

The services sector is growing fast. In the meantime it employs three-quarters of the German workforce, and it is a similar picture throughout Europe. Services are due to become even more important in the future as "smart cities" become reality and "Industry 4.0" continues its advance. This is a fact also recognized by the European Commission, which has placed services standardization on its agenda in its new **internal market strategy**. A **joint initiative for standardisation** has been drawn up to identify strategic areas in standardization, promote an innovation-friendly, efficient standardization system and enhance Europe's reputation as a global centre for standardization. How can services standards help achieve this goal?

- Consistent terminology improves communication between contract partners.
- Descriptions of processes make services **transparent** and **comparable**.
- Standardized qualification requirements make for relationships between consumers and providers that are based on **trust** and **quality**.

The **German Standardization Roadmap**, issued in June, was developed under DIN's leadership and is funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. It identifies the potentials and limits of standardization for the national and European services market. The Internal Market for products is already a fact. Now it is a question of laying the path which will lead to completion of the Internal market for services. With the establishment of the Roadmap, which defines strategic goals and identifies areas needing action, Germany has taken on a leading role in determining the direction European services standardization is to take.

There should only be standards and specifications where it makes sense to have them, and only when they have market relevance. For only then are market participants prepared to get involved in their development, and to accept and use the standard, not only nationally but at a European or global level.

In the services sector there are particularly stark differences in specifications and regulations, which is why it needs to be ensured that the legal framework is always taken into consideration. For example, the assessment of doctors regarding the standardization of medical services is very different from that of finance experts in respect of financial services standards. The former unanimously reject the idea of such standards work, while the latter see it as being absolutely essential. By making services quantifiable, more objective and better oriented to individual needs, standardization has clear benefits for the financial sector.

We hope this information on services standardization will be useful to you in your political work. For the German Standardization Roadmap for Services use the following link:

www.din.de/go/roadmap-services

If you are interested in further information we would be glad to discuss the topic with you.