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**Thermal insulating products for building applications — Conditioning to moisture equilibrium under specified temperature and humidity conditions**

*Produits isolants thermiques destinés aux applications du bâtiment —  
Conditionnement jusqu'à l'équilibre hygroscopique dans des conditions  
de température et d'humidité spécifiées*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO 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, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 16544 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 163, *Thermal performance and energy use in the built environment*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Test and measurement methods*.

ISO 16544 includes the original EN 12429 prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 88 “Thermal insulating materials and products”, with the following clauses modified to reflect the conditions for tropical countries:

- Clause 6.5: Conditioning of test specimen in tropical countries;
- Clause 7.4: Test conditions in tropical countries;
- Clause 10: Test report.

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## Introduction

ISO 16544 is one of a series of existing European Standards on test methods which were adopted by ISO. This group of International Standards comprises the following group of interrelated standards:

ISO	Title	Respective EN standard
12344	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of bending behaviour	EN 12089
12968	Thermal insulation products for building applications — Determination of the pull-off resistance of external thermal insulation composite systems (ETICS) (foam block test)	EN 13495
29465	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of length and width	EN 822
29466	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of thickness	EN 823
29467	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of squareness	EN 824
29468	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of flatness	EN 825
29469	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of compression behaviour	EN 826
29470	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of the apparent density	EN 1602
29471	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of dimensional stability under constant normal laboratory conditions (23 degrees C/50 % relative humidity)	EN 1603
29472	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of dimensional stability under specified temperature and humidity conditions	EN 1604
29764	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of deformation under specified compressive load and temperature conditions	EN 1605
29765	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of tensile strength perpendicular to faces	EN 1607
29766	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of tensile strength parallel to faces	EN 1608
29767	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of short-term water absorption by partial immersion	EN 1609
29768	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of linear dimensions of test specimens	EN 12085
29769	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of behaviour under point load	EN 12430
29770	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of thickness for floating-floor insulating products	EN 12431

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29771	Thermal insulating materials for building applications — Determination of organic content	EN 13820
29803	Thermal insulation products for building applications — Determination of the resistance to impact of external thermal insulation composite systems (ETICS)	EN 13497
29804	Thermal insulation products for building applications — Determination of the tensile bond strength of the adhesive and of the base coat to the thermal insulation material	EN 13494
29805	Thermal insulation products for building applications — Determination of the mechanical properties of glass fibre meshes	EN 13496
16534	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of compressive creep	EN 1606
16535	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of long-term water absorption by immersion	EN 12087
16536	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of long-term water absorption by diffusion	EN 12088
16537	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of shear behaviour	EN 12090
16546	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of freeze-thaw resistance	EN 12091
16544	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Conditioning to moisture equilibrium under specified temperature and humidity conditions	EN 12429
16545	Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of behaviour under cyclic loading	EN 13793

A further group of existing European Standards on test methods for products used to insulate building equipment and industrial installations comprises the following group of interrelated International Standards:

ISO 12623	Thermal insulating products for building equipment and industrial installations — Determination of short-term water absorption by partial immersion of preformed pipe insulation	EN 13472
ISO 12624	Thermal insulating products for building equipment and industrial installations — Determination of trace quantities of water soluble chloride, fluoride, silicate, sodium ions and pH	EN 13468
ISO 12628	Thermal insulating products for building equipment and industrial installations — Determination of dimensions, squareness and linearity of preformed pipe insulation	EN 13467
ISO 12629	Thermal insulating products for building equipment and industrial installations — Determination of water vapour transmission properties of preformed pipe insulation	EN 13469

# Thermal insulating products for building applications — Conditioning to moisture equilibrium under specified temperature and humidity conditions

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies equipment and procedures to condition a thermal insulating product to equilibrium moisture content at  $(23 \pm 2)^\circ\text{C}$  and  $(50 \pm 5)\%$  relative humidity.

It is also applicable to thermal insulating products with moulded skins but is not normally relevant for faced products or for products with other surface treatments.

NOTE 1 The normally specified moisture content is the result of the equilibrium between the atmosphere and the product at  $(23 \pm 2)^\circ\text{C}$  and  $(50 \pm 5)\%$  relative humidity. This International Standard can also be used if a product has to be conditioned to other relative humidities.

NOTE 2 The moisture equilibrium may, due to hysteresis effects, differ depending on whether the equilibrium has been reached by absorption or by desorption. In addition, perfect equilibrium can require a very long time to be reached. Therefore, it is necessary to accept equilibrium within a certain accuracy.

NOTE 3 For products that do not absorb moisture, conditioning is not needed. It should, nevertheless, be ensured that there is no water on the surface before testing.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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 29768, *Thermal insulating products for building applications — Determination of linear dimensions of test specimens*

ISO 12571, *Hygrothermal performance of building materials — Determination of hygroscopic sorption properties*

## 3 Terms and definitions

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

### 3.1 Terms and definitions

#### 3.1.1

##### **atmosphere 23/50**

controlled atmosphere at a temperature of  $(23 \pm 2)^\circ\text{C}$  and a relative humidity of  $(50 \pm 5)\%$

#### 3.1.2

##### **hygroscopic range**

moisture content in equilibrium with 98 % relative humidity or lower

#### 3.1.3

##### **equivalent time**

$\Delta t_e$

$d^2$  hours, where  $d$  is the numerical value of the test specimen thickness, in centimetres

**3.1.4 limiting value of moisture content change**

$\Delta w_1$   
change in moisture content during a specified period of equivalent time,  $\Delta t_e$ , at the upper limit of the hygroscopic range

**3.1.5 conditioning time factor**

$\gamma$   
factor by which the equivalent time,  $\Delta t_e$ , has to be multiplied to determine the required conditioning period in the hygroscopic range

**3.2 Abbreviations**

- EPS            expanded polystyrene
- ICB            insulation cork board
- MW            mineral wool
- PUR            polyurethane foam
- XPS            extruded polystyrene foam

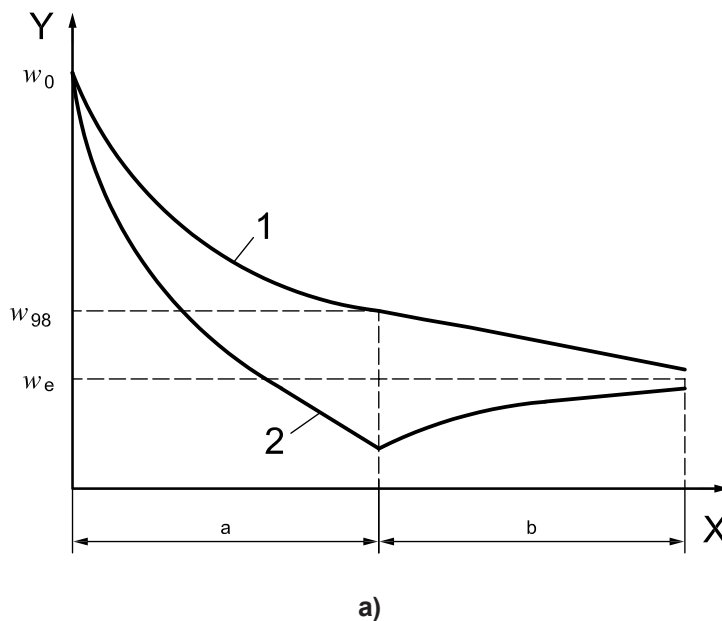
**4 Principle**

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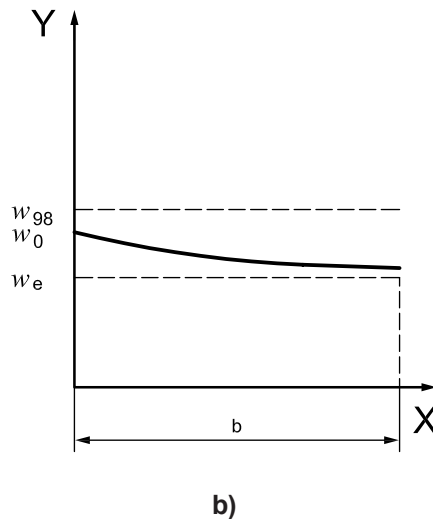
The conditioning is carried out using one or two steps (see Figure 1).

Step 1 is conditioning the test specimen to a moisture content within the hygroscopic range. This conditioning may take place in an atmosphere 23/50 or in a ventilated oven. The choice of condition depends on the type of material. Alternative I shows drying in atmosphere 23/50 and alternative II drying in a heated oven.

Step 2 is conditioning the test specimen to equilibrium with an atmosphere 23/50, after the moisture content has reached the hygroscopic range.





**Key**

X time

Y moisture content

1 alternative I

2 alternative II

 $w_0$  is the initial moisture content $w_{98}$  is the moisture content at upper limit of hygroscopic range $w_e$  is the moisture content in equilibrium with atmosphere 23/50

Figure 1 — Moisture content versus time during Step 1 and Step 2

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**5 Apparatus**

**5.1 Temperature and humidity controlled chamber**, capable of maintaining the atmosphere 23/50.

**5.2 Temperature controlled ventilated oven**, that takes the air from an environment of 23/50. The oven shall be capable of maintaining a temperature of  $(40 \pm 5) ^\circ\text{C}$  or  $(70 \pm 5) ^\circ\text{C}$  or  $(105 \pm 5) ^\circ\text{C}$  as specified in the relevant product standard or any other European technical specification.

**5.3 Measuring instruments**, capable of measuring the linear dimensions of test specimens in accordance with ISO 29768, with an accuracy of 1 %.

**6 Test specimens****6.1 Dimensions of test specimens**

The thickness of the test specimens shall be the original product thickness.

The test specimens shall be squarely cut and square having sides of  $(200 \pm 1)$  mm.

**6.2 Number of test specimens**

The number of test specimens shall be as specified in the relevant product standard. If the number is not specified, then at least three test specimens shall be conditioned.

**NOTE** In the absence of a product standard or any other European technical specification, the number of test specimens may be agreed between parties.

### 6.3 Preparation of test specimens

The test specimens shall be cut so that they are representative of the full size product. Any surface skins, facings and/or coatings shall be retained.

### 6.4 Preconditioning of test specimens

If the procedure shown in Figure 1a) is used, ensure that the test specimens have a moisture content well above the hygroscopic range. If, in this case, the hygroscopic sorption curve for the product is not known, it shall be determined in accordance with ISO 12571.

NOTE To increase the moisture content to above the hygroscopic range, it may be necessary to immerse the test specimens in water, expose them to the exterior climate or expose them to water vapour in accordance with ISO 16536.

### 6.5 Conditioning of test specimen in tropical countries

In tropical countries, different conditioning and testing conditions can be relevant. In this case, the moisture content shall be in equilibrium with atmosphere ( $27 \pm 5$ ) °C and ( $65 \pm 5$ ) % RH, and this shall be stated clearly in the test report.

## 7 Procedure

### 7.1 General

Determine the linear dimensions in accordance with ISO 29768 with an accuracy of 1 %. Calculate the volume,  $V$ , of each test specimen.

The conditioning is carried out using either of the alternative procedures shown in Figure 1a) (Steps 1 and 2) or the procedure shown in Figure 1b) (Step 2 alone).

The test specimens shall be installed in the chamber or ventilated oven such that substantially free air circulation occurs around them.

In some cases, the moisture content will be within the hygroscopic range before the conditioning starts. In this case, Step 1 shall be omitted and only Step 2, in accordance with Figure 1b), shall be followed.

### 7.2 Conditioning Step 1

Place the test specimens in an atmosphere 23/50, or in a ventilated oven at an elevated temperature. The temperature shall be as specified in the relevant product.

NOTE 1 In the absence of a product standard or any other technical specification, the temperature may be agreed between parties.

At preselected intervals of time, depending on the product tested and the atmosphere used, remove and weigh the test specimens to determine any mass changes. Continue until the change in moisture content is less than the limiting value, i.e.

$$\Delta w < \Delta w_1$$

where

$\Delta w$  is the change in moisture content during a period of  $d^2$  hours ( $d$  being the numerical value of the test specimen thickness in centimetres), in  $\text{kg/m}^3$ ;

$\Delta w_1$  is the appropriate limiting value of moisture content change, determined in accordance with Annex A, in  $\text{kg/m}^3$ .

NOTE 2 The limiting value of moisture content change may be determined following the procedures in Annex B.

A suitable time interval is normally 24 h. Constant mass is considered to have been established when the change in the mass of the test specimen over a 24 h period is less than 0,05 % of the total mass.

NOTE 3 For products with a thickness greater than 10 cm, extra drying out time may be required. The acceptable rate of drying is inversely proportional to the square of the thickness, i.e. a 20 cm product would require a change in mass less than 0,013 % per 24 h.

A temperature as high as possible is desirable because this will minimize the conditioning period, but the temperature should not be so high as to cause changes in the material properties.

The effect of moulded skins should be taken into account by increasing the thickness,  $d$ , in the expression " $d^2$  hours". The increase should be the thickness of a slice of homogeneous material with the same vapour resistance as the moulded skins, e.g. for XPS the thickness should be increased by one centimetre for each surface skin of the product.

### 7.3 Conditioning Step 2

Place the test specimens in an atmosphere 23/50 until equilibrium is reached. Equilibrium is deemed to be reached if during the drying process, in two subsequent weighings using a 24 h interval, the change of mass between the two determinations is less than 0,05 % of the total mass.

NOTE 1 An approximation of the conditioning time may be estimated from  $\gamma \times d^2$  hours, where  $\gamma$  is the conditioning time factor and  $d$  is the test specimen thickness, in centimetres. For values of  $\gamma$ , see Annexes A and C.

The effect of moulded skins should be taken into account by increasing the thickness,  $d$ , in the expression " $d^2$  hours". The increase should be the thickness of a slice of homogeneous material with the same vapour resistance as the moulded skins, e.g. for XPS the thickness should be increased by one centimetre for each surface skin of the product.

Products with a thickness greater than 10 cm and almost impermeable products require longer conditioning periods than specified by the equilibrium criterion and should be dealt with accordingly by the laboratory.

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### 7.4 Test conditions in tropical countries

In tropical countries, different conditioning and testing conditions can be relevant. In this case, the conditions shall be  $(27 \pm 2)$  °C and  $(65 \pm 5)$  % RH instead of 23/50.

## 8 Calculation and expression of results

The limiting value of moisture content change and the conditioning time factor by experiment shall be calculated in accordance with Annex A.

## 9 Accuracy

NOTE It has not been possible to include a statement on the accuracy of the measurements in this edition of this International Standard, but it is intended to include such a statement when the standard is next revised.

## 10 Test report

Information on the conditioning procedure shall be included in the relevant test report.

Conditioning and testing conditions in tropical countries shall be included, if applicable.