

ISSNs (International Standard Serial Numbers) can only be assigned to **true serials**, i.e. publications that are intended to be **continued indefinitely**, and which usually bear a date or issue number. **Every serial title must be issued with a different ISSN. If a serial changes its title a new ISSN is necessary.** A change of date on a publication, including annuals, is not a change of title. Electronic and print versions of the same title are issued with separate ISSNs. 'Once-off' publications use ISBNs (International Standard Book Numbers).

An ISSN is an 8-digit number, written in two groups of 4 digits, separated by a hyphen and preceded by the letters ISSN (in capitals) and a single space. (In some cases the last digit may be the letter X, and not a number.) **Even when an ISSN is used in a barcode it should also be printed in full on the publication in some prominent place.** The recommended location, by international agreement, is the top right corner of the cover. If this is not possible the ISSN should appear on the title page or in some other prominent place, e.g. above the barcode or near the publisher information. On electronic publications, the ISSN should appear on the title screen or, in the absence of a title screen, on the main menu. When continuing resources are published in different media (print and online for instance), and different ISSNs and key titles are assigned, the related ISSNs should both be displayed on the continuing resources, each with additional, distinguishing information, as in the following examples:

ISSN 2009-5880 (Online)	or	Online edition: ISSN 2009-5880
ISSN 2009-5872 (Print)		Print edition: ISSN 2009-5872

An ISSN can be used to build a barcode (sample on p. 2), now desired by many wholesalers and retailers. The string of 13 digits, from which the barcode is generated, begins with **977**, is followed by the **first seven** of the eight **digits of the ISSN** (the "Print" ISSN if there is more than one ISSN), followed by **two digits** known as 'sequence variants', followed by a specially calculated **check-digit**. The sequence variants normally start as 00, and are increased by one each time the price changes e.g. 01 for first price change, 02 second price change, (For "one-off" special priced issues a sequence variant of 99 should be used the first time, 98 the second time, ...) The check digit also changes as the result of a change in the sequence variants.

This, main, part of the barcode identifies the title. If the title changes you must apply for a new ISSN.

An extra piece of barcode, called the 'Add-on', **which changes with each issue, is needed to distinguish between the individual issues.** This is generated from a 2-digit number.

If the frequency is between annual and monthly, then the month number is used, e.g. 01 for January, 02 for February, 06 for a June/July issue.

In the case of a publication that appears more frequently than monthly, this number is the International Standard Week Number, i.e. 01, 02, ..., 53.

If a title is published daily, or at a frequency between daily and weekly (e.g. twice a week), the appropriate week number is used for the 'Add-on'. The first sequence variant, in the main part of the barcode, is used, as above, to indicate a price change. The second sequence variant is used for the day number (Monday = 1, Tuesday = 2 etc). The check-digit will also change.

The 'Add-on' for annuals consists of the last digit of the year, always followed by 5 (e.g. 2009 = 95, 2009/2010 = 95, 2010 = 05, 2011 = 15, 2011/2012 = 15, 2012 = 25, 2012/3 = 25, 2013 = 35).

Some further guidelines are also available for extra or special issues and for temporary price changes. Guidelines for retailers, including more detailed instructions regarding barcodes, may be downloaded for free from:

<http://www.ppa.co.uk/resources/Retail/>. As these are UK publications, references to some agencies have to be converted to their Irish equivalents.

The following two companies both produce barcodes, either on microfilm master, disk or label; there may well be others:

Holfeld Graphics, Johnstown Lane, Dun Laoghaire. Tel: (01) 2855233; Fax: (01) 2853061
e-mail: customer@holfeldgraphics.com Web: www.holfeldgraphics.com/

IMS Barcoding Services, Dublin & Cork. Tel.: 021 4294231 / 087 9193689 (priority). e-mail: imsbarcodes@eircom.net. Skype: [mike_oldden_365](https://www.skype.com/name/mike_oldden_365) Nationwide. Web: www.imsbarcodes.com.

For information on barcoding items which do not have ISSNs or ISBNs or for general technical information on barcodes contact:

GS1 Ireland, The Nutley Building, Merrion Road, Dublin 4
Tel: (01) 2080660; Fax: (01) 208 0670; e-mail: info@gs1ie.org www.gs1.ie

May we also take the opportunity to remind you of the obligation placed on Irish publishers by the Legal deposit clause (Section 198) of the Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000, and previously under the Copyright Act, 1963, and related Acts, to send a copy of all publications to this library and to other specified libraries.

Sample Barcode:

