

**CDSG****Cultural Diversity Steering Group**

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Page 1 of 3

Title: CEN/ISSS Cultural Diversity Steering Group
Term of Reference

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1 Background

The “CEN area” covers:

- 34 different countries (28 full members and 6 affiliates);
- Roughly four hundred and fifty million inhabitants;
- Four long-established scripts (the Latin, Greek, Cyrillic and Hebrew scripts);
- Hundreds of different languages and dialects, each with its set of cultural expectations.

This wealth of languages, traditions and cultural conventions meets one of the most technologically advanced areas in the world with a highly developed ICT infrastructure with evermore pervasive IT equipment.

Yet that match is not always perfect. Much of the equipment, the software and the eServices are geared towards relatively few languages, ignoring the cultural and linguistic requirements of the vast majority of European citizens.

This development is all the more urgent in the context of the recent enlargement of the European Union to 25 members, where the linguistic and cultural requirements of the ten new member states of the European Union have not been adequately considered in the past.

In the age of the information society, the inadequate treatment of the cultural and linguistic requirements of European citizens is a factor in widening the digital divide that is already visible in the uneven spread of ICT literacy across the European Union.

The CDSG has the mission to contribute towards overcoming this divide.

The CDSG Secretariat was held by CEN/ISSS until the end of 2002. From 2003-01 Standards Norway has hosted the Secretariat.

2 Scope, aims, actions and activities

Scope

- To recommend on actions and to initiate activities relating to standardization within the field of cultural and linguistic diversity from the point of view of information and communications technology (ICT), in particular on the European

level, but also on regional or international level if this is deemed appropriate for European interests.

- To function as a European discussion and coordination forum for standardization activities related to cultural diversity in ICT in Europe and beyond.

Aims

Some aims of the CDSG are:

- To heighten the awareness of cultural diversity (CDICT) issues in CEN/ISSS and beyond;
- To serve as a discussion and coordination forum for CDICT;
- To work towards CDICT-aware actions in all technical bodies of CEN/ISSS;
- To minimize duplication of work in the different fora and organizations;
- To initiate concrete actions and activities, either in existing technical bodies or through the establishment of new technical bodies;
- To facilitate search and request for funding of CDICT projects and activities.

Actions and activities

Typical actions and activities of the CDSG include:

- To propose work items to be carried out in CEN/ISSS technical bodies;
- To initiate dedicated CEN/ISSS workshops within CDICT;
- To collaborate in connection with CEN/ISSS reports to ensure adequate focus on CDICT issues;
- To facilitate the collection and dissemination of relevant validation data for individual languages and countries in Europe;
- To formulate recommendations to European and international fora on CDICT issues.

3 Working procedures

The CDSG Chair will be nominated by the CDSG and endorsed by the CEN/ISSS Forum. The appointment will be for a period of three years, with the possibility for re-appointment for any number of three-year periods. Unless otherwise decided in each case, the CDSG Chair will chair CDSG meetings and represent the CDSG in the CEN/ISSS Forum and externally.

A CEN Member Body or the CEN/ISSS will provide the CDSG Secretariat. The Secretary will prepare meeting agendas, meeting reports, and any other documents that are needed for the work of the CDSG.

The CDSG will work on a voluntary basis. Meetings will be either physical meetings or conducted by other means, e.g. telephone conferences or Internet-based meetings. Deliberations by email will form an important part of the work of the CDSG.

The CDSG will also host, co-host or initiate seminars, conferences, etc. with topics that fall within the CDSG area of interest. The CDSG will also carry out other awareness activities.

The CDSG's role is advisory. Its recommendations are not binding for participating organizations or others. The CDSG shall report on its activities regularly to the CEN/ISSS Forum and others as appropriate.

4 Membership

All CEN/ISSS Forum members, as well as some organizations and types of organizations that are named separately, are invited to register as *Full Members* of the CDSG and to appoint one or two representatives. The representatives have full access to all CDSG documents on the CDSG document server. The representatives are also asked to participate in CDSG meetings. However, such participation is not required to maintain status as member of and representative to the CDSG.

The following list of categories of candidates for Full Membership is for guidance only:

1. Members of the CEN/ISSS Forum, in particular:
 - a. National Member Bodies of CEN;
 - b. Technical Committees of CEN;
 - c. Active Workshops and other technical groups of CEN;
2. Technical Committees or Subcommittees of ISO, IEC, and ISO/IEC JTC1;
3. International and European organizations that have liaison status with CEN, ISO, IEC, or ISO/IEC JTC1;
4. Super-national governmental organization.

For CEN/ISSS Forum members membership in the CDSG is a matter of registration only. Organizations of the other categories will be considered on an individual basis.

In addition to the Full Membership, the CDSG Secretariat will at its discretion maintain an electronic mailing list of *Observing Members* of the CDSG. These are individuals and organizations that wish to participate in email discussions and be informed about the activities of the CDSG. Observing Members have limited access to CDSG documents, but will receive or get access to the documents and information necessary to stay informed about CDSG activities. Observing Members will only exceptionally be invited to CDSG meetings.