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EU e-Government METADATA FRAMEWORK

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Foreword

The production of this CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA) was formally accepted as part of the CEN/ISSS Workshop on Metadata for Multimedia Information - Dublin Core (WS/MMI-DC) in the Workshop's plenary meeting on 2004-01-18.

This CWA was agreed upon by the contributing partners in the CEN/ISSS Workshop on MMI-DC, representing a wide mix of interests, including administrations, libraries, on-line education and geographic information systems. The list of company individuals who have supported the document's contents may be obtained from the CEN/ISSS Secretariat.

The CWA was approved by the Workshop's plenary meeting on 2005-01-12.

The final text of this CWA was submitted to CEN for publication 2005-02-09.

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Introduction

The work towards a common European metadata standard for e-Government is in its early stages. Therefore, this CWA aims to provide the basis for that work and a first version of the metadata framework. This agreement does not set out a rigid format but rather a way forward as countries, standards and policies continue to develop.

European public bodies are by far the largest producers of information [1]. The European Commission with a recent directive aims at opening up public content for commercial exploitation [2]. Furthermore, the eEurope 2005 initiative suggests that e-Government should be a priority for Member States.

The use of metadata is an essential prerequisite for enabling citizens to discover and retrieve governmental resources and for businesses to exploit these resources. According to the “European Interoperability Framework for pan-European e-Government Services” by the European Commission [3], metadata is essential in achieving semantic interoperability of e-services at a European level. In the same report, it is recommended that “initiatives at pan-European level to develop common semantics on the basis of XML should be performed in a co-ordinated way, and should consider co-operation with the existing standardization bodies”.

The work of the European Committee for Standardization aims to fill in the gap that exists at the European level for a simple e-Government Metadata Framework and supporting deployment guidelines. The aim of this framework is not to replace national initiatives but rather to complement them with a European dimension thus ensuring interoperability at a European level and beyond.

A Workshop was held in September 2004 – Zaragoza, instigated as a part of the preparation for this agreement. The conclusion of the Workshop was that “the European Commission set up or help set up a central e-Government Interoperability Centre”. This centre will be required to co-ordinate metadata efforts as a part of the interoperability aim.”

1 Scope

This CEN Workshop Agreement presents a foundation for an EU e-Government Metadata Framework.

This CEN Workshop Agreement is the result of co-operation between the members of the CEN/ISSS MMI-DC Workshop from January 2004 to December 2004 and capitalises on work reported in CWA 14859 [4] and CWA 14860 [5].

This CEN Workshop Agreement is applicable to three main categories of people:

- 1) strategic decision makers in government/public sector
- 2) policy makers in government/public sector
- 3) metadata and content providers

Vendors of systems and software will not be addressed directly but it is conceivable that they will also benefit from the material.

This CEN Workshop Agreement endorses the Dublin Core metadata standard as the basis for metadata in e-Government.

This CEN Workshop Agreement endorses the extra elements found in MIREG while recognising that more work is still to be done before it can be used fully.

This CEN Workshop Agreement endorses the CWA e-Government Metadata Application Profile.

This CEN Workshop Agreement recognizes the need to develop a pan-European e-Government Thesaurus but recognizes it is out of the scope of this CWA.

This Draft CWA takes into account the activities of IDA MIREG as well as of the DCMI Government Working Group.

This framework embraces the work Member States are involved in relating to metadata.

This framework is compliant with other EU e-Government standards and policies, and will provide the foundation for technology bridges between Member States' needs and pan-European needs.

This framework will be compliant with relevant, maintained international standards and CEN standards.