

Dear Colleague,

This is to inform you that we are in the process of developing a new telecommunications standard in ETSI, addressing 12-key telephone keypads: ***“Human Factors; User Interfaces: Character repertoires, ordering rules and assignment to the 12-key telephone keypad (European languages)”***.

The work is on-going with a preliminary date for the final draft set to April, 2002. It is anticipated to become an ETSI Standard during the second half of 2003, after submission to the ETSI Membership Approval Procedure.

“We” are the STF, Specialist Task Force, 202 of ETSI, the European Telecommunications Standards Institute, working under TC HF, Technical Committee Human Factors, with eEurope 2002 funding. Who we are in person, what we do and why is described on <http://portal.etsi.org/STFs/HF/STF202.asp>, also including the time plan for our work, the latest public draft version of our deliverable and the email address to contact us on.

The work is “backward compatible” with previous telecommunication standards, taking into account work performed previously in ISO/IEC, CEN and complementing a previous ETSI standard. The background to this work is that, at present, only assignment of the letters A-Z to the keys of telephone keypads is standardized, in the ETSI standard ETS 300 640 (which is contents-wise in agreement with the similar ITU-T E.161 and ISO/IEC 9995-8). The assignment of "national-language letters" - like ÄÖÜ - as well as non-letter characters - like punctuation marks and currency signs - is mainly undefined, resulting in a situation where industry implements vendor-specific and uncoordinated schemes. This is in general a nuisance to the user community, and a serious impediment to entering text for visually impaired users. Further, ordering of letters is not specified in this area of telecom but left to implementers, causing inconsistencies e.g. in the ordering and retrieval of names in address books.

This ETSI Standard is intended to define a "pan-European" - i.e. language-independent - key assignment and ordering scheme, as well as language-specific assignments and orderings. The work will use existing standardized definitions as far as possible, in particular standards and other standard-type documents developed by ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 22 and CEN/TC304, although they must be interpreted considering the specific telecom environment.

We assumed you might personally be interested to be informed or inform your staff about the work and its progress. Would you have the possibility to contribute to it by submitting input (e.g. comments), we would appreciate your effort and take it into account. Also, please feel free to forward this email to colleagues or other expertise you think should be informed and possibly involved. There is no charge for contributors (and no compensation either given). Would you not like to receive any more information from us, accept our apologies but please let us know!

A key aim of the work is to ensure a quick uptake of this beneficiary standard, simplifying for both end users and manufacturers. As consensus among those involved enables, simplifies and speeds up this process, we will organize a consensus workshop you are invited to attend. It will be held at ETSI in Sophia Antipolis, France (just outside Nice), on November 6-7, 2002. More detailed information and a separate invitation will be sent out very soon.

Best regards,

Bruno von Niman
ETSI STF 202 Leader

Specialist Task Force 202: Alphanumeric Characters used in European languages: Sorting Orders and Assignment to the 12-key Telephone Keypad

Who we are:

Team Leader:	Bruno von Niman
Team Members:	Martin Boecker
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What we do :

An ETSI Standard (ES) on Human Factors (HF): User Interfaces; Repertoires, ordering rules and assignment of characters to the 12-key telephone keypad (European languages) - DES/HF-00026.

Scope of the work:

The ES specifies the assignment of characters (letters, digits and special characters) to standard 12-key telephone keypads on ICT devices. It applies to public or private, fixed or mobile network terminals, without an alphanumeric keyboard but providing a 12-key keypad in either hardware form (e.g. as push button keys) or software form (e.g. as soft keys on a visual display). The ES also applies to network-based services accessed through such devices.

The ES complements ETS 300 640 by additionally including European language-specific letters (Latin, Greek and Cyrillic scripts) and other common characters (e.g. the Euro sign and punctuation marks).

The ES specifies solutions for both language-independent and language-specific keypad assignments, mapped to the 12-key telephone keypad. It also provides common and language-specific information on character repertoires and ordering.

The ES is applicable to the official majority languages of the European Union, as well as those of near-term enlargement candidate countries, those of EFTA countries, and Russian (the names of the languages used in this standard are the same as used in ISO/IEC standards for language codes). Future revisions of this standard may include the letters of other languages and other characters.

This ETSI Standard does not cover implementation issues.

Read our [Terms of Reference](#)

Why we do it:

Devices with telephone functionality is the largest consumer product segment in the world. Telecommunication, converging with information processing and intersecting with mobility and Internet technology, is leading to the development of new interactive applications and services, offering global access.

Cultural and linguistic diversity is one of the key strengths of Europe. However, in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), it raises issues that need to be considered and solved in order not to limit access to services, their availability and usability, on the basic as well as more advanced levels.

The only standard available today, addressing assignment of characters to the 12-key telephone keypad, is limited to the assignment of the basic 26 Latin letters (a to z). Language-specific letters (e.g., ü, é, å, ä, ö) as well as other characters (e.g., the Euro sign) are not addressed. The lack of addressing such typically European issues has led to diverse and inconsistent solutions for European languages, obviously creating barriers to basic communication

access in (e)Europe.

This work takes into account work previously performed in ETSI, ITU-T, CEN/TC304 and ISO/IEC JTC1, adapting its results to be optimised for devices and services used and accessed through the 12-key telephone keypad, thereby focusing on telecommunication devices.

The languages covered by the present document are the official majority languages of the European Union as defined in EU 2001, Luxembourg Group, Helsinki Group and EFTA [10] and near-term enlargement round candidates' languages, including languages of the EFTA countries.

The work is aligned with the European Commission's initiative eEurope, a program for accelerated uptake and inclusive deployment of new, important, consumer-oriented technologies (http://europa.eu.int/information_society/eeurope).

Time plan for the work:

January 2002	Start of Work
July 15, 2002	Release of First public draft for comments
August 31, 2002	End of commenting period on First draft
October 11	Release of Second public draft for comments
November, 6-7, 2002, at ETSI	First Industrial Consultation & Consensus Workshop (at ETSI in Sophia Antipolis, France)
November 8, 2002	End of commenting period on Second
November 25, 2002	Release of Third public draft for comments
December 15, 2002	End of commenting period on Third draft
February 15, 2003	Candidate ETSI Standard (ES) available
June, 2003	ETSI Standard (ES) released

Latest downloadable draft version, for comments:

[Download the latest draft version \(Second public draft\)](#) 

Latest downloadable draft version, for comments:

If you would like more information, please contact the STF via their mailing list: mailto:HF_KEYS@list.etsi.fr

[Other STFs currently working for TC HF](#)

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