

!! Not for Submission !!

The document below includes the *Word* version of the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board's (IAASB) and the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' (IESBA) online joint survey.

It aims to facilitate *stakeholders' internal outreach or information-gathering activities, and drafting and review of responses prior to completing the online survey.*

Please provide your input by using the [online survey](#).

About this Joint Stakeholder Survey

This joint survey is the first step in the IAASB's and the IESBA's (together referred to as the Standard Setting Boards (SSBs)) process to develop their respective Strategies and Work Plans (SWPs) for 2028–2031. It seeks stakeholders' views on specific matters that will help inform the SSBs as they develop their respective Consultation Papers (targeted for the end of 2026) for their SWPs.

This survey was developed with a broad range of stakeholders in mind as the input from a diverse group of stakeholders will help the SSBs better understand the role of professional accountants in the environment and how the SSBs could best serve the public interest through their mission of developing high-quality international standards.

This survey is set out in the following sections – stakeholders are asked to respond to the questions included in sections I, III, IV and V, by **May 15, 2026**:

Section I — About the Respondent

Section II — Background

Section III — SSBs' Strategic Positioning for 2028–2031

Section IV — Key Trends Impacting the SSBs

Section V — Areas for Joint Action in SSBs' Work Plans

You may respond to all questions or matters for stakeholder input or only selected questions or matters.

All responses will be considered a matter of public record and submissions will ultimately be posted on the SSBs' websites.

SECTION I: ABOUT THE RESPONDENT

1. From which perspective are you providing this feedback?

(a) A personal view

[If (a) is selected]

Your name:

Your organization (if applicable):

E-mail address:

(b) The view of an organization

[If (b) is selected]

Organization: **Institut der Wirtschaftsprüfer (IDW)**

Name(s) of contact(s) for this submission: **Torsten Moser**

Wolf Böhm

Neville Anderson

Sebastian Kuck

Ellen Krekeler

E-mail address(es) of contact(s):

Torsten.moser@idw.de

Wolfgang.boehm@idw.de

Neville.anderson@idw.de

Sebastian.kuck@idw.de

Ellen.krekeler@idw.de

2. Please select from the following options to which stakeholder group you or your organization belongs:

- Academia
- Accounting Firm
 - Global Accounting Firm
 - Large National or Regional Accounting Firm
 - Small- or Medium-Sized Accounting Firm
 - Sole Practitioner
- IFAC Member Body or Other Professional Accountancy or Professional Organization
 - IFAC Member Body or Affiliate

- Other Professional Accountancy or Professional Organization
- International Organization – Please specify: [...]
- Jurisdictional Standard Setter (JSS) or Other Standard Setter
 - JSS for both Auditing and Assurance, and Ethics
 - JSS for Auditing and Assurance only
 - JSS for Ethics only
 - Other – Please specify: [...]
- Organization Other Than an Accounting Firm That Performs Sustainability Assurance Engagements
- Preparer or Issuer of Financial Statements or Other Financial or Non-Financial Information
- Public Sector Organization
- Regulator or Audit, Assurance or Ethics Oversight Body
- Those Charged with Governance
- User of Financial or Non-Financial Information (e.g., investor, analyst, lender or other creditor)
- Other – Please specify: [...]

3. Please select from the following options the geographical region that best matches you or your organization

- Africa
- Asia Pacific
- Europe
- South America
- Middle East
- North America
- Global *[this will not come up as an option if the respondent's view is a personal view]*

SECTION II: BACKGROUND

About IAASB and IESBA

The [International Foundation for Ethics and Audit](#) (IFEA) is a nonprofit organization that supports high-quality, international standard-setting in ethics, audit, and assurance in the public interest. IFEA fulfills its mission through its two standard-setting boards, the IAASB and the IESBA. The IAASB and the IESBA issue their standards independently, following an approved due process including consideration of the [Public Interest Framework](#). The [Public Interest Oversight Board](#) oversees IAASB and IESBA activities and the public interest responsiveness of their standards.

The **IAASB** serves the public interest by setting high-quality international standards for auditing, assurance, quality management, reviews and related services, and by facilitating the convergence of international and national standards. In doing so, the IAASB enhances the quality and uniformity of practice throughout the world and strengthens public confidence in the global auditing and assurance profession.

The **IESBA** serves the public interest by setting high-quality, international ethics (including independence) standards as a cornerstone to ethical behavior in business and organizations, and to public trust in financial and non-financial information that is fundamental to the proper functioning and sustainability of organizations, financial markets and economies worldwide.

SSBs' SWPs 2024–2027

The SSBs maintain a practice of regular and open dialogue with all stakeholders to ensure the SSBs' standard-setting work remains responsive to stakeholder demands and market needs and continues to serve the public interest. Accordingly, each SSB is responsible for developing a comprehensive SWP for standards and related agenda priorities. The current SWPs for both the IAASB and IESBA conclude at the end of 2027.

For the 2024–2027 strategy period, each of the SSBs has identified four strategic objectives.¹ Strategic objectives reflect what each SSB is seeking to achieve during the strategy period, in support of their overarching goal or vision. The strategic objectives guide the selection and prioritization of standard-setting and related activities.

IAASB Strategic Objectives for Its Current Strategy Period, 2024–2027
Establish globally accepted standard(s) for assurance on sustainability reporting
Support the consistent performance of quality audit and review engagements by enhancing our standards in areas where there is the greatest public interest need
Strengthen coordination with IESBA and other leading standard setters and regulators to leverage better collective actions in the public interest
Create more agile, innovative ways of working in line with the Monitoring Group's reform vision

¹ In its 2024–2027 SWP, the IESBA used the term strategic themes instead of strategic objectives.

IESBA Strategic Objectives for Its Current Strategy Period, 2024–2027
Enhancing trust in sustainability reporting and assurance
Strengthening the IESBA Code of Ethics or responding in other ways in areas beyond sustainability reporting and assurance
Further enhancing the diversity of stakeholder perspectives and the global operability and acceptance of the IESBA's standards
Widening the influence of the IESBA's standards through a continued focus on adoption and implementation

SECTION III: SSBs' STRATEGIC POSITIONING FOR 2028–2031

Through a rigorous and transparent due process, extensive stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based analysis, the SSBs work in connected and complementary ways. This collaboration ensures that their standards are responsive to the needs of their stakeholders, and helps to strengthen public trust and confidence in financial and non-financial reporting.

The SSBs' standards promote globally consistent practices that enable auditors and professional accountants in firms and other organizations to deliver their services or perform their activities with a clear focus on the public interest. These global standards help consistency of regulatory approaches. They enhance confidence in reported information for investors' and other users' capital allocation and other decision-making across jurisdictions. These standards therefore offer a critical contribution to economic growth, capital markets efficiency and integrity, and financial stability through enhanced trust and accountability.

Questions or Matters for Stakeholder Input

4. As the SSBs look toward the 2028–2031 period, they are reflecting on how to position their strategies and work plans to best serve the public interest within a rapidly changing global environment. This involves careful consideration of how the SSBs remain relevant, responsive, and impactful in their standard-setting and other related work. **In that context, what do you believe the SSBs should aspire to achieve during their next strategy period, 2028–2031?**

Your answer may touch on different dimensions, for example:

- The relevance, responsiveness and impact of the SSBs' standard-setting and related activities.
- Broader adoption and effective implementation of the SSBs' standards.
- The SSBs' interaction and engagement with key stakeholder groups.
- The SSBs' ability to serve the public interest.

The examples above are for illustrative purposes only and should **not** limit, direct, or otherwise influence your response.

Your answer should address the IAASB and IESBA collectively; however, you may wish to also highlight matters specifically for the IAASB or IESBA (if applicable, you could use separate headings to address such matters).

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in the survey and to share our views on these important matters. We have described the matters that we would like to highlight for the standard-setting boards below:

1. Meeting the public interest should place greater emphasis on whether the overall benefits of any new, or changes to, standards outweigh the costs, as well as on how those costs and benefits are distributed across stakeholders. Particular attention should be given to whether certain groups, such as smaller firms, smaller entities, or specific jurisdictions, bear a disproportionate burden. A balanced approach should ensure that requirements are

proportionate, practical to implement, capable of consistent application, and responsive to the needs of jurisdictions, the profession, and users of financial information. Embedding cost benefit considerations into the due process should go beyond a standalone impact analysis and instead assess the overall effect on the allocation of resources in society.

2. There is a growing concern that standards have become increasingly lengthy and complex over time. In many cases, revised standards have expanded to several times the length of their previous versions, adding layers of detail with diminishing returns in terms of improved engagement quality or ethical outcomes. This is particularly the case for auditing and ethical (especially independence) standards, for which the question arises whether the additional cost involved through the greater granularity of requirements and guidance is subject to diminishing returns of audit and ethical quality. Greater discipline is needed to ensure that revisions focus on clarity, usability, and relevance, rather than continually increasing prescriptiveness, detail and complexity.
3. Triggers for standard-setting projects, as well as for new or amended requirements and guidance, should not arise from isolated instances of non-compliance with clear existing requirements. Instead, standard-setting actions should be based on robust evidence that existing standards are deficient in substance, rather than on deficiencies in their application. In doing so, due consideration should be given to the potential international impact of a project, including cost-benefit considerations, proportionality, and the effective allocation of scarce standard-setting resources. Standard setting should be driven by market needs and appropriate triggers, not by the mere availability of resources. In this context, greater emphasis and importance should be attached to post-implementation reviews when considering changes to existing standards. Given our comments on the diminishing returns for standard setting for audits and ethics, we believe that both standard setting boards should monitoring technological developments, and hence future standard setting for the IAASB should focus on issues of relevance to the assurance and related services market, including matters such as artificial intelligence, risk management, internal control and cybersecurity In this respect, even for technological developments, we believe that the ethics and independence standard setting has reached a saturation point, which implies that IESBA should focus on achieving a more consistent and rigorous global ethics baseline for the accountancy profession that would serve the global public interest.
4. Standards should be designed to be durable and stable over time. Frequent or incremental changes can impose considerable costs on the profession, reporting entities, and society more broadly, including implementation, training, and system adaptation costs. Accordingly, standard setters should place a strong emphasis on stability and avoid changes unless absolutely necessary. For IESBA in particular, we are not convinced that significant new amendments to the Code are needed in the period 2028-2031.
5. Engagement with key stakeholder groups should be rebalanced to ensure that all those significantly affected by standards are adequately represented in the standard-setting process. Engagement with the profession should not only include international firms and global professional accountancy organizations, but in particular national standard setters

that are often responsible or involved in the adoption of international standards. Engagement processes should avoid over-reliance on input from regulators and instead ensure a more proportionate and inclusive consideration of perspectives from the profession.

6. Standard-setting bodies must remain within their defined remit. This is particularly important for IESBA, which is explicitly mandated to develop ethics, including independence, standards for professional accountants in the public interest. Extending standard-setting activities beyond this scope blurs responsibilities, creating regulatory overlap, imposing disproportionate requirements and ultimately damaging the reputation of the profession. There should be a disciplined adherence to the established standard-setting mandate. For these reasons, we do not support the IESBA projects on Firm Culture and Governance (an area covered by national regulation or governance codes) or on CFOs (which extends beyond professional accountants). In particular, there needs to be recognition that standard setting should not be misused to address matters that – though addressing them may be in the public interest – are not within the remit of the standard setting boards, but rather in the remit of reporting standard setters, national legislators or regulators.
7. Third-party reliance issues, particularly the limited availability, accessibility, and reliability of evidence from external parties, are an increasing concern. Complex value chains, cloud and blockchain environments, and the use of external service providers are creating growing dependencies and interconnections. We would like to emphasize the growing dependence of entities and practitioners on service providers of various types, the blurring of the distinction between software and service providers, and the increasing reliance on third party confirmations in the value chain vs. rising assurance expectations in this regard that may only be resolved by one-to-many report solutions.

Approach to survey response

We have found it difficult to rate our quantitative responses to the questions posed. We have also provided separate ratings for both boards in some cases, as on certain topics our belief is that there is a clear differential in the importance of the topic to the respective standard setters based on what each of them has already done in that area to date. A higher rating should not be interpreted as suggesting that standard setting in its narrow sense is needed: it may just indicate that additional monitoring and information gathering is required. In addition, our narrative responses should be given greater weight than the ratings.

SECTION IV: KEY TRENDS IMPACTING THE SSBs

Background and Context

The IAASB's and IESBA's SWPs are shaped by their environment. Shifts in the SSBs' environment influence what topics need to be prioritized, the actions that will best serve the public interest and the timing of such actions. Key trends and changes in the environment create opportunities and challenges and will significantly shape their future SWPs.

Given the rapidly changing environment, the SSBs recognize the importance and potential difficulty in identifying which trends will be the most impactful at the start of the next strategy period in 2028, and how the relevance of these trends may evolve over time. Therefore, the SSBs will remain agile and adapt as necessary throughout the development process of their SWPs as well as during the next strategy period.

The most relevant and impactful trends will be incorporated in the SSBs' SWPs as strategic drivers.² These strategic drivers will assist the SSBs in identifying the opportunities and challenges that affect their ability to deliver on their public interest mandates, while guiding the development of their respective work plans. Although specific trends might have a greater or lesser impact, or imply a certain focus or perspective, for each SSB's work, the strategic drivers may also lead to the identification of topics or items where both SSBs have a role to play, given the connectivity between the SSBs (see **section V**).

In addition to trends impacting the SSBs, there are internal factors relating to the SSBs' governance, structure and operations that will influence how they prioritize standard-setting and related activities and determine future actions. These internal factors are **not** part of this survey. However, they will also inform the SSBs' deliberations and will be incorporated as strategic drivers in developing the IAASB's and IESBA's Consultation Papers on their future SWPs.

Key Trends Impacting SSBs

For the purposes of this survey, the SSBs have included a summary of the trends that may shape their environment and the work they do in the future. To develop this summary, the SSBs conducted a comprehensive review of a wide range of sources of information, including news and publications from jurisdictional auditing and ethics standard-setting bodies, leading financial news outlets, and industry research reports. This multi-source approach enabled the identification of recurring themes and data-supported forecasts across key areas of work for professional accountants. In addition, the SSBs have benefited from input from their Stakeholder Advisory Council (SAC)³ and from the JSS⁴.

Each of the trends that follow was identified for its potential impact on the financial and non-financial reporting ecosystem, including the SSBs' standard-setting landscape in the coming years. The summary of trends is intended to provide a forward-looking, yet grounded, basis to support information gathering, and open a dialogue with stakeholders.

² Strategic drivers are the factors that drive the opportunities and challenges impacting the SSBs' ability to deliver on their mandates in the public interest.

³ More information about the SAC's discussions can be found in the [May 2025 SAC Meeting](#) (Agenda Item 2 and Meeting Highlights) and the [October 2025 SAC Meeting](#) (Agenda Item 1 and Meeting Highlights).

⁴ = IAASB and IESBA Jurisdictional Standard Setters (JSS) Liaison Groups (see "[About IAASB](#)" and "[About IESBA](#)" webpages for more information)

SECTION IV: KEY TRENDS IMPACTING THE SSBs

A – Digital Transformation

Rapid digital transformation, driven by the pace and nature of technological innovation and evolution, is reshaping the global economic and business landscape, creating both opportunities and challenges. Three areas stand out as examples of digital transformation that will influence the future of standard setting.

- A1. **Increasing Use of Emerging Technologies:** Businesses and industries are undergoing transformations driven by the adoption and increasing use of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled tools and agents, internet of things, and blockchain. These technologies exhibit unique characteristics that present tremendous opportunities for increased quality, effectiveness, and efficiency, but also raise new and different challenges and risks to be managed.
- A2. **Digital Assets and Institutionalization of Digital Assets:** Given the growing use of emerging technologies such as blockchain, digital assets, including cryptocurrencies, have become more popular and their institutionalization is accelerating.
- A3. **Financial Crimes Enabled by Technology:** The growing use of emerging technology has also given rise to significant threats to cybersecurity and a significant rise in unlawful activities that exploit digital systems, networks, and AI-enabled tools and agents to commit, conceal, or facilitate financial misconduct.

Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance, Quality Management, Ethics and Independence Matters	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to modernize or enhance the standards, or provide guidance to support stakeholders in navigating the application of the standards amid these developments. • Extended stakeholder engagement, including with emerging technologies experts. 	
Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance and Quality Management Matters for IAASB’s Consideration	Potential Impact on Ethics and Independence Matters for IESBA’s Consideration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible need for the development of guidance (e.g., guidance about the use of emerging technological tools, auditing digital assets, blockchain audit trails and reinforcing the exercise of professional skepticism and professional judgment when using technological tools). • Increased emphasis on, or emergence of different types of assurance engagements (e.g., assurance over emerging technological tools, system controls, AI governance, and cybersecurity). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics and independence considerations relating to the use of AI by professional accountants in public practice and in business and other professionals who use IESBA standards (for example, accountability and threats to professional competence and due care, objectivity and confidentiality). • Over-reliance on the use of technology and its impact on objectivity, professional judgment and professional skepticism. • Growing threats relating to financial crimes

	and cybersecurity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing business models and governance, and potential impacts on ethics and independence.
--	---

5A. Indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

A.1 Digital Transformation – Increasing Use of Emerging Technologies

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
	X (IAASB)	X (IESBA)				

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

IAASB

Emerging technology, particularly artificial intelligence, is increasingly seen as a key trend in the activities of the IAASB due to its growing integration into business processes. Entities are adopting AI at different speeds, but the overall direction is clear and accelerating, with applications ranging from established tools such as OCR for invoice processing to more advanced systems like automated purchasing and agent-based AI. These developments raise important questions around governance, including data access, permissions, performance monitoring through AI-specific indicators, and the reliability of third-party services, all of which require attention by the standard-setting boards.

At the same time, audit firms are beginning to use AI to enhance their procedures, especially by combining multiple sources of information and supporting complex evaluations. Although responsibility for audit quality remains with the auditor, the increasing use of such tools creates challenges for quality management, regulatory compliance, and consistent adoption across firms of different sizes. This is particularly relevant for smaller practices, which may rely more heavily on external technology providers.

In addition, both entities and audit firms are becoming more dependent on technology service providers, which introduces further risks related to control, resilience, and concentration. Ethical considerations also play a growing role, as there is potential for misuse of AI by both management and auditors. These combined factors explain why emerging technology is a central focus for standard setters, as they seek to ensure that standards are robust despite rapid change and guidance is there when it is needed.

IESBA

Although this is a significant global trend, the IESBA has already updated the Code in response to technology developments and has published related non-authoritative support materials. On that basis, we consider the current Code to remain fit for purpose. The recent amendments were shaped by substantial fact-finding and stakeholder engagement; they are principles-based, technology-neutral, and intended to support the ethical mindset and conduct of professional accountants in business and in public practice as they use technology and respond to ongoing innovation. This approach helps keep the Code relevant over time and reduces the risk of fragmentation. Accordingly, we expect this trend to become less strategically significant for the IESBA, with the emphasis instead on sustaining confidence that the existing revisions continue to address emerging issues.

In support of this view, and notwithstanding the continued pace of digital transformation, we are not aware of evidence to date indicating that further changes to the Code are needed to respond to new developments. This reinforces the value of a principles-based framework, which is more likely to remain appropriate as circumstances evolve. So far, the 2022 technology-related revisions—together with earlier changes (for example, refinements to the wording of the objectivity fundamental principle arising from the Role and Mindset project)—appear to have remained effective over time.

Regarding emerging technologies (including artificial intelligence), unless specific and clearly articulated concerns arise that cannot be addressed through existing authoritative requirements, we believe the IESBA's efforts should be directed toward educational and illustrative materials that help professional accountants apply the current provisions in practice—such as the recent “Decoding Ethics: Building trust in a tech-driven world” podcast series. We welcome this initiative and the way it demonstrates how the Code can be applied to continuing technological developments, including topics such as quantum computing.

To limit demands on the IESBA's constrained resources, the Board could also consider drawing on existing educational materials. For example, GAA member bodies will continue to monitor ethical issues arising from the use of AI applications and would bring to the IESBA's attention any matters that, in our view, are not adequately addressed by the existing provisions of the Code.

We also note the discussion at the March 2026 meeting about the importance of organizations establishing appropriate governance arrangements for AI use. While such arrangements are clearly relevant, we believe that governance over the use of AI in entities is outside the IESBA's mandate.

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:



A.2 Digital Transformation – Digital Assets and Institutionalization of Digital Assets

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
				X (both SSBs)		

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

IAASB

Given the recent indications that the IAASB has expressed in “not recreating the wheel” when jurisdictions have developed credible non-authoritative material on the topic of digital assets, our recommendation is that the IAASB partner with professional accountancy organizations to reference those materials to meet global needs. Such action would demonstrate market responsiveness without expending significant financial or human capital to develop IAASB branded non-authoritative material. Furthermore, developments in the applicable financial reporting frameworks may be necessary before consideration of future IAASB action.

IESBA

Consistent with our response above, we view this as an already-established and significant development that is likely to persist as digital assets continue to move further into mainstream use. However, while continued monitoring by the IESBA is appropriate, we do not currently consider a standard-setting project necessary through 2031. Accordingly, we are not in a position to predict whether its relative importance to the IESBA will rise or fall over the next strategy period.

In our monitoring of technology developments, we have not, to date, identified circumstances that would indicate the IESBA Code requires amendment specifically to address digital assets, notwithstanding their growing profile. In substance, digital assets function as another form of asset for holding value and enabling exchange between parties. Because the Code already provides an effective framework for addressing ethical issues associated with traditional assets, we consider that in general same framework capable of being applied to digital-asset contexts as well.

We do not see the need for projects in this area, but should the need arise, projects should be undertaken jointly between the two boards to hinder misalignment.

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

See above.

A.3 Digital Transformation – Financial Crimes Enabled by Technology

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
	X (IAASB)		X (IESBA)			

[If a respondent selects "6 to 1"]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

IAASB

Financial crime is becoming a higher priority as advances in artificial intelligence are lowering the barriers to sophisticated fraud. Tools such as deepfakes and AI-generated documents make it easier to impersonate individuals and bypass traditional controls, while AI also enables users to circumvent IT security measures with greater confidence and precision. At the same time, increasing digitalization heightens exposure to cybersecurity threats, as weaknesses in systems can be exploited to gain unauthorized access, manipulate data, or facilitate fraudulent activities. Together, these developments increase both the scale and complexity of financial crime risks, challenging existing control frameworks. For these reasons, we believe that financial crime in conjunction with artificial intelligence ought to be an area of focus for the IAASB both in terms of applying existing standards and recognizing the inherent limitations of audits and other assurance engagements in this area.

IESBA

We believe that the Code already offers a robust, principles-based framework that remains suitable for purpose in relation to financial crimes through technology. The IESBA's value-add is not to replicate or broaden fraud-focused requirements, but to maintain confidence that the Code continues to address evolving risks as technology changes how misconduct may be perpetrated or concealed.

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

B – Changes in the Geopolitical and Regulatory Landscape

Changes to the geopolitical and regulatory landscape (in)directly influence how the SSBs' international standards evolve. Four areas stand out as particularly illustrative of how these changes shape the environment in which the SSBs operate:

- B1. **Regulatory Changes:** Financial markets, including the accounting and auditing profession, are navigating a complex regulatory environment, with ongoing changes driven by the need for market stability and to prevent economic disruptions, as well as a trend towards reducing regulatory burdens to enhance economic competitiveness and foster innovation and economic growth.
- B2. **Risk of Fragmentation:** In many jurisdictions there is a move away from international alignment toward a more national / regional focus. As a result, different jurisdictions, industries, or organizations may use varied and sometimes conflicting frameworks, rules, and metrics for reporting information. Such fragmentation contributes to uncertainties, adds costs and administrative burdens for providers of professional services and their clients, and erodes trust and confidence in financial and non-financial reporting.
- B3. **Call for Greater Agility in Standard Setting:** Professional accountants and other stakeholders have been emphasizing the need for a more adaptive standard-setting process that allows for addressing issues in a timelier manner. This includes calls for consideration of issuing non-authoritative materials instead of launching standard-setting projects, or undertaking more narrow-scope standard setting to address targeted matters, depending on the circumstances.
- B4. **Greater Diversity of Voices Sought:** Reflecting the broad use of SSBs' standards, there are calls for greater inclusion of voices from emerging economies. The ability to respond to particular needs may impact the adoption and implementation of global standards. It may also impact which stakeholders to connect with and the nature of standards and guidance the SSBs develop.

Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance, Quality Management, Ethics and Independence Matters

- Need to identify potential areas of simplification (including scalability and proportionality).
- Need for increased agility and responsiveness.
- Balance the need for the development of standards (through either full-scope and narrow-scope projects) with the development of non-authoritative materials.
- Increased coordination and collaboration between the SSBs and with other standards setters.
- Strengthened stakeholder engagement, including with investors and those charged with governance.

5B. Indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

B.1 Changes in the Geopolitical and Regulatory Landscape – Regulatory Changes

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
			X (both SSBs)			

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

We believe that standards should change based on evidenced public-interest needs, not fluctuate with political cycles.

For **IESBA**, the ethical baseline should remain steady rather than expand or contract in response. However, deregulation does not, by itself, create a gap that calls for additional ethics requirements; instead it highlights the value of a durable, principles-based Code that can be applied consistently across different regulatory settings. The fundamental principles and the conceptual framework already provide that stable foundation, relying on professional judgment regardless of the direction or intensity of external regulation. Notably, the Code’s provisions on pressure to breach the fundamental principles are designed to help professional accountants resist political, organizational, and commercial pressures that can arise during periods of regulatory change. For these reasons, the IESBA’s emphasis should remain on reinforcing confidence in the Code’s robustness and global operability, rather than reacting to regulatory or geopolitical swings.

In relation to the **IAASB**, deregulation should also be guided by careful cost–benefit considerations rather than by current political trends. There are increasing indications that the growing complexity of existing requirements may no longer be justified by the benefits they provide, suggesting a need to reassess whether the associated costs outweigh their value. This should affect future standard setting, as we set out in our response to Question 4.

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

B.2 – Changes in the Geopolitical and Regulatory Landscape - Risk of Fragmentation

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
	X (both SSBs)					

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

Fragmentation results when international solutions are viewed as not meeting the cost-benefit considerations (e.g. ISAs for LCEs, PIEs vs. Non-PIEs) or the pace of change leads to different versions of international standards being used globally. We believe a key consideration to promote harmonization is to prioritize cost-benefit consideration so that the value of international standards can be convincingly demonstrated.

The need for national solutions for national problems does not always lead to fragmentation: some “fragmentation” is not necessarily a bad thing because differences in environments (law, regulation, language, culture, markets) may require different solutions. Complete conformity may be counterproductive. In this context the IESBA and IAASB are not responsible for resolving regulatory fragmentation.

Cultural differences also need to be recognized and respected. While language is the most obvious example, there are broader considerations, such as differing cultural connotations and levels of acceptability around reporting misconduct. For instance, in some environments shaped historically by authoritarian systems, “denunciation” may carry negative associations, which can affect perceptions of, for example, whistleblowing mechanisms and related safeguards, among other factors. Standard setters need to actively work against unconscious bias in this context.

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

B.3 Changes in the Geopolitical and Regulatory Landscape - Call for Greater Agility in Standard Setting

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
						X (both SSBs)

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

We do not support the idea that greater agility in standard setting in the narrow sense of changes to, or new, standards, since this implies more frequent updates or “reactionary” standards of greater granularity, rather than standards being principles-based and therefore being capable being applied to new circumstances. Standard setters should instead prioritize simplification, usability, and implementation of existing standards. Quick fixes that do not stand the test of time do not lead to durable and robust standard setting that provides a stable platform for the profession and the wider ecosystem.

Nevertheless, the SSBs should be agile in responding to changing or emerging risks, but agility should not be equated with new standards setting. Agility should also mean removing redundant requirements that have become obsolete, and being willing to pause or abandon projects when they are no longer justified. Changes to standards – in particular for IESBA – should be a measure of last resort, used only after more proportionate responses have been appropriately considered.

B.4 Changes in the Geopolitical and Regulatory Landscape - Greater Diversity of Voices Sought

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
			X (both SSBs)			

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

There needs to be greater recognition of the impact of standard setting on the world's largest economies, whether traditionally established or more recently developed. There also appears to be an overemphasis on the voices of regulators and common law jurisdictions. At present, regulatory feedback appears to carry outsized influence in agenda-setting and in the development of requirements, with too little emphasis on day-to-day workability for professional accountants—particularly those in smaller firms and organizations. Any new requirements should be underpinned by clear, evidence-based analysis demonstrating a specific shortcoming in the Code or IAASB standards and a well-articulated public-interest case for change of global impact.

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

C – Evolving Expectations Concerning Sustainability Information

Global challenges regarding sustainability are reshaping expectations for transparency, accountability, and corporate responsibility in addressing the diverse risks and opportunities associated with sustainability matters. These expectations underscore the need for globally consistent approaches that support public trust in sustainability reporting and assurance.

- C1. **Continuing Demand for Sustainability Reporting and Assurance:** Reporting on sustainability information continues to grow as a critical component of corporate transparency. Stakeholders, including users of financial and non-financial information and regulators, are demanding more comprehensive and reliable sustainability disclosures. Also, sustainability information is more and more interconnected with financial information.
- C2. **Regulatory and Geopolitical Changes:** The sustainability regulatory landscape has evolved beyond climate reporting, with amendments to existing regulations and the potential emergence of new jurisdictional and international requirements. On the other hand, some jurisdictions are in the process of recalibrating their previously announced requirements around sustainability reporting and assurance.

Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance, Quality Management, Ethics and Independence Matters	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the adoption and implementation of the SSBs' Sustainability Standards and providing timely responses to implementation questions or challenges, including the need to develop further guidance or standards. Establishing potentially new mechanisms to develop materials in an agile fashion and to draw on specialized expertise. Extended outreach to ensure alignment, interoperability and global consistency across jurisdictions. 	
Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance and Quality Management Matters for IAASB Considerations	Potential Impact on Ethics and Independence Matters for IESBA Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the increased connectivity between sustainability assurance and financial audits to contribute to a coherent approach and consistent assurance quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of need for ethics standards for all preparers of sustainability information.

5C. Indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

C.1 Evolving Expectations Concerning Sustainability Information – Continuing Demand for Sustainability Reporting and Assurance

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
			X (IAASB)		X (IESBA)	

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

<p>IAASB</p> <p>There will be continuing (including voluntary) demand for sustainability reporting and assurance, but not any great general increase. There is likely to be a slightly decreased prioritization of sustainability matters being reported and hence assurance.</p>
--

IESBA

As the IESBA has only recently completed the IESSA, we do not consider it necessary to add further major workstreams in this area at present except as noted below.

The focus should be on supporting timely adoption and consistent implementation. Any additional activity by the IESBA should therefore be confined to narrow, practical updates to the IESSA where implementation experience highlights a specific point that requires clarification or amendment. In addition, there may be value in developing limited non-authoritative materials that illustrate how to apply the IESSA in practice and promote consistent application.

On *Independence Standards for Sustainability Assurance Engagements Outside the Scope of the International Ethics Standards for Sustainability Assurance*, the March 2026 IESBA meeting update noted difficulties in obtaining sufficient information to assess whether demand is increasing for sustainability assurance engagements that fall outside the IESSA. Given this current lack of reliable evidence, we do not support initiating a standard-setting project unless and until the data demonstrates a meaningful level of demand for assurance engagements outside the IESSA scope. The public interest factors that led to the differentiated, and more proportionate, approach in Part 4B of the Code should also be taken into account.

Consideration could be given to whether level of granularity in the requirements of the IESSA might be reduced.

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

C.2 Evolving Expectations Concerning Sustainability Information – Regulatory and Geopolitical Changes

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
			X (IAASB)		X (IESBA)	

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

IAASB

Changing expectations regarding sustainability information are largely driven by regulatory and geopolitical developments. Similar dynamics of regulatory change and rising expectations have been observed for many years. From an IAASB perspective, these are not developments that can be directly shaped through standard setting, as they are primarily determined by legislators and regulators, with standard setters having only a limited ability to respond.

IESBA

From an ethics standpoint, these developments do not alter the fundamental need for a principles-based approach. If anything, the increasing pace of change further highlights the importance of a stable, principles-based Code that can be applied consistently across a wide range of evolving circumstances. Consequently, in line with our comment under C.1., because the IESBA has only recently issued the IESSA, we do not think it is timely to launch additional major workstreams in this space. The priority should be widespread, consistent implementation, and any further work by the IESBA should be limited to focused, practical adjustments to the IESSA where application experience points to a discrete issue that needs clarification or modification.

We do not support IESBA undertaking a project that considers of need for ethics standards for preparers of sustainability information since the focus of this project is on all individuals involved in preparing sustainability information, not just professional accountants. We believe IESBA's focus should be on professional accountants. The credibility of services professional accountants provide is closely tied to the competence, ethics, and accountability associated with licensure; weakening this foundation could erode confidence and create confusion about the qualifications needed to perform high quality engagements. We are very concerned about the long-term consequences to the global profession and thereby the consequences to the public interest, because of decisions to develop profession-agnostic standards.

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

D – Evolving Structure and Business Models of Accounting Firms

The accounting profession is undergoing profound shifts in how its work and firms are structured, financed, and operated, with direct implications for the future of audit, assurance, and ethics standard setting.

- D1. **Alternative Ownership Structures:** Changing ownership structures raise quality management, and ethics and auditor independence considerations, including on firms’ ethical culture. In particular, private equity organizations are increasingly investing in accounting firms, driving growth and technological innovation.
- D2. **Increased Involvement of Non-Professional Accountants in the Accounting and Auditing Profession:** Traditionally, accounting firms were staffed almost exclusively with accountants and auditors. Now, like other private enterprises, a growing share of their workforce consists of specialists from other disciplines, such as technology, data science, law, consulting and sustainability.
- D3. **Challenges to Attracting and Retaining Talent:** The accounting and auditing industry is facing an increasing challenge in attracting and retaining talent, driven by perceptions of the industry as less dynamic and the allure or alternative career paths. Also, given the rapid changes in technology, firms will need to attract and retain talent, and build capacity, in areas where there is strong competition for talent.
- D4. **Non-Assurance Service Line:** The growth of non-assurance services has become a major source of revenue for accounting firms compared to fees for their audit and assurance services. If there is a corporate scandal or failure related to the provision of these services, it impacts the trust in the accountancy profession and its public interest role.

Potential Impact on Audit, Assurance and Quality Management Matters for IAASB Considerations	Potential Impact on Ethics and Independence Matters for IESBA Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for guidance or potential enhancement of standards that address firm level or engagement level quality management. For example, the impact on the governance and leadership, client acceptance and continuance, relevant ethical requirements, and information and communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of issues related to ethics and independence raised by private equity investments in firms and their impact on firm culture, and whether, and how, guidance or standards could help address challenges to a firm’s ethical culture arising from new ownership models. • Consideration of challenges regarding familiarity and compliance with the IESBA Code of Ethics in a multidisciplinary context.

5D. Indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

D.1 Evolving Structure and Business Models of Accounting Firms - Alternative Ownership Structures

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
				X (both SSBs)		

[If a respondent selects "6 to 1"]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

Ownership structures is per se a topic that lies outside the scope of IESBA and IAASB standard setting remit. The structure and ownership of accounting firms are determined by legal and regulatory frameworks rather than ethical, quality management or engagement standards, limiting the IESBA's and the IAASB's ability to address these developments directly. The existing ethical, quality management and engagement requirements already apply regardless of the ownership structure and business models of the accounting firms. Nevertheless, an integrated approach from the boards on ethical and quality management is essential to ensure that related risks are addressed consistently from an ethical and quality management perspective.

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

D.2 Evolving Structure and Business Models of Accounting Firms - Increased Involvement of Non-Professional Accountants in the Accounting and Auditing Profession

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
				X (both SSBs)		

[If a respondent selects "6 to 1"]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

The topic of the nature and extent of increased involvement of non-professional accountants in the accounting and auditing profession falls largely outside the remit of auditing and assurance standard-setting, as the structure, ownership, and composition of accounting firms are primarily determined by national legal and regulatory frameworks.

In relation to IESBA, we consider it important that the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants continues to be directed at the accountancy profession, where there are established oversight, monitoring, and enforcement arrangements. Permitting unlicensed individuals to undertake the same engagements as professional accountants (PAs) risks weakening the value and distinctiveness of the PA credential and sits uneasily with the talent-attraction challenges seen in some jurisdictions. If equivalent work can be performed without qualification and accountability, the incentive to become a PA—and to accept the related monitoring and disciplinary framework—may be reduced. For these reasons, we do not support the IESBA developing new requirements, or reshaping the Code, on the premise that it should apply to users other than PAs. Any proposal to broaden the IESBA’s remit would need to be progressed through a clear, transparent due process with wide global consultation, given the implications for the IESBA’s terms of reference.

Both the Code and IAASB standards already deal with multidisciplinary teams by placing responsibility on the professional accountant for appropriate authority, supervision, and control over individuals performing professional work under their direction. The Code also requires use of the conceptual framework to identify, evaluate, and address threats to the fundamental principles arising from relevant roles, relationships, and responsibilities — including those involving specialists who are not PAs. In our view, these provisions are sufficiently scalable to address the increased use of non-PA specialists, and do not justify additional standard-setting at this time.

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

D.3 Evolving Structure and Business Models of Accounting Firms - Challenges to Attracting and Retaining Talent

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
			X (both SSBs)			

[If a respondent selects "6 to 1"]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

[If a respondent selects "0"]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

Challenges in attracting and retaining talent within the profession are recognized. However, they fall outside the direct remit of global IAASB and IESBA standard-setting. The attractiveness of the profession is shaped by factors such as firm culture, workload, organizational practices, the regulatory environment, and broader market expectations, which are primarily the responsibility of firms, professional bodies, and regulators.

While standards may have an indirect influence, for example through their complexity and practical application, they are not the underlying main cause of talent-related challenges. Addressing these issues through additional or revised standards would therefore be ineffective and risks extending standard-setting beyond its appropriate scope.

As noted, the complexity and lack of scalability in the standards does have an indirect impact on making the profession unattractive, in particular the complexity and overburdensome nature of the ethical standards may make the profession very unattractive. While not a primary strategic driver in itself, talent trends provide an important signal of how standards are experienced in practice and the overall impact of how they are designed and implemented.

D.4 Evolving Structure and Business Models of Accounting Firms - Non-Assurance Service Line

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance	0 I do not agree that this is a trend to be considered
						X (both SSBs)

[If a respondent selects “6 to 1”]

Do you wish to highlight any matters relating to this trend or identified impacts, or any additional impacts, for the IAASB or IESBA or both the SSBs?

[If a respondent selects “0”]

Please explain why you do not believe this should be considered a relevant trend for the SSBs:

IAASB

The IAASB’s standards address quality management and engagement standards for audits, reviews, assurance and related services. As such, the IAASB does not address non-assurance services beyond the related services (currently agreed-upon procedures engagements and compilation engagements).

IESBA

In relation to IESBA, non-assurance services are already covered by the Code and recent revisions have significantly increased the requirements in this area. The focus should instead be on post-implementation reviews of these changes, such as those relating to non-assurance services and fees, to evaluate whether they are proportionate, effective, and have been workable in practice.

Other Trends and Ranking

6. Are there trends or related areas or matters that you believe the SSBs should consider that are not covered? If so, please provide details.

- Yes

[If “yes” is selected, text boxes appear.]

Please number your additional trend (O.1, O.2, O.3, ...)

O.1 Third-party reliance – particularly the limited availability, accessibility, and reliability of evidence from external parties, is an increasing concern (see our response to Question 4).

Please describe the additional trend

There is an increasing reliance on information obtained from third parties, driven by advancements in technology, evolving data ecosystems, and more complex value chains (for example in sustainability reporting and supply chain data). This development gives rise to important considerations for both audit and assurance, particularly regarding the reliability of

externally sourced information and the appropriate level of assurance to be applied. These considerations are relevant not only for reporting entities but also for practitioners, including in the design and operation of their own quality management systems.

On a scale of 1 to 6, indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance
	X (IAASB)	X (IESBA)			

Do you wish to explain your rating or highlight any matters relating to this trend for the IAASB, IESBA, or both the SSBs?

This trend is relevant to both standard-setting boards. A joint SSB effort to identify solutions for the application of existing standards may be helpful and consideration of how one-to-many reports may fill the expectations gap may be a fruitful avenue of approach.

[Further boxes will appear to add more than one trend, if necessary]

- Yes

[If “yes” is selected, text boxes appear.]

Please number your additional trend (O.1, O.2, O.3, ...)

O.2 Standard-setting inflation – there is a trend towards increasing complex, regulatory-driven standard-setting

Please describe the additional trend

In recent years, financial and sustainability reporting and assurance requirements have been subject to significant expansion, often channeled through standard-setting initiatives. This has resulted in a level of complexity and volume that places a disproportionate and increasingly unsustainable strain on the ecosystem, with the resulting burden now difficult to justify.

On a scale of 1 to 6, indicate the extent to which you believe this trend will increase or decrease in importance for the SSBs for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

6 Strongly increasing in importance	5 Increasing in importance	4 Slightly increasing in importance	3 Slightly decreasing in importance	2 Decreasing in importance	1 Strongly decreasing in importance
X (both SSBs)					

Do you wish to explain your rating or highlight any matters relating to this trend for the IAASB, IESBA, or both the SSBs?

In our view, both standard-setting boards should refrain from extending their activities beyond their core mandates. Recent discussions and initiatives indicate a growing tendency to address areas such as firm culture, governance arrangements, and broader preparer-related matters, including proposals to expand ethical requirements to individuals who are not professional accountants (e.g. CFOs without a professional accounting designation). We believe these areas fall more appropriately within the remit other relevant stakeholders, rather than the standard setting boards.

Furthermore, we consider that greater effort should be given to identifying opportunities to streamline and simplify existing standards in joint projects, rather than predominantly focusing on adding new requirements in parallel.

- No

7. Based on your evaluation of the identified trends, please rank what you believe are the TOP FIVE most important trends for the SSBs to consider for their next strategy period starting in 2028.

Please enter the trend code for each of your top five trends (e.g. A.1, B.3), **in order of importance from 1 to 5**, where 1 is the most important. You may include:

- Any of the pre-identified trends (A.1 to D.4), and/or
- Any additional trends you identified above (e.g., O.1).

IAASB:

- 1 – [O2]
- 2 – [A1]
- 3 – [O1]
- 4 – [A3]
- 5 – [B2]

IESBA:

1 – [O2]

2 – [B2]

3 – [O1]

4 – [A1]

SECTION V: AREAS FOR JOINT ACTIONS IN SSBs' WORK PLANS

Background and Context

Although the IAASB and IESBA are independent Boards, each with its own remit, their standard-setting actions have a collective impact on the financial and non-financial reporting ecosystem. Given this collective impact, the two SSBs work closely together to ensure their standards are interoperable and complementary. They endeavor to maintain and enhance their coordination on topics of mutual interest, including improving on the early identification of work plan topics where both SSBs have a role to play and can act jointly or in parallel.

Both the IAASB and IESBA anticipate that certain projects or initiatives on their current 2024–2027 work plans will be carried over to their 2028–2031 work plans.⁵ The SSBs will elaborate on these topics or initiatives, as well as possible new projects or initiatives for their 2028–2031 SWP period, in their respective Consultation Papers targeted for the end of 2026.

This survey focuses **only** on the call from various stakeholders for the early identification of possible joint or parallel work plan topics, or other initiatives or activities. Based on the trends identified in **Section IV** and stakeholders' expectations about the collective impact of the IAASB's and IESBA's work, the SSBs are seeking feedback about areas of common interest that may lead to potential projects or initiatives in which both SSBs have a role to play and that may be undertaken jointly or in parallel.

Questions or Matters for Stakeholder Input

8. **Please share your views about areas of common interest and possible joint or parallel work plan topics (e.g., standard-setting or non-authoritative materials), or other initiatives or activities.**

In our view, greater effort should be given to identifying opportunities to streamline and simplify existing standards in joint projects, rather than predominantly focusing on adding new requirements in parallel.

In terms of coordination, parallel efforts should be avoided completely. Activities should either be conducted jointly or clearly delineated between the Boards. Experience has shown that parallel workstreams do not work.

Whether an initiative is pursued through standard-setting or non-authoritative materials should be informed by appropriate public consultation and only extend to activities that are within the remit of the respective boards. Consideration of public input should be more balanced so that the voice of the profession is not underrepresented, given its central public interest role in applying the standards.

Areas of common interest that may benefit from joint projects include:

⁵ The IAASB's Work Plan for 2024–2027 is included in the IAASB's [Strategy and Work Plan for 2024-2027](#) and IESBA's Work Plan for 2024–2027 is included in the IESBA's [Strategy and Work Plan for 2024-2027](#). See **Appendix 1** for a summary of projects or workstreams that are on the IAASB's and IESBA's work plans for 2026 and 2027, some of which are expected to be carried over to the next work plan period.

A1. Increasing use of emerging technologies

O1. Third-party dependencies

A3. Financial crimes enabled by technology

In addition, if they are pursued, we consider that the following topics should be considered jointly by the standard-setting boards:

a) NOCLAR (non-compliance with laws and regulations)

This impacts ISA 250 and other IAASB pronouncements.

b) Firm culture and governance

This impacts ISQM 1 and other IAASB pronouncements.

c) The growing role of private equity in the profession (potential area)

This impacts quality management and other IAASB pronouncements.

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF IAASB WORK PLAN

Projects or Initiatives	Targeted Milestones	
	2026	2027
Post-Implementation Review of ISA 540 (Revised) ⁶	Recommendations	
Post-Implementation Review – Public Interest Entity– Joint SSBs Action		Revisit Public Interest Entity definition
Maintenance of The ISA for Less Complex Entities	Exposure Draft	Final Standard
Audit Evidence and Risk Response	Exposure Draft	Final Standard
ISRE 2410 ⁷	Exposure Draft	Final Standard
Technology Quality Management Workstream	Action Plan Work commences	Ongoing Work
Other Standards in the ISA 500-Series	Project Proposal Exposure Draft	Post-exposure development
Post-Implementation Review of ISA 315 (Revised 2019) ⁸		Information Gathering
ISA 320 – Materiality in Planning and Performing an Audit		Information Gathering

⁶ International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 540 (Revised), *Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures*

⁷ International Standard on Review Engagements (ISRE) 2410, *Review of Interim Financial Information Performed by the Independent Auditor of the Entity*

⁸ ISA 315 (Revised 2019), *Identifying and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement*

SUMMARY OF IESBA WORK PLAN

Projects or Initiatives	Targeted Milestones	
	2026	2027
Collective Investment Vehicles and Pension Funds	Non-authoritative Materials	
Firm Culture and Governance	Non-authoritative Materials and Other Initiatives; Firm Culture and Governance framework	Non-authoritative Materials and Other Initiatives; Firm Culture and Governance framework
Exploring Extending the Impact of the Code to All Preparers of Sustainability Information		Terms of Reference and Information Gathering
Role of the CFOs	Information Gathering; Report and Recommendations	
Development of Profession-Agnostic Independence Standards for Sustainability Assurance Engagements not Within the Scope of Part 5	Information Gathering; Report and Recommendations	
Business Relationships		Terms of Reference and Information Gathering
Audit firm – Audit Client Relationship		Terms of Reference and Information Gathering
Post-Implementation Review – Non-compliance with Laws and Regulations	Information Gathering; Report and Recommendations	
Post-Implementation Review – Restructured Code	Information Gathering; Report and Recommendations	
Post-Implementation Review – Long Association Phase 2		Terms of Reference
Post-Implementation Review – Non-Assurance Services and Fees		Terms of Reference

Joint IESBA and IAASB Stakeholder Survey
Strategy and Workplans for 2028-2031

Post-Implementation Review – Public Interest Entity - Joint SSBs' Action		Terms of Reference
Post-Implementation Review – Engagement Team - Group Audit Independence		Terms of Reference