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Guide for writing standards taking into account the needs of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

Guide de rédaction des normes pour la prise en compte des besoins des micro, petites et moyennes entreprises

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) are worldwide federations of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies and IEC national committees). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO and IEC 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 or IEC, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with 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 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).

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).

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ISO/IEC Guide 17 is based on CEN/CENELEC Guide 17, *Guidance for writing standards taking into account micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) needs*, which can be accessed through http://www.cencenelec.eu/sme/smenews/Pages/guide17.aspx

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Introduction

It is important that the views of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are sufficiently considered during the development of standards and that standards aimed at large-scale or mass production are not too costly and complex for SMEs to implement.

SMEs benefit from standards, however they may have a weaker position in their market because of their dependency on larger competitors, suppliers or customers or they may have to adapt to existing solutions on the market.

SMEs are present in the majority of sectors. As do other users, SMEs benefit from the technical expertise of standards in the elaboration of which they may not have been present. Nevertheless, there are also sometimes advantages to being small as they can adapt quickly, can be more flexible and can have smaller overhead.

Furthermore, if standards were to take into consideration the SME perspective, considerable benefits would accrue to all the stakeholders involved in standardization.

The aim of this Guide is to raise awareness on the issues that may be of importance to SMEs. By addressing the needs of SMEs, the use of standards may be significantly increased and SMEs will be able to gain the full benefit of utilizing standards.

This Guide provides guidance, advice and recommendations to standards writers on how to take into account the needs of SMEs and addresses the issues to be considered during the development process of ISO or IEC standards.

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Guide for writing standards taking into account the needs of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

1 Scope

This Guide provides guidance and recommendations to writers of standards on the needs of micro, small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) in order to avoid the exclusion of SMEs from the market and the distortion of fair competition.

This Guide is relevant to all stakeholders involved in standardization, i.e. standards writers in working groups (WGs), technical committees (TCs), project committees (PCs), or subcommittees (SCs) as well as members of national mirror committees. Not all principles presented in this Guide necessarily have to apply to all standards. Furthermore, sector-specific questions might not be covered. TCs, PCs, SCs and WGs are best placed to evaluate how to address the specific needs of SMEs in their standards.

This Guide contains:

a) considerations for the development of standards that are best adapted to SMEs' needs;

b) techniques for identifying and assessing provisions in standards that may especially impact SMEs;

c) ways to reduce negative impacts on SMEs resulting from some provisions in standards;

d) guidelines for writing SME-friendly standards;

e) a checklist;

f) information on the impact that new standards can have on micro-enterprises.

NOTE In this Guide, the term "standard" includes all ISO/IEC deliverables.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1
micro, small and medium-sized enterprise
SME
micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as defined by the recognized authority within the country or region, as well as self-employed persons

Note 1 to entry: There is currently no universal definition of what constitutes an SME. Annex A contains examples of definitions from various sources.

3.2
standards writer
person(s), group or organization responsible for the drafting of a standard

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