



Towards Better Participation in Standardisation

ETUC Standardisation Newsletter - December 2024

Dear colleagues and friends,

The ETUC is pleased to share with you its newsletter on standardisation, bringing you regular updates on the ETUC's activities in this field. We are pleased to deliver information on European and international standardisation straight to your inbox. If you wish to receive additional information and/or documents related to the news presented below, feel free to contact us at standards@etuc.org.

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EU Standardisation Regulation: Webinar on Evaluation Study & Presentation of Findings



On 6 November 2024, Intellera Consulting hosted a workshop to present the findings of the Evaluation Study on Regulation (EU) No 1025/2012 on European Standardisation. As a key stakeholder in the European Standardisation System, the ETUC was one of the organisations consulted as part of the study.

During the workshop, the authors shared first insights into the study, which however is yet to be published. It assesses whether the objectives of the Regulation have been achieved, and whether the Regulation itself is still relevant and coherent, according to EU policy objectives. It does so by focusing on 5 criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value. While recognising the positive impact of the Regulation and the achievement of some of its objectives, the authors pointed to areas for improvement (e.g. costly participation for societal stakeholders and SMEs, fragmented representation of societal stakeholders at national and international level, etc.).

The European Commission is expected to take the results of the study into account alongside those of this year's public consultation, in deciding whether to review the EU legislative framework around standardisation. The EC is expected to announce its decision in the beginning of 2025.

ETUC at the ISO/TC 260 Plenary Meeting in Tokyo



The latest plenary of the ISO Technical Committee 260 on Human Resource Management took place in Tokyo, Japan, in the week of 28 October 2024.

Alongside the plenary, working groups (WG) operating under TC 260 also met in person to discuss respective standards, including WG 13, responsible for ISO CD 30201 “Human Resource Management Systems – Recommendations” (HRMS). WG 13 discussed comments received following this Summer’s Committee Draft (CD) balloting phase. The ETUC submitted comments to the ballot, including the proposed introduction of a sub-clause on worker participation and consultation, to ensure workers are adequately involved in relation to HR management systems implemented at their workplace, and that affect their working life.

The ETUC proposal built on similar content included in ISO 45001 in 2018, following ETUC demands. While modifications were made to the ETUC initial proposal, the introduction of the sub-clause was accepted by WG 13 as part of the standard. Despite the changes, which were required for acceptance of the sub-clause by other WG members, this still represents a step forward in the ETUC’s efforts to elevate the recognition amongst other participants in technical standardisation that workers are a specific stakeholder to engage in relevant HRM matters. It also reinforces the basis for inclusion of worker-focused proposals in future standards.

The standard is not yet adopted, and will soon be shared for a further round of feedback (DIS stage). The ETUC will continue following its development very

closely, in order to safeguard the achievements reached so far and further strengthen the role of workers in the standard.

UNI Europa Adopts Resolution on Standardisation



UNI Europa is the European services workers union, representing 7 million service workers constituting the backbone of economic and social life in Europe. For many years, UNI Europa – with the support of the ETUC – has been actively participating in standard-setting activities in CEN and ISO, as well as in the European Commission's High Level Forum on “Standardisation”. In particular, UNI Europa is involved in service-related standardisation, around human resource management, private security services, ladders (cleaning services), etc.

In a recent meeting, on 26 and 27 October, UNI Europa’s Executive Committee discussed the geopolitical impact of technical standards as well as the expansion of “technical” standardisation activities, which increasingly address social, societal and ethical topics. Following an exchange with participants, Oliver Roethig, UNI Europa’s Regional Secretary, concluded that trade unions must be vigilant. And in conjunction with its affiliates, where possible/necessary, expand its network of standardisation expertise.

Signed, Sealed, Delivered: The Machinery Standardisation Request



Standards are needed for the implementation of the existing and new safety requirements of EU machinery legislation. The Machinery Regulation (EU) 2023/1230 will replace the Machinery Directive (EU) 2006/42 in 2027, continuing to outline health and safety requirements for machinery design and construction in the European market.

The updating of machinery standards follows the legislation's review. The European Commission has now adopted a Standardisation Request on the creation of new standards and the revision of existing ones.

The ETUC supported the adoption of the Standardisation Request, which is urgently needed to further advance the development and revision of machinery standards. Working safely with machines is key for the ETUC and therefore we provided input into this work, focusing on the health and safety of workers. We welcome that the Standardisation Request reflects and confirms – as noted in the Regulation – the need to address ergonomics of human-system interaction, including ergonomics of physical and psychological stress and cognitive workload. We also welcome that the Standardisation Request calls for preparing technical solutions for safety functions governed by fully or partially self-evolving

behaviour, using machine learning approaches, since machines using AI will be a challenge we will have to deal with in future.

The ETUC will further follow the execution of the Standardisation Request and the development of selected machinery standards.

The ETUC Discusses Machinery Standards



Working with machines can be dangerous. Therefore machinery safety is a key element for occupational health & safety. And having a safe workplace is one of the core demands of the ETUC.

The ETUC Task Force on Machinery standards was set up a year ago to follow the preparation of machinery standards. These standards are tools for machine manufacturers to implement safety requirements under the Machinery Directive and soon the Machinery Regulation. On 6 November, the ETUC Machinery Task Force met to discuss and gather input for the ETUC's involvement in standardisation committees as well as European Commission (EC) groups.

The focus of the meeting was an in-depth discussion about selected machinery standards as well as the presentation by the ETUI of the 'feedback method', that is, the independent research and training centre of the ETUC. The ETUC

currently follows the revision of two key machinery standards: EN ISO 12100 'Safety of machinery' and EN 614-1 'Ergonomic design principles for machinery safety'. The Task Force discussed the concept of tolerable risk and also looked at the new dimension of human machine interaction when machines use AI. A practical example of how problems in the design and use of machine can be identified was the 'feedback method'. It can help to detect not only defects but also ergonomic risks when working with machines.

The ETUC Task Force will continue providing input on specific workers' issues around machinery safety and raise the voice of workers in the respective standardisation committees.

ETUC & OGBL National Awareness Event on Standardisation



On 6 December, the ETUC and national affiliate OGBL co-organised an awareness raising event in Luxembourg: "Standardisation - It is also important for Unions". The event was organised in collaboration with ILNAS, the Luxembourgish Association for Standardisation.

Participants learnt about the world of standardisation and its relevance for workers. They gained insights into the interconnection between standards and

legislation, and their geopolitical dimension; as well as into the role of the Luxembourgish national standardisation body, ILNAS, and the different kinds of trainings it offers to experts interested in standardisation. Throughout the day, three practical case studies were also presented to people in the room: with examples from human resource management, occupational health and safety, and AI, speakers shared their direct experience in the world of standardisation, highlighting how it impacts workers on a daily basis.

This event is part of the ETUC STAND's work aimed at raising awareness at national level around standardisation. Twice a year, the ETUC organises similar workshops in cooperation with national affiliates, in order to increase awareness within the trade union movement about the world of standards, their influence at the workplace, and their development process.

Starting the New Year with the ETUC STAND Calendar



The new ETUC Standardisation Calendar for 2025 is out! The desk calendar includes interesting facts and ideas around standards and their link with the world of work. Feel free to pass by the ETUC offices as of 6 January 2025, to pick up your very own ETUC STAND calendar!

Christmas Wishes



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

