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| **Keywords:** | Restructuring; Rapporteur Group on Work Programme and Study Group Structure (RG-WP); |
| **Abstract:** | The November 2021 meeting of the TSAG Rapporteur Group on Work Programme and Study Group Structure (RG-WP) discussed the draft action plan contained T17-TSAGRGM-RGWP-211122-TD-0003 (https://extranet.itu.int/meetings/ITU-T/T17-TSAGRGM/RGWP-211122/TDs/T17-TSAGRGM-RGWP-211122-TD-0003.docx ) and updated that draft plan.  The present document reflects the results of that RG-WP meeting and January 2022 TSAG meeting. |

DRAFT Action plan for the analysis of ITU-T Study group restructuring

# 1. Introduction

This action plan initiates review a thorough process of ITU-T potential restructuring options, based on empirical analysis, with a view to having a more effective, efficient, fit-for-purpose, forward-looking and inclusive ITU-T. It focuses on the concrete way to proceed with the analysis of ITU-T structure with a view to potentially approving restructuring at WTSA-24, rather than simply discussing general high-level principles.

The text in this action plan is based on contributions received from Members provided through a correspondence group (CG) activity based on the mandate that was agreed at the January 2021 TSAG meeting and continued under the auspices of the TSAG Rapporteur Group on Work Programme and Study Group Structure (RG-WP).

# 2. Background

The efforts of the proposal, “Food for thought”, from Director TSB on Study Groups’ restructuring for WTSA-20 preparations provided the impetus for discussion amongst TSAG participants for the possible future re-structuring of the ITU-T study groups (SGs). It is considered as a positive step for developing the work of the sector and ensuring the compliance of technology evolution and the business continuity of the sector’s work in all circumstances as well as accelerating the work in order to come up with the best recommendations and desired standards from the sector.

A number of TSAG members recognized the importance of considering the structure of ITU-T study groups because it has not changed significantly since 2008 yet technology has advanced.

A number of TSAG members identified the need for a study that calls for an examination of the ITU-T’s standardization functions to ensure that the ITU-T structure supports the standardization needs of the membership and the industry at large.

# 3. Information required to analyse the restructuring (principles and metrics)

The ITU-T SG restructuring solution should contribute to the mission and long-term activities of ITU-T. The restructuring options that are reviewed should provide input into the discussion by the ITU-T members. In turn, the discussion by members will require output from the implementation of the action plan, in order to assist them by providing a set of general criteria for the evaluation of ITU-T SG restructuring.

The review process will consider both quantitative metrics and qualitative policy-oriented questions. The main information required to assess each of the restructuring options will be based primarily on the principles and agreed metrics by the ITU membership.

## 3.1 Principles

The seven high-level principles generated by WTSA-16 and their detailed explanation (see [TD457r2](about:blank) Annex A and TD937R1) should be used in the consideration of the benefits of each of the potential re-structuring options in the output of the action plan.

The seven high level principles listed are as follows:

1. Optimised structure
2. Clear mandates
3. Enhanced co-ordination and co-operation
4. Cost effectiveness and attractiveness
5. Efficient and productive working methods
6. Timely identification of standardisation needs
7. Support for bridging the standardisation gap

Other considerations include:

1. Standards should be developed with the necessary expertise and background needed to ensure a substantive outcome.

2. Care should be taken to avoid duplication of standardization work between ITU-T study groups, and, in accordance with Resolution 71 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, to minimize to the extent possible, conflicting ITU standards with those of other global standards development organisations (SDOs). Note, however, that studying the relations of ITU-T with other SDOs in the restructuring process should not overlap with the work carried out in other TSAG Rapporteur Groups such as Strengthening Cooperation or Working Methods.

3. Is the current number a stable number, and if there is a proposal to create a new study group, should the total number be maintained?

4. What is the appropriate number of Questions within Study Groups in order to facilitate engagement and participation by members, as well as efficiency in work item allocation among questions?

5. Should standardisation of new and emerging technologies be integrated into existing study groups and merged into Questions through the revision of existing Questions and the establishment of new work items, where appropriate, or establishing new Questions?

Any change to ITU-T structure must take into consideration the impact on the permanence and continuity of the work of the study groups and regional groups to continue the creation of high-quality, demand-driven, efficient, cost-effective and timely Recommendations.

## 3.2 Metrics Required

This action plan aims to guarantee the availability of data and indicators making it possible to propose a T-sector structure that carries value for its members while analysing the availability of their expertise for a better allocation.

The action plan will utilise the following initial data gathered from the period 2008 through 2021. These metrics may be supplemented by additional data deemed useful to answer and analyse the stated questions.

The use of the metrics listed should serve as the basis to collect and analyse data based on the metrics in order to provide input into the answers to the questions listed.

The analysis of these questions and metrics, as well as the underlying data and methodologies used, shall be presented to TSAG for decision and any action, as appropriate.

1. What are the measures of ITU-T’s standardization activities for development of Recommendations?
   1. participation, contribution and leadership by types of membership from 2008 to 2021 for each study group and related subgroups
   2. number of months elapsed between introduction and approval of Recommendations by Study Groups from 2008 and 2020
   3. number of liaison statements from other standardization organizations during 2008 and 2021
   4. number of Recommendations approved using traditional approval process from 2008 to 2021
   5. number of Recommendations approved using alternative approval process from 2008 to 2021
   6. number of test suites developed for ITU-T Recommendations from 2008 to 2021
2. What value do ITU-T’s Recommendations add or have impact on the ITU Membership?
   1. number of unique downloads by Recommendation from 2008 to 2021
   2. number of ITU-T Recommendations incorporated or adopted by other standardization organizations from 2008 to 2021number of standards essential patents first in ITU-T Recommendations from 2008 to 2021
   3. number of ITU-T Recommendations, Guidelines and Reports with policy or regulatory implications between 2008 to 2021
   4. number of ITU-T Recommendations cited in Sector Members’ press releases and documentation from 2008 to 2021
   5. number of ITU-T Recommendations adopted and implemented fully or partially by industry from 2008 to 2021
3. How does ITU-T cooperate and coordinate with other standardization organizations?
   1. number of liaison statements sent to other standardization organizations from 2008 to 2021
   2. number of memoranda of understanding with other SDOs
   3. number of joint workshops or activities with other SDOs
   4. number of standards from other SDOs incorporated or adopted by ITU-T from 2008 to 2021 separated by field/subject
   5. number of liaison officers from or to other SD0s
   6. other mechanisms to collaborate (e.g., JCAs, invited experts)
4. Is the current structure of Study Groups conducive to the standardization process of the rapid pace of telecommunication/ICT technology development?
5. Do ITU-T’s study groups reflect the international nature of the activity?
   * 1. Number of participants (Member States, Sector Members, Associates, Academia, SMEs, and others (e.g. UN organizations, SDOs)
     2. Number of different members, sector members and associates that have committed to contributing actively to the introduction of new work, as shown in the A.1 and A.13 justifications[[1]](#footnote-1)
   * by country
   * by region
   * by membership category
     1. Number of contributions to a work item from
   * supporters
   * others (by country, by region, by membership category)

The set of metrics raise fundamental questions over the work of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector, and the extent to which these questions can be answered by the action plan will influence the potential structure of the study groups. Many of the questions and issues raised are valid and are relevant in wider discussions than study group (re-)structuring.

# 4. Options for restructuring

The initial options to be considered in the implementation of this action plan are listed in TD995r1. However, other options remain open as and when they arise, including future submissions to be identified. The initial range of options can range from do nothing to a radical overall of the current ITU-T study group structure. In other words, this study should evaluate all possible restructure options and not to be limited to options listed in TD995r1.

There have already been submissions previously to past TSAG meetings throughout 2020 on options for study group restructuring at WTSA 20. These submissions have been specifically included in the annexes to this action plan. It was not part of this action plan to decide which option should or should not be included, but to treat each option fairly and equitably.

In implementing this action plan, transparency, fairness, impartiality, and objectivity should be ensured. The problems existing in the current ITU-T SGs’ structure, which need and could be solved by restructuring, should be identified, collected, and analysed objectively in the order of priority and urgency. All problems, once identified, should be prioritized with a clear understanding of which are to be solved in near future and which can be addressed at a later time.

# 5. Application of the information to the analysis

The analysis should take into consideration the metrics that have been identified to answer the following questions:

1. How do the various restructure options look at ensuring the sustainability of study groups and raising future productivity in extracting the required recommendations and standards faster than the current situation?
2. Do the current structure and work program of the ITU-T Study Groups meet the current and future industry demand? If no, what actions are needed?
3. Do ITU-T Study Groups work collaboratively and complement each other to develop joint outputs? How can complementary work be enhanced?
4. What are the impacts of each restructuring option in terms of financial and human resources?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of all the proposals, especially when merging the study groups, in terms of balance between the capacity of each study groups and not increasing the current burden, and also in terms of questions, meeting schedules and ensuring the sufficiency of the number of periodic meetings of the study groups?
6. To the extent an intergovernmental organization like the ITU can be assessed in terms of competitive advantages, what are the competitive advantages that ITU-T has, and how can ITU-T utilize these advantages?

There should be a number of options employed to assess each restructuring option including benchmarking, gap analysis, SWOT analysis and brainstorming workshops.

# 6. Time scales

The following timeline and process should be followed:

* Following TSAG approval of the present action plan, TSAG reports to WTSA-20 with the proposed list of questions (①②③ in timeline)
* WTSA-20 approves list of questions and provides guidance (④ in timeline)
* Data is gathered and analysed (⑤ in timeline)
* TSAG reviews the relevant underlying data, methodologies and analysis and recommendations based on the findings for further action and consideration (⑤in timeline)
* TSAG submits a report to WTSA-24 concerning a possible restructure of ITU-T (⑥⑦in timeline)

The timeline is indicated below.

Graphical user interface, application, table, Excel

Description automatically generated

This action plan should be executed between WTSA20 (Q1 2022) – WTSA24.

# 7. Management and execution of the action plan

TSAG has the ultimate responsibility to manage and review the output of the action plan. TSAG should prepare a report and recommendations for presentation to Council for further action and consideration and submit a report to WTSA-24. That said, Members can use (or not) the output of the action plan as they wish ahead of any consideration by WTSA on a decision for restructuring the ITU-T study groups.

The main responsible coordination point for this action plan should remain with TSAG. The analytics team, with very clear and specified tasks, should include ITU membership with support from TSB.

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1. While the general period of study is agreed to be from 2008 through 2021, it is recognized that the data related to the A.1 and A.13 justifications are available only from a subset of these years. Care should be taken in drawing conclusions from these data. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)