

BUSINESSEUROPE



# Access to standardisation

Business views

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# Business needs related to standards

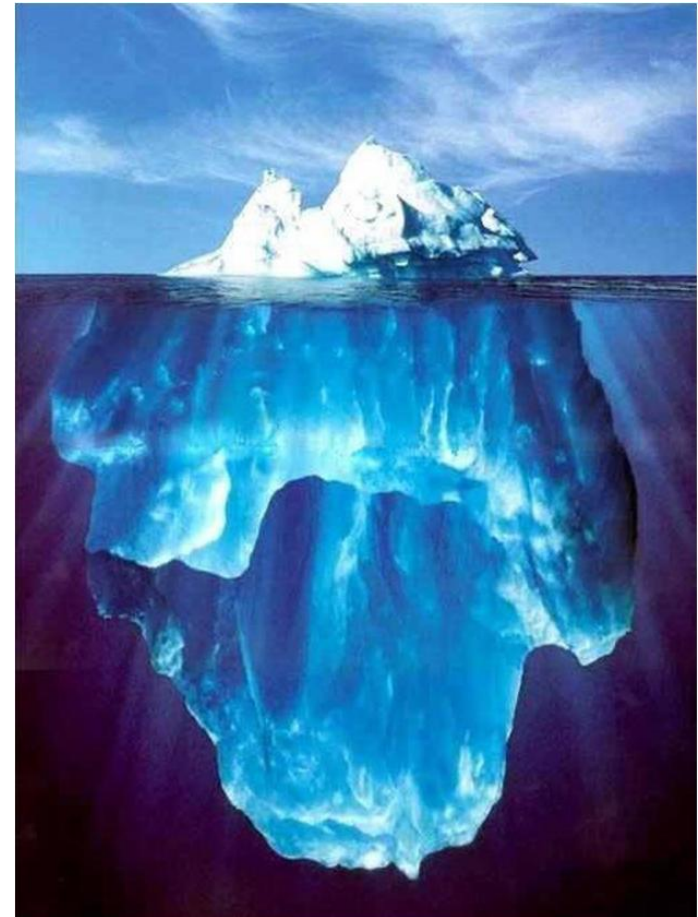
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- Fully voluntary standards
  - Own choice
  - Business model and strategy dictates needs & resources spent
- Unavoidable standards
  - Semi-voluntary (e.g. referred by EU directives)
  - De facto mandatory (e.g. demanded by retail, public procurement, government subsidies; pushed by consumer organisations or NGOs)
  - Formally required (e.g. hard reference by law)
  - Best to have a stake in their definition – avoid excessive burdens
  - Need to know the landscape – ‘what is out there that affects me’
  - Need to understand and to deploy them in the business



# The big burdens and costs?

- Time and expertise to know the landscape, understand relevant standards, translate to deployment in business
- When contributing to the development of standards: time and expertise to contribute; travel costs (mainly if participating at international level)
- Added cost to business: compliance of products and services, research & development – but these apply to all in a level playing field
- Cost when failing to comply



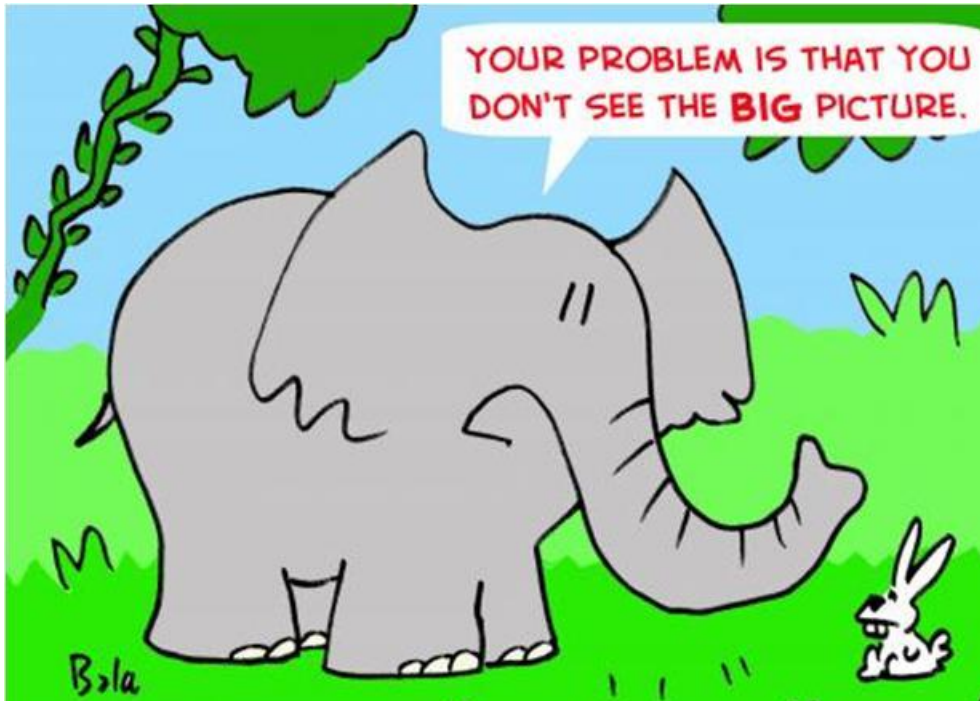
# Biggest gains?

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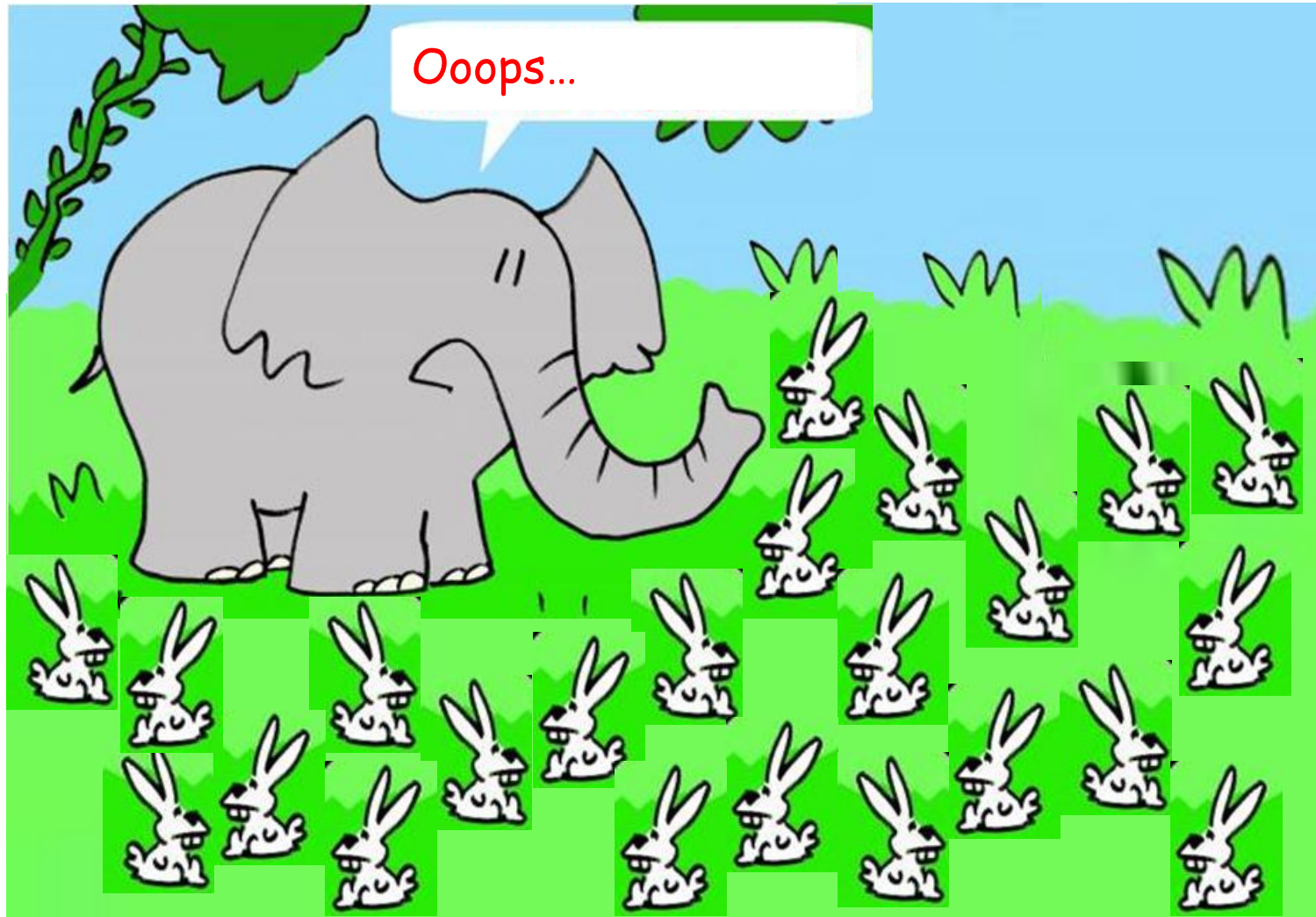
- Minimise superfluous unavoidable standards
  - Better regulation at EU and MS levels
  - Respect EU Single Market principles and rules
  - Avoid abuse of standards for interests of specific stakeholders
    - New Work Item Proposal filtering → market needs in primary chain
    - Competition law → no deliberate orchestration of turning standards de facto mandatory for false competition or demand-creation
    - Authorities → avoid to support such orchestration through legislation or governmental demands (procurement, subsidy, operating permits, ...)
- Joining forces
  - In formal standardisation the competition is often one's best ally
  - Federations & branch orgs should perform most standardisation tasks for SMEs, except actual deployment in the business
    - But even for their deployment they can give hints, training, tools and templates



# Are SMEs a threatened species?



# Are SMEs a threatened species?



# Reflection on some suggested measures 1

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- Free standards
  - Nice, but tip of the iceberg only ...
  - Financial sustainability of Standardisation Organisations?
  - Should have free insight into the landscape + access at fair conditions
- Financial or other support for SMEs to participate
  - Problem of sound representation – “SMEs” is not homogeneous
  - Level playing field? Rabbits and elephants have their own niches
- Participation by consumer organisations, workers, NGOs
  - Realise through the national delegation model
    - No need to create access at European level directly
    - It would compromise the balance and not apply to IEC, ISO
  - Stimulate / subsidise?
    - Only for specific, politically approved domains of public interest



# Reflection on some suggested measures 2

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- Lowering thresholds to participate (for SMEs and other resource-limited stakeholder categories)
  - To what extent? Participation requires dedication, expertise, etc.
  - Non-committed participation may stall progress
  - Maintain a fair balance between those who make the effort to contribute and those who comment
- Represented participation through federations
  - Excellent, but beware of some pitfalls – real representation, IPR, etc.





# Conclusions & recommendations 1

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- Access to standards
  - Free summaries including scope of application and references
  - Fair discount price for “tree of standards” referred to by “root”
  - Reasonable price to acquire standards
  - Low threshold access through web
  - Federations / branch orgs to provide active guidance and help
- Access to standards development
  - National delegation principle cornerstone in ESO’s model
  - Low threshold, active web information supply at National level
  - Low threshold participation balanced with need for expertise and commitment
  - Limited barrier is not all that bad: selects the real stakeholders



## Conclusions & recommendations 2

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- Support for SMEs in standardisation
  - Predominantly help them to organise themselves to join forces
- Support for other stakeholder types in standardisation
  - Not generic but targeted
- Standardisation is to a large extent a “common good”
  - EU and national authorities should take a general supporting role for the standardisation infrastructure so that all stakeholders can benefit
  - In a level playing field

BUSINESSEUROPE appreciated the possibility offered by the Commission to participate in the access study.

Thank you.

