

[View this email in your browser](#)



Towards better participation in Standardisation

ETUC standardisation newsletter - November 2016

Swedish Trade Union members meet in Brussels to discuss standardisation

ASTA, the Swedish group of Trade Union members who follow up the standardisation initiatives, met in Brussels November.

The main objective of ASTA was to elaborate the Swedish annual union programme on standardisation. The ASTA Group was led by My Billstam and Ulf Jarnefjord.

The 13 Swedish trade union representatives took up the occasion to become informed about the latest ETUC activities around standardisation. During a specific session, Joseph Niemiec and Guido De Jongh informed about the ETUC STANDARDISATION project and the 2017 objectives. The PC "standardisation" committee will now meet 2x per year and ETUC will participate in additional standardisation activities in the field of Healthcare services.

On Wednesday 23rd November, ASTA organised a session on European Standardisation, with a focus on the field of Personal Protective Equipment field, took place. Henk Van Houtte (European Safety Federation), Ingrid Soetaert (CEN-CENELEC Management Centre) and Joachim Grafström (SEK) presented the different topics. Exchanges of views took place during a lively debate. We learned that Standards are "voluntary" from a legal point of view, but in practice, binding. (for example, PPE products can hardly be put on the market if it does not comply to ENs, even if in theory other routes than compliance with European Standards are possible).

[Note about ASTA:](#) It was founded in 1990 and is a collaboration between the three Swedish trade union confederations. ASTA encourages greater union influence in standardisation work that is important for workers' environment and safety. About 70 experts participate in standardisation work in approximately

equal numbers of technical committees, both within ISO, CEN and nationally. ASTA also participates in several governance groups within standardisation, e.g. the Swedish Standards Consumers & Workers Council (SKA-Rådet). ASTA receives Swedish government funding, for membership fees, travelling and training to participate in CEN and ISO meetings. In addition, it provides English language training for Standardisation.



French public authorities and social partners oppose to ISO 45001

In an opinion released on 3 November 2016, the standing policy group of the Working Conditions Policy Board (COCT), which gathers together the French public authorities and social partners, has expressed its opposition to the draft international standards ISO 45001 on occupational health and safety management systems. The opinion underlines that occupational health management calls on the processes provided for by the regulations (Labour Code) and social dialogue; standardisation in this field raises a major democratic problem with regard to the legitimacy and representativeness of stakeholders. In this view, ISO 45001 is a typical case illustrating the need to set limits on the extent to which standards can intervene. Please, find here the [opinion](#) (in French) and the corresponding [press release](#) (in English).

Despite the COCT opinion echoing concerns shared by other actors (see for instance the [ETUC Resolution on ISO 45001](#) or the [opinion of the EC Advisory Committee on Health and Safety](#)), it is worth noting that the development of ISO 45001 keeps going on and even extend. Meetings of the ISO 450001 working group have been held in June 2016 (see the [communiqué](#)) and

October 2016 (see the [communiqué](#)) and a ballot on the new draft should take place in June/July 2017. A potential new standardisation work related to psychosocial stress has also been proposed to the standardisation committee developing ISO 45001. In addition, the ISO is already working on a specific standard setting "[competence requirements for auditing and certification of occupational health and safety](#)" and a number of training courses on ISO 45001 are currently advertised by some national standards bodies or certification businesses.

Such developments highlight the extent to which standardisation activities are difficult to stop once initiated and the corresponding need for trade unions to closely monitor developments taking place in international standardisation. They also raise attention to the wide-range of activities, such as audit, certification and training that support the so-called voluntary adoption of standards. This suggests that while trade union participation in the standardisation committee drafting ISO 45001 remains crucial to influence its content, the potential role of trade unions in the audit process taking place at company level might be explored as providing another avenue to influence occupational health and safety management systems.

EESC adopts opinion on the EC communication on "European standards for the 21st century"

On 20 October 2016, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) plenary almost unanimously approved rapporteur Antonello Pezzini's [opinion](#) on the European Commission Communication on European Standards for the 21st century ([COM \(2016\) 358 final](#)). The opinion underlines that the EESC, as the home of civil society, "attaches particular importance to enhancing the transparency and inclusiveness of the ESS [European Standardisation System]". It further recommends that European stakeholders organisations representing societal interests and SMEs (recognized as Annex III organisation in the 1025/2012 Regulation), "should be granted specific member/partner status, with clear rights and obligations, especially the right to an opinion." In order to assess and monitor EU standardisation policies, the opinion also recommends to set-up an inter-institutional dialogue on standardisation between the Commission, the European Parliament, the Council, the EESC and the Committee of the Regions.

Copyright © ETUC STAND. All rights reserved.

Our website is: <http://standardisation.etuc.org>

Our mailing address is: standards@etuc.org

To subscribe to our newsletter, click [here](#)

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



This email was sent to gdejongh@etuc.org
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)
ETUC · Bld du Roi Albert II, 5 · B - 1210 Brussels · Brussels 1000 · Belgium

MailChimp