

International Standards Organisation codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions, Part 1: Country codes (ISO 3166, 2006)

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type: Classification Scheme

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Registration status: [Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 06/02/2012
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

Definition: The International Standard for country codes, Part one.

Classification structure: The purpose of ISO 3166 is to establish codes for the representation of names of countries, territories or areas of geographical interest, and their subdivisions.

Part 1: Country codes

First published in 1974, it has since then become one of the world's most widely used standard solution for coding country names. It contains a two-letter code which is recommended as the general purpose code, a three-letter code which has better mnemonic properties and a numeric-3 code which can be useful if script independence of the codes is important.

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use: There are three related documents which, taken together, make up ISO 3166; Part 1: Country codes, Part 2: Country subdivision code and Part 3: Code for formerly used names of countries.

ISO 3166-1 is by far the most important of the three standards and the only standard in scope for this classification scheme.

Source and reference attributes

Reference documents: Maintenance Agency for International Standards Organisation (ISO) 3166 Country Codes 2006. International Standard for Country Codes. Geneva: ISO. Viewed 11 July 2011,
http://www.iso.org/iso/english_country_names_and_code_elements

Relational attributes

Value Domains based on this classification scheme: [Country code \(ISO 3166\) AA](#)
[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 06/02/2012
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015