

# Challenges and concerns of ISO 26000

by

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# Who is NORMAPME?

It is the European Office of Crafts, Trades and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises for Standardization,

- Based in Brussels
- Exclusively dedicated to SMEs, no large companies
- Member organizations in all European countries
- Member organizations represent over 12M SMEs

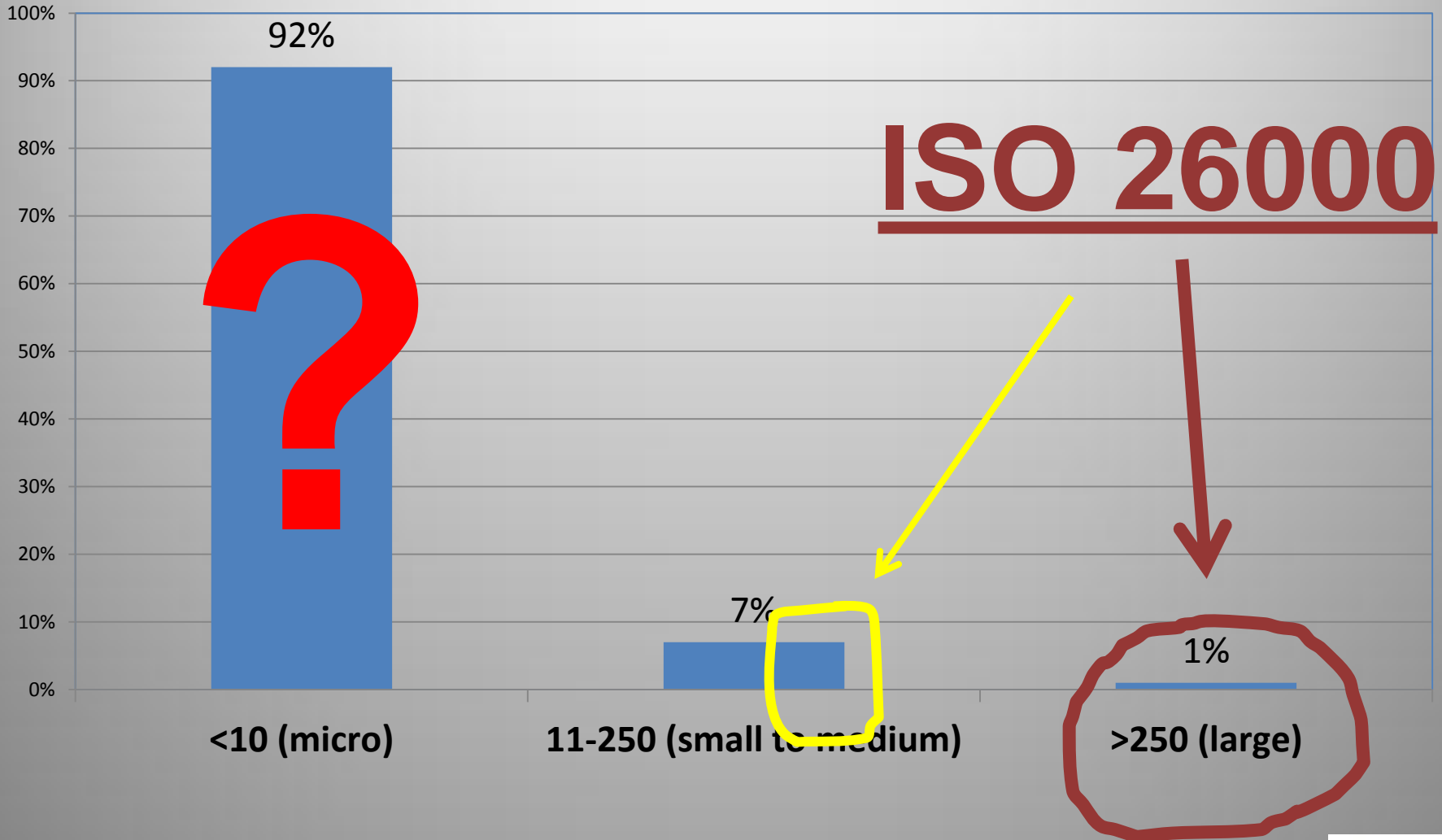
“NORMAPME is the voice of European SMEs in standardization”

# The typical European SME

- ✓ Operates locally only
- ✓ Is family owned, with family tradition
- ✓ Is autonomous (being part of a supply chain is the exception)
- ✓ Has less than ten persons, is a micro-organization
- ✓ Does not need to establish a formal organization (e.g. hierarchy, division of responsibilities, written work rules)
- ✓ Is an active part of its local community
- ✓ Is “observed” by its local community, and
- ✓ Naturally behaves in a socially responsible manner.

- The average company in Europe has 6 employees
- There are more than 24 Million SMEs in Europe

# Population of companies by size in Europe (Source: EUROSTAT)



# Europe's characteristics

While recognizing differences between European countries...

- ✓ They have their constitutions, for centuries
- ✓ They have a high implementation level of law and regulation
- ✓ They have established effectively working enforcement mechanisms, including inspections, prosecution, and jurisdiction
- ✓ They have a Social Dialogue model that is a fundamental element in the European social model (as recognized in Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union)

# ISO 26000 coverage in Europe

The core subjects are covered to a great extent by...

Organisational governance	Tradition, law, agreements between government and business
Human rights	Constitutions, law
Labour practices	Law, collective agreements
Environment	law, regulation, standards
Fair operating practices	Partly by law, business practices
Consumer issues	Law e.g. for food, competitive practices
Community involvement and development	Common understanding and practice, tradition

# Our main concerns...

...remain the ones of the ISO 26000 development, mainly

- Volume and complexity of the document
- Some problematic definitions
- Language
- Focused on larger organizations
- Applicability to micro-organizations
- Claim that all core subjects are relevant to all organizations

- ...and more recently:  
the certification debate may well turn down the good value of ISO 26000

# Our challenges and what we did



## Challenges:

- ❖ To sell the document to our national organizations, and
- ❖ Their challenge to sell it to their members (associations and individuals)

## Action:

- ❖ Development of the “NORMAPME ISO 26000 user guide for European SMEs”

**Did this change much? Not really!**



# Challenges for the ISO 26000 review



## Possible work items :

- Definitions of social responsibility, organization, international norms of behaviour, others
- Shorten the document by 50%
- Clean language, delete redundancies
- Exclude micro-organizations or develop specific guidance
- Change approach: delete the claim that all core subjects are relevant to all organizations
- Take better into account that existing law prevails over standards

**For SMEs: less is more!**

Thank you,  
NORMAPME is ready to  
further contribute