

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

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EESTI STANDARDI EESSÕNA

NATIONAL FOREWORD

Käesolev Eesti standard EVS-EN 14012:2009 sisaldab Euroopa standardi EN 14012:2008 ingliskeelset teksti.

Standard on kinnitatud Eesti Standardikeskuse 29.01.2009 käskkirjaga ja jõustub sellekohase teate avaldamisel EVS Teatajas.

Euroopa standardimisorganisatsioonide poolt rahvuslikele liikmetele Euroopa standardi teksti kättesaadavaks tegemise kuupäev on 26.11.2008.

Standard on kättesaadav Eesti standardiorganisatsioonist.

This Estonian standard EVS-EN 14012:2009 consists of the English text of the European standard EN 14012:2008.

This standard is ratified with the order of Estonian Centre for Standardisation dated 29.01.2009 and is endorsed with the notification published in the official bulletin of the Estonian national standardisation organisation.

Date of Availability of the European standard text 26.11.2008.

The standard is available from Estonian standardisation organisation.

ICS 03.240

Võtmesõnad: kirisaadetus, kulgemisaeg, kvaliteet, postiteenus

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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.

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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of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2009, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2009.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);

- 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)

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.