



SLOVENSKI STANDARD

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Postal services - Quality of service - Complaints handling principles

Postalische Dienstleistungen - Dienstqualität - Grundsätze der Bearbeitung von Beschwerden

Services postaux - Qualité du service - Principes de traitement des réclamations

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EUROPEAN STANDARD
NORME EUROPÉENNE
EUROPÄISCHE NORM

EN 14012

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English Version

**Postal services - Quality of service - Complaints handling
principles**

Services postaux - Qualité du service - Principes de
traitement des réclamations

Postalische Dienstleistungen - Dienstqualität - Grundsätze
der Bearbeitung von Beschwerden

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 25 October 2008.

CEN members are bound to comply with the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations which stipulate the conditions for giving this European Standard the status of a national standard without any alteration. Up-to-date lists and bibliographical references concerning such national standards may be obtained on application to the CEN Management Centre or to any CEN member.

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 CEN Management Centre has the same status as the official versions.

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Foreword

This document (EN 14012:2008) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC “331”, 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of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2009, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2009.

This document supersedes EN 14012:2003.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN [and/or CENELEC] shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

The content has been extensively revised to reflect:

- an increased requirement for postal operators and organizations to demonstrate a stronger focus on providing a quality mail and associated complaint handling experience to postal users;
- limiting the number of measuring parameters; and
- stronger alignment with ISO 10002 adhering to the measuring method described in the first edition of EN 14012 means that also the measuring requirements of this revised 2nd edition of EN 14012 are met. Annex F contains general information regarding measuring and reporting of complaints based on the criteria described in the first edition of EN 14012 and included in Annex I. However this revised second edition of EN 14012 contains more requirements on improvements and corrective actions

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

Introduction

In 1992 the European Commission pointed out in its Green paper the need to establish common rules for the development of community postal services and the improvement of quality of service. The Commission identified requirements for quality of service measurement including the management and measurement of complaints.

The 1997 Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on common rules for the development of the internal market of Community postal services and the improvement of quality of service, 97/67/CE article 19, requires universal service providers to publish information once a year on the number of complaints and the way they are dealt with. Complaints are requests given by users of the postal service in order to communicate that they feel that the service provided has not met the standard they expect or the standard the service provider has to comply with. It is recommended to investigate complaints in order to verify if there is actual non-conformity with the service and to respond to the complainants. Moreover, complaints should be regarded as the instrument to protect users if the service provider does not respect the commitments and promises it has made.

The service provider can use complaints in its continuous quality improvement of the postal service. The level of complaints and the reasons for complaints provide important information about the satisfaction of users with different aspects of the postal service. There needs to be commitment to effective complaints handling at all levels within the postal organization.

An investigation carried out by the European postal regulators CERP in 2004 showed that the costs for fully implementing the first edition of EN 14012:2003 were likely to be too high, even for postal service organizations with existing established and sophisticated complaint management & measurement/ reporting systems. This prompted CEN/TC 331 to start a revision of the European Standard in 2005, incorporating annexes about guidance for its use. This Second version of EN 14012 does not force those who already are using EN 14012:2003 to change their measurement systems to comply with the European Standard, but gives an opportunity to measure less extensively. This second version is also aligned with ISO 10002 on Complaints handling and thus places more emphasis on the need for overall quality improvements within the postal organizations.

Regulatory aspects, information about business sensitive information and special requirements for Universal services have deliberately been left out of this European Standard. The reasons are that it is up to the regulatory and governmental bodies, as well as in contracts between business partners, to refer to business agreements and this European Standard, and to state which part has to be followed and for which service.

National regulators may have more specific requirements than those given in this European Standard.

In this second edition of EN 14012, the general structure of ISO 10002 is followed. For general complaints handling rules that are not postal specific, references are made to the latest version of ISO 10002, which may be revised independently of EN 14012.

The intention of the modified EN 14012 is to provide guidance on how to set up a complaints handling system for postal service operators that can deliver positive solutions for postal users who complain and provide sufficient information about quality of service related to complaints.

Postal specific issues which need to be taken into account are:-

- many postal organization employees are in frequent contact with postal users during the delivery of their core job and may be able to deal with complaints on the spot. Most of this contact is not recognised as complaint handling contact and is therefore not formally recorded. (For example, a postman conducting regular collection and delivery activity);

EN 14012:2008 (E)

- cross border mail may generate cross border complaints where it may be difficult to establish which postal operator is responsible;
- postal operations involving multiple operators carrying an item of mail will result in complaints being made to organizations that may or may not be the responsibility of that organization;
- person who complains may not be the person who has paid for the service; for example, a recipient of a mail item complaining about an incorrect delivery procedure;
- postal business in Europe is regulated by European and national regulatory law. This regulatory law focuses primarily on the Universal Postal Service (which differs from Member State to Member State)

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1 Scope

This European Standard specifies complaints handling principles related to domestic and international postal services. It applies to both national and cross border services. Attention is given to how to handle complaints in multiple operator situations. The standard also gives guidance for compensation and redress procedures.

This European Standard may be applied to all types of postal service both Universal service and non-universal service and by all types of postal organizations. It defines various types of complaints and establishes a methodology for handling complaints in order to improve the service given to postal users. It also gives guidance for complaints handling processes to be set up by postal service providers in order to improve quality of service.

This European Standard provides guidelines beyond the requirements given in ISO 10002 and ISO 9001 in order to consider both the effectiveness and efficiency of a complaint handling process, and consequently the potential for improvement of the performance of an organization. When compared to ISO 9001, the objectives of customer satisfaction and product quality are extended to include the satisfaction of interested parties and the performance of the organization.

This European Standard is applicable to the processes of the organization and consequently the quality management principles on which it is based can be deployed throughout the organization. The focus of this European Standard is the achievement of ongoing improvement, measured through the satisfaction of customers and other interested parties.

It should be noted that the number of complaints received might not be related to the level of service given. A large number of complaints may, on the contrary, reflect the effectiveness of the postal operator's complaint handling process.

This European Standard consists of guidance and recommendations and is neither intended for certification, regulatory or contractual use, nor as a guide to the implementation of ISO 9001.

In Annex I the relationship with the second edition of this European Standard is explained.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 10002 *Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations*

3 Terms and definitions

3.1

"access to customer service information" complaint

complaint about the information provided by the service provider on the specifications of its products and services

NOTE 1 Examples would be complaints about availability of information on product specifications and prices, about incorrect information and advice, or about information on complaints procedures.

NOTE 2 Complaints about information provided by a contractor or franchisee of the service provider would be included in this category.

3.2

"access to postal services" complaint

complaint about how and when postal services are available

NOTE 1 Examples would be complaints about opening hours at post offices, about queues at post offices, about cleanliness of post offices, or about access for disabled and handicapped people.

NOTE 2 Complaints about access points for postal services provided by the service provider through franchised operations are also included in the access to postal services category of complaints.

3.3

"behaviour and competence of postal employees" complaint

complaint regarding the behaviour of individual postal employees and the way individual employees operate postal procedures

NOTE 1 Examples would be complaints about rudeness or behaviour of employees which is inconsiderate of users of the postal service.

NOTE 2 Complaints about mistakes resulting in loss of, damage to or delay to postal items or causing delivery problems is not included in this complaints category.

3.4

cause of complaint

originating event leading to a complaint

NOTE E.g. specific explanation for a service failure or customer perception of failure, generating a complaint.

3.5

compensation

redress given to a complainant by a service provider

NOTE Compensation rules are generally specified in the terms of business.

3.6**complainant**

person, organization or its representative, making a complaint

3.7**complaint**

expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to the perceived failure of its products, services or policies, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

NOTE Organizations may have a more detailed definition of what comprises a complaint in their respective complaint handling approaches.

3.8**complaints handling process**

process starting at the receipt of a complaint through a series of actions resulting in a final response or any necessary escalation

3.9**"complaint handling" complaint**

complaint expressing dissatisfaction about the way in which a previous complaint has been treated

NOTE Reasons for dissatisfaction could include the time taken to handle the complaint or the response received from the service provider.

3.10**cross border mail**

mail distributed from one country to another country

[EN 14534:2007]

3.11**customer**

natural or legal person having a business relationship with a postal operator

NOTE A consumer who purchases postal services is a customer.

cf. User

3.12**customer service**

interaction of the organization with the user throughout the life cycle of a product or service

3.13**feedback**

opinions, comments and expressions of interest in the products or services or the complaints handling process

3.14**final response**

communication by means of which the service provider informs a complainant of the results of any investigation caused by a complaint, and whether the complaint is considered to be justified or not

NOTE 1 A continued dialogue between the service provider and an unsatisfied customer, after the complainant has been informed about the results of the investigation in the final response, is considered a new complaint about complaint handling.

NOTE 2 Even if the complainant is still not satisfied with the content of the final response, the specific complaint is solved by the final response.

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cf. complaint handling complaint

3.15**general complaint**

complaint that is based on a question of opinion or dissatisfaction in general with the service the postal operator provides without reference to a perceived specific service or product failure

NOTE 1 General Complaints are neither related to a specific item or items nor to a specific customer or postal service user.

NOTE 2 The process for handling general complaints may differ from the process for specific complaints.

cf. specific complaint

3.16**item damaged complaint**

complaint regarding damage to the contents or envelope or wrapping of a postal item

3.17**"item lost or substantially delayed" complaint**

complaint regarding a postal item not received, in whole or in part, by the recipient within a specified period of time

NOTE Each postal operator may define a specific 'loss' time depending on the product or service used.

3.18**justified complaint**

complaint regarding a subject for which the service provider, after investigation if necessary, recognises that it may not have fulfilled its obligations in whole or in part

NOTE Examples of the obligations of the service provider are its general terms of business and its regulatory and legal requirements. <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/4696d8bd-3981-4722-be1f-e2ca02e8a920/sist-en-14012-2009>

3.19**"mail delivery" complaint**

complaint about when, where or how postal items have been delivered at the delivery address

3.20**"misdelivery" complaint**

complaint about postal item delivered to the wrong address or the wrong addressee (if appropriate)

3.21**multiple operator(s)**

carriage of mail that involves more than one operator from its introduction into the postal process to its delivery

3.22**"redirection" complaint**

complaint about incorrect treatment of postal items that are affected by a permanent or temporary change of address

NOTE 1 An example of what would warrant a change of address complaint would be failure to redirect letters to a person's new address when the service provider has undertaken to do so.

NOTE 2 Complaints about temporary changes of address, for example during the summer vacation.

3.23**specific complaint**

complaint based on a question of fact related to a specific customer or postal service user, and a specific instance or a specific postal item or items

cf. general complaint

3.24

user

any natural or legal person benefiting from postal services

NOTE 1 A sender or recipient of a postal item is a user.

NOTE 2 The concept of user is wider than customer.

cf. customer

4 Complaint handling - Guiding principles

4.1 General

The overall reason to effectively manage, register and categorise complaints is to easily find information about opportunities for improvement of the quality of products, services and processes. When choosing activities for continual improvement, the organization should identify which causes of complaints that are the most important to start to deal with.

The total volume of complaints and the reasons for those complaints should not be taken as the sole measure of an organization's performance. Many organizations positively generate complaints from users, even in times of high service performance, to further drive service improvement. Comparing total complaint volumes can be misleading. Complaint volumes should also be reviewed against other factors, such as total volume of postal items.

Adherence to the guiding principles set out in 4.2 to 4.14 is recommended for delivering an effective complaint handling process.

4.2 Visibility

Information about how and where to complain about postal services should be well publicized to postal users.

4.3 Accessibility

A complaints handling process should be easily accessible to all complainants and through a variety of complaint access channels, so that no complainant would be disadvantaged. Information should be made available on the details of making and resolving complaints. The complaints handling process and supporting information should be easy to understand and use.

Wherever possible, accessibility to the complaints handling process should be free of specific charge. There shall be at least one free of specific charge access channel available to users who wish to contact an organization to make a complaint.

4.4 Acceptability

A complaint can be accepted from the sender or the addressee of a postal item or service.

Complaints related to the postal service provision can also be accepted from third parties, authorised to act on behalf of senders or recipients.