



## ISO in brief

ISO is the International Organization for Standardization. It has a membership of 162\* national standards bodies from countries large and small, industrialized, developing and in transition, in all regions of the world. ISO's portfolio of more than 18 000\* standards provides business, government and society with practical tools for all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, environmental and societal.

ISO International Standards make a positive contribution to the world we live in. They facilitate trade, spread knowledge, disseminate innovative advances in technology, and share good management and conformity assessment practices.

ISO standards provide solutions and achieve benefits for almost all sectors of activity, including agriculture, construction, mechanical engineering, manufacturing, distribution, transport, medical devices, information and communication technologies, the environment, energy, quality management, conformity assessment and services.

ISO makes optimal use of the resources entrusted in it by its stakeholders by only developing standards for which there is a clear market requirement. This work is carried out by experts on loan from the industrial, technical and business sectors which have asked for the standards, and which subsequently put them to use. These experts may be joined by others with relevant knowledge, such as representatives of government agencies, testing laboratories, consumer associations and academia, and by international governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

ISO International Standards represent a global consensus on the state of the art in the technology or good practice concerned.

\*As of 31 December 2009.