



ETSI position paper regarding the evolution of the European Standardization System, presented to members of the European Parliament on 22 June

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) sector has characteristics of its own. It is intrinsically a global industry; a very competitive sector in which innovation and business cycles are increasingly short. It is also considered a strategic sector in many economies. Yet, from an industry, market and export (i.e. competitiveness) perspective, ICT is not a stand-alone sector. What was described a few years ago as “convergence of IT and telecom” has in the meantime materialized. Moreover most if not all vertical industry sectors (e.g. transport, construction, health, education, entertainment, public services, banking, energy supply etc.) now depend and rely on information and communication technologies to deliver their own sectors’ goods and services.

With regards to the EU internal market dimension, services that need to be interoperable and seamless are and will increasingly be electronic services and/or enabled by electronic communications. From that perspective as well, ICT is intimately entwined with all of the industry sectors that the EU relies on for its competitiveness. The standards that will enable a true pan-European service market have to be considered in a cross-sector dimension.

While there is competition in the global market place, so there is subsequently also competition in standardization and history has shown that direct membership participation is the standardization chosen by the ICT sector, e.g. ETSI, IETF or IEEE-SA. Producing a standard that will be a global success is not a question of formal status or a policy decision but of a successful adoption by industry.

ETSI and its members strongly support the model of voluntary standards setting and direct industry participation, where SMEs (30% of ETSI's 750 members) can easily participate, the standards can be downloaded free of charge and the membership fees start from 2000 € p.a. In addition, participation of public authorities and policy makers in standardization is key for policy making and regulation and the ETSI model caters to this (10% of the 740 ETSI members are public authorities).

ETSI has 70 cooperation agreements with other organizations including many fora and consortia. It allows the incorporation of deliverables of fora and consortia and hence avoids duplication of work and saves resources.

The EU is in a unique situation where one of the three ESOs (i.e. ETSI) is the most successful direct membership standardization organization in the world: More than 4 billion end users are using GSM, UMTS or LTE. ETSI is very well placed to create the return on investment from being the leader in European research in the Future Internet (including the Internet of Things and Mobile Internet) to being a leading knowledge society in the world, implementing the digital agenda. An excellent cooperation between the ESOs and with other standardization organizations will be key for standardizing complex future systems. ETSI has the network and experience to manage this including world leading tools in the field of interoperability testing.

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**European Standardization: A Way out of the Economic Crisis –
Boosting Consumer Confidence and Supporting Industry Competitiveness**

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