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Towards better participation in Standardisation

## ETUC standardisation newsletter - March 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).

### CEN, CENELEC and ETSI further open structures at political level with the adoption of the "Opinion mechanism" and the "3SI" programme

After long discussions, CEN and CENELEC have adopted a new "Opinion Mechanism". This allows the societal stakeholder – the ETUC for the Trade Unions, ANEC for the consumer organisations and ECOS for the environmental representatives – to give opinions on standards at the two key moments in the standards drafting process. These opinions are then to be taken into account by the Technical Committees, who are drafting the content of the standards.

Similarly, ETSI has adopted its "3SI" (Societal Stakeholder Support and Inclusiveness) programme. It consists of a 3SI-advocate as primary contact point to facilitate societal stakeholder issues within ETSI.

### National ETUC seminars on Standardisation

Standards have become a policy instrument for the legislator. Trade union participation in the standards writing process, in particular of standards which contain a social and societal dimension, is therefore essential.

Trade unions must have a better understanding of the standardisation system. Therefore, the ETUC decided to organise **national** seminars, to stimulate awareness and train experts to participate in the drafting process of standards (i.e. capacity building).

The trade unions of **Malta, Hungary and Italy** have asked to benefit from such **national awareness and training events**. These events will be arranged in 2017 and in the local language, helping the participants to overcome the language barriers.

For 2018, such sessions are planned too. But national trade unions must still be identified.

General Secretary Luca Visentini was invited to attend the 60th Anniversary of the EU, in Rome



A social summit took place in the framework of the celebrations of the heads of state in Rome. It was well attended by the four EU institutions and several labour ministers. The ETUC's pay rise campaign was highlighted and it was mentioned by the President of the Council of the EU, during the ceremony.

In the framework of standards and salaries, Iceland is taking the lead. In 2012, it published the Icelandic standard ÍST 85 *"Equal Pay Management System – Requirements and guidance"*.

The Icelandic social partners called for standards – with accompanying certification – as a policy tool to enforce equal pay.

## Strategic Advisory Group on Services - ETUC input accepted

Standards were traditionally elaborated for products – and therefore of limited interest to trade unions. As the economy moves towards a services industry, standardisation organisations are following too and drafting more and more service standards. The labour component in a service is important, hence the need for the ETUC to be involved in the standard setting process for services.

The ETUC actively participates in the elaboration of the CEN Strategy on services, drafted by the SAGS Group (Strategic Advisory Group on Services).

The ETUC's comments on this draft CEN strategy have been taken into account to a large extent. The next meeting is planned on 6 April, in Brussels.

## European Court of Justice embeds harmonised standards into EU legal order

With *James Elliot v. Irish Asphalt* (C-613/14, of 27 October 2016) the Court of Justice of the European Union had for the first time the opportunity to take a clear stance on the legal nature of European harmonised standards. The Court affirms its jurisdiction over harmonised standards and considers them an integral part of EU law. Although the practical consequences of the decision remain unclear, the ruling has the merit of focusing public attention on European standard-setting dynamics. In particular, the reasoning of the Court highlights the role of European institutions in the CEN-CENELEC activities, implicitly asking (urging?) the Commission to take its role in standardisation to a

higher level. Moreover, the judgement fits with the latest tendencies of the New Approach in terms of institutional constraints and judicial oversight on European standardisation. This is consistent with the more pervasive role of the European Commission as acknowledged by the EU Regulation on Standardisation (1025/2012). In a broader perspective, the ruling therefore calls for a reconsideration of the public features of the New Approach. That opens a new scenario for the ETUC and Annex III organisations, which should take the opportunity to foster a debate on the openness, transparency and inclusiveness of CEN-CENELEC standard-setting procedures.

*Contribution by Pierluigi Cuccuru, PhD candidate in Law, Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, Italy.*

## ICT 2017 work programme published

Elaboration of ICT – or Information, Communication and Technology – standards and its related strategy are debated at EU level. The 2017 work programme has just been published and can be consulted here: <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/21763>

## Christophe Hauert returned to Switzerland - recruitment of a new colleague

In 2015, Christophe Hauert initiated the ETUC activities in the field of standardisation. In 2016, he moved back to Switzerland and started teleworking. This arrangement proved to be more difficult than expected and came to an end in February. The ETUC and its numerous experts thank Christophe for the work he achieved as the ETUC STAND project leader.

The ETUC is now looking for a new colleague with basic standardisation knowledge. The recruitment process is underway, with a deadline for submissions on 22 April 2017 (follow the vacancy page <https://www.etuc.org/jobs-vacancies>).

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