

**Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)**  
**Gender-Responsive Standards Team of Specialists teleconference discussion notes and actions**  
**14 December 2022, 20:00 CET**

Item	Subject	Discussion / Action																				
1a	Roll call	Paloma Bernal Turnes, Grace Bolan, Stephanie Eynon, Jeanette Gurung, Lucy He, Lachean Humphreys, Mansha Marwa, Peter Morfee, Michelle Parkouda, Deborah Wautier <b>Secretariat:</b> Lance Thompson																				
1b	Approval of the Agenda	Agenda agreed with no modifications																				
2	Launch of the Team of Specialists	The Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative Coordinator and the WP.6 Secretary provided some opening statements on the launch of the Team of Specialists. It was explained that an initiative is like a project which would have a defined end-date, and which does not necessarily receive any additional secretarial support; it is also not necessarily recognized officially by member States. A team of specialist is an official subgroup of the parent working party which must be approved by the Working Party, the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee; it is therefore reviewed for approval three times by member States. It does receive secretarial support. It must hold at least one annual meeting. Often in the approval process there are no additional comments; however, there were supporting comments from member States for the GRS at each of the three approval steps. The terms of reference of the GRS calls for the appointment of officers at its first meeting.																				
3	Appointment of officers	A team of specialists must have one chair and can have multiple (or no) vice-chairs. It is the membership of the team of specialists which decides on the number of vice-chairs, and which appoints its officers. Candidates can self-nominate. Appointments should take place annually during the annual meeting. The secretariat published a procedure for this election which requested that all potential candidates to provide their bio by Monday 12 December for publication on the website. One candidature was received for chair from Michelle Parkouda and two candidatures were received for vice-chair from Stephanie Eynon and from Lucy He. The Secretary asked if there were any other candidatures; there were none. The Secretary asked if there were any objections to having two vice-chairs; there were no objections. The Secretary recommended the appointment by acclamation of the three candidates from now until the annual meeting of the GRS in 2024 and asked if there were any objections; there were no objections.  ⇒ <u>Michelle Parkouda was appointed chair of the GRS until the annual meeting of the GRS in 2024.</u> ⇒ <u>Stephanie Eynon was appointed vice-chairs of the GRS until the annual meeting of the GRS in 2024.</u> ⇒ <u>Lucy He was appointed vice-chairs of the GRS until the annual meeting of the GRS in 2024.</u>																				
4	Planning of 2023 meetings and topics	The Secretary presented the calendar of dates for the GRS meetings in 2023. The meetings of the GRS are planned for Wednesdays as virtual meetings unless otherwise noted below: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (2023)</th> <th>Time in Auckland</th> <th>Time in Almaty</th> <th>Time in Geneva</th> <th>Time in Ottawa</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8 February</td> <td>(j+1) 00:00-02:00</td> <td>17:00-19:00</td> <td>12:00-14:00</td> <td>06:00-08:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 April</td> <td>20:00-22:00</td> <td>14:00-16:00</td> <td>10:00-12:00</td> <td>04:00-06:00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24 May*</td> <td>21:00-03:00</td> <td>15:00-21:00</td> <td>11:00-17:00</td> <td>05:00-13:00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date (2023)	Time in Auckland	Time in Almaty	Time in Geneva	Time in Ottawa	8 February	(j+1) 00:00-02:00	17:00-19:00	12:00-14:00	06:00-08:00	5 April	20:00-22:00	14:00-16:00	10:00-12:00	04:00-06:00	24 May*	21:00-03:00	15:00-21:00	11:00-17:00	05:00-13:00
Date (2023)	Time in Auckland	Time in Almaty	Time in Geneva	Time in Ottawa																		
8 February	(j+1) 00:00-02:00	17:00-19:00	12:00-14:00	06:00-08:00																		
5 April	20:00-22:00	14:00-16:00	10:00-12:00	04:00-06:00																		
24 May*	21:00-03:00	15:00-21:00	11:00-17:00	05:00-13:00																		

		5 July	02:00-04:00	20:00-22:00	16:00-18:00	10:00-12:00
		27 September	07:00-09:00	00:00-02:00	20:00-22:00	14:00-16:00
		22 November**	22:00-05:00	15:00-22:00	10:00-17:00	04:00-11:00
		* The meeting on 24 May would be the official annual meeting of the GRS ToS and would take place the same week as the other annual meetings of the WP.6 subgroups and initiatives. It will be a virtual meeting only.				
		** The meeting on 22 November would be proposed as a face-to-face meeting in Geneva (with distant participation possibility using MS-Teams). If there is interest, the 20 <sup>th</sup> and the 21 <sup>st</sup> November could also be reserved in the same format. Note: the WP.6 Annual Session is planned on 23 and 24 November in Geneva as a face-to-face only meeting with no distant participation.				
		Note: the annual meeting of GRS and the Forum of WP.6 subgroups and initiatives in 2024 are planned as a face-to-face (only) meeting. Possible locations are Stockholm, Bratislava, or others. If you would like to propose a location (that could accommodate at least four medium-sized meeting rooms during an entire week), please contact the Secretary.				
5	GAP Best Practice Template	<p>The Gender Action Plan (GAP) questionnaire templates and repository are available on the WP.6 website at: <a href="https://unece.org/trade/wp6/GAP-repository">https://unece.org/trade/wp6/GAP-repository</a></p> <p>Two submissions have been received so far from Ecuador and Rwanda.</p> <p>The Secretary reminded that as long as submitters use the template, it is published as-is and only checked for light grammar and spelling.</p> <p>The Team had a discussion on how to increase the responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target specifically the gender focal points of signatories to the Declaration</li> <li>• Request international standards bodies like ISO, IEC and CEN to respond and encourage that they encourage their membership to respond.</li> <li>• VC He will check the responses from last year's survey to see if there are respondents who might be contacted.</li> <li>• Target specific organizations where we know there is already a GAP (such as Sweden, Spain, Germany...)</li> <li>• Have GRS Bureau members reach out to their networks to respond (CEN agreed to also send a similar message).</li> </ul> <p>⇒ <u>Secretary to prepare text for a short email that GRS Bureau members could use.</u></p> <p>Based on the responses, it is expected to develop a publication on the topic which could compare the responses and identify best practices. The publication might also help to identify best practices in specific types of economies (developed, transitional, developing) to assist other actors from similar economies to identify what might work for them. The publication might also help to identify best practices in specific types of organizations (part of the government, independent but closely linked to the government, completely independent, various types of standards development bodies) again to assist actors from similar types of organizations to identify what might work for them.</p>				
6a	Other business: publications in 2023	<p>It is expected that there would be two publications from WP.6 on Gender-Responsive Standards within 2023. The first would likely be on GAP from the previous point. The Team had a brainstorming of other ideas for the second publication. Some of the discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern was raised that rather than considering gender responsiveness of all standards, there has been a push towards standards specifically for women (menstruation, menopause...). It is surprising that these standards did not already exist, so it is good that they are being developed now. While targeted standards are important, we want to emphasize that we are working towards ensuring all standards are gender-responsive standards.</li> <li>• Various suggestions were suggested on the link between gender and the environment. W+ standard has been working on voluntary carbon markets that integrate a gender lens through a matrix.</li> <li>• On a similar note, it was suggested to propose a methodology to identify and recognize organizations that are gender responsive, to help investors to choose</li> </ul>				

		<p>firms that promote gender mainstreaming. This could be linked to successful implementation of gender-responsive standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practices and success stories could also be a good way forward.</li> <li>• We might also consider working with other areas of UNECE to ensure that the standards developed within UNECE are gender responsive.</li> </ul> <p>The Secretary reminded that we will need to remain within the mandate of the Team of Specialists and WP.6 (so the work should be linked somehow to standards). He also underlined that the UNECE has an overarching theme for 2023-2024 on “digital and green transformations for sustainable development” so any topic linked to this would be appreciated. The theme for 2021-2022 was on “circular economy” so any topic linked to this would also be appreciated.</p>
6b	Other business: Code list project	<p>The secretariat has planned to propose modifications to code lists within electronic messages of UN/CEFACT, specifically for titles/salutations. After research on this, it appears that such a code list does not yet exist. It is therefore proposed to develop a White Paper (discussion paper with a suggested way forward) to define potential code lists for titles/salutations, biological gender, social gender and gender identity.</p> <p>It was noted that social gender and gender identity are still rather fluid and still being defined so it might be difficult to propose an exhaustive list and might be better as a free text which would allow each individual to self-define; a list may require being regularly updated. It was suggested that perhaps an indicative list of the most common entries could be proposed with an option for “other” with a free text. (the “most common entries” list could be developed in a similar way to the WCO HS codes where a new entry is created when there is a critical mass of respondents using that entry).</p> <p>The Secretary has developed a first draft project proposal and will circulate to the GRS Bureau.</p>
6c	Other business: Timing of meetings	<p>There was a request from the direction within UNECE that we try to target meeting times that would allow participation of the program countries of the UNECE in Central Asia, the Caucus and the Balkans. During the May to October period, noon in Geneva might be the most appropriate time for all time zones, or we can maintain the meeting-timing in point 4 above.</p>
		Next GRS call: 8 February from 12:00 CET (Geneva)