Connecting citizens with the EU multilingual law-making process: the role of ICT

Enrico Francesconi

ITTIG-CNR – Institute of Legal Information Theory and Techniques Italian National Research Council

francesconi@ittig.cnr.it

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Overview

- EU policy for eGovernment services
- eParticipation initiative of the European Commission
- A proposal for integrating eParticipation ICT solutions
- Conclusions



Rationale

EU eGovernment policies described within:

- Action Plan 2006 2011 (based on Manchester Declaration)
- Action Plan 2011 2015 (based on Malmö Declaration)



Main common objective

Transparency and Participation of Citizens in decision-making processes

Essential pre-conditions

- Regulation quality and accessibility
- 2 Transparent decision and policy making framework

Target outcomes

- achieving economic development
- stimulate competitiveness in business
- guarantee democracy



Better Regulation initiative of the European Commission

Mandelkern Report on Better Regulation (2001)

- Simplicity, clarity and accessibility of EU provisions
- Stakeholder consultations and impact assessments



Smart Regulation in the European Union (2010) Closing the cycle: from Better to Smart Regulation

- Addressing the whole policy cycle: design, implementation, enforcement, evaluation and revision of a piece of legislation
- 2 Sharing responsibility of EU institutions and Member States
- 3 Strengthening the voice of citizens and stakeholders





Preparatory Action (2006-2010) - ICT-PSP framework (2010 →)

- Improving the quality of the legislative process;
- Enhancing accessibility and alignment of legislation at EU level;
- Promoting awareness and democratic participation of citizens to the legislative process;

ITTIG-CNR involved into three projects

- DALOS (DrAfting Legislation with Ontology-based Support)
 Coordinated by: ITTIG-CNR (Florence, Italy)
- SEAL (Smart Environment for Assisting the drafting and debating of Legislation)
 - Coordinated by: Leibniz Center for Law Univ. Amsterdam
- VOICES (Integrating Semantics, Social Networks and Serious Games into eParticipation)
 - Coordinated by: MFG Centre of Excellence for IT and Media (Germany)

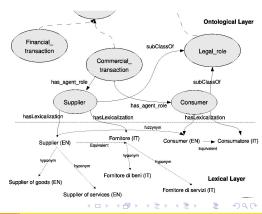


DALOS Objectives and Service

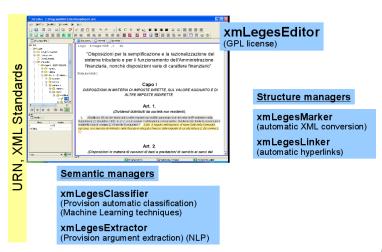
- To improve the quality of legislative texts in a multilanguage environment;
- To improve the accessibility of legislative texts for legal experts, decision-makers and citizens;

The service

- Multilingual legislative drafting using Semantic Web technologies
- Alignment legal concepts at EU and national levels
- Integrating Ontological and Lexical resources (RDF/OWL)



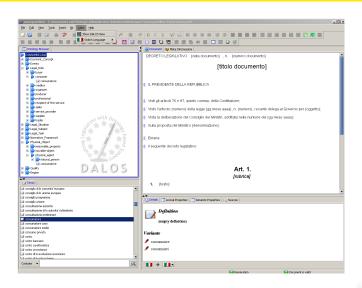
xmLegesEditor: specialized editor for Legislative Drafting



http://www.xmleges.org



xmLegesEditor - DALOS version



http://www.dalosproject.eu

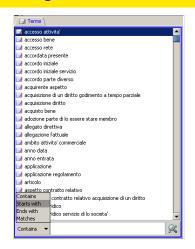


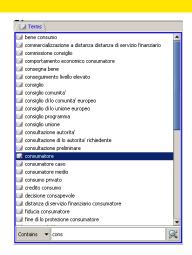
Browsing the Ontology





Searching Terms





- Search of terms according to their lexical forms (Contains, Starts with, Ends with, Exact match)
- Highlight the defined terms



Details and Source Panels



- details on term definition
- link to contexts
- lexical variants



- links to documents where term is used
- document fragments

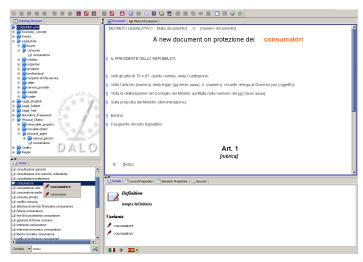
Multi-language support





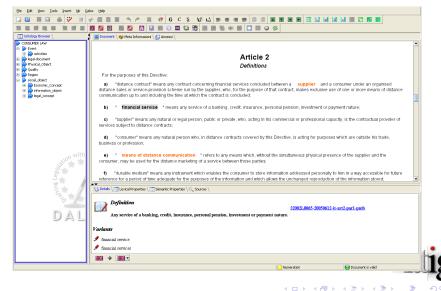
- Two types of multilingual support:
 - global: selection of the language in which terms appear
 - local: "translation" of the selected term and related relations and properties

Term insertion within documents





Editing environment



DALOS contribution to EU policies and institutions

The DALOS service can be used



- To facilitate the transfer of European Directives into national laws;
- To facilitate the alignment of concepts and terminology in national legislations;
- As a source for coherent EU legal documents indexing for Multiligual legal IR



SEAL

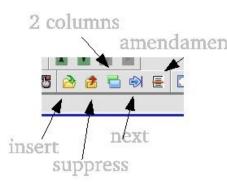
 Providing legal drafters at the European and national levels with a working environment for drafting (amending) legislation;



 Tools to follow all the phases of the legislative workflow (drafting, debating, approval)



xmLegesEditor: legislative workflow functions

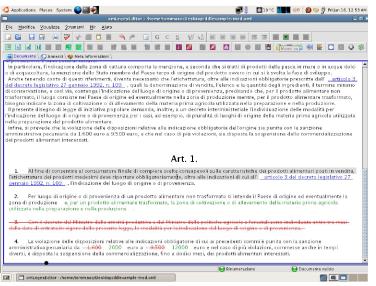


Toolbar for the legislative workflow

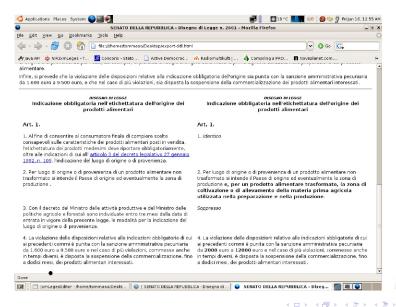
- Amendment management
- Parallel view of different versions of a bill
- Automatic generation of the consolidated version
- Automatic generation of the amending text



Inserting Amendmnets

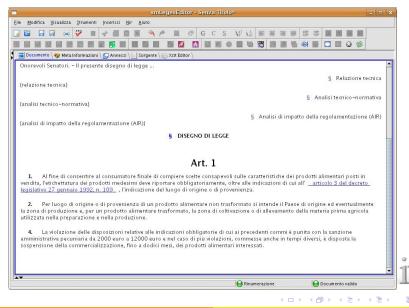


Parallel view of different versions of a bill

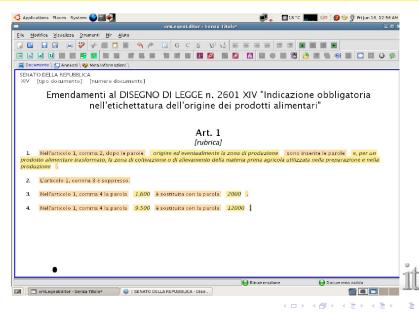




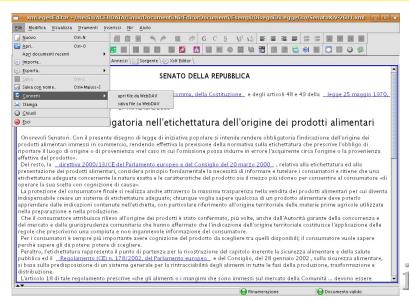
Automatic generation of the consolidated text



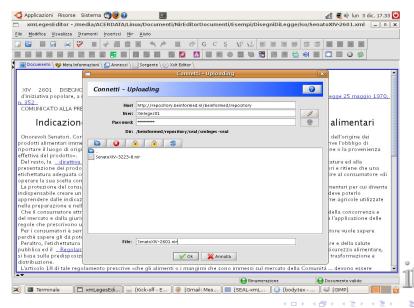
Automatic generation of the amending text



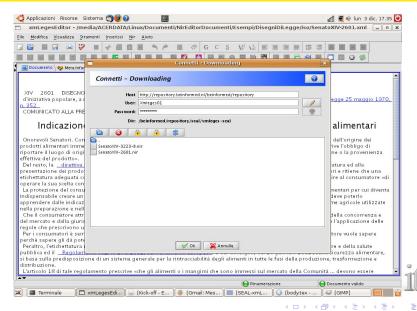
Including Documents in the Legislative Workflow



Including Documents in the Legislative Workflow



Including Documents in the Legislative Workflow



VoiceS

Integrating Semantics, Social Networks and Serious Games into eParticipation

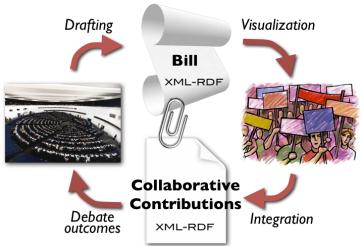
 Semantic technologies to provide solutions to support citizens opinions about any subject to be regulated



 Modules for semantic classification and tools to present citizens' feedback to the elected parliamentarians to improve the decision making process



A Step Forward: Integrating eParticipation Solutions for Open Government



Objectives of the Integrated Solution

- To deliver a high quality public service on legislation on the Web;
- To expose legislative data, for people to take, use, and re-use for whatever application;
 - Legislation.gov.uk example of legislative OpenGov public service



Additional features: Citizens' involvement though Web 2.0 services

ICT Solutions for Re-Connecting Citizens and Law-Makers

Back-end components

- multilingual linguistic-ontological resource (DALOS VOICES)
- @ multilingual legislative drafting environment allowing to manage semantics at the very early stage of law-making process (DALOS – SEAL)
- semantic model for EU legislation able to describe provisions (Definition, Duty, Prohibition, Sanction, Competence, etc.)

Front-end component

- a collaborative platform allowing both law-makers and citizens
 - to access legislation during the law-making process;
 - to obtain semantic focused views on pieces of legislation;
 - to provide comments, suggestions, modifications and rating.



Structural and Semantic views of a Legislative Text Fragment

Article 7 (Notification)

- A controller intending to process personal data falling within the scope of application of this Act shall have to notify the Garante thereof...
- 2. The notification shall have to be given...

Formal profile

Division (or Paragraph)

Functional Profile

Type of provision: "Duty"

Arguments:

Bearer:

"Controller"

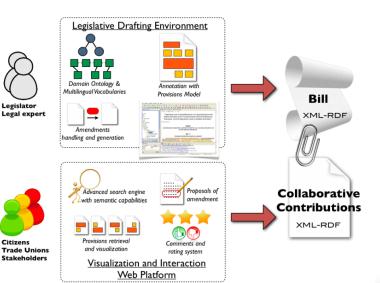
Action:

"Notification"

Counter-party: "Garante"

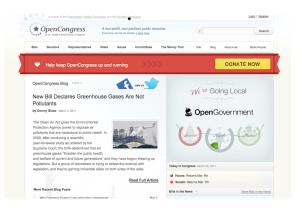


Details of an Integrated eParticipation Solution





OpenCongress.org



- Brings together all the best info about US Congress in one place
- Tracks What's Happening
- Makes Citizens' Voice Heard
- Allows to Share Valuable Info
- Makes Citizens Government Watchdogs

Non-profit initative following on from the Obama's Transparency and Open Government Memorandum (2009)



OpenCongress.org



- Hot, Most-viewed, Newest bills;
- Name and details of bill proponents;
- Percentage of bills proposed;
- Percentage of citizens past approval of a representative activity;
- Video of the parliamentarian debate on a specific bill;



OpenCongress.org



- Wiki for users to provide comments, alternative formulation of a legal text fragment;
- News, most viewed topics
- Blogs, social networks sharing comments
- RSS on specific bills.





Conclusions

- eParticipation initiatives
- Integrated solution for Open Government



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ICT is ready and Time is ripe to ...



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ICT is ready

and

Time is ripe to ...

Make Our Voices Heard!



