



Standardization Capability to Competitiveness

Case Study: Age Assurance Technology

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The StandICT Programme Context

- EU-funded initiative supporting European leadership in ICT standardisation
- Fellowship focused on ISO/IEC 27566-1 development
- Aim: create global framework for privacy-preserving, secure age assurance systems
- Although in support of the EU Digital Services Act; it had wider applicability to age assurance legislation globally
- Support regulators to prioritise risk, resources and responses
- Enable an innovative, creative, technology-neutral competitive market for age assurance solutions













Global Child Protection Online

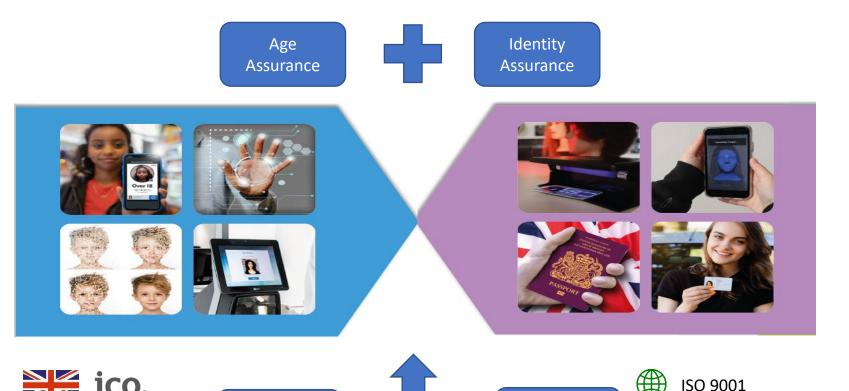
- Global roll out of age assurance requirements
- Governments everywhere have a shared ambition for a safer online experience for children
- It is about **enabling children** to enjoy safer online experiences, including social media, access to age-appropriate materials, games and entertainment and **reducing harm** to children
- It is distinct from Identity Assurance (and importantly so)
- Builds on previous work IEEE 2089.1, PAS 1296:2018, Conformity Assessment into a new Global Framework





Age Assurance is not Identity Assurance





Privacy &

Data

Protection

ISO 27701

- Early solutions relied on government-issued IDs
- Creates privacy, inclusion, surveillance and interoperability barriers
- Limits creativity, innovation and SME participation
- Hinders competitive markets, technological development and user transparency



ISO 27001

Management

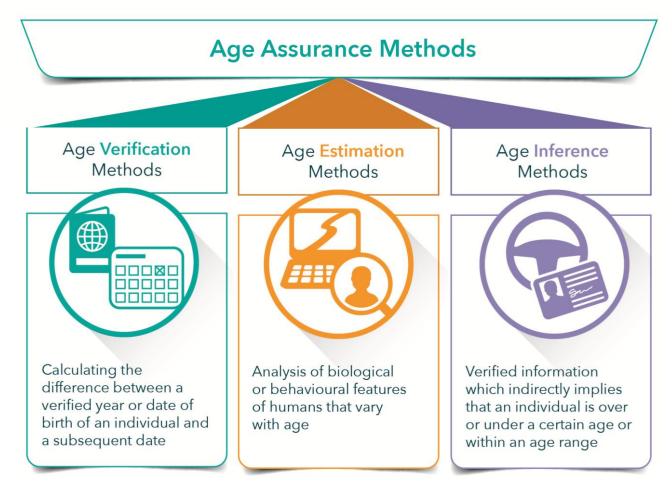
Systems







What is age assurance?

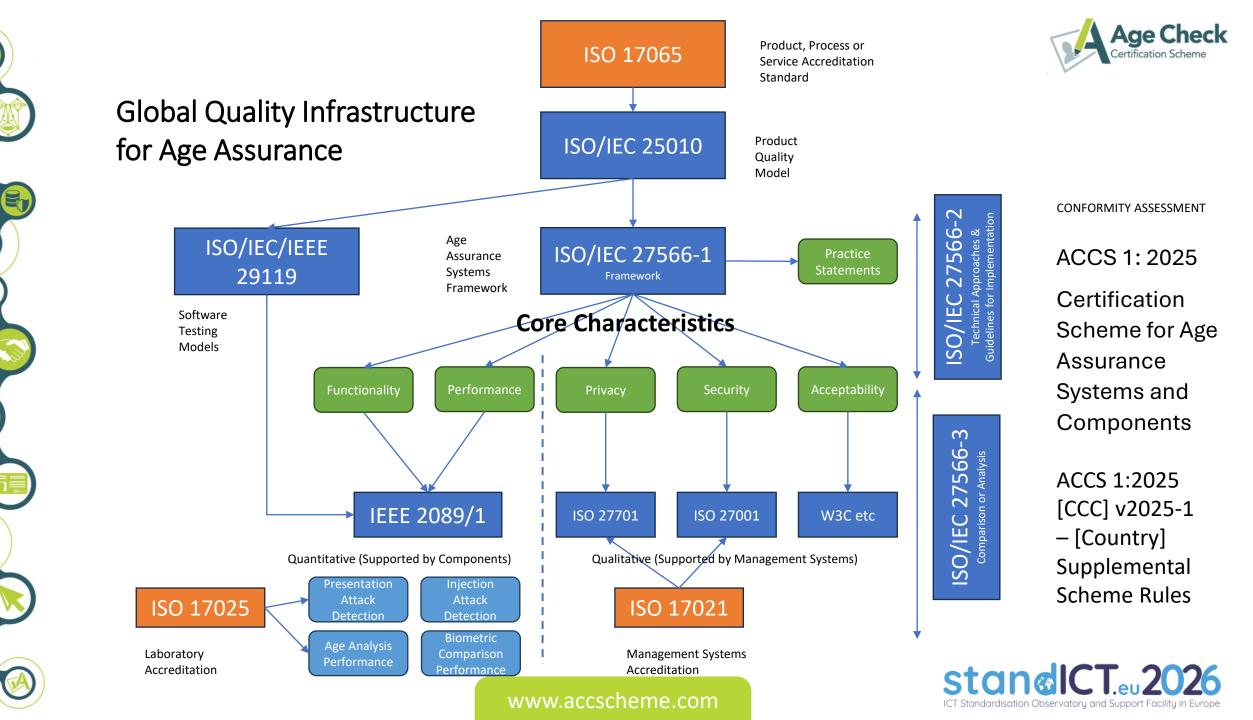






Stan@ICT.eu2026 ICT Standardisation Observatory and Support Facility in Europe

- Funding support from StandICT.eu 2026 enabled technical expertise to be released from private sector to lead the development of a global standard for age assurance
- It focussed on bringing EU-level trust and privacy principles to a global approach – without mandating GDPR compliance globally
- Promoted industry-led innovation-enabling, whilst being technologyneutral approaches







Outcomes & Next Steps

- ISO/IEC FDIS 27566-1:2025 has been formally approved and will be published shortly
- A Certification Scheme has been developed and submitted to an IAF member body (UKAS) for approval
- Opportunity for individual supplementary certification requirements for localisation or specific contexts of use
- Opportunity for the deployment of age assurance in a privacy-preserving, secure and effective manner to protect children from online harm across the whole Tech Stack
- Significant skills and body of knowledge development as a part of the StandICT funding







Certification Scheme

Preparation

- Role(s) of the Applicant (Age Assurance Provider, Intermediary or Relying Party)
- Identification of the Component or System under Analysis
- System Scoping, including Certification Boundaries
- Desired Indicators of Effectiveness
- Preparation and Assessment of Practice Statements

Stage 1 (Product Owner Policies)

- Product Owner/ Applicant Assessment
- Document/ Policy Review of the Five Core Characteristics
 - Functionality
 - Performance
 - Privacy
 - Security
 - Acceptability
- Sources of Data
- Date Transposition
- ConfigurationManagement
- Stage 2 Planning

Stage 2 (Components and Context of Use)

- Component Selection
- Required Indicators of Effectiveness
- Selection of Test Approach (ISO 29119)
- Age Verification
- Age Estimation
- Age Inference
- Approaches to Binding
- Analysis of Five Core Characteristics
- Jurisdictions
- Prior Accredited Certification

Evaluation Review & Certification Decision

- Scientific Review of Evaluation Tasks
- Evaluation Review
- Management of the Certification Mark
- Certification Decision
- Registry
- Addition to Monitoring Services (FREE)
- Applications for Additional/Updated Components
- Surveillance Audits (Annually)
- Recertification (3yearly)







Tech Stack with Age Assurance Options

User Device

Parental controls, child profiles, usage limits



User Device

Smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop used to access digital services



System & Browser

The OS (e.g. iOS, Android, Windows) and browser (e.g. Chrome, Safari) enabling interaction



System & Browser

Safe search, restricted mode, content filters



ISP-level content filtering, adult content blocks, DNS-level controls



Network

Internet access provided by an ISP or mobile network operator



App Store / Platform

Digital distribution services like Apple App Store or Google Play



App Store / Platform

Age-gated downloads, app approval workflows

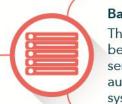


In-app age checks, contextual age-gates, privacy settings



Website or App

Front-end services like games, social media, education tools or streaming platforms



Backend Services

The infrastructure behind the scenes servers, databases, authentication systems



Backend Services

Server-side age verification APIs, policy enforcement logs





Opportunities for business to demonstrate conformity & regulators to prioritise resources

Actions of the Regulated Business

Broadly Compliant
Operator
Clear Age Check
Practice Statements
Internal Verification

Striving to be
Compliant Operator
Developing Age
Check Practices
Working Towards
Certification

Non-Compliant Operator Naïve, Lacking Awareness, Ignorance, Willing to Comply Deliberately or Actively Non-Compliant Operator Not Interested in Compliance Uncooperative

Certification Body's Attention Certified Provider
ISO Compliant
Certification
Monitoring
Regular
Recertification

Pre-Assessment
Initial Audits
Impliance Analysis
Vidence Gathering
Working Towards
Certification

Education
Awareness
Information
Campaigns

Information & Intelligence Sharing with the Regulator

Regulator's Attention

Light Touch
Trust & Confidence
in Certification

Encouraging
Growth
Beacons of Best
Practice

Encouraging Pat' to

Complian e

Condition of

Licence or Approal

Directing on a Path
to Compliance
Education
Awareness
Information
Campaigns



Source: United Kingdom Cabinet Office Regulator's Code











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