

## **ASRO Report on SMEs - 2025**

### **Introduction**

In 2025, ASRO further strengthened its role as a strategic partner for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), supporting their efforts to remain competitive, innovative, and compliant in an increasingly complex economic and regulatory environment. Building on the foundations laid in previous years, ASRO focused on consolidating practical tools, expanding awareness activities, and reinforcing SME participation in standardization.

Aligned with Regulation (EU) No. 1025/2012 and the principles of CEN-CENELEC Guide 17, ASRO continued to promote standards as accessible, understandable, and relevant instruments for SMEs — not only for compliance, but also for growth, resilience, and market differentiation.

#### **I. A year of consolidation**

Throughout 2025, ASRO focused on consolidating its support framework for SMEs, moving from awareness to deeper engagement. The SME-dedicated portal remained a central reference point, offering structured information on how standards can be used strategically in business development, sustainability transitions, and digitalization.

Special emphasis was placed on positioning standards as business enablers, particularly in areas of high relevance for SMEs such as:

- quality management,
- environmental performance,
- occupational health and safety,
- cybersecurity and data protection,
- sustainability and ESG-related practices.

In parallel, ASRO continued to promote the message that standardization is not only a technical process, but also a strategic dialogue between industry, authorities, and society, in which SMEs have a legitimate and increasingly visible voice.

ASRO also marked an important step in strengthening its long-term support for small and medium-sized enterprises through the update of its Policy for SMEs, ensuring that the organisation's strategic approach reflects both European developments and the evolving realities of Romanian businesses. The revised policy reinforced ASRO's commitment to making standardization more accessible and relevant for small companies, by placing stronger emphasis on lowering barriers to participation, improving access to information and digital tools, and consolidating financial and organisational support mechanisms.

#### **II. Tools that support competitiveness**

In 2025, ASRO continued to strengthen the digital and service ecosystem dedicated to small and medium-sized enterprises, with a particular focus on making access to standards more affordable and easier to manage. InfoStandard 5.0, ASRO's digital platform for standards management, remained a central instrument in this effort, supporting SMEs in organizing their standards portfolios, staying up to date through automated alerts, and reducing the administrative burden associated with compliance documentation. To further encourage the use of digital tools, ASRO maintained a 10% discount on the annual InfoStandard licence for SMEs, reinforcing the principle that cost should not become a barrier to professional standards management.

At the same time, the ASRO online store continued to serve as a key access point for standards,

combining fast delivery with user support and flexible purchasing options. Discounted thematic packages and reduced prices for SMEs complemented the preferential conditions offered through InfoStandard, ensuring a coherent approach to affordability across ASRO's services. Through these measures, ASRO positioned digital access to standards not only as a technical solution, but as a practical business support mechanism that helps SMEs remain competitive in increasingly regulated and dynamic markets.

### **III. Giving SMEs a stronger voice**

In 2025, ASRO placed strong emphasis on reinforcing SME participation in the standardization process. The public enquiry system continued to be promoted as an accessible channel for SMEs to influence draft standards. Clear guidance materials and direct support helped demystify the consultation process and encouraged more companies to engage.

Participation in technical committees (TCs) remained a strategic priority. ASRO continued to:

- promote the benefits of TC involvement for SMEs,
- enable online and hybrid participation in meetings,
- maintain reduced fees for SME representatives,
- actively cooperate with SME associations, chambers of commerce, and professional bodies.

Through these efforts, SMEs were not only users of standards, but also co-creators, ensuring that new standards reflect real market conditions, operational realities, and innovation needs.

### **IV. European awareness campaign – MeetingStandards 2025**

In November 2025, ASRO implemented a focused national communication campaign within the European #MeetingStandards initiative, designed to raise awareness among small and medium-sized enterprises about the practical value of standards. The campaign was built around a clear and consistent narrative structure, consisting of six short video materials: a teaser introducing the campaign theme, followed by five consecutive daily videos, each highlighting a concrete way in which ASRO supports SMEs — from policy and dedicated tools to discounts, digital platforms, and participation in technical committees.

The campaign ran between 14 and 21 November 2025 and was promoted organically on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, ensuring coordinated visibility across the main communication channels used by entrepreneurs and business support communities. The video series adopted a human and accessible tone, featuring real people from ASRO and concrete business-related examples, in order to present standards not as abstract technical documents, but as practical instruments that support everyday decision-making in small and medium-sized companies.

In quantitative terms, the campaign achieved strong visibility and engagement across all platforms. On Facebook alone, the campaign period generated over 5,200 video views, reaching more than 1,300 unique viewers and producing 306 interactions, including reactions, comments and shares — a significant increase compared to the usual performance of ASRO's page. The six campaign videos accumulated more than 3,300 views and over 180 direct interactions, with particularly strong results for the teaser and the first campaign day, which focused on ASRO's SME policy and dedicated portal. The closing message, delivered by the Director General, recorded the highest average watch time, confirming the value of leadership visibility in awareness campaigns.

Beyond the numbers, Meeting Standards 2025 represented an important step in strengthening the relationship between ASRO and the SME community. The step-by-step structure of the campaign — teaser followed by one focused message each day — helped maintain interest throughout the week and created a coherent story about how standards and standardization support small businesses in concrete ways. By combining informative content with a personal tone and real-life examples, the campaign contributed to changing perceptions about standardization, positioning it as an accessible, collaborative and business-oriented system in which SMEs are not only beneficiaries, but also active participants.

### **V. Learning, awareness, and capacity building**

In 2025, ASRO's training and awareness activities continued to provide SMEs with practical knowledge

on how to apply standards effectively.

SMEs participated in:

- general and thematic training courses,
- online and in-person workshops,
- awareness sessions linked to national and European initiatives.

Training topics covered areas of high relevance, including:

- management systems (quality, environment, health and safety),
- information security and digital resilience,
- sustainability reporting and ESG-related requirements,
- conformity assessment and certification processes.

Through these activities, ASRO contributed not only to technical knowledge, but also to strategic understanding of how standards support long-term business development.

## **VI. Looking ahead**

By the end of 2025, ASRO had consolidated its position as a reliable partner for small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of standardization. The year marked a clear transition from simple awareness-raising to a phase of structural engagement, in which SMEs benefited from stronger support tools, clearer pathways for involvement, and a more visible presence in standardization activities. This evolution reflects ASRO's long-term commitment to building a system in which standards are not perceived as external requirements, but as accessible instruments that accompany business development.

Looking ahead, ASRO will continue to build on this foundation by expanding its thematic collections and digital services, further improving the functionalities of InfoStandard, and creating new opportunities for SMEs to engage directly in technical committees. At the same time, greater emphasis will be placed on dedicated events that showcase the strategic value of standards for small businesses and on strengthening cooperation with SME representative organisations, both at national and European level. Through these actions, ASRO aims to ensure that the voice of SMEs remains an integral part of the standardization ecosystem.

With sustained commitment and a forward-looking approach, ASRO will continue to support SMEs in transforming standards into a real competitive advantage, contributing to innovation, sustainability, and resilient growth across the Romanian economy.