



From the workplace to design and back: the commitment of Trade Unions in the enlarged Europe

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From 2000, enlargement rose up the work programme agenda of the European Trade Union Institute for Research, Education and Health and Safety (ETUI-REHS). Since then the ETUI-REHS has increased its cooperation with the European industry federations, with new meetings involving trade union representatives of the enlarged Europe to address the challenges for safety and health at work. Under the conditions of a globalized economy, national-level regulation is no longer adequate. Globally accepted rules must be developed and standards should be raised worldwide. As industrial production is almost without exception a European and international activity, manufacturers – in a globalized market with strong growth in international trade – see international standards as a key to gain market access and boost trade. The ETUI-REHS is very alert to the new challenges associated to the globalization of technical standards: the relation of standards to legislation, the duties of manufacturers and users, the framework in which standards are prepared, the representation of legitimate user interests and the perception of risk are among the issue at stake. The ETUI-REHS's experience in the CEN and ISO arena so far bears out the level of that complexity.