DIFI
Agency for Public Management and eGovernment

Norwegian experience with meeting public sector requirements

SEMIC.EU Methodology workshop

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Agency for Public Management and eGovernment

- In Norwegian: Direktoratet for forvaltning og IKT (Difi)
- Established 1 January 2008
- Organised under the Ministry of Government Administration and Reform
- Aims to strengthen the government's work in renewing the Norwegian public sector and improve the organisation and efficiency of government administration, including efficient use of ICT and development of egovernment.
  - The user shall be met by an *open, accessible and coherent public sector* offering integrated and fully digital services via sound electronic self-service solutions
  - *Through the use of ICT make more efficient and free up resources* in order to strengthen public welfare provisions while reducing administrative burdens.

Status

- Currently (political) focus on ICT architecture and interoperability
  - White paper to the Parliament
  - Report on common ICT architecture in the public sector
- Semantic interoperability is emphasised as an important area for standardisation
- Large and complex task, currently no centralised initiative
  - Several independent initiatives in sectors or with limited number of participants
- Spring 2009 start-up of semantic interoperability as focus area under the Standardisation board (for ICT in the public sector)
  - Working groups on technology AND lawyers and practitioners
- Main focus on the semantics – the terms and words – not the technology!

Experiences from current semantic projects

- No or little demand
  - Not in accordance with the immediate needs of the public institutions
  - Time consuming and in conflict with more pressing and compulsory commitments
- Lack of maturity and motivation for collaboration
- Lack of commitment from the institutions
- Lack of overview and documentation of internal ICT systems
- Technology too ambitious
- Organisational challenges – not attention from leaders
- Lack of common methodology

Our observation

- Lack of understanding of the origin of terms and their fluctuant nature – must not overwrite legislators purpose through harmonisation and simplification
  - Terms defined in legal rules and through interpretation and by the context and purpose

- Semantic interoperability not only solution – must be suitable and give added value
- Efficiency of point to point communication/data exchange not to be underestimated.
- Several approaches possible
- Successful when meeting demands and needs, and when resulting in new or improved services

Example projects

Norway Digital
http://www.statkart.no/Norge_digitalt/Engelsk/About_Norway_Digital

- the Norwegian government's initiative to build the national geographical infrastructure
- a working co-operation and infrastructure with reference data and thematic data available, more than 100 operational web map services, geoportal and other services
- an implementation of the infrastructure described by the Inspire Directive
- The aim is to enhance the availability and use of quality geographic information among a broad range of users, primarily in the public sector
- Metadata portal geoNorge http://www.geonorge.no/Portal/
  - ISO 19115 *Geographic Information – Metadata*
- Result: Extensive use, cooperation and development of services; based on needs of and demands from private and public parties

Example projects

SEMICOLON Semantic and Organisational Interoperability in Communicating and Collaborating Organisations

http://semicolon.no/semicolon-web/Hjemmeside-E.html

- A research project addressing the challenges to establish compatible ontologies, information models and the necessary organisational coordination and collaboration to simplify public service production across several public bodies. Runs for 42 months from Oct 2007
- Several private and public partners, the latter providing collaboration cases as study items for the project
  - Birth and name dialogue
  - Metadata Model for Tax Authorities
  - Data to researchers
  - Result XML for kindergarten-applications
- The project will develop ICT-based methods, tools and metrics through research based experiences in real collaboration cases where the aim is to produce public electronic services to industries and citizens
- Challenges: Proper commitment and motivation from public institutions

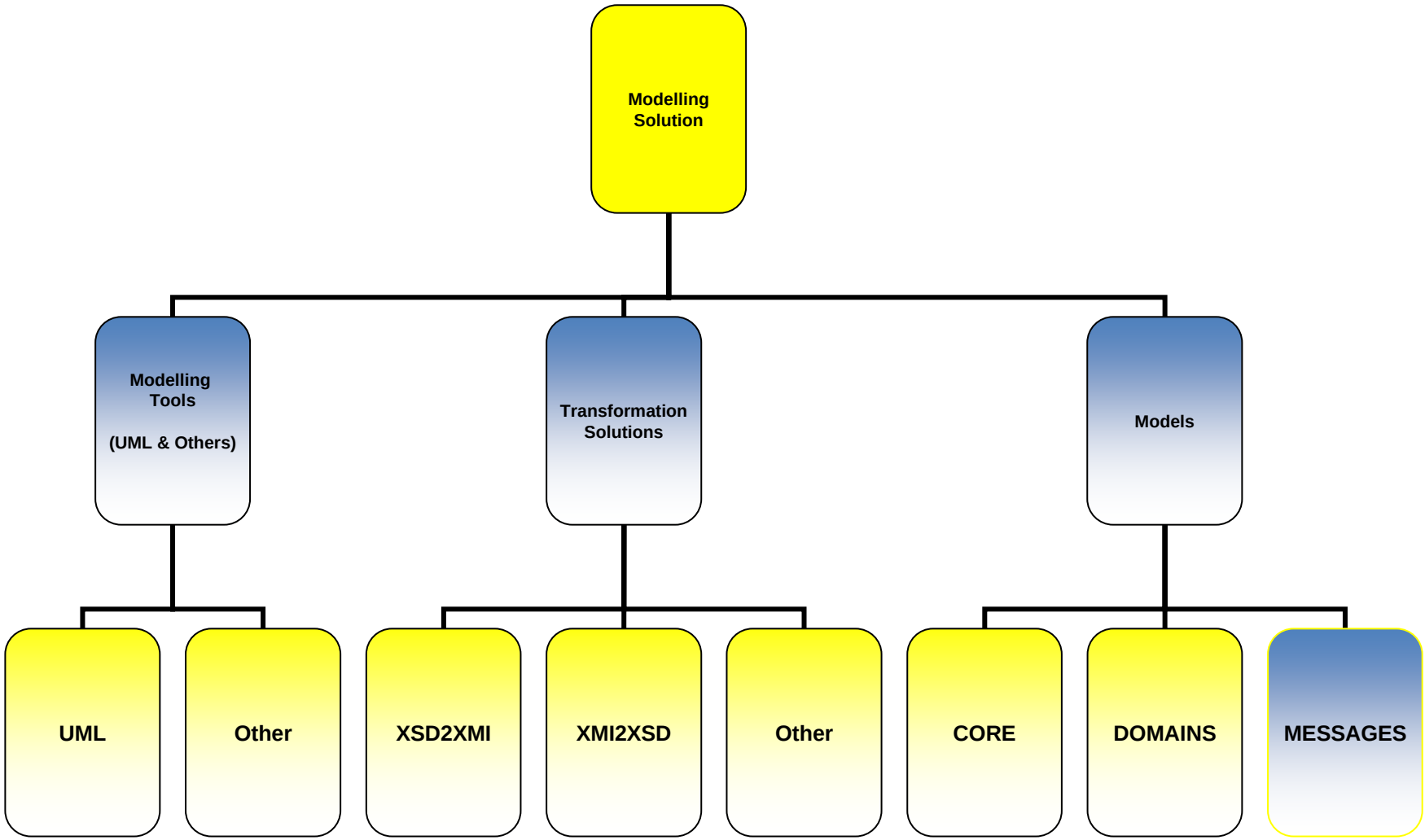
Example projects

SERES Semantic register for electronic collaboration

http://www.brreg.no/samordning/semantikk/

- Run by the Brønnøysund Register Center, responsible for several national registers organised under the Ministry of Trade and Industry
- Contains metadata on describing the semantics and information structure of data being exchanged with and between public institutions.
- Focus on structured information, and use of the metadata in production of electronic forms by defining the content of data flows
- Two-fold aim:
  - Establish tools and methodology for the Register center and their task to coordinate reporting obligations for enterprises
  - Provide metadata to Altinn, the common portal for public reporting
- Challenges: Must support the needs of public institutions that already rely on their metadata; mandate restricted to axis enterprises - public sector; balance ambitions and immediate needs

Example projects - SERES

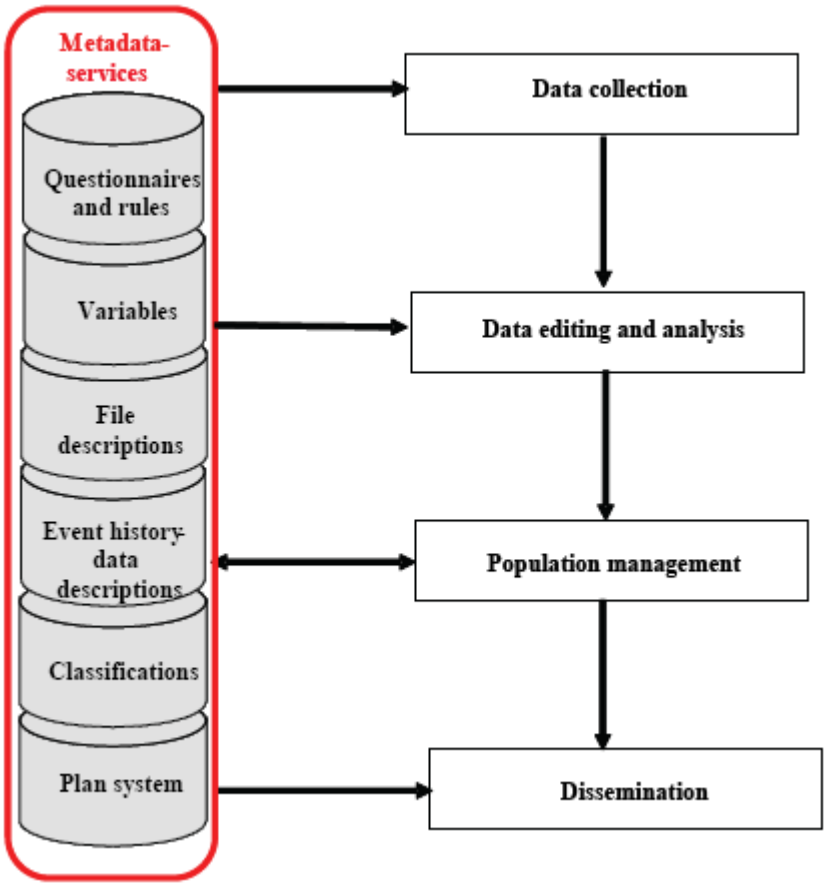


Example projects

SSB Statistics Norway http://www.ssb.no/english/

- Metadata strategy from 2005
- Aim is to create a comprehensive metadata system that will contribute to an efficient production and dissemination of statistics, and at the same time improve the quality of the statistics. The metadata should be created and updated in one place.
- Metadata and metadata systems available on Internet http://www.ssb.no/metadata/
- Stabas - Database for statistical classification http://www3.ssb.no/stabas/MainFrames.asp?Language=en
- Focus on terms and descriptions – not technology

Example projects - SSB



Mastersystems for metadata