Address elements

The International Bureau is currently compiling a list of all the elements that may be included in international addresses, on the basis of model addresses collected from all the UPU member countries.

Once this work has been completed, we shall include a list of international address elements in this chapter. This list will include, for each element:

– the unique code for the element;

– the name of the element;

– the definition of the element;

– specific examples from several different countries, showing different ways of using the element.

This list will form an integral part of a UPU standard that includes, for each country, a formal description of the structure of the country's model addresses. This formal description, supplied in natural language and in other languages (XML, etc.) will therefore include, for each country and each address type:

– the position of each address element on a line;

– information on whether the element is mandatory or optional;

– layout rules describing, amongst other things, the conditions under which:

  • a logical line may be divided into two physical lines;

  • two logical lines may be compressed into one physical line;

  • words that may be abbreviated;

  • etc.

The formal description of the structures of countries' model addresses will not be included in this brochure, but will be the subject of a separate publication within the framework of the UPU standards.

A first version of this standard is planned for November 2002. That version, which will have the status of a working draft (status 0) within the framework of the UPU standards system, will include a formal description of the model address structures of about five to ten countries. Status 0, in the UPU standards system, indicates that the draft standard still has to be tested, and may yet be modified.