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Quality management systems for electoral bodies - Requirements

Systèmes de management de la qualité pour les corps électoraux -- Exigences

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03.120.10	Vodenje in zagotavljanje kakovosti	Quality management and quality assurance
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Quality management systems for electoral bodies — Requirements —

Systèmes de management de la qualité pour les corps électoraux — Exigences

ICS 03.120.10

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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.

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ISO 17582 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*.

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Introduction

0.1 General

The adoption of a system of electoral quality management by an electoral body should be a strategic decision of the organization. The design and implementation of an electoral body's quality management is influenced by

- a) its organizational environment, the political environment and changes in that environment, and the risks associated with that environment,
- b) its varying needs,
- c) its particular objectives,
- d) the electoral process it supports,
- e) the processes it employs, and
- f) its size and organizational structure.

It is not the intent of this International Standard to imply uniformity in the structure of electoral management systems for electoral bodies or uniformity of documentation.

The electoral quality management system requirements specified in this International Standard are complementary to requirements for the electoral service provided by the electoral body. Information marked "NOTE" is for guidance in understanding or clarifying the associated requirement.

This International Standard can be used by internal or external parties, including certification bodies, to assess an electoral body's ability to meet the customer, statutory, and regulatory requirements applicable to the electoral service, and the electoral body's own requirements.

The quality management principles stated in ISO 9000 have been taken into consideration during the development of this international standard.

0.2 The electoral process

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Democratic political systems have many characteristics; however, the fundamental distinctive elements without which there cannot be democracies are the elections. Democracy and elections are indivisible. As such, elections are the most recognized symbol by which democratic systems are sustainable.

Every electoral system has its own set of regulations that vary between countries and even within the states where federal systems exist. Electoral systems are composed of a series of interrelated processes, conducted by the electoral bodies, political organizations, and the citizenship, whose ultimate goal is to elect those who will hold public office.

These essential elements include determining who is eligible to vote; registration of political organizations and candidates; conduct of elections; counting of votes; and the declaration of results.

NOTE An electoral body is an institution that may act autonomously within the judiciary or in some cases independently of the three branches of government. Overall, it is responsible for the full administration of the electoral process, which includes the preparation, organization, management, monitoring and promoting the election, casting the votes and counting of the ballots, the resolution of electoral disputes and the official declaration of the election.

There cannot be elections without citizens exercising their right to vote, and there is no possible election if citizens do not have candidates or options to choose from. As a result, the registration and identification of citizens able to vote as well as the registration of political organizations and candidates become essential to the electoral process.

Voter registration is the first precondition for the establishment of the electoral process, followed by the registration of political organizations and candidates.

By registering, political organizations and candidates legally formalize their participation and become entitled to receive public resources to finance their activities.

Once the candidates and political organizations are properly registered, the electoral body starts planning the logistics for election day. The key factor in logistics is the efficient distribution of materials and equipment. For vote casting to take place, all materials have to be properly distributed.

Vote casting is the single most symbolic act of the electoral process. It is the best expression of exercising a political right. This process is based on the principle of one-person one-vote, without restrictions based on race, gender, religion, and social status.

Vote casting and vote counting go hand in hand. Counting votes is a task of paramount importance, since its results will determine the will of the electorate, and, when done in a transparent and accurate manner, will increase confidence in elections and acceptance of the final results.

The declaration of results is the legally binding conclusion of the process by which the electoral body proclaims the winning candidates.

Regardless of how well the electoral process works, it is key that the voters know the different stages of the electoral process and in particular those processes directly involved in vote casting. Electoral education is a continuous process that spans the entire electoral process. Before election day all information about the election, where to vote, the candidates, location of polling station and other, are available to citizens through electoral education.

The full and transparent implementation of each process constitutes the basis for the electoral body to achieve legitimacy. Collectively these processes constitute an electoral event and occur in three stages: before, during and after the election.

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Quality management systems for electoral bodies— Requirements

1 Scope

1.1 General

This International Standard specifies the requirements for an electoral management system where an electoral body

- a) needs to demonstrate its ability to manage transparent electoral processes that consistently provide electoral services that are reliable and legitimate within the statutory, regulatory, and legal framework, and
- b) aims to enhance trust and satisfaction of customers and other electoral interested parties through the effective implementation of the system, including processes for continuous improvement.

NOTE 1 Electoral bodies may vary according to local legal requirements.

NOTE 2 Statutory and regulatory requirements can be expressed as legal requirements.

1.2 Application

All requirements of this International Standard are generic and are intended to be applicable to all electoral bodies involved in any aspect of the electoral process, regardless of whether they are permanent organizations or temporary organizations established in support of a particular election period. This International Standard is applicable to elections at all levels of government whether local, regional, or national.

Where any requirements of this International Standard cannot be applied due to the nature of an electoral body and its electoral services, the subject requirement(s) can be considered for exclusion.

Where exclusions are made, claims of conformity to this International Standard are not acceptable unless these exclusions are limited to the requirements within Clause 7, and such exclusions do not affect the electoral body's ability or responsibility to provide electoral services that meet the requirements of the customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Subject to the stated scope of the electoral management system (see 4.2.1c, below), the requirements of this International Standard apply to the electoral body's implementation of the following electoral processes as specified in 1.2.1 through 1.2.8:

- a) voter registration
- b) registration of political organizations and candidates,
- c) electoral logistics,
- d) vote casting,
- e) vote counting and declaration of results,
- f) electoral education,
- g) oversight of campaign financing,
- h) resolution of electoral disputes.

1.2.1 Voter registration

The voter registration process establishes the eligibility of individuals to cast a vote. Voter registration is the process by which a person is incorporated into the voter's list. During this process, substantive information is provided to and verified by the responsible electoral authority.

The main activities conducted within the voter registration process are receipt and review of identification documentation; verification of information; maintaining electoral boundaries; updating the registry of voters; generation and publication of the registry of voters; submission and receipt of complaints; and preparation of the final registry.

1.2.2 Registration of political organizations and of candidates

The registration of political organizations and candidates is the process through which a political organization and/or candidate gains legal recognition and is entitled to participate in an electoral process.

The main activities conducted by the electoral body for the registration of political organizations and candidates include receipt and review of documentation; verification of documentation against legal requirements for registration; registration and notification of the political organization receipt and review of documentation; verification of documentation against legal and other criteria for registration; receipt and review of candidate challenges; and the registration and notification of candidates.

1.2.3 Electoral logistics

This process establishes the steps needed to organize and conduct an election. The electoral logistics process is made up of a group of activities conducted by the electoral body that include

- a) printing (preparation) of ballots,
- b) printing of records (including quality control of materials),
- c) development, procurement, and preparation of election materials,
- d) designation and training of officials (e.g. for local polling stations),
- e) establishment of polling stations
- f) preparation of all necessary voting equipment,
- g) protection and distribution of materials, and
- h) development and maintenance of electoral maps.

1.2.4 Vote casting

Vote casting is the process through which a person expresses a preference for a candidate that runs for public office or for a proposed political choice. Casting of the vote is secret, universal, and personal.

Vote casting records all votes produced by a single voter whether in electronic, paper or other form during an electoral process. Voting procedures depend on the legal, regulatory and policy framework. All persons registered to vote have the right to vote, irrespective of their geographic location, gender, class, literacy level, occupation, or physical condition.

Activities conducted and supervised by the electoral institution during this process include the opening of polling stations and voter identification verification.

1.2.5 Vote counting and declaration of results

The law establishes the way each country counts the votes. Regardless, every vote-counting process should consist of several steps, including

- a) determining the total of number of voters who voted according to the voter's list,
- b) opening the ballot box,
- c) verification and reconciliation of the ballots, sorting the ballots into piles representing the different political choices,
- d) counting the ballots,
- e) setting aside challenged ballots and determining acceptance or rejection of challenged ballots according to established rules,
- f) recording the number of spoiled ballots,
- g) completion of the results sheets or statements of votes, and
- h) capturing the results and announcement of results.

Vote counting can be done manually, mechanically, or electronically. By the end of the vote counting process, each polling station should be able to determine

- 1) number of voters that voted,
- 2) number of rejected ballots,
- 3) number of valid ballots,
- 4) number of votes for each party and/or candidate, and
- 5) number of challenged ballots.