



Key benefits

- Facilitation of data exchanges in full alignment with the UPU Regulations
- Universal and inclusive approach: open for signature by UPU member countries, their designated operators and other supply chain stakeholders, such as carriers
- Integrated data governance (notifications, flows, breach prevention, risk management)
- Data protection and confidentiality on the basis of article 10 of the UPU Convention
- ICT data security and storage on the basis of article 8 of the UPU Convention
- Option of settlement of disputes regarding liabilities and indemnities according to the arbitration procedure outlined in the UPU Constitution and the UPU General Regulations
- Support for compliance with national and regional privacy and data protection legislation

UPU Multilateral Data Sharing Agreement (MDSA) – FAQs

Q What is the purpose of the UPU MDSA?

A The purpose of the MDSA is to facilitate the exchange of data necessary for the operation of international postal services and to enable the implementation of such exchanges in accordance with the UPU Acts.

Q Why should I sign the MDSA?

A To date, a number of designated operators have made the provision of electronic advance data (EAD) mandatory for incoming flows. Some of these operators require the signature of a data sharing agreement in order to receive EAD. Without the provision of EAD, it is possible that items will be returned to their origin or suffer extended delays in inbound processing. Therefore, signature of the MDSA is vital to continuing to provide a high quality of service to customers.

Q I have already signed a data sharing agreement (DSA) with multiple parties; do I need to withdraw from it?

A No, DSAs are not mutually exclusive and can be complementary, allowing wider outreach. DSAs signed previously may still apply to parties that have not yet signed the MDSA. The MDSA will replace those agreements signed previously between parties that have signed both agreements.

Q What is the added value of the UPU MDSA?

A The UPU MDSA provides enhanced data protection within the framework of the UPU Acts. Furthermore, the UPU MDSA is the only DSA approved by the Postal Operations Council and developed on the basis of global needs. Please also refer to the section above on key benefits.

Q Is the data processed by the UPU systems (e.g. CDS, POST*Net, QCS, IFS, etc.) secure?

A Yes. The UPU's Postal Technology Centre holds ISO 27001 certification in IT security, and its data centres are hosted in Switzerland.

- Q What are my data security obligations as a designated postal operator if I only use systems hosted by the UPU (e.g. CDS.POST, IPS.POST)?
- A The provisions set out in article 7 of the MDSA relating to the physical security of the operating environment are fulfilled by the UPU. However, the electronic security of personal and sensitive data relating to the direct use and access configuration of those systems by the designated operator remains the responsibility of the designated operator.
- Q What is the UPU definition of personal data?
- A Personal data includes the name and address of a person, as well as any further details used to identify that person; this is also known as “personal identifiable information”. The legal definition can be found in article 1 of the MDSA.
- Q Which party is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of personal data?
- A Each party ensures the confidentiality and security of personal data within its territory. Further details can be found in article 10 of the Convention.
- Q What are the data retention policies set out by the MDSA?
- A The receiving party may retain the data for the period authorized by the receiving party’s applicable legislation, provided that this does not exceed 10 years.
- Q Does the MDSA make provision for the suspension of data exchanges? Under what circumstances?
- A Data exchanges may be suspended against a defaulting party. To suspend data exchanges, a party must notify the International Bureau in writing no later than 30 days ahead of the suspension date, in the event of:
- failure to comply with the requirements of the MDSA;
 - refusal by one party to remedy its failure to apply the MDSA as indicated by the other party.
- Q What is the applicable law for the UPU MDSA? Can it enforce the General Data Protection Regulation or national legislation?
- A No, the MDSA cannot enforce national or regional legislation. The MDSA is governed by the relevant provisions of the Acts of the Union, as well as the relevant decisions of Union governing bodies. In any case, most provisions of the MDSA cover the same principles regarding data protection and privacy as those set out in the UPU Acts.
- Q How are disputes resolved?
- A In the first instance, the parties involved are encouraged to use their best efforts to resolve any dispute in an amicable manner. Subsequently, the arbitration procedure outlined in the UPU Constitution and the UPU General Regulations may be followed, unless otherwise agreed by the parties concerned.