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Contents

Page

Foreword ... **iv**

Introduction ... **v**

1 Scope ... **1**

2 Normative references ... **1**

3 Terms and definitions ... **1**

4 Strategies for identifying societal concerns and ethical considerations of artificial intelligence systems ... **5**
4.1 General ... 5
4.2 Examples of ethical and societal considerations ... 5
4.3 Stakeholders' perspectives, artificial intelligence application context and socio-humanitarian approaches ... 6
4.3.1 General ... 6
4.3.2 Artificial intelligence stakeholders: production or use of artificial intelligence systems ... 6
4.3.3 Artificial intelligence stakeholders: regulatory environment ... 7
4.3.4 Artificial intelligence stakeholders: deployment and application of the artificial intelligence system ... 7

5 Practices for treating societal concerns and ethical considerations of artificial intelligence systems ... **7**
5.1 General ... 7
5.2 Practices on societal concerns and ethical considerations ... 7
5.2.1 Leadership ... 8
5.2.2 Planning ... 8
5.2.3 Support ... 9
5.2.4 Operation ... 9
5.2.5 Performance evaluation ... 10
5.2.6 Improvement ... 10
5.2.7 Controls and objectives ... 11
5.3 Establishing beneficial artificial intelligence and trustworthiness ... 11
5.4 Societal concerns and ethical considerations - use cases ... 11

6 AI system life cycle ... **12**
6.1 General ... 12
6.2 AI system life cycle processes - societal concerns and ethical considerations ... 13
6.3 Practices for managing societal and ethical aspects in artificial intelligence system life cycle ... 14
6.3.1 Ethics by design ... 14
6.3.2 Ethical Data Management ... 14
6.3.3 Model Development and Training ... 15
6.3.4 AI Systems Design, Development, Deployment and Monitoring: ... 15
6.3.5 Stakeholder Engagement and Public Trust ... 16
6.3.6 Continuous Improvement and Adaptation ... 16
6.3.7 Retirement and Decommissioning ... 16

Annex A (informative) **Informative use cases** ... **19**

Annex B (informative) **Guidance to address societal concerns and ethical considerations at each stage in the life cycle of an AI system** ... **28**

Bibliography ... **42**

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Foreword

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Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a pivotal component across various sectors, driving innovation and efficiency. However, its integration brings forth societal concerns and ethical considerations that necessitate careful consideration and management.

Ethical considerations can be explicit or implicit depending on how clearly they are defined and understood within a given context, cultural norms, and organizational policies.

This document provides guidance on addressing societal concerns and ethical considerations, without introducing any value statements, however always anchored in universal human rights standards, when artificial intelligence systems are developed and deployed.

Artificial intelligence systems have the potential to significantly affect individuals and society, both positively and negatively. This document emphasizes the importance of integrating societal concerns and ethical considerations into organizational processes and decision-making frameworks, thereby fostering trust and accountability. This document also aims to assist organizations in responsibly managing artificial intelligence systems by providing a framework for identifying and addressing societal concerns and ethical considerations throughout the artificial intelligence systems life cycle processes.

The unique features of artificial intelligence systems can raise additional concerns compared to traditional systems. This includes considerations of transparency, fairness, human control and the potential societal effects of artificial intelligence systems, including considerations of transparency and fairness. To address these concerns, organizations should ensure that their artificial intelligence systems not only meet technical and operational objectives but also align with broader societal concerns and ethical considerations.

In summary, this document serves as a comprehensive guide for organizations seeking to navigate the complex ethical landscape of artificial intelligence, providing strategies and practices to ensure that artificial intelligence systems contribute positively to society while minimizing potential harms.

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Information technology — Artificial intelligence — Guidance on addressing societal concerns and ethical considerations

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on how an organization can identify and address societal concerns and ethical considerations during the life cycle of artificial intelligence systems that can potentially harm individuals and society.

This document supports existing artificial intelligence system governance, management system and impact assessment standards. This document is applicable to all types of organizations that develop or use artificial intelligence systems, regardless of size, type and nature.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of 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 5338, *Information technology — Artificial intelligence — AI system life cycle processes*

ISO/IEC 22989, *Information technology — Artificial intelligence — Artificial intelligence concepts and terminology*

ISO/IEC 42001, *Information technology — Artificial intelligence — Management system*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 22989, ISO/IEC 42001, ISO/IEC 5338 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology 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
bias
systematic difference in treatment of certain objects, people, or groups in comparison to others

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC TR 24027:2021 [1], 3.2.2, modified — Removed Note to entry]

3.2
ethical behaviour
behaviour that is in accordance with accepted principles of right or good conduct in the context of a particular situation and is consistent with *human rights* (3.6) and *international norms of behaviour* (3.9)

Note 1 to entry: A reference to human rights has been added.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010 [2], 2.7]

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3.3
ethical consideration
consideration integral to the responsible management and governance of artificial intelligence, ensuring values throughout the whole *life cycle* (3.10), such as accountability, *privacy* (3.11), transparency and *fairness* (3.4), with respect for human beings, and positive contributions to society while minimizing potential harms

Note 1 to entry: Considerations for organizations when developing artificial intelligence policies are provided in ISO/IEC 38507 [3].

Note 2 to entry: Considerations for ethical review framework are provided in ISO/IEC TR 24368:2022 [4], 7.2.

Note 3 to entry: A non-exhaustive list of ethical and societal considerations is set out in ISO/IEC TR 24368:2022 [4], 8.2.

3.4
fairness
treatment, behaviour or outcomes that respect established facts, societal norms and beliefs and are not determined or affected by favouritism or unjust discrimination

Note 1 to entry: Considerations of fairness are highly contextual and vary across cultures, generations, geographies and political opinions.

Note 2 to entry: Fairness is not the same as the lack of *bias* (3.1). Bias does not always result in unfairness and unfairness can be caused by factors other than bias.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC TR 24368:2022 [4], 3.7]

3.5
governance
human-based system comprising directing, overseeing and accountability

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 38507:2022 [5], 3.3]

3.6
human rights
rights inherent to all human beings, whatever their nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language or any other status

Note 1 to entry: Human rights practices are referred to in ISO/IEC TR 24368:2022 [4], 5.1.

Note 2 to entry: Human rights are: interrelated, universal and inalienable; interdependent and indivisible; equal and non-discriminatory; and include both rights and obligations.

[SOURCE: EN ISO 22300:2021 [6], 3.1.115]

3.7
impact assessment
formal, documented process by which the impacts to individuals, groups of individuals and societies are considered by an organization developing, providing, or using products or services utilizing artificial intelligence

3.8
interested party
stakeholder
person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

Note 1 to entry: An overview of interested parties in AI is provided in ISO/IEC 22989:2022 [7], 5.19.

Note 2 to entry: 4.3 states that the list of stakeholders can be viewed more broadly, to take into consideration also any other person, entity or group, who knowingly or unknowingly is indirectly affected of the AI system.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 42001:2023, 3.2]

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3.9
international norms of behaviour
expectations of socially responsible organizational behaviour, derived from customary international law, generally accepted principles of international law, or intergovernmental agreements that are universally or nearly universally recognized

Note 1 to entry: Intergovernmental agreements include treaties and conventions.

Note 2 to entry: Although customary international law, generally accepted principles of international law and intergovernmental agreements are directed primarily at states, they express goals and principles which all organizations can aspire.

Note 3 to entry: International norms of behaviour evolve over time.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010 [2], 2.11]

3.10
life cycle
evolution of a system, product, service, project or other human-made entity, from conception including planning, through retirement

Note 1 to entry: Reference to the notion of planning is added and can also be actions taken by human beings as referred to in Note 1 to entry of the definition of planning in ISO/IEC 22989:2022 [7].

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 22989:2022 [7], 3.1.22]

3.11
privacy
right of individuals to control or influence what information related to them may be collected and stored and by whom and to which that information is maintained may be disclosed

Note 1 to entry: Privacy protection measures to be taken to ensure that AI systems do not infringe on individuals' privacy rights, including data anonymization and secure data handling practices. ISO/IEC 15944-12:2020 [8], 3.97.

Note 2 to entry: 4.2 exemplifies ethical and societal considerations in terms of privacy as protecting personal data and ensuring users can exercise their rights over their data, and without undue surveillance.

[SOURCE: ISO 7498-2:1989 [9], 3.3.43]

3.12
responsibility
obligation to act or take decisions to achieve required outcomes

Note 1 to entry: A decision can be taken not to act.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC TR 24368:2022 [4], 3.12]

3.13
safety
expectation that a system does not, under defined conditions, lead to a state in which human life, health, property, or the environment is endangered

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 12207:2017 [10], 3.1.48]

3.14
security
all aspects related to defining, achieving, and maintaining confidentiality, integrity, availability, accountability, authenticity, and reliability

Note 1 to entry: A product, system, or service is considered to be secure to the extent that its users can rely that it functions (or will function) in the intended way. This is usually considered in the context of an assessment of actual or perceived threats.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 15444-8:2023 [11], 3.30]

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3.15
social responsibility
responsibility (3.12) of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and *ethical behaviour* (3.2) that:

— contributes to *sustainability* (3.18), including health and the welfare of society;

— takes into account the expectations of *interested parties* (3.8);

— is in compliance with applicable law and is consistent with local and *international norms of behaviour* (3.9);

— is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships

Note 1 to entry: Activities include products, services and processes.

Note 2 to entry: Relationships refer to an organization's activities within its sphere of influence.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010 [2], 2.18, modified — replaced "stakeholders" with "interested parties".]

3.16
sphere of influence
range or extent of political, contractual, economic or other relationships through which an organization has the ability to affect the decisions or activities of individuals or organizations

Note 1 to entry: The ability to influence does not, in itself, imply a responsibility to exercise influence.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010 [2], 2.19, modified — replaced Note 2 to entry has been deleted.]

3.17
societal concerns
potential impacts of artificial intelligence systems on society including psychological, cultural and economic effects

Note 1 to entry: This involves understanding how AI influences human behaviour, trust, empathy, and identity formation.

3.18
sustainability
state of the global system, including environmental, social and economic aspects, in which the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs

Note 1 to entry: The environmental, social and economic aspects interact, are interdependent and are often referred to as the three dimensions of sustainability.

Note 2 to entry: Sustainability is the goal of sustainable development.

[SOURCE: ISO Guide 82:2019 [12], 3.1]

3.19
value
value in the context of human culture that supports a judgment on what is right or wrong

Note 1 to entry: Reference to ISO/IEC/IEEE 24748-7000:2022 [13] and applicable for any and all values, complimentary to ISO/IEC 42001 [14].

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC/IEEE 24748-7000:2022 [13], 3.1]

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