



Towards better participation in Standardisation

ETUC standardisation newsletter - February 2019

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.

Active Ageing - a new ISO standard under development



Many countries see themselves moving towards an ageing society. This has an impact on our everyday life and it is changing the way we plan things and design our future. In order to defend workers' rights and to ensure that employers start to develop 'ageing friendly' environments for their employees, the ETUC is involved – from the beginning – in a new ISO standard that is being created by ISO/Technical Committee 314 'Ageing societies'. Its Working Group 1 is drafting a standard on the 'ageing workforce' and the aim is to create provisions which will ensure that older employees have meaningful work, access to training, adapted workplace design, etc. After the first meeting that took place in London, UK, the members of TC 314 gathered in Hangzhou, China (from 5-7 November 2018) with the support of the China National Institution of Standardisation. ISO delegations from around the world delivered presentations and adopted positions. The ETUC underlined the importance of taking into consideration the link between life expectancy and retirement age (statistics show that the retirement age is going up and governments are encouraging continuing participation in the labour market, regardless of workers' health or life expectancy). The ISO members unanimously agreed on the importance of focusing on the link between abilities and productivity, a balance between professional career and personal life and responsibilities, a safe environment at the workplace and access to lifelong learning.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Berlin on 24-26 June 2019. The details of the work done by the ETUC within this working group is shared amongst the ETUC community (i.e. those who wish to be involved). You can contribute with materials, statistics and other different resources on this topic by contacting ETUC standardisation team.

Contribution made with the support of Adriana Ciacaru, President of the Youth Commission CNSLR-Fratia (Romania), Member of the ETUC Youth Committee and ETUC delegate in ISO/TC 314 'Ageing societies'.

The European Commission communicates around harmonised standards

Harmonised standards are a subset of European standards, which are published by the European Standardisation Organisations CEN, CENELEC and ETSI.

Harmonised standards are standards which facilitate manufacturers' legal obligations when they design products to be put on the market. This is expressed by using the CE marking. Workers are confronted with the CE label

when they wear personal protective equipment and use machines or electrical equipment, while the wider public encounters it when drinking a pint or buying toys for children.

Through a recent judgement, the Court of Justice of the EU has clarified that harmonised standards “form part of law”, even though they are developed by independent private organisations and their use remains voluntary. This adds additional obligations on the European Commission (and the Member States) to make sure that the harmonised standards fully comply with the applicable legislation.

As such, the Commission Communication further emphasises that the European Standardisation system must be an “inclusive” and transparent system. The Commission will therefore closely monitor whether the input from SMEs, consumers, **workers** and environmental interests are taken into account in the standardisation process, as their contribution enhances the quality of standards.

Therefore, the ETUC, members/affiliates, and ETUI as well as the relevant national authorities must remain vigilant regarding standard-setting activities and continue to be actively involved in the setting of (harmonised) standards which are relevant for workers, and which have a direct impact on their wellbeing.

The Commission Communication [COM \(2018\) 764 Final](#) was published on 22 November 2018 and is available in all EU languages.

Do you already work Agile?



Are you concerned about the consequences for the quality of work, new dependency or a shift of entrepreneurial responsibility on workers when it

comes to *agile reorganisation* in your company?

AGILE has become a buzzword these days. Consultants make a lot of money by bringing it to market, in terms of consultancy products and restructuring processes of companies. Metrics for a quantified and even AI-enabled (AI = Artificial Intelligence) Human Resource Management will be developed in ISO/TC 260 for the management of the workforce, in an agile-associated way. The German standardisation body DIN is preparing a roadmap for an 'innovative working world'.

Dr. Michael Bretschneider-Hagemes from the German Commission for Occupational Health and Safety and Standardisation ([KAN](#)), who has a background as a sociologist with a PhD in philosophy, has examined new systems of power and control at work and the consequences for the worker. One of his works is published under the title *Scientific Management reloaded?*

He is disenchanted with buzzwords like AGIL and 4.0 and offers us insights into the world of post-industrial management. An example? AGIL is not just about being innovative and cool, it is an old paradigm of Sociologist Talcot Parsons from the 1950s! A, G, I, L stands for four conditions for a system to survive in its environment: **A**daptation, **G**oal Attainment, **I**ntegration and **L**atency.

This scheme was anticipated by the neoliberal approach of Management Cybernetics! It is all about new forms of power in a post-industrialist world with questionable consequences for workers. [Michael](#) always has an open ear for discussion...

Good practices - the Swedish case



The standard-writing process is driven by those who are around the table and can afford – resource-wise – to be actively involved. Trade unions – and to a wider extent civil society – are not always in that position.

In Sweden, public authorities have set up a supporting programme for trade unions and consumers, to allow them to be actively involved in the standard-setting process. This supporting programme works in close cooperation with SIS, the Swedish Standards Institute.

The annual ASTA standardisation event of the Swedish trade unions took place on Monday 4 February. The ETUC was invited to give an overview of all ongoing standardisation topics (and beyond).

As such, the event contributed to awareness raising and greater knowledge about ongoing standardisation activities in Europe and the world and the issues of interest (and at stake) for Swedish trade unions. [Ulf Jarnefjord](#), vice-chairman of ASTRA, can provide detailed information on the Swedish supporting programme.

In the framework of the event, the ETUC engaged with a new expert – Anette Anderson of Unionen - for active contribution to a forthcoming ISO standard on 'employee engagement' ([by ISO/TC 260 Human Resource Management](#)).

New ISO standard on sharing economy in pipeline



ISO will develop a new standard for the operation and management of sharing economy platforms.

In 2017, ISO prepared a Workshop Agreement, [IWA 27:2017 Guiding principles and framework for the sharing economy](#). The guidelines cover principles such as accountability, inclusion, health and safety as well as privacy. IWA 27 is the basis for this new work.

This new work will be carried out in the new [ISO/TC 324 'Sharing Economy'](#) which has just been created to write this standard.

One of the many aspects the ETUC is working on is the sharing economy. [Online platform workers](#) often report extreme levels of control, precarious working conditions and no health and safety protection. The ETUC therefore calls for European law to regulate working conditions for online platforms.

'Standards affect workers' leaflet - not only in English



The [ETUC leaflet 'Standards affect workers'](#) is now also available in other languages: French, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovenian, Norwegian and Latvian. The different national versions are one way to help to reach out to the many trade unionists who do not master English.

LO Norway, with the support of the ETUC, has published the Norwegian version of the 'Standards affect workers' leaflet on [LO Norway website](#). Also ZSSS, Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia, has posted the [new leaflet online](#).

ETUC launches a call for tender for a study on the role of standards

The ETUC STAND has issued a call for tender for the preparation of a study on the role of selected international and European standards in shaping the world of work in the European service sector. This study is part of the implementation of the ETUC STANDardisation project Work Programme 2019. Details are [here](#). The ETUC call will end on Thursday, 28 February 2019.

Through the study, the ETUC STAND wants to gather in-depth knowledge about the relationships and interplay between voluntary consensus standards in the European service sector and social dialogue, collective bargaining and agreements, working conditions, and labour laws. Another objective of the study will be to understand the impact of international and European standards on working conditions and social dialogue in selected service sectors.

ETUC national awareness raising workshops for Romanian and Cypriot trade unions



Together with national trade unions and national standards bodies, the ETUC organises seminars to place the topic of standardisation on the radar. This year, we will co-organise two seminars together with our Cypriot and Romanian affiliates.

The joint event with the Romanian trade unions - ASRO - ETUC will take place on 28 March 2019, Bucharest, Romania.

The joint event of SEK - CYS - ETUC will take place on 3 April 2019, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Both events foresee presentations and discussions about standards as a possible policy instrument for legislators and social partners and the possibility for trade unions to participate in standard-setting. The events will also include practical examples of the standards-drafting process.

For more information, please contact the ETUC Secretariat.



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