

Standardisation Forum
International Network meeting
Meeting Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Lead up to the conference

Standardisation and interoperability issues surrounding IT developments are a complicated matter. The subjects have many sides to it and the interests of businesses, politics and society need to be taken into account. Additionally the issue is complicated by the international dimension in which it needs to be approached. Standards are developed on a worldwide platform and various international organisations are involved in the establishment and deployment of standards and hence providing interoperable services. For European countries the EU dimension is of great importance.

The international setting calls for an international approach to the issues surrounding standardisation and interoperability. It calls for cooperation between organisations dealing with the issue in different countries to ensure the development of interoperable solutions. Another reason for cooperating is to learn from each other and to share solutions developed. This prevents different countries performing the same tasks and dealing with similar issues simultaneously and hence 'reinventing the wheel'. Through cooperating internationally the issues of standardisation and interoperability can be dealt with much more efficiently and effectively.

The Dutch Standardisation Forum aims to create an international network of organisations that, similar to them, deal with the standardisation and interoperability issues in their country. To assess the willingness of other countries to join the network the Forum organised a two day conference to start sharing between countries.

1.2 The Conference Setup

The conference took part in Amsterdam the 26th and 27th of November 2009. The following countries and people took part:

Tommi Karttaavi, Finland
Peter Krantz, Sweden
Toshi Suzuki, Japan
Miguel Amutio, Spain
Per Olav Gramstad, European Commission
Bart Hanssens, Belgium
Adam Arndt, Denmark
Shuichi Tashiro, Japan
Nico Westpalm van Hoorn, the Netherlands
Peter Waters, the Netherlands
Joris Gresnigt, the Netherlands

Marijke Abrahamse, the Netherlands
 Paul Oude Luttighuis, the Netherlands
 Jaap Romme, the Netherlands

For contact details of the participants please see appendix A.

During two days a range of topics was discussed to get acquainted and see which issues occupy the minds of the participants. The original programme is shown in appendix B, additionally the issues the attendants wanted to discuss were listed and prioritised:

No. participants interested	Subject
7	Involvement in development of standards
6	Document Formats
3	Accessibility
3	Standard portfolio
2	Adoption and monitoring
2	Business/politics – IT alignment
2	Architectural Guidelines vs EIF
2	National Profiles
1	Selection Process
1	Semantics
1	Cloud Computing
1	Trusted Services
	Vendor Management
	Privacy
	Electronic Record Management

Most of the issues have been touched upon during the meeting, however not to a great extent. The discussions held mainly targeted the first six topics, in the next section a report of these discussions at the meeting is presented.

2 The Discussions

2.1 Day One

A large part of this day is consumed by getting to know each other. The different participants introduce themselves and the issues that they would like to see addressed in the conference. The main goal of the meeting for all is to learn from one another and to gain an international network in the field of standardisation and interoperability. Below there is a short summary of the specific topics that have been addressed. For the introduction of the participants, see the enclosed overview per country.

2.1.1 Development of standards

The central question is 'should standardisation bodies such as those represented by the attendants take place in the development of standards'? On the one hand it can be useful to be able to influence the development of a certain standard to one's own needs, on the other hand the standardisation bodies need to remain independent.

Some of the attendants are involved in certain standardisation bodies, for instance Bart is involved in Oasis regarding ODF, one of the focus points of the Belgium government. Denmark decided to get involved with the development of UBL after seeing that UNCEFACT invoice standards were not yet 'mature' enough and there was a great business case to have a standard for electronic invoicing. Additionally involvement gives the opportunity to influence the direction the standard is going, making it possible to align it with your countries' needs. For instance a special Nordic version of UBL was developed.

In short one could argue that involvement mainly depends on the business or political need for a standard and on the timeline of the standards involved. First one needs to assess, based on an independent review, which standard to use. Once a certain standard is chosen one could get involved with the development of that standard to ensure the development fits with the requirements of one's government.

2.1.2 Document Formats

Major discussion takes part on the subject of document formats, in particular whether to choose for ODF. In several countries governments are favouring ODF, however only Norway obligates the standard as the only standard for all communication involving revisable documents. They have a positive business case for this. Notwithstanding the political attention the ODF debate gets, one can argue that the choice whether to adopt ODF or not shouldn't be a big issue, given the fact that government rarely has to send or receive documents it needs to be able to amend. The accessibility of non-revisable documents (now and in the future) is a more important issue, for this the use of PDF A is preferred by most countries.

In Sweden an additional reason for addressing the document format debate is to comply with transparency regulations: Due to high levels of transparency in Swedish society and government, the people of Sweden need to be able to read the documents they receive as part of the transparency of government.

Another reason for a certain document standard to prevail is pressure from the corporate world.

2.1.3 Standards for standards

Peter Krantz believes all should use a 'standard for standards'. The W3C 'web ontology' OWL could be used as a basis. If all countries use the same standard this would allow for an easier exchange of for instance taxonomies between countries. This web ontology language is mainly aimed at making information 'machine readable' of certain government publications. For instance the publication of new official legislation, or certificates issued under the Services Directive need to be both legal and machine readable. The use of the web ontology provides for this.

2.1.4 Business case for standardisation

The question is what the business case is for standardisation and additionally what is the business case for using open as opposed to closed standards and using open instead of closed source applications.

In Finland there has been a study that revealed the change to the use of open source applications by government would lead to a savings of 5 million. In Denmark when reviewing the use of standards in invoice handling it was estimated that the savings made due to digitisation of the process for each invoice 7 minutes would be saved. In total this would lead to savings of 100 million. Norway makes an elaborate business case for every standard they obligate.

However these examples do point to a few issues: The digitisation of any process would most likely lead to saving a lot of time, it would not necessarily matter whether an open or a closed standard is used. Also, it is hard to assess the changeover costs from one standard to the other, and from closed to open source software. Furthermore should the business case have a sectoral, national or an international scope? Nationally it could make sense to use a certain (maybe closed) standard whereas internationally this would not..

2.1.5 Standardisation vs. its surroundings

Directly linked to the discussion on business cases is how to present the issue of standardisation and interoperability outside the network of experts, to the 'outside world'. Standardisation and interoperability are generally seen as highly technical issues and often considered less interesting by people outside the IT domain. This can lead to missed opportunities or worse, to costly affairs due to 'missing' the proverbial boat when it comes to the development and/or uptake of certain standards. For instance the various pilots funded by

the EU in the domains of eID, eProcurement etc all lead to agreements on which standards to use. Taking part in these pilots can therefore be of great importance, one could be confronted with standards from other countries one cannot cope with easily.

It is extremely important for IT issues in general to be put into the bigger picture. In order to get sufficient funding, but also to get (political) backing for certain operations undertaken (such as involvement in EU pilots). In order to be able to do so, the issues at hand need to be explained in terms the different audiences can understand. Or put differently, the business case for undertaking, in this case, standardisation and interoperability related activities needs to be adapted to the one it is being presented to. Making money is not necessarily the only positive business case, better government service to society, better international involvement, keeping up with the world around you can all be motives for the decision makers to be swayed in the right direction. Although in the end these motivations all relate to a financially positive business case (reduction in administrative burden; no need for changing own systems to fit with international standards; more efficient government operations etc) it is highly important to adapt the message to the audience.

2.1.6 CAMSS

Per Olav Gramstad presented the setup of CAMSS. This presentation is sent separately with this report.

The focus of the European Commission (EC) when it comes to standardisation is on getting the trust from the Member States and businesses. Therefore the CAMSS initiative has a large focus on developing a transparent and open process for standard selection so that there can be no reason for doubting the objectivity of the selection process and therefore eventually selected standards. Suppliers are 'waiting to make a legal case' if in their view standards have been selected unfairly.

Therefore the way the process for standard selection is set up by CAMSS is highly transparent and makes use of market consultations. The process itself is set up to be as transparent and open as possible. Also this process needs to be flexible and is setup as a general process, as the different member states have different views on how it should be formed.

In the CAMSS process the assessment can start with an existing standard that needs to be judged in terms of fit for purpose, or with certain business needs for which a standard needs to be selected. It is good to bear in mind that the standardisation issue revolves around multi-stakeholder needs, for instance at a political level openness might get less attention.

Currently the participation of different countries in CAMSS is not as active as it could be. The main reason for this is a lack of capacity. There are many standardisation and related initiatives in the international community. For the few people that deal with standardisation in one country to be involved in all proves to be a challenge. An idea to cope with this is to do more online, however it is also noted that part of the process of initiatives such as CAMSS is actually meeting the other people dealing with the issue.

2.1.7 DAY 1 CONCLUSION

The first day was mainly targeted at getting acquainted and learning about each others

interests. Some specific issues were discussed as well.

Involvement with development of standards depends on the preference of the country. However, if one decides to get involved one the involvement depends on how far the standards between which to choose have been developed already and what the business need is for the involvement. First one needs to assess, based on an independent review, which standard to use. Once a certain standard is chosen one could get involved with the development of that standard to ensure the development fits with the requirements of one's government.

The different attendants describe various reasons for the choice of a certain standard:

- it is the one that is furthest along
- direct push from businesses
- direct push from politics
- direct push from the international community
- motivation based on business case

It is important that the choice reflects the opinion of the surroundings of the standardisation movement. For instance whether to use ODF or not can depend on the political pressure on the issue.

Furthermore, in order to facilitate international exchange of standards and ensure international interoperability, the choice for a certain standard and how this is chosen is best agreed upon internationally through the acceptance of a 'standard for standardisation'.

The CAMSS process is looking to become a good process for selecting standards. The initiative has to manifest itself in difficult surroundings having to deal with the interests of all parties involved. Participation in CAMSS is considered useful but hard to manage in terms of time and capacity needed.

2.2 Day Two

In day two a few more specific issues have been addressed.

2.2.1 EIF v 2.0

The development of the second version of the European Interoperability Framework has come under a lot of scrutiny from the attendants. Initially the European Commission took in input from all the countries as a starting point for the EIF v2.0. However, the version produced by the EC contained quite a few changes from the original input. Mainly the changes regarding the definition of an open standard are frowned upon by most of the participants.

Per Olav explains that part of the reason for the changes are the multiple consultation rounds that are held with different parties at different times. IDABC works on the basis of consensus and the only way for there to be an EIF is to talk to all parties involved. IDABC wishes to maintain momentum, although not working under set deadlines, and aims to do so by producing a version of the EIF based on broad consensus. Additionally, the EC works more on the basis of a 'homogeneity of systems' view when discussing these sorts of issues and does not look at interoperability internally the way member states are. This forms another

explanation between the difference in input and outcome of the EIF.

Belgium and the Netherlands have jointly responded to the changes in the EIF, the question put the group is whether they would all like to team up in their responses. It was agreed that the responses of the different countries can be shared before submitting them to the EC to try and form a more common response.

2.2.2 Selection of standards (Japan)

Shuichi Tashiro of the Open Software Center of the Japanese Information technology presented the Japanese approach to the selection of standards. The presentation is sent separately with this report.

In Japan public IT procurement is the starting point for the development of an 'open standard specification', established in 2007. In 2008 the Technical Reference Model (TRM) for eGovernment was developed. Currently this is focused on the introduction of the 'Evaluation Criteria of Open Standards and Specifications for Information Technologies' (ECOSS) model. ECOSS is set to achieve a list of recommended open standards but also the methodology to come to that list.

Currently the TRM is in stage 2 with the focus on developing ECOSS, the next stage the list of recommended standards will be developed. The TRM links the standards to the architecture.

The standards will not be mandated. They will be recommended to the CIO council, which is a gathering of the CIO's of the different ministries. This council decides whether to adhere to the recommended standards when making IT procurement decisions.

2.2.3 Adoption of standards (Norway)

The process starts with a business need, where everyone can apply for approval of their standard. This eventually leads to a list of recommended and mandatory standards. The process of selection is very open and includes several open consultations and evaluations. The Norwegian standardisation board advises the Ministry on standards, who will have the final say in the selection process. DIFI's responsibility is to deal with non sector specific standards.

For the mandatory standards an economic impact is made before the standard actually becomes mandatory. The cost assessment of standardisation is based on a business case. This can be both based on exact figures and more general discussion. It can cost up to €200,000 for one standard to complete the selection process. This does however in general apply to standards for an entire application area. Norway wonders whether the net financial effect for the use of standards is positive, however from a political point of view they strive for it. The most important aspect in the uptake of standardisation is explaining why it is necessary to use a certain standard, generally when explained correctly the adoption process is less difficult.

However, some standards are made mandatory in Norway, this means that they are put into a specific regulation. Reasons for doing this are:

- Economical effect
- Political goals
- Specific requirements on quality and interoperability.

These reasons are 'monitored' by the ministry. However monitoring on the uptake of mandatory standards is handled fairly softly. There is no punishment or naming-shaming. Mainly through complaints from society politicians are forced to pay attention to the issue of standardisation.

Finally the process of changing over from one standard to the next is assessed by means of a business case.

In terms of adoption strategies Spain remarks that in Spain a legal basis is needed for standardisation 'to work'. However, the requirements in the law are very general so that the different municipalities can fill in the specifics based on their own preferences. Denmark on the other hand uses a much softer approach due to a lack in political attention and lacking means of enforcement. The Dutch model of comply or explain is seen as useful in that it offers feedback, when organisations decide not to use a certain standard recommended by the Forum. However, the way organisations should explain is not made clear for all involved organizations. For example Norway deals with this by obligating none compliers to send a letter to DIFI with the explanation.

Japan uses an interesting adoption strategy: they give tax cuts to organizations complying with the recommended standards and software. Besides, they do conformity testing.

2.2.4 Semantic Interoperability (the Netherlands)

Paul Oude Luttighuis explains how the Dutch Standardisation Forum deals with the issue of semantic interoperability. The presentation will be sent separately with the report.

The main focus of the Dutch approach is the contextualisation of semantics. The meaning of a certain word can be entirely different depending on the context it is used in. Contextual factors that influence this meaning include:

- Nationality
- Personal Background
- Organisational Setting
- Type of business process
- Dialect
- Etc...

However, generally speaking, part of the meaning of the word will be independent from its context. By standardising on the basis of this commonality and later on adding the specific relevant only to the context the word/term is used in interoperability between much larger sets of information can be achieved.

Where the Swedish approach is similar to the Dutch approach and based on W3C's OWL, the Norwegians have a three tier strategy, they use a different term for internal use, external use, and exchange/communication between organisations.

2.2.5 Accessibility

Briefly the issue of accessibility was discussed. The general consensus is that awareness of accessibility is an issue. The attention given to it is not always as much as it should be. It is not easy to monitor accessibility or stay up to date with the latest developments in web technology.

Different countries have different approaches. For instance the UK and US have legislation aimed at accessibility, Japan refers to existing (e.g. ISO) guidelines, and the EU is (thinking of) developing a framework. In Denmark with all IT procurement, the vendors have to fill in a standardised questionnaire on how they deal with the issue of accessibility. In the Netherlands accessibility is addressed quite broadly and includes certain quality models for government websites, one of the main issues for local councils is being able to adhere to the accessibility guidelines set by the Dutch national government.

2.2.6 DAY TWO CONCLUSION

The second day was targeted at a few specific issues. The different countries have different approaches to the selection and adoption of standards, however the business needs are an important driver of standardisation for all. When it comes to adoption the choice ranges from voluntary (recommended) to mandatory, where even for the mandatory standards the means for 'punishing' those that do not adhere are limited.

Finally semantic interoperability is proven to be a complex issue, approached very differently by the attending countries.

2.3 General Conclusion

In general the meeting has been useful to all. It helps to hear from others who in their own countries are relatively 'lonely' in the field of standardisation, but on an international platform can share experiences and knowledge.

In this meeting a lot of topics have been discussed but only to a certain extent. This has been a very good introduction to each others settings and views, however it would be useful to have more in-depth discussions on each of the topics addressed.

3 Future Commitments

The goal of the conference was to assess the wish for an international network on standardisation and the readiness of different countries to participate. All attending countries were pleased with the Dutch initiative to create the network, and committed to cooperating in the future. The following agreements for future cooperation were made:

1. Practical opportunities for cooperating:
 - a. Finland distributed a paper on standards for document exchange and archiving and invites all to give input;
 - b. The business case report on savings of 5 million due to moving to open source is available in Finland;
 - c. Norway is in the process of translating its guidelines and monitoring questions to English and will distribute these to the network once this is finished;
 - d. Questions regarding the approaches presented by the different countries can be posed by email.
2. Meeting follow up
 - a. It was decided that throughout the year the group will stay in touch and be expanded with other countries that have earlier indicated they would have come to the meeting had they been able to;
 - b. The Dutch will chair the group for the next few months until Norway takes over;
 - c. The chair of the network will be shared, each country will chair the network for one year;
 - d. The next physical meeting will be organised by Norway in Spring next year;
 - e. Until that time the Dutch will have a look into communities that can be used to stay in touch and discuss specific issues. The country that chairs the network will provide for 'maintenance' of the communities.

Appendix A – Contactdetails of Participants

The list below shows the contact details of the attendants of the meeting.

Country	Contact	Position	Contactdetails	Organisatie
Finland	Tommi Kartaavi	Senior advisor, information society	tommi.kartaavi@kuntaliitto.fi +35897712136; mobile +358505633935	Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities
Spain	Miguel Amutio	Head of Area	miguel.amutio@map.es +34 91 273 2990	Ministry of the president
Sweden	Peter Krantz		peter.krantz@finance.ministry.se	Ministry of finance; e government delegation
Norway	Kristian Bergem		Kristian.bergem@difi.no +4790786438; mobile +4722451135	DIFI
Belgium	Bart Hanssens	Interoperability expert	bart.hanssens@fedict.be +3222129689	FEDICT
Japan	Shuichi Tashiro	General Manager	tashiro@ipa.go.jp +81359787507	Information-technology Promotion Agency
	Toshihiro Suzuki	Research Expert	ts-suzu@ipa.go.jp +81359787507	
Denmark	Adam Arndt	IT Architect	adar@itst.dk +4533379241; mobile +4560933063	Ministry of Science Technology and innovation; National IT and Telecom Agency
The Netherlands	Nico Westpalm van Hoorn	Chairman Forum	Westpalm.van.Hoorn@portofrotterdam.com	Standardisation Forum

	Peter Water	Head Secretariat of the Forum	Peter.waters@gbo.overheid.nl	Standardisation Forum
	Joris Gresnigt	Advisor	Joris.gresnigt@gbo.overheid.nl	Standardisation Forum
	Marijke Abrahamse	Advisor	Marijke.abrahamse@gbo.overheid.nl	Standardisation Forum
	Jaap Romme	Advisor	j.romme@hec.nl	HEC

Appendix B – Meeting Programme

Standardisation Forum – *First international network meeting*

26th 27th November - Amsterdam

Background

The Dutch Standardisation Forum is a governmental organisation which serves as a guide for the use of open standards and interoperability in the public domain. They assess which standards are available for exchange of information and services between government institutes and between government and businesses/citizens and determine which ones should be used.

The Standardisation Forum would like to initiate an international network of organisations that deal with standardisation within ICT in government in a manner similar to theirs.

This programme contains the agenda for the first meeting of the international network.

Agenda network meeting

Thursday afternoon

Travel to Amsterdam (each visitor organises their own travel arrangements)

14.00 – 14.30 **Check in** at hotel Radisson Blue, Rusland, 17 - NL-1012 CK Amsterdam
See <http://www.radissonblu.com/hotel-amsterdam/location>

14.30 – 14.50 **Welcome and Introduction Purpose Meeting and Network**
Nico Westpalm van Hoorn, chairman Dutch Standardisation Forum.
The goal of the network and the agenda for the meeting will be discussed.
The forum Standardisation envisions the following goals for the network:
- Sharing of experiences, knowledge and skills regarding the dealing with interoperability and standardisation issues.
- Sharing of standardisation and interoperability issues that are dealt with at a national level as national standards can eventually become international standards.
- Collaborating to assess and judge national standards and when accepted by the entire network promote these standards internationally.

14.50 – 16.00 **Interoperability in your country**
Speakers from the attending countries
Each representative is invited to give a 10 minute introduction on how standardisation and interoperability issues are dealt with in his/her

country. The topics to be addressed are:

- Who they are and who they represent
- What they do on interoperability and standardisation
- Why their work is important
- How their work relates to the country's general policy setting.
- What are their expectations regarding these two days.

16.00 – 16.15

Break

16.15 – 17.45

Governance of Standardisation and Interoperability

Discussion, hosted by Nico Westpalm van Hoorn of the Standardisation Forum.

This discussion will focus on the general structure and setup of the governance of standardisation and interoperability in each of the attending countries. The matters to be discussed are:

- The support structure (organisations involved) for standardisation and interoperability
- The key points of attention in the policy surrounding standardisation and interoperability.

16.15 – 16.45: Each country is requested to shortly introduce how the above mentioned points are organised in their country. For instance in Holland there is a focus on high trust and hence a 'comply or explain' regime. This is endorsed by a formal, high level, standardisation Council, rather than legislation.

16.45 – 17.45: Discussion on the pros and cons of the different approaches. What is effective and what is not, and how do different circumstances influence this? What can be learned from the approaches of others?

17.45 – 18.00

Break

18.00 – 19.00

Participation in Brussels: CAMSS and EIF

In the context of the EU two initiatives are particularly relevant for the participants in this meeting: CAMSS and EIF.

18.00 – 18.30: *Per Olaf Gramstad from the EU will be attending the meeting and host a discussion on the CAMSS.* Part of the discussion will focus on the goal of CAMSS and the current state of affairs.

18.30 – 19.00: *Joris Gresnigt Forum secretariat, will host a discussion on the EIF.* The current developments surrounding the EIF v. 2 will be discussed. Should the attending countries operate jointly in relation to this EIF in the future?

Travel to restaurant

19:30 – 22:00

Diner with Dutch and Foreign visitors

Restaurant Odeon Amsterdam, Singel 460, 1017 AW Amsterdam. See <http://www.odeontheater.nl/?do=content&id=63&tt=page&level=0>

Friday

08.30 - 09.00 Check out

09:00 - 10:30 **Open Standards: definition, selection policy and governance**

Discussion hosted by Nico Westpalm van Hoorn

Following on from the discussion on support structure on day one, this discussion will be focussed on the content of the selection process and policy.

9.00 – 9.15: One of the countries will be asked to present their views on what constitutes an open standard, and how they have shaped their selection policy. How do they choose which standards are to be judged? How does the judging process work, and what status do the chosen standards have?

9.15 – 9.45: Discussion on selection policy. What ways are there to shape this policy, and which policies are considered good?

9.45 – 10.00: Another country will be asked to present how they achieve adoption of the selected standards. What methods are used? What means (money?) are available? And how is all this monitored?

10.00 – 10.45: Discussion on how to deal with adoption of standards and which best practices can be shared between the participants.

10.45 - 11.00 Break

11.00 - 12.30 **Semantic Interoperability**

Presentation by Paul Oude Luttighuis, interoperability expert, on the Dutch approach.

11.00 – 11.30: Presentation of the Dutch approach. How do the Dutch deal with semantic interoperability, the added value of explicitly adding context demonstrated in two cases and the applicability in other countries.

11.30 – 12.30: Discussion on the way other countries deal with interoperability. How can we help each other? How can the Dutch concept be used by the participants?

12.30 – 12.40 Quick break and snack

12.40 – 13.45 **Wrap up, evaluation and Setup for future cooperation**

Joris Gresnigt, Forum Standardisation secretariat

The meeting will be wrapped up and summarised. The participants are invited to share their views on the meeting's success.

Finally the potential and structure for future cooperation will be set up.

Should this involve physical meetings and how will the participants remain in touch throughout the year. Should other countries be included?

Travel to restaurant

14.00 - 15.30

Lunch on a Canal Boat

De Rederij De Nederlanden, Singel 359, 1012 WG Amsterdam. See <http://www.denederlanden.com/Salonboten-Amsterdam/salonboot-iris.html>

Appendix C – Information on attendants' countries

European Commission Information on Per-Olav Gramstad

Who you are and who you represent?

As a Programme Manager at IDABC, I am working with cross-border eGov collaboration among Member States in general and in specific standards and standardisation.

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation?

Currently I am engaging in CAMSS, trying to improve collaboration, a common methodology, among Member States with respect to the sharing and re-use of assessments of business need, standardisation and market support aspects when selecting standards and specifications to be recommended in Member States List of Standards.

Besides the above standards of standardisation, I am participating in the ETSI standardisation of the Trusted Lists of the Service Directive.

What are your organisation's goals?

Our goal is to support Member States in establishing and maintaining the interconnection and interoperability needed cross-border among Public Administrations when supporting the internal free flows of the European Community.

Why is it important what you do?

If we succeed with our objectives the internal free flows of Europe will be less hampered by cross-border barriers found on the side of Public Administration.

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

IMHO ;) I advise upon the standards of standardisation. I wish but we do NOT have a list of standards.

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

My organisation is primarily working with Member States Public Agencies responsible for national public services and secondarily with industry and standardisation bodies.

The reasoning behind this setting.

The rationale behind the IDA, IDA II and IDABC programme is found in "Trans-European Networks" and its' following statement:

"The idea of Trans-European Networks (TEN in the EU jargon) emerged by the end of the 1980s in conjunction with the proposed **Single Market**. It made little sense to talk of a big market, with freedom of movement within it for goods, persons and services, unless the various regions and national networks making up that market were properly linked by modern and efficient infrastructure."

http://ec.europa.eu/ten/index_en.html

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

To share some of my experiences in working with specifications in the Danish NITA and the Community Programme IDABC. Looking forward to re-use other participants experiences.

DENMARK Information on Adam Arendt

Presentation

My name is Adam Arndt, I have a masters degree in Computer Science. I work for the National IT and Telecom Agency of Denmark which heads the OIO initiative regarding IT architecture and standardisation in the Danish public sector.

Tasks in relation to interoperability and standardisation

I am the secretary for the Danish NIF (The OIO Catalogue) and I also work with approving XML exchange formats as compliant with the Danish rules (OIOXML). Furthermore I participate in specific EU projects such as SEMIC.EU and CAMSS. I am the Head of Delegation for Denmark to UN/CEFACT and consequently also a member of NordiPRO.

This means that I am responsible for the maintenance of the Danish NIF and involved in standardising data exchange formats as well as coordinating these efforts internationally.

Goals of the work

The aim of the OIO initiative is to promote interoperability and efficiency in the Danish public sector through the use of open standards and common architectural conventions.

The importance of the work

The initiative is pivotal for the transition of public administration from a paper based bureaucracy to an electronic service organisation.

The benefits include improved competition on public sector it systems, more efficient use of data and other resources and new possibilities for delivery of improved, composite services to the public.

Standards that we advise about

The OIO initiative includes the Danish XML dialect, OIOXML as well as the Danish NIF which contains recommendations about almost 200 technical specifications.

We have also developed an enterprise architecture framework and are currently involved in creating reference architectures for several domains.

Organisation of the work

The initiative is established under a committee, the OIO Committee. The committee has members from all levels of government (national/ministries, regional and municipal) and decides on matters of principle regarding standardisation and its architecture in the public sector.

Under the Committee a number of domain specific subcommittees work on standards and common solutions within their own purview.

All decisions are made by consensus and most - including all recommendations on standards - are subjected to a 30 day public review before the final decision is made by the OIO Committee.

This setup has been chosen because it is important to have participation and ownership from all parts of the public sector and our experience is that voluntary

compliance to consensus decisions is very nearly as effective as authoritative decision within the field of digitisation and standardisation.

Expectations of the meeting

I expect to meet people from different countries who work in similar fields to my own and have similar goals.

I also expect to learn more about how the work is carried out in reality in Holland and other countries.

JAPAN Information on Shuichi Tashiro

IPA (Information-technology Promotion Agency) Japan

Who you are and who you represent?

General manager of Open Software Center of IPA Japan.

IPA is one of “independent administrative agencies”, organizations established by Japanese government to support Government activities in specific areas.

IPA is established to support Japan’s national strategies in the area of Information Technology.

Open Software Center is one of 4 sections in IPA and the scope of it is promoting Open Source Software and Open Standards in Japan.

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation?

- Developing policy papers such as “Government IT Procurement Guideline”, “Japanese Interoperability Framework for information system” and “Technical Reference Model for e-Government systems”
- Research such as “Evaluation Criteria of Open Standards and Specifications for Information Technologies” to extend interoperability of e-Government systems.
- Evaluating software products from the view point of conformity to SOA architecture.
- Supporting to develop standard documents such as Ruby language.

.. etc. .

What are your organisation's goals?

Building sustainable / sound IT environment.

Why is it important what you do?

Standard / interoperability keep will cause healthy competitive environment in IT area.

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

Currently we don’t have such list.

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

METI (Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry) : promoting IT industry

MIC(Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) : Government procurement Policy

CAS(Cabinet Secretariat) : coordinating ministries

CIO council : controlling government IT procurement

IPA : supporting Governments in the area of Information Technology

The reasoning behind this setting.

All these organizations and the areas of their activities are defined by law.

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

Startup of harmonized action among participants for promoting interoperability.

SPAIN Information on Miguel A. Amutio

Who you are and who you represent?

- Miguel A. Amutio, Head of Area, Ministry of the Presidency of Spain.
- Member of the IDABC Management Committee (PEGSCO).

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation?

- I coordinate the development of the National Interoperability Framework and of the National Security Framework of Spain.
- This National Interoperability Framework was established by Law 11/2007 (eGovernment Law); it is applicable to all Public Administrations in Spain and it will have the form of a legal text (a Royal Decree).
- Within the framework of IDABC I have been participating in the expert groups in relation to the development of the European Interoperability Strategy and of the European Interoperability Framework.

What are your organisation's goals?

- At this moment, in relation to interoperability, the main goal of our organisation is to finish the development of the legal text of the National Interoperability Framework and to have it published in the Official Diary.
- Then, to implement the framework in the service of eGovernment services. To support the framework a series of guides providing concrete guidance on electronic documents, standards and other issues is to be developed in the following months. Also there is work ongoing to develop instruments similar to SEMIC.EU and OSOR.EU, together with a repository for the identification of procedures and services provided by the General State Administration.

Why is it important what you do?

- Interoperability is a key aspect for the cooperation in the provision of eGovernment services by public administrations in Spain (General State, 17 regional governments and over 8.000 municipalities, with a high level of decentralisation); for the implementation of public policies; for a better efficiency in the delivery of public services facilitating share, reuse and collaborate; and for the realisation of rights of the citizens (to choose the applications and systems they use to interact with public administrations, to avoid discrimination on the basis of the technological choices).

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

- The eGovernment Law states that "*Public Administration bodies shall use open*

standards and, as

appropriate and in complement, standards which are of general use among the public.”

- The project of National Interoperability Framework foresees the development of a catalogue of standards that it is to be developed. It will have to take into account this statement made by the Law.

- This Law defines open standards as *“Those which meet the following conditions: being public and the use of which is free or of such low cost that it does not constitute a barrier to access; use and application is not conditional on payment for use of intellectual or industrial property rights.”*

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

- The committees of the public administrations with competence in eGovernment:
- Highest Council of eGovernment (General State)
- Sectorial Committee of eGovernment (General State + regional governments)
- National Commission of Local Administrations (General State + municipalities through the Spanish Federation of Local Entities.

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

- To get a better understanding of the approach and criteria followed by governments of other States
- of rules in relation to interoperability, standards and concrete instruments of application.
- To participate in the debates and contribute with our vision, experience and point of view.

SWEDEN Information on Peter Krantz

Who you are and who you represent?

I represent the Swedish eGovernment delegation. Part of my responsibility is to coordinate IT standardisation.

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation? What are your organisation's goals?

The Delegation's first task was to formulate a strategy for "third generation" eGovernment. The strategy proposal was published in November and is open for public feedback until February 2010.

The Delegation has the task of formulating a strategy that covers:

- coordination of public sector participation in international IT standardisation efforts regarding eGovernment,
- how technical interoperability can be achieved at a common public administration level and at sectoral level,
- how standardisation and possible system integration platforms (adapters for automatic conversion between standards and formats) should be used when developing eGovernment.

The strategy states that open standards (as defined in EIF 1.0) is the preferred option.

Why is it important what you do?

Standardisation and interoperability is a key component in efficient services and government transparency.

The goal of eGovernment is to help simplify contacts between the administration and citizens and is to be characterised by accessibility and usability. In order to lower the administrative burden for citizens and businesses the public sector needs to be able to provide services in a manner that doesn't force the user to know about internal administrative responsibility boundaries. This requires information flows that span multiple organisations. Postal address Visitors' address Telephone Fax

It is likely that more government services will be created by other actors (e.g. citizens/non-profit organisations/businesses) in cooperation with government agencies. To make it easy to interact with relevant agencies and reduce the risk of errors it is preferred that information exchange can be done in a standardised manner. To enable as many actors as possible, standards need to be a facilitator and not a barrier for technical, financial or legal reasons.

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

Not yet.

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

The Delegation itself is composed by director generals of some of the larger government agencies (see p 25 in the summary) and a secretariat. Work will be coordinated with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR). The precise roles are

not defined yet and there are other actors that may become involved as well (e.g. Swedish Standards Institute, academia, businesses etc).

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

I expect to learn more about work that has been done in this area in other countries in order to be able to get on track as fast as possible with similar efforts in Sweden.

FINLAND **Information on Tommi Karttaavi, Senior Advisor, Information Society**

Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities (AFLRA)

Member of the JHS-section of JUHTA (the Advisory Committee on Information Management in Public Administration), member of the ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 34 following group and the Document Communications Committee at the Finnish Standards Association (SFS), member of the IDABC Semic.eu and Osor.eu Advisory Groups, Chairman of the Board of ISOC Finland (the Finnish Chapter of the Internet Society).

The key players in Finland in the field of ICT standardisation are the Finnish Standards Association which is the national standards body and ISO member, the Ministry of Finance for the governmental side and the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities for the municipal side.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the development and steering of common State IT operations. The Ministries are responsible for IT management in their own sectors. The State IT Management Unit operates in cooperation with the administrative sectors. The Ministry of Finance arranges and promotes the joint production of IT services that are common to all administration. JUHTA has been set up at the Ministry of Finance to promote cooperation in information management between the State and the municipalities. The Committee plans cooperation in information management, makes reports and studies, and draws up recommendations for the public administration (JHS recommendations).

The Public Administration Recommendations (JHSrecommendations) provide information management guidelines for public administration (both governmental and municipal). A JHS-recommendation can be a uniform procedure, definition or instruction to be used in public administration. The JHS-system aims to improve the interoperability of information systems and the compatibility of data in them, to facilitate cross-sector process development and to make the use of existing data more efficient. The recommendations also aim to minimise overlapping development work, guide the development of information systems and facilitate good common practices in public administration. The recommendations are approved by the Advisory Committee on Information Management in Public Administration (JUHTA) and the writing process is coordinated by the JHS section, appointed by JUHTA.

The JHS system is focused on:

- Compatibility of information systems and their data and structure
- Interfaces that increase the interoperability between information systems
- User interfaces
- Data security and privacy protection
- Cost effective utilization of information systems

We don't currently have any lists of obligatory standards, open or otherwise, compliance to the recommendations is voluntary. This is partly because public administration

authorities, especially municipalities, have a high degree of autonomy in Finland. The policy is to recommend the use of international open standards when applicable.

Expectations for the meeting: getting information on what is going on internationally and networking.

BELGIUM Information on Bart Hanssens
Who you are and who you represent?

Bart Hanssens representing Fedict, the Belgian Federal Public Service ICT (~ federal Ministry of ICT).

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation?

I'm the chairman of the OASIS ODF Interop and Conformance TC, member of the ODF Adoption TC and co-organizer of the ODF Plugfests. I actively test ODF implementations (both open source and commercial offerings), write newsletters on ODF and give presentations at various conferences.

Member State expert for EIF / NIFO, a major contributor of the IDABC ODEF project and member of the cross-government Architecture Workgroup (federal / regional governments in Belgium).

Other fields of interest: PDF/A, IPv6, SEMIC.eu, content management / publishing

What are your organisation's goals?

Fedict is promoting interoperable open standards as a means to reduce vendor lock-in, increase long-term availability of data and reduce TCO. Fedict is also a competence center for e-Gov, providing core components (like eID, FedMAN high-speed network) that are used by Federal Public Services and other governments, companies and citizens.

Why is it important what you do?

Governments should not only talk about standards and interoperability, they must also be actively involved in it, working closely together with implementers to make sure that standards really can be used in an interoperable way.

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

A list of standards can be downloaded (NL / FR) here: <http://www.fedict.belgium.be/nl/downloads/>

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

Regular standards / interop meetings with representatives from regional governments, ICT meetings with Federal Public services, and participation in EIF meetings at the EU level.

Sectoral initiatives (like Crossroad-database Social Security) also exist.

The reasoning behind this setting.

Historical / political / practical.

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

Share expertise and practical solutions for improving interoperability of relevant standards in public administrations.

THE NETHERLANDS Information on Joris Gresnigt

Who you are and who you represent?

Joris Gresnigt, I work as an advisor for the Standardisation Forum Office, mainly involved with open standards. I also participate in several IDABC programs: CAMSS, EIF, NIFO.

What do you do on interoperability and standardisation?

Interoperability is the main theme for the Standardisation Forum. We identified several interoperability priorities, listed in the interoperability agenda you all received. Currently our main focus is on the selection and adoption of open standards and on semantic interoperability. Our main instrument are the lists with open standards.

What are your organisation's goals?

The Standardisation Forum supports the Dutch government in the use, development and establishment of open standards for electronic exchange. In this way it promotes interoperability, not only within the Dutch government system itself, but also in the relations between government agencies on the one hand and citizens and companies on the other. The tasks of the Forum are defined in a decree, see

http://www.forumstandaardisatie.nl/fileadmin/OVOS/Instellingsbesluit_engels.pdf

Why is it important what you do?

With open standards interoperability can be obtained. Interoperability makes the efficient and effective exchange of information possible. This is a condition for obtaining the goals of the Cabinet: providing better and cheaper services to the citizens and businesses.

What standards do you obligate/ advise upon? (do you have a list of standards?)

We have two lists of open standards. One for comply or explain and one with frequently used open standards. Recently we added a list with standards in law- and regulations.

An outline of your Institutional setting surrounding interoperability: which organisations are involved and what are their responsibilities?

The Forum is a think tank which advises on interoperability to a decision making body: The Standardisation Board. This board consists of the highest ranking civil servants of the Netherlands.

In The Netherlands the ministry on Economic Affairs is responsible for the policy surrounding open standards.

The reasoning behind this setting.

The Forum consists of several governmental as well as commercial organisations, making the discussion and advise on cross cutting concern, typical for our networked society, possible.

What are your expectations regarding these two days?

Getting to know each other (better), exchanging valuable insights and starting a network which makes reuse, information exchange and combined positions on important issues possible on a more structured level.