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ITALO SCOTTI E ENRICO SETA

Chamber of Deputies

Italian Legislation on the Internet: Citizens' access to Legislation in Force and Regulatory Reorganisation

Together with the Senate and the Prime Minister's Office, Italy's Chamber of Deputies supports the so called "Normativa" Project, i.e. the most significant attempt so far in Italy aimed to set up a free-of-charge public service enabling citizens to access online a highly stratified and extremely complex body of legislation.

The main challenge lies in determining the scope of the notion of "legislation in force" because of the coexistence of different sources of regulatory production, adopted at different times. Moreover it is only recently that the improvement of legislative drafting and of the quality of legislation have started to attract increasing interest.

The following strategies were pursued in order to deal with those difficulties:

- The application of an XML mark-up for the automatic processing of measures explicitly amending previous legislation and the full tracking of linkages among legislative documents and among provisions;
- a notation system to flag implicit abrogating, amending or supplementing provisions;
- production of an editor enabling text consolidation;
- providing metadata in order to classify pieces of legislation and individual provisions contained therein according to subject-matter;

The "Normativa" Project, which built upon the previous "Normeinrete" project, has already yielded good results in terms of data standardization, production of an editor for the consolidation of legislative texts in XML format, ex-post retrieval of all regulatory measures adopted as of May 2001 (the beginning of the 14th Parliament), the launching of the *x-leges* system for digitalising the entire rule-making process.

Major steps forward are expected in the coming 24 months.

Finally the paper analyses the strong interdependence between the availability of a digital system for filing, consolidating and classifying regulatory texts and the potential success of projects for regulatory simplification and reorganisation.