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*Plenary sitting*

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**A9-0136/2023**

12.4.2023

# REPORT

on a standardisation strategy for the single market  
(2022/2058(INI))

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Rapporteur: Adam Bielan

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on a standardisation strategy for the single market (2022/2058(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on European standardisation<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 2 February 2022 on the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 from 2016 to 2020 (COM(2022)0030),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 2 February 2022 entitled ‘An EU Strategy on Standardisation: Setting global standards in support of a resilient, green and digital EU single market’ (COM(2022)0031),
- having regard to the proposal of 2 February 2022 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 as regards the decisions of European standardisation organisations concerning European standards and European standardisation deliverables (COM(2022)0032),
- having regard to the Commission Notice of 2 February 2022 entitled ‘The 2022 annual Union work programme for European standardisation’ (C(2022)0546),
- having regard to the Commission staff working document of 22 February 2022 entitled ‘EU strategic dependencies and capacities: second stage of in-depth reviews’ (SWD(2022)0041),
- having regard to the Commission Decision of 1 September 2022 setting up the group of experts ‘High-Level Forum on European Standardisation’ (C(2022)6189),
- having regard to the Joint Initiative on standardisation under the single market strategy, as referred to in the Commission communication of 28 October 2015 entitled ‘Upgrading the Single Market: more opportunities for people and business’ (COM(2015)0550) and the summary of actions from the Joint Initiative on Standardisation of 15 July 2019,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 July 2017 on European standards for the 21st century<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 18 May 2022 entitled ‘Standardisation strategy / Standardisation regulation’,

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<sup>1</sup> [OJ L 316, 14.11.2012, p. 12.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [OJ C 334, 19.9.2018, p. 2.](#)

- having regard to the Commission communication of 19 February 2020 entitled ‘Shaping Europe’s digital future’ (COM(2020)0067),
  - having regard to the Commission white paper of 19 February 2020 entitled ‘On Artificial Intelligence – A European approach to excellence and trust’ (COM(2020)0065),
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 19 February 2020 entitled ‘A European Strategy for Data’ (COM(2020)0066),
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 11 December 2019 entitled ‘The European Green Deal’ (COM(2019)0640),
  - having regard to the Commission communication of 14 July 2021 entitled “‘Fit for 55’”: delivering the EU’s 2030 Climate Target on the way to climate neutrality’ (COM(2021)0550),
  - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (A9-0136/2023),
- A. whereas the functioning of the internal market is greatly facilitated by the market’s adoption and use of standards; whereas the adoption of European standards and European standardisation deliverables facilitates market access, enhances the competitiveness of European companies and the safety of citizens, contributes to strengthening the single market and simplifies compliance for market participants and national authorities, replacing as many as 34 national standards with one European standard; whereas harmonised standards provide manufacturers, service providers and other economic operators with the presumption of conformity of their products and services with the essential requirements provided for in Union legislation, among other benefits;
- B. whereas the European standardisation system is based on an inclusive, consensus-based, market-driven approach, which should allow for involvement of all stakeholders in such a way as to ensure that the standards are developed to address the needs of industry and at the same time contribute to fulfilling the interests of wider society, including those of consumers and civil society at large, as well as sustainability requirements; highlights in that regard the need for additional efforts towards making standards gender responsive, reflecting physical differences and addressing equally the needs of women and men; whereas Parliament and the Council have already adopted a partial revision of the existing standardisation legislative framework to improve the decision-making processes of the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) in order to maintain these twin focuses on industry needs and the interests of wider society;
- C. whereas the participation of organisations referred to in Annex III of Regulation 1025/2012 in the standardisation process is guaranteed by that Regulation, yet is limited by persistent entry barriers such as lack of expertise and sufficient financial resources for these organisations;

- D. whereas standards, both at international and European level, are important drivers for market development, technological change and innovation, competitiveness and a level playing field in line with the objectives of the European Green Deal, as well as for a high level of protection of consumers; whereas the Member States, European institutions and the ESOs cooperate with international standardisation bodies and have agreements in place to facilitate the use of international standards in the Union; whereas although European industry is an active participant in international standardisation work streams, the effective representation of smaller companies and societal stakeholders in international forums needs to be further encouraged and supported;
- E. whereas beyond formal cooperation with international bodies, the Commission and the Member States are continuing to develop shared approaches with like-minded third countries or trade agreement partners in the area of standardisation;

### ***General remarks***

1. Welcomes the adoption of the standardisation strategy, which sets out five main areas for action for the Commission; considers that the classification of priority areas for action closely aligns with the weaknesses and strengths of the current system identified during the stakeholder consultation; stresses that the list of areas for action could be further expanded and that there is a need to increase the focus of the strategy on the uptake and implementation of standards, especially among SMEs; notes also the adoption of, and progress on, the 2022 annual work programme on standardisation and looks forward to the 2023 and 2024 annual work programmes;
2. Considers that the fundamental qualities of the standardisation system remain relevant and effective for the proper functioning of the internal market and the competitiveness of European industry; underlines that harmonised standards reduce market barriers, and recalls that standards are a voluntary, market-driven, non-legally binding tool providing technical requirements and guidance, the use of which facilitates the compliance of goods and services with European legislation and ensures fair competition in the market; supports the development of European standards in an accountable, transparent and inclusive way, ensuring that the needs and specificities of all relevant stakeholders, including SMEs and other societal actors, are taken into account;
3. Stresses that standards are pursued in different areas, but that while they might have legal effect, standards cannot be seen as EU law, since legislation and policies regarding the level of consumer, health, safety, environmental and data protection are determined by the legislator; recalls, within this context, the voluntary nature of standards and considers that only Union legislation can set out mandatory requirements and common specifications, for example by means of delegated and implementing acts; stresses, in this regard, the importance of maintaining an inclusive process;
4. Recalls that the ESOs should always consider the EU policy objectives when drafting standards;
5. Stresses that European standards and European standardisation deliverables should be open, inclusive, transparent, high-quality and where applicable, promote durable products which are easier to repair, re-use and recycle and should also respect the rules regarding the protection of personal data and privacy;

6. Encourages efforts that aim to tackle conflicting standards between Member States, which can create unjustified barriers to entry into the single market; calls on the ESOs to step up their efforts to develop harmonised standards, in order to reduce market fragmentation and therefore decrease administrative costs for citizens and businesses, in particular SMEs and microenterprises, including through better representation of these entities;
7. Stresses the importance of standardisation in the areas where non-standardisation has the highest potential to disadvantage consumers including older persons and persons with disabilities; highlights in that regard the role standards play in setting stable and predictable frameworks, in particular for products offered to consumers;
8. Calls for improved representation within the standardisation system and for balanced representation among designated experts, in order to guarantee fair outcomes in respect of the Union's accessibility legislation and standards;
9. Supports the creation of an annual standardisation dashboard to be published along with the annual EU work programme and the rolling plan for ICT standardisation, covering the planned, current and completed standardisation activities with the aim of bringing more transparency to the European standardisation system; emphasises that the dashboard should make it easy for all stakeholders to discover, follow and, where relevant, contribute to the activities pertinent to their areas of interest;

#### ***Leveraging the European standardisation system***

10. Supports the launch of the High-Level Forum on European Standardisation and the desire to broaden the range of voices heard when identifying standardisation priorities and needs, planning future activities and coordinating approaches in standardisation bodies; underlines that this expert group should include a diverse range of stakeholders, including SMEs and consumer organisations, and ensure transparency in its activities, without losing sight of the bottom-up, market-driven nature of standardisation activities; considers that the High-Level Forum may offer input on both strategic and operational levels, in particular in conjunction with the EU excellence hub on standards on technical matters;
11. Welcomes the creation of an EU excellence hub on standards and the appointment of a chief standardisation officer (CSO) in the Commission; believes that this position and the hub, as a resource, should lead to greater consistency across the Commission in terms of standardisation requests and the timely adoption of standards and legislative provisions with relevance to standardisation, as well as to the consistent application of the new legislative framework, to the benefit of public administrations, businesses and other stakeholders; considers that the person holding this oversight function should be an important interlocutor for Parliament, informing it on the Commission's standardisation activities and enabling effective scrutiny on a technical level;
12. Considers that the Commission, with recourse to the High-Level Forum and EU excellence hub, may elaborate more efficient methods for the technical evaluation of standards; believes that there is a need for clarity among parties participating in the standardisation process on what is required and for effective procedures to allow

remedial works during development of the standards in order to avoid delays once the experts complete their work;

13. Underlines the importance of speeding up the activities of the High-Level Forum for Standardisation and of the EU excellence hub, which should take a proactive approach to allow for the timely identification of standardisation needs and should help in striking a fair balance between the needs to shorten the process and to ensure open, inclusive, reliable and high-quality standards; encourages the strengthening of technical expertise and skills in the High-Level Forum, including through sub-groups of experts that are able to elaborate programmes to mainstream training activities and further improve the standardisation system at EU level;
14. Recommends that the Commission should, in consultation with the ESOs, establish a clear set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and guidelines on the aspects of standardisation within its remit, in particular for standards linked to the objectives of the European Green Deal and of the Europe Digital Decade, in order to set precise targets for standardisation-related developments, including civil society participation; considers that these KPIs should be managed via the CSO and the EU excellence hub and may contribute to more effective management and scrutiny of standardisation activities undertaken by the Commission;
15. Notes the risk of overlap between the High-Level Forum and the EU excellence hub, together with other expert groups, industry forums and policy-specific groupings, such as the AccessibleEU centre, which Parliament considers could assist the Commission on standardisation matters; encourages the Commission to avoid the duplication of work streams and to seek collaboration between forums where possible so as to make the best use of experts' limited time, encourage participation and minimise administrative costs;
16. Welcomes the intention to involve Parliament and the Council in an annual event to prepare priorities for standardisation activities; recalls that standardisation is strategic for the internal market and considers that deeper and more regular scrutiny by the co-legislators is desirable;
17. Welcomes the fact that the Commission wishes to accelerate the steps involved in developing standards; considers that the timely preparation of robust, high-quality standards meeting market and societal needs is necessary for the proper functioning of the internal market, keeping pace with innovation and international competitiveness; stresses that delays have occurred in a variety of sectors, leading to difficulties for operators, national authorities and civil society where standards are not available, or to fragmentation where only national standards can be used; underlines, to that end, that public consultation with stakeholders, consensus building, inclusiveness and the proper verification of whether standards satisfy EU legal requirements, in particular in the case of harmonised standards, should prevail over speed;
18. Believes that the long delays in the standardisation processes stem from various causes; considers that the Commission should urgently reconsider its approach following the *James Elliott*<sup>3</sup> case; calls on the Commission to avoid the use of overly prescriptive

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<sup>3</sup> Judgment of the Court of 27 October 2016, *James Elliott Construction Limited v Irish Asphalt Limited*, C-613/14, ECLI:EU:C:2016:821.

requirements in relation to standardisation requests, which reduce the capacity of experts to propose appropriate and timely solutions to meet the demand for a standard request and narrow the scope for future-proofing standards;

19. Considers that EU product legislation should focus on essential health and safety requirements, applying where possible a technology-neutral approach, leaving the technical requirements to harmonised EU standards;
20. Stresses that there may be inherent limits to speeding up the standardisation process, as the preparation of standards, citation of harmonised standards and industry implementation of those standards all add time before market adoption; recognises that it may be easier to accelerate administrative tasks, such as the publication of the reference (citation) to the harmonised standard in the Official Journal of the European Union; highlights that the broader uptake of existing standards rather than the drafting of new ones would also have positive effects on timing and would allow for easier understanding and implementation; points out that the unduly rushed preparation or deployment of standards creates challenges for all stakeholders, including national authorities, as each shortened deadline may have negative effects on the achievement of a broad and robust consensus among all interested parties;
21. Encourages the Commission, while making improvements to its own internal processes, to continue working with the ESOs on ways of achieving timely delivery, including early exchange of information on the content and feasibility of standardisation requests the Commission is planning and the consideration of the most suitable standardisation deliverable depending on the need;
22. Welcomes the action plan developed by the task force between the Commission, the European Free Trade Association and the ESOs entitled ‘A Successful European Standardisation System – Timely European Standards for a Green and Digital, Single and Global Market’, which has the ability to increase the efficiency of the standardisation process as it helps address questions of understanding and feasibility at an early stage;
23. Calls, therefore, for stable, clear criteria for the assessment of harmonised standards, commonly understood by all stakeholders, as well as for the provision of the necessary resources to ensure their timely assessment; stresses, in particular, that the Commission must ensure proper financial planning for harmonised standards consultants and suggests an increase in coordination between these consultants and the EU excellence hub on standardisation;
24. Notes that when setting priorities for standardisation and issuing new standardisation requests, the Commission’s starting point should be an overview of the relevant existing standards; stresses that new standards should be developed where clear gaps are identified; underlines the importance of providing support for the uptake and use of standards, especially among SMEs;

***Upholding the integrity, inclusiveness and accessibility of the European standardisation system***



25. Considers that an evaluation of Regulation (EU) 1025/2012 may identify areas where further efforts with the option of reforms are needed, beyond the targeted amendment already introduced by the Commission; considers that the role, participation and input of relevant stakeholders, including those representing, SMEs, social partners and environmental, social and consumer interests, should be evaluated and strengthened where such reforms may be beneficial and complementary to work envisaged by the ESOs following the Commission's call for them to present proposals to reform their own internal governance; notes that a reform should also enhance inclusiveness and the effective participation of societal stakeholders beyond the current standardisation framework, therefore taking into account the actual results of the consensus-building process;
26. Recalls that in the past years, the ESOs' practices as regards their internal governance and decision-making procedures have changed, and that they have increased their cooperation with international and European stakeholders;
27. Encourages the Commission to improve transparency requirements in the field of standardisation and expects the amending regulation concerning the decisions of European standardisation organisations on European standards and European standardisation deliverables to be implemented swiftly; considers that the amending regulation may help to reinforce decision-making without affecting the important role played by the broader stakeholder base in preparing effective standards that respond to public-interest and market needs;
28. Highlights that the effective participation of European SMEs and other societal stakeholders in international standardisation continues to be a major challenge, owing to limited resources such as funding; believes that the Commission should cooperate with Member States in order to increase financial support and ensure that funding programmes are available that can provide substantial, long-term and stable financial support for the involvement of various stakeholders, including SMEs and consumers organisations; calls for better use to be made of existing tools and guidance that take into account the needs and interests of SMEs and other stakeholders; believes that, with a view to increasing the participation of civil society and broadening the scope of Annex III of Regulation 1025/2012, the Commission should carry out an exercise in mapping civil society organisations which have an interest in contributing to standardisation work at European level;
29. Believes that the participation of SMEs at national level should be promoted, as it is on this level that they can be most effective by virtue of lower costs and the absence of language barriers; notes that the standardisation framework should encourage SMEs to participate actively, notably through access to standardisation activities or, where feasible, the application of reduced rates, and should provide innovative technological solutions in standardisation activities; highlights that national standardisation bodies should facilitate SMEs' access to standards by identifying, in their annual work programmes, standardisation projects of particular interest to SMEs;
30. Welcomes the focus on national-level involvement of wider stakeholders, including SMEs and consumer organisations, in standardisation activities; considers that exchange of best practices may aid Member States and national standardisation bodies to improve

the participation of different stakeholders, in particular SMEs and civil society organisations, but cautions that this should complement and not duplicate the work already undertaken by the ESOs or in networks already established by the organisations listed in Annex III of Regulation 1025/2012; notes that not all organisations listed in Annex III have national counterparts in all Member States; believes that the Commission should increase funding or technical support to those organisations to ensure participation in national standardisation activities, including not only technical work on standards, but also the preparation of positions vis-à-vis standardisation requests at European and international levels, thereby reinforcing the inclusivity of the process as a whole; stresses the importance of ensuring that additional financial support for the participation of SMEs and SME associations is provided by Member States at national level;

31. Notes that in some Member States, national standardisation bodies have already established solidarity mechanisms in which industrial stakeholders contribute to the participation fee of societal stakeholders on the basis of certain criteria such as the size and turnover of the company; calls on the Commission and on the ESOs to evaluate those mechanisms;
32. Recognises the need for a consistent approach towards common specifications, in particular as different legislative processes are currently giving rise to divergent provisions; regrets that the procedure for the adoption of common specifications has not been agreed on a horizontal level and stresses the need for a harmonized approach towards common specifications throughout different Union legislative acts; highlights the importance of linkage between common specifications and existing European and international standards in order to ease compliance, especially for small and medium-sized companies: considers, therefore, that this mechanism should only be used in exceptional cases where the Commission has requested one or more ESOs to draft a harmonised standard and where that request is not delivered within the deadline set or where the request has not been accepted, and only when the standards are not expected to be published within a reasonable period; insists that when harmonised standards are published in the Official Journal of the European Union, common specifications should be repealed; expresses concern about common specifications regarding, among other things, respect for fundamental rights, where recourse to implementing acts affects the co-legislators' powers of scrutiny; stresses that neither standards nor common specifications must address fundamental rights or socio-economic issues;
33. Believes that an evaluation of Regulation (EU) 1025/2012 should assess the possibility of incorporating horizontal provisions on common specifications so that upcoming proposals are able to coherently make reference to it;
34. Considers that divergent regulatory outcomes may also affect the standardisation process more generally, owing to differing terminology, the lack of standard clauses for standardisation requests and difficulties in *ex ante* oversight; underlines that this problem is even more significant where standards are relevant for more than one regulatory act; believes that a common approach or formalised agreement between the Commission and the co-legislators could be explored in order to streamline the preparation of standards and detailed conditions for common specifications;

35. Welcomes the launch of a peer review process among Member States and national standardisation bodies to exchange good practices and propose new ideas for the more effective involvement of civil society and consumers, as well as to set up SMEs-friendly conditions for standardisation;
36. Welcomes the creation of a European website dedicated to the monitoring of internet standards; calls on the Commission to reflect on the creation of an open-access register of all standards developed by the EU in order to allow greater transparency and to encourage citizens to take an interest in the development of European standards.

### *Setting international standards*

37. Believes that it is essential to improve European coordination and engagement at international level in relation to standardisation, with like-minded global partners, while respecting the right of national delegations to reach their own decisions in international forums; considers, nevertheless, that where similar viewpoints exist and are also shared with like-minded third-country partners, European policy leadership on standard development can act as a multiplier for European industrial leadership;
38. Welcomes the valuable role envisaged for international standardisation activities in the strategy; considers that the adoption of international standards by the ESOs could aid European companies when they seek to trade outside of the Union; recalls that not all countries automatically adopt international standards as replacements for domestic standards and invites the Commission and the Member States to encourage third countries to adopt this approach;
39. Emphasises that prioritising standardisation matters in cooperation with third countries in bi-, multi- and pluri-lateral settings is also important to ensure that like-minded, inclusive approaches towards standardisation can prevail at international level and foster cooperation between like-minded democratic partners; calls for the Commission and the ESOs to engage with international counterparts and like-minded trading partners to ensure greater inclusiveness in the international standardisation system and stronger representation of all stakeholders, and to enhance the overall outreach of the EU in the global standardisation system; encourages, in this regard, the Commission and the CSO to develop key performance indicators to monitor commitments and developments on standardisation between the Union and third countries in consultation with the ESOs, which would lead to an increase both of competition in the internal market and of consumer protection to the benefit of the entire economy;
40. Notes that international consortiums have specific relevance in certain sectors, including with respect to the twin transitions; underlines the positive role that incorporating standards developed in consortiums into the European standardisation scheme can have in achieving policy objectives, for example the adoption of USB-C as a common charging platform; urges the Commission and the ESOs to build on this and other examples of best practice and to consider how best to facilitate the adoption of consortium-led standards where they contribute to achieving Union goals;
41. Encourages close European and EU-NATO cooperation regarding harmonisation of standards in the field of defence in order to enhance interoperability;

### ***Cutting-edge innovations that foster timely standard-setting***

42. Stresses the value of commercialisation for research activities, including those launched under the Union's research funding programmes, whose suitability for standardisation of projects should be considered at an early stage; welcomes the creation of the 'standardisation booster', as a test bed for standards' suitability; recalls that the collaborative nature of Union funded research, including with third-country researchers, may be beneficial to standards development and support not only the creation of standards but also the next generation of experts involved in standardisation activities; believes that such efforts should aim at helping researchers participate in the development of European norms within the ESOs;
43. Underlines that while the new legislative framework requires an update, the Commission should promote its approach, the use and integration of international standards and coordination among all actors through free trade agreements, in particular with regard to the Global Gateway;
44. Supports the emphasis placed on standards activities in deployment programmes such as the Connecting Europe Facility and Digital Europe programme, as key means to facilitate the uptake of new and innovative technologies and approaches;
45. Acknowledges the development of the European Code of Practice for researchers on standardisation to promote an overarching approach to standardisation activities in line with EU policy objectives and strategic interests;
46. Is of the opinion that open standards might be helpful to develop innovative solutions and open government policies based on transparency, accountability and reliability;

### ***Ensuring future standardisation expertise***

47. Supports the development of awareness-raising and training programmes, including life-long learning programmes and vocational education and training aimed at developing pathways towards standardisation activities for academics, future industry professionals, policymakers and civil society representatives; calls for training and mentorship programmes to be launched to promote awareness of standards and the benefits of standardisation, particularly aimed at SMEs and other underrepresented stakeholders in standardisation; believes that such awareness-raising and training programmes must be developed in cooperation with industry to ensure that they are fit for purpose and reflect the market-driven approach to standardisation;
48. Supports the funding of European standardisation organisations to carry out preliminary or ancillary activities in relation to European standardisation, which also include cooperation activities, including international ones, research and conformity assessment activities and measures aimed at ensuring that the processing and revision times for European standards or European standardisation deliverables are reduced, without prejudice to the founding principles, in particular the principles of openness, quality, transparency and consensus among all stakeholders;
49. Notes that drafting and implementing standards requires a high degree of technical expertise and that a lack of qualified experts in the public and private sectors might be

exacerbated by new digital challenges that will require more technical skills and competences, and that further efforts are needed to increase knowledge and awareness among public and private stakeholders; welcomes the Commission's initiative to organise the Standardisation University Days to promote awareness among academia and students and to further include standardisation among the projects of the EU academic community; notes that the High-Level Forum should promote the development of academic teaching modules in standardisation in order to improve competences and encourages Member States to include relevant professional education courses on standards in their national education systems;

50. Reiterates its call for greater collaboration among EU institutions, the Joint Research Centre, national governments, civil society and the ESOs to develop training guidelines for policymakers and to create a standardisation culture, including an understanding of how standards processes work and when they can be used; considers that this is as necessary as other internal reforms to provide a solid platform for future standardisation activities, scrutiny and development of standardisation priorities;

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51. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

### **General remarks and state of play**

The European Union institutions have been working hard to create a single market which is both fair and efficient. Standardisation is one of the key tools in achieving this goal. The functioning of the internal market is now greatly facilitated by the adoption of market standards. They replace as many as 34 national standards with a single, European one, to meet the needs of our industries, as well as the interests of society as a whole.

In practical terms, this means that standardisation supports the creation of a level playing field for businesses - it ensures that everyone is playing by the same rules, and that there are no unfair advantages given to one company over another.

Standardisation also helps to protect consumers by guaranteeing that the products and services they use are safe and of high quality. Consumers can therefore make informed choices when purchasing goods and services, knowing that they meet certain standards.

The report drafted by the Rapporteur Mr Adam Bielan aims to outline Parliament's priorities on standardisation in the Single Market as well, on the global scale. The report on Standardisation Strategy recognises and addresses the advantages and weaknesses of the system identified during the consultations with stakeholders.

### **Resolving implementation issues and backlog of standards**

One of the major issues concerns further shift of responsibilities between the Commission and the standardisation organisations. With regards to this particular shift, the Rapporteur is convinced that stakeholders should steer the work, while the Commission shall participate in the process to highlight challenges and inadequate approach with the requirements. The report also highlights the need for reforming the standardisation process in the EU. This stems from the delays in adopting standards. In order to facilitate compliance with existing law and reduce the cost of complying with technical requirements, it is crucial that the current delays are streamlined - this is extremely important for small and medium-sized enterprises, the backbone of the European economy. However, the report doesn't mention the technical process itself - unduly rushed preparation or deployment of standards creates challenges for all stakeholders.

In this context, the Rapporteur welcomes new initiatives such as the launch of the High-Level Forum for Standardisation and the desire to broaden the range of voices heard on this issue. In the Rapporteur's view, this Forum might be great tool to bridge the Commission's and stakeholders' views, provided that truly diverse representation is achieved, including geographical representation. The Rapporteur also welcomes the creation of the EU Excellence Hub on Standards, bringing all the Commission's experts together and the establishment of the Chief Standardisation Officer position, thereby enhancing coordination efforts.

### **International cooperation on the standardisation**

Furthermore, in the Rapporteur's belief, international cooperation should be supported to improve the European commitment in this area. To preserve global trade dynamics, there is a need to ensure that like-minded and inclusive approaches towards standardisation can prevail at the international level, especially with the EU's geopolitical partners such as the US, Canada and other likeminded economies. The Rapporteur sees an added value in trying to find global rather than regional solutions, especially on the digital issues.

### **Small and medium-size enterprises and societal stakeholders**

The report also advocates for improvement of SMEs' and other societal partners' involvement in the process, as well as finding ways for simplifying compliance with the legal requirements. The report also encourages additional financing and technical assistance to stakeholders who act on national level but are often omitted in the discussions in Brussels – this especially concerns SMEs.

The development of awareness-raising and training programmes for academics, future industry professionals and policymakers is also to be welcomed.

### **Voluntary nature of standards**

Finally, it is made clear in the report that standards are voluntary tools and shouldn't be overused to force particular ideas on the technical level when implementing the law. The Rapporteur highlights the importance of the market-driven process that should stand behind standards.

### **Future of the standardisation in the EU**

In general, the Rapporteur welcomes the fact that the standardisation is seen increasingly at the centre of EU digital and industrial strategy and that it is finally getting a well-deserved attention. The Rapporteur believes the implementation of standards is instrumental to trigger market developments and drive technological change across the EU, by promoting a cohesive approach, therefore avoiding conflicts and duplication of work.

The legislation should be future proof. One of the challenges the EU faces is the rapid pace of technological change. The EU will need to adapt quickly to ensure that standards keep up with new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things.

The Rapporteur's ultimate goal is to develop recommendations and clearly communicate the IMCO Committee views on standardisation and the upcoming reform of the system in Europe.

The Rapporteur hopes this process is a further step towards a better single market, enhancing the efficiency and security of public and private services, business, and commerce in the Union.



## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	28.3.2023
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 38 -: 0 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Andrus Ansip, Brando Benifei, Adam Bielan, Biljana Borzan, Markus Buchheit, Anna Cavazzini, Dita Charanzová, Lara Comi, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese, Sandro Gozi, Maria Grapini, Krzysztof Hetman, Virginie Joron, Arba Kokalari, Andrey Kovatchev, Jean-Lin Lacapelle, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Antonius Manders, Beata Mazurek, Leszek Miller, Miroslav Radačovský, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Róza Thun und Hohenstein, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Kim Van Sparrentak, Marion Walsmann
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marc Angel, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Malte Gallée, Ivars Ijabs, Tsvetelina Penkova, Romana Tomc, Kosma Złotowski
<b>Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote</b>	Miriam Lexmann, Jan-Christoph Oetjen

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

38	+
ECR	Adam Bielan, Beata Mazurek, Kosma Złotowski
ID	Virginie Joron, Jean-Lin Lacapelle
NI	Miroslav Radačovský
PPE	Lara Comi, Krzysztof Hetman, Arba Kokalari, Andrey Kovatchev, Miriam Lexmann, Antonius Manders, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Romana Tomc, Tom Vandenkendelaere, Marion Walsmann
Renew	Andrus Ansip, Vlad-Marius Botoș, Dita Charanzová, Sandro Gozi, Ivars Ijabs, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Róza Thun und Hohenstein
S&D	Marc Angel, Brando Benifei, Biljana Borzan, Maria Grapini, Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, Leszek Miller, Tsvetelina Penkova, René Repasi, Christel Schaldemose
Verts/ALE	Anna Cavazzini, David Cormand, Malte Gallée, Alexandra Geese, Kim Van Sparrentak

0	-

1	0
ID	Markus Buchheit

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention