

**Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166
Codes for the representation of names of countries and
their subdivisions**

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Guidelines for the maintenance of ISO 3166 — Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions

1 Role of the Maintenance Agency

In developing ISO 3166, consideration was given to the maintenance of ISO 3166 and the use of the codes contained therein.

Provision was made in ISO 3166 and by the ISO Council for a Maintenance Agency (ISO 3166/MA) with the following functions:

- a) to add and to eliminate country and country subdivision names and to assign code elements as needed, in accordance with the rules provided in ISO 3166;
- b) to advise users regarding the application of the codes;
- c) to update and disseminate lists of country and country subdivision names, code elements and their definitions;
- d) to maintain a reference list of all country and country subdivision code elements used and their period of use;
- e) to publish updates announcing changes to the ISO 3166 in accordance with a);
- f) to administer the reservation of country or subdivision code elements.

2 Composition of the ISO 3166 Maintenance Agency (ISO 3166/MA)

2.1 Voting members

2.1.1 General membership

The ISO 3166/MA membership consists of

- ISO 3166/MA Chair (non-voting member)
- ISO 3166/MA Vice-Chair
- ISO 3166/MA Secretary (ISO 3166/MAS) (non-voting member)
- at least 10 to 17 individually named members representing voting member bodies as follows:
 - five to eight standing members from international organizations other than ISO;
 - five standing members from within ISO/TC 46 participating member bodies (P-members);
 - four (maximum) rotating members from within ISO/TC 46 participating member bodies (P-members).

ISO/TC 46 should review the membership structure of the ISO 3166/MA at regular intervals to ensure that its members fulfil their obligations (see 4.1). Recommendations for changes to the structure shall be submitted to ISO/TC 46 for consideration and, if approved, will be implemented by the time of the next plenary meeting.

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The ISO 3166/MA membership list is available on the ISO 3166/MA ISO Documents website.

2.1.2 International organization (other than ISO) standing members

A minimum of five and not more than eight international organizations that are not within ISO may be appointed to ISO 3166/MA. These international organizations are selected based on the role that they can play in achieving the greatest use and promotion of ISO 3166. These international organizations are appointed by ISO/TC 46 as standing members.

2.1.3 ISO P-members

2.1.3.1 Standing ISO P-members

Five standing P-members may be appointed to consecutive terms in the ISO 3166/MA. These members should reflect the greatest responsibility and productivity within the technical committee structure for this purpose. The P-members are selected by ISO/TC 46 for three-year periods which can be renewed automatically for consecutive terms. The composition of the standing members is established by ISO/TC 46.

2.1.3.2 Rotating ISO P-members

Any P-members from ISO/TC 46 who are not standing members may apply to be a rotating P-member of ISO 3166/MA. ISO/TC 46 selects up to four P-members amongst the candidates taking into account the following considerations.

- Up to four rotating P-members may sit on the ISO 3166/MA at one time.
- Each year, two new members are selected for a period of two years, and two members (who have completed their two-year membership) leave the ISO 3166/MA.

NOTE Members leaving the ISO 3166/MA may be re-elected an indefinite number of times. It is recognised that all willing P-members have an opportunity to serve on the ISO 3166/MA.

- Members should be selected in view of the best linguistic diversity and geographical representation, for example amongst:
 - African states,
 - Asia and Pacific states,
 - European states,
 - North and South American states.
- Where insufficient nominations are received, the relevant number of seats on the ISO 3166/MA may remain unassigned.

At the first election, four members will be elected, of which two will serve two years before leaving and being replaced whilst the other two will serve three years before leaving and being replaced. Those leaving after two years shall be selected by the drawing of lots.

2.2 Non-voting members

2.2.1 Associate Members

At the proposal of the Secretary-General of ISO, other ISO/TC 46 P-members and international organizations may be associated with the work of the ISO 3166/MA. An associate member body has the same status as an ordinary member but does not participate in voting.

The ISO 3166/MA membership list is available on the ISO 3166/MA ISO Documents website.

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2.2.2 Members for information

These members of the ISO 3166/MA are non-voting members participating directly or indirectly in the maintenance of ISO 3166. For those participating as experts for the maintenance of ISO 3166-2, see B.2.2.

The ISO 3166/MA membership list is available on the ISO 3166/MA ISO Documents website.

3 Secretariat

The ISO 3166/MA is served by a secretariat (ISO 3166/MAS), as designated by the ISO Council. (See also 4.2 and 4.3.)

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Voting members

4.1.1 Voting member bodies shall have one vote each and shall nominate within their respective organizations:

- one person to act as the representative voting member;
- one person to act as a substitute to its representative in case of unavailability.

These representatives should preferably be chosen to have the expertise necessary to understand ISO 3166 issues.

4.1.2 The ISO 3166/MA shall decide upon additions to and deletions from the list of country and country-subdivision code elements in ISO 3166 under conditions specified in Clause 5, and upon the assignment, reservation alteration or deletion of code elements. Members are expected to vote, respond and comment without delay within specified time limits on ISO 3166/MA matters and attend meetings of the ISO 3166/MA, as required.

4.1.3 Members that recurrently fail to perform these duties will be reminded by the ISO 3166/MAS of their obligations. However, in the event that the member repeatedly fails to respond, it may result in the downgrade or removal of the member, e.g. downgraded to an Associate Member.

4.2 ISO Secretary-General (ISO-SG)

4.2.1 The ISO-SG is responsible for contacting relevant national authorities regarding code elements proposed by the ISO 3166/MA, and arranges for publication and dissemination of updates to ISO 3166.

4.2.2 Most functions of the ISO-SG concerning updating of ISO 3166 are delegated to the ISO 3166/MA in the interest of accelerating the updating procedures. [ISO Council Resolution 9/1975 amended by ISO Council Resolution 43/1978, e) refers.]

4.2.3 In accordance with Council resolution 53/1969, the ISO-SG is also responsible for liaison with governmental and major non-governmental international organizations. The liaison will be established and maintained as required by the organization concerned.

4.3 Secretariat (ISO 3166/MAS)

4.3.1 The ISO 3166/MAS is responsible for the administration of maintenance procedures, including

- updating and maintaining the ISO 3166/MA membership list;
- calling meetings of ISO 3166/MA voting and/or non-voting members when necessary, preparing meeting agendas and providing the minutes from meetings;

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- voting procedures;
- preparation of material for external contacts to be executed by the Secretary-General of ISO;
- advice to users regarding application of the set of the officially assigned ISO 3166 code elements;
- publication and dissemination of results of the maintenance procedures.

4.3.2 The ISO 3166/MAS is also responsible for maintaining an efficient arrangement concerning communication and documentation to ISO 3166/MA members and other interested parties. On behalf of the ISO 3166/MA members and without affecting the functions of the ISO-SG, the ISO 3166/MAS may contact governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and experts at a working level when needed for the advancement of ISO's country coding system.

4.4 Officers of the ISO 3166/MA

4.4.1 The ISO 3166/MAS in coordination with the ISO/TC 46 Secretariat shall nominate a permanent Chair and Vice-chair to be the officers of the ISO 3166/MA.

These two officers shall be representatives of the two different membership groups

- one from the ISO P-members;
- one from the (non-ISO) International Organizations.

These nominations will be submitted to ISO/TC 46 for approval.

The stipulations regarding appointment and responsibilities of the Chair of ISO technical committees and subcommittees given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1, apply as appropriate. When necessary the Vice-chair replaces the Chair and assumes their responsibilities.

In accordance with ISO's neutrality policy, the Chair will not have a vote on ISO 3166/MA matters. Therefore, if the appointment of the Chair leaves a voting member vacancy from one of its member bodies, the member body shall name a new member to the ISO 3166/MA.

4.4.2 After the appointment of new officers, the outgoing and incoming officers should ensure a smooth and efficient handling of the work with the support of the ISO 3166/MAS during a transitional period.

5 Working procedure

5.1 Principles

5.1.1 The maintenance procedure shall be as expedient as possible. It generally functions by means of communication technologies. When the ISO 3166/MAS or any of the ISO 3166/MA voting members or the ISO-SG consider that a meeting is required, the ISO 3166/MAS consults the ISO 3166/MA members about the convening of such a meeting.

5.1.2 As a general principle, to ensure continuity and stability in the system, code elements shall be changed only for compelling reasons.

5.1.3 Working procedures relevant to particular parts of ISO 3166 are given in Annex A (ISO 3166-1), Annex B (ISO 3166-2) and Annex C (ISO 3166-3).

5.2 Consultation

Before opening any vote, a consultation period of at least ten working days shall be conducted amongst the ISO 3166/MA members. ISO 3166/MA members are invited to provide comments concerning the subject of consultation during this period. Based on findings from this consultation, a vote may be initiated.

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5.3 Voting procedures

5.3.1 Each voting member of the ISO 3166/MA shall have one vote (see 2.1). Votes shall be cast by the nominated representative or the substitute of each voting member. Members shall actively cast their votes, i.e. yes, no or abstention.

5.3.2 Agreement on proposed changes shall be obtained by means of communication technologies or at a meeting of the ISO 3166/MA, provided that the matter has been included in the draft agenda of the meeting. In cases of urgency, the ISO 3166/MAS may obtain the agreement on the proposed changes from the Members of the ISO 3166/MA by telephone; these agreements shall be confirmed in writing.

5.3.3 The length of the reply period shall be six working days but at the request of the Chair or at least one ISO 3166/MA voting member, the reply period may be extended. For the purposes of the ISO 3166/MA, the term "working days" shall exclude Saturdays and Sundays. The term "working days" shall also exclude the last five days of December.

5.3.4 The vote will only be approved if there is a two-thirds majority and at least eight positive votes.

When there is a two-thirds majority of positive votes, but fewer than eight positive votes because of the high number of abstentions, a second round of voting is held. After the second round, there will be no further ballots on the same proposal.

Recorded abstentions do not count. Voting members not fulfilling their responsibilities by casting an active vote will be reminded of their responsibilities (see 4.1).

6 Publication and dissemination of information

6.1 Updating of ISO 3166

6.1.1 After approval by the members of the ISO 3166/MA, an ISO 3166 update, with all agreed corrections, if any, is published.

NOTE The codes defined in ISO 3166 are published on ISO "Online Browsing Platform" (OBP) at: www.iso.org/obp. The information on the OBP is always the most current version of 3166 and users can sign up for notifications to be informed when changes are released.

6.1.2 The approved ISO 3166 update becomes effective upon publication on the OBP.

6.2 Advice to users and promotion of ISO 3166

6.2.1 Subject to these Terms of Reference and in consultation with the ISO-SG, the ISO 3166/MAS acts as a centre for the reception, storage and dissemination of information relevant to users and potential users of ISO 3166, thereby seeking to promote its widest possible use.

6.2.2 The ISO 3166/MAS may consult individual ISO 3166/MA members directly or, where required, through the ISO-SG concerning particular problems of implementation raised by users or potential users.

Annex A

Maintenance procedures specific to ISO 3166-1: Country code

A.1 General

A.1.1 Applicability of Terms of Reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166-1

Common rules for the maintenance of all parts of ISO 3166 are established in the Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166.

Decoding table of ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 codes is available at: <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:pub:PUB500001:en>

NOTE It has become necessary to develop and adhere to more stringent rules for the maintenance of all parts of ISO 3166. The rules have been optimized to reflect the fact that codes already allocated in the past should not be regarded as setting a precedent for future ones..

A.1.2 Particular aspects for the maintenance of ISO 3166-1

This annex gives guidelines describing procedures specific to the maintenance of ISO 3166-1. Since the content of ISO 3166-1 is largely determined by United Nations (UN) source documents concerning UN Member States, the rules for maintaining this part of ISO 3166 are designed to react efficiently to changes in these sources.

A.2 Changes to the list of country names and code elements in ISO 3166-1

A.2.1 Addition of entries to ISO 3166-1

A.2.1.1 Addition of UN Member States to ISO 3166-1

A.2.1.1.1 New UN Member States

As soon as a country has been accepted as a Member State of the United Nations (UN), the ISO 3166/MAS is immediately informed by the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. The UN Statistics Division (UNSD); the UNSD - notifies the ISO 3166/MAS of the numerical code element assigned for the new UN Member State.

NOTE The United Nations Terminology Database Unit (UNTERM) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) provide essential inputs to the ISO 3166/MA.

A.2.1.1.2 Creation of ISO 3166-1 codes for new UN Member States

A.2.1.1.2.1 New ISO 3166-1 codes

When the ISO 3166/MAS receives notification of the new UN Member State, the ISO 3166/MA examines whether or not a new alpha-2 and alpha-3 code elements can be created based on the notification information, as well as with any information available from contact with the authorities of the new UN Member State.

The procedure for creating a new ISO 3166-1 code is as follows:

- a) The ISO 3166/MAS initiates a consultation with its ISO 3166/MA Chair and its members, to choose suitable alphabetic code elements based on the information provided by the UNTERM as well as any information available from the UN Member State.
- b) When agreement has been reached amongst the ISO 3166/MA voting members on the proposed code elements, the ISO 3166/MAS informs the ISO-SG (see 4.2.2).

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- c) The ISO-SG (see 4.2.2), contacts the competent authorities of the UN Member State concerned, if possible, regarding the proposed alphabetic code elements.
- d) If the ISO-SG (see 4.2.2) receives a positive response from the competent authorities of the UN Member State concerned, or there is no response within six weeks, the agreed new code elements are published (see 6.1.1).

A.2.1.2 Additions of dependent areas to be considered by the ISO 3166/MA

A.2.1.2.1 Criteria for consideration for inclusion in ISO 3166-1

A.2.1.2.1.1 Autonomy and self-government

A dependent area for which the inclusion in ISO 3166-1 may be considered, shall be defined as all of the following:

- a) an area of particular geopolitical interest, whose territory is, following international law, under the sovereignty of a UN Member State;
- b) an area which is physically separated from its parent country (i.e. it does not have direct borders with its parent country, **and** it should **neither** be an **exclave** of the parent country **nor** an island within the territorial waters of the parent country; although the minimum geographical distance between the parent country and the dependent area concerned cannot be defined exactly, this distance should be considered in conjunction with the application of interchange requirements, see A.2.1.2.1.2);
- c) an area which enjoys significant autonomy and self-government.

Note that meeting these criteria is necessary for consideration but might not be sufficient for inclusion in ISO 3166-1.

A.2.1.2.1.2 Interchange requirements

An interchange requirement exists between the dependent area for which a code element is requested and other physical locations. For the purposes of ISO 3166-1, the term interchange requirement includes a stated and proven necessity to move physical objects (e.g. goods in freight containers) or non-physical objects (e.g. ICT systems) from one physical location to another where the geographical separation causes problems in using the country code element of the parent country name for the separated dependent area concerned.

A.2.1.2.1.3 Credibility of request

The request for the inclusion of a name of a dependent area in the list of entries of ISO 3166-1 or in the list of reserved code elements shall originate from the competent office of the national government or of the ISO Member Body of the country holding sovereignty over the area. The competent office shall

- a) provide a written statement;
- b) state explicitly that the request originates from their competent office for such matters and that the national government or ISO Member Body has reviewed the criteria outlined in A.2.1.2.1.1 and A.2.1.2.1.2 and considers that the dependent area meets those requirements;
- c) agree explicitly with and support the request (a mere statement that the request is tolerated by the government is not sufficient).

A.2.1.2.2 Requests

When a request for addition of a new dependent area is received, the procedure for treating such requests is the following.

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- a) The ISO 3166/MAS verifies that the request is supported by justification meeting all of the criteria described in A.2.1.2.1.
- b) The ISO 3166/MAS initiates a consultation of the ISO 3166/MA Chair and its ISO 3166/MA members about the proposed inclusion and possible suitable alphabetic code elements.
- c) Following the consultation, the ISO 3166/MA voting members are asked to vote on the inclusion and the chosen suitable alphabetic code elements.
 - 1) If the ISO 3166/MA voting members agree to add the entry to ISO 3166-1, the UNSD is asked to assign a numeric-3 code element and alphabetic code elements are then suggested to the proposer of the request.
 - 2) If the ISO 3166/MA voting members do not agree to include this entry, the request is rejected and the party that made the request informed.

A.2.1.3 Additions of other areas of particular geopolitical interest to be considered by the ISO 3166/MA

Voting members of ISO 3166/MA may request the addition of a new entry to ISO 3166-1 for an area of particular geopolitical interest that does not qualify as a dependent area as defined in A.2.1.2.1.1.

If the ISO 3166/MA votes in favour to add such an entry to ISO 3166-1, the alpha-2 and alpha-3 corresponding code elements shall be chosen as carefully as possible, and if not already assigned, a numeric-3 code element requested from the UNSD. Or if not agreed by the UNSD, a user-assigned numeric-3 code element can be chosen by ISO 3166/MA.

A.2.2 Deletion of entries from ISO 3166-1 (see also Annex C)

A.2.2.1 When the ISO 3166/MAS is informed by the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management or by the UNSD that a country name or the numeric code element of a member state has been deleted from the UNTERM database or UNSD M49 list, the ISO 3166/MAS then immediately informs the ISO 3166/MA members about the deletion of the country name or the numeric code element of the member state and a consultation is initiated of the ISO 3166/MA Chair and its members about possible consequences for ISO 3166.

A.2.2.2 When a request for deletion of a country code element from the list is received, supported by a justification for the request:

- a) the ISO 3166/MAS consults the ISO 3166/MA voting members about the deletion;
- b) the ISO 3166/MAS informs the applicant of the decision taken by the ISO 3166/MA voting members.

A.2.2.3 If the deletion of a country code element from the ISO 3166-1 list has been agreed, a new ISO 3166-3 code element is created by the ISO 3166/MA and an update to ISO 3166-3 is published as soon as possible by the ISO 3166/MAS.

A.2.3 Modification of entries to ISO 3166-1

A.2.3.1 When the UN Department for General Assembly and Conference Management or UNSD receives notification of a change of a country name or the numeric code of a member state appearing in the UNTERM database or UNSD M49 list, it immediately informs the ISO 3166/MAS of these changes:

- a) if authorities responsible for the administration of the country concerned request a change in the country code elements, or if the ISO 3166/MA agrees that there are other compelling reasons for a change, the ISO 3166/MAS then consults the ISO 3166/MA members about alternative code elements to represent the country name (see A.3);
- b) if agreement is reached by the ISO 3166/MA voting members after contact with the competent authorities as described in A.2.1.1, the new code elements are published (see 6.1.1);

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- c) if the change of a country name does not necessitate a change of code elements, the alteration of the name will nonetheless be included in its next update or revision of ISO 3166-1 (see 6.1.1).

A.2.3.2 When there is a change of a country name or numeric code element of a member state not appearing in the UNTERM database or UNSD M49 list:

- a) the ISO 3166/MAS establishes the source and credibility of the change and notes whether there is a request for a change of code elements for the country name concerned;
- b) the ISO 3166/MAS liaises with UNTERM and UNSD on the change;
- c) if the change appears to be bona fide, the ISO 3166/MAS informs the ISO 3166/MA members of the fact and, if a change in code elements has been requested or there are other compelling reasons for a change, consults the ISO 3166/MA voting members about alternative code elements to represent the country name;
- d) when agreement has been reached after contact with the pertinent authorities as described in A.2.1.1, the new code elements are published (see 6.1.1);

A.3 Principles for assigning code elements

A.3.1 When assigning alphabetic code elements to names of countries, dependencies and other areas of particular geopolitical interest, the ISO 3166/MA should attempt to obtain the greatest possible degree of visual association between the code elements and the short names of the countries, dependencies and other areas of particular geopolitical interest concerned.

A.3.2 In this context, the term "visual association" should refer not only to the short name as such but also to the use of a particular code element in an application where it is frequently seen by a large number of people. Examples are the road vehicle designations notified under the 1949 and 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic, marking of freight containers, postal use, use in television and other media and use as a basis for standard currency and location codes.

A.3.3 Where different language versions of short names exist, these should be taken into consideration in assigning alphabetic code elements. Besides the national name version, the names as expressed in the predominant foreign language used in the country should be taken into account. In a first instance, this consideration refers to the official languages of ISO 3166, English and French, but may also, when relevant, include other languages such as Arabic, German and Spanish.

A.3.4 Only the "core" names should be used as the basis for code element assignment. Any reference in the full names to political and religious epithets and forms of government, such as "Democratic", "Republic", "People's", "Kingdom" should be avoided in the assignment of code elements.

A.3.5 The alpha-2 code elements should, wherever possible, consist of the initial letter of the name, selected according to the principles set out above, and another significant letter. It is of advantage if the third letter in an alpha-3 code element could be an extension of the corresponding alpha-2 code element but this should not be a limiting factor if a more convenient alpha-3 code element could be found.

A.3.6 If governments and international organizations express wishes that a particular code element should be used to represent short names of countries, dependencies and other areas of particular geopolitical interest, the ISO 3166/MA should consider such wishes within the framework of the general principles set out above; if such wishes cannot be met, the government or organization concerned should be informed thereof and an alternative solution should be proposed. Wishes emanating from governments and national institutions should be entertained only to the extent that they refer to their own countries, dependencies and other areas of particular geopolitical interest.

A.3.7 If no suitable letter combinations are available, the ISO 3166/MA is entitled to assign code elements at its discretion.

A.4 Reservation of code elements

A.4.1 Transitional reservations

When an ISO 3166-1 code element is changed, the previous code element for the country name concerned should be reserved for a period of at least fifty years after the change-over was published; the exact period is determined in each case on the basis of the extent to which the previous code element was used. Previous code elements are shown in the Remarks of the list part of ISO 3166-1 during a period to be specified by the ISO 3166/MA, the minimum being five years.

Transitional reservations are listed in the OBP.

A.4.2 Indeterminate reservations

In the following cases, existing alphabetic code elements which differ from those included in ISO 3166-1 may be reserved for an indeterminate period of time and, during that period, should not be used to designate country names in ISO 3166-1:

- a) country designations notified under the Conventions on Road Traffic (1949 and 1968);
- b) code elements assigned by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to some specified organizations issuing or registering industrial property titles;
- c) code elements assigned in ISO/IEC 7501-1, *Identification cards — Machine readable travel documents — Part 1: Machine readable passport*.

Indeterminate reservations are listed in the OBP.

A.4.3 Exceptional reservations

Requests for additions to the list of exceptional reservations from ISO/TCs or other bodies will be submitted to the ISO 3166/MA by the ISO 3166/MAS for review and vote.

Exceptional reservations are listed in the OBP.

A.4.4 User-assigned code elements

ISO 3166/MA and its ISO 3166/MAS do not keep a record of the notifications concerning user-assigned code elements received.

Annex B

Maintenance procedures specific to ISO 3166-2: Country subdivision code

B.1 General

B.1.1 Applicability of Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166-2

Common rules for the maintenance of all parts of ISO 3166 are established in the Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166. This annex gives guidelines and describes procedures specific to the maintenance of ISO 3166-2.

B.1.2 Relationship with ISO 3166-1

Main entries of ISO 3166-2 are in one-to-one correspondence with ISO 3166-1 entries, and have the same name. All changes to short names of countries and alpha-2 code elements contained in ISO 3166-1 are reflected in ISO 3166-2.

B.1.3 Sources of ISO 3166-2 content

Contrary to ISO 3166-1, to which the United Nations Organization provides authoritative input information, there is no unique authoritative input source for the complete list of subdivision names in ISO 3166-2. Consequently the content of the list of country subdivision names and code elements in ISO 3166-2 will be derived with preference to a UN source, or if such a source is unavailable from any suitable and verifiable input source. The correctness of information fed into the updating process of ISO 3166-2 shall be verified by the group of experts for the maintenance of ISO 3166-2 established by the ISO 3166/MA.

B.2 Group of experts for the maintenance of ISO 3166-2 (ISO 3166-2 Task Force)

B.2.1 Tasks

The ISO 3166/MA entrusts the group of experts with the following tasks:

- compile information on changes in the structure and names of administrative subdivisions of countries;
- actively contact the relevant authorities in the countries concerned;
- establish permanent contacts with experts in the countries concerned;
- verify the information gathered;
- propose ISO 3166 subdivision code elements;
- prepare an update to ISO 3166-2 to be published by ISO at regular intervals or at least once a year.

B.2.2 Membership

Members of the group of experts are generally nominated by ISO member bodies and are part of the group of members for information (see 2.2.2). The ISO 3166/MA may add new members to the group of experts at its own discretion. The Chair of the ISO 3166/MA shall be a member of the group of experts by default. The ISO 3166/MAS shall maintain the membership list.

B.3 Working procedure

B.3.1 Compilation of information

Information on changes in the list of subdivision code elements and names in ISO 3166-2 shall be gathered by the members of the group of experts.

To work more efficiently, the work may be divided amongst subgroups of experts, e.g.

- America and Oceania;
- Europe and North Africa;
- Asia and South Africa.

The composition of these subgroups is agreed by the ISO 3166/MAS.

Experts shall make proposed changes directly to the draft update made available by the ISO 3166/MAS who then consolidates the information into a draft update proposal for ISO 3166-2.

B.3.2 Verification of information

The ISO 3166/MAS shall circulate draft update proposals for ISO 3166-2 amongst the ISO 3166/MA members for verification and further comments through a consultation period of at least 10 days. A compilation of comments received in the verification phase shall be circulated to the members of the group of experts together with information on decisions taken by the ISO 3166/MAS. The ISO 3166/MAS shall base its decisions on the consensus principle, i.e. only changes to names and code elements of country subdivision on which a far-reaching consensus has been reached within the group of experts shall be included in draft update of ISO 3166-2.

B.3.3 Formal approval

The result of the verification phase shall be forwarded to the ISO 3166/MA in the form of a draft update of ISO 3166-2. The draft update of ISO 3166-2 shall be submitted to a vote amongst the voting members of the ISO 3166/MA in accordance with 5.3.

B.3.4 Frequency of publication

Due to the large amount of work involved in compiling and verifying the information on country subdivisions the ISO 3166-2 update should be published on an annual basis. This periodicity entails that the ISO 3166/MAS should circulate the draft ISO 3166-2 update for approval amongst the ISO 3166/MA voting members.

Annex C

Maintenance procedures particular to ISO 3166-3: Code for formerly used names of countries

C.1 General

C.1.1 Applicability of Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166-3

Common rules for the maintenance of all parts of ISO 3166 are established in the Terms of reference for the maintenance of ISO 3166. This annex gives guidelines and describes procedures specific to the maintenance of ISO 3166-3.

C.1.2 Relationship with ISO 3166-1

Deletions of country names from ISO 3166-1 shall lead to the addition of such deleted names as new entries in the list of code elements for formerly used names of countries to ISO 3166-3. The ISO 3166/MAS shall ensure that the updating processes for ISO 3166-1 and ISO 3166-3 are synchronized.

C.2 Working procedure

C.2.1 Proposal for deletion of country name from ISO 3166-1

When an ISO 3166/MA vote on a draft ISO 3166-1 update results in the deletion of a country code element or entry from ISO 3166-1, the ISO 3166/MAS shall simultaneously submit a corresponding draft ISO 3166-3 update to the ISO 3166/MA for vote.

C.2.2 Agreement of deletion of a country name from ISO 3166-1

When the ISO 3166/MA agrees to the proposed deletion of a country name or entry from ISO 3166-1, it shall simultaneously cast a vote on the corresponding draft ISO 3166-3 update.

C.2.3 Publication of ISO 3166-3 update

Whenever possible, the ISO 3166/MAS shall publish an ISO 3166-3 update on the date when the corresponding deletion of a country name from ISO 3166-1 takes effect.

Bibliography

- [1] The United Nations Multilingual Terminology Database is available at <http://unterm.un.org/> [accessed 2 December 2019].
- [2] The UNSD (M49) list is available at <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/> [accessed 2 December 2019].
- [3] ISO maintains a glossary of FAQs at: <https://www.iso.org/glossary.html> for definitions of working terms, e.g. P-member.