



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 21 December 2011**

**17554/11**

**LIMITE**

**JURINFO 71**

**NOTE**

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from: the Luxembourg delegation (John Dann)  
to: Working Party on e-Law (e-Law)  
Subject: European Legislation Identifier (ELI)

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Members of the European Forum of Legal Gazettes' Working Group (WG)<sup>1</sup> "Access to Legislation" have identified the "Semantic Web of Official Gazettes" as a keystone for the future work. The "Semantic Web", "WEB 3.0" or "Web of connectable data", is designed besides for both human and machines but also facilitates machines to understand the meaning of information. It goes further than the actual "Web of documents with hyperlinks" by enabling machine-readable metadata with descriptions about their meaning and relations with other objects, facilitating inter-domain information sharing and encouraging data to be distributed in reusable and interoperable/open formats.

Means of identifying or naming objects across the Internet are an essential prerequisite of building a "Semantic Web of Official Gazettes" and the goal of this WG is to provide a framework for common data structure, human and machine readable, indispensable for the "Semantic Web".

Within the framework of the WG's on-going work and its "legal" experience, several methods or techniques to implement unique identifiers have been examined. Several benefits and shortcomings of different existing methods have been analysed and the following recommendations have been drafted and endorsed by all participants.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the Working Group in alphabetical order: Austria, Belgium, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Publications Office EU, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom.

The proposal foresees a common standardised set of components within the method and a formal and structured method of declaring the components.

## URI RECOMMENDATIONS

The web uses URIs (Unique Resource identifiers) to identify or name things and to help locate them, using a protocol called HTTP across the Internet.

Well-designed URIs can make an important contribution to improving access to legislation. They help people cite or reference legislation from elsewhere on the web, help search engines to crawl and index legislation and enable information about legislation documents, such as their application and status, to be expressed.

The value of HTTP URIs to name or reference legislation is that the name can be used directly to return a document or useful information about a document. In other words, users can go to a browser, put in the name for the legislation and return some useful information about that legislation, ideally the text of the legislation itself.

We recommend the use of **HTTP URIs** for all Official Gazettes' online information.

**We propose a European Legislation Identifier (ELI) scheme of URI Templates<sup>2</sup> to encourage and promote the use of HTTP URIs for legislation in Europe's Official Gazettes.**

ELI needs to be flexible enough to enable countries to design high quality URIs for their own legislation but also enable a coherent European wide approach.

ELI is a set of components for creating URI Templates for legislation in Europe. These components can be used to make high quality URIs supported by a formal technical description.

**To aid adoption of ELI we propose a generic ELI URI Template as Best Practice.**

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<sup>2</sup> URI Templates (<http://tools.ietf.org/html/draft-gregorio-uritemplate-07>) provide a mechanism for abstracting a space of resource identifiers such that the variable parts can be easily identified and described. URI templates can have many uses, including discovery of available services, configuring resource mappings, defining computed links, specifying interfaces, and other forms of programmatic interaction with resources.

## **ELI Templates - Best practices**

Well-designed URIs are more likely to be used. There are a number of common considerations when designing URIs for legislation. The URI Templates for legislation typically contain one of a number of different component parts:

- country where the legislation is from
- organisation or agent that made the legislation
- type of legislation
- version of the legislation, for example whether it is an original version or a formal consolidation
- reference for the legislation, often using some formal numbering system in the Official Gazette
- the date of the legislation, when it was signed or published
- sub divisions of the legislation, to refer to particular articles within the document
- point in time of the legislation, how it stood on a particular date
- language the legislation is written in

Different jurisdictions will also have specific local issues to think about when creating URIs for their legislation. Considerations will include how the legislation has been cited in the past and whether there are any laws about how legislation should be cited.

Individual jurisdictions will be able to determine the value space of each of the components, even when the component is being used in the same way. There are likely to be some value spaces which are language-specific, such as 'article' in the sub-division component.

## Generic ELI URI Template

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/eli/ {country}/ {agent}/ {sub-agent}/ {year}/ {month}/ {day }/{type}/{Natural identifier}/ {Level 1...}/ {Point in Time}/ {Version}/ {language}
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### ELI Template Components (all optional)

		Name	Comments
	1	Eli	
<b>Country</b>	2	Country	Use of DCTERMS.ISO3166 : 2 alpha  For international organization the registered domain name can be used: e.g. "EU" or "WTO"
	3	Agent	Administrative hierarchical structure, e.g. Federal states, constitutional court, parliament etc...
	4	Sub_agent	Administrative hierarchical sub-structure
<b>Reference</b>	5	Year	YYYY  Various interpretations allowed depending on countries' requirements, e.g. date of signature or date of publication ...
	6	Month	MM
	7	Day	DD
	8	Type	Nature of the act (law, decree, draft bill etc.  Various interpretations depending on countries' requirements
	9	Sub-type	Sub-category of an act depending on countries' requirements (e.g. Corrigendum)
	10	Domain	Can be used if acts are classified by themes. e.g. Codes
	11	Natural identifier	Reference or Number to distinguish an act of same nature signed the same day.
<b>Sub-division</b>	12	Level 1	Reference to a sub-division of an act. e.g. art15
	13	Level 2	Reference to a smaller sub-division than article.  e.g. art15.2
	14	Level 3	Reference to a smaller sub-division than article.
	15	Level n	Reference to even smaller sub-division
<b>Point in time</b>	16	Point in Time	YYYYMMDD  Version of the act as valid at a given date.

<b>Version</b>	17	Version	To distinguish between original act or consolidated version
<b>Language</b>	18	Language	To differ different official expressions of the same act Use of DCTERMS.ISO3166 : 3 alpha

## Examples using the Generic ELI URI Template:

### Minimum used Metadata :

**eli/lu/etat/2010/2010-12/** : reference to the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010

### With optional metadata:

**Common standardised set of components within the method and a formal and structured method of declaring the components/** : reference to all signed acts in 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10** : reference to all signed acts in the month of October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30** : reference to all signed acts on 30 October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law** : reference to all LAWS signed on 30 October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/** : reference to the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/fr** : reference to the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010 French version

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/de** : reference to the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010 German version

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/art.8** : reference to article 8 in the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/fr/art.8** : reference to article 8, French version, in the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010

### Consolidated version:

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/consolidated** : reference to the latest consolidated version of the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010

**eli/lu/etat/2010/10/30/law/2010-12/20110512/consolidated/** : reference to the consolidated version of the law “2010-12” signed on 30 October 2010 as in force on 12 May 2011

### Projects:

**eli/lu/etat/mineco/2010/draft/eco123-1** : reference to the first draft project of the law written by the Ministry of Economics

## United Kingdom examples using a specific ELI URI Template:

**id/{type}/{+year}/{identifier}/{sub-division\*}** : *ELI Template for UK Identifier URIs*

**{type}/{+year}/{identifier}/{sub-division\*}/{version,language}** : ELI Template for UK Document URIs

### Identifier URIs

**id/ukpga/2011/3** : Identifier for United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3

**id/ukpga/Eliz2/10-11/59** : Identifier for United Kingdom Public General Act, 10 and 11 Elizabeth II, Chapter 59 (i.e. using regnal year for UK Acts of Parliament prior to 1963)

**id/ukpga/2011/3/section/1** : Identifier for United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3, section 1

**id/ukpga/2011/3/section/1/2** : Identifier for United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3, Section 1, Subsection 2

### Document URIs

**ukpga/2011/3** : Reference to the current and in force version of United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3

**ukpga/2011/3/enacted** : Reference to the enacted (original) version of United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3

**ukpga/2011/3/scotland** : Reference to the United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3, as it extends to Scotland

**ukpga/2011/3/2011-11-01** : Reference to the United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3, as it stood on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

### Representation URIs

**ukpga/2011/3/data.pdf** : Reference to the current version of United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3 in PDF

**ukpga/2011/3/data.xml** : Reference to the current version of United Kingdom Public General Act, 2011, Chapter 3 in XML

## COMMON METADATA

## European Legislation Identifier (ELI)

Field Name	Description	Field identifier	Cardinality	Data type	Comments
<b>Legal resource (language independent)</b> <b>Any type of legal resource published in an Official Journal at the work level</b>					
<b>Unique Identifier</b>	The identifier of the legal resource. New URI scheme can also be used	id_document	1	string	See URI Proposal
Local identifier	The identifier of the legal resource in a local reference system	id_local	0..*	string	Act's reference in the EU's, country's or region's own terminology, e.g. celex id, com id
<b>Type of legislation</b>	The type of a legal resource (e.g. directive, règlement grand ducal, law, draft proposition etc, Parliamentary act .....	type_document	1	string	For national and regional laws specified on the appropriate level, various interpretations depending on countries' requirements
Territorial application	Territory that this legal resource is applicable for (e.g. EU, country / member state, region ....)	relevant_for	0..*	unit_administrative	Individual administrative units, taxonomy of possible values to be defined (NUTS taxonomy, two or more levels)
<b>Agent / Authority</b>	Member State or regional bodies, European Institutions, other bodies who initiated / adopted the legal resource (e.g. Luxembourg Government, European Parliament, Rheinland-Pfalz...)	agent_document	1..*	country / institution	Based on authority tables: Corporate bodies / Countries, if necessary extended to cover regional agents. RECORD project
Sub-Agent / Sub-authority	Administrative hierarchical sub-structure. (e.g. Name of Ministry...)	service	0..*	free text indicating responsible ministries, DGs etc.	
Subject	The subject of this legal resource	is_about	0..*	concept_eurovoc	Eurovoc where applicable, Extensions might be needed (e.g. as used in Spain)
<b>Date of adoption</b>	The official adoption or signature date of the document	date_document	1	date	Format: YYYY-MM-DD
<b>Date of publication</b>	Date in which this legal resource was officially published	date_publication	1	date	Format: YYYY-MM-DD
Date entering in force	Applicable date for this act if know and unique, otherwise controlled vocabulary such as "multiple", "unspecified-future", ...	date_entry-in-force	0..*	string	Format: YYYY-MM-DD or string „unspecified-future“ or string „unspecified-past“

Date no longer in force	Applicable date starting from which the act is not in force anymore	date_no-longer-in-force	0..*	date	
Status	Status of the legal resource (in force, not in force, partially applicable, implicitly revoked, explicitly revoked, repealed, expired, suspended ... etc )	status	0..*	string	Controlled vocabulary might be very useful
Related to	Reference to draft bills, judgements, press release....	related_to	0..*	URI Identifier to other resource(s)	
Changed by	Legal resource changed (amended or replaced) by another legal resource (typically a newer version, replacement can be completely or partially)	changed_by	0..*	URI Identifier to other legal resource(s)	
Basis for	Legal resource (enabling act) enables another one (secondary legislation)	basis_for	0..*	URI Identifier to other legal resource(s)	Enabling act / empowering act
Based on	Legal resource is based on another legal resource (e.g. a treaty article, a provision in the constitution, framework legislation, enabling act ...)	based_on	0..*	URI Identifier to other legal resource(s)	
Cites	References to other legal acts mentioned	cites	0..*	URI Identifier to other legal resource(s)	
Consolidates	Reference to the consolidated version(s) of the act	consolidates	0..1	URI Identifier to other legal resource(s)	
<b>Expression</b>					
<b>Expression belongs to a work</b>	Technical field to link expression objects to their work (implicit in many XML serializations)	belongs_to	1	Identifier of other legal resource	
<b>Language</b>	Language version of the expression.	language_expression	1	string	DCTERMS.ISO3166 : 3 alpha
<b>Title</b>	Title of the expression	title_expression	1	string	
Short title	Established short title of the expression (if any)	short_title_expression	0..1	string	
Alias	Alternative title of the expression (if any)	title_alternative	0..1	string	
Publication reference	Reference to the OJ or other publication in which the legal resource is published, identified by a suitable mechanism	published_in (in CDM on work level)	0..*	string	



Description of the act	A suitable free text description of the legal resource in the expression's language (e.g. using the abstract)	description	0..1	string	
<b>Manifestation link or description to the physical object</b>					
<b>manifests</b>	Technical field to link manifestation objects to their expression (implicit in many XML serializations)	Identifier of expression	1..*		
<b>link_manifestation</b>	URI pointing to the act itself (mostly a link to the original publication, but can be a local file)	link_manifestation	1..*	string; Format URI	
<b>publisher</b>	Publishing house (in a given country often a constant, e.g. "Service Centrale de Législation" for Luxembourg)		0..*	string	
<i><b>Bold: Mandatory Fields</b></i>					