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Edu4Standards.eu panel at EURAS conference

**Towards responsible
and human-centric
standardisation**



Partners of Edu4Standards.eu organised a workshop and discussion panel “Towards responsible and human-centric standardisation” at the annual EURAS Conference “Comprehensive Standardisation for Societal Challenges”, which took place in Delft, The Netherlands, on 19-21 June 2024.

The name of the conference is the abbreviation for “European Academy for Standardisation”. Dating back to the 1990s, EURAS conference for almost three decades now each year gathers scholars, practitioners, and policymakers under the banner of standards and standardisation research, education, and practice.

The 28th EURAS conference in Delft was organized by the European Academy for Standardisation (EURAS), The Royal Netherlands Standardization Institute (NEN), and four Dutch universities: TU Delft, TU Eindhoven, Rotterdam School of Management, and Tilburg University.

The aim of the panel discussion was threefold. The first aim was to benefit from the synergies between the EURAS conference and the Edu4Standards.eu project. EURAS is a traditional forum for standardisation scholars, and this year’s topic of the conference “Comprehensive Standardisation for Societal Challenges” matches the goals of Edu4Standards.eu project to develop the Innovative Teaching Concept of Standardisation (ITCoS) as a comprehensive concept of education on standardisation to address societal and policy challenges.



The second aim of the panel discussion was to seek to establish links between different knowledge domains, as represented by the background of scholars contributing to the development of ITCoS under the Edu4Standards.eu project: law, ethics, management, economics, education, among others. Edu4Standards.eu scholars sought new ideas for bridging different disciplinary domains from the traditionally truly inter- and transdisciplinary audience of EURAS conference.

Finally, the panel discussion provided a great opportunity to promote the Edu4Standards.eu project and disseminate the preliminary project findings.

The two guiding questions for the panel discussion were how the Innovative Teaching Concept on Standardisation (ITCoS) can support the policy-sought human-centric and EU-values-grounded education about standardisation and how the Edu4Standards.eu project can best achieve the promised impact targets for dissemination of the project results to boost education about standardisation in Europe.





Summary of the panel discussion

The panel was represented by the following Edu4Standards.eu participants and perspectives on education about standardisation:

- 🌐 **Prof. Elisabeth Staudegger**, University of Graz: law and policy;
- 🌐 **Dr. Barbara Reiter**, University of Graz: ethics and European core values;
- 🌐 **Dr. Kęstutis Mosakas**, Vilnius University: ethics and philosophy;
- 🌐 **Oksana Kuzmuk**, Vilnius University: education and gender, green, and digital skills;
- 🌐 **Prof. Ivana Mijatovic**, University of Belgrade: education;
- 🌐 **Prof. Vladislav Fomin**, Vilnius University: education and policy.



The panelists presented preliminary results of the Edu4Standards.eu project and indicated the direction for further research. Prof. Elisabeth Staudegger and Dr. Barbara Reiter presented the results of their work at University of Graz on identifying Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for a human-centric concept of education about standardisation. This included the presentation of European core values to be considered and embedded in the Innovative Teaching Concept (ITCoS), as well as issues and challenges related to “bridging” the values with standardisation-related competences and “grounding” them in discipline-specific examples to be used in students’ education.



Dr. Kęstutis Mosakas and Oksana Kuzmuk presented the results of European policy documents analysis focused on identification of key concepts relevant for the desired orientation of education about standardisation towards a human-centric model: gender equality, digital and green skills, EU core values and EU interests.

Prof. Ivana Mijatovic shared her experiences from the organisation of work in standardisation committees as examples of venues where values-as-embedded in educational system are re-emerging in the daily practices of standardisation professionals.

Prof. Vladislav Fomin presented his views on possible means for boosting popularity of education about standardisation, enlisting a number of traditional mechanisms for the development and promotion of new teaching courses and programs.

The presentations by the panelists triggered a good response from the audience. A number of important questions were discussed, as briefly summarised as theses / conjectures below.

- 1.** It is important to rest the standardisation process on principles of ethical conduct legitimacy of European standardisation process and ethics.
- 2.** While the core values of EU are known and are expected to be adhered to by all member states (and citizens), each of the core values is a multidimensional concept and as such is likely to be subject to different interpretations depending e.g., on the discipline of education/science, geographic region, or a type of educational venue (applied sciences, traditional university, a business school, vocational training).
- 3.** A claim can be made that standardisation in itself represents one or more European core values.
- 4.** There is a potential contradiction in the teleology of standardisation and education. Education must cater at least also for the development of the skill of critical thinking (reflection, interpretation), whereas standardisation must cater to prescription of certain way of doing something, leaving little or no space to (critical) interpretations.
- 5.** Experienced lecturers of standardisation suggest the topic of standards and standardisation is better served if “hidden” (or “embedded”) in courses with different titles.
- 6.** Experienced lecturers also call for “bringing romanticism” into education about standardisation.
- 7.** Reconciling the imperatives of capitalistic market development and human-centric values may be a challenge. Known examples from other disciplines and topics should be considered, for example, the principle of “doing business at the bottom of the pyramid” developed and popularised by C.K. Prahalad.
- 8.** The development of ITCoS is challenging due to three essential characteristics such model must accommodate:
 - a.** Interdisciplinarity (e.g., different values can or must be translated into different competences and /or demonstrated through different examples depending on the discipline of education);
 - b.** Internationality (e.g., introducing variability in terms of interpretations and prioritization of values);
 - c.** Inter-representationality (e.g., standardisation specialists can be taking on different roles, some of which carry the “conflict of values” – a TC member is representing a private company and a nation-state at the same time).

Overall, the panel can be considered as achieving on all its three intended goals.

It was a fun, a pleasure, and an intellectual feast to run the panel – thanks to all who participated!



Short bio of the panelist speakers:



Prof. Vladislav V. Fomin holds a Distinguished Professor's position at the Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius University and visiting professor's position at the Faculty of Computing of the University of Latvia. Vladislav has broad research interests in the intersecting domains of Information Systems and Management as reflected in more than 120 publications. Relevant to this panel, is Vladislav's contribution to theorizing process of standard making, digital transformation, pedagogical and methodological work in the domain of technology and standards education, recent theoretical works on regulation of and by means of technology, including the work on weakly structured systems.



Oksana Kuzmuk is a junior researcher at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty. Oksana's educational background is in international relations and international economics, followed by research work experience in a number of EU funded research projects on technology education. Ms. Kuzmuk's academic interests include the role of self-actualization for well-being, improving education for unleashing human potential, and finding practical tools to unleash the human potential.



Prof. Ivana Mijatovic is a full professor at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade (UB FOS). She is a passionate teacher of standardization at the bachelor's, master's, and PhD levels at UB FOS. She leads the UB FOS team in the Horizon Europe projects HSbooster.eu (Standardisation Booster for H2020 & HE research results) and Edu4Standards.EU (Education for Standardisation in the EU). Additionally, in the Horizon Europe project StandICT2026.eu, she chairs the EUOS group for education in ICT standardization. From 2012 to 2023, she served as the vice president of the board of the European Academy for Standardization (EURAS, www.euras.org). During 2018/2019, she held the position of president of the International Cooperation in Education about Standardization Committee (ICES, <http://www.standards-education.org/>). Moreover, she has served as a section editor in the Encyclopedia of Sustainable Management (Springer Nature, 2023), co-editor of the book Sustainable Development: Knowledge and Education about Standardisation (Springer Nature, 2020), and author of four chapters in the book series Springer Nature "CSR, Sustainability, Ethics & Governance". Ivana is a member of the national committee for standardization KS I1/07 - Software Engineering, IT for Education and the Internet at the Institute for Standardization of Serbia.



Dr. Kęstutis Mosakas is a researcher at the Kaunas Faculty of Vilnius University (Edu4Standards.eu project) and at Vytautas Kavolis Interdisciplinary Research Institute (Vytautas Magnus University, VMU). His main field of research is ethics of robotics (moral status and rights of robots in particular), with his other areas of interest being applied ethics, meta-ethics, philosophy of religion, and philosophy of mind. Kęstutis worked as a junior researcher in the EU-funded research project “Integration study on Future Law, Ethics, and Smart Technologies” (2018-2022) and was the research assistant of the Research Cluster for Applied Ethics at VMU (2017-2022). Kęstutis holds a Bachelor’s degree in English philology (2013, VMU), a Master’s degree in practical philosophy (2017, VMU), and a PhD in philosophy (2023, VMU).



Dr. Barbara Reiter is a philosopher and lecturer specializing in the didactics of philosophy and ethics at the University of Graz. Born in Coburg, Upper Franconia, she pursued her studies in philosophy in Würzburg, Berlin, and Bremen. Following experiences in the United States and Switzerland, she has resided with her family in Graz for the past decade. Dr. Reiter’s academic interests span various topics including the pursuit of the good life, Aristotelian philosophy, value transmission, feminism, humanization, media philosophy, theories of chance, contingency, fragility, computer ethics, and serendipity.



Elisabeth Staudegger, since 2011 Professor for IT Law and Legal Informatics at the University of Graz. As the EU legislator has opted for a new legislative concept explicitly complemented by standardization and meanwhile often adopts a risk-based approach with self-assessments on human rights and ethics, Prof. Staudegger’s current involvement in projects is aimed at investigating the human-based approach, values by design and risk analysis from a practical application perspective (TRUESSEC.eu, VERDI, Learning Analytics). Under Edu4Standards.eu project, Prof. Staudegger advocates the value-based perspective for education about standardization to ensure that relevant skills can be guaranteed for future standardization professionals.



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