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## **Thermal performance of buildings — Heat transfer via the ground — Calculation methods**

*Performance thermique des bâtiments — Transfert de chaleur par le  
sol — Méthodes de calcul*



Reference number  
ISO 13370:2017(E)

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

ISO 13370 was prepared by ISO Technical Committee ISO/TC 163, *Thermal performance and energy use in the built environment*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Calculation methods*, in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/TC 89, *Thermal performance of buildings and building components*, in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 13370:2007), which has been technically revised.

The changes in this third edition are mostly editorial. This document has been re-drafted according to CEN/TS 16629:2014. Some additional output variables have been introduced to facilitate the linkages between this document and ISO 52016-1.

## Introduction

This document is part of a series aimed at the international harmonization of the methodology for assessing the energy performance of buildings. Throughout, this series is referred to as a “set of EPB standards”.

All EPB standards follow specific rules to ensure overall consistency, unambiguity and transparency.

All EPB standards provide a certain flexibility with regard to the methods, the required input data and references to other EPB standards, by the introduction of a normative template in [Annex A](#) and [Annex B](#) with informative default choices.

For the correct use of this document, a normative template is given in [Annex A](#) to specify these choices. Informative default choices are provided in [Annex B](#).

The main target groups for this document are architects, engineers and regulators.

Use by or for regulators: In case the document is used in the context of national or regional legal requirements, mandatory choices may be given at national or regional level for such specific applications. These choices (either the informative default choices from [Annex B](#) or choices adapted to national/regional needs, but in any case following the template of [Annex A](#)) can be made available as national annex or as separate (e.g. legal) document (national data sheet).

NOTE 1 So in this case:

- the regulators will specify the choices;
- the individual user will apply the document to assess the energy performance of a building, and thereby use the choices made by the regulators.

Topics addressed in this document can be subject to public regulation. Public regulation on the same topics can override the default values in [Annex B](#). Public regulation on the same topics can even, for certain applications, override the use of this document. Legal requirements and choices are in general not published in standards but in legal documents. In order to avoid double publications and difficult updating of double documents, a national annex may refer to the legal texts where national choices have been made by public authorities. Different national annexes or national data sheets are possible, for different applications.

It is expected, if the default values, choices and references to other EPB standards in [Annex B](#) are not followed due to national regulations, policy or traditions, that:

- national or regional authorities prepare data sheets containing the choices and national or regional values, according to the model in [Annex A](#). In this case a national annex (e.g. NA) is recommended, containing a reference to these data sheets;
- or, by default, the national standards body will consider the possibility to add or include a national annex in agreement with the template of [Annex A](#), in accordance to the legal documents that give national or regional values and choices.

Further target groups are parties wanting to motivate their assumptions by classifying the building energy performance for a dedicated building stock.

More information is provided in the Technical Report (ISO/TR 52019-2) accompanying this document.

The subset of EPB standards prepared under the responsibility of ISO/TC 163/SC 2 cover *inter alia*:

- calculation procedures on the overall energy use and energy performance of buildings;
- calculation procedures on the internal temperature in buildings (e.g. in case of no space heating or cooling);
- indicators for partial EPB requirements related to thermal energy balance and fabric features;

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- calculation methods covering the performance and thermal, hygrothermal, solar and visual characteristics of specific parts of the building and specific building elements and components, such as opaque envelope elements, ground floor, windows and facades.

ISO/TC 163/SC 2 cooperates with other technical committees for the details on appliances, technical building systems, indoor environment, etc.

This document provides the means (in part) to assess the contribution that building products and services make to energy conservation and to the overall energy performance of buildings.

In contrast with ISO 6946, which gives the method of calculation of the thermal transmittance of building elements in contact with the external air, this document deals with elements in thermal contact with the ground. The division between these two International Standards is at the level of the inside floor surface for slab-on-ground floors, suspended floors and unheated basements, and at the level of the external ground surface for heated basements. In general, a term to allow for a thermal bridge associated with the wall/floor junction is included when assessing the total heat loss from a building using methods such as ISO 13789.

The calculation of heat transfer through the ground can be done by numerical calculations, which also allow analysis of thermal bridges, including wall/floor junctions, for assessment of minimum internal surface temperatures.

In this document, methods are provided which take account of the three-dimensional nature of the heat flow in the ground below buildings.

Thermal transmittances of floors give useful comparative values of the insulation properties of different floor constructions and are used in building regulations in some countries for the limitation of heat losses through floors.

Thermal transmittance, although defined for steady-state conditions, also relates average heat flow to average temperature difference. In the case of walls and roofs exposed to the external air, there are daily periodic variations in heat flow into and out of storage related to daily temperature variations, but this averages out, and the daily average heat loss can be found from the thermal transmittance and daily average inside-to-outside temperature difference. For floors and basement walls in contact with the ground, however, the large thermal inertia of the ground results in periodic heat flows related to the annual cycle of internal and external temperatures. The steady-state heat flow is often a good approximation to the average heat flow over the heating season.

In addition to the steady-state part, a detailed assessment of floor losses is obtained from annual periodic heat transfer coefficients related to the thermal capacity of the soil, as well as its thermal conductivity, together with the amplitude of annual variations in monthly mean temperature.

[Annex F](#) provides a method for incorporating heat transfers to and from the ground into calculations undertaken at short time intervals (e.g. 1 h).

ISO/TR 52019-2 provides information on

- thermal properties of the ground,
- the influence of flowing ground water,
- ground floors with an embedded heating or cooling system, and
- ground floors of cold stores

along with worked examples illustrating the use of the procedures in this document.

[Table 1](#) shows the relative position of this document within the set of EPB standards in the context of the modular structure as set out in ISO 52000-1.

NOTE 2 In ISO/TR 52000-2, the same table can be found, with, for each module, the numbers of the relevant EPB standards and accompanying technical reports that are published or in preparation.

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NOTE 3 The modules represent EPB standards, although one EPB standard could cover more than one module and one module could be covered by more than one EPB standard, for instance, a simplified and a detailed method respectively. See also [Tables A.1](#) and [B.1](#).

**Table 1 — Position of this document (*in casu* M2–5) within the modular structure of the set of EPB standards**

Sub module	Overarching		Building (as such)		Technical building systems									
	Descriptions		Descriptions		Descriptions	Heating	Cooling	Ventilation	Humidification	Dehumidification	Domestic hot water	Lighting	Building automation and control	PV, wind, ..
sub1		M1		M2		M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11
1	General		General		General									
2	Common terms and definitions; symbols, units and subscripts		Building energy needs		Needs								a	
3	Applications		(Free) Indoor conditions without systems		Maximum load and power									
4	Ways to express energy performance		Ways to express energy performance		Ways to express energy performance									
5	Building categories and building boundaries		Heat transfer by transmission	ISO 13370	Emission and control									
6	Building occupancy and operating conditions		Heat transfer by infiltration and ventilation		Distribution and control									
7	Aggregation of energy services and energy carriers		Internal heat gains		Storage and control									
8	Building zoning		Solar heat gains		Generation and control									

<sup>a</sup> The shaded modules are not applicable.



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**Table 1** (continued)

Sub module	Overarching		Building (as such)		Technical building systems									
	Descriptions		Descriptions		Descriptions	Heating	Cooling	Ventilation	Humidification	Dehumidification	Domestic hot water	Lighting	Building automation and control	PV, wind, ..
sub1		M1		M2		M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11
9	Calculated energy performance		Building dynamics (thermal mass)		Load dispatching and operating conditions									
10	Measured energy performance		Measured energy performance		Measured energy performance									
11	Inspection		Inspection		Inspection									
12	Ways to express indoor comfort				BMS									
13	External environment conditions													
14	Economic calculation													

<sup>a</sup> The shaded modules are not applicable.