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## Securities and related financial instruments — Classification of financial instruments (CFI) code

*Valeurs mobilières et autres instruments financiers concernés —  
Classification des instruments financiers (code CFI)*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 68, *Financial services*, Subcommittee SC 8, *Reference data for financial services*.

This ~~fourth~~<sup>fifth</sup> edition cancels and replaces the ~~third~~<sup>fourth</sup> edition (ISO 10962:2015~~2019~~), which has been technically revised. The ~~main changes to the previous edition are as follows:~~<sup>six-character hierarchical structure remains unchanged from the previous version.</sup>

The main changes to the previous edition are as follows:

- The CFI code list has been removed from the specification and moved to an external code list.
- ~~To address industry requirements for the classification of derivative instruments, the structure of the CFI and content of 6.8, 6.9 and 6.11 have been amended, where the support for multi-commodity derivatives, the addition of exercise styles not connected to option type (put or call) and the ability to classify foreign exchange derivatives for single currencies and a basket of currencies are included.~~<sup>the code list are captured in the form of a machine-readable semantical model of the code lists and their values. It is important to understand that this is a semantic representation of the CFI hierarchical structure and not a canonical semantic classification of financial instruments, which is beyond the scope of this document.</sup>
- ~~In 6.8 The CFI external code list is maintained and published by the ISO 10962, changes have been introduced for the identification of deliverable/non-deliverable for swap products.~~<sup>maintenance agency, which is responsible for managing the modification and enhancement of the code lists, their values and corresponding descriptions. The maintenance agency is responsible for publishing the CFI code list. The CFI external code list is published in a selection of human-readable and machine-readable data formats [e.g. spreadsheet, PDF, comma-separated values (CSV), JSON-LD, TTL] at the discretion of the maintenance agency. See [https://www.iso.org/maintenance\\_agencies.html#81140](https://www.iso.org/maintenance_agencies.html#81140).</sup>
- ~~Rolling foreign exchange spot contracts have been included in 6.11.~~

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

The classification of financial instruments (CFI) code was developed to address ~~a number of problems which have several problems that~~ concerned the financial community. With the growth of cross-border trading, the requirement to improve communication of information among market participants ~~has had~~ become critical.

The business problems ~~centred~~ around an inability to obtain information on ~~securities~~ financial instruments due to the lack of a consistent and uniform approach to grouping financial instruments. With the explosive growth over the ~~past~~ previous 20 years in new instruments and features attached to financial instruments, a serious communication problem ~~has had~~ developed.

Many market participants ~~are were~~ using similar terminology for instruments having significantly different features. ~~The problem is~~ This problem was compounded when market participants ~~looked~~ looked beyond their own national markets. ~~They encounter~~ where they encountered the same words ~~used~~ used to describe instruments in another country, which have with significantly different features. Where the terminology ~~is was~~ in a different language, the market participant encounters the problem of the same words being applied to different instruments along with the market participants encountered additional problems of translation, which ~~also can~~ also be misleading.

In addition, the customs and practices of local markets ~~vary varied~~ considerably in the manner in which they structure ~~how they structured~~ financial instruments, often leaving foreign participants ~~confused and~~ perplexed. On careful analysis, it ~~is was~~ often found that the characteristics and features of these instruments ~~are were~~ similar to a domestic instrument instruments. However, most market participants ~~do did~~ not have the time and resources to do this analysis.

The inability to group ~~securities~~ financial instruments in a consistent manner ~~is was~~ another problem encountered by market participants. Reports of holdings by different sources for similar financial instruments often ~~result in financial~~ resulted in those instruments being categorized differently. This not only ~~affects~~ affected comparability but ~~causes~~ caused a credibility issue with the reader. When relative performances ~~are being~~ performance is measured, the ability to properly categorize holdings is essential if true comparisons are to be made.

~~The solution envisioned is twofold. One is~~ A twofold solution was developed to address these problems. ~~One was~~ to establish a series of codes ~~which clearly that~~ classify financial instruments having similar features. The other ~~is was~~ to develop a glossary of terms and provide common definitions ~~which that~~ allow market participants to easily understand the terminology being used.

The benefits derived are many:

- ~~The development of these codes will increase the efficiency, reliability, data consistency and transparency of financial services transactions for both market and reference data. Classifying financial instruments in a consistent, structured and standardized way is also beneficial for regulatory reporting requirements.~~
- The CFI code system provides a set of codes for financial instruments ~~which that~~ can be used globally for straight-through processing by all involved participants in an electronic data processing environment. For example, readers of portfolio holdings see reports from different sources using the same ~~Categories, Groups and Attributes, making~~ categories, groups and attributes, making the comparison of instruments more credible.
- The use of these codes increases the efficiency, reliability, data consistency and transparency of financial services transactions for both market and reference data. Classifying financial instruments in a consistent, structured and standardized way is also beneficial for regulatory reporting requirements.
- The broadened scope and coverage of CFI codes encourages market participants to take advantage of other International Standards, particularly international securities identification numbers (ISINs).



- It is intended that the improved understanding of the characteristics and categorization leads to a better ~~comprehension~~ understanding of financial instruments. This leads to more active markets and ~~the resulting improvement in~~ improved market liquidity. In addition, these codes ~~will be~~ are displayed on websites using internet technology, which has allowed the growth of e-issuing, e-trading and e-settlements.
- The CFI code system can further serve as a basis for the classification of financial instruments for industry risk aggregation and regulatory reporting.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) draws attention to the fact that it is claimed that compliance with this document may involve the use of a patent.

ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity and scope of this patent right.

The holder of this patent right has assured ISO that he or she is willing to negotiate licences under reasonable and non-discriminatory terms and conditions with applicants throughout the world. In this respect, the statement of the holder of this patent right is registered with ISO. Information may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents).

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# Securities and related financial instruments — Classification of financial instruments (CFI) code

## 1 Scope

This document defines and describes the structure for the codes for an internationally valid system to classify financial instruments. The classification system applies to financial instruments negotiated internationally as well as to domestic instruments. The term “financial instruments” refers not only to classical securities, and derivatives but also covers the innovative financial products that have emerged in different markets (a trend that is expected to continue in the future).

This document is intended for use in any application in the trading and administration of securities financial instruments in the international securities business. In so far as the trading and the administration of securities do not affect other countries, the application of this document remains at the discretion of the responsible national bodies, such as stock exchanges, banks, brokers, regulatory bodies and other institutions active in the securities field.

In principle, the CFI code reflects characteristics that are defined when a financial instrument is issued and that remain unchanged during its entire lifetime. However, a few events that can lead to a new CFI code for the same instrument are anticipated, such as the changing of voting rights or ownership restrictions by a stockholders' meeting.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of ~~There are no normative references in 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 10962:2021  
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/iso/71b3a722-c42d-453a-9cfb-c53bafba2381/iso-10962-2021  
ISO 6166, Securities and related financial instruments — International securities identification numbering system (ISIN)~~

## 3 Terms and definitions

~~No~~ For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions are listed in this document apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### concept

unit thought, idea or meaning

Note 1 to entry: A concept uses an *Internationalized Resource Identifier* (3.2) as a unique identifier.

### 3.2

#### Internationalized Resource Identifier

##### IRI

unique string of characters to identify a *concept* (3.1)

Note 1 to entry: The IRI supersedes the universal resource identifier (URI) for use in identifying concepts within a *Resource Definition Framework* (3.3).

### 3.3

#### Resource Definition Framework

##### RDF

general method used to model *concepts* (3.1)

### 3.4

#### Web Ontology Language

##### OWL

semantic web language designed to represent rich and complex knowledge about things, groups of things and relations between things, allowing one to represent hierarchical class relationships and capture properties and constraints, among other things

Note 1 to entry: Further information is provided at: <https://www.w3.org/OWL/>. There are various syntax conventions by which OWL can be represented [see *Terse RDF Triple Language* (3.6)].

Note 2 to entry: Any terms that are part of this vocabulary are prefixed with owl:.

### 3.5

#### Simple Knowledge Organization System

##### SKOS

W3C recommendation designed for representing classification schemes and taxonomies

Note 1 to entry: Like OWL, SKOS is an RDF-based vocabulary..

Note 2 to entry: Unlike the class hierarchy one can develop in OWL, SKOS provides the ability to create hierarchies that utilize different types of relationships, e.g. is-a-part/member-of and as such, and also provides the opportunity to support classifications and taxonomies across a broad range of information and use cases.

Note 3 to entry: Further information is provided at: <https://www.w3.org/SKOS/>.

Note 4 to entry: Any terms that are part of this vocabulary are prefixed with skos:.

### 3.6

#### Terse RDF Triple Language

##### TTL

syntax convention that represents the *Web Ontology Language* (3.4)

Note 1 to entry: Further information on this OWL syntax and details regarding how it is structured is provided at: <https://www.w3.org/TeamSubmission/turtle/>.

## 4 Conventions and principles

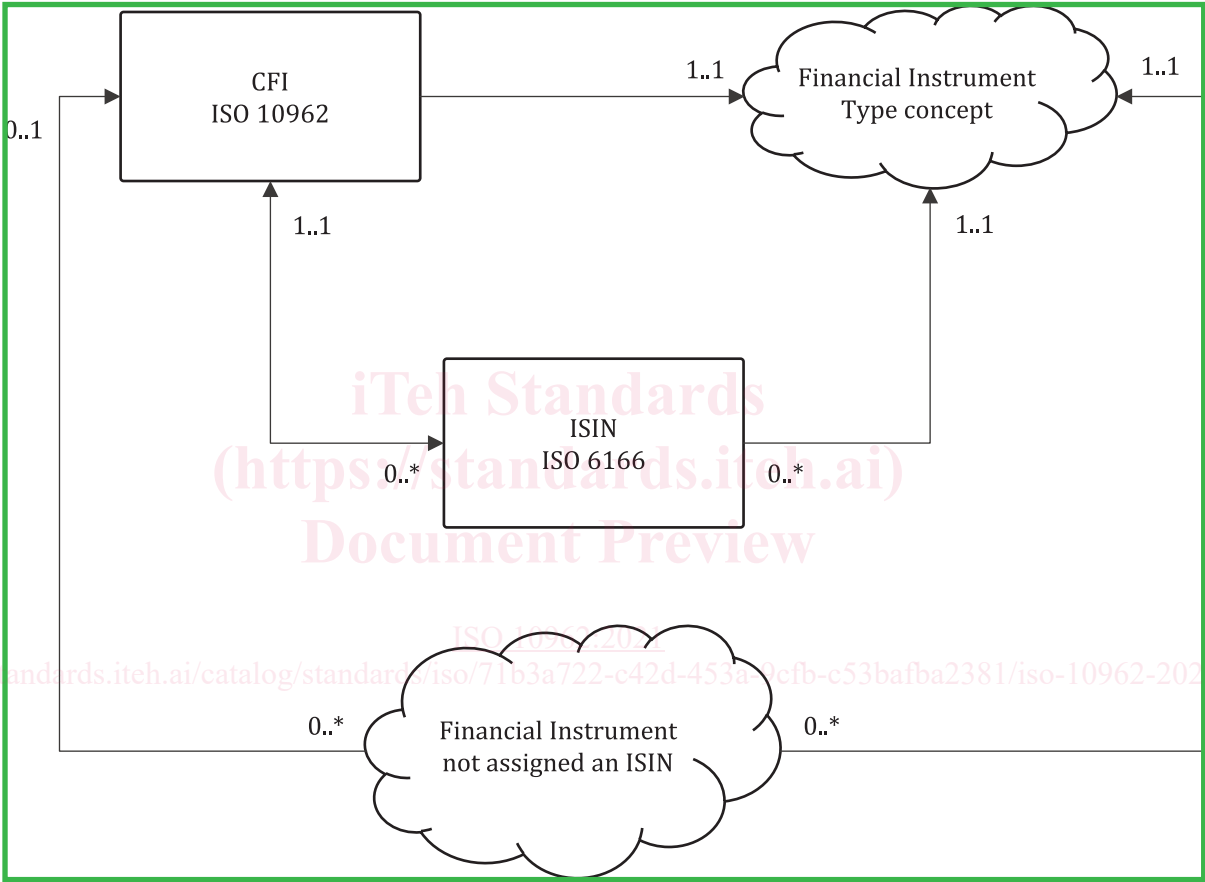
~~4.1 The GFI code provides the most comprehensive information possible, while maintaining the code manageability. One of the essential rules of this GFI concept is that the classification is determined by the intrinsic characteristics of the respective financial instruments and not by the instrument names and terms prevailing in a given country, these terms can possibly be used in a different sense in another country. This principle avoids confusion arising from different linguistic usage as well as redundancy, while allowing objective comparison of the instruments across all domestic markets.~~

~~Refer to the examples in Annex A.~~

4.24.1 General

The CFI code provides the most comprehensive information possible while maintaining the manageability of the code. One of the essential rules of this CFI concept is that the classification is determined by the intrinsic characteristics of the respective financial instruments and not by the instrument names and terms prevailing in a given country; these terms can be used in a different sense in another country. This principle avoids confusion arising from different linguistic usage as well as redundancy, while allowing objective comparison of the instruments across all domestic markets.

The CFI code should be defined in such a way that there is only one possible unique CFI code per type of financial instrument. The CFI code should have a one-to-many relationship with financial instruments. A financial instrument should only be associated with a single CFI code, see Figure 1.



Key

- concepts or entities not defined within TC 68/SC 8 standards as of publication of this document
- entity defined by an ISO standard
- relationship between entities

Cardinality rules

- 0..\* (optional, zero or more)
- 1..1 (one to one)

Figure 1 — Entity relationship

The CFI code is composed of six alphabetic characters where each character position has special significance. The structure can be summarized as follows (detailed descriptions are provided in the following subclauses):

- The first character represents the Category of the instrument.

- The second character represents the Group within a given Category.
- The third to the sixth characters are attributes which are defined to be significant within the context of a given Category and Group.

The CFI code consists of six alphabetical characters. The following alphabetic characters, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y and Z are available for assignment. Two alphabetic characters have special meanings and cannot be redefined:

X Not applicable or undefined: the character 'X' may be used for any respective Attribute if the information is unknown, not available or applicable at the time of assignment, regardless of whether it is stated as an available character for the Attribute and should be updated to reflect the respective Attribute as soon as it is known or available.

The character 'X' shall not be used as a value in the above described manner for Category or Group.

M Others (miscellaneous): the character 'M' exclusively represents 'Others (miscellaneous)' and may only be used where it is available as a character within the context of its parent category or group. 'M' is only to be selected when the Category, Group or Attribute being classified cannot shall not be attributed to an existing specified Category, Group or Attribute.

The meaning of an alphabetic character is local to, and only valid within, the context of its parent Category or Group category or its group.

Refer to Annex A for an example.

#### 4.2 Category

The first character indicates the highest level of classification and differentiates between Categories such as equities, collective investment vehicles (CIVs), debt instruments and many more, the Category, which describes the broad asset classes of the instrument, such as debt, equities, listed options, referential instruments or swaps.

#### 4.3 Group

The second character indicates specific Groups within each Category, equities, for example, category. For example, equities are broken down into groups such as common or ordinary shares, preferred or preference shares, and common or ordinary convertible shares. Within the category of debt instruments, groups include bonds and convertible bonds.

- common/ordinary shares,
- preferred/preference shares,
- common/ordinary convertible shares,
- preferred/preference convertible shares,
- limited partnership units,
- depositary receipts on equities,
- structured instruments (participation) and
- others (miscellaneous).

Within the Category of debt instruments, the Groups are bonds, convertible bonds, bonds with warrants attached, medium-term notes, money market instruments, structured instruments (capital protection), structured instruments (without capital protection), mortgage-backed securities, asset-backed securities, municipal bonds, depositary receipts on debt instruments and others (miscellaneous).