



NSAI
Standards

Irish Standard
I.S. EN 14142-1:2011

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

I.S. EN 14142-1:2011

Incorporating amendments/corrigenda/National Annexes issued since publication:

The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) produces the following categories of formal documents:

I.S. xxx: Irish Standard – national specification based on the consensus of an expert panel and subject to public consultation.

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SWIFT xxx: A rapidly developed recommendatory document based on the consensus of the participants of an NSAI workshop.

This document replaces:
EN 14142-1:2003

This document is based on:
EN 14142-1:2011

Published:
16 August, 2011

This document was published
under the authority of the NSAI
and comes into effect on:
16 August, 2011

ICS number:

03.240

NSAI
1 Swift Square,
Northwood, Santry
Dublin 9

T +353 1 807 3800
F +353 1 807 3838
E standards@nsai.ie
W NSAI.ie

Sales:
T +353 1 857 6730
F +353 1 857 6729
W standards.ie

Údarás um Chaighdeáin Náisiúnta na hÉireann

English Version

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 18 June 2011.

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EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION
COMITÉ EUROPÉEN DE NORMALISATION
EUROPÄISCHES KOMITEE FÜR NORMUNG

Management Centre: Avenue Marnix 17, B-1000 Brussels

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Foreword

This document (EN 14142-1:2011) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 331 "Postal Services", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

This document shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by February 2012, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by February 2012.

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.

This document supersedes EN 14142-1:2003.

NOTE This document has been prepared by experts coming from CEN/TC 331 and UPU, under the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UPU and CEN.

This document (EN 14142-1:2011), is the CEN equivalent of UPU¹⁾ standard S42-6 Part A. It may be amended only after prior consultation, between CEN/TC 331 and the UPU Standards Board, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between CEN and the UPU.

The UPU's contribution to the document was made, by the UPU Standards Board²⁾ and its sub-groups, in accordance with the rules given in Part V of the "General information on UPU standards".

EN 14142-1:2011 is based on UPU S42-6 Part A "International postal address components and templates — Part A: Conceptual hierarchy and template languages" [1].

This document is the equivalent to Part A of a two-part UPU Standard, S42: International postal address components and templates. S42 was originally published as a single part standard covering the definition of address components and postal address templates with examples, but has been split into two parts in order to separate the general aspects which apply to all countries and which can be expected to remain stable from the specific aspects which apply to each country considered in itself and conventions adopted by the working group which may be modified in the light of further experience. For example, the conceptual hierarchy of segments, constructs, elements and element sub-types, code tables, and the definition of the template languages will be found in EN 14142-1:2011, while the specific natural language and XML templates, rendition instructions, mapping conventions, and presentation guidelines for each country are included in CEN/TR 14142-2:2010.

1) The Universal Postal Union (UPU) is the specialized institution of the United Nations that regulates the universal postal service. The postal services of its 189 member countries form the largest physical distribution network in the world. Some 5 million postal employees working in over 660 000 post offices all over the world handle an annual total of 425 billion letters-post items in the domestic service and almost 6,7 billion in the international service. Some 4,5 billion parcels are sent by post annually. Keeping pace with the changing communications market, posts are increasingly using new communication and information technologies to move beyond what is traditionally regarded as their core postal business. They are meeting higher customer expectations with an expanded range of products and value-added services.

2) The UPU's Standards Board develops and maintains a growing number of standards to improve the exchange of postal-related information between posts, and promotes the compatibility of UPU and international postal initiatives. It works closely with posts, customers, suppliers and other partners, including various international organizations. The Standards Board ensures that coherent standards are developed in areas such as electronic data interchange (EDI), mail encoding, postal forms and meters. UPU standards are published in accordance with the rules given in Part VII of the General information on UPU standards, which may be freely downloaded from the UPU world-wide web site (www.upu.int).

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EN 14142-1:2011 contains a revised element list with several elements added or deleted, and defines an expanded roster of element sub-types in order to account for addresses from countries around the world that are either represented with templates defined in EN 14142-1:2011 or have been provided to the UPU as sample addresses. Many of these sample addresses can be found on the UPU web site, though from time to time that site is updated with changes and new examples. As part of the work of the Addressing Project Group, the Web site addresses will be mapped according to the UPU element list, including element sub-types, from EN 14142-1:2011, using the mapping conventions detailed in CEN/TR 14142-2:2010.

CEN/TR 14142-2:2010 describes the address templates for each country, i.e. the specific way an address is formatted in each country, indicating in particular the order in which the various elements appear. The address templates are supplemented by rendition instructions, specifying how elements are to be rendered for printing.³⁾

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, Croatia, 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.

³⁾ The Brazilian postcode, for example, is saved in the format 99999999 in a database. However, in an address, the postcode should be printed in the format 99999–999. The rendition instructions therefore state that the Brazilian postcode is printed with a dash between the 5th and 6th digits.

Introduction

The postal service provides letter, package and parcel **delivery**⁴⁾ 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.

This document deals with physical postal addresses and not with others like email addresses.

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 postal services 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 mean that automation became not only economic, but also essential a long time ago. As a result, it has become more and more vital to ensure that the vast majority of postal items are addressed in a way which 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 might use different approaches to the structuring of printed addresses.

In this context, the UPU Postal Operations Council's POST*Code Project Team charged its sub-project team 2 to develop a standard, covering the definition of address components and **postal address templates**. This standard, International Postal Address Components and Templates, is the result of this development.

4) Terms in **bold** are defined either in Clause 3, Terms and Definitions or Clause 5, Postal Address Components.

1 Scope

This standard provides a dictionary of the possible⁵⁾ components of postal addresses, together with examples of and constraints on their use.

This standard This standard defines three hierarchical levels of postal address component:

- **segments**, such as **addressee specification**, which correspond to major logical portions of a postal address;
- **constructs**, such as **organisation identification**, which group elements within segments into units which are meaningful for human interpretation;
- **elements**, such as **organisation name** or **legal status**, which correspond to the lowest level of constructs, i.e. those which are not themselves made up of subordinate elements, though they may be sub-divided for technical purposes.

To cover multiple occurrences and locations of elements in an address, and to be able where necessary to work with sub-divisions of element content, the standard defines a fourth level:

- **element sub-types**, such as **door type** or **door indicator**, representing parts of conceptual elements, such as **door**, for database storage or to facilitate presentation, or representing multiple instances of conceptual elements for use in defining address element structures or templates.

NOTE The underlying point is that elements are conceptual whereas sub-types are defined to meet technical needs such as template construction, rendition requirements, accurate representation of address instances, and matching to postal database fields.

This standard further provides a methodology for the specification of **postal address templates**, which stipulate how a postal address is to be written, including the order in which **postal address elements** are to appear, required and optional elements, and the presentation or rendition of the elements, subject to constraints on the space available for that task. Languages suitable for human comprehension and computer processing of postal address templates are defined and described.

It also defines a number of useful terms, such as **delivery address**, **forwarding address**, **mailee** and **mail originator**. 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, combine several of the postal address components defined herein into single fields or lines.⁶⁾ Considerable intelligence may be required in mapping between different representations, particularly where these are subject to a degree of ambiguity.⁷⁾

⁵⁾ Note that 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 at this time include **postcodes**.

⁶⁾ Note that 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 standard, as part of the address, but they obviously need to be taken into account in the design of the database and the applications which use it.

⁷⁾ For 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* specify the length or value range of components.

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

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.

EN ISO 3166-1, *Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions — Part 1: Country codes (ISO 3166-1:2006)*

UPU Standards Glossary

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions in the UPU Standards Glossary and the following additions and exceptions apply.

NOTE This clause of the standard defines a number of general terms and concepts which are referred to in this standard. This clause does not include definitions of individual **postal address components**, which are separately defined in Clause 5.

3.1

address

see **postal address**

3.2

addressee

party 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 is taken as implying that **delivery** is to be to an individual or legal entity having legal access to the **delivery point**.

NOTE 2 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**.

NOTE 3 The use made by the postal operator of addressee and mailee data might be dependent on the postal service applicable to the postal item. For some services, such as registered mail, the postal operator's responsibility might include ensuring that the addressee, or a duly authorised representative, acknowledges receipt of the postal item. In other cases, addressee data could 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 might 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).

NOTE 4 When the addressee is explicitly defined (see NOTE 1), there is always one addressee in a syntactically correct postal address, whereas the mailee information does not have to be present. In some countries, the addressee may be an abstraction such as "Postal Customer".

3.3

component

see **postal address component**

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