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## ISO and IEC recommended practices for standardization by national bodies

*Pratiques de normalisation recommandées par l'ISO et l'IEC à leurs  
organismes nationaux*





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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

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 document 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 and IEC 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)) or the IEC list of patent declarations received (see <http://patents.iec.ch>).

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

For an explanation of 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 [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by a Joint Working Group of the ISO Technical Management Board and the IEC Standards Management Board.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO/IEC Guide 59:1994), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

- the structure, content and language used have been updated to allow easier application;
- a scope has been added to define the subject of the document and the aspects covered, thereby indicating the limits of applicability of the document;
- [Clauses 4](#) and [5](#) have been added to support the implementation of the WTO TBT agreement.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

Standardization brings technological, economic and societal benefits. Standards help to harmonize technical and other specifications of products and services making industry more efficient and removing barriers to trade.

Standards are considered an essential component of the “quality infrastructure”, the system comprising organizations (public and private), policies, relevant legal and regulatory framework and practices which is needed to support and enhance the quality, safety, and sustainable soundness of goods, services and processes.

Standards are developed by many bodies, at the national, regional and international levels. Alongside the growth of international trade, technological and societal cooperation, standards bodies have developed procedures and modes of cooperation which are commonly considered to constitute good practices for standards development at all levels. The use of standards is voluntary unless they are cited as requirements in legislation or in legal contracts.

The foundations of ISO’s and IEC’s membership and participation models are at the national level. ISO and IEC, together with their national bodies, are responsible for fostering and ensuring coherence and coordination.

The ISO and IEC system for standardization is based on collaboration agreements between ISO and IEC and an extensive array of collaboration agreements among regional, national and other standards bodies.

The WTO TBT agreement has provided a framework to facilitate international trade through international standards. ISO and IEC are committed to the implementation of the WTO TBT framework when developing International Standards (see [Annex A](#)). The national bodies should set guidelines to define their organizational culture, which consists of the values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour that their national experts should share and use regularly in their work. ISO and IEC have developed and apply Codes of Conduct to be followed by participants in standardization work. These Codes of Conduct include responsibilities to consider:

- inclusiveness;
- consensus-building attitude and skills;
- compliance with the procedures;
- efficiency;
- impartiality;
- commitment to quality;
- dedication of personnel and experts.

International deliverables other than International Standards can perform similar functions in reducing technical barriers to trade and thereby facilitating trade. Information about other deliverables published by ISO and/or IEC can be found in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1.

The first edition of this document predated the existence of both the WTO TBT Committee decision on principles for the development of international standards, guides and recommendations (G/TBT/9, 13 November 2000) and the WTO TBT Agreement’s Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards (Annex 3 of the 1995 WTO TBT agreement). The purpose of this edition of this document is to provide recommendations for implementing good standardization practices that are intended to support, but do not replace or supersede, the two WTO TBT Committee documents.

This document does not constitute an official interpretation of the two WTO TBT documents cited above.