



GUIDE 21

Adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards

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[ISO/IEC Guide 21:1999](#)

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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.

Guides are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

Draft Guides adopted by the responsible Committee or Group are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as a Guide requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

ISO/IEC Guide 21 was prepared by the ISO/IEC ad hoc Technical Advisory Group for the revision of ISO/IEC Guides 3 and 21.

This second edition of ISO/IEC Guide 21 cancels and replaces the second edition of ISO/IEC Guide 3:1981, *Identification of national standards that are equivalent to International Standards*, the first edition of ISO/IEC Guide 21:1981, *Adoption of International Standards in national standards*, and ISO/IEC Guide 21:1981/Add.1:1983, *Indication of the degree of equivalence between national standards and International Standards*.

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Annexes A to E of this Guide are for information only.

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0 Introduction

0.1 This Guide provides the methods for adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards and includes a system for indicating the degree of correspondence so as to promote coherence in the way regional or national standards bodies adopt International Standards and indicate the degree of correspondence with International Standards. It applies equally to the adoption of other international normative and informative documents such as Technical Reports. Greater uniformity in the indication of both correspondence and deviations among countries will aid communication, avoid confusion and facilitate trade.

0.2 International Standards are widely adopted at the regional or national level and applied by manufacturers, trade organizations, purchasers, consumers, testing laboratories, authorities and other interested parties. Since these standards generally reflect the best experience of industry, researchers, consumers and regulators worldwide and cover common needs in a variety of countries, they constitute one of the important bases for the removal of technical barriers to trade. This has been explicitly acknowledged in the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade of the World Trade Organization (WTO TBT Agreement).

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It is important that every effort should be made to adopt and use International Standards and, consequently, to withdraw conflicting regional or national standards as soon as practicable for the reasons mentioned above. Only by developing a global approach can the benefits of standardization be fully realized. However, full adoption may not be practicable in all cases for reasons such as regional or national security, protection of human health or safety, or protection of the environment, or because of fundamental climatic, geographical or technological problems. The WTO TBT Agreement recognizes that these are legitimate reasons for regional or national deviations.

0.3 The adoption of an International Standard as a regional or national standard will be extremely difficult if the regional or national rules or traditions concerning structure and layout of regional or national standards differ from those of the standard being adopted. It is therefore recommended to apply, as far as possible, the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3, for the preparation of regional and national standards.

Even for the cases referred to in 0.2, every effort should be made to reduce the deviations to a rational minimum. Moreover, where deviations from International Standards exist, it is important to identify the deviations clearly and to state the reasons for the deviations. If International Standards are adopted only by means of a re-edited version, it is extremely difficult to identify the technical deviations owing to the presentation differences, i.e. differences in the structure and wording, of the original standard. On the other hand, a clearly identified deviation will have a tendency to disappear because as long as it remains visible, the question as to whether it is still necessary will arise repeatedly, while a hidden deviation may not disappear even when no longer justified.

0.4 It is recommended that as much information as possible is given about the correspondence of regional or national standards that adopt International Standards (or are based on them). This information should be displayed in a

prominent place on the regional or national standard (preferably on the title page and in the foreword), in standards lists, catalogues, year-books and any other media for retrieval purposes. When quoting an International Standard, at least its number and date of publication should be given. If a regional or national standard does not exist materially (for example, if the International Standard has been adopted by the endorsement method), this information about correspondence should be given in standards listing media as mentioned above.

0.5 Although the scope of this Guide covers only the adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards, the methods of adoption described and the degrees of correspondence may also be applied to the adoption of regional or national standards by other regional or national standards.

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Adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards

1 Scope

This Guide provides methods for

- determination of the degree of correspondence between regional or national standards and relevant International Standards (clause 4),
- adoption of International Standards as regional or national standards (clause 5),
- indication of technical deviations which would facilitate immediate recognition of any deviation (clause 6),
- numbering of regional or national standards that are identical adoptions of International Standards (clause 7), and
- indication of the degree of correspondence between the regional or national standard and the International Standard (clause 8).

This Guide does not contain any rules for the use of an International Standard in production, trade, legislation or similar activities. It also does not deal with

- adoption of regional or national standards as International Standards,
- adoption of regional or national standards as other regional or national standards,
- adoption of regional standards as national standards, or
- adoption in or of technical regulations.

2 Normative reference

The following normative document contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Guide. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, this publication do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this Guide are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the normative document indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, *Standardization and related activities — General vocabulary*.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this Guide, the terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC Guide 2 (some of which are repeated below for convenience) and the following apply.

3.1 standard

document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their result, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, definition 3.2]

3.2 international standard

standard that is adopted by an international standardizing/standards organization and made available to the public

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, definition 3.2.1.1]

3.3 regional standard

standard that is adopted by a regional standardizing/standards organization and made available to the public

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, definition 3.2.1.2]

3.4 national standard

standard that is adopted by a national standards body and made available to the public

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, definition 3.2.1.3]

3.5 adoption

(of an International Standard in a regional or national standard) publication of a regional or national normative document based on a relevant International Standard, or endorsement of the International Standard as having the same status as a national normative document, with any deviations from the International Standard identified

NOTE 1 The term "taking over" is sometimes used to cover the same concept as "adoption".

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NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996, 10.1.

NOTE 3 For the conditions of adoption of an International Standard as a regional or national standard, see 4.1.

3.6 editorial change

(of an International Standard in a regional or national standard) any permitted change that does not alter the technical content of the standard

NOTE A list of permitted editorial changes is given in 4.2.

3.7 technical deviation

(from an International Standard in a regional or national standard) any difference between the technical content of the International Standard and that of the regional or national standard

3.8 change in wording

when adopting an International Standard in one of its official languages, the replacement of single words or phrases in the regional or national standard by synonyms to reflect common language use in the region or country adopting the International Standard

EXAMPLE The use of "elevators" for "lifts" in certain countries.

3.9

structure

(of a standard) order of the clauses, subclauses, paragraphs, tables, figures, annexes

3.10

vice versa principle

principle whereby anything that is acceptable under the terms of the International Standard is acceptable under the regional or national standard and vice versa, and thus compliance with the International Standard also means compliance with the regional or national standard

4 Degrees of correspondence

4.1 General

For comparison of regional or national standards with relevant International Standards, an indication of their correspondence is essential if their relationship is to be understood quickly. A skeleton classification into three degrees of correspondence (see 4.2 to 4.4) is sufficient and an over-detailed indication is not reasonable because of the variety of possible cases. Any comparison will have to be made point by point, and will need to cover both the scope and the content to discover deviating items.

An International Standard is considered to have been adopted when the regional or national standard is identical (see 4.2) or modified (see 4.3) in relation to the International Standard.

Identical adoption of International Standards ensures transparency, which is fundamental to the facilitation of trade. It is important to remember that even if two standards bodies introduce deviations or redrafting which they consider not significant in their regional or national standards against the International Standard, problems may arise because these changes could add up and lead to non-acceptability between the two regional or national standards. Identical adoption avoids these problems.

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4.2 Identical

The regional or national standard is identical to the International Standard under the following conditions:

- a) the regional or national standard is identical in technical content, structure and wording (or is an identical translation), or
- b) the regional or national standard is identical in technical content, although it may contain the following minimal editorial changes:
 - substitution of decimal point for a decimal comma;
 - correction of any misprints (e.g. spelling errors) or pagination changes;
 - deletion of text in one or several languages from a multilingual International Standard;
 - inclusion of any technical corrigenda or amendments issued to the International Standard;
 - changes to the title to be consistent with an existing regional or national series;
 - substitution of “this regional/national standard” for “this International Standard”;
 - inclusion of any regional or national informative material (e.g. informative annexes that do not alter, add to or delete from the provisions of the International Standard); examples of informative material are advice to users, training guidance or suggested forms or reports;

NOTE Any changes in document layout (e.g. in relation to pagination, font type and font size etc.) especially in an electronic environment, have no impact on the degree of correspondence.

4.3 Modified

The regional or national standard is modified in relation to the International Standard under the following conditions. Technical deviations are permitted provided they are clearly identified and explained. The regional or national standard reflects the structure of the International Standard. Changes to the structure are only permitted if an easy comparison of the content and structure of the two standards continues to be possible.

For transparency and traceability, it is strongly recommended that a national standard adopts only one single International Standard. Under certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to adopt several International Standards within one national standard. However, this is only practicable for the user if an easy comparison of the content is provided in a list identifying and explaining the changes. Modified standards may also include the changes permitted under identical correspondence.

The “vice versa principle” is not fulfilled. (standards.iteh.ai)

Modified standards can include such cases as the following.

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- a) “The regional or national standard contains less”
The regional or national standard only applies a subset of the available choices in the International Standard, has less stringent requirements, etc.
- b) “The regional or national standard contains more”
The regional or national standard adds aspects or types, has more stringent requirements, includes additional tests, etc.
- c) “The regional or national standard alters a part of the International Standard”
Part of the content is identical, but both the regional or national standard and the International Standard contain some differing requirements.
- d) “The regional or national standard provides an alternative choice”
The regional or national standard provides a provision of equal status, which may be used as an alternative to that given in the International Standard.

See annex A for examples of lists of technical deviations and their explanation.

NOTE A regional or national standard can include an International Standard in its totality and can contain additional technical provisions, which are not part of the International Standard. In this case, the degree of correspondence to the International Standard is either “modified” or “not equivalent”, depending on whether or not the differences are clearly indicated and technical deviations are listed and explained, although the part composed of the included International Standard may not have been subject to any modifications.

4.4 Not equivalent

The regional or national standard is not equivalent to the International Standard in technical content and structure and the changes have not been clearly identified. This also can include the case where only a minority in number or significance of the international provisions remain in the regional or national standard.

NOTE This degree of correspondence does not constitute an adoption.

5 Methods of adoption

5.1 General

5.1.1 This clause describes a range of methods for adoption of International Standards and can apply equally to the first two degrees of correspondence (see 4.2 and 4.3). It also gives some indications concerning the advantages and disadvantages of these methods. The preferred methods are given in 5.5 (see also annex B for a summary of the relationships between the degrees of correspondence and the methods of adoption/publication).

5.1.2 Any regional or national standard which adopts an International Standard by any method shall ensure that the identification of the International Standard is clearly stated. For adoption by the Cover Sheet method or by Republication, the identification of the International Standard shall include, in a prominent position such as on the cover sheet, the reference number, the title (in at least one of the official languages in which the International Standard was published), date or year of publication and the degree of correspondence (see clause 4).

5.1.3 When adopting an International Standard, all existing amendments and technical corrigenda to the International Standard shall be included in the regional or national standard.

NOTE Amendments and technical corrigenda published after the adoption of an International Standard, should be adopted as soon as possible.

5.1.4 With particular reference to the development of electronic versions of standards, standards bodies may find new methods of adoption which are not covered in this Guide, or may combine the existing ones. In this case the method used will not be listed here. However, the recommendations regarding choice and indication of correspondence will still remain applicable.

NOTE Examples of different types of adoption notices are given in annex C.

5.2 Endorsement method

5.2.1 If the International Standard is declared by the regional or national body to have the status of a regional or national standard, an "endorsement notice" may be issued. The endorsement notice may contain information or instructions pertinent to this declaration. An endorsement notice should only be issued where condition 4.2 a) is fulfilled. Each endorsement notice should only refer to one International Standard (including any amendments and/or technical corrigenda).

5.2.2 The endorsement notice may allocate a unique regional or national reference number to each endorsed International Standard. Alternatively, the reference number of the International Standard should be used.

5.2.3 The endorsement notice may appear in an official bulletin and/or as an independent document. The text of the International Standard should not usually be attached to the endorsement notice.

5.2.4 The endorsement method is one of the simplest methods of adoption. It does not require a reprint of the text of the International Standard. However, the endorsement notice cannot be used without the International Standard and, therefore, the latter shall be made available in some way. Further, if the endorsement notice does not have its own identification number, the International Standard may not be easily traceable as having been adopted within the regional or national standards system.

5.3 Cover sheet method

An International Standard (including any amendments and/or technical corrigenda) may be published with a regional or national cover sheet. The cover sheet should have a regional or national reference number and the International Standard will become a part of the regional or national standards system if there is an identical (see 4.2) or modified (see 4.3) degree of correspondence. Each cover sheet should only refer to one International Standard (including any amendments and/or technical corrigenda). Adhesive labels, stamps or other indications applied to the International Standards are considered to be equivalent to cover sheets. Since the use of stamps or labels provides limited space for information, instructions or notes, these should not be used as if they are cover sheets unless the regional or national standard is identical to the International Standard.

5.3.2 The cover sheet should contain information and instructions regarding the standard as well as information relating to editorial changes. If necessary, a reference to an annex listing any technical deviations and reasons for them with reference to the International Standard should be included.

5.3.3 The cover sheet method has the advantages that it does not require a reprint and that the full text of the International Standard is attached.

5.4 Republication

5.4.1 General

There are three methods of republication, i.e. reprinting (see 5.4.2), translation (see 5.4.3) and redrafting (see 5.4.4).

5.4.2 Reprinting

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5.4.2.1 The International Standard is printed as a regional or national standard by direct reproduction of the published document (e.g. by photography, scanning or from an electronic file). In addition, the regional or national standard may include the following:

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- a) a regional or national introduction, preface or foreword (see 5.4.2.2);
- b) a translation of the text (see 5.4.3);
- c) a different title (see 4.2 and 5.4.2.4);
- d) amendments and/or technical corrigenda (see 5.1.3) to the International Standard;
- e) regional or national informative material in a regional or national foreword, notes or annexes (see clause 6);
- f) editorial changes or technical deviations (see clause 6).

5.4.2.2 A regional or national introduction, preface or foreword may contain information or instructions pertinent to the regional or national adoption of the standard. Such information would normally include the following:

- a) the original parent publication title and reference number (with the year of publication), e.g. ISO 9001:1994, *Quality systems — Model for quality assurance in design, development, production, installation and servicing*;
- b) the regional or national body responsible for the standard (e.g. technical committee number and title);
- c) if appropriate, details of editorial changes;
- d) if appropriate, reference to technical deviations and changes in structure together with their explanations or to the annex giving this information.

NOTE Examples of regional or national introductory material are given in annex D.