

Paris, 24 March 2025

PRESS RELEASE

ISSN International Centre Clarifies Rules for ISSN Assignment

The ISSN International Centre, in cooperation with the National ISSN Centres worldwide, reaffirms its commitment to the **transparent and consistent assignment of ISSNs** based on **geographical criteria** and in accordance with the requirements of **ISO 3297**. This ensures the accurate description and accessibility of serial publications across global information networks.

ISSN assignment follows a geographical rule: the country of publication is determined by the first or most typographically prominent place mentioned on a given resource. In cases where this information is missing, external sources such as a publisher's website or a publication database may be consulted. For online resources without a clear country of publication, the location of the publisher's principal place of business is used, excluding the location of the web host, distributor or server.

Under normal circumstances, a National ISSN Centre has sole responsibility for assigning ISSNs to continuing resources published within its jurisdiction, in accordance with international law and agreements with the International Centre.

However, in cases where there is no national ISSN centre, in occupied or disputed territories and in countries not officially recognised by the United Nations, or where there is no ISO country code, the International ISSN Centre assumes responsibility for assigning ISSNs for as long as necessary.

In occupied and/or disputed territories and other conflict zones, the International Centre applies special measures to ensure **fairness and consistency** in the administration of ISSN assignments. These measures include:


- Assign ISSNs using the **ISO 3166** three-letter country code of the internationally recognised country and the centre code 0 for the International Centre.
- Adding detailed publication **history records**, including earliest and current places of publication, publisher names and ISSNs of related titles, along with a public note in the ISSN portal (portal.issn.org) explaining the exceptional circumstances.
- **Manage split publications** resulting from territorial disputes by closing original ISSN records and assigning new ISSNs to affected titles.
- Ensure **proper linking of related titles** through bibliographic fields and public annotations.

In territories without an ISO country code, the International Centre may assign ISSNs at the request of publishers, using 'INT' as the country code and centre code 0, in consultation with the relevant national centres as appropriate.

By maintaining these strict assignment protocols, the ISSN International Centre fulfils its mission to provide stable and internationally recognised identifiers for serial publications, thereby promoting clarity and accessibility in the global publishing landscape. However, the assignment of an ISSN does not constitute proof of the intellectual property rights associated with the identified resources.

The ISSN International Centre is the global authority responsible for the assignment and management of International Standard Serial Numbers (ISSNs), working with a network of National Centres to support the bibliographic control and dissemination of serial publications worldwide.

CONTACT

 Gaëlle Béquet, Director, ISSN International Centre

 gaelle.bequet@issn.org