



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 25639-1**

**Exhibitions and events —**

**Part 1:  
Vocabulary**

*Foires et événements —  
Partie 1: Vocabulaire*

**Second edition  
2025-04**

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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.

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 ISO 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](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 25639-1:2008), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the title of the document has been changed from "*Exhibitions, shows, fairs and conventions — Part 1: Vocabulary*", to "*Exhibitions and events – Part 1: Vocabulary*";
- the structure of the document has been modified in order to align with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2;
- a new category on “Related activities” has been introduced, and the title of the last category has been changed to “Others”;
- two terms, “visit” and “admission category”, have been moved to more appropriate categories;
- nine terms have been added to the category “Individual and entity”;
- eleven terms have been added to the category “Types of events”, including four terms related to "event" (“event”, “physical event” “hybrid event” and “online event”), three terms related to "exhibition" (“hybrid exhibition” “physical exhibition” and “online exhibition”), three terms related to "conventions" (“summit”, “forum” and “congress”), and one additional term (“media conference”);
- eleven terms have been added to the category “Related activities”;
- three terms have been added to the category “Physical items”: “booth location drawing”, “maximum floor load” and “audit report”;
- six terms have been added to the category “Others”: "exhibits", "trade day", "intellectual property", "demographics", "admission category" and "legacy";
- two terms have been removed (“international exhibitor” and “national exhibitor”). These terms are intended to be incorporated into ISO 25639-2;

## ISO 25639-1:2025(en)

- the terms “convention centre” and “congress centre” have been combined into one single term;
- the definitions of multiple terms have been amended and improved (for example, the definitions for “accompanying person”, “delegate”, “visit”, “booth” and “duration of exhibition”).

A list of all parts in the ISO 25639 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user’s national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

The first edition of this document was published in 2008. Over the last decade, the rapid development of the global digital economy and the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have brought new formats, new fields and new concepts to the exhibition and event industry. The definitions of some terms have also evolved. ISO 25639-1:2008 has therefore been revised to meet the latest industry demands, and to accurately and comprehensively identify the contents of exhibition and convention activities.

This second edition of ISO 25639-1 is intended to meet the development direction and demands of the global exhibition and convention industry. The title of the second edition of ISO 25639-1 has been changed to “*Exhibitions and events — Part 1: Vocabulary*”. This will help to explain and improve understanding of the various components of the exhibition and event industry, and provide guidance for industry participants. The revision will also facilitate the recovery and sustainable development of the exhibition and event industry in the post-pandemic COVID-19 era.

This document contains a list of terms and definitions commonly used in the exhibition and event industry. It is intended to facilitate a common and universal interpretation of these terms and definitions, such that the attributes associated with them can be objectively compared and correctly visualized.

This document is intended to help stakeholders within the industry:

- to better relate when interpreting and understanding the various components that make up an exhibition or event; and
- to decide whether they wish to take part in that exhibition or event.

This document is also intended to help to improve professionalism and raise standards for the exhibition or event industry, and to serve as a guideline enabling industry players to be more discerning with regard to the various statistical data released on exhibitions or events.

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# Exhibitions and events —

## Part 1: Vocabulary

### 1 Scope

This document specifies terms and definitions that are commonly used in the exhibition and event industry. They are grouped into the following five categories:

- individual and entity, which lists and classifies the various types of people involved in the exhibition and event industry;
- types of event, which defines the different types of exhibitions and events, including physical, hybrid and online exhibitions and events;
- related activities, which describes related activities during the exhibition and event;
- physical items, which describes the various composition sizes, facilities and types of printed materials of the exhibition and event; and
- others.

### 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

### 3 Terms and definitions

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 Individual and entity

##### 3.1.1

##### **accompanying person**

individual present with a *visitor* (3.1.22) or *delegate* (3.1.30) during an *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: Such persons are more likely to be tracked at *physical exhibitions* (3.2.13) where an entry badge is required, compared to *online exhibitions* (3.2.12).

Note 2 to entry: Online platforms cannot capture accompanying person information of those sharing screens or otherwise jointly viewing an exhibition.

##### 3.1.2

##### **media representative**

journalist, reporter, social media content writer, blogger, influencer or live streamer attending the *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1)

### 3.1.3

#### **service provider**

third-party entity that provides products or services related to the *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.

### 3.1.4

#### **official contractor**

*service provider* (3.1.3) appointed by the *organizer* (3.1.8) or by the venue to provide services or products

Note 1 to entry: The services can include the set-up and *tear-down* (3.5.3) of exhibit booths, the overseeing of labour, material handling and loading dock procedures.

### 3.1.5

#### **sponsor**

entity that supports or endorses the *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1), such as:

- governments or organizations underwriting all or part of the cost of an exhibition or event;
- an individual who assumes all or part of the financial responsibility for an exhibition or event;
- a commercial entity that provides financial backing for an exhibition or event, and in return, receives recognition, advertising, *registrations* (3.3.1) or other benefits

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.

Note 2 to entry: Sponsorship can be “in-kind” support or endorsement and not necessarily of a monetary form.

Note 3 to entry: Sponsors can (but do not necessarily) participate in the profit from the exhibition or event.

### 3.1.6

#### **co-sponsor**

joint *sponsor* (3.1.5)

### 3.1.7

#### **contra sponsor**

barter sponsor

entity that supports or endorses the *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1) with goods or services

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.

Note 2 to entry: A contra sponsorship arrangement occurs when goods or services (not money) are provided in return for other goods or services.

### 3.1.8

#### **organizer**

entity or individual who produces, arranges and manages every aspect of an *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.

Note 2 to entry: The organizer is not necessarily the owner of the exhibition or event.

Note 3 to entry: The organizer can appoint a third party to manage the exhibition or event. The third party can be a company which specializes in organizing *conferences* (3.2.14), *conventions* (3.2.15), *congresses* (3.2.16) or exhibitions referred to as a professional conference organizer (PCO) or a professional exhibition organizer (PEO).

### 3.1.9

#### **co-organizer**

entity that forms a partnership with the *organizer* (3.1.8) to either produce or manage the *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1), or both

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.



**3.1.10**

**speaker**

individual who delivers a speech or talk as part of an *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1) agenda

Note 1 to entry: Types of speakers include keynote, panellist, general session, seminar leader, trainer, workshop leader and “change of pace” speakers, such as humourists and entertainers.

Note 2 to entry: As a data point, this is a type of *registration* (3.3.1) and speakers can also be registered under a different category (e.g. *sponsor* (3.1.5) or exhibitor).

**3.1.11**

**participant**

individual logging into an *online exhibition* (3.2.12) or *online event* (3.2.4) or attending in-person at a *physical exhibition* (3.2.13) or *physical event* (3.2.3)

**3.1.12**

**attendee**

individual attending a *physical exhibition* (3.2.13) or *physicalevent* (3.2.3) in-person, or logging into an *online exhibition* (3.2.12) or *online event* (3.2.4), including *visitor* (3.1.22), *exhibitor staff* (3.1.21), *speaker* (3.1.10), *delegate* (3.1.30), *media representative* (3.1.2) and any other verified *admission category* (3.5.8)

Note 1 to entry: Attendee does not include staff from the *organizer* (3.1.8) and *service provider* (3.1.3).

Note 2 to entry: When quoting figures for attendees, it is advisable to provide a full breakdown of admission categories.

**3.1.13**

**total attendance**

total number of unique *attendees* (3.1.12) to a *physical exhibition* (3.2.13) or *event* (3.2.1) or logging into an *online exhibition* (3.2.12) or *event*, including *visitor* (3.1.22), *exhibitor staff* (3.1.21), *speaker* (3.1.10), *delegate* (3.1.30), *media representative* (3.1.2) and any other verified *admission category* (3.5.8)

Note 1 to entry: When quoting figures for attendees, it is advisable to provide a full breakdown of admission categories.

**3.1.14**

**audit organization**

audit body

independent third-party organization which is responsible for the development and maintenance of *exhibition* (3.2.5) or *event* (3.2.1) industry auditing rules and, in some cases, for the selection of *auditors* (3.1.15) and for the collection and publication of exhibition or event statistics

**3.1.15**

**auditor**

qualified, independent third party appointed by the *organizer* (3.1.8) to carry out an audit

**3.1.16**

**host country**

country where the *physical exhibition* (3.2.13) or *event* (3.2.1) takes place

**3.1.17**

**exhibitor**

direct exhibitor

entity that displays products or services accepted by the *organizer* (3.1.8), including *main exhibitors* (3.1.18) and *co-exhibitor* (3.1.19)

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, government, a body or an organization.

**3.1.18**

**main exhibitor**

*exhibitor* (3.1.17) contracting directly with the *organizer* (3.1.8)

**3.1.19**

**co-exhibitor**

*exhibitor* (3.1.17) on the *main exhibitor's* (3.1.18) *booth* (3.4.1), with its own products or services and personnel, having the approval of the *organizer* (3.1.8)

**3.1.20**

**represented company**

indirect exhibitor

entity not present with their own staff, and whose products or services are displayed on an *exhibitor's* (3.1.17) *booth* (3.4.1)

Note 1 to entry: An entity can be a company, a body or an organization.

**3.1.21**

**exhibitor staff**

exhibitor personnel

person working on the *exhibition* (3.2.5) *booth* (3.4.1) during the official opening hours, employed by the *exhibitor* (3.1.17)

Note 1 to entry: Exhibitor staff excludes third-party *service providers* (3.1.3).

**3.1.22**

**visitor**

person who attends an *exhibition* (3.2.5), with the purpose of gathering information, making purchases or contacting *exhibitors* (3.1.17)

Note 1 to entry: Visitor excludes *exhibitor staff* (3.1.21), media personnel, *service provider* (3.1.3) and *organizer* (3.1.8) staff.

Note 2 to entry: A *speaker* (3.1.10) or *delegate* (3.1.30) is a visitor only if attending the exhibition.

**3.1.23**

**trade visitor**

professional visitor

buyer

*visitor* (3.1.22) who attends an *exhibition* (3.2.5) for professional or business reasons

Note 1 to entry: Trade visitor excludes *media representatives* (3.1.2).

**3.1.24**

**general public visitor**

private visitor

show visitor

*visitor* (3.1.22) who attends an *exhibition* (3.2.5) for personal interests.

Note 1 to entry: Public visitor excludes *media representatives* (3.1.2).

**3.1.25**

**international visitor**

foreign visitor

*visitor* (3.1.22) whose address provided to the *organizer* (3.1.8) is outside the *host country* (3.1.16)

Note 1 to entry: EU countries are counted as individual nations.

Note 2 to entry: Foreign or international visits are those visits by non-domestic visitors of places of residence other than the country in which the event takes place.

**3.1.26**

**national visitor**

domestic visitor

local visitor

*visitor* (3.1.22) whose address provided to the *organizer* (3.1.8) is inside the *host country* (3.1.16)