Chapter 4
Individual Participation in Standards Setting:
Role, Influence, and Motivation

Jonas Lundsten
Malmö University, Sweden

Jesper Mayntz Paasch
Universty of Gävle, Sweden & Aalborg University, Denmark

ABSTRACT

Since standardization is essential and additionally has organizational effects, studying motivation for participating in the standardization processes is important. A phenomenological study of descriptions made by individual participants in project teams for geographical information at the Swedish Standards Institute, SIS, was conducted 2016-2017. The study indicated that participants were motivated, but there were different motivators depending on the participants' differing contexts. For most participants, the main personal meaningful goal was to be at the forefront of development. For participants employed by organizations with frequent interactions with stakeholders, the main personal meaningful goal was to satisfy the stakeholders' needs. This study also showed that several members felt that they do not have sufficient time for working with standardization asks due to the fact that their daily work in their organizations often has higher priority in relation to standardization work. This may slow down the development of standards and other publications due to lack of resources.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores motives for individual participation in formal standardization processes for geographic information in Sweden and is a continuation of research presented in Lundsten and Paasch (2017; 2018; 2019). Geographic information and geodata are common terms for information describing the physical world around us,for example buildings, roads, forests and features related to location, for example administrative boundaries.

Participation in a formal standardization process may require huge resources from the participants (Riillo, 2013). However, standards are not "trade secrets", but available for anyone, such as competitors, for a fee charged by the standardization body. The motives for participation do therefore not rely on the protection of ideas for the companies involved. A motive can also be to share technical and/or strategic knowledge and/or access to markets (Bild & Mangelsdorf, 2016; Riillo, 2013), thereby gaining either technical and/or economic advantages.

Geographical information has gained much interest during the last decades due to increased

use and exchange of digital data ("maps") describing physical and administrative features. Standards and related documents, such as specifications and code lists, play an important part in this.

The benefits of standardization in the field of geographic information are well known and the development of formal standards have in Sweden been in focus for several years, e.g. by public and private stakeholders participating in technical committees, TC, at the Swedish Standards Institute, SIS, for more than two decades. Examples are Lantmäteriet [the Swedish mapping, cadastral and land registration authority], Trafikverket [the National Transport Administration] which have been involved in formal standardization since the late 1980-ies, being part of a national initiative concerning a standardization programme for geographic information at the Swedish Standards Institute.

There is a long tradition for implementing international standards for geographical information and to develop national standards when international standards are not available. Examples are the International Organization for Standardization's [ISO] 19100 series of standards for geographical information, which, among other things, specify how to describe geographic information (ISO, 2014) which has been implemented as a Swedish standard (Swedish Standards Institute [SIS], 2014) and the nationally developed Swedish standards for application schemas for municipal zoning plans, SS 637040:2016 (SIS, 2016) and road and railway networks, SS 637004:2009 (SIS, 2009). Sweden has recently adopted a national strategy for advanced cooperation for open and usable geographic information via e-services (Lantmäteriet, 2016). The strategy state, among other things, that the use of standards is of major importance for achieving an effective infrastructure for, among others, data exchange, digitization of public administration, more effective social

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