



New legal obligation in Switzerland - reporting requirements Art. 24 Swiss Film Act

Information leaflet

What is ISAN?

The International Standard Audiovisual Number (ISAN) is an ISO standardised, voluntary numbering system for the identification of audiovisual works. A unique, internationally recognised and unalterable reference number is allocated to each audiovisual work which is registered on the ISAN database.

In order to identify a work version, an ISAN can be extended: It is then referred to as a V-ISAN. Businesses that are obliged to register and submit reports are requested to provide an ISAN in their reports, not a V-ISAN.

What is the structure of an ISAN?

An ISAN or a V-ISAN consists of two control digits and 24 hexadecimal digits which have been divided into different segments: a root segment with twelve digits, one four-digit segment for the identification of episodes or parts of an audiovisual work (where applicable), and the last eight digits for the identification of versions.



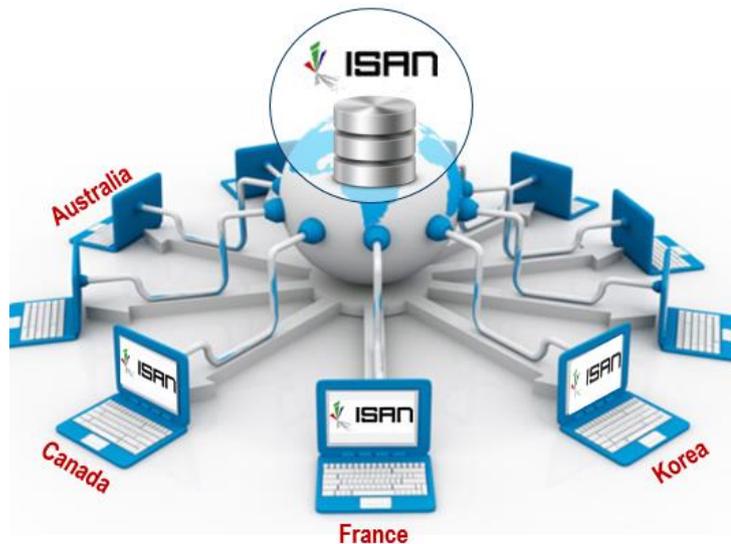
The root always remains the same for an audiovisual work, irrespective of the nature of its distribution or exploitation. ISAN is a neutral number and does not contain any information on contents such as production countries or distribution rights. All ISANs as well as the pertaining work data are centrally stored in the ISAN database and accessible online.

What is the purpose of an ISAN?

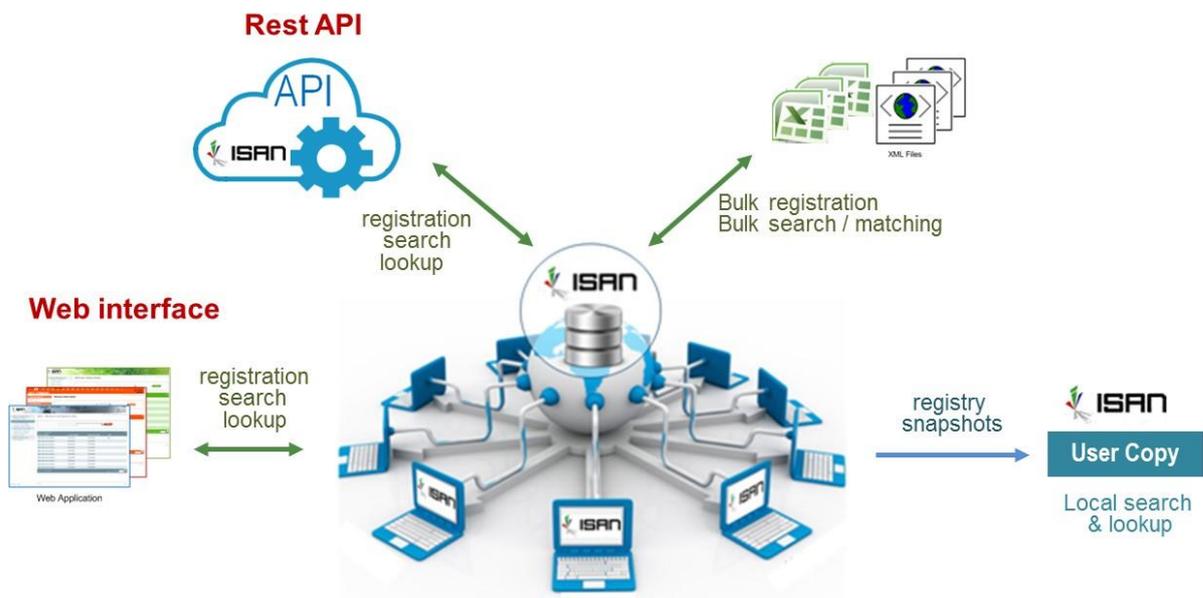
An ISAN distinguishes an audiovisual work or a work version uniquely from any others. Irrespective of language version, distribution title and other national or regional adaptations, a work with an ISAN can be identified any time, anywhere. ISAN therefore serves the needs of film creators, rights holders, users, distributors as well as consumers: It allows to monitor the exploitation of films, supports automatic data exchanges and data storage, facilitates the allocation of copyright royalties and helps funding and promoting institutions with their activities.

How and where can the ISAN database be accessed?

The ISAN database is managed by the ISAN International Agency (ISAN-IA). It is there that the data of all registered audiovisual works and versions is centrally coordinated and maintained. Each ISAN is linked to essential information ("metadata"), describing the work or the version (title, type, director, production year, duration etc.).



Data from the ISAN registry can be retrieved and/or enhanced in different ways, depending on the data volume: directly via API REST, via data exchange or via the “web interface”.



Access to the ISAN database is granted by the national or regional [registration agency](#) in charge; for Swiss businesses, this is done by ISAN Berne.

How do I find an existing ISAN?

The ISAN database already contains more than a million works. Users which have been registered by a registration agency have access to an extensive search function in the ISAN system. A publicly accessible search function via title search is available at www.isan.org/lookup.

How can I retrieve ISANs for several works?

There are various ways to match a big number of works with the ISAN database:

- A “matching service” of ISAN-IA and the registration agencies allows a matching of work data which can be submitted via Excel or XML files.
- Businesses preferring to match their data by means of their own algorithms can obtain an excerpt of the ISAN registry or get access via API REST via the registration agency (www.isan.org/api).

Please get in touch for further information.

How can I get a new ISAN for a work that has not been registered yet?

A new ISAN is usually ordered by the film producer or their representative. If an ISAN is required before the producer has acquired it, the distributor or the renting agency, or a rights holder can carry out the registration. The ISAN thus created will be later allocated to the producer.

Two steps are necessary to create an ISAN:

1. The applicant gets registered with their regional [registration agency](http://www.isan-berne.org) – ISAN Berne is responsible for Switzerland (you can download the “application for registration” at www.isan-berne.org).
2. Once the applicant has been registered, they are sent their own personal access data for the ISAN online system, where a new ISAN can be created (for detailed information, please consult www.isan-berne.org).

For optimal results in terms of identification, it is vital that all details – wherever possible – are provided, as they are also mandatory pursuant to the provisions in the Films Act: Title, type, film genre, reference year, duration, language, (co-)production countries, director, screenwriter and (co-)producer.

How can work data that is registered with an existing ISAN be altered or enhanced?

The person carrying out the registrations can change and enhance the data pertaining to their own works in the ISAN database at any time. All other corrections must be communicated to ISAN Berne or ISAN-IA.

What does an ISAN number cost?

Current ISAN Berne prices can be retrieved at www.isan-berne.org. SUISSIMAGE members currently benefit from special conditions (see www.suissimage.ch).

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