

Open Standards in the Public Sector

Governments and administrations from all over the world influence and track open standards by participating in OASIS (Organisation for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards). OASIS is an international, non-profit consortium that drives the development, convergence, and adoption of open standards for the information society. Its work includes ebXML, OpenDocument, UDDI, and a broad range of other standards that are widely recommended and adopted in the public sector.

OASIS has more than 5,000 participants representing over 600 organisations and individual members in 100 countries. Members work to:

- reduce the costs and risks of developing Internet-based government services
- identify requirements for standardisation
- articulate valid business cases
- review proposals for new standards
- collaborate on standards development
- promote best practices
- recommend adoption policies
- advocate for royalty-free licensing terms

Where does OASIS fit in the international standards community?

OASIS has formal relationships with more than 60 international and industry standards organisations. The goal of these liaisons is to ensure sanction and traction for approved OASIS work, minimise duplication of efforts, and promote convergence.

OASIS Standards have been ratified globally through the United Nations, the International Standards Organisation (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

OASIS works closely with the European Union (EU) to promote open standards, playing an active role in the EU ICT Standards Policy Review and the ICT Standards Board. OASIS liaises with the European Commission regarding the further development and implementation of electronic government solutions and support for data exchange and interoperability to strengthen the Single European Market.

OASIS participates in a Memorandum of Understanding on Electronic Business with the IEC, ISO, ITU, and UN/ECE, in a collaborative effort to increase coordination across many different international programmes for more efficient standards development and more rapid adoption in the global marketplace.

Who participates in OASIS?

Users and influencers, including those in the public sector, make up almost half the OASIS membership. This balanced representation between users and software providers helps to assure both the viability and interoperability of the standards produced.

The international community comes together in the consortium. Each OASIS Committee chooses a language in which to work. A majority of Committees are currently chaired by members in Europe, and Asia represents the fastest growing segment of new members. OASIS staff work from 15 locations in seven countries across four continents.

What does the public sector gain from OASIS membership?

Governments participate in OASIS to:

- lower the costs and risks of developing Internet-based government services
- influence software vendors and systems integrators to develop open, standards-based solutions for the public sector
- improve the competitive landscape by helping to create global, interoperable standards
- ensure their own interests are represented as requirements and business cases are defined
- monitor the marketplace adoption of open standards through access to members-only information
- ensure their staff are kept up-to-date on key standards issues and developments
- learn from other agencies, industries, and companies how to implement and adopt open, standards-based, best practices.

OASIS advances standards that enable open, interoperable government services.

eGovernment

The OASIS eGovernment (eGov) Member Section serves as a focal point for discussions of governmental and public administration requirements for e-business standardisation. The group brings together representatives from global, regional, national and local government agencies--as well as private sector organisations that need standards to interact with the public sector. OASIS eGov provides a platform for those with a common interest in directing and understanding the impact of open standards on the public sector.

OASIS eGov promotes more effective sharing of best practices, use cases, and experiences that enhance the open standards environment. Members facilitate government-oriented demonstrations and interoperability events. OASIS eGov also provides guidance for committees within OASIS as well as efforts in other standards organisations that work on matters relevant to the public sector or electronic government applications of XML standards.

Document Management

The OpenDocument OASIS Standard is an XML-based file format which enables users of varying office suites to freely exchange documents. Ratified as ISO/IEC 26300, the standard frees documents from their applications-of-origin, enabling them to be exchanged, retrieved, and edited with any OpenDocument-compliant software or tool. Many governments and other public sector institutions require documents be stored in the OpenDocument format to guarantee long-term access to data without legal or technical barriers.

Conservation

The World Conservation Union (IUCN), comprising more than 111 government agencies and 82 countries, works within OASIS to harmonize and develop conservation and biodiversity-related semantics and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Election and Voter Services

The Election Markup Language (EML) OASIS Standard enables the structured interchange of data for election and voter services. Used in both public and private organisations, EML extends to all aspects of the election process and has been adopted by hardware, software, and service providers. The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers issued a Recommendation to its 46 member states, "Open standards shall be used to ensure that the various technical components or services of an e-voting system, possibly derived from a variety of sources, interoperate. At present, EML is such an open standard, and in order to guarantee interoperability, EML shall be used whenever possible for e-election and e-referendum applications."

Emergency Management

OASIS is the source for incident- and emergency-related standards for data interoperability. Work includes the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) for alerting and event notification applications, the Emergency Data Exchange Language (EDXL) for a wide range of emergency data exchange operations, and the Hospital Availability Exchange (HAVE) for tracking and communicating hospitals' bed availability, status, and capacity. These OASIS emergency management standards are used by a growing body of U.S. agencies including the Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, the National Weather Service and the Geological Survey. The CAP OASIS Standard is an ITU Recommendation. The Committee seeks local and national participants worldwide to broaden adoption of its work.

E-Commerce

ebXML (Electronic Business using eXtensible Markup Language) is a modular suite of specifications that enable organisations of any size and in any geographical location to conduct transactions over the Internet. Using ebXML, governments now have a standard method to exchange messages, conduct trading relationships, communicate data in common terms, and define and register business processes. ebXML was started in 1999 as an initiative of OASIS and the United Nations/ECE's CEFAC. The U.K. National Health Service (NHS), the world's largest civil IT project, uses ebXML for electronic health messaging. Norway's National Insurance Administration has transported €1.2 billion ebXML transactions to date. The ebXML OASIS Standards are also approved as ISO 15000.

The Universal Business Language (UBL) OASIS Standard is the product of an international effort to define a royalty-free library of standard, electronic XML business documents such as purchase orders and invoices. Six Northern European countries support the UBL-based format for invoices and other business documents used in public e-procurement.

Forestry

OASIS members from the U.K. Forestry Commission, the Scottish Enterprise (Scotland's main economic development agency), and the U.K. Forestry and Timber Association are developing standards within OASIS for a range of e-business applications to enable transactions from the forest to the customer.

Healthcare

The OASIS International Health Continuum (IHC) Committee provides a forum to define needs and requirements with respect to XML and Web services. Among other projects, the group works on facilitating the integration of document-centric healthcare metadata. OASIS staff participate on the board of the Healthcare Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP), which is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. HITSP serves as a cooperative partnership between the public and private sectors for the purpose of achieving a widely accepted and useful set of standards that enable and support widespread interoperability among healthcare software applications.

“Open standards should be part of public IT and software procurement with the object of promoting competition. The Government should ensure that all digital information and data that the public sector exchanges with citizens, companies and institutions, are available in formats based on open standards.”

Folketinget (Danish Parliament)

Legal Systems

The legal community collaborates within the OASIS LegalXML Member Section to create a variety of standards. Members work on standards to create and transmit legal documents among attorneys, courts, litigants, and others (Electronic Court Filings) and to develop technical requirements to govern self-proving electronic legal information (eNotarization). They also create technical requirements to govern self-proving electronic legal information (Integrated Justice). The Electronic Court Filings standard has been adopted by the US Joint Technology Committee of the Conference of State Court Administrators and National Association for Court Management.

Security

OASIS has numerous standards that are critical to ensuring the security of government web-based services. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommended the use of the Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) OASIS Standard to authenticate external and internal users of government online services. Denmark also endorsed SAML as the “recommended standard for federation.”

Use of the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) is advanced within OASIS as a means of employing digital certificates to manage access to network resources and conduct e-transactions. PKI is implemented by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies around the world.

Web Services and SOA

Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) standardization efforts at OASIS focus on workflow, translation coordination, orchestration, collaboration, loose coupling, business process modeling, and other concepts that support agile computing. Most of the underlying SOA methods are derived from OASIS Web services standards.

The OASIS Open Composite Services Architecture (CSA) Member Section works to simplify SOA application development by advancing the Service Component Architecture (SCA) and Service Data Objects (SDO) families of specifications.

Singapore’s Infocomm Development Authority and the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology led the formation of the OASIS Framework for Web Services Implementation (FWSI) Technical Committee.

Taxation

Tax XML is an initiative within OASIS to research and analyze personal and business tax reporting and compliance information represented in XML. The group works to facilitate interoperability in a way that is open, flexible and international in scope. Tax XML focuses on a common vocabulary that enables participants to unambiguously identify the tax-related information exchanged within a particular business context. Members span the globe and include the Australian Taxation Office, Canada Revenue Agency, German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Netherlands Tax and Customs Administration, UK Revenue & Customs, and US Internal Revenue Service.

Some OASIS Members in the Public Sector...

Updated Sept 2007

Australia

- Australian Government Information Management Office
- Australian Department of Education Science and Training
- Australian Taxation Office
- National Archives of Australia

Austria

- Austria Federal Chancellery
- A-SIT, Zentrum für sichere Informationstechnologie

Belgium

- Ministry of Finance

Canada

- Canada Revenue Agency
- Ministère des Services Gouvernementaux
- Ottawa Courts Administration Service
- Public Works & Government Services

China

- Beijing Municipal Administration Com.
- China Internet Network Info Center

Denmark

- Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation

Finland

- TiEKE (Finnish Information Society Development Centre)

Germany

- Federal Ministry of the Interior

India

- National Informatics Centre

Japan

- Electronic Commerce Promotion Council
- National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology

Korea

- National Information Society Agency
- IT Industry Promotion Agency

Netherlands

- Tax and Customs Administration

New Zealand

- Ministry of Education
- State Services Commission

Norway

- Directorate of Labour and Welfare
- Norwegian Defence Logistics Org.

Singapore

- Infocomm Development Authority

Spain

- CATcert-Agencia Catalana de Certificacio

Sweden

- Assoc. of Local Authorities & Regions
- Defence Materiel Administration
- Verva-Swedish Administrative Development Agency

Tunisia

- National Digital Certification Agency

United Kingdom

- Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- UK e-Government Unit Cabinet Office
- U.K. Forestry Commission
- UK H.M. Revenue & Customs
- Ministry of Defence Tech. Information

United States of America

(National)

- American Bar Association
- Argonne National Laboratory
- General Services Administration
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
- National Center for State Courts
- National Center for Supercomputing Applications
- National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST)
- National Library of Medicine
- National Notary Association
- Property Records Industry Association
- USAMC Logistics Support Activity
- US Department of Defense
- US Department of Homeland Security
- US Internal Revenue Service
- Veterans Health Administration

(State and Local)

- Arizona Supreme Court
- Bay State Council of the Blind (BSCB)
- California Admin. Office of the Courts
- California Legislative Data Center
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Judicial Council of Georgia
- LA County Info. Systems Advisory
- Maricopa County, Arizona
- Missouri Office of State Courts Admin.
- New York State Office of Court Admin.
- Oregon Judicial Department
- Pennsylvania Association of Notaries
- Texas Dept. of Information Resources
- Utah Administrative Office of Courts
- Washington State Administrator for Courts
- West Virginia Health and Human Resources

International

In addition to national agencies, several international organizations are OASIS members, including:

- Universal Postal Union
- The World Bank

Annual membership dues

Organization type / size	Annual Dues (USD)		
	Foundational	Sponsor	Contributor
National govt. agency (OECD member country)	44,000	10,000	*
National govt. agency (non-OECD member country)	44,000	10,000	1,100
Local govt. agency	44,000	10,000	1,100
Academic institution or association	44,000	10,000	1,100
Company employing more than 500 people	50,000	16,000	8,000
Company employing 100-500 people	48,000	14,000	7,500
Company employing 10-99 people	46,000	12,000	6,600
Company employing fewer than 10 people	46,000	12,000	3,200

* Contributor-level dues for national govt. agencies from OECD member countries are based on the number of employees and correspond to the dues categories for companies.

Individual-level membership is also available.



join@oasis-open.org

http://www.oasis-open.org