

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003877/25  
to the Commission  
Sarah Knafo (ESN)  
(2 October 2025)**

*Subject:* Commission initiative on competitiveness and excessive red tape

The Commission recently launched an initiative to strengthen the competitiveness of European businesses, including by ‘making standard-setting processes faster’. However, many businesses consider that the main problem is not the slow pace of standard-setting procedures, but the proliferation of standards and administrative constraints, which hamper activity and increase burdens on businesses, particularly industrial firms.

Moreover, the announced creation of a new category of medium-sized enterprises (250 to 1 500 employees) calls into question the consistency of the stated objective of simplification.

1. Does the Commission intend to repeal some of the excessive European standards in order to substantially ease the burden on European businesses?
2. Can it explain how the creation of a new legal category of companies would contribute to competitiveness and administrative simplification in practice, without adding additional complexity?
3. Is it prepared to reassess the impact of the Green Deal on the EU’s industrial competitiveness, particularly in terms of regulatory costs and distortion of competition with non-EU producers?

Submitted: 2.10.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission  
(2 December 2025)**

Standards adopted by European Standardisation Organisations are in principle voluntary. The Commission relies on a specific standards type, the European harmonised standards, to provide presumption of conformity with EU product legislation.

Developed by experts based on consensus, they are of voluntary use and simplify access to the single market, reducing conformity costs. In the Single Market Strategy <sup>(1)</sup>, the Commission announced a revision of Regulation EU 2012/1025 <sup>(2)</sup> to enhance the speed and flexibility of the standardisation process.

The Commission small mid-cap enterprises (SMC) definition, set by a recommendation on 21 May 2025 <sup>(3)</sup>, lays the ground to better account for and support SMCs, in addition to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It provides for streamlined regulatory requirements, better guidance and access to finance.

The new definition ensures SMEs can transition smoothly into SMCs. The recommendation was accompanied by the revision of eight legal acts in the Omnibus IV package, to extend measures for SMEs to SMCs, which would otherwise follow the same rules of large corporations.

The Commission unveiled earlier in 2025 the Competitiveness Compass <sup>(4)</sup>, the EU’s strategy to strengthen the competitiveness of its economy and the Clean Industrial Deal <sup>(5)</sup>, the EU’s plan for competitiveness and decarbonisation.

Both documents, largely inspired by the Draghi report <sup>(6)</sup>, envisage measures aiming at closing the innovation gap and decarbonising European industry.

The Commission also launched in February 2025 a larger simplification effort, starting with proposals to reduce reporting requirements for companies <sup>(7)</sup>. To track progress, all 26 Commissioners are required to report on simplification measures taken in their respective portfolios <sup>(8)</sup>.

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<sup>(1)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0500>.

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:02012R1025-20241213>.

<sup>(3)</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L\\_202501099](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L_202501099).

<sup>(4)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/competitiveness-compass\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/competitiveness-compass_en).

<sup>(5)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/clean-industrial-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/clean-industrial-deal_en).

<sup>(6)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/draghi-report/one-year-after\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/draghi-report/one-year-after_en).

<sup>(7)</sup> [https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/omnibus-package-2025-04-01\\_en](https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/omnibus-package-2025-04-01_en).

<sup>(8)</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/simplification-and-implementation/2025-annual-progress-reports-simplification-implementation-and-enforcement\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/simplification-and-implementation/2025-annual-progress-reports-simplification-implementation-and-enforcement_en).