BS EN 17371-1:2021

BSI Standards Publication

Provision of services

Part 1: Service procurement — Guidance for the assessment of the capacity of service providers and evaluation of service proposals

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National foreword

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A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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European foreword

This document (EN 17371-1:2021) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 447 "Horizontal standards for the provision of services", the secretariat of which is held by BSI.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by September 2021, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by September 2021.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

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According to the CEN-CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organisations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

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Introduction

This document is part of a series of European Standards that address different phases in the provision of services (see Figure 1): the service procurement phase (EN 17371-1), the service contracting phase (EN 17371-2[1)]) and the service execution phase (EN 17371-3).

Each part of the series can be used individually or in combination with the other parts.

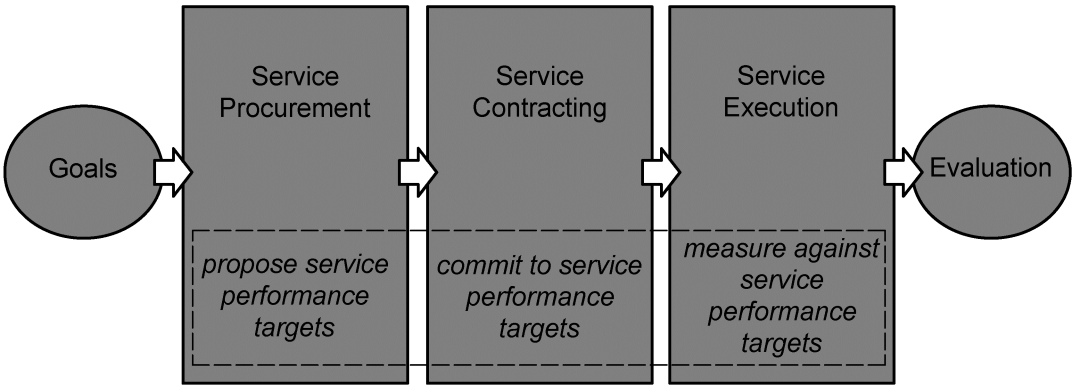

Figure 1 — Phases in the provision of services

The drafting of the series was initiated after CEN presented the findings of a study on the potential and a possible impact of horizontal service standards on the EU single market for services. This study was as a response to the standardization request M/517 from the European Commission for programming and development of horizontal service standards. The objective of this standardization request was to encourage the development of voluntary European Standards covering issues common to many service sectors. Such standards should aim to facilitate compatibility between services providers and improve information and the quality of services to the recipient.

This document provides recommendations focusing on the:

— service procurement process through to the selection of providers/service providers;

— criteria for assessing a service provider's capacities to deliver the service to be provided;

— criteria for evaluating a service proposal.

The goal is to build on existing best practice and avoid additional constraints, in particular on medium, small and micro organizations, including by the provision of a framework and template. This document reflects the most important trends within service procurement. It is aimed at, e.g:

— organizations purchasing services (also referred to as “service buyers” in this document);

— organizations providing services (also referred to as “providers” and “service providers” in this document);

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— governmental departments (national or European) in their role as authorities defining the rules and procedures governing public procurement;

— organizations advising customers how to select service providers (such as consultancies);

— organizations that manage systems for shortlisting or (pre)qualifying service providers for the purpose of helping their customers select service providers that are capable of fulfilling their needs and successfully leading their projects;

— organizations responsible for compiling official lists of approved providers, meaning those who are authorized to bid on certain contracts;

— organizations responsible for sourcing service providers.

Whilst not the focus of the document, it is recognized that societal stakeholders including consumers, labour and environmental NGOs have legitimate interests in service procurement, for example in areas such as accessibility, privacy and sustainability. These interests have been taken into account in this document.

The recommendations specified by this document are common to both private and public purchase, wherever a recommendation applies only to one type of purchase it is identified. Taking into account the European/national legislations on public procurement, some recommendations should be considered as requirements by the public buyers.

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1 Scope

This document provides guidance for the assessment of the capacity of service providers and the evaluation of service proposals in order to improve and facilitate the process of procuring services.

This document is applicable to:

a) Service buyers and service providers regardless of type, size or the nature of the services;

b) Service providers who may be inside or outside the service buyers' organization; and

c) Any interested parties who are directly or indirectly involved in or affected by a procurement process.

This document is not applicable to business-to-consumer (B2C) service contracts or for works contracts.

NOTE 1 "Works contracts" are contracts that have as their object the execution, or both the design and execution, of a work are not covered in this document. Contracts having as their object only the design of a work are covered.

NOTE 2 "Work" means the outcome of building or civil engineering works taken as a whole which is sufficient in itself to fulfil an economic or technical function.

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:

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

3.1
interested party
person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by service procurement

3.2
procurement
activity of acquiring services from providers which could be public procurement or any other form of procurement

3.3
public procurement
any procurement regulated by public procurement rules (international, EU, national, regional)

3.4
service buyer
organization that buys services from a service provider

Note 1 to entry: In public procurement, the service buyer may also be known as the contracting authority/entity.

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3.5
service procurement
activities enabling an organization to enter into a contract with one or more service providers

3.6
service provider
organization or part of an organization that offers, supplies and/or manages one or more services

Note 1 to entry: A service provider can be external or internal to the services buyer's organization.

3.7
subcontractor
organization contracted by the provider to perform a specific part of a contract

3.8
tenderer/bidder
organization that submits/has submitted a tender or an offer

4 Service procurement process

4.1 General

This clause describes the elements of the service procurement process prior to signing a contract.

Organizations may schedule these elements in any order. Some elements may not be applicable in particular cases.

The service procurement process includes consideration of human resources, material, equipment and infrastructure resources as relevant to the service to be provided.

These considerations should be embedded in a wider strategic approach (sometimes called sourcing) that considers the whole cycle from initial planning and identification of needs until the end of service contract (See Annex A).

The buyer shall determine whether public procurement legislation applies. If this is the case, the normative clauses marked public procurement shall be applicable.

4.2 Drafting of the technical specification

In order to develop a good invitation to tender it is necessary to provide to potential bidders a clear statement of what the buyer wishes to procure.

The buyer should determine the service and the service provider requirements including statutory and regulatory requirements and requirements of the end user, for example:

— cost/price;

— on-time delivery;

— reporting;

— quality criteria;

— service provider sustainability (e.g. environmental, social aspects);

— accessibility;

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— avoidance of discrimination;

— health and safety;

— security;

— reliability;

— responsiveness, competency;

— communication.

It may specify required minimum performance levels for each requirement.

A pre-requisite is that the buyer understands what services are currently being delivered and at what cost. The buyer then needs to have a clear understanding of which services it wishes to procure and how they are to be delivered. Only then may a clear statement be provided to bidders which will, in due course, form a major part of the evaluation of tenders prior to the award of a contract.

The specification of service requirement is a vital component in a good procurement of services and will form the basis of the services to be procured and their delivery.

The service buyer should also determine the relative importance of the requirements in order to prioritize them. This makes the further steps of the process of service procurement more effective and improves the service delivered.

Any conflicting requirements should be identified and resolved at the beginning of the process. A comprehensive list of prioritized requirements on the service and service provider should be the result.

The buyer should consider any risks such as the use of outdated information (e.g. standards) and opportunities (e.g. evaluation from former tenders).

In determining requirements related to end users, organizations should consider the extent to which the service can be accessed, understood and used by the widest range of users, including persons with disabilities.

In the European Union and its CEN member countries, there are statutory and/or regulatory requirements related to accessibility that shall be reflected in requirements and specifications, where relevant.

4.3 Methodology for gathering information

Methods of gathering information for the determination of the service provider requirements include:

— consulting internal interested parties, e.g. managers of the relevant functions;

— consulting external interested parties, e.g. end users, qualification and certification bodies, regulation bodies, trade associations and trade unions;

— market research and analysis;

— reviewing available documented internal information, e.g. lessons learned and known experience from previous projects, market research and analysis.

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