

Report of the START-ED Webinar/Meeting on 2 November 2020.

List of participants at webinar see annex 1 below.

1. The Webinar participants were welcomed by the UNECE secretariat, Mr. Mika Vepsäläinen.
2. The coordinator of the Group, Mr. Serguei Kouzmin opened the meeting and provided the following adopted provisional agenda:
 - Decisions on START-ED from 29th WP 6 session (2019);
 - Labour market requirements regarding new skills and competences of graduates;
 - Elaboration of a new educational programme on environmental matters;
 - Interpretation of the provisions of the international standards.
3. Decisions on START-ED from 29th WP 6 session (2019)

Mr. Serguei Kouzmin reviewed the 29th session held on November 2019. The WP took note of the discussion and requested the secretariat to:

 - pursue issues raised in the discussion;
 - pursue formal establishment of a Group of experts on education and standards related issues;
 - request liaison status at ICO/TC 232 (education and learning services);
 - explore the possibility of a joint meeting with the European Commission network of scholars;
4. As of now, the issues from the panels were pursued, the formal establishment of the Group had to be put aside for budgetary reasons, the UNECE received a liaison status with ISO/TC 232, and due to COVID-19, the meeting with the European Commission was postponed. These uncompleted issues can be returned to once the situation improves.
5. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin highlighted the aim of the Group's establishment as a platform for cooperation and exchange of experiences on teaching standards; methodological and practical support to teachers who are willing to initiate new courses on standards matters, to identify potential issues, challenges of interest or of concern.
6. Such academic cooperation may take various formats, such as in the form of links between heterogeneous academic institutions, also as links between academic and non-academic bodies. It was also noted that COVID-19 increased the importance of virtual forms of education and training. In this context it was suggested that the Group should dedicate special attention to virtual education issues, to establishing virtual networks of academics and of students

Labour market requirements regarding new skills and competences of graduates

7. Mr. Hamid Lavassani (Director, Global Sales, Caterpillar) presented on education programmes on leadership and management skills for workers to help prepare them on the return to work after COVID-19. The driving point was that technical education is not enough and that there is a need to develop emotional intelligence, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, and stress management for all employees.
8. Emotional intelligence consists of emotional intelligence, consisting of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, all leadership characteristics which research demonstrates can be learned.
9. Self-confidence is a self-explanatory characteristic which is crucial across generations and especially during difficult times.

10. Interpersonal skills are especially important for [Generation Z](#) (Gen Z) which are experiencing difficulties and confusion in transition from college to the professional world in light of disruptions caused by COVID-19. Research suggests that programmes should be implemented to aid in this transition, moving beyond short-term introductions to more comprehensive approaches such as coaching and mentoring.
11. Stress management is particularly needed for Gen Z which reports higher levels of anxiety and depression than previous generations. Unaddressed stress and anxiety for employees can result in absenteeism, turnover and lowered productivity for the entire society. Recent data estimate that the annual cost of job stress to U.S. businesses exceeds USD 300 billion. For the European community that number can be even higher. Further programmes should be developed to create best practices.
12. Mr. Hamid Lavassani then reviewed the education programme offered by Dale Carnegie Training that was used by Caterpillar to train its leaders. The 8-week programme included trained coaches, assignments, and a final exam which involved workers creating a thesis and defending it in front of a jury. More specifically, the programme covered: development of leadership capabilities; managing stress and developing confidence; public speaking and high impact presentations; and management capability.

Elaboration of a new educational programme on environmental matters

13. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin recalled the 2019 high level panel meeting on education where a suggestion was made to elaborate a model programme on environment along the lines of the programme on education on standardization. He noted that preliminary consultations revealed an interest in such activity and that the Moscow State Regional University (MGOU, professor Tatiana Vlasova) has (among others) expressed interest to contribute to such work. Contributions from Ms. Sandra Feliciano (University of Porto) and from professor Tatiana Guseva (Moscow Mendeleev University) on existing programmes were received.
14. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin then informed the meeting that the Faculty of Economics at Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia offers a course titled "Environmental Management" which ties in with public administration and enterprise, and considers environmental issues regarding taxation, tax administration and tax and policy courses.
15. Lastly, a representative of a coal extracting company noted that a distinction shall be made between general awareness building and specialized training. Companies are usually looking for a very concrete training to ensure compliance with a specific standard.

Interpretation of the provisions of the international standards

16. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin then introduced issues relating to the interpretation of existing standards. In short, the issue is that when standards are approved for use, there is no mechanism to request a device on the interpretation of certain standards and that the interpretation is only done during the revision of the standards. Furthermore, there is no methodology on how to interpret standards. Therefore, this is a clear obstacle to the implementation of standards.
17. Mr. Mika Vepsäläinen brought attention to how standards can be interpreted differently by members and furthermore that there is an issue that some actors may choose to deliberately 'misinterpret' the standards. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin then stated that if there are no objections, this issue could be later presented more broadly to WP.6 and proposed to exchange information with other programmes to see if a model programme can be made on education of standards.

18. Ms. Olga Ilina highlighted the importance of environmental education for employees. She noted that for her company, Siberian Coal Energy Company (SUEK), the issue was disclosing the correct environmental information as there are many standards which disclose information on environmental regulation. As none of these formats are obligatory, companies struggle on which formats to use as well on disclosing the correct formats to their employees.
19. Mr. Hamid Lavassani then asked the participants if there are is any ongoing thinking in their respective institutions on returning to work. Mr. Mika Vepsäläinen responded that returning to work will be dependent on what has or has not been learned in the past lock down and return to work experiences and how this will change per institution and the government recommendations of respective nation state.
20. Mr. Serguei Kouzmin then asked if there were any further comments. As there were none, he closed the meeting.

Annex I

List of participants in the webinar

Alessandro Attolico – *Executive Director of Territorial Planning and Innovation Development, Province of Potenza, Italy*

Alexander Tatum – *Head of International cooperation department at State committee for standardization, Belarus*

Alexandre Lavassani – *Manager, Oracle Investment*

Allaume Thomas – *Founder, Venty Consulting*

Charlotte – *Danish Standards*

Daria Michurina – *Expert, Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs*

Frank Lienesch – *Head of Department “Explosion Protection”, The Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt, Germany*

Jindra Kafkova – *Head of International Relations Department, Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing, Czech Republic*

Jitka Kolářová – *Head of International Cooperation Department, Czech Trade Inspection Authority*

Knut Blind – *Chair of Innovation Economics, Berlin Technical University, Germany*

Ksenia Popova, *Ministry of Industry and Trade, Russian Federation*

Lavassani Hamid – *Global Sales and Distribution Director, Caterpillar*

Malgorzata Janoutova – *Counsellor Specialist, Czech Office for Standards, Metrology and Testing, Czech Republic*

Marta Orviska – *Professor, Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia*

Mika Vepsäläinen – *Chief Market Access Section, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Oisin Curtis – *Consultant, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Olga Ilina – *Head of Investor Relations, Siberian Coal Energy Company (SUEK), Russian Federation*

Ray Walshe – *Assistant Professor of Emerging Tech Standardization, Dublin City Univeristy, Ireland*

Roman Samsonov – *Coordinator, UNECE WP.6 Sectoral Initiative on Pipeline Safety*

Salehin Khan – *Associate Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Sebastian Pantin Urdaneta – *Intern, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Serguei Kouzmin – *Coordinator, Start-Ed Group*

Signe Bøgh – *Project Manager, Danish Standards, Denmark*

Tatjana Vlasova – *Head of the Organisational Management Department, Moscow Region State University (MFOY)*

Tauno Kangur – *Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Tetiana Melnychenko – *Deputy Head of Standardization and International Cooperation Division Technical Regulation and Metrology' Department, Ministry of Economy, Ukraine*

Valentin Nikonov – *Coordinator of the Group of Experts on Risk Management in Regulatory Systems, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe*

Yukiko Kotani, *Japan External Trade Organization*