

Directorate C - Access to and reuse of public information
C.3 -TED and EU public procurement

Luxembourg, 04 March 2019

Ref.: NM/amb

REPORT ON THE 8TH WORKING GROUP MEETING OF THE EPROCUREMENT ONTOLOGY

Project:	eProcurement Ontology	Meeting Date/Time:	2019-02-12 / 09.30 – 17.00 2019-02-13 / 09.30 – 15.00
Meeting type:	8 th Working Group Meeting	Meeting Location:	Luxembourg
Chairperson:	Natalie Muric	Issue Date:	2019-02-19

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and introduction - Rudolf Strohmeier, Director General of the Publications Office of the European Union
- Status update on eAccess and eNotification conceptual models - Natalie Muric, Publications Office
- eEvaluation – Issues and Challenges - Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa, Everis
- Interactive session on eEvaluation – Natalie Muric & Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa
- eForms: State of Play and Links with Ontology - Jachym Hercher, Directorate General for Internal Market Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
- eSubmission – Issues and Challenges - Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa
- Interactive session on eSubmission – Natalie Muric & Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa
- Closing remarks - Maria Manuela Cruz, Head of Unit, Publications Office

List of Participants		
Attendee Name (<i>present</i>)	Initials	Organisation
Paloma ARILLO-ARANDA	PAA	Publications Office
Ana-Maria BABALIGEA	AMB	Publications Office
Andrea CACCIA	AC	CEN TC 440
Patrizia CANNULI	PC	IT Consip
Eugeniu COSTETCHI	EC	Publications Office
Manuela CRUZ	MC	Publications Office
Vibeke ENGESETH	VE	DIFI - Agency for public administration and IT management
Cécile GUASCH	CG	ISA ² - DIGIT
Jáchym HERCHER	JH	DG GROW
Jan MÆRØE	JM	DIFI - Agency for public administration and IT management
James MCKINNEY	JM	FUND for the CITY OF NEW YORK Inc. Open Contracting Partnership
Natalie MURIC	NM	Publications Office
Myroslav OPYR	MO	Quintagroup Ukraine
Rachid OUARRAQI	RO	Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances
Dmitry PALAMARCHUK	DP	EBRD
Roman POLISHCHUK	RP	Quintagroup Ukraine
Zbigniew RACZIEWICZ	ZR	Publications Office
Timo RANTANEN	TR	Hansel Oy
Giovanni Paolo SELLITTO	GPS	ANAC - Autorità Nazionale Anticorruzione
Enric STAROMIEJSKI	ES	Everis
Annalisa VACCA	AV	Publications Office

Summary of Meeting

- **Welcome and Introduction – Rudolf Strohmeier, Publications Office**

Mr. Rudolf Strohmeier, Director General of the Publications Office of the European Union (hereafter referred to as OP) started the workshop by welcoming the participants.

During the introduction, he explained that public procurement is at the heart of digital single market and that the semantic alignment that this working group is working on it is crucial for reaching maximum efficiency for electronic transfer and reusability of procurement data.

The Publications Office is the official publisher of EU notices and it provides eAccess for tenders of the EU Institutions. He mentioned also the work done by the Publications Office in standardization (Open Data Portal, EuroVoc, authority tables managed in 24 languages).

He stated that creating coherency in this data, its terminology and definitions will provide a common understanding of the terms used by all actors and interested parties. With the evolving technologies, this will ensure that reliable open data can be reused and accessed by buyers, economic operators and citizens. Ensuring maximum accessibility, greater competition and higher transparency, which in turn ensure the good use of public money.

He encouraged the participants to share their knowledge and be actively involved in the workshop so that the data requirements of the eSubmission and eEvaluation phases can be drawn up and integrated into the current work on the eNotification and eAccess phases.

He also mentioned that he sees the presence of the participants at the workshop as a sign of recognition of the work that the Publications Office has been developing.

- **Status update on eAccess and eNotification conceptual models - Natalie Muric, Publications Office**

Ms. Natalie Muric presented the basis of the eProcurement ontology work stating that the ontology is about data and not processes.

The presentation is available in annex.

The group was encouraged to work as a team and each participant presented himself. It was noted that the participation in each Webex meeting was not compulsory and that maybe it was easier for organizations with different representatives to split the representatives across meetings.

- **eEvaluation – Issues and Challenges - Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa, Everis**

Mr. Enric Staromiejski presented the status of the eEvaluation phase and described the background of the ontology project as a whole. He described the issues encountered and the work that has been done until now (Phase 1 - Glossary, Phase 2 - eNotification and eAccess) and the challenges that are foreseen. He explained the objective was to identify actors, data and business rules not processes.

The presentation is available in annex.

Open discussions followed the presentation on eEvaluation.

- **Interactive session on eEvaluation**

It was noted that the objective of this group was to represent and define the concepts. Thus enabling administrations across Europe to implement solutions from the data perspective and enable cross-

border interoperability. Actors need a common model: what is tender, what is bid, etc.

A new model for eEvaluation was proposed to take into consideration each individual evaluator that provides a “mark” for the evaluation result. It was noted that the “marks” were not for publication but were internal information. For the procurement criteria the evaluator evaluates the tender and comes up with an evaluation detail. Marks are generally given on a scale of 1-10. It was decided after some discussion to name the mark/point as the score. It was also noted that some tender systems do not evaluate quality but money. Increasing quality can lead to a reduction in the evaluation price. The score is a numeric value.

There was general agreement that the economic operator wants to know about the evaluation for transparency reasons, it is necessary that the evaluation board writes a single comment translated into scores, for each award criteria. The evaluation board is composed of different people, each one gives a score. This is an internal exercise that will help the internal process. The evaluators provide their individual views and a committee comes up with a common agreement. The tenderer can receive extracts from the report for transparency matters and for predictability of future procedures. A complaint can result in a new evaluation.

Each evaluator performs an individual evaluation; this should be connected to the tender. An evaluator may only evaluate some criteria, so this should be modelled. The model therefore needs to show type of evaluations: administrative, exclusion, selection, participation and quality.

It was noted that eTendering systems have experienced difficulties in modelling teams of evaluators. How an evaluation team is set up can be very complex and difficult.

It was stated that the evaluation is based on what the buyer wants to measure and the admissibility of the tender. Admissibility criteria (e.g. whether the tender was submitted on time). Admissibility criteria are distinct from participation criteria which cover for example matters such as the contract being reserved to sheltered workshops. Admission criteria do not require a score. Some criteria are only applicable at the time of signing the contract at which point the evidence must be provided.

The model drawn up was questioned as one single evaluator cannot provide the evaluation results. The award criteria are not part of the tender: Evaluators evaluate a tender using award criteria and create a result by consensus. One evaluator can evaluate one criterion or more criteria on one or more tenders/lots.

There was a discussion as to whether just the function/algorithm was needed for the calculation method and not the individual results per evaluator; however it was felt that this data should be modelled. Services could then choose whether the data was made either openly or in a closed environment or not at all.

Questions were asked as to whether systems could be considered actors.

An agent (evaluator) is a system, person, organisation, that is part of the evaluation board that delivers the evaluation report.

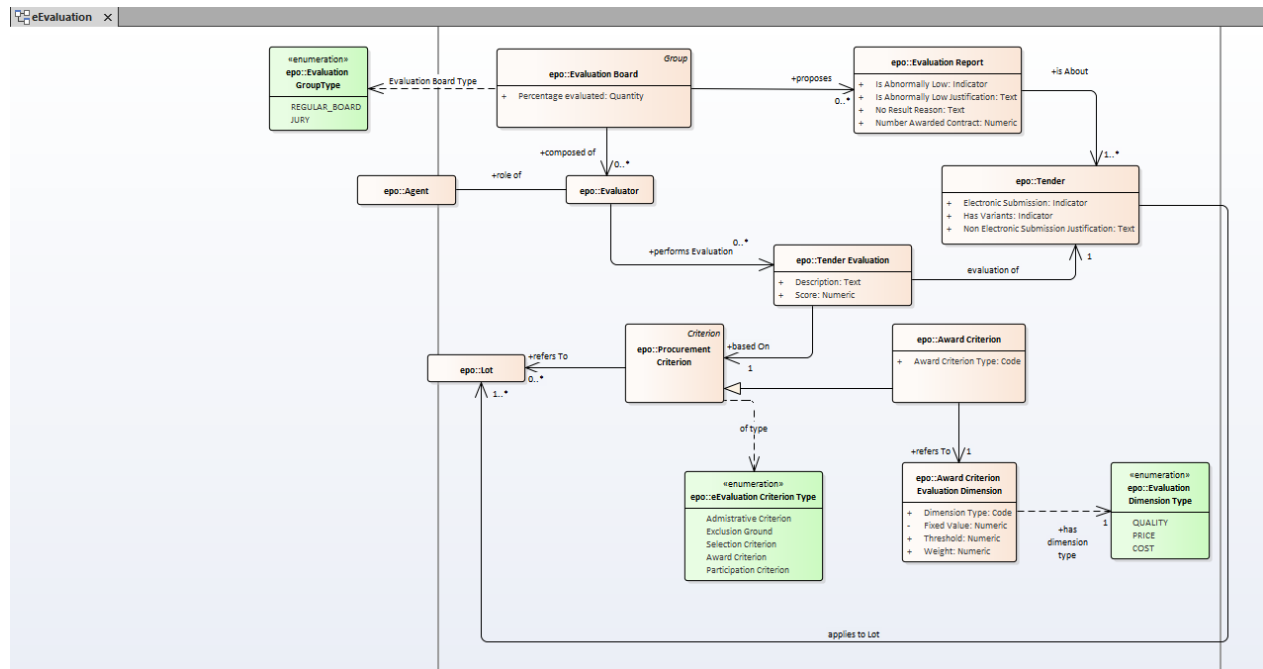
Buyers are organisations who delegate activities to service providers who are organisations.

A Central Purchasing Body (CPB) can act on behalf of a buyer. The CPB can sign a framework agreement which is both a technique and a ‘contract’. Business is ensured not by the frame agreement but by the resulting contract(s) where the concrete budget is defined. The framework agreement only specifies the

global amount available. It was noted that these relationships need to be clearly modelled.

There are several interactions between the buyer and the tenderer that have to be modelled such as the request for clarifications.

The discussion resulted in the eEvaluation model:



- **Follow-up required**

1. Successive evaluation based on ranking needs to be modelled.
2. Properties on evaluation report are still missing and need to be analysed.
3. Self-evaluation by the economic operators as foreseen in Ukraine needs to be modelled in the Evaluation result model.
4. The different standard methods for evaluation (based on Giampaolo explanation) needs to be addressed as they impact on eNotification.
5. Whether an evaluator has inputted on specific criteria needs to be modelled or at least this need should be discussed.
6. Questions and answers need to be modelled i.e. for abnormally low offers.

- **eForms: State of Play and Links with Ontology - Jachym Hercher, Directorate General for Internal Market Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs**

Mr. Jachym Hercher presented the state of play for eForms and the relation between eForms and Ontology. He informed that the eForms consultation has been launched and stakeholders should give their feedback and comments on GitHub until 11th of March.

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/initiatives/ares-2019-797630_en

<https://github.com/eforms/eforms>

The presentation is available in annex.

The presentation was followed by a discussion:

A full mapping to UBL cannot be carried out until the adoption of the business terms and the business rules are clearly defined. Possibilities of how extensions to UBL can be implemented are being looked into.

It was stated that the ontology was more structured than the eForms and that the eForms should be based on the ontology. If there is a move to UBL the harmonisation will be made via the ontology. The conceptual model can be taken to express eForms in UBL or whatever. The ontology has broader requirements than the eForms therefore the ontology cannot be blocked by the needs of eForms. The ontology being much richer and flexible. The eForms could eventually be updated in time. One goal should be that the mapping is both human and machine readable. It should be ensured that the eForms are aligned with the ontology: the ontology should be the reference and eForms the implementation of the standardization created by the ontology.

- **eSubmission – Issues and Challenges - Enric Staromiejski Torregrosa, Everis**

Mr. Enric Staromiejski presented the status of eEvaluation and described the analysis done, including the submission terms, access tool and tender. He continued describing the challenges encountered for eSubmission that were detected at the eNotification stage.

The presentation is available in annex.

An open discussion followed the presentation on eSubmission.

- **Interactive session on eSubmission**

It was noted that the cost can include the price. Cost is not linked directly to the acquisition price.

The concepts and issues to be addressed in eSubmission were listed:

- Submission Terms: within the procurement terms the model needs to be discussed to see which concepts are needed
- Access Tool: used to describe how to download procurement documents/tools and also how to submit the tenders
- Tender: the composition of the tender with regards to documents and lots
- Actors involved: eTendering system and tenderer
- Entities and properties: what is in the tender, who are the other actors, information requirements
- Rules: opening the tenders, security, confidentiality, law enforcement in general

A question was raised as to how to deal with more than one submission from the same supplier? Is the last one submitted the valid one? It was also noted that there is also the possibility of parallel tendering from the same provider with slightly different prices but that might not be legal in all countries.

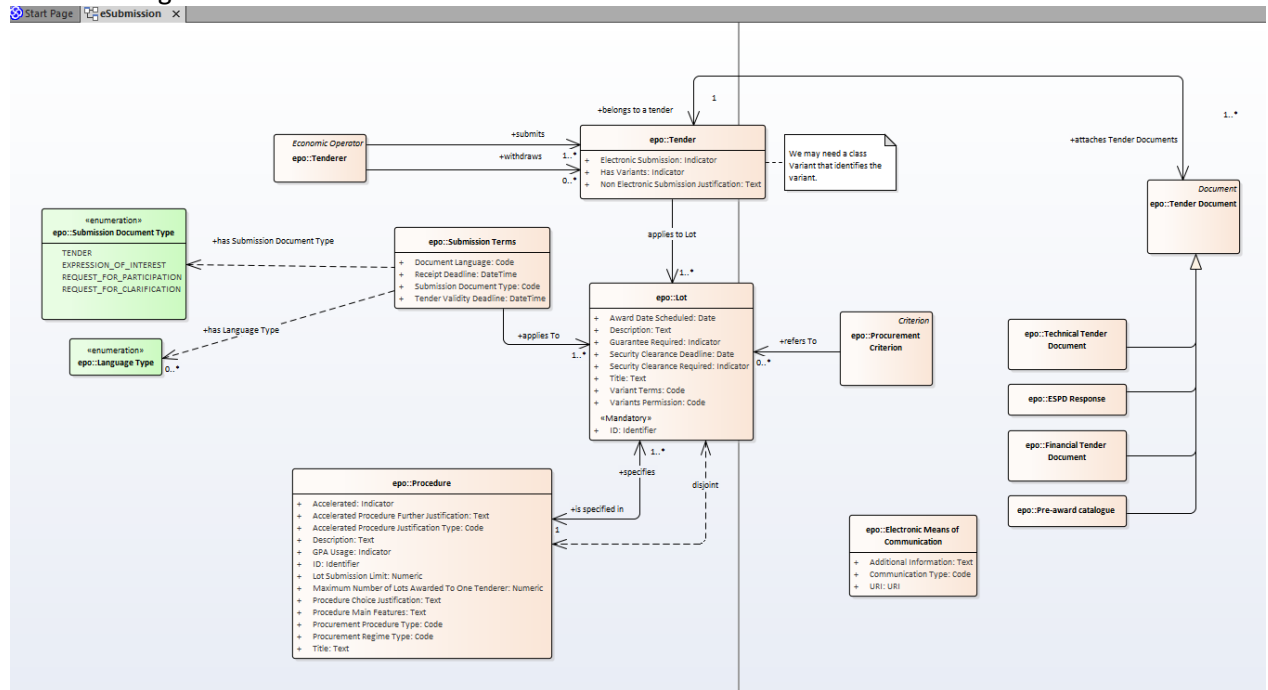
It was noted that the tender refers to lots and that lots may have variants in which case an identifier is necessary for each variant and a class is needed for variants.

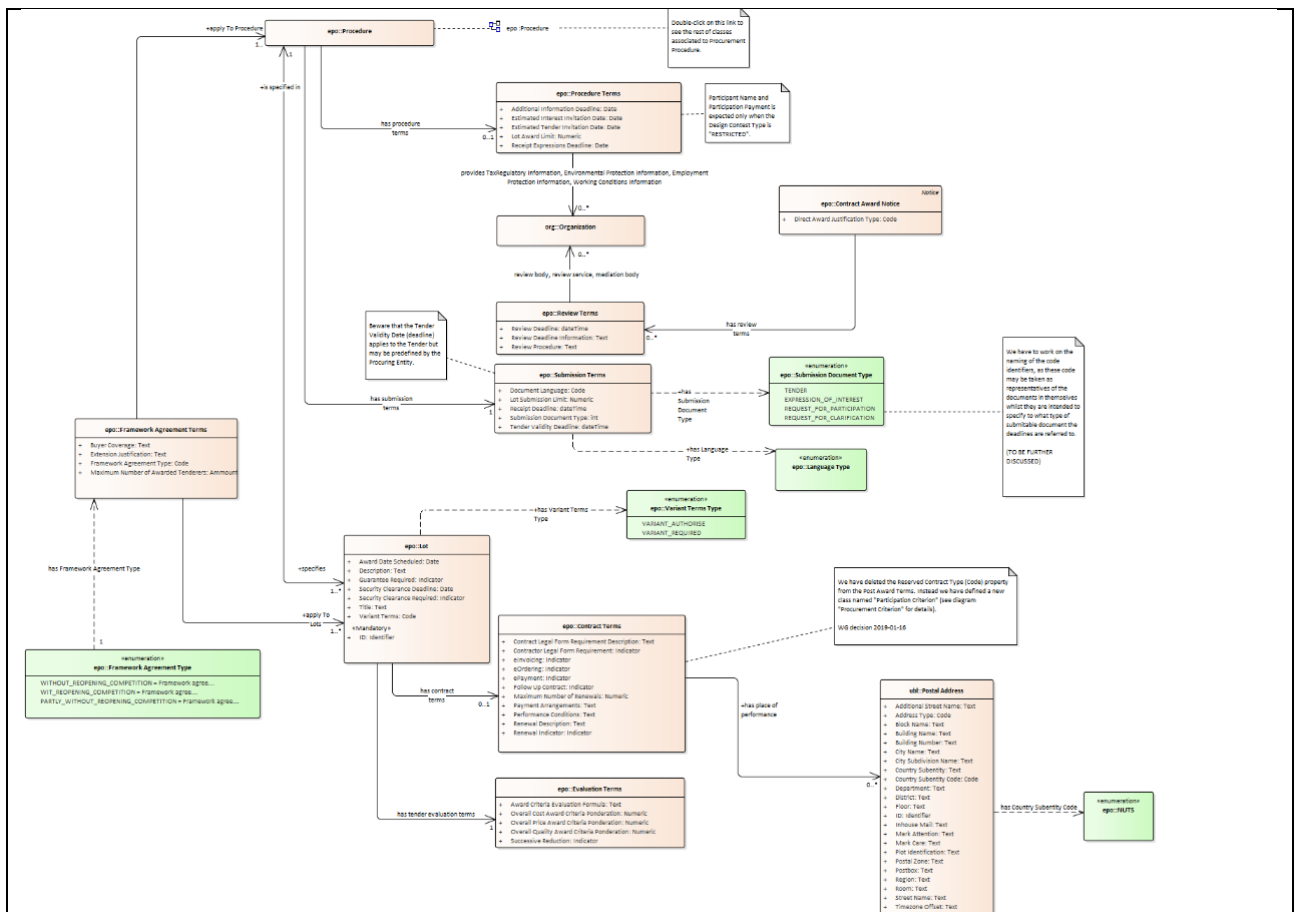
It was noted that each lot class refers to only one submission terms class, however one submission terms

class can apply to one or more lot classes. For one tender we can have several submission deadlines for the different types of documents or milestones. Submission terms were therefore applied to Lots. Submission Document type and document language were created as code list properties of the Submission Terms.

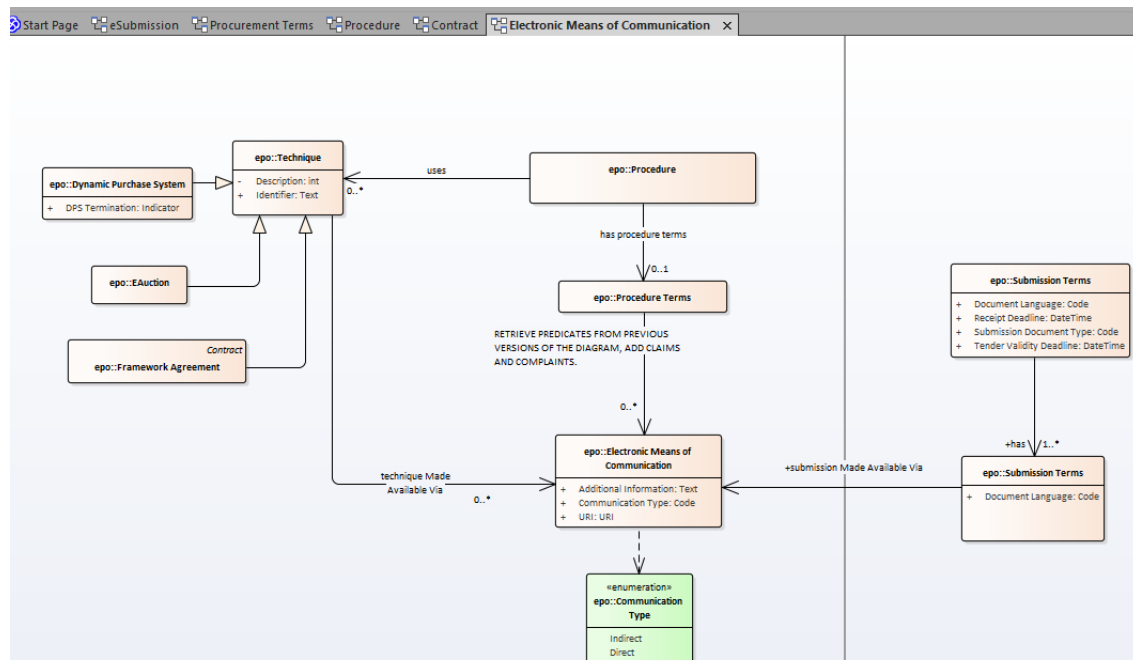
The class Access Tool was renamed Electronic Means of Communication so that it could be used by the classes Technique, Procedure (i.e. questions and answers) and Submission Terms. A code list Communication Type was added to allow for direct and indirect accesses (indirect: where tools are applied). This code list can also be associated with complaints and claims etc.

The following models were created as a result of these discussions:





Procurement Terms : Class diagram



- **Follow up required**

1. Coherency is to be ensured in the design of Object Properties (links between classes), Data Properties (attributes inside the class, e.g. simple elements, like Amount, Indicator, etc.)
2. Electronic means needs to be added to the eSubmission model.
3. All descendants of Tender Document should also be added to the new eSubmission model.
4. A discussion needs to be held as to whether a class "Variants" needs to be created or whether the existing property 'Variants is sufficient'?
5. We need to break down the Documents into more structured information. The relationship of this data with regards to lots needs to be clearly modelled. This has to be done for both Procurement Documents and Tender documents and has implications on the eNotification and eAccess phases as well.
6. The Tender Receipt data needs to be modelled.
7. The need to model System Managers as data with regard to service providers of the buyers and suppliers needs to be analysed, service providers are modelled for buyers but as of yet not for economic operators. This may include the need of describing the type of service being provided (e.g. data aggregators, e.g. a PQS, or Financial, Tax Authorities, Banks, etc.). Some Service Providers intervene in eNotification, eAccess and eSubmission others only in eSubmission, etc.
8. The WG should discuss about Guaranties and if they are needed, for what and for when.
9. The WG should discuss whether the opening of tenders is part of the eSubmission?
10. Concerning the opening the following points should be reflected on :
 - the 'opening ceremony, off and on-line'.
 - admissible and non-admissible tenders: technical issues (as validity of the tender), business-domain incompleteness or incorrectness, CONFIDENTIALITY of the Tender, or even of parts of one document of the tender (e.g. signing an XML node); Traceability and Integrity.
 - Is eSignature part of the model? and how?
 - Opening Reports that are also needed.
11. here to describe/codify the type of "manifestation" of the document (paper, html, pdf, etc., see as an example the IFLA-LRM ontology).
12. Retrieve the definition of submission terms
13. Create code list for communication type
14. Think about the TYPE of CONTENT not the communication type only

- **Closing remarks - Maria Manuela Cruz, Head of Unit, Publications Office**

Ms. Manuela Cruz thanked the participants for their presence and involvement in the discussions. She reminded the audience of how important it is for members of the group to participate in both the online meetings and the face-to-face meetings (next one in May). The Publications Office is also open to the idea that the next face-to-face meeting will be held in Brussels if this is more convenient for the participants.

Ms. Manuela Cruz expressed the importance of the creation and evolution of the ontology. Welcoming working group members to provide any input on concepts and definitions that they felt were lacking. She asked the participants to work on the ontology in parallel with the eForms and to ensure synergies and alignment between the two. The ontology she said as discussed earlier should be the basis from which the eForms are built.

- **Planning of actions and tasks**

The action points decided for the next meeting are listed below.

Action Points (AP):			
AP#	Name Description	Due Date	Who
1	The wiki will be updated	27-02-2019	Everis
2	Presentations on GitHub and Joinup	20-02-2019	OP
3	Reflect on the items under the point follow-up required		WG
4	WG Members to identify missing concepts and definitions.		WG
5	Create code list for communication type		OP
6	Create doodle for dates in May		OP

Proposed Next Meetings:	Dates
Face-2-face meeting	2 days in May
Conference calls https://ecwacs.webex.com/meet/nmuric	Every Tuesday 14:00-16:00 and Thursday 15:00-17:00