



Towards better participation in Standardisation

## ETUC standardisation newsletter - July 2017

Dear colleagues and friends,

The ETUC is pleased to send you its newsletter on standardisation that will keep you regularly updated on the ETUC's activities in the field of standardisation. It will deliver information on European and international standardisation direct to your desktop. If you wish additional information and/or documents related to the news mentioned below, feel free to contact us at [standards@etuc.org](mailto:standards@etuc.org).

### ETUC participates in the panel discussions of the 2017 European Committee for Standardisation's General Assembly



The 2017 CEN and CENELEC General Assembly took place on 21<sup>st</sup> June in Edinburgh. This year's panel discussion was dedicated to the "Digital transformation" and its opportunities and challenges for standardisation. Peter Scherrer – Deputy General Secretary – and other panel members reflected on whether standardisation can be a catalyst for achieving a fair digital economy. Peter noted that we must avoid a society of "winners and losers", a digitally divided society. Because standardisation has become an important policy tool for the digital transformation of society, it must take into account societal issues. The digital society is increasingly shaping a new society where jobs are vanishing or moving around the globe and unfair price competition is created. Taking UBER as one of several examples, you see that digitalisation is causing a move away from "professional workers" to "occasional workers", who do not have the same training and skills. This has major consequences for both workers and customers. Who is taking care of training, skills, and health and safety standards for these occasional workers?

It was concluded that standards can help to set benchmarks to avoid a "race to the bottom". But at the same time, under no circumstances must standards encroach upon other policy instruments like decent workers' protection laws, collective bargaining or the social dialogue.

## The European Parliament adopts its report on European Standardisation

On 4<sup>th</sup> July, the European Parliament adopted its report on European standardisation. It confirms the importance of European standards and stresses that these shall be drawn up in an open, inclusive way, under all circumstances.

At the same time, the national delegation principle is recognised as the cornerstone of the European standardisation system. Civil society's participation at national level is therefore of key importance and must be supported and facilitated, including with public financing (lack of resources is a major barrier to participation). The ETUC standardisation activity partially compensates for this lacking or low-level participation by civil society at national level. The ETUC thus supports its national trade unions in this process.

## Joint publication of a leaflet on "Civil society participation" in standardisation



The ETUC, together with ANEC, ECOS and the standardisation organisations CEN and CENELEC have published a new leaflet about their rights in standard-setting activities.

The [leaflet](#) gives a concise overview of rights in the standardisation system as well as how civil society contributes to a balanced representation in standard-setting activities.

## CEN grants ETUC access to its standardisation databases

On several occasions, the ETUC has pointed out that not all planned standardisation activities are visible on the public websites. To improve transparency, the ETUC asked for and obtained access to the internal CEN databases where all standardisation projects are registered.

The ETUC welcomes this access, which societal stakeholders have been requesting for many years.

Access to this database allows a better understanding of whether a standardisation project is relevant (or not) for workers.

## National seminars to raise trade union awareness on standardisation

The national trade unions of Italy and Malta, in conjunction with their respective national standardisation bodies and the ETUC, are organising a one-day seminar. The objective is to raise awareness among the national trade unions about standardisation as a policy instrument for legislators and social partners. At the same time, a basic training on the standards-drafting process is planned, to recruit new trade union experts.

The Italian event will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> November in Milano, at UNI, the Italian standardisation body. The Maltese event will take place on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November. Further details will be announced in the next newsletters.

## New colleague joins the ETUC team

Katrin Behnke has joined the ETUC as Standardisation Officer. Katrin has extensive knowledge of the standardisation system and is familiar with civil society issues. She will support the ETUC STAND project and strengthen the participation of trade unions in the standardisation process at European level. Katrin holds a master's degree in Environmental and Resource Economics and is fluent in German and Dutch. We welcome Katrin to the team and the ETUC office.

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The ETUC STAND project is financially supported by the European Commission and EFTA



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