



Towards better participation in Standardisation

ETUC standardisation newsletter - June 2018

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.

High-Level Interinstitutional Dialogue on European Standardisation kicks off

On 1 June 2016, the European Commission published its communication on 'European standards for the 21st Century'. The communication aims for an efficient standardisation system that is based on close partnership between the regulator, standardisation bodies and other related stakeholders, including the ETUC. One of the actions to achieve this is the 'High-Level Interinstitutional Dialogue'.

The first High-Level Interinstitutional Dialogue took place on 7 June in Brussels. The representatives of the European Parliament, Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the Commission presented their visions for standardisation and brainstormed on potential ways to fine-tune the overall process.

On behalf of the ETUC, Peter Scherrer (Deputy General Secretary) and Guido De Jongh (Advisor) attended the dialogue. Peter Scherrer reiterated that while there is a need to have an agile standardisation process which allows the trade unions to influence standard-setting when there are issues which directly concern workers, it should not replace the legislative process. He therefore stressed the need to have the social partners involved in standard-setting, both

at political and technical level. The ETUC also pointed out that standardisation should serve society as a whole and not just industry's interests. The Commission has a vital role in steering this process.

Theresa Griffin, Member of the European Parliament, pointed out that standards are an enabler to spread new technologies such as clean energy or 3D printing. But standards must also take into account the interests of workers.

Meeting with the ISO, IEC and the European Commission towards an inclusive international standardisation system

More and more standards are developed at the international level by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Committee (IEC). This trend has been especially noticeable over recent years.

International standards are implemented as national standards, either at European level (via CEN and CENELEC), or directly.

But the international standards elaborated by ISO and IEC do not take account of the European regulatory framework on standardisation (Regulation 1025/2012). Practically, this means that the European societal stakeholders – including the ETUC – have no enhanced position in the international standard-setting activity. They merely sit around the table like any other stakeholder. In some specific cases, access to ISO documents – necessary to influence the content of ISO standards – has been slow or problematic, preventing any active influence in the international standard-setting process.

Moreover, international meetings take place all over the world, demanding a significant investment in order to take part. Only global organisations can mobilise such resources (but not the ETUC). As such, influencing the content of ISO standards is 'challenging'.

To address this (emerging) issue, the Commission hosted a first dialogue with ISO, IEC and the ETUC, as well as consumers (ANEC), environmental groups (ECOS), SMEs (SBS) and CEN and CENELEC. During the first meeting, ISO and IEC provided details on their standardisation processes and explained how ISO and IEC work.

The Commission made a clear statement to ISO and IEC inviting them to improve their standard-setting processes to take better account of the specific issue of inclusiveness in Regulation (EU) 1025/2012. The Commission added that this is important as many international standards become European standards, in the context of European regulatory frameworks, which need to be assessed against the criteria of Regulation (EU) 1025/2012, including inclusiveness aspects.

This first meeting resulted in an enhanced awareness among the ISO and IEC central secretariats of Regulation 1025/2012. ISO and IEC are expected to make their processes more inclusive, so that the European regulator can continue to rely on international standards.



ISO standards for Human Resource Management

The ISO/Technical Committee 260 was set up in 2011 to draw up international standards for human resource management. Standards already published cover procedures and methods to assess employees (ISO 10667), workforce planning (ISO 30409), guidelines on human governance (ISO 30408), etc. Currently, 10 draft standards are under development. Given that the

management of employees is highly relevant for trade unions, the ETUC decided to participate actively in ISO/TC 260. After being granted a 'liaison status', the ETUC participated in the ISO/TC 260 working group meetings on 14-17 May in Paris. We welcome the fact that trade unionists from other countries are involved as well and look forward to coordinating the workers' input.



The ETUC is participating in WG 2 'HRM Metrics', WG 7 'Human capital reporting' and TG 'Employee engagement'. Our main attention is focused on ISO DIS 30414 'Guidelines for human capital reporting for internal and external stakeholders'. The draft standard provides HR managers with indicators for measuring employees' contribution to the organisation. Having voiced several concerns about the indicators and other aspects of the standard, we regret that only a few of our comments have been accepted. The work is in its final stage.

The ETUC also follows the work on a standard on employee engagement, which started in May. Before ISO launched this new task, the ETUC asked for the proposal to be discarded. The standard will provide guidelines and a framework for HR managers to review employee engagement in their organisation. The ETUC is seriously worried about this work. We clearly emphasised the danger that workers can be put under pressure and highlighted the need for worker representatives in an organisation.

Towards international standardisation on an ageing workforce

The ETUC is working on [active ageing and intergenerational solidarity](#). In 2017, EU employers and trade unions approved [a Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Intergenerational Approach](#). The agreement is to ensure a healthy, safe and productive working environment and work organisation to enable workers of all ages to remain in work until legal retirement age.

In parallel, ISO has set up a new Technical Committee on 'Ageing societies'. This new committee will draw up a number of new international standards, including a standard on an ageing workforce. This standard is likely to contain tools for workplace design, workplace technologies and working practices, to maximise employability of older workers.

To ensure the views of the ETUC are reflected in this work, we got involved in ISO/TC 314 'Ageing societies'. We participated in the first ISO/TC 314 meeting in London on 20-22 June, advocating a lifelong-learning process for workers.



Towards a European standard for the service provision of hairdressers?

Following-up on the [ErgoHair](#) workshop in Paris, UNIEuropa and the ETUC have called upon the Commission to prepare a standardisation request for European standards to cover the service provision of hairdressers, with a focus on OHS and ergonomics. The first aim is to have this standardisation topic included in the Annual Union Work Programme 2019.

The action could improve occupational health and safety protection and risk prevention in hairdressing salons; allow the development of recommendations on the parameters of professional hairdressing service provision (risk



assessments/ competences and qualifications); develop recommendations for client management to ensure client safety regarding hairdressing services provision; develop recommendations for the establishment, maintenance and day-to-day running of a hairdressing salon (hairdressing salon service management) including ergonomic parameters and assuring safety; and finally draw up recommendations for the salon and equipment maintenance and safety (notably the storage and handling of hazardous substances). Another lasting impact could be a general, overall improvement in service provision in future.

Further discussions between the different stakeholders are ongoing.

IG Metall has launched a social label for garages



IG Metall is one of the largest trade unions in Europe. It has put in place a social label which is awarded to car dealerships which comply with criteria such as collective agreements, personnel training and cooperation with work councils. The label, called 'Autohaus Fair', focuses on respect for labour agreements, training and works councils.

The label is a win-win for both the workers and the car dealerships, as it establishes an equal playing field. Indeed, car dealerships and garages which do not respect labour agreements tend to have a lower cost structure and undercut those car dealerships which focus on quality, service and good working conditions.

The 'Autohaus Fair' label was started up in Hessen (in Central Germany), and is currently being rolled out in other regions. Full details on the label are [here](#).

Raising awareness of standards in Latvia

Together with [LBAS](#), the Union of Independent Trade Unions of Latvia, and [LVS](#), Latvian Standards Institute, the ETUC held an event on standardisation on 13 June in Riga.

The seminar ‘Standardisation: It is also important for trade unions’ made standardisation more understandable and visible to trade unionists and clarified the link between trade union work and standardisation. The speakers explained the standardisation process at the Latvian, European and international levels and the need to involve trade unions. In the afternoon, companies involved in the standard-setting process in Latvia offered their perspective and shared examples of best practice.

Egils Baldzens, LBAS President, spoke about the need to raise awareness of the influence of standards, stressing that a fruitful collaboration with LVS would be a first start. The head of LVS, Ingmars Pilmanis, confirmed the need to cooperate, with trade unions as well, on standardisation. Following the event, LBAS and LVS agreed to work more closely together. As a start, LBAS will be invited to participate in the LVS working group on occupational health and safety.

Peter Scherrer, ETUC Deputy Secretary General, invited LBAS to help the ETUC in working to represent workers in standardisation and stressed the important role of trade unionists in developing standards, to ensure they provide good and safe working conditions which go beyond the legal requirements.



Standardising learning and development at the workplace?

ISO is proposing to work on a new standard, which will provide a framework for understanding, organising and benefiting from learning and development in work organisations. The standard will set out roles and responsibilities for effective learning and development at different levels, covering the individual employee, the line manager, learning services providers, the HR or learning function, and the organisational level. It will provide guidance on learning needs analysis; the choice and implementation of appropriate learning methods; the effective implementation of learning plans; and assessment and evaluation of learning.

This standard would be part of the series of human resource management standards that have been and are being developed in ISO/TC 260. ISO will vote on this proposal in early September. If the vote is positive, ISO is going to set up a new working group to draw up the standard.



If you are interested in this work and/or would like to submit your views on this proposal, please contact your [National Standardisation Body](#). For more information, do not hesitate to approach the ETUC (standards@etuc.org).

ETUC participates for the first time in the KAN

The German Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardisation ([KAN](#) in German) has invited the ETUC to attend its seminar on 12-13 June 2018 in Sankt Augustin.

A long tradition of promoting the well-being of workers exists in Germany, which contributes to social peace and stability in the workplace. In that framework, the KAN focuses on workers' interests in standard-setting activities.

During the event, the KAN and the German trade unions shared knowledge and policy developments on the standardisation activities. The KAN staff provided an overview of the standardisation landscape at German, European and

international levels and shared knowledge on the hierarchy of the German regulatory framework of laws and technical regulations, voluntary codes and national standards.

On behalf of the ETUC, Guido De Jongh complemented the German vision with the wider European perspective. He also proposed making better use of KAN knowledge and sharing this on a wider European level. The extensive [KANPraxis](#) database, which helps in searching for standards, anthropometric data, ergonomics etc. is also interesting.

During the two-day seminar, the KAN organised a visit to the laboratory facilities of the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the German Social Accident Insurance ([IFA](#) in German). IFA does research, investigations and testing of products and materials.



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