

Brussels, 05 April 2012

Orgalime views on EP IMCO Report on the EC proposal for a Regulation on European Standardisation

IMCO Report A7-0069/2012 of 26 March 2012 on European Standardisation
Rapporteur: Lara Comi (COM(2011)0315 – C7 0150/2011 – 2011/0150(COD))

Orgalime welcomes the outcome of the vote of the EP Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) on the Commission Proposal for a Regulation on European standardisation - [COM\(2011\)315](#), based on the excellent report of the Rapporteur, Ms Lara Comi.

Orgalime welcomes the European Parliament's efforts to ensure the private and voluntary governance of ESOs and the market relevance of draft EC standardisation requests, as well as taking into consideration the international aspects of standardisation.

We particularly welcome the following amendments to the European Commission Proposal:

1. **the introduction of the standstill procedure** for consistency with the Article 7 of Directive 98/34/EC (*Amendment n°50 on Article 4 – paragraph 3 a new*).
2. **the realistic replacement of the obligation to "ensure" by the one to "encourage and facilitate"** for all activities incumbent to European standards organisations (ESOs) with the view to facilitate access and appropriate participation of all interested stakeholders (*Amendment n°52 on Article 5 – paragraph 1 introductory part; Amendment n°54 on Article 5 – paragraph 1 a new; Amendment n°56 on Article 5a new*).
3. **the explicit rejection of voting or veto rights for Annex III organisations** (*Amendment n°54 on Article 5 – paragraph 1a new*). Indeed, voting or veto rights would not improve societal relevance; education at all levels about the role of standards for markets and society is much more relevant.
4. **the obligation for the Commission to notify European business federations** and other stakeholder organisations in order to ensure the market relevance of draft EC standardisation mandates (*Amendment n°71 on Article 8a new*), and hence the obligation to consult/notify "all relevant stakeholders" on EC annual work programmes (*Amendment n°59 on Article 6 – paragraph 1*) and EC standardisation mandates (*Amendment n°64 on Article 7 – paragraph 1*). Such a notification system, open to all interested stakeholders, is key to ensuring the market relevance of EC standardisation requests. It can be easily operated by an IT system and, in our view, would not add significant costs or administrative burden to the European Commission's work.

Orgalime, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 34 trade federations representing some 130,000 companies in the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 22 European countries. The industry employs some 9.7 million people in the EU and in 2010 accounted for some €1,510 billion of annual output. The industry not only represents some 28% of the output of manufactured products but also a third of the manufactured exports of the European Union.

5. **the request to Member States to “encourage participation of public authorities, including market surveillance authorities, in national standardisation activities”** (Amendment 57 on Article 5 c new) is most welcome.
6. **provision of a “detailed explanation” in case Member States raise a formal objection against a standard** (Amendment n°66 on Article 8 – paragraph 1 second EP modification on the ending part). Member States should indeed justify their motivation for raising a formal objection against a finalised draft harmonised standard, especially if they have decided not to participate in national standardisation activities, *considering that the development work has typically been ongoing for about three years and has involved all interested stakeholders*.
7. **limiting the scope of use of ICT technical specifications** in Articles 9 and 10. We very much support the changes in the terminology across the whole Commission proposal, especially that which converts “standards” in the field of ICT into “technical specification” (e.g. Amendment 23 on Recital 20 and Amendment 43 on Article 2 point 4a new and Amendment 72 on Chapter IV – title). In our view, this clarifies that such specifications cannot be used directly as a reference in European harmonised legislation. In this respect, we invite the Council to approve the proposal of the Commission as supported by the EP IMCO Committee that such technical specifications in the ICT field can only be used in support of public procurement purposes.
8. **rejection of EC funding of Annex III organisations for “the verification of the quality, and conformity to the corresponding policies and legislation of the Union, of European standards and European standardisation deliverables”** (Amendment 83 on the deletion of Article 12 paragraph 1 – point d).
9. **rejection of EC funding of “other bodies” to contribute to “the production and revision of European standards and European standardisation deliverables”** (Amendment 84 on deletion of Article 13 paragraph 1 – point b – point i).

We therefore call on the Council to keep as many of the above-mentioned amendments to the Commission proposal as possible.

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