

ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2
Coded Character Sets
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Secretariat ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2 - IPSJ/ITSCJ *(Information Processing Society of Japan/Information Technology Standards Commission of Japan) Room 308-3, Kikai-Shinko-Kaikan Bldg., 3-5-8, Shiba-Koen, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0011 Japan *Standard Organization Accredited by JISC
 Telephone: +81-3-3431-2808; Facsimile: +81-3-3431-6493; E-mail: kimura@itscj.ipsj.or.jp

To: **ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2 and its WG 2 and WG 3**

Title: **Liaison Report from CEN TC 304**

Source: Erkki I. Kolehmainen, co-operation officer
from CEN TC 304 to ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2

Date: 2001-10-10

CEN TC 304, ICT - European Localization Requirements, held its 18th Plenary at CEN/CENELEC in Brussels, Belgium, on 26th June 2001. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the following CEN members: Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece, Norway, Poland (affiliated CEN member) and Sweden plus CEN/ISSS (Information Society Standardization System).

Last year PriceWaterhouseCoopers had been contracted by the European Commission to conduct a Cultural Diversity Study, for which the report was published in an open meeting on 22nd February 2001 in Brussels. In addition, PWC had prepared for a more limited circulation an annex to the report dealing specifically with CEN TC 304.

Following the Cultural Diversity meeting, TC 304 held its 17th Plenary in Brussels on 23rd February 2001.

This liaison report is a short summary of the items of particular relevance to ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2 and the current overall status of CEN TC 304.

The most relevant item to SC 2, which was also asked to be forwarded by the secretary to the appropriate ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2 officials and 10646-1 editors, is the following resolution:

Resolution #1 Identification and use of MES (Adopted unanimously)

CEN TC304 emphasizes that in order to maintain integrity and interoperability the names and the corresponding content of Multilingual European Subsets (MES) must always be used as defined in CEN Workshop Agreement 13873:2000. This is especially true for the Annex A of FPDAM 1 of ISO/IEC 10646-1:2000.

Although there was considerable discussion on the ramifications thereof, and the action by the editors was criticized heavily, the intent behind their action received quite some understanding. Thus, it would appear that there is room for a reasonable solution by SC 2 that would take into account both the integrity and the intent of the CWA, in light of the continued evolution of the 10646-1.

On the other items:

The European standard EN 1923 (1998), European Character Repertoires and their Coding, 8-bit single byte coding, will be replaced by a European pre-standard ENV 1923 (which essentially will add the EURO SIGN into the repertoire). On the positive side for UCS, whereas an EN must be transposed by CEN members into their national standards, this does not have to be done for an ENV, which will also lapse after a relatively short period of time unless specifically converted to an EN or exceptionally renewed. *CEN/ISSS might like to issue this as a TS (Technical Specification) instead of an ENV, as the new TS procedure will eventually replace the ENV procedure.*

On the more general issues:

Iceland has announced in May (with an 1-year notice period) that they wish to relinquish the secretariat of CEN TC 304 and a call has been issued for new secretariat. Þorgeir Sigurðsson, although no longer employed by Icelandic Standards, is still contracted to be the secretary of CEN TC 304.

In the June Plenary, Wolf Arfvidson (from Statskontoret, Sweden) announced that he could no longer (after 9 years) continue as the chair of CEN TC 304. Until the secretariat issue has been resolved, Wolf will act as the interim chair.

The Cultural Diversity study is leading to the establishment of the Cultural Diversity Steering Group, which now has its Terms of Reference approved by the CEN/ISSS Forum. The first meeting of CDSG has been called for 16th November in Brussels.

The ToR foresee a CDSG membership as follows:

- CEN/TC 304 - European Localization requirements (up to 3 representatives)
- CEN/WS EC - Electronic Commerce (up to 2 representatives)
- CEN/WS MMI/DC - Dublin Core (1 representative)
- CEN/WS LT - Learning Technologies (1 representative)
- 1 representative each from:
 - Interested CEN/ISSS Forum members or their representatives
 - Interested ICTSB (Information and Communications Technologies Standards Board) members
 - LISA (Localization Industry Standards Association)
 - UNICODE
 - ISO/IEC JTC 1 CLAU (Cultural, Linguistic and User Interface)
 - ANEC (European Association for the Co-ordination of Consumer Representation in Standardization)
- Observers are expected from CEC and EFTA.

CEN TC 304 will have completed most of its currently active work program by the end of the year when its contract for Commission funding will run out.

As the role of CEN TC 304 will be determined by the CDSG, the implementation of Resolution #1 from its 16th Plenary on the expanded industry participation has been postponed. For the same reason, I'm not in a position to elaborate further on the future work program. The date for the next Plenary has been tentatively set for early December. *This might be postponed by up to about three months.*

Sincerely, Erkki

Erkki I. Kolehmainen, Senior Adviser
TIEKE Tietoyhteiskunnan kehittämiskeskus ry
TIEKE Finnish Information Society Development Centre
Salomonkatu 17 A, 10th floor, FIN-00100 HELSINKI, FINLAND
Phone: +358 9 4763 0301, Fax: +358 9 4763 0399
<http://www.tieke.fi> - erkki.kolehmainen@tieke.fi