

ISO 26000 approved for publication

ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility has successfully passed the last development phase and has been approved for publication as an ISO International Standard. The document is expected to be published in November 2010

The final vote by ISO's worldwide membership of national standards institutes closed on 12 September. The standard was approved by 94 % of the countries voting, and largely supported by the liaison organizations who also participated in its development.

ISO 26000 will provide harmonized, globally relevant guidance for private and public sector organizations of all types. The document distils global agreement on:

- Definitions and principles of Social Responsibility
- The core issues to be addressed in implementing Social Responsibility
- Guidance on how to integrate Social Responsibility throughout the operations of an organization.

The standard is consistent with and complements relevant declarations and conventions by the United Nations and its constituents, notably the International Labour Organization (ILO), with whom ISO has established a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to ensure consistency with ILO labour standards. ISO has also signed MoUs with the United Nations Global Compact Office (UNGCO) and with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to enhance their cooperation on the development of ISO 26000.

Development of ISO 26000 was launched in 2005. The project was carried out by the multi-stakeholder ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (ISO/WG SR), which included experts and observers from 99 ISO member countries – of which 69 were developing nations – and 42 public and private sector organizations. Six main stakeholder groups were represented: industry; government; labour; consumers; nongovernmental organizations; service, support, research and others, as well as a geographical and gender-based balance of participants. In all, some 400 people took part which made the working group ISO's biggest ever.