



ETSI Security Conference 2025

Insights from StandICT.eu on addressing the skills gap in cybersecurity standards

Luigi Colucci, Project Manager
at Trust-IT Services



06/10/2025



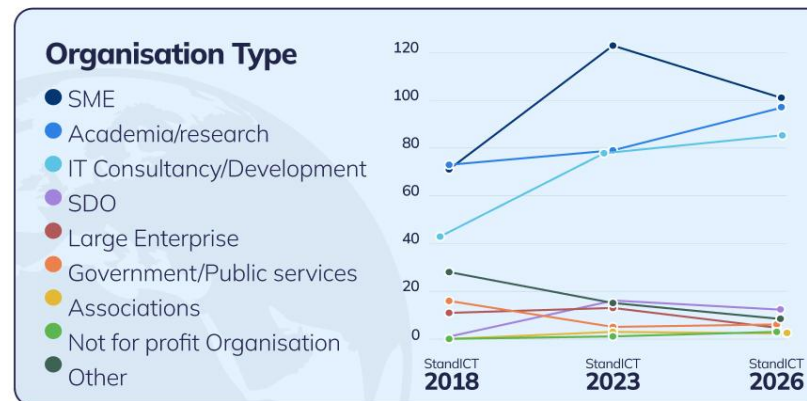
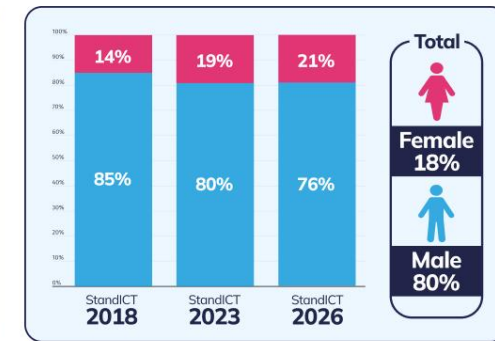
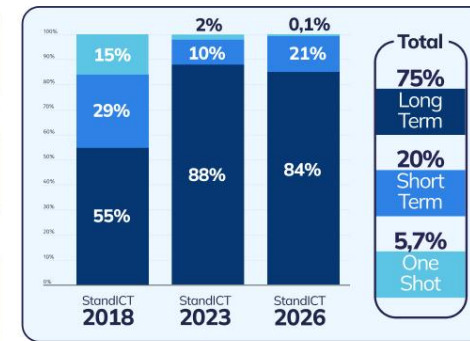
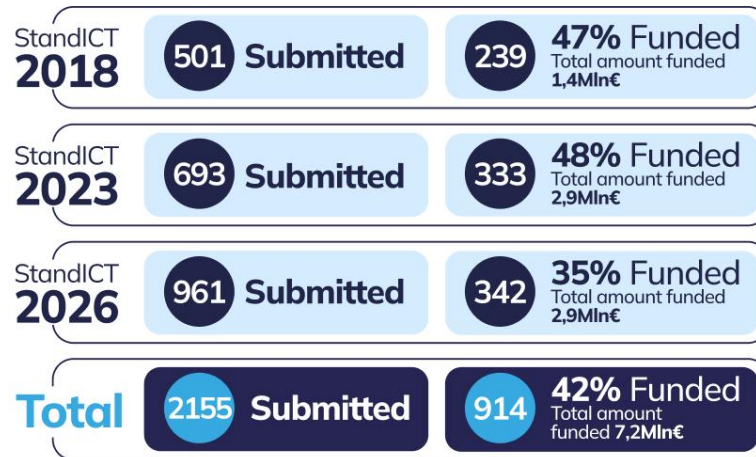
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StandICT.eu Open Calls

Supported European experts in global ICT standardisation through 9 Open Calls.

146 cybersecurity applications submitted during StandICT.eu 2026, of which 60 received a total of €444,390.00 funds.

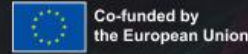
Resulting in improved SME readiness and a pipeline of experts actively contributing to standards work.



Top 3 Most Targeted Topics	StandICT 2018	StandICT 2023	StandICT 2026	Total	Percentage
CYBERSECURITY	74	56	60	190	20%
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	9	46	66	121	13%
5G & BEYOND 6G	19	31	17	67	7%

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO CRA STANDARDS



103

Submitted Applications
From SSP1 to SSP7

52

Funded Contributions
For a total amount of € 862,725



Gender 69% Male
31% Female

61%

Contributions awarded to **Small and Medium Enterprises**

Addressing Standardisation Requests

32

Horizontal standards for security requirements

9

Horizontal standards for vulnerability handling requirements

29

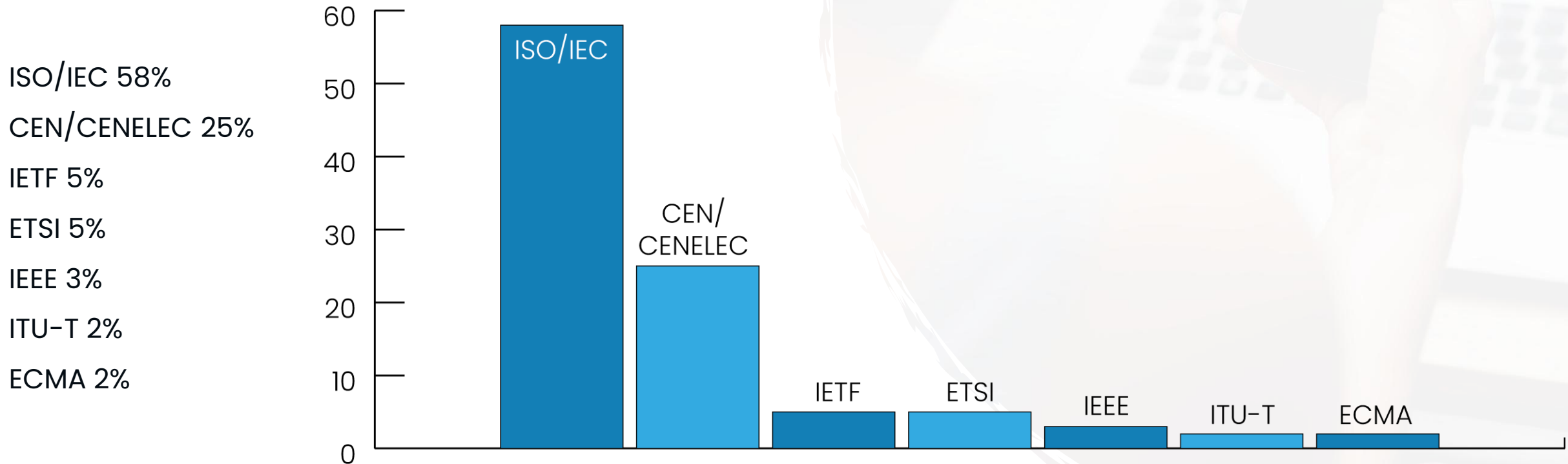
Vertical standards for security requirements

StandICT.eu impact on standardisation

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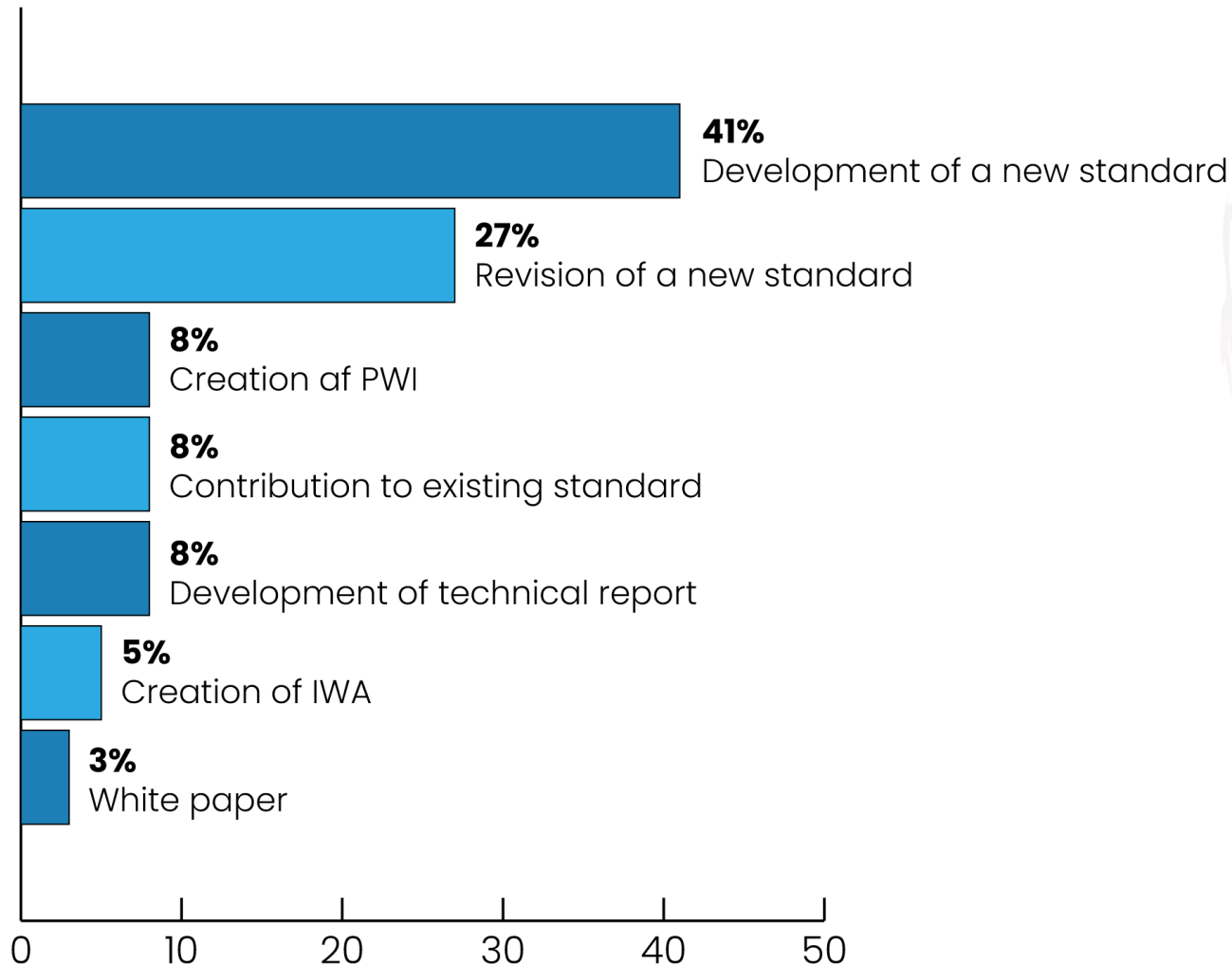
Impact

Reducing the cybersecurity skills gap means more experts able to deliver the kind of tangible impact already achieved by StandICT.eu funded fellows → impact that reshapes how SMEs, citizens, and governments operate.



StandICT.eu impact on SMEs

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Real-World Impact of EU Standardisation Funding Programmes, such as StandICT.eu and CYBERSTAND.eu

Impact of SMEs get clearer guidance.
Lower certification costs.
Interoperable standards that open new markets.
Simplified compliance with GDPR, eIDAS2, NIS2, CRA.
Open-source tools instead of vendor lock-in.
Age-appropriate and trusted digital services in EU.
EU orderly transition to quantum-safe algorithms.

StandICT.eu impact on training

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EUOS Training Standards Academy

Empower professionals through structured learning pathways in ICT standardisation. It offers 15 items, of which 9 webinars with 800+ participants and 6 modules with 900+ downloads. The material is divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels.

Lessons learned

Hundreds of professionals have gained practical skills to navigate ICT standardisation.

Demand is strong: Hundreds of participants and downloads highlight a real need for ICT standards training.

Blended formats work: They combine the immediacy of live interaction with the lasting value of self-paced learning.

Training grows the community: Training activities attract new members into the community, who can then be consulted to create more accurate, market-ready training resources.



StandICT.eu mentorship programme

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Mentorship programme

45 mentees, 30 mentors (returning StandICT.eu fellows), virtual meetings, emails.
Provide funded fellows (academia and SMEs background) with hands-on insights on how to work in SDOs:

- Drafting technical documents
- Commenting to ongoing projects
- Optimal strategies for engaging with other international stakeholders.

Impact

If Europe does not bring new experts to the SDO tables, others will.

Through mentorship and financial support, StandICT.eu enables SMEs and academics to overcome financial and knowledge barriers to engage in ICT standardisation.



StandICT.eu mentorship programme success stories

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Problem: SME expert leading ISO project faced high costs and critical feedback from Chinese delegation.

How mentorship helped: Guidance from senior mentors on how to handle international objections and engage constructively.

Result: Issue resolved, project moved forward, stronger leadership role in standardisation.

Problem: Securing stable funding for TC meetings was difficult, limiting continuity in standardisation work.

How mentorship helped: Guidance on the most relevant projects and navigate group protocols effectively.

Result: Career redirection towards compliance and AI, expert now working in a technical engineering management role.



StandICT.eu mentorship programme success stories

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Problem: Limited familiarity with chairing a standardisation effort, in particular a CEN Workshop Agreement.

How mentorship helped: Guidance on chairing standardisation meetings.

Result: Better facilitation of the CEN Workshop Agreement as chairperson, which was [successfully published](#).

Problem: Guidance needed to align security with quantum expertise, and to identify business opportunities for planning PQC implementations.

How mentorship helped: Guidance and clarity on what has already been achieved, what can be done now, and what remains to be addressed.

Result: Built a solid footing, created a quantum security plan, and started contributing to SDO work on quantum development goals.



REPORT: Expert voices from the field: how to close the cybersecurity standardisation gap

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This report was developed by the EU-funded project **StandICT.eu 2026** in collaboration with the EU-funded projects **CYBERSTAND.eu**, **INSTAR**, **HSbooster.eu**, and **NERO**.

The insights shared here reflect the hands-on experience of **38 experts** actively shaping cybersecurity standards.

These perspectives are unique as they stem from **real-world experience** rather than theory.

This report gathers expert insights and **recommendations** to help close the cybersecurity standardisation skills gap and strengthen Europe's role in **global cybersecurity standardisation**.

Download the report on the **StandICT.eu website**.



REPORT: Expert voices from the field: how to close the cybersecurity standardisation gap

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What should early-career professionals do today to close their cybersecurity standardisation skills gap?

Attend the events that **ESOs** organise on a regular basis. Use **e-learning** courses. Get involved at national level in your **National Standardisation Body (NSB)** and its relevant standardisation "mirror committees". Join SDOs WGs as **observer** through you NSB membership. Find **mentors** in standards bodies.



REPORT: Expert voices from the field: how to close the cybersecurity standardisation gap

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From your perspective, why does the cybersecurity standardisation skills gap exist, and why is it still here?

It isn't a top of mind **requirement** for companies top management tier. **Rapid evolution** of technology. Cybersecurity people tend to work on more practical problems instead of coming from a **standards** perspective. **Lack of awareness** on standards in academic programmes. Industry rewards **speed-to-market**, not compliance with standards.



REPORT: Expert voices from the field: how to close the cybersecurity standardisation gap

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What recommendations would you give now to policymakers to close the gap?

Mandatory **training**, better **long-term funding** (years vs months), disseminate **success stories** of how standards improved people's lives. Support initiatives to **fund SMEs and researchers** to attend standards meetings as observers, Support Cybersecurity experts to contribute to standardisation activities via different levels of grants.



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If you could choose, what bold or unconventional actions would you take to close this gap in 1-2 years?

Pen testing and **audits**, showing companies how security impacts them. Create **open database** of standards application **best practices** giving SMEs free guidance otherwise hidden by consultants. Fund student travel and research on standards. Encourage **open standards** work and connect newcomers with experienced contributors. Offer **awards** for standards work and publish **compliance roadmaps** to raise awareness among leaders and companies. Allow publication and use of drafts/beta standards.



REPORT: Expert voices from the field: how to close the cybersecurity standardisation gap

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What are the emerging skills that are currently missing in cybersecurity standardisation?

Machine Learning & GenAI Security, Machine-Readable Standards, AI Incident & Threat Intelligence, Threat Modelling & New Techniques, Technical Offensive Skills, Malware Analysis & Forensics, Threat Intelligence Automation, Zero Trust Interoperability.



Actionable steps forward

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Cybersecurity threats evolve daily; standards skills can't lag behind:

- **Education** on cybersecurity standardisation should be integrated into **university curricula**, building on existing training provided by ETSI and CEN-CENELEC.
- Link skills funding to **EU regulations** (CRA, NIS2) to ensure relevance.
- Promote the [Cybersecurity Skills Academy](#) as a **one-stop shop** offering clear, **plug-and-play** learning pathways where users can easily see which skills they will gain, what they will be able to do after completing a course.
- Ensure that the learning pathways in the Cybersecurity Skills Academy are fully **aligned** with the [European Cybersecurity Skills Framework \(ECSF\)](#).



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standICT.eu 2026
ICT Standardisation Observatory and Support Facility in Europe

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