

European standardisation

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The Commission presents a report on the impact of the procedures established by Article 10 of Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 on European standardisation on the timeframe for issuing standardisation requests (Standardisation Regulation.).

To recall, the main feature of the European standardisation system is that the Commission may request the European standardisation organisations (ESOs) to draw up a European standard or a European standardisation deliverable for products or for services in order to support Union legislation and policies. Around 20% of all European standards and European standardisation deliverables are the result of such Commission requests, while the remaining 80% stem directly from proposals by industry or other standardisation stakeholders.

The report describes the previous regime for standardisation requests as established by Directives 83/189/EEC, and later by 98/34/EC, noting that it was restricted to product standardisation. It also covers the effects of the new Regulation.

Implementing act: the Standardisation Regulation establishes revised rules. The main change is that, under Article 10(2), the Committee on Standards is consulted applying the examination procedure described in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 [5](#). Therefore, the opinion of the Committee is binding and the Commission adopts a standardisation request as an implementing act subsequently. The previous regime had maintained the informal status of standardisation requests and consultations.

Increase speed: the [Communication on A strategic vision for European standards](#) sets an improved speed of the European standardisation as a strategic objective. For standardisation requested by the Commission, the calculation of speed includes the overall time taken by the Commission itself during the preparation of a standardisation request. Thus, there is an increased need for efficient cooperation between the ESOs, the Commission, Member State experts and stakeholders under the new rules in order to ensure that the full sequence of steps in the workflow can be completed in due time. Therefore, the consultation of Member States in the Committee on Standards does not create a delay in the process compared to the previous practice when considering the total amount of time spent in the preparation process of a standardisation request. Only a negative opinion of the Committee on Standards would cause an extra delay of several months.

Statistical analysis: the average number of standardisation requests during years 2006-2013 (issued under the old regime) was 20 requests per year. In 2014, the first year of issuing requests under the new regime, the number is estimated to be nine requests.

The scope of standardisation requests has widened from product standardisation to service standardisation, and requests supporting the Unions general policies have been made possible. However, the number of standardisation requests is expected to drop in 2014 by 50% from the average number during the last years of the old regime. In addition to a downward trend since 2012 in the number of requests (due to the maturity of the New Approach sectors) the other two main reasons for this drop could be:

- the increased formality of the process, together with the compulsory annual planning and more specific requirements on the content of a standardisation request, and
- the fact that standardisation requests are no longer used to initiate actions like standardisation related studies, which do not directly lead to the adoption of European standards or European standardisation deliverables.

Pertinent factors: the report notes the following

- the relatively short period of experience concerning standardisation requests issued on the basis of Article 10 of the Standardisation Regulation;
- transparent and proper planning of standardisation requests and informal consultation process with the ESOs, the Member States and all relevant stakeholders are of key importance before issuing standardisation requests;
- the Commission is updating its internal guidance concerning how to plan, to draft and to consult standardisation requests;
- preliminary and ancillary work in relation to European standardisation, like feasibility studies, where no specific European standards or European standardisation deliverables are requested by the Commission can be initiated together with the ESOs without requests.

Conclusion: since there has been a short time-frame since the application of the Regulation, there has not been enough time to gain sufficient experience with the application of the new rules to draw definitive conclusion about whether the new rules will result in a permanent and unacceptable increase in the length of procedures for standardisation requests. Thus, there is not enough data to substantiate the need for a legislative proposal to amend Article 10 of the Standardisation Regulation at this stage. The Commission will revisit the situation by the end of 2015, in the context of the implementation report.