

Technical standards and regulations: procedure for the provision of information. Codification

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The purpose of this Report is to analyse the application of procedures as laid down by Directive 98/34/EC for standardisation and technical regulation between 2002 and 2005. It is divided into two parts. The first deals with “Standardisation”; the second “Technical Regulations”.

Standardisation: The procedure in the field of standards has been designed to monitor all new standardisation activities introduced by the National Standardisation Bodies or NSBs. Systems have been set up to allow the bodies to comment, participate or to request an initiative be taken at European level. The report finds that the procedure has continued to operate successfully between 2002 and 2005. The publication of national standardisation initiatives encourages all stakeholders to consider the possibility of extending work at a European level. In the new field of standardising services the number of national initiatives notified is high.

Concerning Mandates the report finds that the process of mandating is well-established but care must be taken to ensure it continues to operate smoothly. To that end, the informal consultation of all relevant parties prior to the Committee consultation is essential and will need to be reinforced. As far as “Formal Objections” are concerned the report finds that the number of objections has been low. However, when taking account of new objections, the number of formal objections is on the rise. The main areas concern machinery, toys, construction products and medical devices. Although time consuming the process of receiving objections has, in general, worked well.

Technical Regulations: Between 2002 and 2005, the utility procedure has been fully confirmed in terms of effectiveness, transparency and administrative co-operation. Moreover, the high number of draft technical regulations notified by the Member States, in accordance with the Directive, contributes towards the correct application of Community legislation through a preventative approach. The networking approach and the high degree of co-operation between the Commission and Member States have also ensured that national regulatory activities have been carried out without creating technical barriers to trade and that Community harmonisation has occurred only where really needed.

The intense work undertaken to ensure that the 10 applicant countries comply with the obligations arising from the Directive on their accession to the EU has helped ensure the correct operation of the enlarged internal market.

Extending the enterprise policy dimension remains a high priority. Notified drafts are already available electronically, free of charge and in all the official languages of the EU. Efforts will continue to provide economic operators with a legal framework that is as clear as possible without any regulatory excesses.