European standards - implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012

2016/2274(INI) - 04/07/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 629 votes to 34, with 33 abstentions, a resolution on European Standards for the 21st century.

General considerations: while welcoming the overarching Commission standardisation package, Parliament acknowledged that the European standardisation system is a central element in the delivery of the single market.

It advocated an **open, inclusive, transparent and primarily market-driven European standardisation system open to all actors** (businesses, public authorities, standardisation bodies and other interested parties).

Moreover, the European standardisation organisations (ESOs) should in all circumstances develop **inclusive, sustainable, safe and high-quality standards** with fair access for and treatment of all stakeholders as well as minimised impact on the environment and adequate protection of personal data and privacy.

The resolution stressed that **open standards** are essential to the further development of open government data and smart cities policies, as well as for the transport sector, and the development of multimodal transport.

In order for Europe to uphold its **key role** in the international standardisation system, Members stressed the importance of promoting European standards at a global level when negotiating trade agreements with third countries.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) standards: Parliament called on the Commission to request the ESOs to contribute to **high-quality interoperable standards** with a view to adapting ICT standardisation policy to market and policy developments.

Members recommended that the Commission and ESOs prioritise standards in the **area of 5G, cloud computing, IoT, data and cybersecurity domains**, as well as in that of vertical domains, such as 'connected and automatic driving and intelligent transport systems', 'smart cities', 'smart energy', 'advance manufacturing' and 'smart living environments'.

Against the background of an increased use of **online banking, social networking and e-health initiatives**, ICT standards need to reflect the principles of the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data.

Parliament stressed that Europe should support open standardisation processes based on the FRAND (fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory practices) methodology while ensuring that the standardisation process offers a level playing field.

European standards for the 21st century: Members considered that the standardisation system should fully integrate the concerns of **citizens, consumers and SMEs**. They regretted that Parliament did not consult them prior to the adoption of the package, and urged the European institutions to align the different initiatives into a **single strategic, holistic work programme**.

The resolution stressed the importance of the interinstitutional dialogue for the preparation of the Annual Union Work Programme (AUWP) and encouraged efforts to involve, prior to the adoption of the AUWP, all relevant stakeholders in an Annual Standardisation Forum.

The ESOs should be encouraged to ensure that market-relevant services standards reflect the **increased servitisation of the economy** and are developed with the aims of ensuring the safety and quality of services.

Moreover, the standardisation process must include standards that improve barrier-free accessibility to transport and transport services for people with disabilities and **older people**.

With a view to **enhancing synergies between standardisation and research communities**, Members recommended the creation of a specific standardisation chapter to be developed under Horizon 2020.

European Standardisation Organisations: while welcoming the role played by the ESOs, Members encouraged further initiatives to improve their **openness, accessibility and transparency**. The use of digital tools can facilitate stakeholders' participation in the development of standards and provide information about upcoming, ongoing and finalised standardisation work.

Strategic recommendations: the Commission is called upon to **enhance the synergies** and coordination between the European institutions, the ESOs, the NSBs and all relevant stakeholder organisations through the **Annual Standardisation Forum**.

Parliament also called on the Commission to **harmonise the conditions for Annex III organisations** in Regulation 1025/2012 and to ensure the removal of the *de facto* obstacles to their effective involvement in standardisation. It also recommended that the membership status, rights and obligations of Annex III organisations be subject to a revision with the ESOs.

The Commission is invited to:

- expedite the deployment of the necessary **infrastructure**, including through modernising, converting and retrofitting, for the market uptake of new technologies supported by European standards (e.g. alternative fuels infrastructure);
- work with the ESOs and the NSBs to **promote easy-to-use contact points** of access to standards that can provide assistance and information to the users of standards regarding those which are available and their general specifications;
- develop **technology-watch activities** so as to identify future ICT developments that could benefit from standardisation;
- prepare a **European register** listing existing European standards in all official EU languages.

Lastly, Member States are encouraged to use European ICT standards in public procurement procedures.