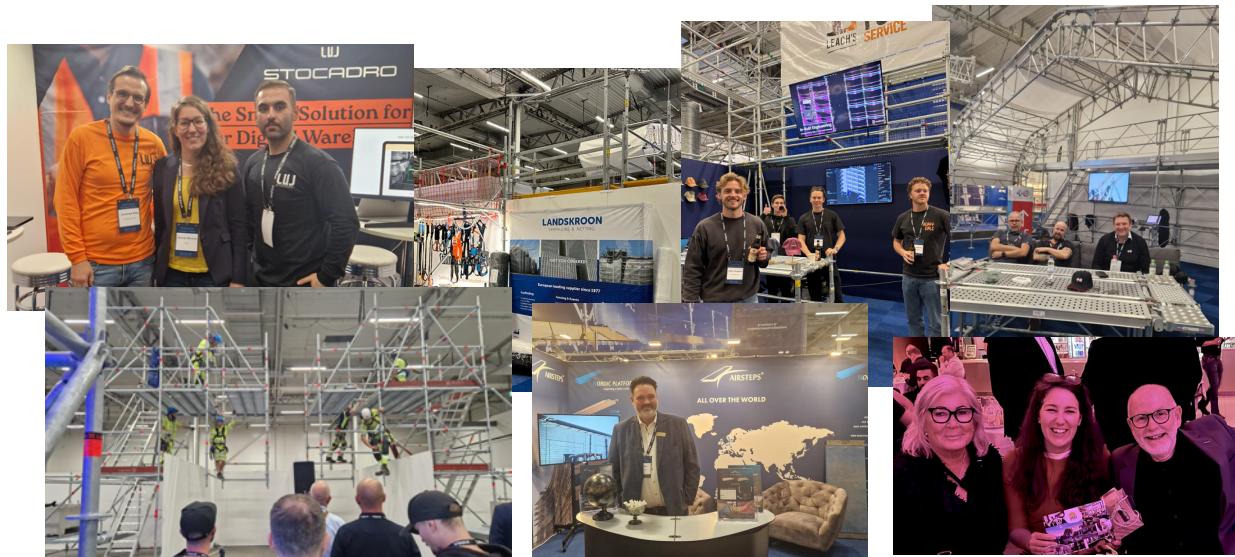
III. Scaffpoint in Sweden

On 22 and 23 October, the Scaff Point scaffolding trade fair took place in Stockholm (Kista). Among the exhibitors were organisations, suppliers and manufacturers from the industry, including many UEG associate members (Altrad, AT-PAC, Landskroon, Haki, PlusEight, Nordic Platform, Scafom Rux, Scaffcalc, Stocadro, etc.). Presentations were given on topics such as safety, working environment and certification.

Three well-known figures from the UEG took part in the panel discussion on Norway and Sweden – similarities, differences and the future of the scaffolding industry in the Nordic countries: The panel discussion was moderated by Hakan Carlsson, former Secretary General of the Swedish Association – Hakan Carlsson was also the main organiser of the trade fair – also present was his successor at STIB, Anders Strömberg, and Geir Gule, President of the UEG.



An exciting scaffolding competition took place between two teams and the apprentice of the year was crowned. Douglas Nordenbelt impressed at the event dinner with a magic show that was second to none. Ingela and Hakan Carlsson were thanked with a standing ovation for their services to STIB. The UEG would like to take this opportunity to once again express its gratitude for the excellent cooperation and organisation of the unique meetings in Sweden and the consistently reliable and enriching input from Sweden since it joined the UEG in 2015! TUSEN TACK!



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IV. Rebuild Ukraine Conference

On 13 and 14 November, the UEG participated for the third time with seven associate members in the Rebuild Ukraine Conference in Warsaw. Many thanks to the associate members, Haki, Kero, Landskroon, Layher, Nordic Platform, PlusEight and Scafom Rux, who made this presence possible for the UEG! As many languages were spoken at the UEG stand, especially Polish and Ukrainian, there were many good conversations and no language barriers.

The fair had 8,000 visitors.

There were 762 exhibitors and 33 countries represented.

The Board made a point of contacting representatives from countries that are not yet represented in the UEG. This gives us hope that connections can be established with Italy, Portugal and Spain. We are also confident that the Baltic



Scaffolding Association, which has close ties with Ukraine, will be present at one of the next UEG events!

V. General Assembly Small Business Standards (SBS)

On 3 December, the General Assembly was held with the new Secretary General Jon Echano. The agenda included the appointment of experts for the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) for 2026 and the election of the Board for the coming term of office 2026-2029. Even though the experts now act independently of the associations, the UEG can consider itself fortunate that Karsten Weise has been nominated again for TC 53. This means that the UEG SBS Mirror Committee will continue under his chairmanship. Geir Gule, who represented the UEG on site, was also elected to the SBS Board for the next term of office 2026-2029, along with 11 other people. Philip van Nieuwenhuizen was elected as the new President. In his acceptance speech, the President-elect began by expressing his deep gratitude to former President Gunilla Almgren. The President praised her impressive presence and tireless commitment to SBS since its inception, emphasising that her visionary leadership and tireless dedication have been instrumental in establishing SBS as the leading voice for SMEs in the field of standardisation. SBS embodies the hopes and ambitions of around 22.5 million SMEs across Europe.

The President presented a clear and focused plan for the new term, focusing on four strategic priorities designed to strengthen SBS's influence and support for SMEs:

Expanding SBS's reach at national level

Increasing membership, particularly among national SME associations and industry associations that are currently outside SBS.

Communicating the concrete impact of standards

The new leadership intends to highlight the concrete benefits of standardisation for SMEs and link SBS's work directly to competitiveness, resilience and public procurement in Europe.

Strengthening influence in the standardisation of new technologies

Given the rapid pace of digitalisation, AI, cybersecurity and green technologies, the President emphasised the need to ensure that SMEs are not left behind. SBS will strengthen its presence in the technical committees of CEN, CENELEC, ETSI, ISO and IEC.

Closer cooperation with ICT-oriented SME networks and start-ups will be encouraged to ensure that new technology standards remain SME-friendly.

Securing and strengthening funding

SBS is co-funded by the European Commission and EFTA, which is crucial for appointing experts to committees. The President committed to working proactively with policymakers to secure and strengthen this important funding.

The President called on all stakeholders to contribute their expertise and ideas to ensure that "the voice of SMEs in the EU is well integrated into standardisation work". See more information: <https://sbs-sme.eu/publication/press-release-sbs-elects-philip-van-nieuwenhuizen-as-new-president/>

VI. SMEUnited

a) New President

On 10 December, the SMEUnited General Assembly took place in Brussels. Secretary General Hannah Monreal was in attendance. Davide Galli was elected President for the next two years. He is a board member of Italian SMEUnited member Confartigianato and will take over from Petri Salminen (2022-2025) in January 2026. Mr Galli is a mechanical engineer and runs a company with nine employees that manufactures small precision components. In his inaugural speech, he stated:

"I am committed to simplifying legislation as the main driver of competitiveness for our businesses. In order to create a supportive regulatory environment for the 26.1 million SMEs in Europe, the 'Think Small First' principle must be applied. The many vice-presidents for the various subject areas are predominantly leading figures in national craft associations.

b) Vision 2040

At the subsequent conference " 2040 for Crafts and SMEs", Mr Salminen announced: "SMEUnited, together with its member organisations, will put the 2040 vision into practice by translating the 'Think Small First' principle from theory into practice. We invite the European Commission to work with SMEUnited to test concrete legislative initiatives to develop proposals based on an approach suitable for micro-enterprises."

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When presenting Vision 2040, Secretary General Willems explained: "The members of SMEUnited see Europe in 2040 as an entrepreneurial society with equal opportunities for businesses of all sizes and policies that promote entrepreneurial diversity, entrepreneurship and European technological sovereignty."

She continued: "SMEs and craft businesses ensure economic and social cohesion in Europe's regions and are recognised for this. SMEs and craft businesses are considered anchors of local identity, resilience, democracy and trust. They create local jobs, regional value added and promote social cohesion and social life in the regions, with particular importance in rural areas." For more information, click here: <https://www.smeunited.eu/news/smeunited-presents-vision-2040-by-crafts-and-smes>



VII. Training centre in Dortmund

Preliminary meeting on the exchange of trainees

On 4 December, Vice-President Albin Nilsson and Secretary-General Hannah Monreal met with Training Manager Florian Pelmer and Kristin Köhler from the Dortmund Education Centre. Vice-President Dagmara Tyc joined the meeting via Teams.

Albin Nilsson presented his proposal to hold a recurring exchange of trainees from all member countries lasting several days. Kristin Köhler, who had already accompanied a German-French exchange programme, see UEG-Report 01/2025, was very enthusiastic, especially as she is convinced that trainees can fuel cross-border exchanges the most. Florian Pelmer was also immediately very enthusiastic. A preparatory event to which all UEG members are cordially invited will take place on 24 March 2026 in Europe's largest training centre in Dortmund. The trainers from all member countries last met at the training centre in 2019. The new "Datapool" working group is now drawing on the documents prepared for this meeting having taken place in 2019. The UEG is confident that an initial exchange with two trainees and one trainer from each member country can take place in Dortmund as early as the last quarter of 2026.

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VIII. Events in 2026

24 March: Event at the training centre in Dortmund

September: General meeting in Manchester

22–25 October: Meeting of trainees from all member countries in Dortmund

Merry Christmas and all the best for 2026!



Facts and figures about the tree, which is being created by the company of our expert, Karsten Weise:
<https://www.weihnachtsstadt-do.de/en/weihnachtsbaum>

If you have any questions about the individual topics, please do not hesitate to contact the UEG General Secretariat: generalsecretariat@ueg-eu.org