



PRESS RELEASE

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Hearing of the IMCO Committee on European Standards for the 21st Century Standardisation must include SMEs to live up to a modern society

Standards should represent the interest of those who are using them on a daily basis, such as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), consumers and workers. So SMEs, namely the main economic players in the European Union, should be properly included in the standards making process at national, European and international levels. This was the main point stressed before MEPs by Small Business Standards, the European association representing SMEs in standardisation, at yesterday's hearing in the Internal Market Committee of the European Parliament.

Christel Davidson, Director of Small Business Standards, said: "Standards are necessary for SMEs to demonstrate the products they want to sell in the Internal Market respect European legislation. The problem is that not all SMEs are involved in the process to draft standards. On the contrary, most are only standard users. The under-representation of SMEs in standardisation could eventually lead to the disappearance of many smaller companies from the market, which would be a huge loss for the European economy. To avoid this, SMEs should be more included in the standards making process at national and international level, and should be granted a specific member status within the European Standardisation Organisations."

"Another problem is the development of standards for services. As for products, the development of services standards must be based on the specific needs of companies. Yet, many services are provided locally and respond to a specific local context. This makes the development of European or international services standards often unnecessary", Christel Davidson added.

She concluded: "A third and last point is the involvement of European Institutions. We would like to invite the European Parliament to engage with the European Economic and Social Committee in its ad hoc forum on the inclusiveness of the European Standardisation System that will soon be set up. Ultimately, it is necessary for all the actors to work together to make a success out of European standards."

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EDITORS' NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process at European and International levels. SBS is co-financed by the European Commission and EFTA.

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