European Commission

The ISA programme

What's in it for us?

Business case

Interconnecting business registers with the Core Business Vocabulary

ISA

This business case underscores the potential of the Core Business Vocabulary as the foundation for a common semantic standard for interconnecting business registers in Europe and beyond.

The need for cross-border company information

According to the 25 May 2010 conclusions of the Competitiveness Council, improving access to up-to-date and trustworthy information on companies could encourage greater confidence in the market, help recovery from the financial crisis, and increase the competitiveness of European business. In the single market, European companies are increasingly conducting business beyond national borders. Therefore, companies increasingly rely on up-to-date information on their cross-border business partners. Business registers play an essential role in this regards as their core services consist of registering, examining, storing and making publicly available company information.

New EU Directive on Interconnecting Business Registers

On 13 June 2012, the European Parliament has adopted a new Directive (2012/17/EU) aimed at setting up a system for the interconnection of Business Registers. The interconnection of business registers aims at creating a more business-friendly legal and fiscal environment and contributing to the Europe 2020 strategy by improving confidence in the single market. The Directive underscores the need for a common semantic standard for interconnecting business registers..

"Cross-border access to business information requires closer cooperation between business registers"

Interconnecting business registers will help:

Provide reliable and up-to-date information about businesses

Improve cross-border access to official business information for citizens, businesses and public administrations
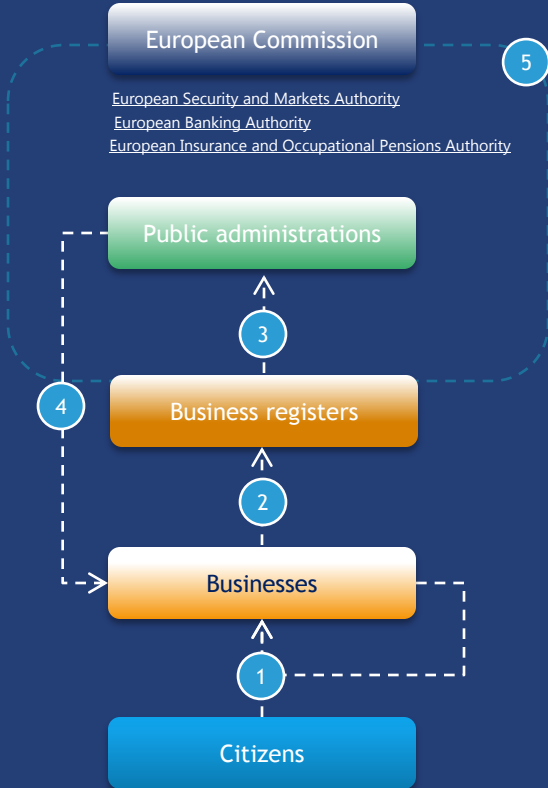
Strengthen confidence in the single market

What is a business register?

Business registers are an authentic source of information about legal entities. Organisations who maintain a business register are responsible for the registration, examination, and storage of company information, such as information on a company's legal form, its seat, capital and legal representatives. Business registers must make this information available to the general public.

Why do we need to exchange information about businesses?

◻ The European Banking Authority wants to collect information on subsidiaries of financial institutions in all EU Member States in order to conduct an elaborate stress test.

◻ A public administration publishes the financial reports of businesses as open data and wants to link them to the business register.

◻ A Danish construction company wants to conclude a subcontracting agreement with a British engineering firm. It wants to know which legal representatives must sign the agrement.

◻ A citizen wants to rent a holiday apartment with a German travel agency. Before transferring an advance, he wants to check if this travel agency is a trustworthy business

European Commission

5

European Security and Markets Authority
European Banking Authority
European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority

Public administrations

3

4

Business registers

2

Businesses

1

Citizens

1&4   Need for access to reliable and up-to-date information on companies
2   Registration, examination, and storage of company information
3   Owned by Members States
5   National and European Regulations

Semantic interoperability barriers

All the 27 Member States hold business registers. Depending on countries, they are organised at national, regional or local level. While information about companies is easily available in the country of their registration, access to the same information from another Member State may be hindered by semantic barriers. Business registers cannot be opened up or joined up: data is defined in a "national" way, depending on the cultural, legal, organisational contexts of the country, and this creates many semantic conflicts when we try to share it.

Semantic barriers

> Lack of a single identifying system

> No common controlled vocabularies (e.g. company status, classification of activity, etc.)

> Lack of a common data model for information exchange

"Harmonisation requires agreeing on common semantics of fundamental, across Europe: Core Vocabularies."

ISA initiatives

Interoperability Solutions for Public administrations (ISA) of the European Commission has launched several initiatives that aim at addressing these semantic conflicts. ISA is convinced that in order to foster cross-border and cross-sector semantic interoperability, harmonization should start at a higher level of abstraction that surpasses the cultural, legal, organisational differences of individual Member States.

In particular, harmonisation requires agreeing on common semantics of fundamental, across Europe: Core Vocabularies.

Core Business Vocabulary

What is a Core Vocabulary?

A Core Vocabulary is a simplified, reusable, and extensible data model that captures the fundamental characteristics of an entity in a context-neutral fashion. Such Core Vocabularies are the starting point for interoperability agreements and defining mappings between existing vocabularies to guarantee a level of cross-domain and cross-border interoperability that can be attained by Public Administrations.

The Core Business Vocabulary

The Core Business Vocabulary Working Group was chaired by Piotr Madziar from DG MARKT/F2 as this organisation is responsible for the EC legislative proposal on interconnecting National Business Registers. Other Working Group members where affiliated with XBRL Europe, opencorporates.com, the European Business Register, the European Banking Authority EBA, and many more…

The working group followed a process and methodology based on W3C's best practices

The Core Business Vocabulary has the potential to help overcome semantic interoperability barriers and facilitate interconnection between business registers in Europe

FI

NO   SE

EE

DK   LV

IR   UK   DE   LT

NL

BE   LU   CZ

SV   SK

FR

CORE BUSINESS VOCABULARY

ES   IT

GR

isa

| Introduction | Business registers | Semantic interoperability barriers | Core Business Vocabulary | What are others doing? | References |

What are others doing?

United Kingdom

All limited companies in the UK are registered at Companies House, an Executive Agency of the British Government.. Company data is published as Linked Open Data. Free and pay-per-view access is offered.

OpenCorporates.com

Opencorporates.com is an independent open data initiative, maintaining information of over 43 million companies in 50 jurisdictions, including 23 US states. It provides access free of charge via web interface and API. OpenCorporates.com has implemented the Core Business Vocabulary.

Norway

In June 2012, the Norwegian open data portal data.norge.no announced that authentic Norwegian company data has been made available through an API.

Estonia

Estonia offers free and pay-per -view access to its company and land register.

Estonia – Central Commercial Register

Norway - Brønnøysundregistrene

http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/
OpenCorporates.com

CORE
BUSINESS
VOCABULARY

Belgium – FPS Economy

Belgium

The Belgian Federal Public Service Economy (FPS Economy) has plans to share its company data as Open Government Data. FPS Economy holds authentic data on 1.2 million Belgian companies. A law change is required before the project can start.

Contact us

https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/contact

This Business Case was prepared for the ISA

programme by PwC EU Services EESV

References

European system of financial supervisors (ESFS)
http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/finances/committees/

The interconnection of business registers - several documents
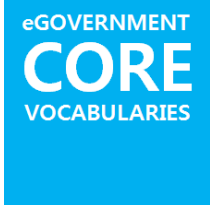http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/business_registers/

Core Business Vocabulary v1.00
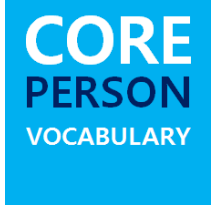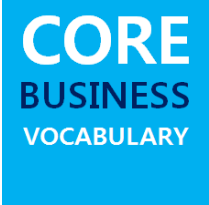http://joinup.ec.europa.eu/asset/core_business/release/100

ADMS
ASSET
DESCRIPTION
METADATA
SCHEMA

http://goo.gl/sLHlU

CESAR
COMMUNITY OF
EUROPEAN
SEMANTIC ASSETS
REPOSITORIES

http://goo.gl/3VCZU

eGOVERNMENT CORE VOCABULARIES

http://goo.gl/tY9ty

CORE PERSON VOCABULARY

http://goo.gl/q2RQx

CORE BUSINESS VOCABULARY

http://goo.gl/VODFF

CORE LOCATION VOCABULARY

http://goo.gl/dqOnm

ADMS. SW

http://goo.gl/03xkP

http://goo.gl/eK1EY

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