



ETIM International

Classification Guidelines

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1. Introduction

ETIM offers an open standard for the unambiguous grouping and specification of products in the technical sector through a uniform product classification model. This classification uses: product classes, features, values and synonyms that make it easy to find the right product. The product classification itself is no “final product” but offers a structure for an electronic product database and applications such as an online web shop, search engine or configuration software. ETIM classification is multilingual, media neutral and supplier neutral.

ETIM International is the international standardization committee for ETIM. The principal objectives and activities are to develop, maintain, publish and promote the ETIM classification model. The long-term goal of ETIM International is to achieve that the ETIM model becomes the most used technical information model in the involved industries.

This document aims to provide with a brief framework to give formal guidelines on the organization as well as for the content management and quality requirements of the classification work. With the rapidly growing global interest and involvement it now becomes necessary to provide the fundament for a proper ETIM organization, in particular one concept for the administration and one for the technical administration of a uniform global ETIM model. To secure the uniform application and further development of a common ETIM model, it will be necessary to specify basic rules.

This document replaces all previous versions of this document as well as all previously published documents regarding classification guidelines in the respective member countries. Should a previously published version or any other document conflict with this document, the regulation of this document has priority.

2. Organization

2.1. General

ETIM International is a non-profit association governed by the provisions of the Belgian law and has its seat in Brussels. The working language of ETIM International is English. Full membership of ETIM International is open to recognised national ETIM organizations as specified in the present statutes.

The association has the following formal bodies: The General Assembly, the Executive Board and the Technical Committee.

The General Assembly has full powers to achieve the objectives and to ratify the vision and strategy of ETIM International. Each country has one vote in the General Assembly, which decides by majority. The General Assembly is the highest formal body in the organization and will elect the Executive Board to perform operational tasks, it can also set up policy groups and working groups. So ETIM International shall be governed by an Executive Board in accordance with decisions reached by the General Assembly.

The Executive Board is empowered to establish a Technical Committee, of which the chairman is appointed by the Board. This Committee will make proposals for the further development, enhancement and maintenance of the ETIM model. The Technical Committee shall be open to technical experts from the national ETIM organizations.

These guidelines describe the organization of the international collaboration and decision making regarding the ETIM classification. The organization and decision making within the national ETIM organizations is organized separately, but harmonized with the international guidelines to avoid conflicting stipulations.

2.2. Online Database and Service Portal ETIM CMT

CMT is the abbreviation for Classification Management Tool. It is a custom build online software tool to access the international multilingual ETIM master database and to efficiently organize and process additions and requests for change (RFCs) to the ETIM model. CMT is also the communication medium for status updates on RFCs to the requester and other interested members. Members with login can use a personal interest filter (PIF) to select on which classes they want to be informed, in case of RFCs they receive a summary status update every week, this way the amount of unwanted messages is reduced to an absolute minimum. This update includes direct links to the online RFC in ETIM CMT to view the complete request and/or to join the discussion on this request.

A non-conclusive listing of functions in CMT:

- Search, view and print ETIM classes in all available language versions; actual versions but also previous versions. The complete and detailed class history is available (what has been changed, by whom and when). Also reference products (pictures, product id, and links) can be saved to make clear what products should be classified in a certain class.
- Versions of the same class can be compared with each other to easily view the changes (using colours); it is also possible to compare different classes to each other to see what they have in common.
- View all available entities in the master tables, such as groups, features, values, units, synonyms; manage the translations if relevant and see in which classes these entities are used.
- Selections filter to select and print or export groups of classes using all available parameters as selection criteria. Members with login can save an indefinite number of selections to re-use including their PIF as mentioned earlier. Selections can be exported in all available export formats, like XML, Access, TXT, CSV and Excel.
- Add new classes or propose changes to existing classes (RFCs); a complete workflow engine is incorporated to assign tasks in the decision process and to communicate on actual status.
- View all the current RFCs and also RFC history to classes.
- A discussion board is available to involve members in the decision process on RFCs, the same discussion function is available for general discussions on a certain class (which then might lead to a RFC being proposed).
- Functions to prepare an official publication (only for administrators) including a number of standardized pre-publication checks to assure quality and consistency.

2.3. Expert groups

The expert groups (working groups) are the technical bodies in the standardization process. Each country of ETIM International can organize and administrate the structure of own expert groups. They check the content of the ETIM data model, develop own RFCs and check all external RFCs. These proposals shall be prepared in the local language and in the system language 'ETIM English' (British English).

The expert groups are composed of representatives from the manufacturers, the wholesalers and other relevant persons (associations, standards organizations ...). Expert groups can have a meeting at a national level or even cross-border. Usually, a representative of the relevant staff office should be present.

During a meeting, an expert group will develop existing classes and features or create new classes that are missing in the actual ETIM data model. It is recommended to take minutes to document the result of a meeting for the future. The expert group works out a suggestion, the final solution and decision is the responsibility of the ETIM Technical Committee. The result of a meeting has to be entered into the CMT to allow all ETIM members to evaluate the worked-out RFCs (especially the ETIM Technical Committee).

It is not always necessary to meet face-to-face; often it is enough to coordinate change requests by e-Mail, telephone or directly in CMT.

International expert group meetings would be ideal, but are very difficult to organize (location and time) and involve high costs (travelling) for those involved. So usually expert group meetings are only organized at local level and only in exceptional cases on international level, if the issues at hand require this. The ETIM TC has put in place some procedures to avoid overlapping or conflicting results from parallel local expert group sessions. Requested, planned or active local expert groups are required to be listed in the TC expert group board in Trello (collaboration tool to organize tasks and projects), so they are visible to other countries that also have requirements for the same product group. When there are expert groups active in multiple countries for the same product group, this expert groups board is used to coordinate the efforts. In addition to the Trello board, each expert group can open a discussion group on our community website, where discussion on specific topics is easily organized. This way we manage to combine local expertise with international consensus in the most pragmatic and efficient way.

2.4. Local ETIM organization

2.4.1. Local national secretariats and/or -staff offices

As mentioned in chapter 2.1 the organization of the national ETIM organizations is not centrally defined. However some guidelines are given by the statutes to the activities to be performed by the national organizations. For the purpose of this document as technical guidelines we want to distinguish here between administrative and political tasks as the responsibility of the national secretariat on the one hand and technical tasks as the responsibility of the national staff offices on the other hand. Depending on the national situation these two can be combined into one operational service. In this document we will only focus on the technical tasks, for the rest we refer to the current statutes.

Core local ETIM staff office duties:

- Organize the translation in local language(s) of the ETIM classification within the foreseen time frame, see also more detailed information in chapter 2.4.2.
- Provide know-how and administrative support to expert groups (or individual members) that are active in their country
- Receive local requests for change and perform a first evaluation for local approval or denial
- Enter approved local requests for change into the ETIM CMT tool and complete and/or check the system language 'ETIM English' (British English) translations if necessary
- Act as the communication liaison between the local ETIM members and the international organization regarding RFCs and other model issues
- Participate as empowered delegate in the Technical Committee and the joined activities regarding the model management and maintenance
- Participate actively in meetings and conferences organized by ETIM International concerning the development and promotion of the ETIM classification system
- Organize the distribution of the latest version of ETIM to the local members and promote the use of the latest version
- Avoid the creation of non-uniform versions by respecting the release plan of ETIM International

The above activity descriptions are non-conclusive but are given to indicate the scope and the responsibilities.

2.4.2. Local language versions

ETIM is an open standard and is available for free to everyone. This includes the coding structure and the system language ('ETIM English'), but NOT all local language versions. The following guidelines apply to local translations:

- The local ETIM organization is responsible for and has ownership of the local ETIM language version.
- Ownership concerns the file with translations that is prepared by the local ETIM organization. It does not involve copyright in the sense that other parties would be prohibited to make their own translations.
- ETIM International will always only accept and promote as official language version the one produced by the local ETIM organization
- The local ETIM organization decides who can have access to their local language version. ETIM International promotes the free availability of language versions, since our final goal (having ETIM classified product data) is best served by that. But ETIM International also understands that limiting access to language versions for 'members only' can help convince companies to become a member, especially in the start-up-phase.
- Language versions that are not open for all are still visible in ETIM CMT for everyone. So you can see all languages, but release and export files are only available to local members. Please also notice that is important that ETIM is open for all, meaning that anyone in any member country should have the opportunity to become a member of the local ETIM organization.

Open languages at this moment are ETIM English (our 'system language'), Belgian-Flemish, Belgian-French, Dutch, Finnish, German, Italian and Norwegian.

2.5. Technical Committee

The ETIM Technical Committee (TC) is the central body for all matters regarding the standardization process and formally reports to the ETIM International board. It has a technical supervision over the complete ETIM model. The TC will decide on all proposed RFCs (accept, rework, reject) by using the CMT and can also submit proposals to the board for approval (for matters beyond the model content). The board can ask the TC for advice in technical matters.

Each member country designates one person as a member of the TC, who is regarded as an ETIM technical expert. The Chairman of the TC shall be appointed by the Executive Board. Each member country has one vote in the TC. The named representative of a member country can designate a substitute delegate if necessary. Each member of the TC can propose guests for an official meeting to the Chairman, but only one named person per country can vote/decide.

Every member in the Technical Committee has one vote. Decisions are made by a simple majority of votes. Abstention is regarded as a "no-vote". If there is a tied vote the chairman decides. At least two times a year, there should be an international face-to-face meeting of the Committee members; the Chairman is responsible for the organization. A transcript of the meeting has to be made, which will be communicated to the TC members and to the ETIM International board. TC members are responsible for informing their national board.

If necessary, the TC works together with other relevant institutions and initiatives.

If an ETIM member does not agree with a decision of the Technical Committee, he can raise an objection to the ETIM International board. The objection has to be verbalised written in English and has to include all information to enable a fast and precise final decision of the board members.

Further non-conclusive tasks of the ETIM Technical Committee:

- to make proposals for the further development, enhancement and maintenance of ETIM
- development of these guidelines
- development of CMT
- development of the ETIM data model (beyond the content)
- forwarding information to the ETIM International board
- forwarding information to the own member countries
- central administration and coordination of special overlapping nominating features (colours, protection symbols, ...)
- technical coordination and realization of collaborations with other classification initiatives, within the framework of the cooperation as agreed by the board and/or the General Assembly (e.g. eCI@ss, PI, proficl@ss, GS1)
- discuss recommendations for the exchange formats
- responsibility for the English data model, incl. synonyms

3. ETIM Classification Model

What is product classification?

Product classification is simply a logical, unambiguous classification (taxonomy) of products in different product classes (categories), designed so that anyone within the sector can communicate about those products without misunderstandings. The ETIM model gives a listing of the most important technical characteristics of each product class to describe and find the products. Each class has several synonyms, thereby finding the right product is much easier for everyone!

Why product classification?

No double work due to constantly having to manually re-enter information that was already there electronically; Minimisation of failure costs of incorrect orders due to confusing or incorrect product information; High quality of product data, which is even considered a strategic asset these days; Optimal support of product data to numerous functional applications that use and rely on these data; Efficient product data management;

International concept

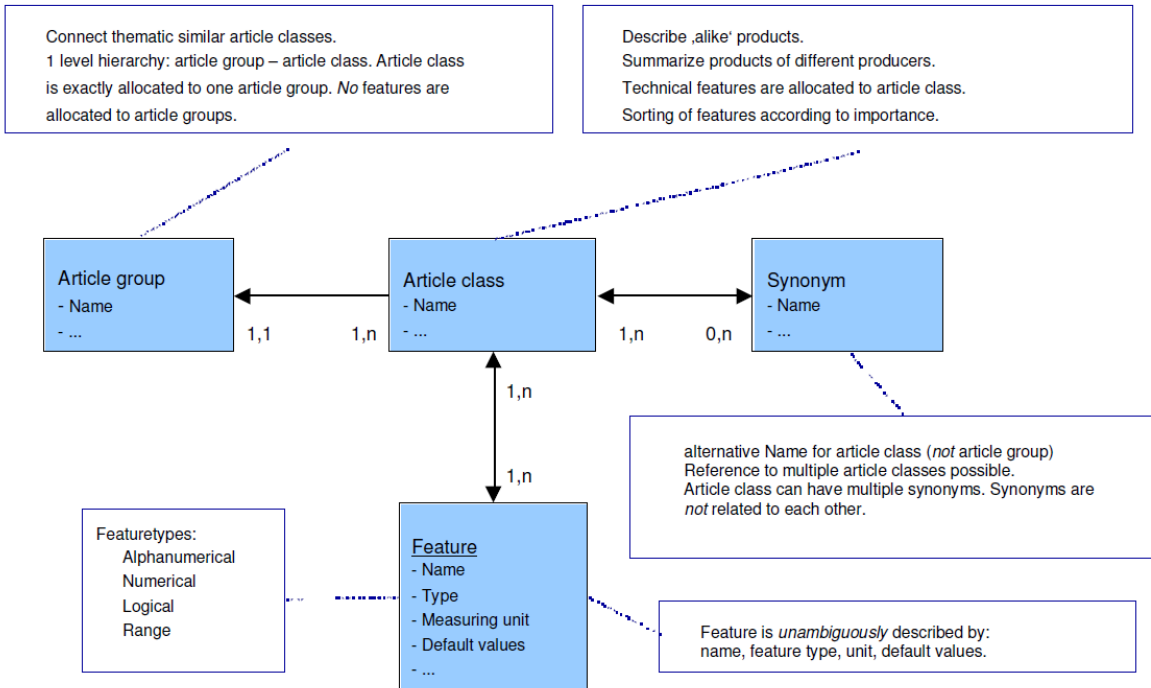
The fundamental idea is the international use of one identical standard ETIM model. The integration of the ETIM structure in the product information management systems of international companies gives suppliers and wholesalers a strategic option to standardize the flow of data and exchange the product information between different countries for all available products.

Model

The ETIM Classification model is built using the following categories or entities:

- Product groups
- Product classes
- Synonyms (Keywords)
- Features
- Values
- Units

A schematic view of the model and its relations:



Picture 1: Logical data model for ETIM

All classes, features, values and units have a clear and unique identifier that is language-independent; the description of the entities however is language-dependent.

Entity	Identifier ID	ID example	Max. length description
Group	EG + 6 digits	EG000017	80 positions
Class	EC + 6 digits	EC000016	80 positions
Feature	EF + 6 digits	EF000138	80 positions
Value	EV + 6 digits	EV000147	80 positions
Unit	EU + 6 digits	EU000015	15 positions (abbreviation e.g. mm) 80 positions (description e.g. millimetre)
Synonym	no ID	-	80 positions

Group:

The ETIM model is a two-level classification model. The two-levels consist of the product group and product classes. The product group is used to order the product classes. Every product class is assigned to exactly one product group. Nevertheless, ETIM is organized flat, because the groups are only for the convenient organization of the management of the product classes. Essential – and that is the real focus of ETIM- is the definition of product classes and their features.

Class:

Describes similar products, bundles products of different manufacturers or suppliers; all product classes have features to specify the technical characteristics of the products in the class, the features of each class are ordered due to their importance and are also structured meaningful (dimensions, features of electrical data, ...)

Feature:

A feature is clearly described by: description, feature type, unit and/or value

Feature types:

A – alphanumeric = list of possible values (e.g. red, green, long, short, ...)

L – logic = yes or no questions (also known as Boolean; “true” or “false”)

N – numeric = one numeric value

R – range = two numeric values that limit a range (interval) of values. The ETIM range feature is considered to be a closed range, so an interval which includes all its limit points, mathematically denoted as [a..b].

Value:

To each alphanumeric feature of an ETIM class, a fixed list of possible values is assigned; the order of this value list of a feature within an ETIM class is sorted language-dependent; so the value list of the feature “EF000007 – Colour” can be different in each ETIM class that uses this feature.

Unit:

Numerical and range features always need a unit of measurement which defines what value is expected. An exception are features like “number of...”. These numerical features do not need a unit.

Since ETIM is now no longer just used in Europe but globally, we had a difficult challenge regarding units in the classification model. Where we use metric units in Europe, in North America they use imperial units. What makes it even more complicated is that often the unit is the same (like Watt, Volt, Lumen, ...) and in other cases different (like millimetre versus inch). To tackle this problem we introduced a second unit field in our database for imperial units, which is only filled when the feature has a different unit for the metric and imperial system. See screenshot below for an example in CMT. For more information on how we made this work in the data exchange without changing the exchange format, see chapter 4.4. on metric versus imperial release.

Features		Translations	Discussion	Reference products	Mappings from this	Mappin
	Code	Description	Type	Unit	Unit (imp.)	
1	EF007094	Width sensor	N	mm	inch	
2	EF007111	Diameter sensor	N	mm	inch	
3	EF007283	Height of sensor	N	mm	inch	
4	EF007334	Length of sensor	N	mm	inch	
5	EF007084	Rated operation current Ie at AC-15, 24 V	N	A		

To find if a unit has an imperial equivalent and what that would be, just click on or go to the (metric) unit details and see the remark field for the corresponding imperial unit code.

Home / Units / Unit

EU570448: Millimetre

Remark: **Imperial equivalent = EU000051.**

Synonym:

Also often referred to as “keyword”, it means an alternative name for a product class (not for a product group) and a reference to several product classes is possible, a product class can have several synonyms, synonyms are not related to each other. A synonym does not have an ID, it is directly assigned to an ETIM class (language-dependent). The local ETIM organization is responsible for the synonyms in the local language.

Since there is not yet a (native English speaking) local ETIM organization in Great Britain, the TC has the final responsibility regarding the English language version, including the synonyms.

An example of an ETIM class which contains all relevant feature types:

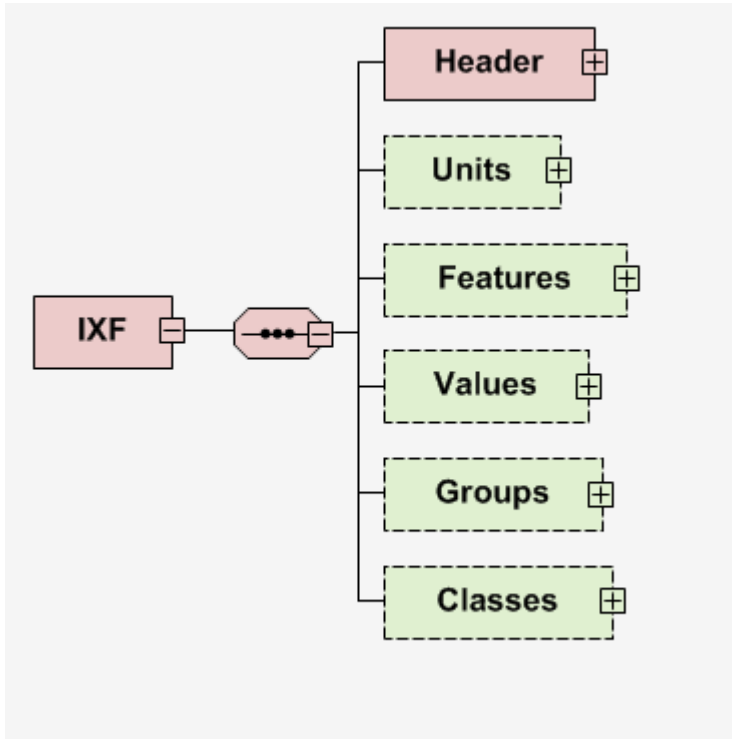
ETIM International - Classification Management Tool - Class Viewer				
Group	: EG000009 - Cable and wire entry systems			
Description	: Cable plug sealing clamp			
ArtClassID	: EC000451			
ArtClassVersion	: 4 (11/26/2007 11:27:14 AM)			
Status	: 5			
<hr/>				
Synonyms: Cable entry; Cable inlet; Cable plug sealing clamp; Insert; Nozzle; Sealing plug				
<hr/>				
Features				
<hr/>				
No.	Description	A/N/L/R	Unit	Value
1	Nominal diameter	N	mm	
2	Nominal size PG	N		
3	Model	A		Open; Closed; Trimmmable (cut away);
4	Sealing range	R	mm	
5	For wall thickness	R	mm	
6	Degree of protection (IP)	A		IP00; IP10; IP12; IPX7; Other; Rubber; Plastic; Other;
7	Material	A		Light grey; Black; White; Natural colour; Other;
8	Colour	A		
9	Halogen free	L		
(End Features)				

4. Release format classification

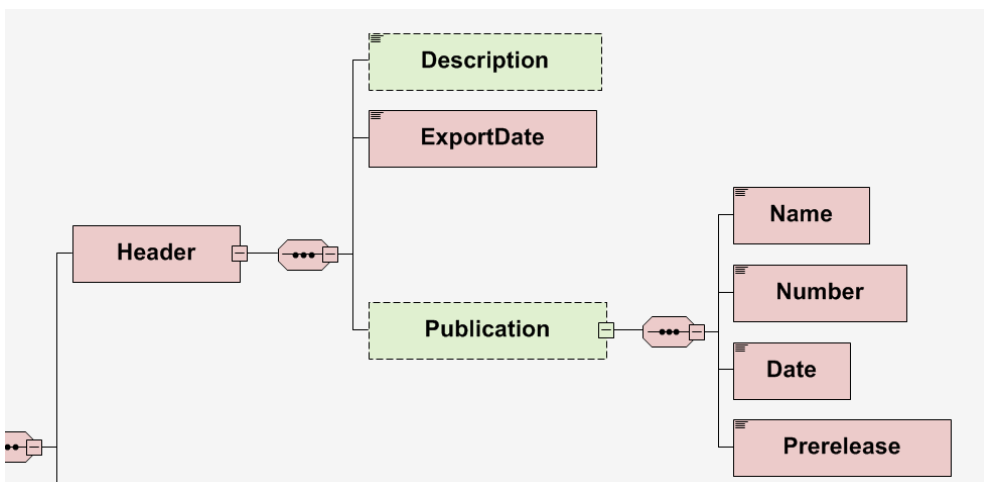
4.1. IXF format

The content of the ETIM model is identical in all member countries, which means that any ETIM class in use in a country has exactly the same features with the same identifying code for all the countries. However, in the past the release format was slightly different per country. Because this could and did indeed cause some confusion, ETIM decided to develop a new uniform international release format based on XML, a modern and flexible carrier for the ETIM model. Every country can still decide to have additional country-specific release formats, as described in chapter 4.2, but starting from ETIM 6.0 ETIM IXF will be considered THE international standard ETIM release format. The ETIM IXF format is multilingual, so it can contain multiple language versions of the ETIM model in one file. Below the summarized XSD diagram is displayed to give an overview of the sections in the format, after that we will focus on the respective sections in more detail. However for the complete and detailed format description we refer to the separate document on ETIM IXF.

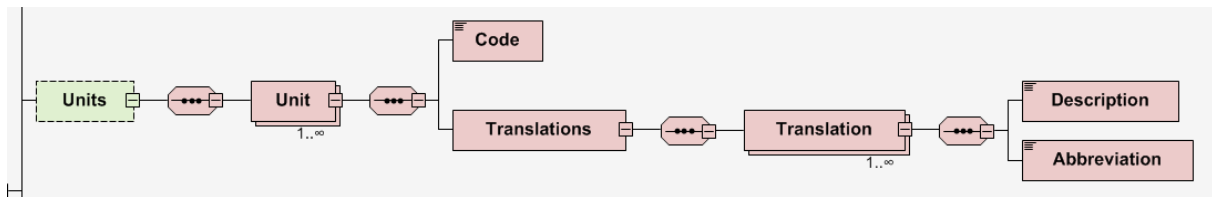
The format is built up with a header section, master tables with all the used groups, features, values, units and the class section defining classes and relating them to groups, features, values and units.



In the header section general information about the release is given. Since the ETIM IXF format can and will also be used for exports from the database that are not official ETIM releases, the header section is divided into two elements that at first impression might seem to overlap each other. In case of an export that is not an official release the “Publication” element can be omitted. The element “Prerelease”, a Boolean that indicates if this publication is a pre-release or not, is related to the possibility of using ETIM IXF for a more dynamic release of ETIM, which is explained in chapter 4.3.



The master table for units contains all the units used in this release or export, with its official code (ID) and the respective translations of description and abbreviation, as illustrated in the example below.

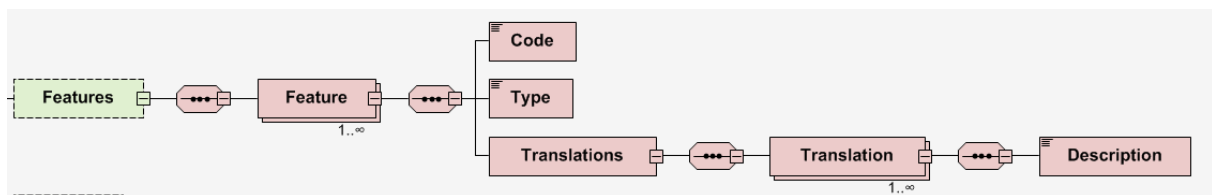


```

<Code>EU000002</Code>
<Translations>
  <Translation language="de-DE">
    <Description>Hekto-Pascal</Description>
    <Abbreviation>hPa</Abbreviation>
  </Translation>
  <Translation language="en-GB">
    <Description>Hecto Pascal</Description>
    <Abbreviation>hPa</Abbreviation>
  </Translation>
</Translations>

```

The master table for features contains all the features used in this release or export, with its official code (ID), the type of feature (A, N, R or L) and the respective translations of the description, as illustrated in the example below.

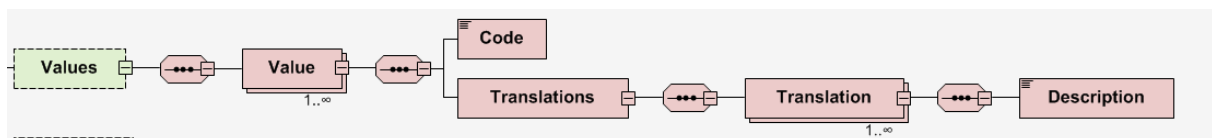


```

<Feature>
  <Code>EF005497</Code>
  <Type>Range</Type>
  <Translations>
    <Translation language="de-DE">
      <Description>Aderdurchmesser</Description>
    </Translation>
    <Translation language="en-GB">
      <Description>Core diameter</Description>
    </Translation>
  </Translations>
</Feature>

```

The master table for values contains all the values used in this release or export, with its official code (ID) and the respective translations of the description, as illustrated in the example below.

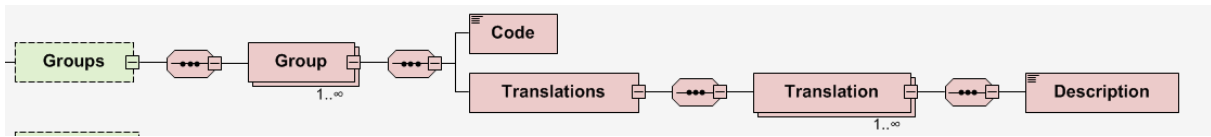


```

<Value>
  <Code>EV006702</Code>
  <Translations>
    <Translation language="de-DE">
      <Description>Steckverbinder M12</Description>
    </Translation>
    <Translation language="en-GB">
      <Description>Connector M12</Description>
    </Translation>
    <Translation language="sv-SE">
      <Description>Kontaktidon M12</Description>
    </Translation>
  </Translations>
</Value>

```

The master table for groups contains all the groups used in this release or export, with its official code (ID) and the respective translations of the description, as illustrated in the example below.

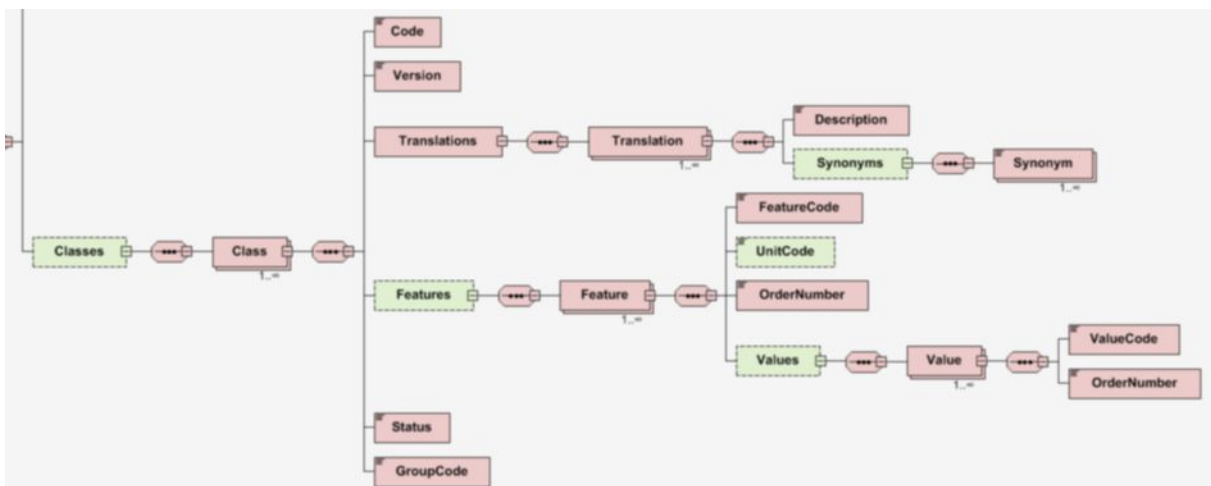


```

<Group>
<Code>EG000003</Code>
<Translations>
<Translation language="de-DE">
<Description>Schutzschlauchsysteme</Description>
</Translation>
<Translation language="en-GB">
<Description>Protective hose systems</Description>
</Translation>
  
```

Finally the “classes” section defines all the classes included in the release or export. The following elements are defined per class:

- The class code (ID)
- The class version
 - Please note that this class version is no longer related to the release version, as it was in the past! A new class will have version 1 and the class version only changes if the class has been changed.
- The translation part gives the translations of the official class name, but also the language dependent synonyms per language version.
- The relations between the class and its allocated features, values and/or units including the display order.
- The status of a class, which will always be “Published” if it concerns an official release, in case of a pre-release the value “ReadyForPublication” can occur for classes that are changed after the latest official release.
- Finally the class is attributed to a group



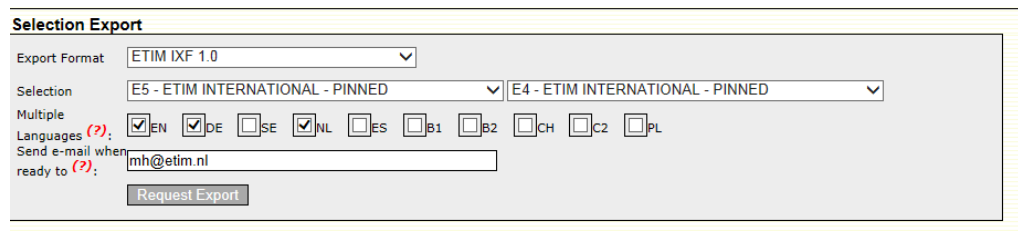
What the above diagram does not indicate is that the ETIM IXF format also contains change codes on CLASS level, on CLASSFEATURE level and on CLASSFEATUREVALUE level. These change codes indicate if an element is new, changed, unchanged or deleted.

```

</Class>
<Class changeCode="Changed">
<Code>EC010033</Code>
<Version>3</Version>
<Translations>
<Translation language="en-GB">
<Description>Plastic slide plate, feed-through tile</Description>
<Synonyms>
<Synonym>Plastic slide plate, feed-through tile</Synonym>
</Synonyms>
</Translation>
<Translation language="nl-NL">
<Description>Kunststof glijtschaal dakdoorvoerpan</Description>
<Synonyms>
<Synonym>Glijtschaal</Synonym>
<Synonym>Knobbel</Synonym>
<Synonym>Kunststof glijtschaal dakdoorvoerpan</Synonym>
<Synonym>Regenschaal</Synonym>
<Synonym>Schamierstuk</Synonym>
</Synonyms>
</Translation>
</Translations>
<Features>
<Feature changeCode="Unchanged">
<FeatureCode>EF024327</FeatureCode>
<UnitCode>EU570448</UnitCode>
<OrderNumber>1</OrderNumber>
</Feature>
<Feature changeCode="New">
<FeatureCode>EF025219</FeatureCode>
<OrderNumber>2</OrderNumber>
<Values>
<Value changeCode="New">
<ValueCode>EV005866</ValueCode>
<OrderNumber>1</OrderNumber>
</Value>
<Value changeCode="New">

```

These change codes are automatically generated at the export from the ETIM database, related to the release version it is being compared to, based on the selections given in the command line.



4.2. Country specific formats

The ETIM IXF format as described in chapter 4.1 is the international master or source format for all the member countries. However, local ETIM organizations are free to choose other additional formats in which they want to make the ETIM model available to their local members. This is often done to serve specific needs of users or more general software applications.

It is also possible to communicate additional country-specific elements that are not in the core ETIM model. For example: The Netherlands has an old class coding system for ETIM classes called UBIM, where EC000001 is coded as 6550-039. This coding system has no international relevance, but is still of interest to some Dutch user groups. Although no longer in the official release from version ETIM 6.0, the local Dutch staff office will still maintain this additional coding for some time. A country specific format can be used to communicate ETIM with these additional UBIM codes.

ETIM International has neither direct involvement nor responsibility in the definition and distribution of country specific formats, other than to facilitate these in the CMT database. The ETIM CMT master database already supports a range of exports formats like ASCII (TXT), CSV, ACCESS and EXCEL. Please contact your local staff office for more information on country specific formats in your country.

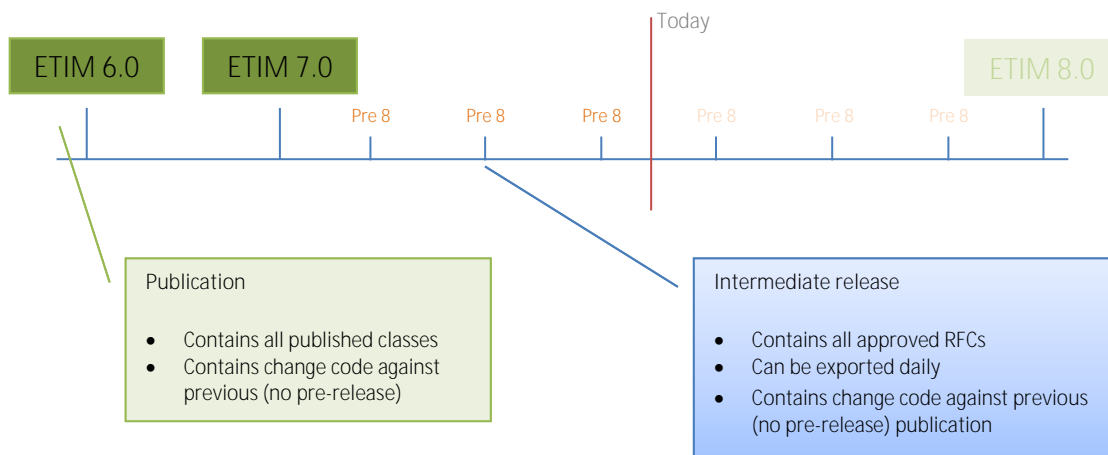
4.3. Dynamic release

The time period between official international ETIM releases is momentarily around three years. This time period is determined by factors like adaptation time, version stability and time for development cycle. It is clear that a standard needs version stability, which can be considered an advantage of a standard and cannot be expected to be able to adapt to market- or product changes real time. This will not change for the official release, the version that everyone is expected to support.

On the other hand however, the market is asking ETIM more and more to provide a more flexible solution, a solution that makes it possible to anticipate the next publication. This means using new classes, features or values already for internal applications. This means being able to communicate this information bilaterally between two trading partners, if both support this information. This means having an option of spreading the internal work load involved in adapting the classified product information to a new ETIM release.

For those countries interested in offering a more dynamic solution to release changes to their members ETIM International will support so called “intermediate releases”. This intermediate release contains all classes that are “Published” or “Ready to publish” at the moment of export. Each country can decide if it wants to offer an intermediate release or not, and if so, if they want to have a continuous dynamic release (daily or weekly) or not (ETIM 6.1 etcetera). See example scheme below.

Timeline publication & pre-releases



Clearly there are restrictions to an intermediate release. Everyone is expected to support an official ETIM version; intermediate releases are always optional for those who wish to use them and are either for internal use or bilateral exchange only. Moreover, class changes that are “ready to publish” can still be revoked depending on the arguments; of course this should be exception rather than the rule.

We strongly advice that software tools using the dynamic publication visualize the upcoming changes, additions and deletions so that the manufacturer and also the user of the data can see and decide which features and values to fill and/or use.

A dynamic or intermediate release is identified in the ETIM IXF format by the header element “Prerelease” and always gives the changes related to the current official ETIM release using the change codes as explained in chapter 4.1. For more technical details we refer to the format description document on the ETIM IXF format and the dedicated document on ETIM Dynamic release, which you can find in the download section on our website (under classification and format).

4.4. Metric versus imperial release

As explained before the ETIM model now supports the addition of imperial units of measurement, if they are different from the unit used in the metrical system. In this chapter we will explain how this is implemented in the ETIM release format and how it works in actual data exchange without changing the ETIM BMEcat exchange format.

Only in CMT (see screenshot in chapter 3) you will see both units next to each other, length is still length, whether it is expressed in meters or feet. But if we make an export (release) from CMT you can choose to have metric units, imperial units or both.

Export current selected classes ✕

Name

Export Format

Compared to

Features Metric Imperial Both

Languages ETIM English Belgian Flemish Belgian French British English Danish Dutch Finnish French German Norwegian Italian Polish Spanish Swedish Swiss French Swiss Italian

Send e-mail to

At the export for the features with imperial units a different code is assigned to distinguish it from the metrical variant. So for example you can have an EF007220 for Busbar thickness in mm and an EFI07220 for Busbar thickness in inch.

```

Features
├── Feature
│   ├── changeCode = "Unchanged"
│   ├── FeatureCode
│   │   └── EF007220
│   ├── UnitCode
│   │   └── EU570448
│   └── OrderNumber
├── Feature
│   ├── changeCode = "Unchanged"
│   ├── FeatureCode
│   │   └── EFI07220
│   ├── UnitCode
│   │   └── EU000051
│   └── OrderNumber

```

```

<Features>
  <Feature changeCode="Unchanged">
    <FeatureCode>EF007220</FeatureCode>
    <UnitCode>EU570448</UnitCode>
    <OrderNumber>1</OrderNumber>
  </Feature>
  <Feature changeCode="Unchanged">
    <FeatureCode>EFI07220</FeatureCode>
    <UnitCode>EU000051</UnitCode>
    <OrderNumber>1</OrderNumber>
  </Feature>
  <Feature changeCode="Unchanged">
    <FeatureCode>EFI07219</FeatureCode>
    <UnitCode>EU000051</UnitCode>
    <OrderNumber>2</OrderNumber>
  </Feature>
  <Feature changeCode="Unchanged">
    <FeatureCode>EF007219</FeatureCode>
    <UnitCode>EU570448</UnitCode>
    <OrderNumber>2</OrderNumber>
  </Feature>

```

So the separate EFI code (still related to the original metric one) makes it unambiguous again. And as you can see for the example below, it is now possible to unambiguously exchange both the values for the metric and imperial unit at the same time.

```

<FEATURE>
  <FNAME>EF007337</FNAME>
  <FVALUE>0.5</FVALUE>
  <FVALUE>16</FVALUE>
</FEATURE>
<FEATURE>
  <FNAME>EF107337</FNAME>
  <FVALUE> 0.0197</FVALUE>
  <FVALUE> 0.6299</FVALUE>
</FEATURE>
<FEATURE>
  <FNAME>EF007343</FNAME>
  <FVALUE>0.5</FVALUE>
  <FVALUE>10</FVALUE>
</FEATURE>
<FEATURE>
  <FNAME>EF107343</FNAME>
  <FVALUE>0.0197</FVALUE>
  <FVALUE>0.3937</FVALUE>
</FEATURE>
  
```

4.5. Release version notation

The notation for ETIM releases has been quite diverse in the past. It is important that we use a consistent notation in all formats and documentation. ETIM decided for an official notation as “ETIM-7.0” for official releases and “DYNAMIC” for intermediate/dynamic releases. Any ETIM documentation that is not yet compliant with this notation will be changed at first occasion (release or revision).

5. Exchange format for classified product data

The ETIM data model is completely uniform, differing only in the language.

The exchange format for classified product data, not to be confused with the release format for the data model, however is set and defined by each local ETIM organization individually. ETIM International recommends the BMEcat® standard, which is the most common exchange format within the ETIM countries.

The BMEcat®-Standard was introduced in November 1999 in cooperation with the BME e.V. (German Federal Association for Materials-Management, Procurement and Logistics) as a standard for electronic data-transfer of multimedia product-catalogues. It is based on the internet-standard XML (Extensible Markup Language) as a universal platform and manufacturer-independent exchange-format. Catalogues created in this generally-accepted format prevent special individual solutions for different customers.

The BMEcat®-standard today counts as one of the most strongly accepted formats for e-business. Numerous well-known companies e.g. American Express, AUDI, Bayer, BMW, Deutsche Bahn, Philips, Siemens, VISA and many others take part in the BMEcat® initiative.

ETIM International has released guidelines on how to use the BMEcat® Version 2005 standard for the exchange of ETIM classified product data, including country specific regulations. See the dedicated

ETIM BMEcat guideline document, which you can find in the download section on our website. ETIM also offers its members the use of the ETIM BMEcat certification tool to validate and certify their ETIM BMEcat files to the ETIM BMEcat guidelines and the ETIM classification releases. You can find this tool following the links on the top of our homepage.

However, in some countries specific national formats are still in use and accepted as sector standard, sometimes in addition to BMEcat®. To get the information which data format is currently established in an ETIM country, please contact your local ETIM office.

6. Processes and procedures

A support contact per country is appointed, who will organize and coordinate the (local) process of generating change requests to the current ETIM version. Whether this is done by appointing working groups or otherwise will be left to the country's own judgement. The support contact will be responsible for entering change requests in the ETIM CMT portal, after which they can be processed and decided on. This chapter describes the possible processes, the workflow and the decision making.

6.1. Development of new classes

When new classes are proposed first a check will be done to ensure that the products are not already covered by existing classes or should be seen as an extension by changing existing classes. The country staff office will perform this first check which will be verified by the TC. If the request for a new class will be estimated as an extension to an existing class the necessary changes to the existing class will be proposed and are further to be processed as such. When it is clear that the respective products have no interference or overlap with existing classes the request will be developed as a new ETIM class. See further chapter 6.4 for general provisions to RCFs.

6.2. Changes to existing classes

Changes to existing classes can be of different nature:

- The complete deletion of an existing class
 - Arguments can be various: can be old products that no longer exist; product classes that are moved to a more general class (generalisation); product classes that are split up in more specific classes (specialisation); classes that appear to be double. In case of deletion where possible the code(s) of the replacement class(es) will be indicated.
- Textual improvements to class names, synonyms, features or values
 - Since these changes are always language dependent they can be handled within the responsibility of the local staff office without approval of the TC as long as it is made sure that the meaning of the entity is still in accordance with the intended meaning, the English translation is leading to determine the intended meaning
- The addition or deletion of synonyms
 - Since these changes are always language dependent they can be handled within the responsibility of the local staff office without approval of the TC
- The addition of a new feature
- The deletion of an existing feature
 - Because this can have great impact on already available classified product data in the market a clear argumentation why deletion is asked for is vital for the decision process
- Change of unit to an existing feature (N- or R-type)
 - Mostly in case of errors occurred at entering into CMT, for example Length in “ml” changed to “mm”
 - Caution is advised when making unit changes such as Length in “mm” changed to “m”, since if a supplier overlooks the change at a release change it has a severe impact on the correctness of his data

- The addition of a value to an existing feature
 - Important is to make sure that the additional value does not affect the meaning of existing values. Example: if the value list for the feature “Material” already contains the value “Plastic”, the addition of the value “PVC” would make the list inconclusive, since PVC is also plastic
- The deletion of a value from an existing feature
 - As with the deletion of features a clear argumentation is asked for
- Change of the EG group to which a class is attributed.
- Change of the sector(s) to which a class is attributed.

6.3. General improvements

The TC and/or the staff offices can initiate general improvements to the ETIM model to improve the model quality, which can have impact on individual classes. Usually these improvements are related to consistency or duplicates in entities. However the TC can decide to dose the execution of this type of changes in time to keep the impact of changes within reasonable limits. General improvements are usually a result of the application of guidelines that are determined. For guidelines see chapter 7.

Examples:

- Consistency in the use of abbreviations. In most language versions words like “maximum” are abbreviated as “Max.”
- Consistency in the use of punctuation marks like “x/y” instead of “x / y”
- Duplicates like “Type of lamp” versus “Lamp type”

Note: In CMT we can give double features or values the status ‘deprecated’. This means that they still exist in the ETIM tables since they are used in actual class versions, but can no longer be found or selected when entering new classification. The status of ‘deprecated’ elements is made clear by displaying them in a lighter shade of grey as the example below, making them easy to recognize. If then a class containing ‘deprecated’ elements is under construction (for other reasons), the opportunity is used to change the ‘deprecated’ element to its successor. This way the change is the least disturbing for suppliers using the specific class. When there are no more class versions using the deprecated element it will no longer appear in the ETIM release (but still exists in the ETIM master database while used in previous versions!).

EF021982	With piezo ignition	L
EF021983	Facility for remote control	L
EF021450	With remote control	L
EF000781	Protection	A

6.4. General provisions to RFCs

Regardless of the nature of the development (new class, change to existing class, general improvement) the procedure to hand in, process and decide an RFC is the same. This chapter gives some general provisions on RFCs and describes the workflow and decision making.

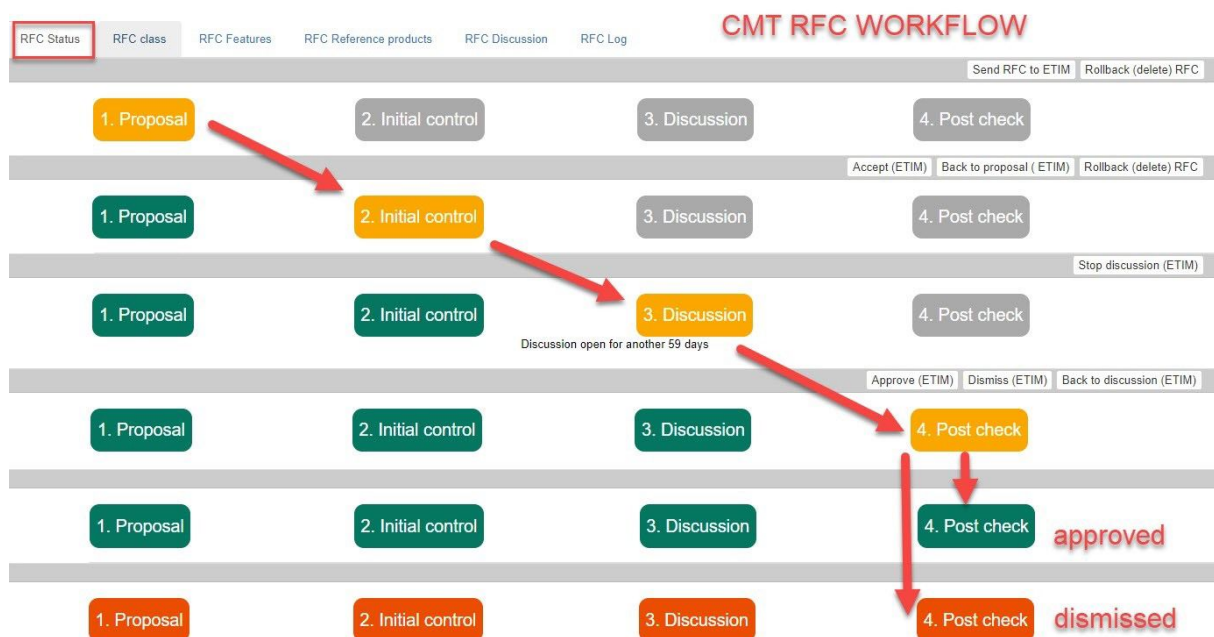
First some general provisions to which an RFC has to comply with to be accepted as a valid RFC:

- The communication language for RFCs and discussion is English. All proposals (content) are to be entered in the countries own language(s) as well as in the system language ‘ETIM English’ (British English)
- To make clear to other stakeholders which products are dealt with the addition of reference products (pictures, preferably also manufacturer product numbers) is mandatory
- The general description of the RFC gives a clear summary of the nature of the changes proposed, like “Add synonym ES” or “Delete feature because of changed regulations”
- The general description of the RFC gives a clear indication of who requested the RFC

RFC checks/processing includes:

- Verifying if there is not yet an existing class for the products at hand (for new classes)
- Assess if a new class is not too specific or too general
- Verifying if a new class has been assigned to the proper product group
- Check consistency with related classes (e.g. naming of classes for accessories should be consistent with class for main product)
- Check if general RFC info is entered correctly (title, requester, type of request,..)
- Check If a (new) class is assigned to the proper sector(s)
- Check if the arguments for the proposed changes are sufficient including reference products
- Assess if the proposed features are correct for the products at hand
- Check if proposed new features comply with ETIM guidelines and do not exist already, consistency feature sorting etc. When new features or values have been created unjustified, these have to be deleted again right away to avoid further 'pollution'.
- Replace possible deprecated features and values (marked to be deleted in time) with successor (this is actually maintenance, but still part of RFC process)
- Check completeness language requester and completeness and correctness of ETIM English translations. Also check if the other translations (of existing features and values) fit within the context of the products at hand.
- Report (via CMT logging) of possible imperfections that need to be adjusted before the request can be accepted (or report of changes I did to the RFC myself if that was more pragmatic). If necessary consult with requester for explanation or discussion.
- Accept RFC and set to discussion status
- After discussion period has ended check if there are remarks received from others (and judge/weigh these) and check if possible requested changes have been implemented. If necessary extend discussion period en report back via RFC log the remaining issues to requester.
- Eventually approve or (with argumentation) dismiss the request.

The workflow, as incorporated in the CMT tool, knows four phases in the RFC process, these are clearly indicated at the status page of an RFC, see example below of all the subsequent phases:



Phase 1 – Proposal

In this phase the requester can prepare his RFC by entering the requested changes directly in the CMT system. In this phase the RFC is not yet visible in lists with RFC overviews and will not yet be notified to stakeholders. When the requester finishes his request he can send the RFC to ETIM, or if he decides to withdraw his request he can roll back the complete RFC.

Phase 2 – Initial control

As soon as the requester has sent in his request the workflow initiates a notification to the ETIM administrator groups (always TC members) that a proposal for a change request has been handed in through CMT. The RFC is assigned to the person that should consider it and respond to the requester within 7 days if his request is accepted (set open for discussion), set back to proposal (additional information requested) or rolled back (dismissed). In this phase a brief check is done if the RFC complies with ETIM rules and regulations. In case the RFC is dismissed of course a clear argumentation is given, like the person is not entitled to propose RFCs, the proposed class already exists, etc. When the RFC is regarded as a valid RFC and it is accepted by the administrator, it is assigned to and automatically set to the next phase in the workflow. Admittance of an RFC in this phase can be done by all individual administrators and does not require approval of the full TC.

Phase 3 – Discussion

In this phase the RFC is set open for discussion for a period of 60 days, all allowed stakeholders (ETIM members) can participate in the discussion using the discussion board to an RFC. For minor changes (only additions, this to the judgement of the TC), the TC can decide to skip the discussion phase, to make it possible to enable a quick implementation. At the start of this phase a notification is sent (by weekly summary at this time) to everyone that has indicated he wants to be informed to changes in this class or group of classes. Notification is organized by PIF (personal interest filter), as described in chapter 2.2. All discussion entries are also included in the weekly status update on changes.

After 60 days the discussion term will be automatically closed by the workflow engine and a notification is sent to the administrator group.

Phase 4 – Post check

Depending on the status of the discussion the administrator could decide to extend the discussion term with another 60 days. If the discussion is not extended, the administrator will estimate if the RFC is ready to be scheduled for decision making by the TC. There are basically three scenarios in this:

- If there is no discussion or the discussion has led to an agreement on the RFC, the RFC will be scheduled for approval by the TC.
- If the discussion has not led to an agreement on the RFC but to the opinion of the TC a workable compromise is feasible, a proposal for a final RFC proposal is done by the TC by e-mail to the involved parties. After receiving the response to the proposal the RFC will be scheduled for final decision making.
- If the discussion on the RFC is substantial and if in the opinion of the TC an easy agreement on the RFC is not expected the TC can organize a (physical or teleconference) meeting intended to find a compromise solution. If no compromise can be reached the TC will take a decision on the RFC considering all interests as good as possible. If necessary the TC will ask for an investigation to be performed by neutral experts.

The decision of the TC will be notified to the requester. If the RFC is dismissed a proper argumentation will be given why the RFC is dismissed. If the RFC is approved, the class version status will be automatically set to “ready for publication”, the class version is available in intermediate releases and will officially be published at the next official release.

The decision of the TC is open for appeal to any ETIM member that has objections to the decision; such has to be done within 30 days after the TC decision by e-mail to cmt@etim-international.com with reference to the RFC-id and with a clear argumentation of the objection. The TC will answer to the appellant if his objection is admissible and if so the objection will be scheduled for examination in the next TC meeting. The TC will communicate its reasoned decision on the objection to the appellant. If the appellant disagrees with the decision of the TC on his objection a final appeal is open to him directly to the executive board.

6.5. Specific CMT procedures

6.5.1. Class translation and synonym updates

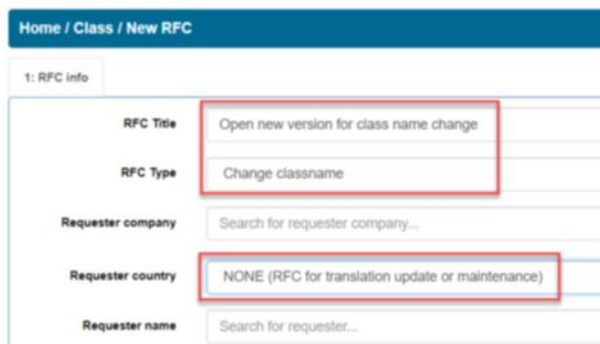
The procedure to enter class translations (new or changes) or add synonyms does not follow the standard RFC procedure. To avoid many separate RFCs for each translation update, class translations and synonyms can be added and edited continuously until the class is published.

Some basic 'need to know' things first:

- The class translation of a published class in ETIM is part of an ETIM release and cannot be changed online in CMT.
 - So if you want to add or change class translations for published classes (like update for ETIM 7.0) you will always have to send an Excel to the international staff office with as column names ARTCLASSID, ARTCLASSVERSION, LANGUAGECODE and ARTCLASSDESC. We will then upload it in the database, please note that the ARTCLASSVERSION column is very important to connect the translation to the right class version!
- If the class translation is for the next release (or dynamic release) then you can enter it in CMT if your login allows you to do so.
- Class Translations are no longer part of an RFC and no longer in the RFC tab pages.
- Before you can add or change class translations or synonyms there has to be a new version of the class first. So if there was no other (approved) RFC yet to the class you still have to open one to create a new working version.
- All this might seem unnecessary complicated, but the RFC processes in the CMT database are not that easy, so there is no easier solution.
- There are 3 scenario's as described below:

Existing class - no open RFC yet:

- Open a new RFC and use as RFC title "Open new version for class name change" or "Open new version for synonyms" and set RFC type to "Change class name" or "Add/delete synonyms".




Home / Class / New RFC

1: RFC info

RFC Title	Open new version for class name change
RFC Type	Change classname
Requester company	Search for requester company...
Requester country	NONE (RFC for translation update or maintenance)
Requester name	Search for requester...

- Now a new version of the class is created and anyone (with sufficient rights) can change class translations till the class will be published again. Just send the RFC in, the staff office will approve it or close it if it is no longer needed.
- Now leave the RFC by clicking on the highest version number and then click on the Translations page. You can now change translations by just clicking on the class translation you want to change. Change the translation and click OK.



ETIM

International

Home / Classes / Class

Combination of contactors

Class code: EC000010
Sector: E
Group code: EG000017 - Low-voltage industrial con

EC000010 - Combination of contactors

Class version: 4 5 6 7

Compare to version: 4 5 6 7

RFCs (1)

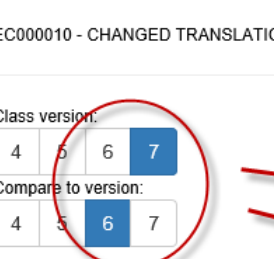
[Create new RFC...](#)

9610 [Open new version for class name change](#)

Features
Translations
Discussion
Reference prod

	Translation	Synonyms
🇧🇪	Beveiligingssamenstelling	Aanzetter ✖ ; Au Motorstarter ✖ ; Omkeerschakelaa Sterdriehoekstarte
🇧🇪	Contacteurs Assemblés	Bloc de contacteur Combinaison de pr Contacteur étoile
🇳🇱	Automatische sterdriehoekschakelaar	Aanzetter ✖ ; Au Motorsterdriehoek Omkeerschakelaar Sterdriehoekstarte
🇩🇰	Add translation...	Add synonym...
🇬🇧	Combination of contactors	Automatic reversing Motor starter ✖ ; Sterdriehoekcombin

- You can see the changed translation(s) by comparing to the previous (published) version



ETIM

International

Home / Classes / Class

Combination of contactors

Class code: EC000010
Sector: E
Group code: EG000017 - Low-voltage industrial con

EC000010 - CHANGED TRANSLATION DEMO

Class version: 4 5 6 7

Compare to version: 4 5 6 7

RFCs (1)

[Create new RFC...](#)

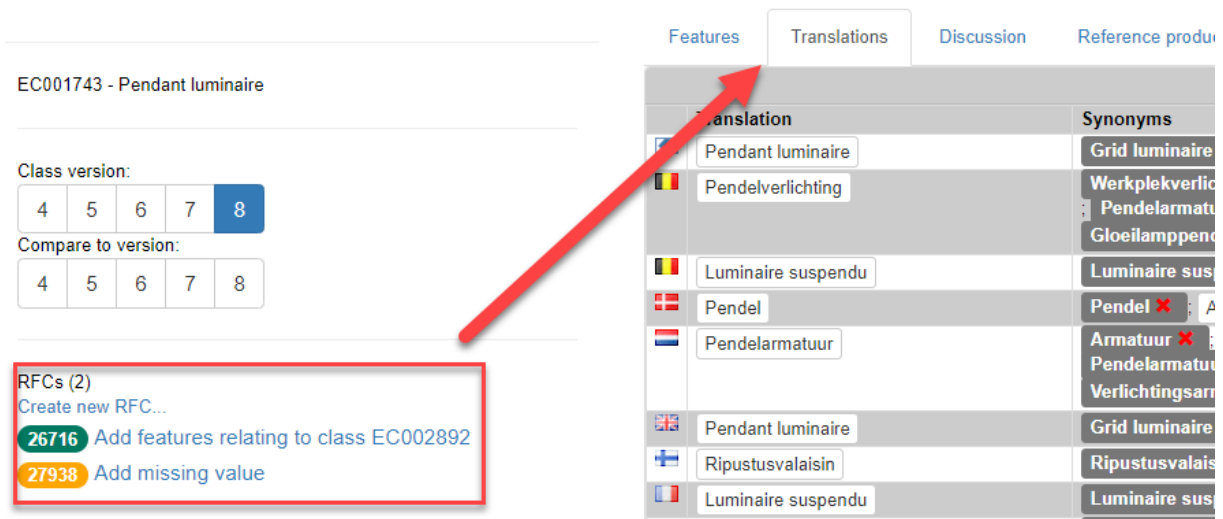
9610 [Open new version for class name change](#)

Features
Translations

	Translations	Synonyms
🇧🇪	Beveiligingssamenstelling	Aanzetter Automatische omkeerschakel Omkeer Omkeerautomaat Omkeercombinatie Sterdriehoekcombinatie Sterdriehoekcombinatie
🇧🇪	Contacteurs Assemblés	Bloc de contacteur Branche de contacteur étoile/triangle Commutateur de triangle
🇳🇱	Automatische sterdriehoekschakelaar	Aanzetter Automatische omkeerschakel Omkeercombinatie Omkeercontactor Sterdriehoekcontactor Sterdriehoekcombinatie
🇩🇰	(no translation)	
🇬🇧	Combination of contactors → CHANGED TRANSLATION DEMO	Automatic reversing switch Automatic reversing switch Automatic reversing switch Reversing safety Reversing safety switch Starter combination switch CHANGED
🇩🇪	Schützkombination	Automatischer Stern-Dreieck-Schalter Schützkombination Sternschütz Verbin

Existing class – with already open RFC:

- If the concerning class already has the status ‘under construction’ or ‘ready to publish’, so there was already one or more RFCs to the last published class you can just go directly to translations. But please verify that there is at least either an RFC “Open new version for ...” already or another RFC that has been approved, like in the example below. The reason is that if we would dismiss the only open RFC the new version of the class will be rolled back and the added translations will be lost again. For the rest proceed as before.



EC001743 - Pendant luminaire

Class version:
 4 5 6 7 **8**

Compare to version:
 4 5 6 7 8

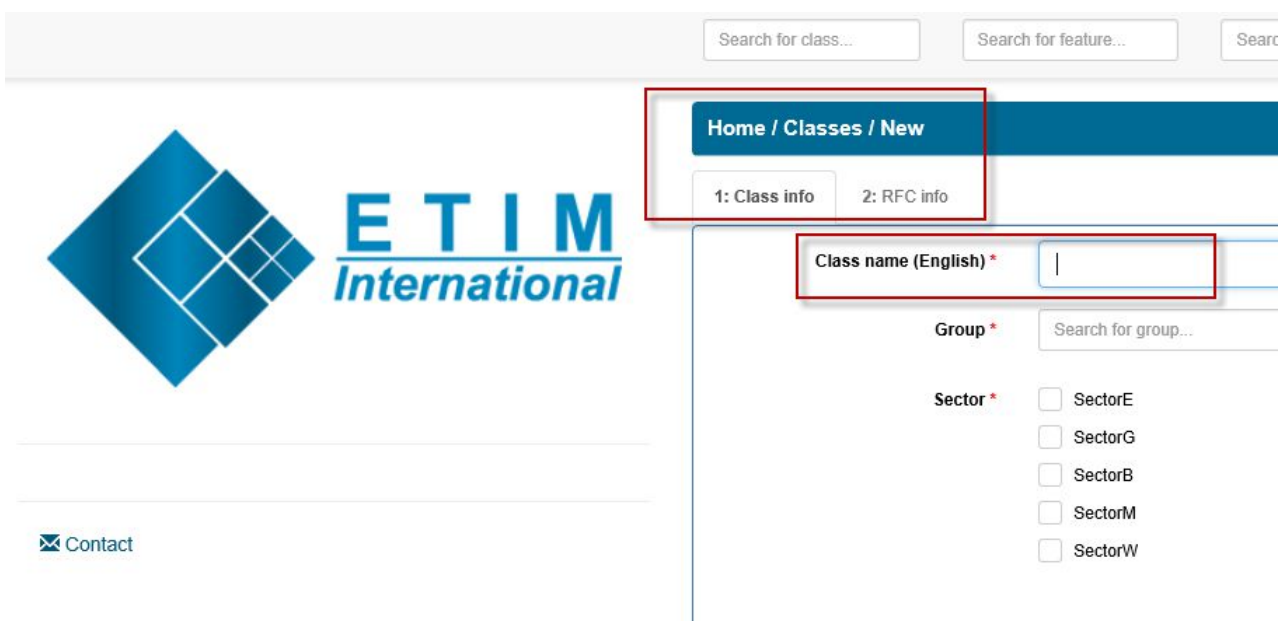
RFCs (2)
 Create new RFC...

- 26716** Add features relating to class EC002892
- 27938** Add missing value

Translation	Synonyms
Pendant luminaire	Grid luminaire
Pendelverlichting	Werkplekverlichting Pendelarmatuur Gloeilamppend
Luminaire suspendu	Luminaire sus
Pendel	Pendel ✗ ; A
Pendelarmatuur	Armatuur ✗ Pendelarmatuur Verlichtingsarr
Pendant luminaire	Grid luminaire
Ripustusvalaisin	Ripustusvalais
Luminaire suspendu	Luminaire sus

New class - no open RFC yet:

- The info fields for a new class have been split up in 2 parts: Class Info and RFC Info. In the Class info part it is now mandatory to start with the **English class name** (system language)! Please make sure this translation is as accurate as possible, since it is the key to others for translation! In the next step RFC info the usual information on an RFC.



Search for class... Search for feature... Search

Home / Classes / New

1: Class info 2: RFC info

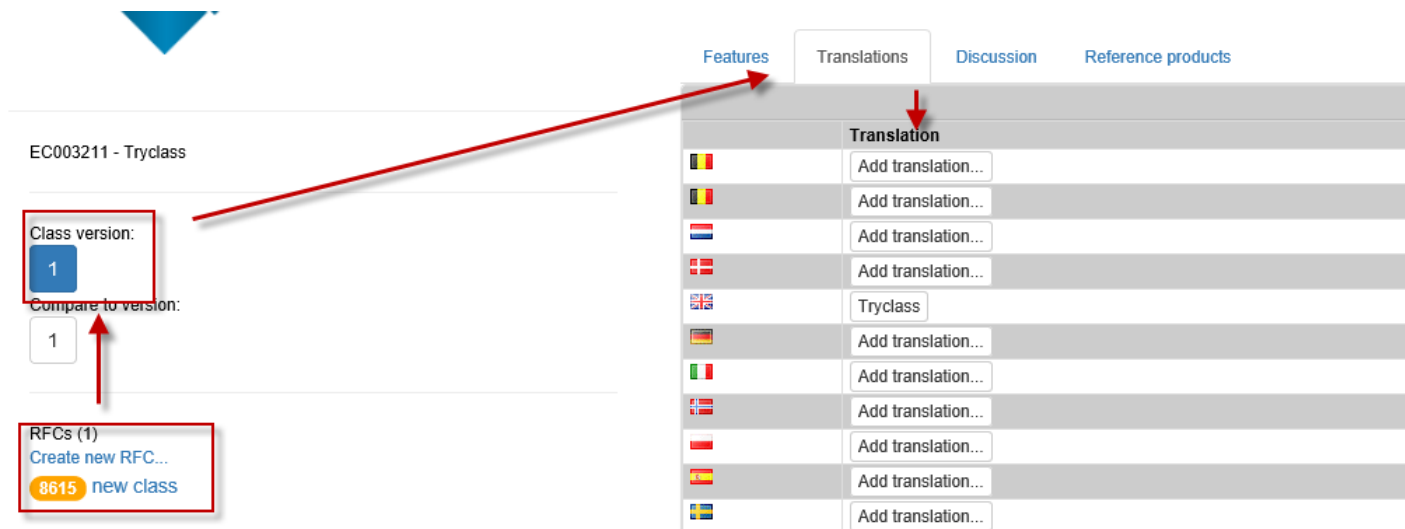
Class name (English) *

Group * Search for group...

Sector * SectorE SectorG SectorB SectorM SectorW

Contact

- As before, by clicking on the class version (always 1 for a new class) you can add the translation and synonyms for your own language version.



The screenshot shows the ETIM web interface for a class named "EC003211 - Tryclass". On the left, the "Class version" is set to "1", and there is a "Compare to version" dropdown also set to "1". Below this, there is a section for "RFCs (1)" with a "Create new RFC..." button and a "8615 new class" button. On the right, there are tabs for "Features", "Translations", "Discussion", and "Reference products". The "Translations" tab is active, showing a list of languages with "Add translation..." buttons for each. The English version is labeled "Tryclass".

6.6. Publication

An (official) ETIM publication consists of the collection of unique classes (no multiple versions of one class) fixed at a certain moment in time. A publication has a name and a date. Depending on the format the publication contains change codes reflecting the changes compared to the previous official ETIM publication. A publication contains only classes with status "Published" except when it is a dynamic release.

Release planning will be proposed by the ETIM International TC and communicated to the involved countries in time. Prior to an official release the Technical Committee will provide a beta version which can be examined and released via internet to all involved persons.

7. Guidelines classification

7.1. Naming-, notation- and translation rules:

- Translations to local language versions have to be as close as possible to the original translation (ETIM English and/or source language for changes), to prevent inconsistencies in the meaning of groups, classes, features, values and units in different languages. Inconsistencies can cause severe issues when used as source for further translations in other languages.
- Descriptions, naming- and notation conventions should be used as consistent as possible within each language version.
- Group names, class names, feature descriptions and synonyms in all ETIM-languages should preferably begin with a capital letter.
- Values begin with a capital letter or a small letter depending on the definition of the ETIM language version.
- Other definitions are possible but must be consistent within a language version.
- Descriptions should preferably not contain abbreviations and words should not be shortened. Exceptions are generally defined solutions as Max. etc. When abbreviations are used, they should be used consistently within that language through the complete model.
- Descriptions may contain letters, numbers and in exceptional cases special characters.

- The following special characters should be avoided (only fragmentary list):
„ “ ; # _
- For class names the singular form has to be chosen.
- The descriptions are in accordance with the general use by product specialists. Official terms and spellings should be used.
- Descriptions must be selected manufacturer-neutral.
- Descriptions cannot exceed the length of 80 characters; a shorter term should be preferred where possible and useful.
- If multi-unit words (compound nouns) are written with or without a dash is not defined consistent. In the region of features, dash should be avoided if possible.
- The use of abbreviations is based on the customary of each subsector; within the data model it should be consistent.
- Descriptions that contain a number or that are separated by a slash should be written consistent within the language version:
 - o number + adjective: with or without dash or blank (e.g. 5polig, 5-pole)
 - o number + unit: with blank (e.g. 5 mm)
 - o number + greater than/smaller than/equal to symbol (<>): without blank
 - o dash for “to”: without blank (e.g. 4-5)
 - o multiplication: without blank (e.g. 4x5)
 - o in exception to the previous, numbers with commas or negative numbers should be written with blank, like „0,2 - 0,6 bar“ or “-1 - 0 bar”
 - o break values: with blank (e.g. 1 1/8)
 - o separations with slash: without blank (e.g. Aluminium/plastic)
 - o Number + corner degrees should be noted like 45° (not 45 degrees)

7.2. Guidelines for product groups

ETIM groups serve as a structural support for the expert groups and the Technical Committee and to simplify the navigation through the classification. They can be used as a catalogue structure, but this is not the primary function.

A group must contain at least two product classes.

7.3. Guidelines for product classes

7.3.1. General guidelines for product classes

Product classes describe similar products. They summarize products, which can be characterized by similar features. A product class is defined by technical features and each product must be assigned to exactly one product class.

If products cannot be classified, appropriate product classes must be created. It should be ensured that there is no overlap with existing classes.

The change of a class name is only permitted if this has no effect on the products assigned to that class. If there would be a change of the meaning, the old class has to be deleted and a new class has to be created.

Some general rules for ETIM classes:

- Class names must be unique. To avoid naming conflicts, the descriptions should be as precise as possible. Non-specific descriptions such as “cover” should be avoided because they can occur in many areas of ETIM.
- Class names must be selected manufacturer-neutral. The descriptions are intended for professionals in the relevant field and characterise the professional class.
- The singular form has to be chosen.

- The data model must be structured in such a way, that every product must be assigned to exactly one class. The ETIM classification data model does not allow classifying a product (with an identical product number) to multiple ETIM classes.
- Each class has to be assigned to one or more sectors (implemented as Boolean fields on class level in our database). The sector assignment enables to filter and/or export from our database (CMT) only those classes that are relevant for the specific sector(s). This is also important to compose the proper release files for all countries, since not all sectors in ETIM are implemented in all countries yet. Very specific product classes will only be assigned to a single sector, like EC011805 Life raft for the shipbuilding sector. Very general products will be assigned to all sectors, like EC000158 Screwdriver for slot head screws.
- Each class must be assigned to exactly one ETIM product group.
- For each class synonyms have to be defined. The class name is always used as a synonym.
- Each class must have at least one feature.
- The same feature can only be used once in the same class.

The following actions for classes are allowed:

- Create (a new class)
- Modify (an existing class)
- Delete (an existing class)

If a class should be deleted, it must be remarked where the products of the deleted class should go:

- generalisation:
there will be one or more classes (new or already existing), that are more general (e.g. delete the classes "Lawn scarifier" and "Lawn aerator" and create a new class "Lawn scarifier/aerator")
- specification:
there will be one or more classes (new or already existing), that are more specific (e.g. delete the class "Hammer" and create new classes "Claw hammer", "Smith hammer", "Chisel hammer")
- exception:
a class could be deleted without successor if the products, described by the class, do not exist anymore at all

7.3.2. Accessory and spare part classes

Accessory and spare part classes can be of use to be able to classify products that can be seen as an accessory to or a spare part for a main product (that normally exists as a separate class in ETIM). For these products mostly a deep specification is not necessary, because they only fit as accessory or spare part to a certain make (brand) or model. To make the solution for accessory and spare part classes in ETIM as consistent as possible some general rules for these classes were agreed on:

- We will as much as possible combine accessories and spare parts in one combined class.
- The class name is generally composed as "Accessories/spare parts for...."
- Preferably the name of the accessories/spare parts class refers to the main product class it relates to (if any), e.g. "Accessories/spare parts for ballast" when the name of the main product class is "Ballast". Also it can refer to a clearly delineated group of related classes, e.g. EC011728 - Accessories/spare parts for central gas heaters.
- To avoid an explosion of classes, preferably consider accessory/spare part classes for groups of products if possible instead of for each separate product class.
- The first feature always should be EF000215 "Type of accessory/spare part"
- All the values listed in "Type of accessory/spare part" should also be entered as synonym (in all languages). Excluded are of course values like e.g. "others" – they shall not be entered as synonym.
- Logical features "Spare part" and "Accessory" will be added to each of these combined classes, to enable easy filtering for spare parts and accessories in databases based on ETIM (sometimes products can be spare part AND accessory)

- If the class is more general than just for one main product class, logical features can be used if needed to identify for what products the accessory/spare part is suitable for, like “Suitable for washbasin”.
- The number of further features should be as limited as possible.

7.3.3. Set classes

Often a combination of several single products is sold together as a set with a unique product number and a fixed price. In that case the set needs to be classified as such, the existing classes for the single products in the set cannot be used, since a product can only be assigned to one single class.

A class for a set of products can describe:

- a combination of different products, which as single product would be classified in several different ETIM classes. For example EC011802 - Set sanitary accessories.
- a combination of similar products, which as single product would be classified in the same ETIM class. For example EC002120 - Bit set.

Some general guidelines that must be respected for ‘set classes’:

- The class name includes ‘set’ in the description.
- Usually logical features are used to identify what products are part of the set, like “With ...”.
- In addition or instead a common solution if more products of the same type are included is to add numeric features (without unit) like “Number of ...”
- The number of further features should be as limited as possible. A detailed technical specification of all the single products in a set class is not admissible!
- As with accessory classes, all the single products in the set should be listed as synonym for optimal findability.

7.3.4. Classes for services

There is an increasing interest for classification of services, like cable installation per meter. The ETIM TC has decided that classification of services is allowed if closely related to core ETIM products. Condition is that they are offered with a unique product number and for a fixed price. Example of an existing class is EC002744 - Calibration measuring instrument. The TC does not by definition reject such requests, but much depends on the actual request, so admissibility will be decided on a case by case basis.

7.4. Guidelines for synonyms

Some general rules for ETIM synonyms:

- Each class has at least one synonym: the class name
- In addition more synonyms are useful
- General concepts such as colours or non-specific words, that aim to increase the number of matches, are not permitted as synonyms
- The spelling of synonyms has no specific rules, but should not contain abbreviations; per term only one spelling in the list is recorded
- For synonyms the singular form has to be chosen.

7.5. Guidelines for features

7.5.1. General guidelines for features

To each product class features are assigned, at least one.

The features characterise the **most important objective technical properties**. Ideally, all features of an ETIM class fit to all products which can be assigned to that class.

The features should enable the user of product data a useful pre-selection within a large range of products. They are not intended to describe a product in such detail that it finally enables to select between the last two remaining products in a selection. At this point the manufacturers own free description (in the product data exchange file) should clarify the difference in addition to the general and standardized ETIM features.

Another function of a feature list is to describe the class and to differentiate it from another class.

Each feature is specified by:

- The feature code (like EF000001)
- Description of the feature
- Feature type A/L/N/R
- Unit (depending on the class within the feature is used; only possible for the feature type N and R)
- Values (depending on the class within the feature is used, only possible for the feature type A)

Some general rules for ETIM features:

- The number of features of a class should be limited to the most important technical characteristics for selecting the right product.
- At a definition of features for a class, the features are taken from a “feature base table”. Only if the desired feature does not exist or cannot be replaced by similar one, the requester can define a new feature.
- A feature description must be unique. It should only occur once (with the same feature type A, N, R or L) in the whole model.
- The use of numerical, logical or range features is preferred to the creation of alphanumerical features.
- Numerical and range features usually need a unit of measurement. The assigned unit should be based on normed standards such as the ISO standard. Exceptions are features with the expression “Number of...” These numerical features do not need a unit. Where relevant an imperial unit has to be added as well next to the metric unit, see chapter 3 section units for more information.
- Alphanumerical features are always closed. I.e. for every alphanumerical feature a value list must be defined, which contains all possible values. The list must be defined during the creation of a feature and it should contain at least three values. The exception of two values is possible, but not in combination with one real value and the value “others”.
- The deletion of features from a class is generally permitted but should only be used in exceptional cases.

7.5.2. Guidelines for sort numbers of features

Each feature list within a class is sorted according to their importance and is also structured meaningfully (dimensions, features of electrical data ...).

This order is part of the data model and is the same for all language versions. It can be used for example to show the order of features within an online search engine.

7.5.3. Guidelines for description of features

Here some rules for the description (name) of the features:

- A feature description must be unique within the data model in combination with its data type.
- The renaming of features (except for the spelling correction without changing the meaning) and the changing of units should be avoided. If renaming should imply a change in meaning or in case of a unit change the existing feature has to be deleted and a new feature is created with a new ID.
- Features that describe limits (minimum/maximum) always have the addition “Min.” or “Max.” at the beginning of their descriptions.
For example: maximum power output = <Max. power output>
This rule may be waived on the basis of linguistic characteristics but within a language version conformity is needed.
- Features that describe a value according to a defined standard should in ETIM English be described as “... according to ...” like “Efficiency according to EN 779”. Also in other languages the preferred solution should be used consistently.

7.5.4. Guidelines for type of features (A/N/L/R)

There are four different types of features within the ETIM classification model:

Alphanumeric

Alphanumeric features can be a combination of letters and numbers. They are always univalent, that means, only one value can be chosen, never 2 or more. This must be respected when creating a value list within a feature of a class.

The values are not only assigned to a feature but additional to a class. So each value list is different depending on the class.

If a value list within a feature of a class is not complete, the value “others” can be added.

Numeric

To a numeric feature one real number can be assigned.

Logical

Within the ETIM data model, a logical feature is designed to give the answer yes/true or no/false (Boolean). But these values are not part of the data model but part of the exchange format.

Range

This feature type allows the definition of a value range of real numbers through a minimum and maximum value (value pair). Whether the data type is Range is not always obvious in the description of the feature. As mentioned before, the ETIM range feature is considered to be a closed range, so an interval which includes all its limit points, mathematically denoted as [a..b].

Example: <Measuring range> »10 - 500« »mA«

Measuring range

If there is only one value (minimum = maximum), in the exchange format although two identic values

Example: <Frequency> »50 - 50« »Hz«

The feature type is chosen when creating a new feature (ID) and can NOT be changed. If the same feature is needed with a different type, then a new feature needs to be created.

7.5.5. Guidelines on specific and generally applied features

The following rules have been established within the ETIM data model:

- The material a product is made of can be defined by the following two features:
 - Material
 - Material quality
- Length in classes for 'meter products': For classes like cables or pipes/tubes, the ETIM classification normally should not include a length. You can often buy the same cable per meter, in a box with 100 meter, a reel with 1000 meter etc. The idea is that you only classify the product once (in its smallest sellable article) and other packing variants are referenced. So (in an ETIM based product database) you search on the product and can find all referenced other delivery/packaging articles.
- Weight in ETIM classes: ETIM describes the technical features of products, important to select the right product quickly and easily and describe its most important technical characteristics. The ETIM classification model does not contain logistical or pricing information, as this information is defined as fields in the data exchange format. The gross weight (with packaging) and net weight of the product are defined in the ETIM BMEcat exchange format. So repeating this information in the classification is in most cases regarded as redundant and is only admissible if the weight of the product is a selection criterium for the type of products that are classified. The decisive question to determine this is: Would I prefer to buy one product or the other based on its weight? This is relevant for example for hammers or power tools.

7.5.6. Guidelines on colours in ETIM

- Only "basic colours" are allowed in ETIM. Also, wood colours (like "Oak") and material colours (like "Copper") are permitted to be used in ETIM.
- As basic colours are allowed:
 - Amber
 - Anthracite
 - Beige
 - Black
 - Blue
 - Brown
 - Green
 - Grey
 - Multi-coloured
 - Orange
 - Pink
 - Red
 - Turquoise
 - Purple
 - White
 - Yellow
- As only exception 'light' and 'dark' will be admitted, like in 'light grey' and 'dark grey', but only if this is commonly used in the market to indicate and identify a technical specification.
- RAL number will be added if a more detailed specification of the colour is needed.
- If the colour of the product is the 'natural' colour of the material the product is made of, then the value for colour is equal to the value for material, e.g. material = "Gold", then colour should also be "Gold" (not e.g. "Material own colour").
- A product without a colour will get the value "Colourless" and not "None" or "Clear" (e.g. a drinking glass or a window).
- Transparent is not a colour and should be listed as separate (logical) feature
- If a manufacturer wants to give a more detailed (often commercial) information about a colour he can use the element FVALUE_DETAILS and/or the free text short or long description fields in BMEcat or a similar exchange format.

7.6. Guidelines for (alphanumerical) values

7.6.1. General guidelines for values

Each value is defined as a translatable or non-translatable value. Most values are translatable, that means the description can be different in the varying language versions. Non-translatable values have exactly the same description, indifferent in which language version because they are language-independent:

Examples for non-translatable values:

- Numbers like „1“, „2“, „3“, ...
- Combinations of numbers and language-independent units like „90 mm“, „100 m“
- Standardized designations like „RJ45“ or „IP40“
- Values that display e.g. the real imprint of a product are written with capital letters, e.g. „DOWN“, „HEBEN“, „OMLAAG“

If the spelling of the capital letter of the first word of a value is not consistent in all actual ETIM languages this value is automatically to be treated as translatable (language-dependent).

7.6.2. Guidelines for sort numbers of values

The order of a value list of a feature within an ETIM class is a mixture of language-independent assorting (values like „None“, „Others“, „Not applicable“) and language-dependent values (most values).

The value list of a feature can be different in each ETIM class that uses this feature.

This order is part of the data model. It can be used e.g. to show the order of values within an online search engine.

7.6.3. Guidelines on specific and generally applied values

The following rules have been established within the ETIM data model:

- For values which represent a dimension in inch, in ETIM English the unit should be figured with the word „inch“, not with the symbol “. Each country can decide themselves whether to use the word „inch“ (translated in the respective version language), or the symbol “, as long as it is used consistently in the language version.

7.7. Guidelines for units

7.7.1. General guidelines for units

- If a unit should be assigned to a numeric or a range feature, it must be taken from the ETIM „unit base tables“.
- Unit translations are a local responsibility, but a uniform notation is considered important. Where possible we should refer to (base or derived) SI units, at least for the abbreviations (short descriptions).

7.7.2 Generally applied units

- For features related to hydraulics (water/fluids) ‘bar’ (EU570056) is the preferred unit.

7.8. Guidelines for reference products

We distinguish between two types of reference products in ETIM CMT.

- Class reference products: To help understand what products should be classified in a certain class.
- RFC reference products: to support requests for change, to provide clear examples and/or more detailed information of products for which the requested features/values are relevant.

Reference products can be pictures, product identification numbers, hyperlinks to information or a combination of these. Each class or RFC can have multiple reference products.

Please notice that RFC reference products are only temporary and will be deleted when the RFC is closed. So for new classes you need to put the reference products on class level, not (only) on RFC level. Also if you want reference products for changes to stay visible after RFC approval, you would need to upload them two times, on RFC and on class level.

Some guidelines:

- If only a picture (without supplier id) is used as reference a neutral picture is preferred without visible brand designation.
- For manufacturer related reference products, products of member companies are preferred where possible, but are not to be considered as added value of membership. We cannot allow multiple reference products only to display competitive brands, such at the discretion of the CMT administrators.
- Descriptions to reference products are always in English.
- Links to online technical documentation preferably refer to English information, however this is not always possible.
- Reference products are only for online reference in ETIM CMT and ETIM In Your Pocket and cannot be made available to users for offline use.

8. Glossary

CMT	= Classification Management Tool
RFC	= Request for Change
TC	= Technical Committee
XML	= eXtensible Markup Language

9. Change log to previous document versions

In this chapter a brief summary overview is provided of additions and changes to previous versions of this document.

Changed/Added in version V2-2019:

- Chapter 2.3: Update on international expert group organization and coordination
- New chapter 2.4.2 regarding local language versions
- Chapter 2.5: update guidelines on relation between board and technical committee.
- Chapter 3: New section on imperial units of measurement
- New chapter 4.4. Metric versus imperial release
- New chapter 4.5. on release version notation
- Chapter 5: added reference to ETIM BMEcat guidelines and certification tool
- New chapter 6.5.1: Procedure for class translation and synonym updates in CMT
- Chapter 6.4: added section on RFC checks.
- New chapter 6.5. on specific CMT procedures with first subchapter 6.5.1. on class translation and synonym updates
- Renamed chapter 7.1. to “Naming-, notation- and translation rules” and added several rules
- Chapter 7.3: added class sector assignment; updated guidelines on accessory classes including also spare parts; added a section with guidelines on set classes; added a section with guidelines on classes for services.
- 7.5.5 renamed to “Guidelines on specific and generally applied features”; added guidelines on length for ‘meter products’ and for weight in ETIM classes.
- New chapter 7.5.6. with guidelines on the use of colours in ETIM
- Chapter 7.6. split up in subchapters and added chapter 7.6.3 on Guidelines on specific and generally applied values
- Chapter 7.7: additional guidelines for unit notation and added chapter for ‘generally applied units’
- New chapter 7.8: Guidelines for reference products (moved existing chapter 7.8 on ‘generally applied features’ to 7.5.5.)
- Added chapter 9 Change log to previous document versions