SLOVENSKI STANDARD
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Poštne storitve - Baze naslovov - 1. del: Sestavni deli poštnih naslovov

Postal services - Address databases - Part 1: Components of postal addresses

Postalische Dienstleistungen - Adressdatenbanken - Teil 1: Bestandteile der postalischen Anschrift

Services postaux - Bases de données d'adresses - Partie 1: Composants des adresses postales

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EUROPEAN STANDARD

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Postal services - Address databases - Part 1: Components of postal addresses

Services postaux - Bases de données d'adresse - Partie 1: Composants des adresses postales

Postalische Dienstleistungen - Adressdatenbanken - Teil 1: Bestandteile der postalischen Anschrift

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 28 November 2002.

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This European Standard exists in three official versions (English, French, German). A version in any other language made by translation under the responsibility of a CEN member into its own language and notified to the Management Centre has the same status as the official versions.

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW

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EN 14142-1:2003 (E)

Contents

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW

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Foreword

This document (EN 14142-1:2003) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 331 "Postal Services", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by August 2003, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by August 2003.

This document has been prepared under a mandate given to CEN by the European Commission and the European Free Trade Association, and supports essential requirements of EU Directive(s).

Annexes A, B and C are informative.

According to the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organizations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

EN 14142-1:2003 (E)

Introduction

The postal service provides letter, package and parcel **delivery**[1] on a global and universal basis, without the need for **recipients** to enter into explicit service contracts. **Postal addresses**, which combine private recipient information with publicly known **delivery point** data, provide the mechanism through which **mailers** specify the intended recipient and the means by which the postal operator can fulfil its delivery commitment.

Traditionally, postal operators have been highly flexible with regard to the manner in which postal items can be addressed: any form and content of address was acceptable as long as it permitted sufficiently unambiguous determination of the delivery point. Even today, many posts pride themselves on their ability, using staff intelligence and local demographic knowledge, to deliver postal items carrying incomplete or unusual address representations.

However, increasing volumes and labour cost rates long ago reached the point at which automation became not only economic, but essential. As a result, it has become more and more vital to ensure that the vast majority of postal items are addressed in a way that can be processed automatically, without risk of misinterpretation.

Today, the vast majority of postal items carry printed addresses, which are extracted from computer databases.

Such databases need to be maintained in the face of population mobility, creation and suppression of delivery points and changes in their specification such as renaming of streets, renumbering of properties, etc. Moreover, there is a growing tendency for companies to exchange or trade address data and, in the context of the European Single Market, for companies in one country to hold address data of organisations and individuals in other countries, which may use different approaches to the structuring of printed addresses.

In this context, CEN/TC 331 Postal Services charged its Working Group 3 to develop a multi-part standard, covering the definition of address components and **postal address structures**, the electronic exchange and validation of address data and the representation of addresses on postal items. This standard, *Components of Postal Addresses*, is the first in what is intended to become a series of standards and guidelines covering:

— the definition of the logical **components** of postal addresses and ways in which postal addresses can be constructed from these: *Components of Postal Addresses*;

— the (country-dependent) way in which postal addresses should be printed on postal items: *Physical Presentation of Address Components*;

— the procedures and syntax to be used for exchanging address data between computer systems: *Electronic Exchange and Digital Representation of Postal Address data*;

— the (country-dependent) rules and procedures for checking the correctness of postal addresses: *Validation of Postal Address data*;

— the interpretation of printed addresses, and the extraction, from them, of **postal address components**: *Extraction of Address Components from line-oriented Address Representations*.

This document comprises Part 1: *Components of Postal Addresses*. It should be possible to express any **syntactically correct postal address** in accordance with the component definition specified herein. However, the converse may not hold: that is, a set of components structured in accordance with the definition may not necessarily be a syntactically correct postal address.

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[1]   Terms in **bold** are defined either in section 3, or section 4, Postal Address Components.

This initial version[2] of the standard is primarily concerned with those components, such as **addressee specification**, **thoroughfare** or **postcode**, which may be part of a printed representation of an address (A.2). Furthermore, the definitions given are natural language ones, rather than being formal specifications (A.3).

1 Scope

This European Standard provides a dictionary of the possible components of postal addresses, together with examples of and constraints on their use. It also defines a number of useful terms, such as **delivery address**, **forwarding address**, **mailee** and **mail originator**. It does *not* specify the length or value range of components. Nor, though it may indicate some cases in which a component may occur more than once, does it give a precise specification of recurrence rules.

NOTE 1   An individual postal address, or a class of postal addresses (such as the addresses used in a given country) may require only a subset of the possible components. For example, Irish postal addresses do not include **postcode**; Dutch addresses do not separate **thoroughfare type** from **thoroughfare name**.

The standard is an enabling one: it serves to define components that are drawn on in other standards described in the Introduction above. It is intended to be used together with the other parts of the standard.

The standard defines three levels of postal address component:

a) **elements**, such as **organisation name** or **legal status**, which correspond to the lowest level of component which it may be useful (A.1) to distinguish in address representations;

b) **constructs**, such as **organisation identification**, which group elements into units which are more meaningful for human interpretation;

c) **segments**, such as **addressee specification**, which correspond to major logical portions of a postal address.

By providing a standard dictionary of postal address components, this standard is expected to greatly facilitate the formal description of actual address representations and the definition of procedures for mapping between them.

In practice, many address representations, whether in computer databases, in electronic messages or in printed or written form, may combine several of the postal address components defined herein into single fields or lines.

NOTE 2   Practical databases (and even printed addresses) may also combine postal address components, as defined herein, with other relevant data. For example, a company's customer database may include a customer reference or identification number along with each customer's address. Such additional data are not considered, for the purpose of this European Standard, as part of the address, but they must obviously be taken into account in the design of the database and of the applications that use it.

Considerable intelligence may be required in mapping between different representations, particularly where these are subject to a degree of ambiguity.

EXAMPLE: In the individual name *John Smith*, it is reasonably evident that *Smith* is the individual's **surname** and that *John* is a **given name**. But *James Joyce* is rather more ambiguous: does this represent *Mr Joyce*, with given name *James*, or *Ms James*, with given name *Joyce*?

This standard does not cover the topic of data protection. Users of the standard are nevertheless reminded that the storage and exchange of personal data are subject to legislation in many countries. The standard may be applied only to the extent that this is compliant with such legislation.

The present version of the standard applies to European postal addresses only.

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[2]   The present specification is the first release of Part I of the standard. It is expected that work on the development of Parts 2 to 5 may result in the need for changes to this specification. Annex A provides an informative list of aspects of the specification that may be particularly subject to change. Where relevant, the body of the standard refers to the points listed in annex A using superscripted cross-references. Thus the reference[b] refers to point number b) in the annex.

5

EN 14142-1:2003 (E)

NOTE 2   Application of the standard to addresses of non-European countries is for further study. A number of groups are working on the definition, printing and communication of addresses for other parts of the world. When the results of such work become available, it is intended that the standard should be reviewed to ensure world-wide compatibility.

2 Normative references

This European Standard incorporates by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text, and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated references, subsequent amendments to or revisions of any of these publications apply to this European Standard only when incorporated in it by amendment or revision. For undated references the latest edition of the publication referred to applies (including amendments).

EN ISO 3166-1, *Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions - Part 1: Country codes (ISO 3166-1:1997).*

ENV 13712:2000, *Postal services - Forms - Harmonised vocabulary.*

3 Terms and definitions

This clause of this European Standard defines a number of general terms, definitions and concepts which are either referred to in this Part (Part 1) of the standard, or are expected to be referred to in future parts. The clause does not include definitions of individual **postal address components**, which are separately defined in clause 4.

For the purposes of this European Standard, the terms and definitions in ENV 13712 together with the following additions and exceptions (A.4) apply.

3.1
address
see **postal address**

3.2
addressee
natural or legal person who is the intended ultimate recipient of a postal item

NOTE 1   The addressee may be explicitly defined as part of the postal address, or may be implicit. For example, in certain countries, omission of addressee information may be taken as implying that delivery must be to an individual or legal entity having legal access to the delivery point.

NOTE 2   The term "natural or legal person", which is used in the above definition for consistency with other standards, should be understood as including also groups of such persons and forms of organisation which have no legal personality. This applies also to its use in the definition of mailee, but not to the definitions of mail originator and mail submitter, since the legal responsibility of these parties may be engaged in the event of breach of postal regulations.

NOTE 3   An address may contain multiple addressee specifications. For example, *Mr or Mrs Smith* specifies that the addressee is either one of two individuals, whilst *Mr Jones and Mrs Smith* denotes that the addressee is a group of two individuals. See also addressee role descriptor, 4.3.1.

NOTE 4   The above definition differs from that in ENV 13712.

NOTE 5   The use made by the postal operator of addressee and mailee data may be dependent on the postal service applicable to the postal item. For certain services, such as registered mail, it may be an integral part of the postal operator's responsibility to ensure that the addressee, or a duly authorised representative, acknowledges receipt of the postal item. In other cases, addressee data may be purely informative or used by the postal operator only for consistency checking and/or for the activation of forwarding services. In still other cases, it may be used for sorting or sequencing purposes prior to delivery (e.g. in the case of business mail being pre-sequenced by department or individual company official).

3.3
component
see **postal address component**

6

3.4
construct
see **postal address construct**

3.5
data identifier
alphanumeric prefix to a data structure that defines the content, format and intended interpretation of the data

NOTE   Data identifiers are defined in accordance with ISO/IEC 15418.

3.6
delivery
postal process in which a postal item leaves the responsibility of the postal operator through being handed over to, or left for collection by, the **addressee**, the **mailee** or an authorised representative, or deposited in a private letter-box accessible to one or other of these

NOTE   Except in the case of special services, for which the addressee or mailee is required to acknowledge receipt, delivery does not necessarily guarantee that the postal item actually reaches the addressee or mailee. In particular, where postal items are left for collection or deposited in a private letterbox, other persons may have access to them, either legally or otherwise.

3.7
delivery address
postal address specified by the **mailer** to which the postal operator is requested to deliver the postal item

NOTE 1   The delivery address may in certain circumstances – e.g. un-addressed mail – not actually be represented on the postal item. In this case, the delivery address is determined by the postal operator in accordance with an agreement between the operator and the mailer.

NOTE 2   The postal item may not actually be delivered to the requested delivery address. For example, in the case of forwarding, delivery takes place at the forwarding address.

3.8
delivery point
physical location recognised by a postal operator as a valid location at which **delivery** of a postal item may occur

3.9
element
see **postal address element**

3.10
forwarding address
postal address, specified by the **addressee** or **mailee** of a postal item, to which the postal operator is requested to deliver the postal item, in place of delivering it to the **delivery address**

NOTE 1   Not all postal items can be forwarded, as for some postal services the **mailer** may require the return of the postal item if it cannot be delivered at the delivery address.

NOTE 2   Forwarding addresses may be permanent, e.g. in case of relocation of the addressee, or temporary. They may also involve the holding of mail for collection by the addressee or the mailee (see **poste restante**).

3.11
mail originator
natural or legal person responsible for originating the content of a postal item

NOTE   The mail originator can be thought of as the initiator of the postal item. Mail production, finishing, submission and payment processes *may* be performed by the mail originator, but may equally be performed by other parties. In particular, the mail originator:

— does not necessarily determine the **delivery address** (e.g. un-addressed mail, or mail which is addressed by a mail-house);

EN 14142-1:2003 (E)

— does not necessarily produce (print, fold, insert into envelopes, etc.) the mail;

— may be distinct from the **mail submitter;**

— may not pay for the (complete) service (Freepost, Business Reply, COD, under franking, etc.);

— may be distinct from the person or legal entity to which the postal item must be returned in case of non-delivery.

cf **mailer**

3.12
mail recipient
individual who actually receives a postal item at **delivery**, or who first accesses the postal item if it is left for collection

NOTE   The mail recipient should normally be the **addressee**, the **mailee** or an authorised representative of one of these two. However, this may not always be the case, e.g. if the postal item is left for collection in a location to which third parties have access; if the addressee/mailee have moved without leaving forwarding instructions, or if the addressee or mailee specification was ambiguous and was, as a result, misinterpreted by the postal operator.

3.13
mail submitter
natural or legal person responsible for induction of a postal item into the postal system

NOTE   The mail submitter may be, but is not necessarily, the same party as the **mail originator**.

3.14
mailee

natural or legal person designated in a **postal address** as having responsibility for ensuring that postal items, delivered or handed over by the postal operator at the **delivery address**, reach their **addressee**

NOTE 1   Unlike the addressee, mailee is never implicit: if a postal address does not contain a **mailee specification**, then there is no mailee.

NOTE 2   As is the case for addressee, the mailee specification may be ambiguous.

NOTE 3   The term "natural or legal person", which is used in the above definition for consistency with other standards, should be understood as including also forms of organisation which have no legal personality. This applies also to its use in the definition of addressee, but not to the definitions of **mail originator** and **mail submitter**, since the legal responsibility of these parties may be engaged in the event of breach of postal regulations.

3.15
mailer
natural or legal person who carries out one or more of the processes involved in creating, producing, finishing, inducting and paying the postage due for a postal item

NOTE 1   Many processes are involved in the production and mailing of postal items. These include:

— initiation;

— content production, which may be separated into parts produced by several different parties (e.g. inserts may be produced separately from covering letters);

— finishing, including assembly of the content and its packaging (e.g. placing in an envelope, or wrapping) for mailing purposes;

— addressing;

— induction into the postal system;

— payment.

These processes may be performed by one party, or may be split between different parties, each fulfilling a particular role or combination of roles. Where it is necessary to distinguish between such roles, they are referred to by separate terms, in particular **mail originator**, **mail submitter** and **payer**; where such distinction is not necessary, mailer is used as a generic term.

8

NOTE 2: The term "natural or legal person", which is used in the above definition for consistency with other standards, should be understood as including also forms of organisation which have no legal personality.

3.16
payer
natural or legal person responsible for payment, to the postal operator, of the postage due in respect of a postal item

NOTE 1   This term is not used in the present document, but is included for consistency with other specifications relating to the interface between **mailers** and postal operators.

3.17
postal address
set of information which, for a postal item, allows the unambiguous determination of an actual or potential **delivery point**, usually combined with the specification of an **addressee** and/or a **mailee**

cf **delivery address**, **forwarding address**, **return address**.

NOTE 1   The **components** of postal addresses are defined in 4.

NOTE 2   The above definition differs from that in ENV 13712.

NOTE 3   Postal addresses may be ambiguous, incorrect or non-existing. See also **syntactically correct postal address**, **valid postal address**.

3.18
iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
postal address component
collective term for **postal address elements**, **postal address constructs** and **postal address segments**, as defined in this standard
(standards iteh.ai)

NOTE   Clause 4 of this standard defines the postal address components which may occur in an actual postal address. It should be noted that not all components are necessarily used in a specific instance or class of postal addresses.

3.19
postal address construct
combination of **postal address elements** which together form a logical portion of a **postal address**

NOTE 1   Constructs may be defined hierarchically. That is, a construct may comprise a logical grouping of postal address elements; a logical grouping of lower level constructs or a combination of elements and lower level constructs.

NOTE 2   4.2 of this standard defines the constructs which may occur in a postal address. It should be noted that not all constructs are necessarily used in a specific instance or class of postal addresses.

cf **postal address component**, **postal address segment**

3.20
postal address element
basic entity of a **postal address** that has a well defined meaning and representation, has significance for customer or postal processing purposes and cannot usefully be divided into smaller units for exchange or printing purposes

NOTE 1   A **given name** is an example of a postal address element, but the individual characters of which it is comprised are not. On the other hand, **compound surnames** are treated as **postal address constructs**, rather than as elements, because they need to be divided into lower level components – **surname prefix** and **surname**.

NOTE 2   4.3 of this standard defines the elements which may occur in a postal address. It should be noted that not all elements are necessarily used in a specific instance or class of postal addresses.

cf **postal address component**, **postal address segment**

EN 14142-1:2003 (E)

3.21
postal address segment
named group of related **postal address constructs** and / or **postal address elements**

NOTE 4.1 defines the postal address segments.

cf **postal address component**

3.22
postal address structure
manner in which **postal address components** are or can be combined to form a **postal address**

NOTE Postal address structures may differ from country to country, from region to region or even from operator to operator within a country.

cf **syntactically correct postal address**, **valid postal address**

3.23
poste restante
delivery service indicator specifying that a postal item is to be held, at a designated postal establishment or agency, for collection by the **addressee** or his/her authorised representative

NOTE The above definition differs from that in ENV 13712.

3.24
recipient
see **mail recipient**

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(standards.iteh.ai)

3.25
return address

postal address which, for a postal item, specifies the **delivery point**, and, where relevant, the **addressee** and/or **mailee**, to which the postal item is to be delivered in case the postal operator is unable to effect normal **delivery**

NOTE 1 The interpretation of "normal delivery" may be dependent on the service characteristics for the postal service appropriate to the individual postal item.

NOTE 2 The return address is usually (but not always) the postal address of the **mail originator** or the **mail submitter**. It need not necessarily be explicitly represented on the postal item - for example, it may be derived from a company logo or from a franking mark, or it may only be apparent when the postal item is opened (normally in a special location designated for the processing of non-deliverable postal items). It may also be impossible to determine the return address, in which case the non-delivered postal item concerned must be handled according to national regulations (e.g. be destroyed).

3.26
segment
see **postal address segment**