# Annex 2-eEurope Standardisation Action Plan
## Grant Application Form

## Part I – General Information

| Title: | Organisation: |
|---|---|
| **Generic Methodology for Multilingual Product Description and Classification for eBusiness – "Gen-ePDC"** | CEN |

Short description:  *<please provide a short technical description of the proposed activity in maximum 15 lines>*

This project is building on successful steps taken towards **semantic interoperability**.
DG Enterprise has financially supported within the framework of **CEN/ISSS/eCAT\***:
- a project concerning the investigation of multilingual e-cataloguing (successfully completed in December 2003 with a study report as CWA*)
- the first part of a project aimed at designing a **common architecture** for a **multilingual cross-industry Product Description and Classification** (ePDC* – to be completed by the end of April 2004 with a CWA, which shall serve as an input to international standardization in ISO*)

The second part of the ePDC project, proposed here, aims at **harmonizing existing classifications** into an interoperable, multilingual, common horizontal, i.e. cross-industry system, and to maintain, promote, and make it available to the public under a royalty-free license on an on-going basis.  In order to ensure its interoperability with one of its major applications: cataloguing, it is complemented by a task on "Basic principles and requirements for the development of **multilingual eCatalogues** and the respective **data modelling methodology**" (to serve as an input to standardization in ISO)

Output/deliverables:  *<please indicate the expected deliverables and the timetable for completion>*

The Project will provide CWAs dealing with:
- 1.1 the business rules to operate a joint working committee in charge of the implementation and management of the classification (Sept 2004)
- 1.2 the description of the toolset, its using conditions and funding proposals for maintaining the common classification on an on-going basis (Sept 2004)
- 1.3 the transition plan for migration from proprietary structures to the multilingual common architecture (Sept 2004)
- 1.4 the maintenance process and policies (Sep 2004)
- 1.5 the assignation of domains to collaborating organizations (November 2004)
- 1.6 reports on the results of the migration (May 2005)
- 1.7 multilingual catalogues and their respective data modelling methodology (December 2004)

The following basic documents (to be completed by December 2004) are planned to be used as an imput for international standardization in ISO:
- 2.1 the attribute library
- 2.2 the product classes with sets of attributes
- 2.3 the standardization of the hierarchies
- 2.4 the use of keywords (including synonyms)
- 2.5 the basic principles and requirements for multilingual eCatalogues and the respective data modelling methodology

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Requested financial support: *<please indicate the requested financial contribution from the EU/EFTA in absolute figures, as well as a percentage of the total eligible costs>*

A financial support is requested to contract experts (2) to prepare the CWAs, to finance the secretariat supporting the project team and organizing the Workshop activities

| | |
|---|---|
| Experts + contribution in kind (50%) | 201.500 |
| Secretariat | 40.300 |
| Meetings, promotion etc. | 8.200 |
| Total cost: | **EUR 250.000** |

Of which **EUR 125.000** are requested as financial contribution from EU/EFTA

## Part II – Policy relevance and expected impact

Policy relevance: *<please describe the relevance of the proposed initiative to the eEurope 2005 Action Plan and which specific policy objectives are supported>*

This second part of the Product Description and Classification project meets the following policy objectives of the **eEurope 2005 Standardization Action Plan**:

1. It fully supports Objective 2.1 (e-procurement standards – eCatalogues and eClassification)
2. It is in line with Objective 1.2 (sectoral interoperability), as it is an "horizontal" cross-industry operation
3. It has been widely supported by the "B2B Internet Trading Platforms – New challenges for SMEs" recommendations
4. It is the implementation of the two projects of CEN/ISSS/eCAT, whose first part was already supported by DG-Enterprise
5. It is strongly supported by Industry: more than 15 worldwide organizations (including some from Asia and the USA), which will guarantee widest application of the results
6. The pre-standard type of documents among the results are planned to be taken as working drafts into the ISO standardization framework to become International Standards (such as ISO/PWI 22274 "Basic principles and requirements of multilingual product classification for electronic commerce")
7. Interoperability tests will be conducted during the "migration" phase according to deliverable 1.6

It is further **in line with COM(96)359** on standardization and the global information society the CEC "stresses the need to guarantee interoperability, promote information exchange and message security and ensure that the Community rules on competition are adhered to". It meets **standardization priorities on interoperability** – particularly **semantic interoperability** – as identified in the **eEurope 2005 Rolling Action Plan** and discussed in **CEN/ISSS/eBIF**.

Expected impact: *<please describe the expected impact of the proposed standardisation initiative in support of the eEurope 2005 Action Plan. Who would benefit potentially from this initiative? What would be the cost of non-implementation?>*

- Enough momentum has been created towards the **harmonization of competing industry standards** to become interoperable by complying with the planned CWAs (and later with the International Standards to be derived from these CWAs).
- Through the strong support from all participating organizations, the project will be widely accepted by industry and will assure a good coordination with such already existing initiatives like OIDDI*, DINsml.net*, …

- Many primary actors in eBusiness, such as the members of MoU/MG*, have already declared since years that such an initiative would be more than welcome; several trials by limited groups have failed; it is the first time that such a wide spectrum of classification schemes work together towards a common accomplishment.
- The generic approach of this methodology and the respective CWAs will ensure a high degree of semantic interoperability and re-usability of classified product descriptions
    - within the enterprise,
    - between enterprises,
    - within an industry sector,
    - between industry sectors,
    - across different electronic market places, etc.
- A non-implementation would, throughout the world, cause very high expenses for maintenance and further development of product description and classification schemes, as well as too many catalogue schemes; industries would stay divided by regions: USA, Europe,... (so far the main horizontal schemes are focused on a region); conversion and mapping costs will dramatically increase and software adaptation will result in high extra-expenses

Accronyms:

*CEN/ISSS/eCAT – Workshop on "Multilingual eCataloguing and eClassification in eBusiness" (see also ePDC)

*CWA – CEN Workshop Agreement

*DINsml.net – the electronic dictionary of properties of the German Standards Institute (DIN)

*ePDC – second project "Global Multilingual Product Description and Classification for eCommerce and eBusiness" of CEN/ISSS/eCAT

*ISO – International Organization for Standardization

*MoU/MG – Management Group of the ITU, UN-ECE, ISO, IEC Memorandum of Understanding concerning standardization in eBusiness (comprising representatives of the most important industry consortia active in the field of eBusiness standardization)

*OIDDI – Open Interoperable Data Dictionary Initiative