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The REFIT-platform

BusinessEurope is positive on the work of the REFIT-platform and its impact on better regulation. Because the platform has been able to put forward high-quality opinions on a wide variety of issues following submissions by stakeholders, citizens and national administrations, it is important that it is continued by the next Commission and becomes a permanent body.

The REFIT-platform is a new and important instrument that allows citizens, organisations and businesses to provide bottom-up suggestions on how to make EU regulation more efficient and effective while reducing burden and without undermining policy objectives.¹ The REFIT-platform represents different stakeholders, who all share the interests of making regulation more efficient and simplifying rules in order to make everyday life for businesses and citizens better. The REFIT-platform has already provided opinions on a wide range of topics including consumer policy, competition and environmental issues.

Despite their different backgrounds, the members of the REFIT-platform have been able to agree on most of the issues brought to their attention. Not only does the platform continue to receive high-quality submissions, but the European Commission has also shown a strong commitment to follow the REFIT-platform's opinions. This shows that the platform works as intended and serves as a complement to the Commission's REFIT work. It is a way for the Commission to get insights into the reality of citizens and businesses who deal with regulation in practice. The topics covered by the REFIT-platform have also been used as a selection criterion for the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) in deciding what to scrutinize.

The world is rapidly changing and the rules that work today might not work tomorrow. It is important that we learn from the REFIT-platform and find ways of making sure that the insights of stakeholders are continuously listened to and that citizens, organisations and businesses can continue to submit their opinions. In order to see how the REFIT-platform can be brought into the future, more emphasis should be placed on the outcome and impact of the adopted opinions.

Recommendations

- BusinessEurope recommends that the REFIT-platform is continued by the next European Commission and becomes a permanent body supporting ex-post evaluation.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-making-process/evaluating-and-improving-existing-laws/refit-making-eu-law-simpler-and-less-costly/refit-platform_en



- The activities of the REFIT-platform can be developed further, for example by designing recommendations related to cross-cutting better regulation topics such as consultations and impact assessments, and also need to become better known among the broader public.
- On the 'lighten the load' website,² the Commission should give an indication of the factors that may improve submissions, such as a precise problem description.
- The person or organisation submitting a suggestion should be given the opportunity to present the submission either in person or via digital means to the REFIT-platform, as this may clarify the issue at stake.
- Since follow-up to the opinions of the REFIT-platform is key, we suggest that the person or organisation submitting a suggestion should also be given the opportunity of a feedback meeting with the relevant Commission services.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/lighten-load_en