

Internationalization of the Legal URN Scheme

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Scheme Internationalization

1. Summary of reasons and benefits (Furore, April 05)

- **several countries** aim to adopt a URN scheme for legal documents
 - > with a **structure similar** to the Italian one
 - > with the necessary **adjustments**
- an international **common scheme** allows:
 - > cross-countries **references**
 - > creation of cross-countries **services** (i.e. CaseLex)
 - > building of international **infra-structure** for resolution
 - > **interchange** of experiences and tools

Proposal for the International Scheme

Structure proposed in Furore

```
urn : <meta-space> : <country-code> : <national-name>
```

where:

- <meta-space> is a common **meta namespace** for legal documents (the proposed name is **lex**)
- <country-code> is the **ISO 3166** 2-letters code: it, fr, dk, etc.
- <national-name> is the **uniform name** of a legal act in a certain country with a similar structure:
authority : act : details : annex @ version ...

i.e. **urn:lex:es:estado:ley:2002-07-12;123**
urn:lex:it:stato:legge:2003-09-21;456
urn:lex:fr:etat:lois:2004-12-06;321

Extension proposal of Brazil

The proposal

- to substitute the <country> element with a more general <locality>

urn : lex : <locality> : <national-name>

- locality is composed by the country and a related specification, according to local organisation (federation unit, region, ...)

<locality> ::= <country-code> *[:<specification>]

- i.e. <br-locality> ::= br ; <federation-unit> ; <municipality>
urn:lex:br;sp;sp:camara.municipal:projeto.lei:2004-11-23;4903
<it-locality> ::= it ; <region> ; <province>
urn:lex:it;toscana;firenze:comune.firenze:ordinanza:2004-11-23;4903

Analysis of Brazil proposal

1. Motivation

- **scenario** of federal state of Brazil:
 - legislative production from: **federal**, **state** and **city** houses
 - 27 states, 5,000 cities: **explosion** of authorities
 - need of distributing the **resolution** process
- this situation is **similar** to many countries:
 - **legislative** production at 2 levels: federal/state or state/region
 - a large number of bodies issues **local** measures

2. Positive considerations

- a specification of country is useful for distinguishing **federal** from **state** act
(federal: **urn:lex:br:stato:lei:...** state: **urn:lex:br;sp:stato:lei:..**)
- useful to help the **decentralization** of resolution process

Analysis of Brazil proposal

3. Critical aspects

- use of **abbreviation**: the scheme uses full denominations
i.e. `urn:lex:br;sp:stato:lei:...` ==> `urn:lex:br;sao.paolo:stato:lei:...`
- the **splitting** of enacting authority in 2 elements (<locality> and <authority>): the field is not self-explaining:
i.e. `urn:lex:it;toscana:regione:...` ==> `urn:lex:it;toscana:regione.toscana:...`

4. Open issues

- **inter** state/region/province/... institutions:
which areas have to be inserted? **everyone** or the **common**?
- **migration** of a body from an area to an other one:
how to resolve old URNs?

Official registration of “lex” namespace

1. URN scheme for legal documents is stable and robust

- widely used in **Italy** in several institutions
- has been **tested** a lot also to identify the official collection
- is regularly **maintained** (last version is 1.3 of May 06)
- **other** countries aim to adopt it

2. Why asking for the official registration?

- having a standard **mechanism** to link norms in a persistent way for Internet community
- addressing the standard **evolution** according to IANA general principles
- sharing a common **infrastructure** for routing the resolution via DNS

Official registration of “lex” namespace

3. Official IANA registration requires the submission of a RFC to IETF

- **technical** considerations on uniqueness, persistence, resolution, ...
- elements demonstrating that the **organization** promoting the URN is
 - > stable
 - > able to maintain
 - > the namespace
 - > the registration service for a long time

Notes on registration requirements

1. International legal URN based on the Italian schema satisfies all the technical requirements needed for the official registration

- IETF compliant
- **well-defined** with respect to the requested aspects (syntactic structure, uniqueness, persistence, assignment rules and resolution mechanisms)

2. Responsibility of registration and maintenance

- in Italy standard was proposed within the **Normeinrete** project
- it has been issued by CNIPA as **national** technical norm
- a **WG**, coordinated by ITTIG, continues to maintain it
- currently CNIPA **collaborates** and funds the working group
- the Italian branch can be soon **operative** (“nir” ==> “lex:it”)

Final proposal

1. CNIPA seems to be the most suitable candidate to propose the official registration

- institutional role in **standardization** activities for PAs
- international **collaboration** for technical matters

2. To charge CNIPA with IANA registration of “lex” namespace

- **basic** structure:

urn : lex : <country-code> ; <specification> : <national-name>

- <national-name> is defined for every country by a proper **institution**, on the base of a common structure

<authority> : <measure> : <details> : <annex> @ <version>

and to receive adhesions from other countries

- to make the application more **relevant** for IANA

Final proposal

3. If accepted, to create the basic infrastructure

- root point of namespace (“lex.urn.arpa”)
- primary DNS server for “lex” routing (i.e. c/o CNIPA)
- routing to activated national DNS servers (“lex:it”, “lex:br”, ...)

to activate national services

- routing to various national resolvers (“it:stato”, “it:regione”, ...)

• The benefit

- direct access by urn: unnecessary conversion in http scheme

Architecture of Distributed Resolution System

