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E-002103/2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.7.2026)

The Commission applies the ‘Think Small First’ principle through tools designed to integrate small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) considerations from the earliest stages of the legislative process. The SME filter¹, applied when the Commission publishes its intention to legislate on the ‘Have Your Say’ portal², identifies which initiatives are relevant for SMEs and thus require a proportionate SME test. The SME test³ assesses the impact of new legislation on SMEs where an impact assessment is required. The SME check, a compulsory annex to impact assessment reports, summarises the key SME test findings for initiatives that are (highly) relevant for SMEs. In addition, targeted SME consultations, including panels supported by the Enterprise Europe Network⁴, gather direct input on SME challenges.

As announced in the 2025 Single Market Strategy⁵, the Commission is preparing good practice examples of SME-friendly provisions to support EU and national lawmakers in tailoring legislation to SME needs.

The Commission presented its approach to designing new legislation which is 'simple-by-design' in the Communication ‘A Simpler, Clearer and Better Enforced EU Rulebook’⁶. Future legislation should be simple, designed with implementation in mind from the outset and take into account the needs and capabilities of SMEs. This further reinforces the Commission’s simplification agenda that has a clear target to reduce administrative burdens for SMEs by 35% by the end of the mandate⁷.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/63274>.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say_en.

³ SME test – tool 23, Better Regulation Toolbox, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/de79fb8e-4cc1-45a0-ac34-72f73a5147ca_en?filename=BR%20Toolbox%20-%20Dec%202025%20-%20Chapter%203.pdf.

⁴ <https://een.ec.europa.eu/>.

⁵ COM/2025/500 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0500>.

⁶ COM/2026/380 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52026DC0380>.

⁷ COM/2025/47 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025DC0047>.