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COVER NOTE

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To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
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Subject:	COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT Accompanying the document Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on European Standardisation, repealing Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2026) 787 final.

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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Accompanying the document

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council

on European Standardisation, repealing Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council

{COM(2026) 780 final} - {SEC(2026) 780 final} - {SWD(2026) 785 final} -
{SWD(2026) 786 final}

Executive Summary Sheet
Impact assessment for the Revision of the EU rules on public procurement
A. Need for actions
Why? What is the problem being addressed?
Standardisation is a key enabler of the internal market: standards facilitate the exchange of goods and services between Member States, contributing to the harmonisation of the internal market. By ensuring interoperability, quality and consumer trust, standards facilitate market access and reduce internal market fragmentation. However, the current European Standardisation System faces significant challenges. The average development time for harmonised standards (hENs), which the Commission requests from European Standardisation Organisations (ESOs) to support Union harmonisation legislation, is six years, which is incompatible with the rapid pace of technological and legislative changes. This delay increases compliance costs for businesses, particularly SMEs, and hinders the EU's ability to meet regulatory targets. Additionally, there is insufficient participation from SMEs, civil society, and the research and innovation community in the standardisation process, reducing the quality and inclusiveness of standards. Recent Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) rulings requiring free access to harmonised standards threaten the financial sustainability of ESOs and their members, the National Standardisation Bodies of Member States (NSBs), which partly rely on the sales of harmonised standards to finance their activity. Finally, the EU's influence in international standardisation is declining, particularly in strategic technologies such as AI, cybersecurity, and green technologies, impairing the EU's competitiveness and strategic autonomy.
What is this initiative expected to achieve?
The revision of the Standardisation Regulation aims to improve the responsiveness of the European Standardisation System by accelerating the delivery of high-quality harmonised standards and ensuring their timely availability to support EU legislation. It intends to reduce compliance costs for businesses, particularly SMEs, by ensuring predictable and timely access to harmonised standards. It seeks to ensure the sustainability of the European Standardisation System by balancing the requirement for free access to harmonised standards with the financial viability of ESOs and NSBs, while fostering inclusive participation from all stakeholders. The initiative also aims to consolidate the EU's influence in international standardisation to support competitiveness, strategic autonomy, and alignment with EU values.
Why should EU act? What is the value added of action at the EU level?
The EU must act to maintain the integrity and competitiveness of the internal market. Standardisation eliminates technical barriers, enabling the free movement of goods and services and reducing costs for cross-border operators. A legally and financially sustainable European Standardisation System is critical for the effective implementation of Union legislation and for the EU's ability to shape global standards in emerging technologies. EU-level action ensures policy coherence, supporting key priorities such as competitiveness and strategic autonomy, while avoiding the fragmentation that would result from divergent national approaches. Moreover, the problems affecting the functioning of the European Standardisation System are of a common EU nature and shared by all Member States. Finally, collective action leverages economies of scale and enhances the EU's influence in international standardisation fora, which would not be achievable through individual Member State efforts.
B. Solutions
What legislative and non-legislative options have been considered? Is there a preferred choice or not? Why?
Three policy options were assessed in the impact assessment.

Option 1, a modernised ESOs' monopoly, retains the current structure of the European Standardisation System where ESOs are the sole recipients of standardisation requests from the Commission but introduces targeted improvements such as the integration of specifications from other Standard Development Organisations (SDOs), simplified legal procedures, strengthened inclusiveness measures and improved EU coordination on the international stage.

Option 2, a European Standardisation System centred on ESOs with new flexibilities, builds on Option 1 by adding the flexibility for the Commission to address standardisation requests to alternative SDOs where ESOs lack expertise or fail to deliver. It also introduces free and unrestricted access to harmonised standards via a central repository and establishes an EU Expert Centre led by a Chief Standardisation Officer to enhance coordination and international influence. It facilitates the implementation of EU strategic autonomy in standardisation by ensuring that the EU can decide to adopt its own standards differing from international standards in targeted cases.

Option 3, an open European Standardisation System managed by the Commission, represents a radical departure from the current system by eliminating the ESOs' exclusive right to receive standardisation requests and allowing the Commission to submit standardisation requests to any SDO, while mandating the publication of hENs in the *Official Journal of the European Union* for full free access.

Is there a preferred choice or not? Why?

Option 2 is the preferred choice because it strikes a balance between continuity and innovation. It improves the existing European Standardisation System while fostering ESOs' performance by introducing a degree of competitive pressure through the flexibility to address requests to alternative SDOs. The new flexibility will also better support EU competitiveness and technological sovereignty by enabling access to state of the art expertise in cutting-edge sectors such as digital, quantum computing or space technologies. Option 2 is also the most future proof, ensuring free and unrestricted access to hENs and allowing the system to adapt if ESOs modify their sectoral coverage or new SDOs emerge as leaders in specific fields.

Option 1 is also efficient and effective to address the objectives of the initiatives but would not bring as much positive impact to competitiveness as Option 2. Option 3 is both the less effective and efficient option as it would significantly disrupt the current functioning of the European Standardisation System and entails risks to the delivery of harmonised standards to support Union legislation and policy.

C. Impacts of the preferred option

What are the benefits of the preferred option (if any, otherwise main ones)?

The preferred option significantly improves the responsiveness of the European Standardisation System, *i.e.* its ability to deliver harmonised standards rapidly and on time for supporting Union legislation. It reduces the average delivery time of harmonised standards by 19 %, from 6 years to approximately 4.2 years. This acceleration is expected to save businesses around EUR 295 million annually in compliance costs, out of which EUR 52 million stemming from the flexibility to use alternate SDOs in sectors where ESOs may lack expertise. Free and unrestricted access to harmonised standards via a central repository will save businesses another EUR 30 million annually. The establishment of an EU Expert Centre will enhance coordination and strategic oversight, strengthening the EU's position in international standardisation fora. Targeted divergence from international standardisation will enable the EU to protect its interests in strategic technologies if needed.

What are the costs of the preferred option (if any, otherwise main ones)?

The preferred option incurs overall limited costs across stakeholders. The Commission will require an additional EUR 1.5 million annually for new resources (7.5 full-time equivalents) to support the implementation of the preferred option. NSBs will face costs of around EUR 2.9 million per year to

implement inclusiveness measures targeted at SMEs, civil society and the R&I community and to create transparency registers to allow the public identification of interests represented and active in the standardisation process. Businesses may incur limited duplication costs of up to EUR 4.5 million per year in sectors where alternative SDOs are used.

The preferred option will impact mostly ESOs and NSBs that will have to compensate for the loss of revenues stemming from free and unrestricted access to harmonised standards. These foregone revenues would be compensated by new additional value-added services from the NSBs enabled by the digitalisation of the sector and the development of 'smart' digital standards. The Commission would also support the NSBs that are more reliant on the sales of harmonised standards and less ready to offer such new services for an estimated EUR 6 million per year to ensure the sustainability of the European Standardisation System.

How will businesses, SMEs and micro-enterprises be affected?

Businesses, particularly SMEs and micro-enterprises, will experience a strongly positive net impact under the preferred option. SMEs will benefit the most from faster access to harmonised standards, which will reduce their conformity assessment costs, and from free access to harmonised standards. Large firms will also benefit from savings in compliance costs as well as from improved predictability and the strategic alignment of standards with EU priorities. The overall reduction in compliance costs and administrative burdens will enhance competitiveness, particularly for smaller enterprises operating across borders. SMEs are expected to capture 78 % of the benefits of the preferred option (EUR 253 million per year).

Will there be significant impacts on national budgets and administrations?

The preferred option will not have impact on national budgets and administrations.

Will there be other significant impacts?

Beyond its economic impacts, the preferred option can have positive indirect environmental and social benefits as a better functioning European Standardisation system would increase the ability of sectoral legislation to achieve its environmental and social objectives

D. Follow up

When the policy will be revised?

The revised Standardisation Regulation will be evaluated five years after its entry into force. The evaluation will focus on key performance indicators related to the responsiveness, sustainability, and international influence of the ESS, building on the data reported by ESOs and SDOs through the Commission eNorm platform. Responsiveness will be measured through metrics such as the average delivery time of hENs, the share of standards available on time to support EU legislation, and the use of alternative SDOs. Sustainability will be assessed by monitoring the engagement of ESOs in delivering harmonised standards and the participation of experts from SMEs, civil society and the R&I community in standardisation activities. International influence will be primarily evaluated based on the EU's participation in International Standardisation Organisations.