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## Standardisation strategy implementation as a key step for the future of the single market

Brussels, 16 November – In light of the publication of the European Parliament IMCO (Internal Market and Consumer Protection) Committee [draft report](#) on the standardisation strategy produced by rapporteur Mr. Adam Bielan (ECR, PL), SBS presented today its [position paper](#) on the content of the strategy and its implementation. The standardisation strategy was published by the European Commission in February 2022.

SBS positively notes the consistent references made in the IMCO draft report to strengthening the role and interests of SMEs and other societal stakeholders in standardisation, particularly with an eye to the upcoming proposals for governance reform that should be put forward by the European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) before the end of the year.

Overall, SBS fully supports the strategy's commitment to a more inclusive, transparent and effective European standardisation system and largely appreciates the first steps that have been taken over the last few months to implement its measures. Although there have been advances towards inclusiveness, SBS considers that there is still room for improvement to ensure the effective representation of SMEs in standardisation and makes a series of proposals in this regard.

According to SBS, standardisation bodies should be encouraged to further work with SME associations to ensure the representation of SME interests in their work. SMEs tend to rely more than large companies on business associations to represent their interest in standardisation.

The SBS position paper also calls for increased participation of SMEs in standardisation at the national level to achieve a more balanced and inclusive European standardisation system and to influence international standards. SBS supports the launch of a peer review process between Member States and national standards bodies to identify best practices and those areas where SME participation at the national level could be further improved.

In order to ensure further involvement in standardisation by SMEs, SBS calls for the creation of a one-stop-shop to monitor and keep track of standardisation-related developments at the national, European and international levels.

An important obstacle to the participation of SMEs in standardisation is the availability of resources. The EU and EFTA provide financial support for the participation of SMEs in standardisation at the European and international levels. Additional financial support should be provided at the national level for the participation of SMEs and SME associations. Also, funding and support schemes should be available to help SMEs to buy and access standards at special rates and help them with their implementation. In general, with regard to the future steps of the implementation of the strategy, SBS calls for a stronger focus on measures to favour the uptake and implementation of standards by SMEs in their economic activities.

Regarding some of the implementation measures that are already getting under way, SBS welcomes the creation of the High-Level Forum on European standardisation and stresses the need for a strong representation in the forum.

As for the upcoming evaluation of Regulation 1025/2012, whose launch has been announced for the end of 2022, SBS appreciates the recommendation made in the IMCO draft report to "strengthen ... the role, participation and input" of SME associations and other societal stakeholders. However, SBS believes that this goal can be achieved by fully implementing the provisions of Regulation 1025/2012, particularly Articles 5 and 6 on stakeholder participation and access of SMEs to standards at the national level, rather than by proceeding to its revision.

Commenting on the IMCO draft report and the implementation of the strategy, SBS Secretary General Maitane Olabarria said: "SMEs and microenterprises face strong and diverse challenges in interacting with standardisation. It is important that their views, concerns and needs are considered by the Parliament in their own initiative report and in the implementation of the strategy in general".

[Read the position paper](#)

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**EDITORS' NOTES:** Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in standardisation. SBS is co-financed by the European Union and EFTA. Its 21 members are national and European sectoral and inter-professional associations representing SMEs in 32 European countries.

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