

UNECE Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies

Update on WP.6 activities

June 2022

2nd Annual Forum of WP.6 subgroups, 22-26 May 2023

A “[Back to Basics of Quality Infrastructure](#)” session during the forum echoed the presentations made in the pre-session panel of the 32nd Annual Session in November 2023. The foundational principles of standardization, national technical regulations, international regulatory cooperation, metrology, market surveillance, risk management and conformity assessment are the backbone of much of the work within WP.6. We are looking into the possibility for producing a publication on the topic.

The Team of Specialists on Gender-Responsive Standards (GRS) hosted a webinar on “[Achievements and challenges in implementing gender action plans](#)”, sharing best practices from Austria, Rwanda, The European Committee for Standardization (CEN/CENELEC), the Pan American Standards Commission (COPANT), the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) and ASTM International. A summary of the toolkit of current GRS guidance was also presented. A colleague from the WTO provided a closing keynote putting GRS in the context of wider challenges to mainstreaming gender in trade policies.

The Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems (GRM) hosted [a webinar](#) which outlined cross-border risk management from a customs perspective and from a product compliance perspective and linking these back to the guidance already produced by GRM.

A [sharing of best practices in market surveillance](#) also took place during the forum with a very informative session on the nuances of the European Union product regulatory system which is used as a reference in many parts of the world.

The Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques (START) reviewed the current initiatives in light of their relevance and reassessed its priorities based on demand-driven approaches. Several key areas of future work were identified, such as new case studies on cybersecurity and trunk pipeline safety of installations for the transport of hydrogen and the material used in that environment. It was further suggested that *Recommendation L on the International Model for Transnational Regulatory Cooperation Based on Good Practice* could usefully evolve to cover processes, systems and services.

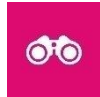
33rd WP.6 Annual Session

The 33rd WP.6 Annual Session will take place 23-24 November 2023. During this meeting, we plan to put forward for approval revision of Recommendation K, a White Paper on Code Lists for gender, sex and salutations, a proposal for internal working procedures and very likely a new recommendation on the market surveillance of products with embedded technologies, such as artificial intelligence.

WHERE YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

- Invite standards development organizations to become signatory to the [Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development](#).
- For those standards bodies that already have standards-related gender action plans, to fill out the [questionnaire template](#) for a future guide on best practices on the topic.
- Participate in the WP.6 meetings in view of the proposed topics (outlined on the next page).
- Any return on experiences on gender, standards and sustainable development that you would like to share at an upcoming GRS webinar. Deadline 15 July, please.
- Project on conformity of products with embedded technology currently [out for public review](#).

MARS



Advisory Group on Market Surveillance

At its annual meeting, the MARS nominated a new chair from Belgium and two vice-chairs from New Zealand and Belgium.

Following the webinar on “[Market surveillance role in combatting counterfeit products](#)” with insightful contributions from Serbia, Denmark, the United Kingdom and the WTO, MARS plans to revise [Recommendation M](#) on this subject in the coming months. It was also suggested that it could be useful to also review [Recommendation N on Good Market Surveillance Policies and Practices](#) for a potential review. The group proposed to eventually organize a webinar on this topic in early 2024.

The [Annual meeting of MARS](#) on 26 May featured best practice presentations from Estonia, Belgium, Sweden and the European Commission DG GROW. This provided insight into current practices and regulations which are reproduced in many parts of the world.

START



Ad Hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques

The sectoral initiative on pipeline safety (SIPS) is working towards the creation of a common regulatory arrangement on trunk pipeline safety; this work should be finalized in 2024. The group will also work on a harmonized vocabulary in this field. Finally, the group will be studying the trunk pipeline safety for growing markets such as hydrogen.

The sectoral initiative on equipment for explosive environment (SIEEE) will be present at the next IEC-Ex meeting in Edinburgh in September 2023 and will discuss there the future work which can be put forward in WP.6.

The sectoral initiative on cybersecurity reviewed its Common Regulatory Arrangement and confirmed that it is a very useful document. It encouraged that further examples in the annex would be useful. They also underlined that further promotion of the work would be useful.

The START also underlined that a review of Recommendation L in view of dealing with systems, processes and services would be useful.

Next meeting: 12 July

GRS



Team of Specialists on Gender-Responsive Standards

The Team continues to promote the signature of the [Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development](#). Recently, Standards Australia and KazStandards have become the 81st and 82nd signatories respectively. The Team has also completed a template for a [repository of gender action plans](#) and already received submissions from Australia, Austria, Ecuador, CEN/CENELEC, New Zealand and Rwanda. A new publication, “Why Gender-Responsive Standards are Better for Everyone” will be available shortly.

The work of GRS has also been cited within the [European Commission Regulation C\(2023\) 1210 Annex](#) of February 2023, item 82. And the International Telecommunication Union has encouraged their membership to take the e-learning course on the [learnQI platform](#).

GRS plans to have a webinar on gender, standards and sustainable development on 27 September 2023 – more to come on the website shortly.

Next meetings: 5 July, 27 Sept.

GRM



Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems

At its annual meeting, the GRM nominated a new chair from the UK and two vice-chairs from Israel and the UK.

Work is still underway on the project on “Integrated risk management in single window systems”. The Group will also be looking at a capacity matrix in order to identify the expertise available within the Group. A suggestion to work on risk management in relation to life under water is also being discussed.

Next meetings: 6 July, 14 Sept.

START-Ed



Education on Standardization Initiative

The learnQI platform has been a great success. In its first six months, there have been over 400 registrations on the platform and around 250 of those have completed their courses.

The sectoral initiative on education on standardization is planning its next activities.