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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Delegations

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Subject: Boosting the role of Member States to strengthen the European  
Standardisation System

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Delegations will find in Annex a Presidency note on *Boosting the Role of Member States to Strengthen the European Standardisation System*, in view of the meeting of the Working Party on Technical Harmonisation (Attaches) on 8 September 2023.

## **Boosting the Role of Member States to Strengthen the European Standardisation System**

*Working Party on Technical Harmonisation (Standardisation)*

*8 September 2023*

### **Background**

Two of the outcomes from the publication in February 2022 of the European Standardisation Strategy<sup>1</sup> have been the launch of the **High-Level European Forum on Standardisation** and the appointment of a **Chief Standardisation Officer** in the Commission. As a result, the Commission will allow for a greater coherence in the coordination of the legislative provisions that can be developed through standardisation for the benefit of public administrations, companies, and other interested parties.

Presently, the activity of the High-Level Forum on European Standardisation plays a decisive role in identifying the standardisation needs of the Union in view of its political and legislative priorities, and in establishing a framework for coordination and dialogue among all the parties that contribute to the European standardisation system (ESS).

The system pursues **a balanced view in order to respond quickly to the identified needs. ESS should also ensure adequate levels of quality, in accordance with the public authorities' requirements, the possibilities of the markets, and the development of new technologies., all of which seek reliable standards** with a high degree of consensus and acceptance, and based on the state of the art of the area in question.

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<sup>1</sup> An EU Strategy on Standardisation - Setting global standards in support of a resilient, green and digital EU single market [COM\(2022\) 31](#)

Almost simultaneously, however, some elements have appeared on the scene, which are able to challenge the ESS' s capacity to respond to the raised expectations. In this respect, it would be worth highlighting the example of the outstanding role that the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)<sup>2</sup> will play, as it requires from the companies within its scope to report while using a double materiality perspective in compliance with the European Sustainability Reporting Standards. Such reporting risks overloading the administrative burden that companies already have due to their regulatory compliance with the New Legislative Framework (NLF).

If approved, the Advocate General's Opinion in ECJ case C-588/21 P<sup>3</sup> could prove equally disruptive, with a negative impact on the voluntary contributions from all stakeholders. The Court case may weaken the public-private partnership among the EU, CEN, and CENELEC, and detrimentally de-couple the European standardisation process from the international standardisation system.

Such issues and challenges enable to further debate on the improvement of ESS' s efficiency and the guarantee of its sustainability in the future, in view of the possible resources which are necessary to achieve the objectives set by the European Standardisation Strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> Directive (EU) 2022/2464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 amending Regulation (EU) No 537/2014, Directive 2004/109/EC, Directive 2006/43/EC and Directive 2013/34/EU, as regards corporate sustainability reporting (Text with EEA relevance) PE/35/2022/REV/1 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32022L2464>

<sup>3</sup> Advocate General's Opinion in ECJ case C-588/21 P <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/es/TXT/?uri=CELEX:62021CC0588>

## Questions for debate and reflection:

Based on the strategic approach on standardisation in the European Union, **how can Member States raise awareness of the important relationship between standardisation and legislation, in order to encourage the involvement of different stakeholders? Business stakeholders would be of particular interest because of the need for elaborating standards able to support the deployment of the EU political priorities.**

**What are your views on the recent challenges for the European Standardisation system? What actions can be proposed at the different levels and for the different actors in the system to join efforts and ensure that the European standardisation system maintains its long-term relevance?** The urgency to provide the ESS with additional capabilities in order to address the current challenges should not miss the opportunity to propose improvements that would allow the system to remain sustainable. There seems to be a clear need to rejuvenate the community with experts involved in standardisation, as well to maintain and re-inforce the inclusion of the outcomes from innovation projects on European standards. These work lines require large resources and strong leadership as well as a coordinated action by the European Commission, the Member States, the European and national standardisation bodies, and the economic agents involved in the standardisation activity.

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