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Systems and software engineering — Life cycle profiles for very small entities (VSEs) —

Part 5-4: Agile software development guidelines

Ingénierie des systèmes et du logiciel — Profils de cycle de vie pour très petits organismes (TPO) —

Partie 5-4: Lignes directrices relatives au développement de logiciels agiles

Reference number
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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 or www.iec.ch/members_experts/refdocs).

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This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 7, *Software and systems engineering*.

A list of all parts in the ISO/IEC 29110 series can be found on the ISO website.

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.

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Introduction

0.1 Introduction to the ISO/IEC 29110 series

For the purpose of the ISO/IEC 29110 series, a very small entity (VSE) is an enterprise, organization (e.g. government agency, non-profit organization), department or project having up to 25 people. Since many VSEs develop and/or maintain system and software components used in systems, either as independent products or incorporated in larger systems, a recognition of VSEs as suppliers of high-quality products is required.

VSEs around the world are creating valuable products and services. According to the World Bank, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) account for about 90 % of enterprises worldwide. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), SMEs represent 99 % of all businesses and generate about 60 % of employment. Almost one person out of three is employed in a micro firm with less than 10 employees. The European Union reports that micro firms, with fewer than 10 persons, account for 93,5 % of all enterprises and small firms, with 10 to 49 employees, account for 5,5 % of all enterprises. The challenge facing governments is to provide a business environment that supports the competitiveness of this large heterogeneous business population and that promotes a vibrant entrepreneurial culture.

From studies and surveys conducted, the majority of International Standards do not address the needs of VSEs. Implementation of and conformity with these standards is difficult, if not impossible.

Consequently, VSEs have no, or very limited, ways to be recognized as entities that produce quality systems/system elements including software in their domain. Therefore, VSEs are excluded from some economic activities.

It has been found that VSEs find it difficult to relate International Standards to their business needs and to justify the effort required to apply standards to their business practices. Most VSEs find it helpful to have detailed, specified, procedures when beginning agile projects, rather than attempting to interpret and tailor the more flexible, high-level process requirements of ISO/IEC/IEEE. To address some of these difficulties, a set of guidelines have been developed based on a set of VSEs characteristics. The guidelines are based on subsets of appropriate standards processes, activities, tasks, and outcomes, referred to as profiles. The purpose of a profile is to define a subset of International Standards relevant to the VSEs' context; for example, processes, activities, tasks, and outcomes of ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207 for software systems; and processes, activities, tasks, and outcomes of ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288 for systems; and information products (documentation) of ISO/IEC/IEEE 15289 for software and systems.

VSEs can achieve recognition through implementing a profile and by being audited against ISO/IEC 29110 specifications.

The ISO/IEC 29110 series can be applied at any phase of system or software development within a life cycle. The ISO/IEC 29110 series is intended to be used by VSEs that do not have experience or expertise in adapting/tailoring ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207 or ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288 standards to the needs of a specific project. VSEs that have expertise in adapting/tailoring ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207 or ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288 are encouraged to use those standards instead of the ISO/IEC 29110 series.

The ISO/IEC 29110 series is intended to be used with any life cycle such as: waterfall, iterative, incremental, evolutionary or agile.

Systems, in the context of the ISO/IEC 29110 series, are typically composed of hardware and software components.

The ISO/IEC 29110 series, targeted by audiences, has been developed to improve system or software and/or service quality, and process performance. Figure 1 describes the ISO/IEC 29110 series and positions the parts within the framework of reference.

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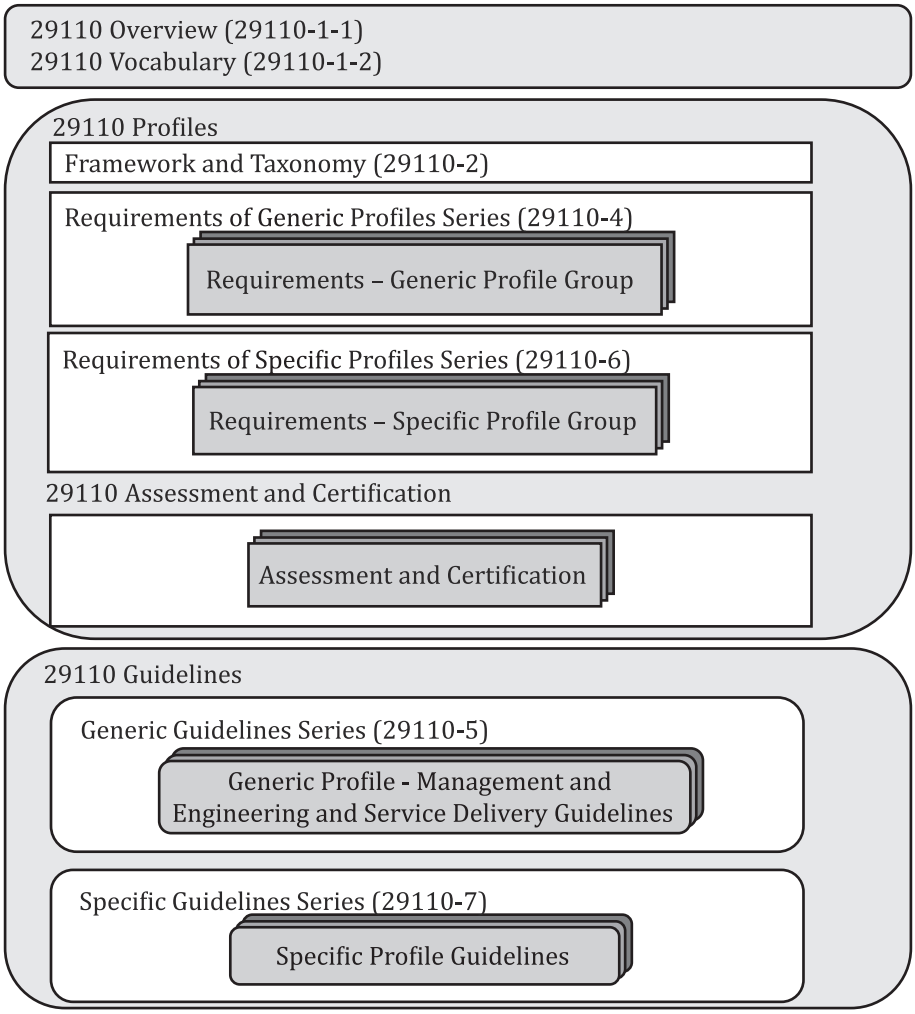


Figure 1 — ISO/IEC 29110 series

ISO/IEC 29110-1-1 introduces processes, life cycle and standardization concepts, the taxonomy (catalog) of ISO/IEC 29110 profiles and the ISO/IEC 29110 series. ISO/IEC 29110-1-1 also introduces the characteristics and needs of a VSE, and clarifies the rationale for specific profiles, documents, standards and guidelines. ISO/IEC 29110-1-2 defines the terms common to the ISO/IEC 29110 series. ISO/IEC 29110-1-1 and ISO/IEC 29110-1-2 are targeted at VSEs and their customers, assessors, standards producers, tool vendors and methodology vendors.

ISO/IEC 29110-2 introduces the concepts for systems and software engineering profiles for VSEs. It establishes the logic behind the definition and application of profiles. For standardized profiles, it specifies the elements common to all profiles (structure, requirements, conformity, and assessment). For domain-specific profiles (profiles that are not standardized and developed outside of the ISO process), it provides general guidance adapted from the definition of standardized profiles. ISO/IEC 29110-2 is targeted at profile producers, tool vendors and methodology vendors.

ISO/IEC 29110-3 defines certification schemes, assessment guidelines and compliance requirements for process capability assessment, conformity assessments, and self-assessments for process improvements. ISO/IEC 29110-3 also contains information that can be useful to developers of certification and assessment methods and developers of certification and assessment tools. ISO/IEC 29110-3 is addressed to people who have direct involvement with the assessment process, e.g. the auditor, certification and accreditation bodies and the sponsor of the audit, who need guidance on ensuring that the requirements for performing an audit have been met. ISO/IEC 29110-3 is targeted at VSEs and their customers, assessors, accreditation bodies.

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ISO/IEC 29110-4 provides the specifications for all generic profiles of the Generic profile group that are based on subsets of appropriate standards elements. ISO/IEC 29110-4 is targeted at VSEs, customers, standards producers, tool vendors and methodology vendors.

ISO/IEC 29110-5 provides management, engineering and service delivery guidelines for profiles of the Generic profile group. ISO/IEC 29110-5 is targeted at VSEs and their customers.

ISO/IEC 29110-6 provides the specifications for specific profiles that are based on subsets of appropriate standards elements. ISO/IEC 29110-6 is targeted at VSEs, customers, standards producers, tool vendors and methodology vendors.

ISO/IEC 29110-7 provides guidelines for each profile of the specific profile group. ISO/IEC 29110-7 is targeted at VSEs and their customers.

If a new profile is needed, ISO/IEC 29110-4 or ISO/IEC 29110-6 and or ISO/IEC 29110-7, ISO/IEC 29110-5 can be developed with minimal impact to existing documents.

0.2 Introduction to this document

This document aims to help VSEs that want to reinforce their agile environment to develop software products using an agile approach with practices of the ISO/IEC 29110 series. Therefore, it can be implemented by organizations or projects that are implementing and using an agile environment and want to reinforce it using the processes and products recommended by this document.

This document provides examples of work products templates (see Annex A).

This document is based mainly on the scrum and XP agile methods (see Annex B).

This document also aims to help VSEs that want to initiate a certification of the two processes of the software Basic profile of the ISO/IEC 29110, as specified in ISO/IEC 29110-4-1, while performing their agile practices (see Annex C).

This document has been developed, using the management and engineering guidelines of the ISO/IEC 29110-5-1-2 software Basic profile, by modifying and adding elements (e.g. task, work product, role) for VSEs involved in the development of software using an agile approach (see Annex C). However, this document does not contain any requirements; and organizations cannot claim conformity to this document.

Using this document, VSEs can obtain the following benefits:

— project planning: by providing a set of events to enable the team to track the work and know what an impediment can be and assign tasks to each member of the team;

— effort estimation: by providing estimation techniques for the sprint planning event;

— progress tracking: by providing tools (e.g. burndown chart, product backlog, daily scrum) to update and track the work, the budget and the schedule until the project's closure;

— management of changes and artefacts: by providing a set of tasks to control the changes to the software and management work products;

— clarity of each role: by providing a set of tasks for each role;

— agile risk management: by providing work products to identify and manage risks;

— reduced rework: by providing a set of tasks that minimize errors and handle the detection and correction of defects effectively.

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Systems and software engineering — Life cycle profiles for very small entities (VSEs) —

Part 5-4: Agile software development guidelines

1 Scope

This document provides guidelines for very small entities (VSEs) that want to reinforce their agile environment to develop software using an agile approach with practices of the ISO/IEC 29110 series.

This document is applicable to VSEs that do not develop business- or safety-critical products.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies

ISO/IEC 29110-1-2, *Systems and software engineering — Lifecycle profiles for Very Small Entities (VSEs) — Part 1-2: Vocabulary*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 29110-1-2 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1.1
acceptance criteria
working *agreement* (3.1.6) on the required quality attribute that work meets before it completes a specified story or feature, item or artefact

3.1.2
agile
approach to development, delivery and maintenance of products and services by enabling rapid response to feedback

Note 1 to entry: The required specification for the software under development is elaborated with specific requirements only when the work is started. This lean principle is meant to avoid waste of work and to provide an *agile team* (3.1.5) with means of prioritizing their work.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 33202:2024, 3.2, modified — "need specification" has been replaced by "required specification".]

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3.1.3
agile development
development approach based on iterative development, frequent inspection and adaptation, and incremental deliveries in which requirements and solutions evolve through collaboration in cross-functional teams and through continuous stakeholder feedback

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26515:2018, 3.1, modified — Note 1 to entry has been removed.]

3.1.4
agile environment
organizational culture, infrastructure, and methodologies that support *agile development* (3.1.3)

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26515:2018, 3.2]

3.1.5
agile team
organization or team using *agile development* (3.1.3) methods and approaches

Note 1 to entry: Typically, with roles such as team lead, project manager, user or user representative, software and information developers, and testers

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26515:2018, 3.3]

3.1.6
agreement
mutual acknowledgement of terms and conditions under which a working relationship is conducted

EXAMPLE Contract, memorandum of agreement.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207:2017, 3.1.5]

3.1.7
backlog
collection of *agile* (3.1.2)*features* (3.1.15) or stories of both functional and non-functional requirements that are typically sorted in an order based on value priority

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26515:2018, 3.4]

3.1.8
baseline
formally approved version of a configuration item, regardless of media, formally designated and fixed at a specific time during the configuration item's life cycle

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207:2017, 3.1.11]

3.1.9
build
operational version of a system or component that incorporates a specified subset of the capabilities that the final product will provide

[SOURCE: IEEE 828-2012, 2.1, IEEE dictionary]

3.1.10
burndown chart
graph that represents the work remaining to do on a project

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26511:2018, 3.1.6]

3.1.11
burnup chart
graphical representation of the work completed toward the release of a product

[SOURCE: Agile Practice Guide, Project Management Institute, 2017]

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3.1.12
continuous integration
technique that continually merges artefacts, including source code updates from all developers on a team, into a shared mainline to build and test the developed system

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 32675:2022, 3.1]

3.1.13
definition of done
DoD
statement on the required quality attributes that work meets before the work completes a specified life cycle activity or task and is ready for use

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 33202:2024, 3.13]

3.1.14
event
ceremony
key meeting in which a set of tasks are performed to help the *scrum leader* (3.1.28), *product owner* (3.1.20), and developer to organize, evaluate, and adjust the work to be done to develop a product

EXAMPLE *Sprint* (3.1.31) planning, *daily scrum* (3.1.29), sprint review and sprint retrospective.

3.1.15
feature
functional or non-functional distinguishing characteristic of a system

Note 1 to entry: A feature, item or artefact is usually an enhancement to an existing system.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26515:2018, 3.7, modified — The original note 1 to entry has been replaced by a new one.]

3.1.16
increment
tested, deliverable version of a *software product* (3.1.30) that provides new or modified capabilities

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 33202:2024, 3.17]

3.1.17
pair programming
practice from eXtreme Programming (XP) that typically involves one developer writing source code or configuring a system while a second developer observes the work to look for errors and to determine whether the work completed is accurate and meets its requirements

Note 1 to entry: Pairs alternate roles periodically so a different developer writes code while the other developer observes.

3.1.18
planning poker
team-based estimation approach whereby relative estimates of the effort required to develop and test each *user story* (3.1.37) are set via consensus

Note 1 to entry: The approach uses poker cards that are typically based on a Fibonacci sequence (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13).

3.1.19
product backlog
It is an emergent, ordered list of what is needed to improve the product. It is the single source of work undertaken by the *agile team* (3.1.5)

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3.1.20
product owner
designated stakeholder accountable for defining and accepting outcomes of the work and managing *backlog* (3.1.7), while aligning with the stakeholder needs

Note 1 to entry: A product owner is also the 'voice of the user' or the user representative on the team.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 33202:2024, 3.2, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.1.21
process purpose
high-level objective of performing the process and the likely outcomes of effective implementation of the process

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24774:2021, 3.12]

3.1.22
process outcome
observable result of the successful achievement of the process

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24774:2021, 3.11]

3.1.23
profile
subset of appropriate standards' processes and their outcomes, activities and tasks combined to accomplish a particular function

Note 1 to entry: The base standards used to develop profiles for VSEs are ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207, ISO/IEC/IEEE 15288 and ISO/IEC/IEEE 15289.

3.1.24
repository
organized and persistent data storage that allows data retrieval

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 26511:2018, 3.1.24]

3.1.25
safety-critical product
software whose failure or malfunction can result in one (or more) of the following outcomes:

— death or serious injury to people

— loss or severe damage to equipment or property

— environmental harm

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 23643:2020, 3.15, modified — EXAMPLE has been removed.]

3.1.26
self-organizing team
group composed of motivated individuals working together toward meeting a goal

Note 1 to entry: They have the ability and authority for decision-making. They manage their work and readily adapt for changing demands.

Note 2 to entry: Principles of self-organizing teams are competency, collaboration, motivation, trust, respect and continuity.

3.1.27
scrum
iterative project management framework used in *agile development* (3.1.3), in which a team agrees on development items from *product backlog* (3.1.19) and produces them within a short duration of a few weeks

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24765:2017, 3.3637]

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3.1.28
scrum leader
person who facilitates the *scrum* (3.1.27) process within a team or project

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24765:2017, 3.3638, modified — The term has been changed from "scrum master" to "scrum leader".]

3.1.29
daily scrum
in *agile development* (3.1.3) methods, brief daily meeting where team members share accomplishments from the prior daily meeting, plans for the current day and identification of impediments

Note 1 to entry: The *product backlog* (3.1.19) is sorted in prioritized order.

3.1.30
software product
set of computer programs, procedures, and possibly associated documentation and data

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207:2017, 3.1.54, modified — Note 1 to entry has been removed.]

3.1.31
sprint
short time frame, in which a set of software *features* (3.1.15) is developed, leading to a working product that can be demonstrated to stakeholders

Note 1 to entry: In some organizations, a sprint is known as an iteration.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24765:2017, 3.3914]

3.1.32
sprint backlog
iteration backlog
sprint catalogue
set of *backlog* (3.1.7) items [e.g. *user stories* (3.1.37)] that are selected for inclusion in a given *sprint* (3.1.31)

3.1.33
story points
units of measure for expressing an estimate of the overall effort required to fully implement a *product backlog* (3.1.19) item or any other piece of work

3.1.34
time-boxed
having prescribed duration limit for a project task

[SOURCE: Adapted from Software Extension to the PMBOK Guide Fifth Edition]

3.1.35
task board
kanban board
scrum board
visual representation of an *agile team's* (3.1.5) progress within an iteration

3.1.36
unit test
testing of individual routines and modules by the developer or an independent tester

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24765:2017, 3.4429, definition 1]

3.1.37
user story
brief description of desired functionality

Note 1 to entry: User story can describe the stakeholder roles, goals, benefits, and motivation.

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Note 2 to entry: Work in *backlog* (3.1.7) can be referred in other ways like epics, features, items or artefacts.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 33202:2024, 3.1.54, modified — In Note 2 to entry, "items or artefacts" has been added.]

3.1.38
velocity
rate of current work unit completion, measured as work units completed per fixed time period, such as *story points* (3.1.33), delivered *features* (3.1.15), functions, function points, *user stories* (3.1.37), use cases, or requirements completed in a given time period

Note 1 to entry: Used as a measure of burndown rate or burnup rate.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 32675:2022, 3.1]

3.2 Abbreviated terms

DT developers

CUS customer

PM project management

PJM project manager

PO product owner

SI software implementation

SL scrum leader

TE task event

TL technical leader

WP work product

4 Naming, diagramming and definition conventions

This clause provides a description of the process structure, and the notation used to describe the processes.

Process name – process identifier, followed by its abbreviation in parentheses “( )”.

Process purpose – high level objective of performing the process and the likely outcomes of effective implementation of the process.

Process outcomes – observable result of the successful achievement of the process purpose. Outcomes are identified by the abbreviation of the process name, followed by the letter “O” and a consecutive number, for example PM.O1, SI.O2.

Events – key meetings throughout the software development to organize, evaluate, and adjust the work to be done to develop a product in an agile environment. For the purpose of this guide, an event is composed of a set of tasks to be performed. An event is the first level of process workflow decomposition, and the second one is a task. Events are identified by a process name abbreviation followed by a consecutive number and the event name. Each event description is identified by the event name and the list of related outcomes surrounded by parentheses “()”. For example, PM.O1 Project planning (PM.O1, PM.O5, PM.O6, PM.O7) means the event PM.O1 Project planning contributes to the achievement of the listed outcomes: PM.O1, PM.O5, PM.O6 and PM.O7. The event description begins with the task summary and is followed by the task descriptions table. The selection of the techniques or methods is left to the VSE or project team.

Input work products – work products required to perform the process and its corresponding source, which can be another process or an external entity to the project, such as the customer. They are identified by

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