

## ETUC standardisation newsletter - November 2023

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 key demands regarding the evaluation of the regulation 1025/2012 on European Standardisation



The European Commission launched on September 1<sup>st</sup> a [call for evidence](#) with a view to possibly revise the Regulation 1025/2012 on European standardisation. The objective was to collect feedback and views on the effectiveness of the current legislation in “*meeting the opportunities and challenges of globalisation,*

*ensuring the security of citizens and supporting the green and digital transition”.*

In its [contribution](#), the ETUC does not call for a full revision of the Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012, but considers that important adaptations are needed to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Among its key demands, the ETUC stresses the importance of setting clear boundaries on the scope of standardisation so as to avoid having standards tackle socio-political issues, which must be addressed by legislation, social dialogue and in collective agreements. Moreover, Regulation 1025/2012 should foresee a better representation and effective participation of trade unions at national level, in particular when standards address occupational health and safety, work processes or working conditions. Finally, the ETUC called for the indispensable role of the European Commission in ensuring that harmonised standards are in line with the legal requirements it aims to support to be further strengthened.

Standardisation must deliver for all. It is therefore important to have the right policy settings and regulatory framework to ensure that standardisation does not only support the interests of industry, but also and most importantly, that it effectively protects workers safety and contributes to better working conditions.

Subsequent steps in the revision process will include a public consultation, targeted surveys, interviews and a validation workshop. This process is expected to extend into 2024, when a the new Commission is in place.

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## Finalizing the Hairdresser's glove standard



In 2018, the social partners' of the hairdresser sector found that hairdressers' gloves were not fit for purpose simply because of the lack of gloves specifically made for hairdressers on the market. It was therefore decided to elaborate in CEN/TC 162 a standard for hairdressers gloves, which would become part of the EN ISO 374 series. The standardisation work started in January 2020, with the elaboration of laboratory round robin tests to check that the values and test methods in the standard were correct.

Almost 3 years later, on 17 October 2023, a final hybrid meeting of the CEN/TC 162/WG 8 took place gathering more than 17 glove experts from around the globe. The working group addressed the final technical and editorial comments on the final draft standard prEN ISO 374-6, including those (negative) comments of the HAS consultant. The standard is expected to be published in the first half of 2024. Once published, EN ISO 374-6:2024 will be offered to the European Commission for referencing in the OJEU. As such, hairdressers gloves sold in Europe will de-facto have to comply with this new standard for hairdresser gloves, making them at last safer to use.

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**ISO 45001 'OHS management' reloaded**



The international standard on Occupational health and safety management systems - [ISO 45001:2018 'Occupational health and safety management systems — Requirements with guidance for use'](#) – is likely to be updated in the years to come. It is worth noting that ISO 45001 is the third most certified standard worldwide.

The standard can be seen as a series of minimum requirements an employer's management system must comply with in order to achieve certification. ISO 45001 deals with some of the requirements that are already covered by the EU legislation on occupational health and safety, namely the provisions on risk assessment, training, information and consultation, which are under the "Framework Directive". The ETUC has been and continues to be critical towards this standard.

The International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) is currently consulting the members of the Technical Committee ISO/TC 283 'Occupational health and safety management' on whether there is a need to review the standard. The consultation is open until 17 November. If the members of ISO/TC 283 – which are also the National Standardisation Bodies – vote in favour of an update, ISO/TC 283 will then launch a second ballot on whether the standard needs to be revised, confirmed or withdrawn.

In 2018, the ETUC published a [Trade Union Guide 'ISO 45001 - Using the new](#)

[health and safety standard in the workplace](#)' with useful advice to work councils on what to do when the standard is implemented in their workplace.

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## ETUC at ISO/TC 260 'Human Resource Management' plenary



The International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) is developing standards covering human resource management. The dedicated Technical Committee [ISO/TC 260](#) on HRM has already developed 30 international standards under the ISO 30400 series.

The ETUC has been participating in ISO/TC 260 since 2018. Our main concern is the role of union and worker representatives in human resource management processes, as employee rights and good practices of collective interest representation are not sufficiently addressed in the standards. Many areas, core to social dialogue at work, which ask for the involvement of work councils, are however part of the ISO 30400 standards. These areas range from workforce planning, data collection and staff surveys, to recruitment and leadership.

The ETUC attended the ISO/TC 260 plenary meeting held from 14 – 15 September in Montreal. Most remarkably was the discussion and resolution on

the new proposal ISO/NP 30441 'Workplace Wellness — Creation and promotion of practices to improve wellbeing and effectiveness'. The ETUC had raised its concern about the scope of this proposal as its implementation would give the illusion of health and well-being when in fact it cannot give a guarantee or a proof of existence of effective preventive measures in the workplace that can really have a positive impact on the workers' health. Furthermore, the proposed standard would deal with workplaces and OHS measures, which are already covered by national law and other international standards developed by ISO/TC 283 'Occupational Health & Safety management'. The ETUC therefore welcomes that the plenary adopted a resolution to clarify the scope of this proposal and to seek collaboration with the ISO/TC 283 liaison. We will closely monitor the implementation of this resolution. Meanwhile, ISO/TC 260 set up WG 15 tasked with the preparation of the standard on workplace wellness.

## Recruitment standard published



The International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) has revised the international standard [ISO 30405:2014 'Human Resource management – Recruitment'](#). The standard has been on the market for some years and was

recently updated to take into account new developments. The work took place in ISO/TC 260 WG 5 ‘Human resource management – Recruitment’.

While there is no European “recruitment standard”, the participation of collective employee representations in connection with recruitment procedures is defined by the Directive on informing and consulting employees (2002/14/EC) and many national legal rules. The ETUC participated actively and focused its involvement on the legal issues regarding employee representation and union negotiation rights as well as data protection. We also submitted comments related to AI, data protection, equal chances and non-discrimination. ISO 30405 was published in June 2023.

## Gearing up for machinery standards



The Machinery Regulation (EU) 2023/1230 was published in the summer of 2023. The ETUC was actively involved in the revision of the Directive and in the preparation of the Regulation (EU) 2023/1230 in the last years to put forward the workers’ interests.

As the regulation follows the New Legislative Framework (NLF), it will be underpinned by standards. As such, it outlines the Essential Health and Safety

Requirements (EHSR) that will serve as the foundation for the development of standards necessary for manufacturing and testing machines before they can enter and circulate in Europe. The Machinery Regulation and underpinning standards also take into account emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence in machinery and the risk on safety that is connected to it.

At present, the European Commission is preparing a draft standardisation request on the creation of new standards and on the revision of existing ones under the regulation. These standards, by presuming conformity with the Machinery Regulation, not only facilitate its implementation but also define crucial safety consideration when handling machines. Therefore the ETUC is providing technical comments to the development of the standardisation request, putting the focus on the effective fulfilment of the EHSR to ensure a safe way of working with machines.

## Health and safety during an emergency situation – a missed chance



The ETUC is greatly concerned with the development of ISO/FDIS 41017 'Facility management – Guidance on emergency preparedness and management of an epidemic', taking place in ISO/TC 267 WG 7 'Facility management - Guidance on emergency management of epidemic prevention in the workplace'. The scope of this standard covers guidance for health and safety



through facility management in response to outbreaks in all types of workplaces. It provides guidelines specifying inter alia the general epidemic prevention and control strategy deployment, organization and leadership, and epidemic prevention.

Throughout the joint CEN-ISO development of this standard under the Vienna Agreement, the ETUC provided comments on the role of worker representatives and on the health and safety of workers during an emergency situation. We regret that only few of our comments were taken aboard. We also raised serious concerns about the untransparent and unfair management of the work by the committee, as our recent comments were neither shared or discussed.

As this standard is also under vote for adoption as a European standard, the ETUC submitted comments to the European Standardisation Committee, CEN/TC 348 'Facility management', asking for the inclusion of processes for consultation and participation of employees and several other requirements on health and safety in the workplace. The vote in CEN closes on 5 December.

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