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Towards better participation in Standardisation

ETUC standardisation newsletter - May 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.

ETUC Standardisation Permanent Committee met on 3 May

The ETUC Standardisation Permanent Committee is the ETUC body dealing with standardisation issues. It met on Wednesday 3 May 2017. More than 25 trade union representatives discussed both technical and policy-orientated issues surrounding standardisation.

Annalisa Tessarolo from the European Commission gave a keynote speech, stressing that European standards are a very important policy tool to complete the internal market. Standards are a tool developed for and by industry. But with the new legal basis of regulation 1025/2012, the co-legislator has shown a clear wish that civil society be on board in standard-setting activities.

During the meeting, further fine-tuned positioning took place on issues such as healthcare services, international standardisation activities around Human Resource Management (ISO/TC 260), the ongoing standardisation activities in selected CEN Technical Committees and on cleaning services. The next Standardisation PC meeting will take place on 9 November.

The Icelandic Equal Pay Management System standard helps to bridge the gender pay gap

The Icelandic standard IST 85:2012 *Equal Pay Management System – requirements and guidance* was developed by the social partners and with the support of the Ministry of Welfare. The objective was to create a system that ensures that women and men working for the same employer are paid equal wages and enjoy equal terms of employment for the same jobs or jobs of equal value. To show how standards can be used in a social context and to bridge the gender pay gap, seminars took place at the EFTA Secretariat (Brussels) and the United Nations (New York). At the ETUC, Marianna Traustadóttir of ASI – the Icelandic Confederation of Labour – provided background on the Icelandic standard.

The Icelandic standard shows how standards can be used to improve the wellbeing of workers.

New guide to address the selection criteria of cleaning services



UNIEuropa (the European Services Workers' Union) and EFCI (the European Federation of Cleaning Industries) have published a new version of the guide *Selecting Best Value*.

This guide aims at providing public and private purchasers with a practical tool designed to assist them in selecting the most economically advantageous

tender (offering best value for money), rather than limiting their criteria to the lowest price only.

The elaboration of the technical specifications, which describe the required quality of the cleaning service, must still be completed by the buyer. This might be the more difficult part of tendering for cleaning services. It could be addressed in a forthcoming complementary document to the guide.

The new version of the guide will soon be available in several languages.

ETUC organised a one-day Seminar on *Trade Unions and Standardisation - Setting the scene*

Traditionally, trade unions have focused on legislation to improve the wellbeing of workers. But as standardisation and standards have developed as a 'soft regulation tool', and thus a policy instrument for the legislator, trade unions need to get more involved.

This ETUC Seminar, which took place on 4 May, aimed to offer both awareness raising and hands-on training for trade union experts active in the standard-writing process.

Annalisa Tessarolo from the European Commission delivered the keynote speech, stressing the importance of societal stakeholders actively participating in standard-setting activities. The Secretary General of the European Confederation of European Security Services, Catherine Piana, showed how standards on the quality of private security services are a win-win for both employers and employees. Christophe Hauert, University of Lausanne, illustrated the importance of standards to the development of international trade and thus delocalisation of jobs.

The second part of the seminar focused on the training of experts who actively participate in standard-setting activities. Ingrid Soetaert from the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre gave an overview of the standards development process. The seminar concluded with a hands-on training exercise: how to read standards and how to comment on them.

Addressing the English language barrier in standard setting

English is the de facto language in standard-setting activities. But not all trade union experts master English at a sufficient level to argue and defend their case

in international meetings. This creates a barrier for active participation in the European and international standard-setting process.

To improve their English language skills, several trade union experts will attend a one-week English training course, with a focus on the standard-setting activities vocabulary and processes. The training will take place in September, in York (England).

Second draft version of ISO/DIS 45001: Occupational health and safety management systems

A second version of the DRAFT International Standard 45001 was published on 19 May, for a two-month consultation period. The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) have jointly prepared their position.

This second draft version of ISO/DIS 45001 contains a number of improvements. But there are still some key issues which must be addressed. Proposals for further improvement have been laid out in a position letter.

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