



workshop

report



Global services

ISO standards as solutions



13-14 June 2016, Geneva, Switzerland

Executive summary, outcomes and next steps for ISO



This workshop was organized as part of the ISO strategy for service standardization, launched in February 2016. ISO developed this strategy as a response to requests from its members to further investigate the important topic of trade in services and the role of international standards. With trends such as “servitization”¹, expansion of web-based services and rising value of exports in commercial services worldwide, ISO anticipates that market demand for international service standards will steadily increase and we want to make sure that ISO, and its members, have the tools and knowledge necessary to respond to this demand and to the challenges and opportunities it brings.

What’s next for ISO in the field of service standardization? What was learned from this workshop that will shape ISO’s next steps in the implementation of a strategy for services?

On ISO rules and procedures:

- The separation of management systems from service requirements is still questioned for service standards and opinion is split.
- A lighter version of ISO 9001 for SMEs involved in services? Ongoing debate.
- Further feedback needs to be sought on these issues and this will be for the TMB to re-examine.

On communication:

- Improving stakeholder engagement and raising stakeholder awareness about the benefits of service standards is a priority, especially for SMEs. ISO must develop new tools and guidance to support its members in their efforts to engage stakeholders.
- ISO members want more opportunities to learn from each other’s experiences with service standardization. ISO must work to facilitate this information exchange. As a first step, a follow-up regional workshop on services will be planned for 2017.
- This workshop was attended by a number of International Organizations in Geneva who are interested in knowing more about ISO’s work on services. ISO needs to reach out to these organizations (e.g. ITC, UNCTAD, WTO) and share more information about standardization in the area of services, the ISO process, and the involvement of developing countries.

On new potential trends in service standards:

ISO needs to maintain the momentum and interest in services that was evident at this workshop and welcomes more proposals for the development of new service standards. Members wanting more information about how to propose new service standards or fields of work in ISO can contact the TMB secretariat at tmb@iso.org. Some potential new areas of work and trends that were mentioned by members during the workshop were:

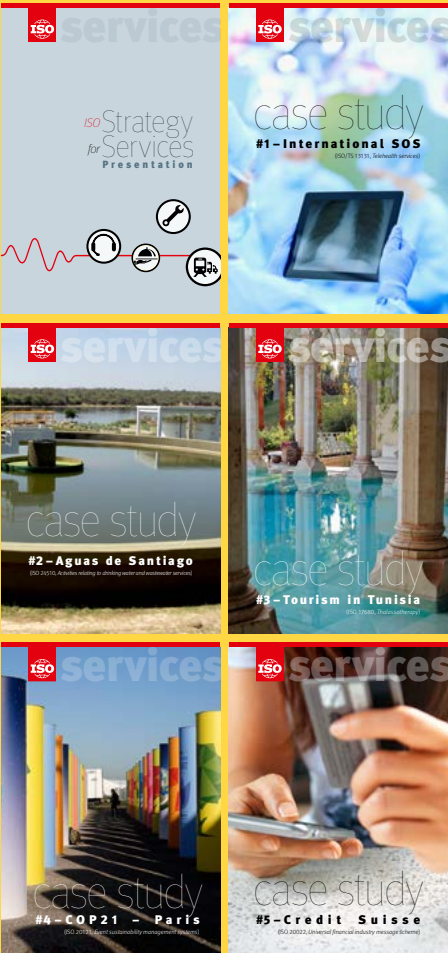
- Service standards as tools to support public services
- Service standards for Consumer to Consumer services (C2C) E.g. Air BnB, Uber.
- Conformity assessment for services
- Consumer protection (standardize ethics, complaint handling, codes of conduct, etc.)

If you have any feedback you would like to provide on the services workshop, the proposed next steps or the ISO strategy for service standardization, we would love to hear from you. Please send your comments to Belinda Cleeland (cleeland@iso.org).

¹ Servitization: the trend whereby companies that traditionally only developed products are progressively developing capabilities to offer services and solutions to complement their products.

Context and purpose of the workshop :

The ISO services strategy



The full strategy is available for download from the ISO web-site : www.iso.org/iso/the_iso_strategy_for_service_standardization.pdf

The first part of the ISO services strategy concentrates on **communication and outreach** ; it aims to increase ISO’s visibility as a developer of International Standards for services, develop clear arguments in favour of service standardization, and address these arguments to stakeholders. One of the primary goals of the workshop was therefore to bring together standards developers, standards users, public and private sector stakeholders and other international partners (such as international organizations and consumer organizations) to raise awareness of how standards can benefit the services sector and to share experiences, expectations, challenges and best practices in dealing with standardization in the services sectors.

Conducting case studies of ISO service standards, how they are used, their benefits and impacts, was another action included in the first part of the services strategy. This workshop provided a venue to launch these case studies and to hear from some of the ISO members, and their stakeholders, who helped develop and implement these standards. There are five case studies, along with an introductory brochure presenting the strategy and key insights and trends in service standardization, all freely available on the ISO website and for order from the ISO webstore :

Case study 1 : International SOS (ISO/TS 13131, Telehealth services)

Case study 2 : Aguas de Santiago (ISO 24510, Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services)

Case study 3 : Tourism in Tunisia (ISO 17680, Thalassotherapy)

Case study 4 : COP21 (ISO 20121, Event sustainability management systems)

Case study 5 : Credit Suisse (ISO 20022, Universal financial industry message scheme)

ISO Strategy for Services – Presentation (background brochure)

The second part of the services strategy concentrates on **understanding market interests** ; on finding out what stakeholders need and in which sectors there is the greatest potential for benefit from the development of international service standards. Another aim of this workshop was to gather insights from participants into the trends they see in their own industries and countries and how ISO can help them achieve their goals. After all, the ISO services strategy is designed to be a living document that will be adapted as we learn more about member and market needs, so the input from this workshop will help to shape ISO’s future strategic direction in the services sectors.

Communication about service standards – the ISO campaign

During the workshop, the ISO communications team ran a campaign on service standards, to:

- Enhance understanding and awareness of how consumers and businesses benefit from service standards.
- Connect a wider digital audience to what was happening in the ISO Services Workshop in Geneva Switzerland (13 – 14 June)

See the campaign website here : <http://www.iso.org/sites/servicestandards/index.html>

23 ISO members from all over the globe participated in the campaign along with at least 15 other partners and stakeholders (e.g. CEN/CENELEC IEC, ANEC, WTO, FAO, ITC). The hashtag **#ServiceStandards** on twitter received over 1100 tweets from 330 contributors reaching an audience of 586 641 people!



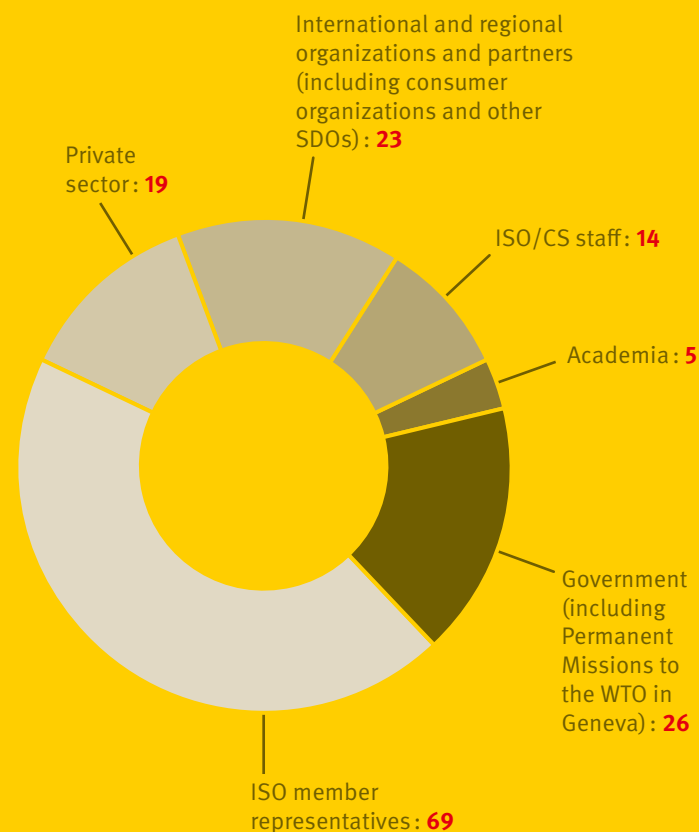
Video interviews with ISO members and experts at the workshop were shot live during the coffee breaks (this was ISO’s first use of **Facebook live**!) We also published an interview with the Deputy Director General of the WTO, which you can access [here](#).



Published to coincide with the workshop, the May-June issue of the **ISO Focus** magazine was also on the theme of ‘the service economy’. You can download the PDF [here](#).

Summary of workshop sessions

The full workshop agenda is available on the event website: www.cvent.com/d/xfqx2k.



Keynote speech : Services, trade and the role of International Standards

David Shark, Deputy Director-General, World Trade Organization (WTO)

If International Standards for services are going to have a significant impact on freeing up world trade in services, their acceptance within the WTO is crucial. ISO was therefore honoured to have the Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) make the keynote speech at the workshop.

Trade in Services is increasingly gaining attention at the WTO partly because of its higher added value and its growing contribution to job creation, and also because of the growing importance of services in regional trade agreements, such as the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), currently under negotiation by 23 parties, including the US and the EU.

As David Shark pointed out, however, it remains a difficult and very highly regulated sector and there is a real need to free up barriers to market access and ensure interoperability, whilst also ensuring regulatory responsibilities. In this quest, International Standards will have a key role to play, notably through their referencing in regulations. GATS, the General Agreement on Trade in Services, is the WTO forum where members negotiate the reduction of these barriers to market access. As things stand today, diverse regulatory requirements are acting as obstacles to services trade and we need to move towards regulations being based on objective and transparent requirements, such as those provided by International Standards.

Participants

The workshop was planned to coincide with the yearly plenary meeting of ISO/COPOLCO (the ISO Committee on Consumer Policy) and the meeting of the WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, both taking place in Geneva in the week of 13 June, in order to draw maximum interest to the event from consumer and trade representatives.

There was strong interest in the workshop from all regions of the globe and we welcomed 156 participants from 40 countries, including representatives from 29 ISO members. The breakdown of participants by sector is shown in the chart on the left.

The full list of participants is available on the workshop [website](#).

1 workshop session

Regional/National solutions: lessons learned

For more details on any of these presentations, see the PPT slides available on the workshop website: www.cvent.com/d/xfqx2k

The workshop began with a look at what was going on around the world in terms of national and regional initiatives on service standardization.

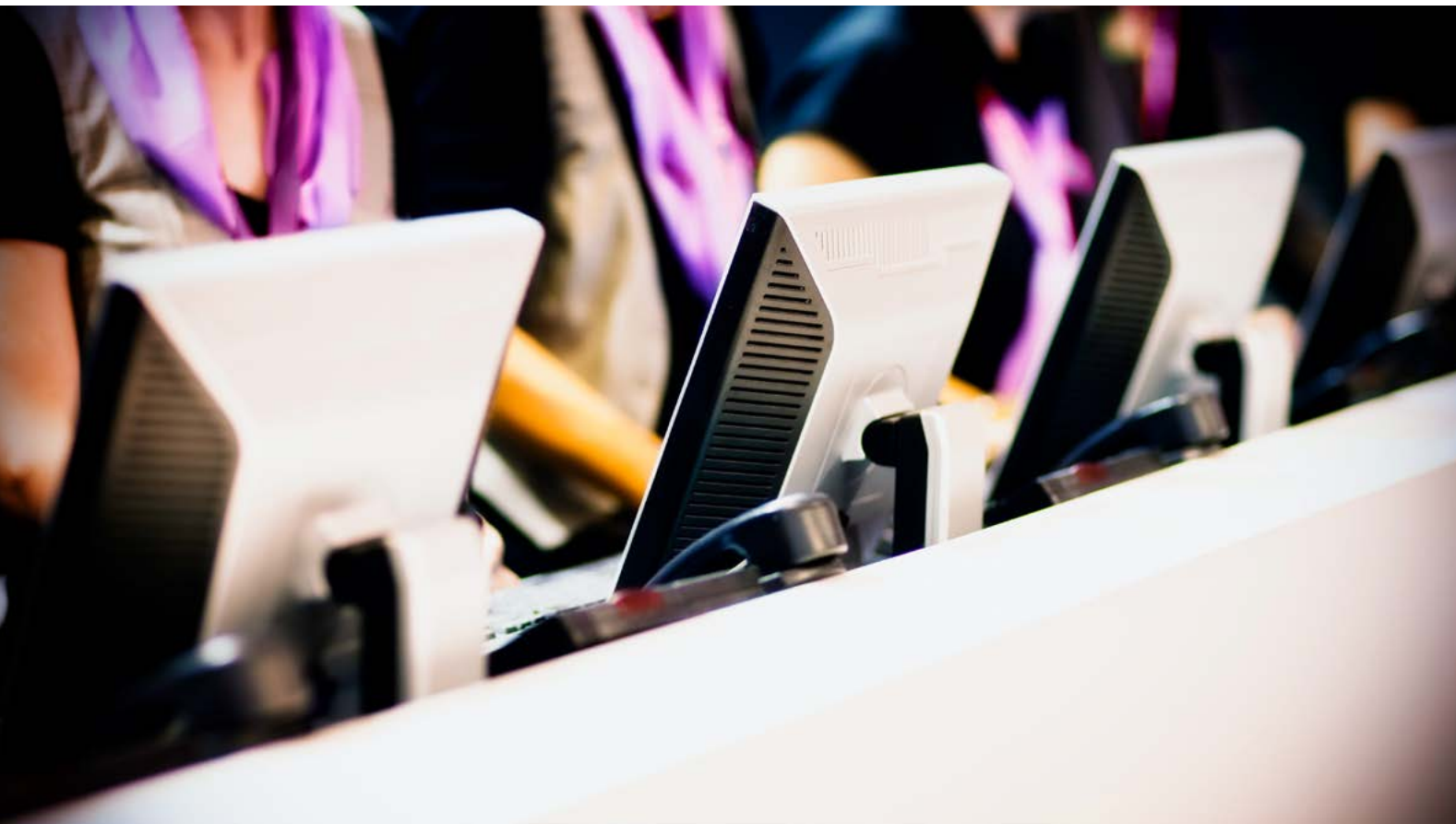
In Europe, both DIN (Germany) and AFNOR (France) have conducted extensive studies of their national services sectors to identify the key stakeholders and their motivations, and to understand the relevant market and legal conditions. This has been done in the wider context of European standardization and a mandate from the European Commission for the development of horizontal service standards, which raised interest and concern from service sector stakeholders in Europe. In Germany, DIN has developed a standardization roadmap for services, which offers, for each service field, an overview of organizations/associations/public authorities, an overview of legal framework conditions and examples of standards and specifications. In France, AFNOR has published a white paper offering key recommendations on how services standardization can be facilitated. Some of these recommendations were echoed and reiterated by other participants throughout the workshop – for example, the need to support service sector stakeholders in their understanding and appropriation of standardization, and the need to identify and develop standardization that combines products and services (taking advantage of the ‘servitization’ trend). Both AFNOR and DIN are also currently participating in the CEN-led European efforts to develop a services strategy and emphasized the need to involve SMEs more deeply.

From Asia, we were presented with two very different approaches, from China and Japan. SAC (China) described how there was already a huge amount of work at national level on service standards (more than 130 technical committees and subcommittees) and how this work began as early as 2007 with a pilot project on service standardization. In China, this focus on service standards is well established within government structures, with specialized departments in each ministry taking part in a ‘joint conference system’ fostering exchanges between ministries and promotion of service standards. In Japan, there is an obvious increasing need for service standards, but because of cultural and regulatory systems, there was a need to make process improvements and to use a framework different from that used to develop product standards. This led JSA (Japan) to develop the ‘new approach’, which is a continuous scheme starting with scientific and academic research, then moving on to standardization, implementation, and finally and feedback and evaluation of results. The collaboration in a first phase with scientists and academia is what really sets this approach apart and JSA hopes that the results from new approach can be used to contribute to service standardization in ISO in the future. From North Africa, we heard about the Tunisian experience of developing ISO 17680 on Thalassotherapy services in TC 228 Tourism and related services, an effort that was co-led by INNORPI (Tunisia) in a twinning arrangement with AENOR (Spain). INNORPI is now undertaking a number of activities to actively promote this standard to the benefit of the tourism industry in Tunisia. Read more about the Tunisian experience in the case study on ISO 17680 (case study 3).

And finally, from South America, we heard the Brazilian experience of developing service standards and how, through a trial and error approach, ABNT (Brazil)

developed its own set of best practices for service standardization that differed from those for product standardization. The importance (and difficulty) of defining terms and definitions related to services and service standards is one lesson from the Brazilian experience that seems to resonate with many other countries. As does the need to harmonize and clarify stakeholders' understanding of service standards and expectations of the results. Through the questions and discussions following these presentations, some common themes and important points emerged:

- **Terminology, definitions and classification** are a real challenge when it comes to service standards, and the wide variety of different service sectors. This in turn creates a challenge for national standards bodies when and trying to increase the understanding and awareness of service standards amongst their stakeholders.
- The **stakeholders** involved in the development of service standards are often different from the traditional stakeholders dealt with by standards bodies (e.g. SMEs are very important in services, there is also increased involvement from consumer groups) and national standards bodies may need to ensure their staff are aware of key differences and can adapt to different stakeholder needs.
- **Conformity assessment**, whether it be by self-declaration, second, or third-party assessment, is very important for users of service standards, who place a high value on having their conformity with the standard recognized.



Session 2

Roundtable discussions, stakeholder expectations and needs

Session two of the workshop offered participants the chance to have their say on what they understood by the term 'service standard', what they expected from international service standards, what their priorities were in terms of service standard development (e.g. which sectors) and what ISO should do next. Tables of approximately 8 people spent one hour discussing these issues before reporting their findings back to the plenary session.

Here are some of the key points that were raised for each discussion question:

What is our understanding of the term 'service'?

- Activity that someone provides to fulfil a need
- **Intangible**
- **Customer-focused**
- The common understanding of the term is too one-sided – the provider is usually the focus. We should also consider the recipient of the service.

What elements are most important in the provision of a service?

- Meeting consumers' expectations
- Quality
- Integrity
- Efficiency
- Consistency/reliability
- Safety
- Guarantee to the customer
- Price
- A clear feedback mechanism for the customer

What type of benefits can come from having standards for services?

- Improved safety
- Benchmarks for quality of services
- Better informed consumers – more transparency and clarity of expectations for consumers
- Increased consumer **confidence and trust**
- Increased protection for customers
- Business continuity for the service provider
- Easier mutual recognition (e.g. of qualifications)
- Competitive advantage
- Better comparability
- Integration of providers
- Improved communication between the service provider and the customer
- **Regulatory convergence** in services sectors (ISO standards as benchmarks for GATS in WTO) – trade facilitation
- More innovation
- What type of standards would help services to be purchased or provided internationally?

- Competencies of personnel
- Performance measurement
- Customer satisfaction measurement
- Terminology and definitions
- Management systems for quality of services
- Outsourcing and logistics
- Privacy, security, data compatibility
- Service standards that are ‘scaled down’ so that ordinary small business people can use and understand them easily (given the importance of SMEs in the services sectors)
- Service standards that allow for flexibility on the part of the provider

What service standards priorities exist in your country/region and why?

- There are different levels of development in different countries and in different sectors – it all depends on the national needs identified (societal and economic needs)
- In general, we need to be more proactive and less reactive, when it comes to development of service standards
- There is often a **focus on areas where there is a possibility for consumer detriment, market failure or harm**; to help protect vulnerable segments of the population
- Standards in the following sectors were all mentioned several times:
 - Health
 - Tourism (including hotels and food & beverage services)
 - Recreation (especially safety aspects)
 - Financial and business services
 - Environmental services
 - Retail
 - ITC
 - Energy
 - Ageing societies
 - Data protection

How can ISO International Standards help?

- By focusing on the WHAT rather than the HOW
- By defining new ways to measure service
- By taking into consideration service chain delivery, difficulties due to language barriers and different regulations/laws
- By supporting the move to digital businesses

In addition to this, several tables debated the question of regulation and how much room there is for standards in services sectors that are highly regulated. What should come first? A standard or a regulation? There was no clear consensus on this.

In summary, the takeaway messages from the roundtable discussion were that definitions are difficult; the term ‘service’ alone can be nuanced in many different ways. However, participants clearly felt that there were real benefits to be had from developing International Standards for services, both for consumers and providers. There is ongoing or planned work on service standards across a wide range of sectors in many countries.



3 Useful session

Helpful ISO tools for designing, assessing and measuring service performance

Day 2 of the workshop began with a look at some of the tools and standards that ISO has already developed in the services sectors. During this session, we heard from a mix of standards developers, standards users and consumer representatives.

The Chair of the services working group in ANEC, Julie Hunter, provided an overview of ISO/IEC Guide 76 Development of service standards – Recommendations for addressing consumer issues. This Guide is a tool that helps standard writers design a better service standard by helping them to understand the consumer perspective, even when a consumer representative can’t be present during the standards development process. Services are complex, intangible and changing all the time. But there are a number of common problems we can identify: choice (confusion about how to choose a provider); provision of information (insufficient information available to allow consumers to make informed decisions); accessibility (difficulty accessing, using or understanding the service); communication (difficulty communicating with provider); and complaints and redress (difficulty resolving problem). Guide 76 is currently being revised to better address these common problems and to be re-structured around common elements of services that can help provide a template for service standards: pre-service delivery; service delivery; and post-service delivery.

To get a different perspective, we then heard from a user of an ISO service standard, the CEO of Argentinian water utility Aguas de Santiago, Sebastian Paz Zavalía, who explained how his company had implemented ISO 24510 Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services and the difference it has made. ISO 24510 was applied throughout the whole company in four different stages, finishing with certification in 2011. The result has been improved performance and efficiency, reduction of operating expenses, a lowering in the number of complaints, and increased trust in the company by the public. For more details, see the ISO case study on Aguas de Santiago (case study 2).



Moving on to look at how International Standards can support service delivery, we heard from the Convenor of the ISO/IEC Working Group that developed ISO/IEC 20000 on IT service management, Erin Casteel. She explained that (despite the reference to IT in its name and its current scope) this is a standard that is based on practical industry experience and could be broadly applicable across all service types. It specifies requirements for a service provider to plan, establish, implement, operate, monitor, review, maintain and improve a service management system, in other words, providing a generic, high level picture of how to manage the service life-cycle. ISO/IEC 20000 is currently undergoing its third revision.

Our final presentation of this session was given by Ian Cleare, a member of CASCO WG 45, and it looked at confidence in services and how standards – specifically conformity assessment standards – can help. CASCO already has two standards in its toolbox that are relevant to the certification of services: ISO/IEC 17065 *Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services* and ISO/IEC 17067 *Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes*. However, the service certification scheme in ISO 17067 is not very detailed and CASCO members have decided there is a need for further work to be done – this led to the setting up of CASCO WG 45, which is currently developing a technical report (TR) on service certification schemes. While the individual service standards would set out the requirements for particular services, the CASCO TR would describe how to assess conformity of the service to these requirements. For services, as compared to products, different conformity assessment techniques will be required because of their intangible nature – for example, customer surveys to assess customer experiences, ‘mystery shopper’ to observe service delivery, and recording and analysis to monitor service delivery. CASCO WG 45 is aiming to publish the TR in May 2017.



Session 4

Panel discussion

This panel was designed to bring together service providers and users from different sectors and with different perspectives to discuss how International Standards for services could be useful in varied contexts (in private sector business and in government) and to different audiences (by consumers and by developing countries).

From the private-sector perspective, Gregor von Bergen from Credit Suisse explained how ISO 20022 has been beneficial in the financial sector (see case study 5) and how **standards can complement regulation**. For example, in heavily regulated industries that are traditionally slow to change (like banking), standards can sometimes provide a quicker way to change practices. In fact, International Standards can even make it unnecessary to implement regulation – if they come to market quickly enough, their implementation can solve the problem that regulation would otherwise have had to solve.

Wendi Brick, who works with government agencies in the US to improve their customer service, explained how the government perspective is completely different when it comes to service provision. This is because, while private sector companies need to ensure customers are satisfied so that they get repeat business and maintain good reputations, government services are not primarily aimed at making customers satisfied, but rather at enforcing regulations. With government services, there is no choice of supplier for the consumer! Nevertheless, even without this customer satisfaction element, International Standards can certainly be useful for government services, especially when it comes to **setting expectations** for what the service should deliver and improving internal processes in government agencies (e.g. purchasing, contracting, HR). She added that it would be good to have ISO standards for government agencies, because it would show government agencies that improving service quality is a serious question. Innovative agencies are trying to improve, but in general, there are no requirements for them to do so at the moment.

From the consumer perspective, we heard from Sandra Herrera (who represents the Colombian ISO member on COPOLCO) that consumers worldwide, whether from developing or developed countries, and whether they view themselves as ‘consumers’ or not, still seem to have very similar ideas about what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ service. This led to a discussion on the importance of stakeholder engagement and the need to ask consumers what the problems are and what it is that they want. Seah Seng Choon, from CASE, the consumer association



of Singapore, described how CASE works with industries where there is a need for standards, and bases the requirements it develops on commonly received complaints from consumers. This has been shown to increase the confidence of consumers, and buy-in from businesses.

In general, panelists noted that consumers don't hear about what is going on in the standards world and therefore **stakeholder engagement** of consumers in the development of service standards is essential and needs to happen as early as possible (at the NWIP stage). Stanislav Karapetrovic, a professor at the University of Alberta who is also involved in a number of ISO activities including the development of the ISO 10000 series of customer satisfaction standards, stressed that lack of knowledge about standards is a serious issue for stakeholder engagement. He demonstrated that spreading the word about service standards can also happen via implementation of the standards. For example, he described how he uses ISO 10002 *Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations* to get formal feedback from his students on the classes he teaches at the university. He also uses surveys based on ISO 10004 *Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for monitoring and measuring* to measure how happy students are with the level of service. Through this implementation of these standards, students' awareness of standards is improved and they become more engaged by understanding how the standards work.

Overall, the take-home message from this panel was that service standards are indeed useful, but they must respond to the needs of the customers, and, in order for this to happen, stakeholder engagement in the standards development process is absolutely crucial. We need more efforts to increase:

- awareness of the benefits of standardization for services;
- consumers' knowledge of standardization;
- information sharing with and among consumers;
- awareness of the availability of service standards and which providers apply/use them.



Session 5

Breakout sessions

BREAKOUT 1 : Business-to-business providers and users of services

Moderator: *Jacob Mehus, CEO – Standards Norway*

This session began with the presentation of some examples of best practice in business-to-business service standards from Norway on facility management – service standards for the building and construction sector. These were developed using a service standard model with 4 categories: procurement, contract, performance (service-level agreement) and performance indicators. See the PPT on the workshop **website** for more details. Discussions showed that the need for B2B services is certainly evident at the local level, even if it is not yet so prominent at the international level. With services, there is a particular need to consider small companies and to have standards that can be broken down and applied “piece-by-piece” since, a business might be operating internationally, but it also often has to operate at local level. Participants proposed that as national B2B standards mature, they may become regional and then international – thus promoting trade of services. Participants agreed that there was no need to set up a new standardization system for services, but they did feel that different approaches (particularly in terms of communication with stakeholders) was necessary. They agreed that it would be good to have more guidance and even an international framework or model for service standards, in the way that ISO has a framework for management system standards (the high level structure). **CEN Guide 15** was put forward as an example that could be used as the backbone of such a structure.

BREAKOUT 2: Business-to- consumer providers and users of services

Moderator: *Sadie Homer, Senior Policy Advisor – Consumers International*

Like all standards, it is market demand for service standards that makes them successful, and there is certainly strong evidence for market demand at the international level for B2C service standards on topics such as complaints handling systems, customer contact centres and online reputation, for example.

In this breakout session, participants once again emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement in the development of successful service standards for consumers. They noted that there are new and emerging stakeholder groups for service standards, and standards developers must evaluate the support needed to bring consumer views to the table and be careful to engage the most relevant stakeholders for the subject at hand – this may require more training of national committees. Once stakeholders are identified, it is important to clearly explain to them the objectives of the standard(s), the benefits, and the timeline for development.

Overall, in the development of B2C service standards, there needs to be a clear focus on communication – targeting communication by stakeholder group and making sure it is clear, relevant and easily understandable.

BREAKOUT 3: Public services and highly-regulated services

Moderator: *Ruggero Lensi, UNI, Director, External relations, new business and innovation*

G to C services are provided by government to consumers/citizens and can be provided directly (via civil services), or indirectly (via financing – outsourcing the provision of services to other companies, whether private sector or non-profit). G2C services can cover a very wide range of sectors, such as waste management, public housing, public libraries, environmental protection, postal services, public broadcasting, telecommunications, and much more. These services are normally highly regulated and, since they are provided by the government, there is often a monopoly on service provision, meaning that consumers have no choice of provider. Participants agreed that these two characteristics – regulation and monopoly – make G2C services a challenging market for voluntary standards because, with so many rules already governing service provision and without any competition for the services they provide, there is little incentive for government to use voluntary standards.

The other main challenge for standardizers was identified as stakeholder engagement, since government and consumers are traditionally two of the stakeholder groups that are the hardest to engage in the standards development process. Government stakeholders are hard to get on board partly because it is very hard to quantify the benefits of the standardization of government services, and partly because elected officials have finite mandates, so priorities in government are liable to change. Special investment and engagement on the part of standards bodies is required to overcome these challenges.

However, despite these difficulties, workshop participants still agreed that there is much benefit to be derived from G2C standards, and there were a number of positive examples provided of service standards already developed or under development: social mediation (to clearly define the profession and have it better recognized); elderly care homes (quality of the service); inclusive service provision (identifying vulnerable customers and responding in a fair and flexible way); security services (scheme for qualification and certification for organizations providing security services); financial education to citizens (quality of the service); and performance indicators of local administration. While G2C service standards face some specific challenges, there are still a number of opportunities to be explored, particularly in areas such as procurement and subcontracting (when the government service is provided by a private company) and as a complement to regulation, providing the “how” to the regulation’s “what”.



BREAKOUT 4: Perspectives and requirements of developing countries for service standards

Moderator: *Guillermo Zucal, IRAM, Division manager of standardization on security issues, environment, quality and health*

This breakout session discussed whether developing countries have particular needs and requirements when it comes to developing service standards. Should the approach to standards development be different? Are there specific challenges to overcome?

Of course, even amongst developing countries, there are large differences – some have big standards organizations, others very small. Some have stakeholders that are larger companies, others have mostly SMEs. There are also differences in maturity and capabilities of standards infrastructures and this influences how work is done at national level and also with ISO.

Nevertheless, participants felt that, in general, requirements for service standards are similar whether in developed or developing countries. Indeed, the top concerns of developing country standards developers echoed those we have heard from all participants throughout the workshop: getting the right stakeholders involved and reaching consensus, and improving awareness of the value of service standards.

Where differences were more noticeable was in the area of implementation of the service standards, where outcomes depend on the particular situation and resources available. Lack of resources can also translate into lack of access to the standards (because of their cost).

In conclusion, there is certainly a large interest from developing countries in service standards and in increasing cooperation between ISO members on this subject, including sharing experiences and best practices for development and implementation of service standards.

Moderated discussion and audience debate

This session was a chance to review and discuss the ideas, questions and conclusions from previous workshop sessions. This discussion was moderated by the Acting ISO Secretary-General, Kevin McKinley, and the discussants were Steven Cornish (ANSI representative on the TMB) to provide the TMB perspective and context around the rules and processes for standards development, and Ratna Devi Nadarajan (Chair of ISO/COPOLCO), to provide the consumer perspective on service standards. The following were the main points of discussion:

Sharing of experiences and best practices

- Over this workshop, we have seen a number of different approaches to standardization of services and participants expressed interest in learning more from their peers – ISO members would like to be able to **learn from each other's experiences**.
- It would be useful for ISO to provide good **communication materials** on services standards, not just on what ISO is doing, but **sharing national approaches, strategies and practices** of ISO members.

Stakeholder engagement

- One of the key take-aways from this workshop, and one where there is strong consensus, is the importance of engaging the right stakeholders for the development of service standards.
- Stakeholder engagement is not just a challenge for developing countries – even large, developed ISO members have difficulty finding stakeholders for subjects outside of 'normal business' areas, and services often fall into this category. Lots of educational effort is required.
- Lack of understanding is one big reason behind lack of stakeholder engagement – from the outside, for people who are not familiar with standards development (often the case for stakeholders from services sectors), the process seems complicated and prescriptive. The process and its flexibility is not well enough understood by these 'newer' categories of stakeholders.

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

- SMEs were singled out as a stakeholder type that is crucial in the services sectors.
- Participants agreed that it was more difficult for standards developers to engage with SMEs because they often don't belong to associations (one of the main ways to get involved at national level), making involvement at international level an even greater challenge.
- Some participants argued that more support for SMEs is needed (for example from government). Others argued that while we can develop guidance and tools to help SMEs, we should not specifically focus on one stakeholder type. ISO's priority should be to help NSBs at the national level.

The exclusion principle (separation of the MSS and the requirements for the service)

- Participants debated whether or not ISO's exclusion principle – which states that the management system and the requirements for the service shall not be in the same standard – was appropriate for service standards. Several members have received feedback from service sector stakeholders that they would find it useful to have both the MSS and requirements in a single standard.
- In the context of the discussion on the importance of SMEs, some argued that most service providers are SMEs and, for them, having two standards (an MSS and another standard with requirements) is too costly and seems more complicated. For example, SMEs find ISO 9001 very big and hard to implement. Therefore, we need a new approach in the services sector. For example, a 'light' MSS.
- On the other hand, other participants were very strongly against the merging of an MSS with requirements in a single standard. They argued that we should only have one MSS per sector and that having a separate management system for each separate service would dilute the value of the MSS and is unnecessary. After all, service providers often deliver more than one type of service... would they then have to confirm to multiple MSS?
- Steven Cornish explained the TMB perspective and history behind the exclusion principle – the TMB originally rejected the notion of mixing requirements and MSS due to conformity assessment. For example, if a company self-declares or is certified to a 'mixed' standard, it may not be clear to users which part of the standard the declaration/certification relates to. The TMB also decided against a tiered approach to MSS for SMEs (i.e. having 'light' versions of MSS) because this would create confusion in relation to the brand and credibility of ISO standards. There would be less comparability between organizations using the 'regular' version and the 'light' version. Instead of changing the exclusion principle or creating 'light' MSS, another option would be to compel the committees that develop the MSS to reexamine their standards to make sure they are also suitable for SMEs.

ISO would like to sincerely thank all of the presenters, panellists and table discussion facilitators for their preparation and contributions to the workshop and, of course, all of the workshop participants for their active engagement and for sharing their ideas, expertise and experiences with us. The input received from the wide variety of stakeholders present will help shape our thinking about ISO's future orientations in service standardization.



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*June 2016

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ISBN 978-92-67-10685-4