



**International
Standard**

ISO 14785

**Tourism and related services —
Tourist information services
— Requirements and
recommendations**

*Tourisme et services connexes — Services d'information
touristique — Exigences et recommandations*

**Second edition
2024-11**

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Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Information services	2
4.1 Information and promotion channels	2
4.2 Information provision	2
4.3 Service languages	4
5 Destination promotion	4
6 Service requirements	4
6.1 General requirements	4
6.2 Commercial activities	5
6.3 Statistics and analysis	5
7 Staff	6
7.1 General requirements	6
7.2 Training	7
8 Infrastructures	7
8.1 General requirements	7
8.2 Online infrastructure	8
8.3 Onsite facilities	8
8.4 Maintenance and cleaning	9
9 Suggestions and complaints management	9
Annex A (normative) Best practices on sustainability	10
Annex B (normative) Accessibility	13
Bibliography	15

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 document 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).

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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.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 14785:2014), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the document has been updated to include requirements and recommendations for online tourist information services;
- new services which have emerged from the development of digital technologies have been added;
- the annexes have been restructured, completed and become normative.

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.

Introduction

Tourist information offices (TIOs) are physical facilities where information services are provided to tourists. TIOs are governed by management organizations, in coordination with stakeholders, who are responsible for defining and implementing tourist information services and the promotion strategy of the destination.

The first edition of this document described requirements for onsite facilities and services. Due to rapid technological and internet advancements, management organizations have started to present tourism information both onsite and online. It was therefore necessary to update this document with requirements and definitions concerning online tourist information services. It was also necessary to highlight the important value of the human side of services provided onsite, which offers a differential value to tourist information services.

This second edition of ISO 14785 defines the service scope, service content and service quality of TIOs in order to offer management organizations with updated and comprehensive tool covering all information services offered both onsite and online. This document is intended to help to improve the competitiveness of TIOs and to enable them to better respond to the new needs and challenges brought by the continuous development of the tourism industry.

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Tourism and related services — Tourist information services — Requirements and recommendations

1 Scope

This document provides minimum quality requirements and recommendations for onsite tourist information services located at the destination, online tourist information services or both. This document is applicable for management organizations responsible for tourism information services at the destination.

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 terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

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

3.1 tourist information office

TIO

physical facility where *tourist information services* (3.2) are provided either onsite or online with the aim of meeting and improving the *tourists'* (3.7) expectations once they are at the destination

3.2 tourist information service

TIS

activities carried out by a *management organization* (3.4) at the destination aimed at promoting its tourist offer and providing information

Note 1 to entry: Tourist information services can be offered on physical facilities (tourist information offices) or online.

3.3 stakeholder

individual, group, organization or authority involved in the *TIS* (3.2) value chain

Note 1 to entry: Stakeholders can be grouped into the following major categories:

- national or regional public administrations [including national tourism administrations (NTAs), national or regional tourism promotion boards, destination management organizations (DMOs), municipalities, public entities in charge of infrastructure policies, development and legislative or regulatory frameworks, organizations or professionals working in the field of cultural heritage management and protection];
- travel and tourism industry stakeholders [investors in destinations and tourism industry, travel and tourism businesses, especially small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across the tourism sector: transportation, accommodation, tour operators and travel agencies, transport manufacturers, hospitality and catering, other tourism providers and trade associations];
- enterprises and organizations from the support sectors: for example, companies entrusted with the execution of construction works within destinations, architects, developers and promoters of support tools and services for

people with specific access requirements, and companies or professionals operating in the area of information and communication technology (ICT);

— end users (i.e. tourists and the local population with or without specific access requirements).

[SOURCE: ISO 21902:2021, 3.16, modified — “tourism destinations” was removed.]

3.4

TIS management organization

organization responsible for defining and implementing the *tourist information services* (3.2) and the promotion strategy of the destination

3.5

accessibility

provision of conditions that enable products, systems, services, environments and facilities to be used everywhere by people from a population with the widest range of user needs, characteristics and capabilities, with safety, comfort and autonomy

[SOURCE: ISO 21902:2021, 3.1, modified — Note 1 to entry was removed.]

3.6

accessible tourism

form of tourism that involves a collaborative process with stakeholders that enables people with access requirements including mobility, vision, hearing and cognitive dimensions of access to function independently and with equity through the delivery of universally designed tourism products services and environments

[SOURCE: ISO 21902:2021, 3.3, modified — “universal design” was removed.]

3.7

tourist

user

person who uses the different facilities and services provided by a tourist organization

[SOURCE: ISO/PAS 5643:2021, 3.3, modified — “visitor, customer, guest” was removed.]

4 Information services

4.1 Information and promotion channels

The TIS management organization shall define the information to provide, the promotional activities to carry out and the channels to communicate with each tourist target group.

The TIS management organization, regardless of whether the service is offered onsite, online or both, shall include among its defined channels at least the following: online platform (e.g. website), email and contact telephone.

According to the selected channels, the management organization shall enable its staff to access the necessary technology, and to define the operations and accessibility requirements to be carried out through each communication channel.

4.2 Information provision

The TIS management organization shall have a database of the main sources considered to be legal, reliable sources of tourist information. This database can be internal or shared with other public or private bodies. It shall be updated at least once a year.

The TIS management organization shall provide general and specific information, considering the interest and needs of its different tourist target groups. The information shall not be biased by private interest and shall be offered in an impartial way. The information shall cover the following:

- a) contact details of the destination tourist offices. The location of the TIO(s) in the destination shall be clearly and visibly indicated on the tourist map(s), website and printed TIO information, if available. In the case of online TIS with or without infrastructure at the destination, means to interact with the tourists shall be ensured (e.g. through contact e-mail);
- b) the destination, including location (map), description, features, opening hours and accessibility conditions services (e.g. accessible accommodation, restaurants, transport, tours and activities) and tourist attractions (e.g. accommodation, transport, restaurants, museums, heritage sites and shopping areas).
- c) tourist itineraries (e.g. art deco itinerary, luxury shopping itinerary) at the destination;
- d) transportation terminals, routes and timetables (arrivals and departures), and information related to transportation;
- e) parking areas nearby the tourist attractions at the destinations (e.g. website, social media);
- f) events calendar (e.g. recreational, cultural, festival, sporting or leisure business events), including date, venues and contents for each event;
- g) tourist service providers: accommodation, restaurants, tourist guides, currency exchange, translators, rental services, travel agencies, etc. and their contact details. The TIS management organization shall provide information about legal tourist providers only. The TIS management organization can provide information about certification(s) (e.g. quality, sustainability, environmental, safety and/or security certifications) of tourist resources or organizations;
- h) safety, security, environmental and other relevant recommendations and regulations at the destination (e.g. presence of poisonous plants/wild animals, precaution for solo travellers, presence of pickpockets);
- i) ethics code at the destination^[12];
- j) emergency/health services contact details (e.g. hospitals, pharmacies, ambulances, fire services, police, safety and health issues, insurance services);
- k) weather forecast;
- l) contact details of other services that might be relevant for the tourist (e.g. banks, tax-free agencies, lockers, lost and found);
- m) frequently asked questions (FAQ) (e.g. passport, visa information, currency, credit cards and money);
- n) other relevant services: charging services (e.g. mobile, cars, transport cards), parcel storage, pet storage, children's car and wheelchair rental, etc.

The TIS management organization shall

- define the format in which information a) to n) has to be provided,
- be able to offer different formats if requested (e.g. digital documents, online information on screen readers, paper, etc.),
- offer printable digital contents on the website with regards to sustainable practices,
- be able to send basic information (e.g. maps) upon request,
- offer printed basic information free of charge at the TIO,
- update the information online, onsite or both regularly, at least once a year, regardless of the mean by which it is displayed, and
- establish a procedure for managing the supply of leaflets, written and digital material supply.

4.3 Service languages

The TIS management organization shall define the languages in which the information and promotion services shall be offered. At least one international foreign language shall be used, according to the identified tourist target groups. The number of international foreign languages used shall be increased according to the needs of the tourist target groups.

This shall include the information provided either online or onsite on the different formats and channels available (e.g. digital documents, automated chatbot, telephone).

5 Destination promotion

The TIS management organization shall define a marketing strategy at the destination, that guarantees the involvement of different destination stakeholders during the development of the marketing strategy. This marketing strategy shall include all of the tourist attractions on offer at the destination and shall be based on the result of the analysis of the following:

- a) information concerning the destination;
- b) tourists' needs and growing demands;
- c) strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis of the destination.

The TIS management organization shall define the promotional activities to be developed according to the defined strategy.

The website of the destination shall be used to collect and integrate all tourist resources, information and offers available at the destination (see list in 4.2), to facilitate coordination and communication of stakeholders, and to create destination awareness amongst tourists in order to attract target market travellers.

The TIS management organization shall develop and distribute, according to a predefined strategy, contents and promotional material through onsite or online channels, in support of the marketing strategy.

6 Service requirements

6.1 General requirements

The TIS management organization shall offer information about the destination, tourist products and service providers at least through a website or TIO.

When providing the information service, the following provisions shall apply:

- a) The TIS management organization shall define and communicate the information service hours, both for online and for onsite services (i.e. for each tourist information office at the destination), considering the number of tourists, tourist activities and seasons, when applicable.
- b) The attention/response procedure both for telephone, online and onsite services shall be defined. This procedure shall include the courtesy rules to be applied when the staff interacts with tourists. Telephone calls should be answered before the fourth tone. Digital interaction should not exceed 24 working hours. Tourist service, specifically face-to-face, shall be given priority over any other activities.
- c) Staff shall be identifiable
 - 1) in the case of onsite services, the staff shall use a badge or specific clothes/garments. It is recommended to identify the international languages used by the staff (e.g. tag), and
 - 2) in the case of calls and digital interaction, the staff shall give the name of the destination.

6.2 Commercial activities

The TIS management organization can perform commercial activities, for example:

- provision of third-party booking and sales;
- selling of events tickets, tour tickets, guided tours, etc.;
- selling of local products (e.g. handicrafts, souvenirs, food and drinks), and related publications;
- selling of transport tickets, SIM (subscriber identity module) cards, digital services (e.g. internet);
- currency exchange;
- other upon request.

Tourists shall be provided with the following information, as appropriate:

- a) products and service-related information:
 - 1) product prices (including taxes) and conditions before the payment (e.g. in events or guided tours: date, time, main features of the service, restrictions or limitations, venue or meeting point);
 - 2) product description, including the origin, materials and applicable warranty and guarantee, etc;
 - 3) storage conditions of food and drinks (if applicable), including the expiration date, which shall be monitored;
 - 4) shipping times.
- b) payment-related information:
 - 1) accepted payment methods;
 - 2) payment cards, which shall be accepted for online transactions. If online payment options are provided, there should be a warning that these payment options are third-party payment options and responsibility will not be taken by the TIO. The provisions of ISO 32111:2023, 8.5 should be taken into consideration;
 - 3) a receipt shall be issued in all cases and an invoice if requested.
- c) return and refund policy as well as after-sales guarantee (if applicable).

The TIS management organization providing commercial activities shall establish a procedure considering the above-mentioned requirements.

TIS management organization shall maintain transparency and ethical practices.

6.3 Statistics and analysis

The TIS management organization shall establish a system that builds a detailed knowledge-base of tourists' profiles, needs and interests. For that purpose, at least the following data shall be collected:

- a) number of users of the tourism information services;
- b) origin country for international tourists and the region for national tourists;
- c) type of information or services requested by the tourists.

Other relevant information that should be collected to configure the tourists' profiles includes:

- tourists' age range, etc.;
- purpose of their visit, segmented according to the TIS marketing strategy;

- their satisfaction level with the destination;
- their satisfaction level with the tourist information service provided, including complaints and suggestions.

The above-mentioned information can be collated through different means, such as surveys or questionnaires, online tracking, online marketing analytics, digital opinion aggregators, online reputation of the destination, social media monitoring, collecting subscription and registration data. Services refer to all available information channels (i.e. telephone, mail, onsite facilities, social networks). If there is a destination app, downloads should be controlled and analysed.

If the TIS management organization collects personal data, it shall create a privacy notice or privacy policy to remain open and transparent. If the tourist accepts the privacy notices/privacy policies presented by the TIS management organization, the information can be collected.

NOTE Concerning data protection, see Reference [10].

The TIS management organization shall also establish a regular dialogue with the public (i.e. local and regional authorities) and private sector (i.e. tourism service providers) at the destination in order to collect updated information about products and events developed and facilitate provision of this information to tourists. The TIS management organization shall keep the contact details of the relevant stakeholders at the destination and record the activities developed with them.

Periodic reports based on these data shall be developed at least once a year and shared with stakeholders.

The TIS management organization shall analyse the previously collected information to identify the different tourists' target groups and establish the information and promotion strategy accordingly, considering each target group.

The TIS management organization should regularly analyse data on a quarterly, half-yearly, and annual basis and the analysis should be conducted based on trends, patterns, environmental impact, and identification of areas for improvement.

7 Staff

7.1 General requirements

The TIS management organization shall document organizational chart that identifies the different job positions at the TIS.

A job profile shall be defined and documented for all identified job positions, including required skills and knowledge, as well as related responsibilities.

Minimum responsibilities (e.g. management, information provision, quality management, technology management and marketing) shall be identified and assumed by one or more employees.

Regarding the minimum knowledge required for the different positions, the following shall apply.

- The TIS manager shall have comprehensive knowledge of methods, approaches and procedures involved in tourism promotion such as supervisory interviewing skills, training and management; customer service; and dealing tactfully and cordially with all people profiles. Abilities to effectively manage a budget and establish and maintain effective working relationships with government officials, associates, tourists, industry partners and stakeholders are requested.
- The TIS staff providing information services shall have good communication skills and knowledge of at least one foreign language, marketing and technologies, as well as solid knowledge and understanding of the tourist offer at the destination, including attractions, events, transportation, accommodation, dining and cultural offerings.
- The staff responsible for quality, who shall ensure that the TIS follows the requirements established in this document, shall be familiar with the following: implementing and executing inspections, testing,

and evaluation methods to ensure the quality of TIS, preparing reports by collecting data on inspections or any other aspects which have been analysed in detail.

- The staff responsible for marketing shall have extensive knowledge of marketing strategies, channels, and branding.
- Outsourced or internal IT technical support personnel shall be familiar with various common computer equipment and shall provide technical support for the software and hardware of the TIS.

7.2 Training

The TIS management organization shall:

- a) determine and ensure the necessary staff competence (including temporary staff), based on education, training, skills and work experience;
- b) provide training;
- c) set out all basic instructions required to provide standardized and appropriate work methods, including ways of dealing with tourists, face-to-face or by using appropriate technologies for information and communication.

Training shall be offered periodically, according to the needs. This training shall be documented within a plan. The training shall include aspects such as:

- 1) training related to each position, as needed: TIS provision, customer service, planning, tourist marketing, communication techniques, IT Tools, social media, administrative procedures, use of database and information resources, etc.;
- 2) tourist offer at the destination;
- 3) first aid, dealing with emergency situations and safety measures;
- d) the destination tourism code of ethics^[11] or alternatively the World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) code of ethics^[12];
- e) accessibility measures for people with disabilities and disability awareness training for customer facing staff;
- f) quality and sustainability management in accordance with [Annex A](#);
- g) after-sales service techniques and management of complaints and suggestions.

Familiarization tours for TIO staff, visiting tourist and service provider sites, visiting other tourist information offices and mentoring can be helpful.

Training activities shall be recorded and their effectiveness shall be assessed.

8 Infrastructures

8.1 General requirements

The following requirements shall be met:

- a) the TIS management organization shall provide the infrastructures and equipment needed for the development of the information and promotion activities;
- b) the TIS management organization shall be committed to accessibility and shall conform to [Annex B](#);
- c) access to the TIS shall be free of charge;

- d) use of digital or physical infrastructures and equipment shall be safe and secure; security during online transactions shall be ensured;
- e) protection of personal and business data shall be ensured during its collection, storage and analysis;
- f) corporate identity shall be consistent.

8.2 Online infrastructure

The following requirements shall be met:

- a) the website shall be clearly designed and organized to facilitate information searches, to facilitate usability and to ensure a satisfying experience by the users considering the information requested in 4.2;

NOTE These characteristics can be monitored by indicators of the website.

- b) the online equipment and associated facilities shall enable at least telephone, internet and email communications;

NOTE Online web content drafted by the TIS see Reference [9], for example.

- c) There shall be digital text-based communication to provide an option to choose between plain text and hypertext markup language (HTML).

The online equipment and related facilities should have access to technologies that allow services such as linking to social media, waiting calls, intelligent query answering, compilation and portability of digital documents, autonomous information systems, and contents compatible with mobile applications.

The TIS should have an internal or outsourced data centre for data storage. It should provide physical space and a suitable operation environment for data storage equipment.

The web-based communication can include auto-generated emails, intelligent query answering and individually written emails clarifying and confirming messages to the tourists.

The mobile web-based communication can follow the Mobile Web-Based Practice Guide^[13] and associate mobile web application best practices^[14].

Most recent versions of word processing software or apps have automated tools for saving documents in accessible formats. These should be selected whenever possible.

Network security techniques should take into consideration the provisions of ISO/IEC 27701 and ISO/IEC 27033-2.

8.3 Onsite facilities

The TIS management organization shall determine its suitable location(s), considering the characteristics of the destination and the tourists' flows (e.g. town centre, tourist sites, transportation terminals, main access roads to the destination).

The following requirements shall also be met:

- a) The tourist information offices shall be clearly visible and duly signposted. The "i" sign shall be placed in a way that can be perceived by pedestrians and motorists.
- b) Sign-posting shall be consistent and should conform to ISO 7001.
- c) The location of the TIO(s) at the destination shall be indicated on the tourist map(s), website, and printed information of TIO, if available.
- d) The premises shall be kept at an adequate temperature.

The tourist information office should have IT equipment, phone and internet services.

The IT equipment and associated facilities should be adapted to the needs of tourists and staff.

8.4 Maintenance and cleaning

In order to offer secure and safe facilities of TIS, there shall be a maintenance plan which specifically includes all legal inspections and revisions needed for the day-to-day running of the services. This shall specifically include the emergency and fire systems, lifts, light systems, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, software and hardware, alarm system, plagues treatment and other elements related as appropriate.

A periodic maintenance plan related to IT equipment shall be documented, maintained and reviewed.

There shall also be a cleaning plan for physical infrastructures. This shall include all equipment and facilities of the TIO.

Corrective maintenance and cleaning activities shall be recorded.

9 Suggestions and complaints management

There shall be a documented procedure to manage suggestions and complaints. This procedure shall specify how to manage suggestions and complaints related to the destination and to the TIS, as well as those received onsite or by digital channels, including public online complaints posted on the most relevant internet websites and social networks for the TIS.

The TIS management organization shall respond to the complaints submitted, even though, by legal requirement, it is another body that is competent to give the answer and adopt measures to prevent their repetition.

TIS operating online shall regularly, at least once a month, monitor the online platforms most used by tourists. The TIS management organization shall regularly monitor the platforms where the tourist destination has established an institutional presence.

The person in charge of responding to complaints shall have the necessary skills.

Personal data shall be protected by the TIS management organization.

Annex A **(normative)**

Best practices on sustainability

A.1 Overview

The TIS management organization shall implement sustainable practices (economic, social, environmental) that are oriented to the contribution and fulfilment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contemplated in the United Nations Agenda 2030.

NOTE In relation to sustainability, TIS management organization can refer to ISO 23405.

A.2 Environmental actions

Specific environmental actions can be:

- a) verification of adequate operation of equipment and energy and water sources through maintenance activities in order to ensure their efficiency;
- b) installation and use of devices and equipment that help save water and energy;
- c) use of natural light whenever possible and selection of low-consumption light sources;
- d) installation of motion detectors or timers in passage common areas;
- e) prioritisation of individually regulated HVAC systems over those centrally regulated;
- f) set up of electronic equipment in energy-saving mode, whenever possible;
- g) avoiding the use of screen savers, since they consume energy;
- h) disconnection of electronic devices when they are not used;
- i) use of recycled paper or materials, or paper or materials with an ecologic certification;
- j) use of promotional material that causes reduced impact on the environment;
- k) use of recycled toners and inks, or toners and inks with an ecological certification;
- l) delivery of dangerous waste only to authorized waste management entities;
- m) segregation of waste to ease recycling;
- n) use of biodegradable bags for waste management;
- o) controlling of generated waste and implementation of practices that lead to a reduction of waste generation;
- p) replacement of dangerous and toxic cleaning products by innocuous and biodegradable products, without phosphates and chlorine, non-corrosive, etc.;
- q) introduction of plants into office spaces;
- r) purchase of second-hand office equipment when possible;
- s) promotion of ecotourism to support natural areas and wildlife;

- t) promotion of the ongoing implementation, monitoring and measurement of environmentally friendly sustainable impacts and results on the tourism industry.

A.3 Social actions

Specific social actions can be:

- a) selection of local providers, whenever possible, and inclusion of sustainability criteria within contracts with services and products providers;
- b) provision of information to the stakeholders about the sustainable practices implemented at the destination by the TIS management organization;
- c) training the staff on sustainability best practices and promoting their commitment to the SDGs;
- d) promotion of the tourists' participation in sustainable practices at the destination;
- e) promotion of equality (gender, age, ethnicity) in working relationships and with tourists;
- f) promotion of the inclusion of especially vulnerable groups, for example:
 - 1) participation in campaigns and initiatives for social purposes (e.g. food drives);
 - 2) donation of products, furniture and equipment to the local community;
 - 3) development of measures aimed at improving the accessibility of the facilities;
 - 4) development, promotion and prioritization of healthy tourism products and activities.
- g) promotion of a healthy lifestyle that reduces sedentary practices, for example, by encouraging staff to take the stairs instead of the elevator;
- h) establishment of flexible scheduling policies to improve the work-life balance of the TIO's staff;
- i) collaboration with other organizations in the same sector to identify specific ways to contribute to the SDGs;
- j) collaboration and provision of support in projects developed by institutions or non-governmental organizations for the prevention of violence in all its forms.
- k) Promotion of cultural tourism and preservation of cultural heritage.

A.4 Economic actions

Specific economic actions can be:

- a) promotion of the destination while enabling a satisfactory cohabitation between tourists and residents;
- b) promotion of sustainable practices among stakeholders (including own staff and tourists) at the destination (e.g., sustainable transportation);
- c) contribution to local economic development;
- d) promotion of sustainable tourist offers at the destination;
- e) promotion of tourism products and activities based on cultural and natural heritage, respectful of the criteria of authenticity and integrity of the assets;
- f) encouragement of tourists to purchase local crafts;
- g) promotion of the stakeholders who implement best sustainable practices to the tourists;
- h) offering accessible tourist services and products to all;