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COVER NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	From the 1987 Green Paper to Global Leadership: How ETSI Shapes Freely-Available Digital Standards to Boost EU Competitiveness - Presentation at the Working Party on Technical Harmonisation on 16 October 2025

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ETSI's Model: Openness, Inclusiveness and Global Reach in Support of EU Priorities

35+ Years at the Heart of Digital Standardisation

Connectivity (5G/6G), IoT, Cybersecurity, Network virtualisation, eID, Trusted Data Framework, Artificial Intelligence, Radio, Quantum and others.

From European Roots to Driving Global Standards

ETSI is both a European Standardisation Organisation (ESO) and a globally recognised Standards Development Organisation (SDO).

We bridge efforts to translate European leadership into global action by developing standards that strengthen the EU's competitiveness and values.

Independence and WTO/TBT Principles

ETSI operates as an independent and neutral organisation.

Our work follows the WTO/TBT principles of openness, consensus, transparency and voluntary application, **ensuring trust and legitimacy for all stakeholders**.

Flexible Processes and Standards Free of Charge

ETSI offers a broad range of agile tools, including Technical Committees, Industry Specification Groups, Software Development Groups, Interop Testing/PlugTests, Special Committees, Specialist Task Forces, and the PAS process, to deliver timely results.

All ETSI standards are freely available, with over **60,000 published** and more than **26 million downloads** each year.

Over 900 Members: Direct Participation and Inclusiveness

ETSI offers a unique European platform for direct participation, fostering dialogue between governments, researchers, SMEs, technology companies and societal stakeholders.

We promote inclusiveness, including strong collaboration with Annex III organisations and the open-source community.

Global Reach and Partnerships

ETSI operates within a broad community, collaborating with the ECC and CEPT across 46 countries (radio equipment and spectrum), and the ITU.

We are a founding partner of global partnerships like 3GPP and oneM2M.

We also maintain **over 100 partnerships** and contribute to international cooperation projects like **SESEI, SESEC,GIST** and **IndiCo-Global**.

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ETSI's Success Stories and Recent Developments

Examples of European-led Success Stories

Wireless Systems
- GSM -> 3GPP (3G/4G/5G/6G)
- DECT, TETRA

Smart Card Platform
- SIM Cards, Payment Cards

Electronic Signatures, Identification and Trust Services (e.g., eIDAS series)

Quantum-Safe Security
- Quantum Key Distribution
- Quantum-Safe Cryptography

Consumer IoT Security (e.g., ETSI EN 303 645)

Accessibility of ICT Products and Services

Examples of Recent Developments (2025)

- Creation of **TC Data** - Standards for EU Trusted Data Framework
- Creation of **TC Quantum Technologies** and **Quantum Incubator** - To prepare ahead of the Quantum Act
- Agile Standardisation in support of the **Cyber Resilience Act (CRA)**:
  - Early public consultations (during the drafting-stage)
  - Balanced representation (e.g., SMEs, Open Source community)
  - Funded Specialist Task Forces (STFs) supporting the work – open, transparent, consensus-driven and inclusive
- Specialist Task Force (STF) on development of **EUDI Wallet** standards.
- Support to the **AI Act** despite delays in hENs delivery: ETSI TR 104 119 – Trustworthy AI systems provides an indicative list of deliverables supporting certain requirements of the AI Act. An EN to come: ETSI EN 304 223

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ETSI Position Papers [link here]

Single Market Strategy (Statement, May 2025)

Welcomes the efforts to reinforce European standardisation through a faster, more inclusive system — while ensuring harmonised standards stay central. It is recommended to leverage ETSI Technical Specifications - especially those developed with a strong international dimension in strategic digital areas like cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital identities, quantum technologies, data governance and data spaces - which are better suited to fostering innovation, competitiveness and technological deployment.

International Digital Strategy (Position Paper, June 2025)

Highlights ETSI's role in global standardisation efforts. Through its existing network of 900+ member organisations and 100+ partners in the global ICT and digital arena, and the implementation of international projects such as Indico Global, SESEI, SESEC and GIST. ETSI holds a unique position to bring technology companies, governments and societal stakeholders beyond the EU to the table with the aim of fostering technical cooperation on a reciprocal basis and in advancing global green and digital transitions.

Revision of Regulation 1025/2012 (Position Paper, July 2025)

Emphasises ETSI's model: direct participation that brings added value to the industry by developing standards with a strong international dimension (globally-applicable) contributing to European competitiveness and respective European interests and values. It incentivises researchers and the industry, in particular SMEs, to contribute at lowest possible cost and to have their voices directly heard.

Highlights practical solutions and emphasises the effective use of ETSI's flexible tools (e.g., free-of-charge availability of standards, Special Committees, Specialist Task Force (STF), Software Development Groups (SDGs), ETSI Projects, PAS Process).

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ETSI and the Revision of Regulation 1025/2012

Considerations:

- From 2019 onwards, there has been a gradual increase in citation time to almost 2 years for 2023.
- Decline in industry participation (less experts) due to long citation delays (other path: notified bodies).
- Key challenges are addressed ex-post: in response to or ahead of a standardisation request. Earlier engagement and effort is needed.

ETSI Achievements since 2022:

- Implementation of EC-ESO Task Force results (Checklists on the handling of SReqs, and Assessment of draft hENs).
- Adaptation of approval process for Standardization Requests to 2022/2480 (SRdAP).
- Governance reform such that decisions concerning ENs are taken exclusively by representatives of NSBs.

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Revision of Regulation 1025/2012

Accelerating the process

- ✓ Rely on available European standardisation deliverables and not on common specifications (e.g., Technical Specifications)
- ✓ Shorten citation time and delays
- ✓ Increase funding of ETSI Specialist Task Forces (STF)
- ✓ Funding digital 'incubators' in parallel of the legislative process

Improving access

- ✓ Standards are accessible to all free-of-charge
- ✓ Over 60,000 Standards: View, Download, Print
- ✓ Over 26 Million Downloads on a yearly basis

Strengthening EU's role in international standardisation

- ✓ Replicate the success (e.g., 1987 Green Paper, 3GPP)
- ✓ Greater focus on "globally-applicable" digital standards
- ✓ Normative references or Publicly Available Specifications (PAS)
- ✓ Leverage ETSI's proven Model and International Impact

Enhance inclusiveness / balanced representation

- ✓ 25% of ETSI members are SMEs.
- ✓ Incentivise (direct-participation, capacity building)
- ✓ No financial barriers to entry (e.g., membership)
- ✓ Greater contributions from Research and Academia

Link to Position Papers: **https://www.etsi.org/media-library/position-papers**

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Summary

1. **Access to standards: ETSI's policy already precedes the 2022 Standardisation Strategy which called to consider free access to standards and other technical deliverables.**

2. **All ETSI standards and deliverables are freely available, irrespective of membership.**

3. **ETSI's model and dual role as both an ESO and a globally recognised SDO have proven successful in strengthening European competitiveness and driving market uptake.**

➢ **Time to replicate the success – through ETSI – across all digital sectors for Europe.**

The EU has a proven model at its fingertips and at the heart of digital standardisation – there may not be a need to reinvent the wheel. Today, and more than ever before, there is a unique window of opportunity to leverage ETSI's model. Whatever the direction, it is important not to mortgage the future of the European standardisation system for the sake of a short-term fix.

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