

ITI VIEW ON GLOBAL ICT STANDARDS

Global ICT standards are developed in many venues and share certain characteristics. They are created through collaborative efforts that have a global reach, are voluntary and widely adopted by the marketplace across national borders. These standards are developed not only by national-member based international standards bodies, but also by consortia groups and other standards-setting organizations (SSOs).

Global ICT standards share three important characteristics:

- They respond broadly to the needs of global markets.
- They demonstrate relevance through voluntary worldwide adoption and implementation.
- They are products of standardization processes that are consensus-based, transparent, and industry-led with participation open to any interested party.

One method for establishing global standards is through ISO, IEC, and ITU¹ where participation is via Member States or national bodies. Representatives from industry and other stakeholders can participate through the national members and sometimes directly. These organizations are important parts of the global standardization ecosystem. However, they are not sufficient to meet the current and increasing demands of a connected world with rapidly changing needs. Accordingly, the ICT sector relies on a diversity of voluntary, market-led, standards setting organizations with global reach. These standards setting environments have diverse structures to accommodate specific needs. The standards-setting processes in these fora often are as detailed and effective as those utilized by formal international standard setting organizations.

Global ICT standards facilitate global supply chains that enable companies in many parts of the world to collaborate on building complex and competitive products. For customers, global standards enhance choice and ease of use, and encourage competition that provides customers with lower costs. As markets expand, voluntary global ICT standards play a key role in facilitating international trade. Global standards can be regionally adopted to meet local environmental, cultural, health and safety requirements.

ICT facilitates an innovative and flexible global infrastructure of integrated networks and related practices. Enterprises of all sizes are accessing global markets with ICT offerings and managing critical operations in ways that previously were geographically constrained. From communication links in health care to supply chains and transportation systems, these ICT offerings must be inter-connected. Because these businesses operate globally, their preference is for ICT offerings that utilize global standards over national or regional standards.

Global ICT standards provide greater value to industry, customers and society.

¹ ISO = International Organization for Standardization, IEC = International Electrotechnical Commission, ITU = International Telecommunication Union.