



Planned Revision of ISO 17100: A New Era for Translation Services

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The upcoming revision of ISO 17100, Translation services – Requirements for translation services, is set to bring significant changes to the translation industry. In the ISO standards knowledge-sharing webinar hosted by EUATC and ISO TC 37/SC 5 on 28 April 2025, Ingemar Strandvik, an expert in the field, presented this revision to address the evolving needs and technological advancements in translation services.

Systematic Review and Revision

ISO standards undergo systematic review every three years to ensure their relevance and usefulness. The options are to confirm, deprecate, or revise the standards. Given the rapid development in the translation sector, particularly in technology, the revision of ISO 17100 is both important and challenging. This standard is considered the foundation of the translation standards ecosystem, providing high levels of quality assurance and risk mitigation.

Key Topics for Discussion

Several key topics are likely to be discussed during the revision process:

1. **Integration of Machine Translation and AI:** The development in machine translation and AI since 2015 has raised questions about the exclusion of raw machine translation with post-editing from the scope of ISO 17100.
2. **Compulsory Second Pair of Eyes:** ISO 17100 prescribes that a second person should revise the translation to ensure quality assurance. The debate continues on whether post-editing should be equated with revision or considered as initial translation without revision.
3. **Competence and Qualifications Requirements:** The bold competence and qualifications requirements for translators have been criticised for being Eurocentric and not representative of low-resource languages. There is a conversation to be had about the need to adapt these requirements to the realities of high-resource and low-resource languages.
4. **Linkage Between Standards:** The adoption of ISO 11669 last year, with its focus on project management specifications, may require adjustments in the light of ISO 17100. There are also stakeholders who are advocating to merge ISO 18587, the post-editing standard, with ISO 17100 to address the blurred distinction between post-editing workflows and human workflows with CAT tools and machine translation.



Global Survey and Task Force

A task force was set up last year to prepare for the upcoming revision. A global survey was conducted, receiving almost 200 responses from around the world. This input will be analysed and fed into the revision work, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

Transition Period

Once the revised ISO 17100 is published, there will be a transition period for any translation service providers to update their certification to the revised version of the standard. Language service companies will have several years to comply with the new requirements, ensuring a smooth transition without panic.

The revision of ISO 17100 is a crucial step towards aligning translation standards with the current technological landscape and industry needs. It presents an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the evolution of best practices in translation services.

We encourage all members and stakeholders to actively participate in the revision process through their national standardisation bodies. Your input is invaluable in shaping the future of translation standards. Together, we can ensure that ISO 17100 continues to safeguard quality and meet the demands of a rapidly changing industry.

Let's build a stronger, more standardised industry together!

Read more about ISO standards development for language services at

<https://atccertification.com/about-iso-standards/>