

Elements in the Development of the National Interoperability Framework

Promoting Cooperation and Collaboration between Public Administration Agencies

Over two years ago, the Council of Ministries approved Royal Decree 4/2010, of 8 January 2010, regulating the National Interoperability Framework. The legislative act approving Royal Decree 4/2010, as a result of the mandate in Article 42.3 of Law 11/2007, was not a final act but marked the beginning of intense, continuous activity to develop the formal and technology elements required to turn its provisions into a reality. As in the development of the National Interoperability Framework, the task required the cooperation of the High Council for E-Government and the E-Government Sector Committee, and the collaboration of the work teams at all levels of government.

Some of the most visible instruments in the National Interoperability Framework include the Technical Interoperability Standards in Additional Provision 1 of Royal Decree 4/2010.¹ Seven of the eleven technical standards have been approved and published already.² To the initial standards, an additional technical standard was added on the reuse of information in the public sector as part of Royal Decree 1495/2011, of 24 October, on the development of Law 37/2007, of 16 November, on the Reuse of Information in the Public Sector, targeted at the state sector.

However, the work done with the technical standards did not stop at their development. With the aim of facilitating their enforcement across all three levels of government in the Spanish Public Administration, a set of help tools is being

¹ The Technical Interoperability Standards and their application guides are available at the E-Government website. Cf. http://administracionelectronica.gob.es/?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=P60215901274203521811&langPae=es

² The unpublished technical standards are 'Standard Catalogues,' 'Data Brokerage Protocols,' 'List of Data Models,' and 'E-Document Management Policies.' They are all in the final development stage.

developed. On the one hand, Application Guides were prepared for the existing Technical Interoperability Standards. On the other, in the case of e-documents and e-files, an XSD validation tool was developed and is available for download at the Centre for Technology Transfer.

A less visible element is the infrastructure interoperability is based on in Public Administration. It includes the infrastructure mentioned in the technical document of the E-Government Observatory on the SARA Network and its services (January 2012),³ but not only this. The National Interoperability Framework itself mentions three other key infrastructures in Additional Provision I: the Inventory of Procedures and Services, the Semantic Interoperability Centre and the Directory of Reusable Applications. Whereas the Inventory and the Directory are now a reality, the Centre is being developed after the SEMIC.EU model.

Regarding the Inventory of Procedures and Services, it has been translated into two specific elements in the General Administration. On the one hand, the Administrative Inventory System – a register of the General Administration procedures and services at the core of the most important procedures adding value to E-Government, such as the reduction of administrative burdens. On the other, the Administration Directory – the basis for the implementation of the Administrative Record Interconnection System, enabling the electronic transfer of entries between Public Administration agencies.

As to Directory of Reusable Applications, it has materialised in the Centre for Technology Transfer. Having grown by 600% since it was first launched, in terms of both the number of Public Administration applications and the number of Public Administration users, this centre has become a meeting point for the reuse of solutions, services and cases studies in the implementation of E-Government in Spain.

³ Cf. http://administracionelectronica.gob.es/recursos/pae_020002437.pdf

Finally, a point must be made on the dissemination of the National Interoperability Framework at the international level. Both the Digital Agenda for Europe⁴ and the EU E-Government Action Plan⁵ include the development of national interoperability frameworks in line with the European Interoperability Framework as a goal to be met by member States. Spain sought to align its scheme with the European framework early, participating in the development of the latter by being part of ISA programme.⁶ Our country's participation was based on the active promotion of the elements in the National Interoperability Framework, most of them translated into English.

⁴ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/digital-agenda/index_en.htm

⁵ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/action_plan_2011_2015/index_en.htm

⁶ Cf. <http://ec.europa.eu/isa/>