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## Legal translation — Requirements

*Traduction juridique et judiciaire — Exigences*





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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 documents 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)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

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 37, *Language and Terminology*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Translation, interpreting and related technology*.

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).

## Introduction

Legal translation is a specialization which covers law-related or legal specialist field translation in terms of content as well as context (e.g. legal settings). Given the highly specialist field, potential legal consequences, and formal and liability issues, this specialization requires specific competences and a very professional approach from the specialist translators involved. Due to the formalized, official or sensitive nature of the subject matter in some countries, settings and under certain circumstances, legal translators may be subject to specific professional, confidentiality and ethical requirements, authorization, certification, and security clearance procedures. Furthermore, in some countries, certain types of legal translation are performed by authorized legal translators who have to comply with specific official requirements.

Serious legal issues and other consequences can be avoided if the legal translation service is provided by competent legal translators who have professional understanding of the relevant legal systems, knowledge of legal terminology and target language genre conventions and can produce authentic texts. Legal documents constitute the basis for many personal and business undertakings. Legal translation is a highly specialized type of translation service which is frequently used in official and legal settings and this requires meeting the highest professional quality benchmarks. Taking the above into account as well as the fact that there are no international standards in this area, this document was developed in response to the evident market need.

This document is intended for implementation by individual translators who specialize in the provision of legal translation services.



# Legal translation — Requirements

## 1 Scope

This document specifies requirements for the competences and qualifications of legal translators, revisers and reviewers, best translation practices and the translation process directly affecting the quality and delivery of legal translation services. In particular, it specifies the core processes, resources, confidentiality, professional development requirements, training and other aspects of the legal translation service provided by individual translators.

Fulfilment of all the requirements set out in this document enables the individual legal translator to demonstrate conformity of their legal translation services to this document and their capability to maintain a level of quality in legal translation services that will meet the client's and other applicable specifications.

The use of output from machine translation, even with post-editing, is outside the scope of this document. Consulting of a machine translation resource by a legal translator, does not constitute use of raw machine translation plus post-editing.

This document does not apply to interpreting services.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1 Concepts related to legal translation and legal translation services

#### 3.1.1 translate

render *source language content* (3.3.2) into *target language content* (3.3.3) in written form

[SOURCE: ISO 17100:2015, 2.1.1]

#### 3.1.2 translation

set of processes to render *source language content* (3.3.2) into *target language content* (3.3.3) in written form

Note 1 to entry: A translation may refer to formats other than text-based formats, e.g. an audio file, image, etc.

[SOURCE: ISO 17100:2015, 2.1.2]

#### 3.1.3 legal translation

law or legal specialized *translation* (3.1.4) by a *legal translator* (3.4.5)