

# Simplified Group Assessment

An addendum to the TISAX Participant Handbook for TISAX participants with many locations and a centralised and highly developed ISMS

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# 1 Overview

## 1.1 Purpose

For companies with many locations, the regular TISAX assessment process can be quite extensive.

Under certain conditions we offer an alternative – the “simplified group assessment” (“SGA”, German: “Vereinfachte Gruppenprüfung”). The simplified group assessment is a special case of the TISAX assessment process.

There are two options for the assessment process:

- a) “sample-based simplified group assessment” (“S-SGA”)
- b) “rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment” (“R-SGA”)

If the preconditions are fulfilled, and depending on the selected option, the simplified group assessment can either reduce the efforts compared to the regular TISAX assessment process (S-SGA) or allows you to obtain TISAX labels faster while spreading the efforts over time (R-SGA). Option b) also allows a combination with an ISO matrix certification.

This special TISAX assessment process is designed for companies with many locations and a centralised, highly developed information security management system (ISMS).

The purpose of this addendum is to describe when you can benefit from the simplified group assessment and how to get through the special assessment process.

## 1.2 Scope

This addendum applies to the TISAX assessment process “simplified group assessment”.

It contains all you need to know to run through this special assessment process.

## 1.3 Audience

You are the audience of this addendum if you are responsible for getting a company with at least three locations through the TISAX process.

We expect all readers to already have a good understanding of the TISAX concept and its terminology.

## 1.4 Structure

First, we explain whether one of the TISAX audit providers can apply the simplified group assessment to your situation. Then we point out aspects to consider when deciding whether this makes sense for your company. We present some additional requirements you need to deal with. And finally, we explain how the assessment process works and where it is different from the regular process.

The estimated reading time for the document is 30-35 minutes.

## 1.5 How to use this document

We assume you have already read our TISAX participant handbook. If not, please do so before continuing. Understanding the content of this document is impossible without the knowledge of what the handbook explains.

You can find the TISAX participant handbook here:

 <https://www.enx.com/handbook/tisax-participant-handbook.html>

This document uses illustrations to help you improve your understanding. Often, the colours in the illustrations carry supportive meaning. Therefore, we recommend either reading the document on a screen or as colour hard copy.

We appreciate your feedback. If you think anything is missing in this addendum or is not easy to understand, please don't hesitate to let us know. We and all future readers of this addendum will be thankful for your feedback.



## 1.6 Contact us

We're here to guide you through the TISAX process and to answer any questions you may have.

Send us an email at: [tisax@enx.com](mailto:tisax@enx.com)

Or give us a call at: +49 69 9866927-77

You can reach us during regular business hours in Germany ([UTC+01:00](#)).

We speak  English and  German.



## 2 Introduction



### THE SAMPLE-BASED SIMPLIFIED GROUP ASSESSMENT IN A NUTSHELL

<b>WHO?</b>	COMPANIES WITH AT LEAST THREE LOCATIONS
<b>WHAT?</b>	A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR COMPANIES WITH MANY LOCATIONS
<b>WHEN?</b>	AS A PRE-EMPTIVE STEP (USUALLY BEFORE A PARTNER ASKS FOR TISAX RESULTS)
<b>WHERE?</b>	FOCUS ON HEAD QUARTER AND A SUBSET OF ALL LOCATIONS
<b>WHY?</b>	LESS EFFORT FOR COMPANIES WITH MANY LOCATIONS AND A CENTRALISED AND HIGHLY DEVELOPED ISMS
<b>HOW?</b>	DEEP DIVE AT HEAD QUARTER PLUS VALIDATION AT SAMPLE LOCATIONS

Figure 1: The *sample-based* simplified group assessment in a nutshell

### Is the simplified group assessment something for me?

This is the first question we will help you answer with this document. We will explain under which conditions a simplified group assessment is possible and recommended.

Choosing the simplified group assessment is always optional. You can always stay in the regular process. You will receive TISAX labels either way and thus fulfil your partner's request.

Next, we will present you the pros and cons of the two assessment process options of the simplified group assessment. This enables you to choose wisely between the regular process and the simplified group assessment.

Once you decided to do a simplified group assessment, you need to consider additional requirements. The additional requirements dock to the chapters in the ISA document. To be prepared for a simplified group assessment, you need to fulfil all of them.

If you are confident that you fulfil all the additional requirements, you can start the TISAX process. You need to register as a TISAX participant and depending on your assessment objectives you need to register one or more scopes. With a completed registration, you can contact the TISAX audit providers and explicitly request offers for a simplified group assessment.

The main event during a simplified group assessment is the precondition check. It is an extension of the initial assessment. Its purpose is to check whether your ISMS fulfils all conditions for the simplified group assessment.

Only if you pass the precondition check, the simplified group assessment process continues. Subsequently, all remaining locations are checked. The respective type of check depends on which assessment process option you chose.

You can only pass the simplified group assessment if your ISMS passes all checks with positive results.  
The publication and sharing of your assessment result is the same as for the regular process.

Now let's find out whether the simplified group assessment can be applied to your situation.



## 3 Assessment process options

You have to select one of these two assessment process options:

1. Sample-based simplified group assessment (S-SGA)
2. Rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment (R-SGA)

The details of each assessment process option follow further down. Here, we'll just give brief summaries:

### **Sample-based simplified group assessment (S-SGA)**

At the main location (usually the company's headquarters), the TISAX audit provider assesses your ISMS much more thoroughly than in the regular assessment process. The assessment of the sample locations also requires somewhat more effort. However, all other locations are checked less thoroughly than in the regular assessment process.

### **Rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment (R-SGA)**

At the main location (usually the company's headquarters), the TISAX audit provider also assesses your ISMS much more thoroughly than in the regular assessment process. All other locations are checked more or less equally thoroughly, but evenly spread out over the three-year validity period of the TISAX labels.



Important note:

The assessment process option R-SGA is NOT available for prototype protection assessment objectives (3. Proto parts, 4. Proto vehicles, 5. Test vehicles, 6. Proto events).

## 4 Applicability

Can the simplified group assessment process be applied to your situation? To find out, we will present the conditions in this section.

There are two main conditions:

1. Minimum number of locations in the assessment scope
2. Centralised and highly developed ISMS

Both conditions are described in detail in the following sections.

### 4.1 Centralised and highly developed ISMS

The simplified group assessment is only possible for companies that have a centralised and highly developed ISMS.

Here's what TISAX considers as “centralised and highly developed”:

- Your main location must be able to ensure the compliance with all ISMS-related rules and policies at all locations in the assessment scope.
- The dependent locations must have a reliable channel back to the main location.
- Their feedback must match with the expectations set by the main location's rules and policies.

A main characteristic of the simplified group assessment process is that the audit provider will check your ISMS even more thoroughly during the assessment at your main location than in the regular process. The purpose is to find out whether your ISMS is sophisticated enough to warrant less intense checks at the other locations.

Please refer to section “7.1 ISA self-assessment” on page 19 for detailed requirements.

### 4.2 Minimum number of locations in the assessment scope

We offer the simplified group assessment for companies with many locations, where running through the regular process would be unnecessarily extensive. Therefore, your company needs to have a certain number of locations before the simplified group assessment can be applied.

You must have at least three locations in your assessment scope. If you have less, then you need to follow the regular process. We typically recommend having at least twelve locations in your assessment scope.

For rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessments, the total number of locations in the assessment scope has a negligible effect, as the total effort is comparable to the standard assessment process.

But for a sample-based simplified group assessment, you may want to consider our recommendations as illustrated in the diagram below.

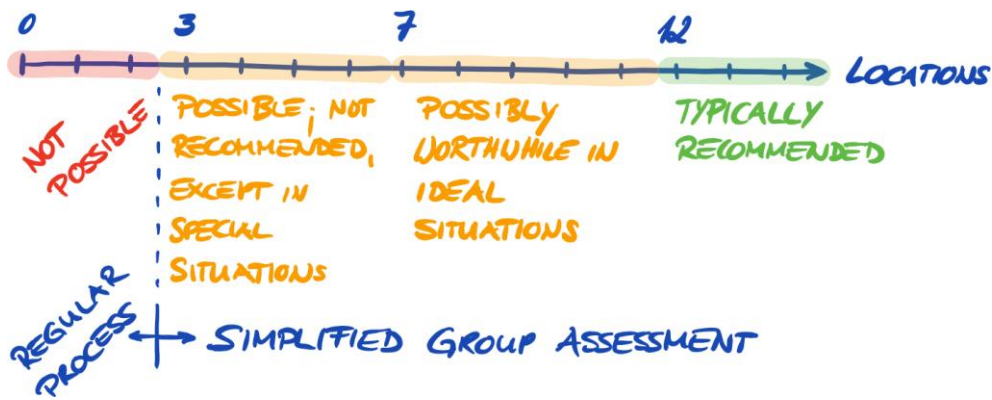


Figure 2: Minimum number of locations in the assessment scope (for a sample-based simplified group assessment)

## 5 Considerations

This section presents the pros and cons of the two options of the simplified group assessment in more detail. It should help you consider all the relevant aspects and enable you to decide whether the simplified group assessment is an option for you.



Please note:

The simplified group assessment is optional. You can always decide to follow the regular process.

### 5.1 Pros & cons of the sample-based simplified group assessment (S-SGA)

#### 5.1.1 Pros of the S-SGA

**Reduced overall effort:**

The efforts at the main location are higher than in the regular process. But averaged over all locations, the efforts can be significantly lower than in the regular process.

This is due to the fact that:

- sample checks are only conducted at a subset of all locations in the assessment scope and
- simplified checks are conducted at all remaining locations.

The following diagram illustrates how the sample-based simplified group assessment can reduce the overall effort. For the precondition check (at the main location) and the sample checks the effort is higher, because the audit provider assesses the central processes in depth. For the remaining locations he also assesses the central processes, but since the assessment level is lower, the overall effort per locations is lower. In the regular process on the other hand, the audit provider would have assessed all those locations with the same assessment level.

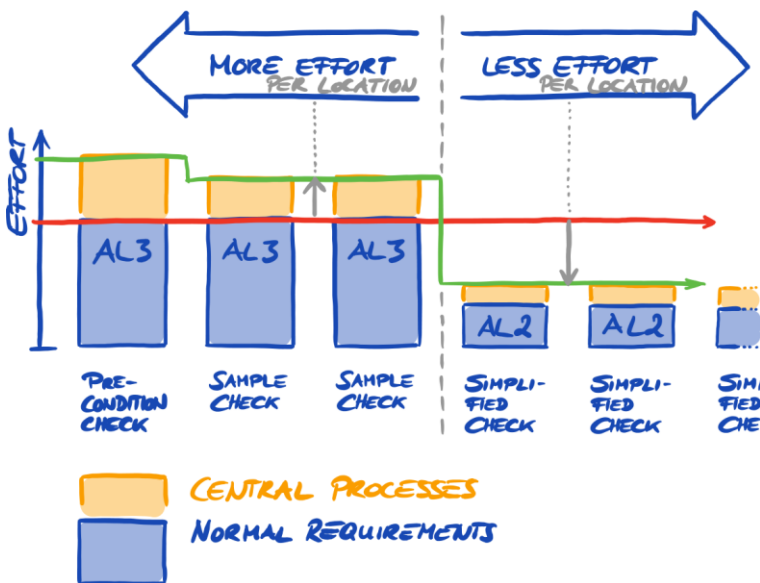


Figure 3: Effort comparison between the sample-based simplified group assessment (“S-SGA”) and the regular process (“Reg”)

You can benefit from further effort reductions like overlapping assessment scopes.

**Easier to keep your assessment scope current:**

It is easier to keep your assessment scope current in these cases:

1. Structural changes
2. Location changes
  - a) New location
  - b) New entity

It is easier to later add new locations or entities (e.g., a new company at an existing site) to your assessment scope(s) during the validity period of the original assessment. You benefit from the simpler checks for new locations.

However, this only counts as an advantage if you expect a certain fluctuation in the number of locations.

For more information on when which kind of check is applied, please refer to section “9.1 Additional locations (scope extension assessment)” on page 30.

**Quicker:**

While the preparation may take longer, the overall time to receive assessment results for all locations can be less than in the regular process.

## 5.1.2 Cons of the S-SGA

**Higher efforts at the main location:**

The efforts at the main location are higher than in the regular process. You should consider this aspect if it's urgent for you to get TISAX-assessed. Getting a certain location TISAX-assessed is quicker in the regular process.

**Higher level of organisation required:**

The main location must operate with a higher level of organisation than for the regular process. The higher level is defined by the additional requirements.

For more information, please refer to Table 3: The five additional ISA requirements for simplified group assessments on page 19.

**More possibilities to fail:**

To benefit from the simplified group assessment, you need to pass ALL checks. If you fail at any of the checks, you fall back to the regular process. Such a fall back would mean that the audit provider has to conduct regular assessments for ALL locations.

**More complex planning:**

The entire assessment process is more complex. Thus, your planning will be more complex.

## 5.1.3 Further considerations regarding the S-SGA

It will be obvious to you by now, but for the sake of completeness: Just getting one or a few locations TISAX-assessed is much easier in the regular process.

**Break-even point for number of locations:**

We would like to give you an exact number of locations for which the sample-based simplified group assessment would most likely lower the overall efforts compared to the regular process. But due to the many factors influencing the overall effort of getting a company with many locations TISAX-assessed, we can only state that – as a very rough estimate – we consider this number to be seven. But keep in mind that when approaching TISAX in a strategic way, starting with fewer locations may still be enough to justify the initially higher overall effort.

**CISO control:**

A company's chief information security officer (CISO) may need/get more control.

## 5.2 Pros & cons of the rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment (R-SGA)

### 5.2.1 Pros of the R-SGA

**Alignment with other certifications such as ISO 27001 audits:**

This pro argument only applies if you maintain another certification such as ISO 27001 in parallel to your TISAX labels. In contrast to the three-year validity period of TISAX labels, you will have yearly audits to maintain an ISO 27001 certification. The assessment process option R-SGA allows to evenly spread out the audits at the remaining locations over the TISAX label's three-year validity period. You can use this to align the TISAX audits with the ISO 27001 audits.

**Faster TISAX labels:**

You receive the TISAX labels as soon as the precondition check at the main location is complete. You receive the TISAX labels before the audit provider completed the checks of the remaining locations.

### 5.2.2 Cons of the R-SGA

**Possibly no reduction of efforts:**

The efforts at the main location are higher than in the regular process. The efforts at the remaining locations are formally the same as in the regular process.

## 5.3 Comparison with regular process

The following table roughly summarises where both options of the simplified group assessment process are different than the regular process:

TISAX process element		Simplified group assessment
Registration	=	No difference
Requesting offers	≠	Explicit request to the audit provider required
Self-assessment	≠	Extended (with <a href="#">additional requirements</a> )
Assessment process	≠	- Extended initial assessment (precondition check) at the main location - S-SGA only: On average, reduced effort over all other locations
Exchange	=	No difference

Table 1: Differences between the regular process and the simplified group assessment process

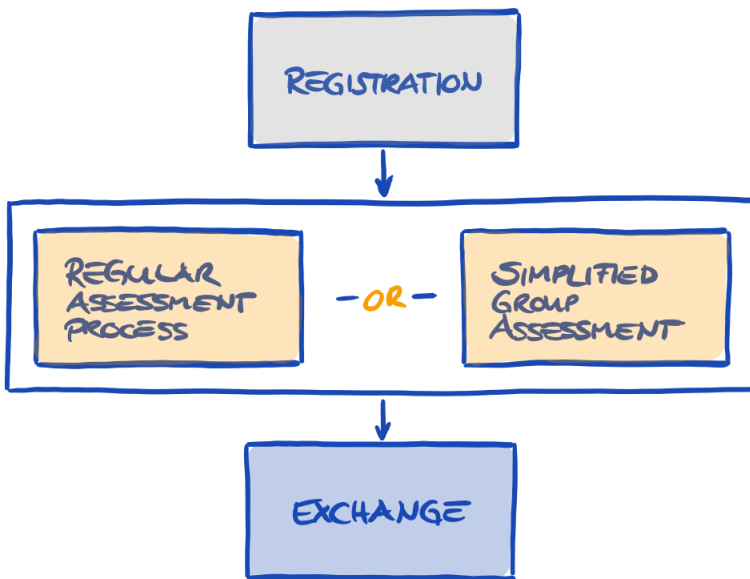


Figure 4: Simplified group assessment process: Only the assessment step is different than in the regular process



## 6 Registration

You have decided to do a simplified group assessment? Then you can start the simplified group assessment process. The process mostly follows the regular process described in the TISAX participant handbook. The differences are described in this section (Registration) and the next (Assessment).

### 6.1 Preparation

As for the regular process, we recommend preparing the registration. Most of our recommendations also apply to the simplified group assessment. The differences are described in the following sections.

#### 6.1.1 Applicability check

This first step is not part of the regular process.

Based on the [additional requirements](#), you should assess internally whether you (already) fulfil the requirements. If not, you should implement (and test) any changes prior to starting the simplified group assessment.

#### 6.1.2 Scoping

Scoping in the context of the simplified group assessment can be quite complex. We'll explain all facets in this section. We hope to enable you to find the best approach to your situation.



Please note:

Scoping is the topic where most people have questions. Don't worry, we'd be glad to help. Please don't hesitate to [give us a call](#).

Generally, we recommend following these steps:

1. Create a table that contains all your locations  
(put all locations in the first column, one per row)
2. Add a column per assessment objective
3. For each location, mark the applicable assessment objective(s)
4. Put all locations that need the same assessment objective in one assessment scope  
(column = scope)
5. Use the result to register the assessment scope(s)

The steps are the same, regardless of whether you have one or more assessment objectives.

Example table:

AO = Assessment objective

Location	AO1: Info high	AO2: Info very high	AO3: Proto parts	AO4: Proto vehicles
1	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓		
4	✓		✓	
5	✓	✓	✓	✓
...				
	Assessment scope 1	Assessment scope 2	Assessment scope 3	Assessment scope 4

Table 2: Example table for the scoping steps

If you have just one assessment objective or all locations have the same assessment objectives, the situation looks similar to the regular process. Yet you will benefit from the reduced efforts of the (sample-based) simplified group assessment because for most of your locations the assessments will be easier. And adding new locations later is easier, too.

When you have a heterogeneous scenario where not all locations have the same assessment objective(s), the benefits of the sample-based simplified group assessment might be even bigger. At first glance, it might look counter-intuitive because having several overlapping assessment scopes might mean an unnecessary number of sample checks. But these assessment scopes are not looked at like in the regular process. Rather, a sample check at any location can count for the other scopes as well.

For more information on the sample size, please refer to section “7.3.2.4 Sample size” on page 23.

### 6.1.3 Registration fee

As in the regular process, the registration fee is based on the number of locations in an assessment scope.

However, in the simplified group assessment process, any location with more than one assessment objective will be part of more than one assessment scope. For such cases, you would pay the location-based registration fee as many times as a location is part of assessment scopes. As this could result in a high total registration fee, we offer additional pricing models which can reduce costs. For more information, please refer to our current price list.

You can download the price list on our website at:

<https://www.enx.com/en-US/TISAX/downloads/> (“TISAX PARTICIPATION PRICE LIST”)

Direct PDF download:

<https://portal.enx.com/pricelist.pdf>

## 6.2 Online registration process

The registration process mainly follows the steps outlined in the TISAX participant handbook. There are only differences when you register your assessment scope(s).

When you are asked to specify the scope name, we recommend the following naming pattern:

Pattern: SGA [Assessment objective(s) in short form]

Examples: SGA Info very high

SGA Info high + Proto parts

This allows our staff that handles your application to easily recognize your company and this scope as a candidate for a simplified group assessment. The scope name will also help your TISAX audit provider.



Important note:

If you want to discuss your simplified group assessment plans, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#) at any stage in the process.

You are now ready to start the assessment process.

## 7 Assessment

### 7.1 ISA self-assessment

The simplified group assessment requires an extended ISA self-assessment.

Below is the list of five additional requirements. They extend the requirements for the respective question in the ISA. All additional requirements have the requirements level “MUST”. They apply to both protection needs of the criteria catalogue “Information security”.

No.	Question	Additional requirement
1.	1.1.1 - To what extent are information security policies available?	Policies are published and implemented in the entire scope.
2.	1.2.1 - To what extent is information security managed within the organization?	The management system is approved by an entity that has the necessary authority for the entire scope (i.e., all locations within the scope).
3.	1.2.2 - To what extent are information security responsibilities organized?	A named person with overall responsibility for the management system exists and is available.
4.	1.5.1 - To what extent is compliance with information security ensured in procedures and processes?	<p>Highly developed efficiency checks (e.g., dedicated and appropriate information security audit responsibilities and resources) for the entire scope exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The implementation of all applicable requirements and controls are covered.</li> </ul> <p>A detailed internal audit plan and schedule is defined and followed. The following aspects are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The entire scope of the assessment is covered</li> <li>- Internal audits are conducted regularly</li> <li>- Results of internal audits are tracked within the ISMS structures</li> </ul> <p>In case of major changes audits are conducted by an independent and appropriately qualified entity (i.e., external entities or special internal departments which are independent according to the definition of the International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Findings and implementation of corrective actions is tracked by the independent entity.</li> </ul>
5.	1.6.1 - To what extent are information security events processed?	Standard mechanisms to report and track relevant security events are established.

Table 3: The five additional ISA requirements for simplified group assessments

ISA Class	ISA New	Maturity level	Control question	Objective	Requirements (must)	Requirements (should)
1			IS Policies and Organization Information Security Policies			
1.1			To what extent are information security policies available?	The organization needs at least one information security policy. This reflects the importance and significance of information security and is adapted to the organization. Additional policies may be appropriate depending on the size and structure of the organization.	+ The requirements for information security have been determined and documented. - The requirements are adapted to the organization's goals, - A policy is prepared and is released by the organization. + The policy includes objectives and the significance of information security within the organization.	+ The information security requirements based on the strategy of the organization, legislation and contracts are taken into account in the policy. + The policy indicates consequences in case of non-conformance. + Further relevant information security policies are prepared. + Periodic review and, if required, revision of the policies are established. + The policies are made available to employees in a suitable form (e.g. intranet). + These policies (or extracts thereof) are provided to external business partners depending on the respective case. + Employees and external business partners are informed of any changes relevant to them.
05.1	1.1.1				+ <b>ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS(S)</b>	
			Organization of Information Security			

Figure 5: Where the additional requirements currently dock to in the ISA 5.1 document

To be prepared, you must conduct the self-assessment and answer the respective question with the additional requirement(s) in mind. Your implementation description and reference to documentation must cover the additional requirement(s) (as if they were written in the ISA).

**Requirements (must)**

+ The requirements for information security have been determined and documented:  
 - The requirements are adapted to the organization's goals,  
 - A policy is prepared and is released by the organization.  
 + The policy includes objectives and the significance of information security within the organization.

+ The auditee must have specified central policies that implement all requirements of the controls of the criteria catalogues in question (i.e., ISA). The policies must be published and implemented in the whole scope. The efficiency in all locations must be checked regularly through internal audits (see also 5).

Figure 6: The additional requirements as if they were included in the ISA 5.1 document

It is mandatory to have a self-assessment for every location. However, this “self-assessment” must not necessarily be an “ISA self-assessment” (in its Excel manifestation). With appropriate mapping, you can use the information from your ISMS to produce an acceptable self-assessment artifact.

You have to ensure the following:

- The answers to all questions (including evidence) in the ISA must be centrally available.
- The answers must be available for all locations in the assessment scope.
- You must provide an easy method for mapping your answers to the questions in the ISA.  
Please discuss this point with your audit provider. He has to confirm that your approach is acceptable.

## 7.2 Requesting offers from TISAX audit providers

When you request offers from the TISAX audit providers, you must explicitly mention the fact that you intend to do a simplified group assessment. The audit provider is not obliged to point out that this option exists or may be applicable to your situation.

## 7.3 Assessment process

You have to select one of two assessment process options:

1. Sample-based
2. Rotating schedule-based

Both methods share some aspects, other aspects are completely different. The following sections explain each option in detail.



Important note:

You can only select one of the two options. Both options are mutually exclusive. The selected option applies for the full three-year validity period.

### 7.3.1 Precondition check

The precondition check applies to **both** assessment process options.

The precondition check is conducted at the location from which the information security is managed (usually the company's headquarters).

With the precondition check the audit provider checks whether the [additional requirements](#) are fulfilled.

It is always conducted on site and in assessment level 3 (AL 3).

The precondition check has the purpose to create a detailed expectation of how the ISMS works across all locations. If all requirements are met, the audit provider will have a clear view on what to expect once he continues with the location checks.

During the precondition check the audit provider checks whether the answers to the ISA questions for all locations in the assessment scope are available.

If the precondition check fails, the simplified group assessment process is aborted.

### 7.3.2 Sample-based simplified group assessment (S-SGA)

The following sub-sections only apply to the **sample-based** simplified group assessment.

#### 7.3.2.1 Location classes and check types

In the regular process, every location is subject to the same intensity, assessment methodologies, etc. (of course depending on the assessment objective). In the sample-based simplified group assessment process, there are now three different classes of locations which are each subject to a different type of "check".

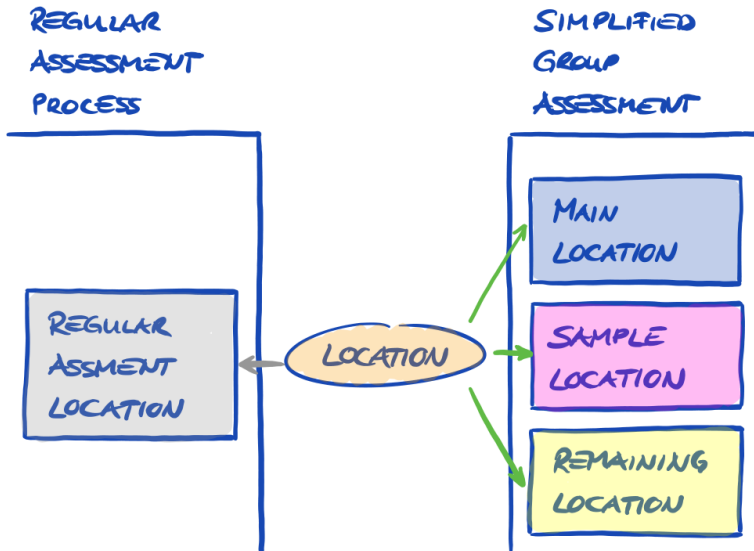


Figure 7: The location classes

Location class	Check type	Abbreviation
Main location	Precondition check	PCC
Sample location	Sample check	SAC
Remaining location	Simplified check	SIC

Table 4: Location classes and check types

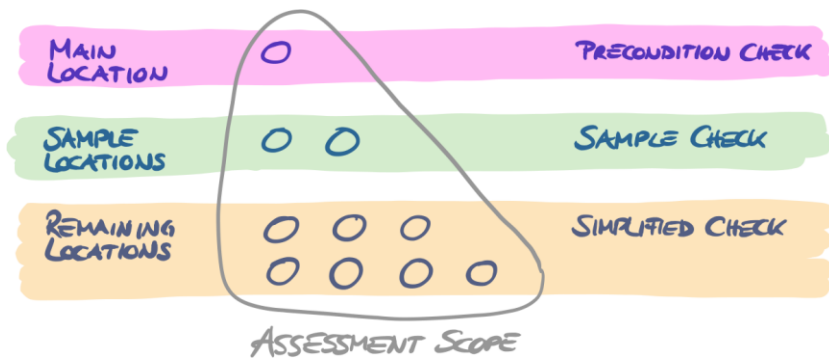


Figure 8: The locations classes and check types

All locations must be part of the assessment scope, regardless of their class.

Each check type is different in the following ways:

Check type	Additional requirements	Assessment level	Site
Precondition check	Yes	Always AL 3	Always "On site"
Sample check	Yes	AL 3 or AL 2	"On site" or "Remote"
Simplified check	Yes	AL 2 or AL 1	"On site" or "Remote"

Table 5: Check type differences



**Additional requirements:**

The additional requirements cover the central processes. They vary slightly over the location classes. At the main location, the audit provider focuses on its role as the hub of the ISMS. For the other locations, the audit provider focuses on how predictably and reliably the spokes interface with the hub.

**Assessment level:**

For the main location, the assessment level is always AL 3. For sample locations, the assessment level can be either AL 3 or AL 2. For the remaining locations, the assessment level can be either AL 2 or AL 1.

**Site:**

The precondition check is always conducted “on site”. For the other check types, the site is derived from the requirements that come with the respective assessment objective.

Example: Assessments for prototype assessment objectives are conducted “on site”.

### 7.3.2.2 Sample checks

A successfully passed precondition check is a mandatory condition for the sample checks.

The sample check is conducted at the sample locations (a subset of all locations in an assessment scope).

The purpose of the sample checks is to verify that the observations at every sample location match with the expectations set during the precondition check.

The audit provider first conducts a regular assessment (as required by the assessment objective(s)). Then he verifies that the central processes are correctly implemented and whether they work as expected.

For more information on the number of sample checks, please refer to section “7.3.2.4 Sample size” on page 23.

For more information on the selection of sample locations, please refer to section “7.3.2.5 Sample selection” on page 24.

### 7.3.2.3 Simplified checks

All sample checks must be successfully passed before the process can continue with the simplified checks of the remaining locations.

The audit provider will usually check all remaining locations with a lower assessment level than applied to the sample checks.

For more information, please refer to section “7.3.2.6 Assessment levels” on page 25.

### 7.3.2.4 Sample size

The audit provider must conduct sample checks at a defined minimum number of sample locations.

The minimum number of locations in the sample depends on the total number of locations in your assessment scope.

The minimum number of sample locations always starts at two.

The minimum number of locations in the sample is calculated based on a formal equation. However, we start with a version in plain English:

1. Take the total number of locations (including the main location) in your assessment scope ( $No_{locations}$ ).
2. Take the square root and round up to get the minimum number of sample locations ( $No_{samples}$ ).

Examples:

Total number of locations	Minimum sample size
6	3 (rounded up from 2.4)
42	7 (rounded up from 6.5)
128	12 (rounded up from 11.3)

Table 6: Examples for sample sizes

Here's a visual approach:

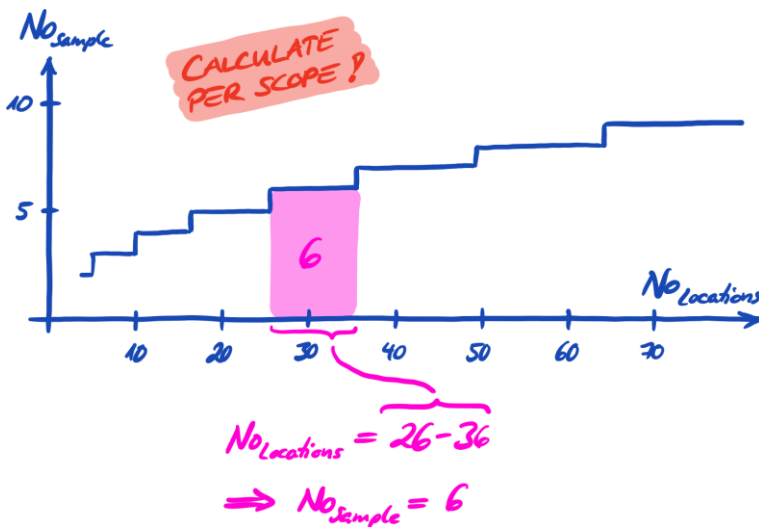


Figure 9: The sample size diagram

And this is the formal equation:

$$No_{samples}(No_{locations}) = \lceil \sqrt{No_{locations}} \rceil$$

Equation 1: Minimum number of sample locations

The result is always rounded UP.



Important note:

The number of locations in the sample can be higher than the calculated minimum number. For more information, please refer to the next section.

### 7.3.2.5 Sample selection

The audit provider:

- selects the sample locations from the total number of locations in the assessment scope after the precondition check.
- selects at least as many locations as calculated for the sample size.

- can decide to conduct sample checks at more locations than indicated by sample size.
- does the selection based the probability of non-conformities and the possible impact of non-conformities. All this is based on the audit provider's professional judgement ("risk-based sample").
- documents his justification for the selection of the subset.

### 7.3.2.6 Assessment levels

The assessment levels reflect a tiered approach for gaining confidence in whether the requirements are fulfilled.

#### Generally:

In an assessment in assessment level 3, the audit provider obtains his own impression. He's really aiming to understand and observe how the requirements are fulfilled. He does not solely rely on documentation or statements.

In an assessment in assessment level 2, the audit provider (selectively) compares what the ISMS suggests he would observe against the real situation at that location.

#### In the context of the simplified group assessment:

The main location is always assessed in an assessment in AL 3. The audit provider aims to get a comprehensive idea of how the ISMS works. He focusses especially on the central processes and how they take effect on the dependent locations. The audit provider builds up a detailed picture of what he expects to observe at the dependent locations.

The sample locations are then assessed with the focus on verifying the picture that emerged during the precondition check at the main location. The sample checks are conducted either in AL 3 or AL 2.

Successful assessments of the main location and the sample locations warrant that the remaining locations are assessed in a lower assessment level. Thus, the simplified checks at the remaining locations are either conducted in AL 2 or AL 1.

The following table shows the assessment level and the assessment locality for each location class:

No.	Assessment objective	Main location		Sample locations		Remaining locations	
1.	Handling of information with high protection needs	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote	AL 1	Remote
2.	High availability	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote	AL 1	Remote
3.	Handling of information with <u>very</u> high protection needs	AL 3	On site	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote
4.	<u>Very</u> high availability	AL 3	On site	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote
5.	Protection of prototype parts and components	AL 3*	On site*	AL 3*	On site*	AL 2*	On site*
6.	Protection of prototype vehicles	AL 3	On site	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site
7.	Handling of test vehicles	AL 3*	On site*	AL 3*	On site*	AL 2*	On site*
8.	Protection of prototypes during events and film or photo shoots	AL 3	On site	AL 3	On site	AL 2*	On site*

9.	Data protection According to Article 28 ("Processor") of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote	AL 1	Remote
10.	Data protection with <u>special</u> categories of personal data According to Article 28 ("Processor") with special categories of personal data as specified in Article 9 of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	AL 3	On site	AL 3	On site	AL 2	On site/ remote

Table 7: Assessment level and locality for each location class



Please note:

About the three assessment objectives marked with an **asterisk (\*)**:

Because these three assessment objectives mandate on-site assessments, the simplified group assessment may not make much sense in a scenario where these are the only assessment objectives. There wouldn't be a difference in efforts compared to the regular process. However, in a more heterogeneous scenario it is possible to have these assessment objectives and it may still make sense.



Please note:

Some locations can face "split AL" situations.

A "split AL" situation means a location with dependent assessment objectives can be subject to checks for one assessment objective in AL 1 and to checks for another assessment objective in AL 2.

Assessment objectives with dependencies (e.g., "Info High" included in "Proto") and a general "on site" requirement (currently "Proto parts", "Test vehicles" and "Proto events") can cause "split AL" situations.

Example:

The assessment objective is "Proto parts". This includes the assessment objective "Info high". For "Info high", the audit provider must conduct the simplified check in AL 1. However, "Proto parts" mandates the audit provider has to conduct the simplified check in AL 2 and "on site". In such a situation, the audit provider will focus on the "Proto parts" requirements in an AL 2 on-site check. He will also focus on any "Info" requirements that are closely linked to the "Proto" requirements. He will check all other "Info" requirements as in a typical AL 1 check.



Important note:

It is essential to understand that assessment level and assessment site don't have a fixed 1:1 relationship – even if in many cases it looks like one.

An AL 3 assessment will always be "on site". But for the other locations, an AL 2 assessment can be "remote" (e.g., for assessment objective "Info high") or it can be "on site" (e.g., for assessment objective "Proto parts").

In some cases, the sites are mandated by the assessment objectives.

### 7.3.3 Rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment (R-SGA)

The following sub-sections only apply to the **rotating-schedule-based** simplified group assessment.

### 7.3.3.1 Location checks

In contrast to the sample-based simplified group assessment, there is no difference between the regular assessment process and the rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment. The audit provider will check all locations in the assessment scope, according to the selected assessment objective(s).

### 7.3.3.2 Schedule

The location checks are spread out over the TISAX labels' three-year validity period. In each year of the validity period, the audit provider must check at least 30% (rounded up) of the total number of locations in the assessment scope.

Reminder: The validity period of TISAX label(s) starts on the day of the closing meeting of the initial assessment. It ends three years later.

Follow these steps to determine the schedule:

Step	Example
	<b>36 locations</b> Validity period from 2023-03-05 to 2026-03-04
1. Multiply the total number of locations in the assessment scope with 0.3.	$36 \times 0.3 = 10.8$
2. Round up to get the "minimum number of location checks in a year".	10.8 rounded up = 11

This adds up to 33 location checks. The audit provider can plan the check of the missing three location for any time during the three-year validity period.

## 7.3.4 Further shared aspects

The following sub-sections apply to **both** assessment process options.

### 7.3.4.1 Conformity

The audit provider focuses on the fulfilment of the [additional requirements](#). The identification of a major non-conformity automatically implies that the additional requirements for the simplified group assessment are not fulfilled. Therefore, if the audit provider finds new major non-conformities that are not known to and not managed by the ISMS, he must abort the simplified group assessment. He won't abort the process, if the major non-conformity is known to and managed by the ISMS and there is a valid reason that this major non-conformity was not yet treated.

A new simplified group assessment is only possible, if you can prove structural changes that prevent major non-conformities at all locations.

**Important note:**

The abortion of the process when the audit provider finds a new major non-conformity is an essential difference to the regular process. If the audit provider finds a major non-conformity in the regular process, you simply mitigate and resolve it (as documented in a corrective action plan) and request a follow-up assessment. You don't have this option in the simplified group assessment.

### 7.3.4.2 Process duration

It is impossible for us to give you a reliable estimate regarding the process duration. It depends on too many factors. If you have to get 20 identical data centres TISAX-assessed, the process is much faster than for an automotive tier-1 supplier with a wide variety of businesses.

Factors you need to consider are:

- Number of locations
- Homogeneity of the locations
- Quality and structure of the internal ISMS documentation at the main location (central availability of information about all locations)

### 7.3.4.3 TISAX report

The TISAX report is the only place where you will see that the audit provider conducted a simplified group assessment. Any publication or sharing permission granted via the ENX portal does not give this information.

For the rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment, the audit provider will issue:

- the first TISAX report after the main location check,
- updates of the TISAX report at the end of each calendar year and
- a final update at the end of the three-year validity period.

## 8 Exchange

There is no difference in the process to publish and share your assessment result compared to the regular process.



## 9 Lifecycle management

### 9.1 Additional locations (scope extension assessment)

This section only applies to the **sample-based** simplified group assessment.

You can add one or more locations to your existing assessment scope. The new locations must be part of the central ISMS.

If you add new locations to your assessment scope, the required minimum number of sample locations may change. If the sample size changes, your audit provider has to repeat the sample selection step (“7.3.2.5 Sample selection” on page 24). If the audit provider must add sample locations, he can select them from the existing locations and/or the new locations.

If new locations aren't selected as sample locations, the audit provider will conduct simplified checks instead of sample checks.

If the sample size doesn't change even with the new locations, the audit provider will by default also conduct simplified checks. However, if the audit provider expects any risks regarding the new locations, he has to conduct sample checks.

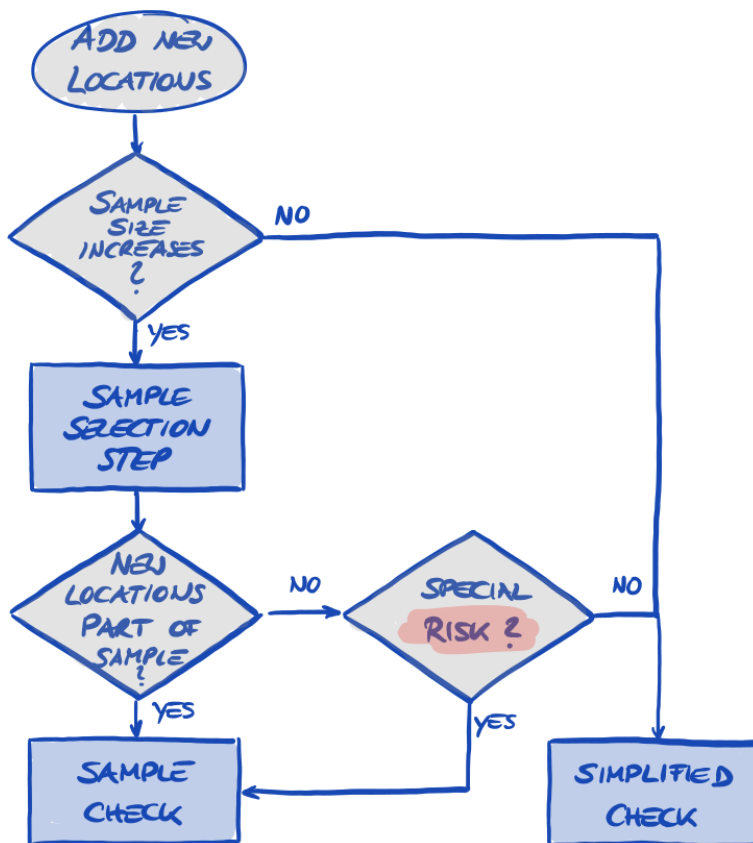


Figure 10: Decision tree for determining the check type for new locations

When the checks are successfully passed, the audit provider issues an updated TISAX report.

The updated TISAX report contains:

- Information about the new locations

- Information about additional sample checks, if applicable
- Justification for the sample selection, if applicable

The validity period of the assessment result and the corresponding TISAX labels does not change if you add new locations.

Only the audit provider that did the original simplified group assessment can add new locations.



Please note:

We recommend creating the new locations in the ENX portal as your first step. The second step is to then request the scope extension assessment from your audit provider.



Important note:

If you add a new location and the audit provider finds a major non-conformity (that is not already managed by the ISMS), the entire assessment scope is at risk of losing its TISAX labels (except for those locations that have already been assessed according to regular procedures). This won't happen for minor findings. But if the non-conformity suggests major risks that are unmanaged by the ISMS, the audit provider can't justify that you can keep your TISAX labels.

## 9.2 Removing locations

You are obliged by the “TISAX Participation General Terms and Conditions” to notify us, when something changed in a way that the requirements aren't fulfilled anymore.

Examples for such changes:

- a location stopped following the central processes
- a location is no longer under the full control of the central ISMS
- a location was sold to another company
- a location declared bankruptcy

We will remove the location(s) from the assessment scope. The audit provider won't issue an updated TISAX report.

## 10 Document history

Version	Notes
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Several sections added/updated to cover the “rotating-schedule-based simplified group assessment” (R-SGA)</li><li>• Section “<a href="#">ISA self-assessment</a>” updated to reflect the newest version of the additional requirements</li><li>• Section “<a href="#">Assessment levels</a>” updated with the new assessment objectives “High availability” and “Very high availability”</li><li>• Minor typing errors corrected</li><li>• Minor wording changes</li></ul>