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Standardisation package

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The annual Union work programme for European standardisation for 2017

{SWD(2016) 185 final}

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1. INTRODUCTION

European standards have proven to be an important policy tool for European policy making. Standards represent policy instruments which improve the functioning of the Single Market by eliminating technical barriers caused by conflicting national standards. They ensure the interoperability of networks and systems, grant a high level of consumer and environmental protection, they support and promote innovation. Standards benefit consumers, companies and society at large and contribute to the overall growth and competitiveness of the EU economy.

By driving the development of European standards for goods and services in strategic priority areas representing expanding markets, the Commission aims to create a competitive advantage for European enterprises, in particular for SMEs.

The publication of the **annual Union work programme for European standardisation (AUWP)** is a requirement set by the Regulation (EU) 1025/2012 (the Regulation) and aims to identify strategic priorities for European standardisation reflecting the policy objectives set by the Commission in its own planning.

In order to create new momentum for European Standardisation, the AUWP for 2017 is part of a comprehensive package on standardisation, including the Commission Communication on "European standards for the 21st century", with a Staff Working document on Service Standardisation, the Communication on the Article 24 Report on the implementation of the Regulation. In the AUWP, particular attention is paid to the Communication on the priority ICT standards plan adopted on 19th April 2016. This AUWP is also adopted also having in mind the discussions conducted in the context of the Joint Initiative on Standardisation, initiated by the Commission following the adoption of the Single Market Strategy[1].

It supports actions across the Commission priorities for Connected Digital Single Market; Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy; Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base.

The current AUWP complements the actions included in the AUWP for 2016[2], notably on inclusiveness in the meaning of the Regulation.

The orientations indicated in the work programme do not have a budgetary impact over and above what is already foreseen in financial perspectives for the year 2017.

2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR EUROPEAN STANDARDISATION

2.1. ICT Standardisation

The Commission Communication on ICT Standardisation Priorities for the Digital Single Market[3] identifies a list of priority building blocks for the Digital Single Market (DSM) where improved ICT standardisation is most urgent [4] : **5G communications, cloud computing, the internet of things (IoT), (big) data technologies and cybersecurity.** These are essential technology building blocks where areas such as eHealth, connected and automated vehicles, smart energy, advanced manufacturing or smart cities will rely. At this stage, the Commission does not foresee to send any standardisation requests to the ESOs but will ask for their

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[1] COM(2015) 550 final, SWD(2015) 202 final
[2] COM(2015)686
[3] COM(2016)176
[4] COM(2015) 192

involvement in a number of preparatory activities aiming at mapping and developing the appropriate standards.

In **cloud computing**, the Commission will request ESOs to update the mapping of cloud standards and guidelines for end users (especially SMEs and the public sector), in collaboration with international SDOs, cloud providers and end users, by mid-2017.

In the internet of things (IoT), the Commission will foster an interoperable environment for the Internet of Things, working with ESOs and international Standards Development Organisations. The Commission then will assess if further steps are needed to tackle identified interoperability failures, and if necessary, consider using legal measures to recommend appropriate standards.

In cybersecutity, the Commission will:

- invite ESOs to draw up practical guidelines covering IoT, 5G, Cloud, Big Data and smart factories, by the end of 2016;

- invite ESOs to develop standards, by the end of 2018, that support global interoperability and seamless trustworthy authentication across objects, devices and natural and legal persons based on comparable trust models;

- over the next three years, will support ESOs in the development of standards-based cybersecurity risk management guidelines for organisations and of corresponding audit guidelines for authorities or regulators with oversight responsibilities.

> The Commission will work with ESOs to ensure that their strategies and activity roadmaps take into account the new requirements emerging from the digitisation industries such as vehicles, energy, eHealth and advanced manufacturing.

2.2. Services Standardisation

As announced in the Single Market strategy[5], the Commission has adopted a a document on services standardisation as a staff working document annexed to the Communication on "European standards for the 21st century". The document clarifies services standards coverage, specificities, benefits as well as challenges. In order to promote the greater development and use of European standards, and to address national barriers fitting within the existing legal framework, most notably the Services Directive, the Commission proposes a combined approach consisting of:

- an enhanced development of European service standards based on a framework for the monitoring of national and other service standards and market needs, identifying possible areas for development of European standards, prioritisation in line with EU priorities, and prompting their development;

- improved mutual recognition and reduction of related national obstacles, starting with a targeted review of existing rules and practices for authorisations concerning standards and certificates in a chosen area as well as the assessment of equivalence of requirements; and

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[5] COM(2015)550

- more effective information to service providers, including improving the availability of information on standards and related requirements through the Digital Single Gateway.

Based on the above, the Commission:

- will carry out an analysis of whether there are areas of conflict or duplication between national service standards or where there are potential policy gaps with respect to the ten Commission Priorities. It will report on an annual basis as part of the report to the EP and the Council on EU standardisation policy. On this basis it will decide whether to issue mandates or to recommend that CEN develop standards or standardisation deliverables.

- will engage by the end of 2016, with European and national standard setters and stakeholders to agree criteria to prioritise European service standards.

- will launch in 2017 a targeted review to gather information on existing rules and practices for authorisations on standards and certificates as well as the assessment of equivalence of requirements, with a view to promoting best practices, the removal of barriers and widespread adoption of proportionate equivalence assessments.

- recommends that CEN (i) finalise its work on mapping international, European and national service standards by the end of 2016 and that it maintains it on a constant basis, (ii) issues an annual list of areas of potential conflict or duplication between national service standards or where there are potential gaps where European service standards could be developed, and (iii) identifies whether there are any areas impeded by the absence of linked product and service standards.

- recommends to NSBs deciding on whether to develop a national service standard, to consider the European dimension and whether it might be better to develop a European service standard instead.

- recommends to Member States to explore the use of European service standards, , when introducing or reviewing legislation involving market access conditions in service sectors.

The measures proposed complement the other actions on services and standardisation in the Single Market Strategy, as well as the Joint Initiative on Standardisation. The activities are carried out in the frame of existing structures and processes of the European Standardisation System, and they make use of existing fora and groups.

The implementation of the proposed framework starts in 2016, following the adoption of the Commission standardisation package. In 2017, the Commission will step up efforts and set practical solutions to promote the greater development and use of European service standards, improve awareness, and address the barriers faced by European service providers.

2.3. Strategic priority fields for standardisation requests to the ESOs in 2017

The Commission has identified its strategic priorities for European standardisation in the below listed fields where it intends to request from the European standardisation organisations the development of standards and standardisation deliverables. The

fields are directly linked to the following Commission's priorities: Connected Digital Single Market; Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy; Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base.

In the Connected Digital Single Market, the proposed actions aim at enhancing the e-skills and the use of digital technologies:

- develop and start the implementation of a comprehensive European framework for the ICT professions, providing a reference of competences as required and applied at the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) workplace, using a common language for competences, skills and proficiency levels that can be understood across Europe;
- improving and facilitating the reporting formalities required be legal acts of the Union und by Member States for ships arriving in and/or departing from ports of the Member States in order to reduce the administrative burdens for shipping companies;
- facilitate the flow, access and use of information in transport in order to enhance efficiency and reduce costs of transport operations.

As to the Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy, the proposed actions aim at combining our infrastructures, diversifying our energy resources, reducing energy consumption and promoting climate-friendly technologies:

- enabling harmonisation of licensing process and industrial standards for EU nuclear infrastructures development throughout their lifetime (construction, operation, decommissioning, waste management) in order to built a common framework for energy policies and win from economies of scale; and
- assuring interoperability between grids for increase of renewable energies in the power mix, in order to enhance the capacity of the existing infrastructures to absorbe green energy resources while not increasing the cost for users.

In supporting the Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base, the Commission proposes actions increasing safety and interoperability requirements which are necessary for the completion of the internal market in products as of to the maintenance of a high performing industrial base in Europe:

- In the construction products sector, the following initiatives will allow the industry to incorporate improvements from other sectors, adapt the existing products and producing new innovative products to meet the current safety and quality needs:
  1. assessment methods for regulated dangerous substances and the emission of radiation must be finalised and the new assessment methods should be gradually introduced in construction product standards;
  2. construction products in contact with water intended for human consumption;
  3. innovative products and assessment of essential characteristics of the contruction products performance;
- methods for assessment of the risk of unlisted substances related with plastic materials and articles intended to come into contact with food in order to update the existing standards against new hazzards;
- plastic biodegradability for packaging and packaging waste which will support recycling;
- In the field of railways, the following initiatives will help on the improvement the interlinking and interoperability of the national rail networks:

1. interior passive safety supporting the interoperability of the rail system which will improve the safety requirements of travel by train at European level;

2. simplification of the methodology for the calculation of the free passage of the pantograph (mechanical kinematic pantograph gauge) to facilitate the assessment of the acceptance of pantograph heads in overhead contact lines; continued work on the interoperability of the railway system: development of urban railway standards.

- triggered by several accidents and incidents, the following products/procedures are to be addressed in standards: weather information products provided to pilots including applications in the cockpit based on different sources, Runway Overrun Awareness Alerting systems, Onboard Weight and Balance systems;

- sustainable chemicals produced from secondary raw materials which will minimise the cost and the dependence of European Union for raw materials; and

- supporting the competitiveness and efficiency of the defence and security sector in order to win from economies of scale and support Europe in its role as a stronger global actor

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

> The Commission invites the ESOs to continue the joint promotion of international and European standards in those world regions where the European industry can benefit from strengthened standardisation assistance and easier market access.

A significant part of European standards derive directly from international standardisation.

To achieve also better acceptance of European initiatives at international level the ESS should manage to express coherent positions in the appropriate bodies.

The Commission is negotiating TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) with the United States, and standardisation is a major point of discussion, due to the two different systems, but susceptible to bring great advantages if a mutually benefiting agreement would be reached between the two parties.

The Commission has also succesfully negotiated CETA with Canada, and is in ongoing negotiations with Japan. In all these trade agreements, standardisation is crucial, because the main barriers between these actors are technical barriers to trade rather than simple tariff issues.

Towards third countries, the Commission will continue the existing policy dialogues, visibility and awareness actions (Seconded European Standardisation Expert in India, SESEI, Seconded European Standardisation Expert in China, SESEC, or China Europe Standardisation Information Platform, CESIP) for which the ESOs' support is fundamental (see the yearly Operating Grants).

The standardisation-related cooperation with China has a twinned objective. The promotion of the EU regulatory model (for the marketing of products) supported through standards is, in the long term, expected to ease market access. Bilateral technical harmonisation at the level of standards represent another route to create a more level playing field, a clear win-win for the domestic market and the European companies. According to the findings of the EU-CN WG "Standardisation" some 90

ENs have been adopted as Chinese standards which represents a competitive advantage for European companies. The India-related work pursues similar objectives.

The Commission, already technically contributing to some international standardisation work, expects to be more involved in European and international standardisation, to realise the full potential of its existing formal observer-status, in order to better implement its commitment to the primacy of international standards.

4. HORIZON 2020 – RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The development and implementation of research and innovation agendas including through standardisation is essential for EU competitiveness. Horizon 2020 will give strong support to the market uptake of innovation, in particular to supporting standardisation through research and putting science into standards. Standardisation activities are an essential channel for the market adoption of research results and for the diffusion of innovations including research results from the Euratom part of Horizon 2020.

Horizon 2020 will give support to improve the efficiency of the standardisation system by promoting open standards and platforms and consistent application of standards and their uptake by the market.

> ESOs should encourage and facilitate appropriate representation, at technical level, in standardisation activities of legal entities participating in a project that is related to that area and that is funded by the Union under a multiannual framework programme for activities in the area of research, innovation and technological development. ESOs should report to the Commission on the implementation of this action from 2013 until 2016.

5. NEXT CYCLE

Following the discussions in the context of the Joint Initiative on Standardisation, to enhance the evidence base of the annual governance cycle on EU standardisation policy, the Commission will undertake the following two actions:

- Launch a study to analyse the economic and societal impact of standardisation

It is acknowledged that standards play a vital and sometimes invisible role in supporting economic growth through their role in boosting productivity, competitiveness and innovation as well as societal welfare. The Commission will hence, following the invitation from the Council[6] and in line with the Joint Initiative on Standardisation, launch a study in due time which should explore the impacts of standards on the economy and society at large. The study

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[6] The Competitiveness Council on 2 March 2015, "INVITES the Commission to finalize the Independent Review and analyse the impact of standardisation on the economy taking into account the interest of all the parties".

will build on and take into account existing national studies[7], as well as the different models currently used for financing standardisation.

- Set up a substantiated inter-institutional dialogue

As of 2017 in every annual cycle, the adoption of the AUWP in July every year will be preceded by a single report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the EU standardisation policy. On the basis of this report, the Commission proposes to engage in an inter-institutional dialogue with the the European Parliament and the Council in Spring.

The report will include among others information on:

- the progress of implementation of the actions foreseen in the AUWPs, including on the development of European service standards;

- the progress of implementation of the actions foreseen in the Communication on ICT Standardisation Priorities for the Digital Single Market;

- the state-of-play of the standardisation requests addressed to the ESOs;

- the number of standards produced and registered in work programme of the ESOs;

- the contribution of the Annex III organisations (SBS[8], ANEC[9], ECOS[10] and ETUC[11] representing respectively SMEs, consumers, workers and environmental interests in standardisation) to the production processes of standards (inclusiveness);

- the EU financial contribution to the ESOs under the Regulation.

The Report and the consecutive dialogue will serve as a policy input to the AUWP for the following year.

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[7] British Standards Institution (2015), *'The Economic Contribution of Standards to the UK Economy';* AFNOR (2016): *Economic impact of standardisation*; AFNOR (2009): *The Economic Impact of Standardisation – Technological Change, Standards and Long-Term Growth in France*.; DIN (2000): *Economic Benefits of Standardization, 3 volumes. Berlin: Beuth. (Update 2011)*; DTI (2005): *The Empirical Economics of Standards, DTI ECONOMICS PAPER NO.12. London*
[8] Small Business Standards   http://sbs-sme.eu/
[9] The European consumer voice in standardisation   http://www.anec.eu/anec.asp
[10] The European Environmental Citizens' Organisation for Standardisation   http://ecostandard.org/
[11] The European Trade Union Confederation   http://www.etuc.org/