



**The
Irish Public Service
Metadata
Standard**

Version 1.1

**QUICK
USER GUIDE**

June 2002



Creating IPSMS Metadata - A Quick Guide

This Quick Guide will assist you in applying metadata to documents, or to be more precise, information resources. Metadata is, in effect, descriptive summary information about those resources. This summary information will help the end user find what they are looking for and help them to determine the suitability of information resources. Note: The term 'resources' is interchangeable in the User Guide with the term 'documents'.

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How much metadata should be created for each resource?

An Irish Public Service Metadata Standard (IPSMS) metadata record consists of seven mandatory elements, and whatever number of non-mandatory elements as may facilitate the finding of the information resource. [Mandatory elements](#) must be present in order to be in compliance with the IPSMS. [Non-mandatory elements](#) may also be included where they might facilitate other requirements, such as assisting the user in determining the suitability or otherwise of located information resources.

How much information is included in each element will depend to a large measure on the resource being described - a guiding principle is be concise and to the point and exclude redundant information.

How to create and add Metadata

The enclosed [template](#) is a simple means of creating and inserting metadata. The procedure is simple and straightforward and can be used by all. The procedure is as follows;

1. Copy the blank template to a location from where you can access it with ease. Remember, it is always available at this site in any event.
2. You may be able to insert default values in your template for the following elements: Creator, Publisher, Format, Language, Rights.
3. When creating a metadata record, copy your template. The copy is where you will input the information.
4. Double check that any default values are correct for the document being described.
5. Input the remaining information between the inverted commas following the content label (content="").
6. Do not delete any elements not being used. Leave the inverted commas (content="") empty. These elements may come into use with some future modification of the record. Empty elements are simply ignored by the search engine.
7. Likewise, do not delete any comment tags. They are there to guide you.
8. Multiple subject terms may be input in the one Subject element using the semi-colon (;) delimiter. It is the only element where more than one value may be input in the one instance of an element. For other elements, if you need to enter more



- than one value (e.g. two creators) copy the element and paste it in below, inputting the second value.
9. Cut and paste the completed metadata record into the <HEAD> of the document after the meta <TITLE>.
 10. Check that the completed metadata record has been copied and pasted in its entirety.
 11. Finally, upload the document to the server.

Metadata may be created in a number of ways, using templates (as above), third-party software, or having a third-party content management system incorporate metadata creation into its document publishing process. The solution appropriate to each organisation will depend on a number of considerations, such as the editing tools currently used, human resources, amount of content generated, and individual preferences. The method of creating metadata using any third-party product will be product-dependant.

Encoding Syntax

HTML is the standard way for embedding metadata, utilising the <META> tag in the <HEAD> of a document.

The <META> tag has two main attributes: NAME and CONTENT. The values for both attributes are enclosed in straight double quotes.

Each metadata element has a prefix indicating the metadata schema from which the element is drawn. DC indicates that the element is drawn from the Dublin Core metadata scheme.

A DC metadata entry looks like this;

```
<meta name="DC.Title" content="Title of document">
```

Element refinements are not supported directly in HTML <meta> elements, so a syntax convention relying on the use of characters within these text strings is used.

To accommodate element refinements, dots (.) are used to append qualifiers to DC element names.

A qualified element should look like this;

```
<meta name="DC.Date.created" content="2001-08-23">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Relation.isVersionOf" content="hard copy 6th edition, ISBN 0346289042">
```

HTML 4.0 allows use of two particular attributes of the <meta> elements, scheme and lang (language). These attributes allow you to indicate an encoding scheme or controlled vocabulary where so used.

The scheme and lang attributes should be indicated as follows:

```
<meta name="DC.Type" scheme="IPSDT" content="press release">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Title.alternative" lang="ga" content="Tuarascáil Bhliantúil an Choimisinéara Faisnéise 2000">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" scheme="PST" content="information technology">
```

Note the use of case in the above examples.



The 15 Elements

[Title](#), [Subject](#), [Creator](#), [Publisher](#), [Date](#), [Identifier](#), [Type](#), [Description](#), [Contributor](#), [Language](#), [Format](#), [Relation](#), [Rights](#), [Coverage](#), [Source](#).

The Mandatory Elements

[Links are to more detailed explanations]

Title

Label: DC.Title

Usage: Mandatory

Make sure your title is descriptive of the document. Try to avoid overly long titles. Avoid generic titles (e.g. "Press Releases and Speeches" - this is descriptive of the location folder, not the specific press release in hand). The title should mirror that which that appears in the <TITLE> tag in the <HEAD> of the document. If you are also presented with an alternative form of the title you may include it in a repeat use of the title element but with qualification.

Example:

```
<meta name="DC.Title" content="The Housing Market in Ireland: An Economic Evaluation of Trends and Prospects">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Title.alternative" contents="The Third Bacon Report">
```

Subject

Label: DC.Subject

Usage: Mandatory

The Subject element is useful for locating material on a particular topic.

For example, 'Find all information about... adult literacy'.

The keywords or phrases included in the Subject element should encapsulate what the content of a document is about (i.e. the subject matter, the topics covered).

Subject terms should reflect the specificity of the content being covered. Avoid using terms too general for the material being covered. Concepts or subject matter minor in nature or given only passing reference should not be described in the Subject element.

Please note that terms should be input using the semi-colon delimiter, or alternatively using separate DC.Subject tags.

Example:

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" content="information technology; people with disabilities; internet; assistive technology">
```



Alternatively;

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" content="adult literacy">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" content="adult education">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" content="disadvantaged groups">
```

Terms input from a controlled vocabulary such as the Public Service Thesaurus (PST) should indicate the scheme in use, as follows;

```
<meta name="DC.Subject" scheme="PST" content="information technology; people with disabilities; internet; assistive technology">
```

Creator

Label: DC.Creator

Usage: Mandatory

The creator of a document is the entity (i.e. person, agency, unit within an agency) responsible for producing the content. It is preferable to indicate the name of the corporate unit (e.g. agency, unit within agency) rather than a person in most instances.

If listing a unit within an organisation, it is good practice to also indicate the organisation, using a left to right hierarchical display. For example;

Department of Health and Children. Corporate Services Division. Freedom of Information Unit

Comhairle. Information and Research Unit

Guidance on name for entry

For corporate names, use direct name entry (i.e. do not invert), e.g.

Department of Finance NOT Finance, Department of

For personal names, put surname first, e.g.

Byrne, Eddie NOT Eddie Byrne

Publisher

Label: DC.Publisher

Usage: Mandatory

The publisher is the organisation making the document available in its current form. Not to be confused with the organisation hosting the site, for they may not be one and the same. Generally, it will be sufficient to list the organisation at the top level only.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Creator" content="Department of Finance">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Creator" content="Comhairle">
```

For name form entries, follow the guidance given for Creator.



Date

Labels:

DC.Date.created

DC.Date.modified

Usage: Mandatory

The date input refers to the content of the document. A new document ought to have the same date input as its creation date and modification date. Only the modification date will change thereafter.

There are a number of other modifiers available for the date element, but their use is not mandatory. Their use is dependent on their appropriateness in capturing and relaying particular dates in the life of a document.

The date is to be recorded using the ISO 8601 standard. This is: yyyy-mm-dd.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Date.created" content="2001-07-14">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Date.modified" content="2001-08-24">
```

Identifier

Label: DC.Identifier

Usage: Mandatory

Used to distinguish documents or resources from one another. In an online environment it is generally the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) of the resource.

An identifier may act as a means of identifying the location of a document, and fulfill a role in recalling or retrieving the document. This element can also be used for local identifiers (e.g. ID numbers or call numbers) assigned by the Creator of the resource to apply to a particular item.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Identifier" content="http://www.basis.ie/sub1/riskasse.htm">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Identifier" content="A00433">
```

Type

Label: DC.Type

Usage: Conditional

This element is used to identify the category that the current document or resource fits. Typically, this might indicate whether a resource was, for example, a report, a legislative work, a press release or a circular.

The *Irish Public Service Metadata Standard* requires that documents matching any of the 6 document types taken from the *Irish Public Service Metadata Document Type* (IPSDT) list must so indicate the document type. This is why the use of the Type element is referred to as *Conditional*.

The approved list of 6 document types is;

legislation (Examples: Act, Statutory Instrument, Regulation, Bill. Not report on same, e.g. report on Implementation of Wildlife Act).

policy (Examples: Green paper, White paper. Not Department policy on computer use).



report (Examples: Annual Report, Bacon Report. Not report of meeting).

form (Example: Application for planning permission. Not Search Form or Form of enquiry to webmaster).

press release (Actual text of same).

speech (Actual text of same. Not document including extract of same or discussing same).

It is recommended that where terms are taken from the IPSDT controlled list, such should be indicated using the 'scheme' indicator.

Example:

```
<meta name="DC.Type" scheme="IPSDT" content="press release">
```

Users may also, if they so wish, use document types from an in-house list. They may do so by repeat use of the Type element.

Recommended Elements

[Links are to more detailed explanations]

Description

Label: DC.Description

Usage: Recommended

This is an account of what a document is about, and as such ought to be informative of the content of the document. It may take the form of a summary, an abstract, or even a list of contents. It will prove useful to the person seeking information in giving them information which allows them to assess a document and its relevance to them. It may also be useful if appropriate to indicate the intended audience or the purpose of the document.

Descriptive information may be taken from the item itself. If a description cannot be found either in the introductory or front matter, or the first few paragraphs, it needs to be created following an analysis of the content.

Normally, a description should be limited to a few brief sentences

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Description" content="Information on how to contact the Department of Health and Children customer call-in centre">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Description" content="Guidelines for employers on the management of workplace health and safety, the preparation of safety statements, and the carrying out of risk assessments">
```

Contributor

Label: DC.Contributor

Usage: Recommended

A contributor is someone who has made a significant contribution to the content of a document, but not so significant that they could be listed as a creator or joint creator of the content.



It is recommended to use this element only if the entity's contribution is significant and where searching on the entity may be useful in discovering the resource.

For name form entries, follow the guidance given for Creator.

Example:

```
<meta name="DC.Contributor" content="MacCabe, Fergal">
```

Language

Label: DC.Language

Usage: Recommended

Used to indicate the language of the document's contents.

It allows a search to be restricted to resources in a particular language. For example, 'Locate Irish language documents published by the Department of Education'.

The information seeker can also decide whether a document is worth retrieving based on the language of the content.

Recommended best practice is to use the two-letter language code taken from the ISO 639-1 standard. For example, 'en' for English, 'ga' for Irish.

Example:

```
<meta name="DC.Language" content="ga">
```

Format

Label: DC.Format

Usage: Recommended

Used to indicate the data format of the resource.

This element allows the searcher to decide if a resource is worth accessing or retrieving, based on the ability of their software to cope with the format of the resource.

Format may include the media-type or dimensions (e.g. size, duration) of the resource. It becomes necessary to indicate data format where, for example, the format requires software other than a web browser (e.g. plug-in), or where download time is lengthy.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Format" content="application/pdf; 535kb">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Format" content="video/quicktime; 4 minutes, 30 seconds">
```

Recommended best practice is to select a value for the Format element from a controlled vocabulary. Examples from the IMT list include;

- application/rtf
- application/pdf
- video/quicktime

A more complete list is available.

Relation

Label: DC.Relation

Usage: Recommended



Used to indicate that a relationship exists between this and another resource, and what type of relationship that is.

This element may be used with qualifiers which indicate the precise nature of the relationship, or alternatively, input a free text statement stipulating the type of relationship. The value input will usually be a URL.

The Relation element should be used if there are significant resources that are related to the current resource, which may be useful for the consumer to also access or retrieve.

The qualifiers that may be used are;

Column A	Column B
DC.Relation.isVersionOf	DC.Relation.hasVersion
DC.Relation.isReplacedBy	DC.Relation.replaces
DC.Relation.isRequiredBy	DC.Relation.requires
DC.Relation.isPartOf	DC.Relation.hasPart
DC.Relation.isReferencedBy	DC.Relation.references
DC.Relation.isFormatOf	DC.Relation.hasFormat

Note that relationships consist of value pairs (e.g. isFormatOf, hasFormat). If a two-way relationship or association is to be stipulated, one record will indicate one side of the value pair (isFormatOf), while the second record will indicate the other side of the value pair (hasFormat). However, the IPSMS does not require all records to have metadata associated with them, but rather that all records are discoverable via the deployment of metadata. Consequently, it may be in order to use one side only of a value pair, as a resource may reference another with no such reference back from the referenced resource. In the event that a one way relationship only is to be indicated, preference should be given to using the qualifiers indicated in Column B above

Examples:

[Indicating the present resource is also available in pdf format] =

```
<meta name="DC.Relation.hasFormat"
```

```
content="http://www.oasis.gov.ie/rights/entitlements.pdf">
```

[indicating Irish language version of <http://www.gov.ie/educ/publications/213233a.htm>]

=

```
<meta name="DC.Relation.hasVersion"
```

```
content="http://www.gov.ie/educ/publications/216a33a.htm">
```

[without qualifier] =

```
<meta name="DC.Relation" content="this electronic edition supersedes the hard copy-only second edition, same title, ISBN 0863402017">
```



Rights

Label: DC.Rights

Usage: Recommended

Typically, a copyright notice or terms of use statement.

If a document includes a rights statement, it is recommended to indicate same in the DC.Rights element via a textual statement or a URI pointing to such.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Rights" content="© Department of Health and Children 2000">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Rights" content="http://oasis.gov.ie/about/copyright.html">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Rights" content="Copying permitted providing source is acknowledged">
```

Coverage

Label: DC.Coverage

Usage: Recommended

The extent or scope of the content of a resource.

This information will indicate either the spatial or temporal coverage of a resource.

Spatial refers to geographic area or administrative area. Temporal refers to the time period covered by the resource.

This element allows a search to be restricted to resources about or relevant to a certain place or time. It also allows the information seeker to determine the suitability or otherwise of a particular resource based on, e.g. jurisdictional coverage or time period.

Examples:

[for Eastern Region Health Authority resource] =

```
<meta name="DC.Coverage" content="Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow">
```

[for Shannon Development]=

```
<meta name="DC.Coverage" content="Shannon Region">
```

[for period of time]

```
<meta name="DC.Coverage" scheme="ISO 8601" content="2000-04-01/2001-03-31">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Coverage" content="August, 2000">
```

Source

Label: DC.Source

Usage: Recommended

A reference to a resource from which the present resource is derived.

This element can be used if the contained information would be useful in locating the current resource. The information may also help verify and authenticate the content of the current resource.

Examples:

```
<meta name="DC.Source" content="Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs leaflet SW17">
```

```
<meta name="DC.Source" content="http://www.dscfa.ie/dept/booklets/sw37.htm">
```



Template

<!--IPSMS DC metadata-->

<!--mandatory IPSMS elements-->

<meta name="DC.Title" content="">

<meta name="DC.Creator" content="">

<meta name="DC.Subject" content="">

<meta name="DC.Subject" content="">

<meta name="DC.Subject" content="">

<meta name="DC.Subject" content="">

<!--repeat the dc.subject line if more subject terms are needed-->

<meta name="DC.Publisher" content="">

<meta name="DC.Date.created" scheme="ISO 8601" content="">

<meta name="DC.Date.modified" scheme="ISO 8601" content="">

<!--date format yyyy-mm-dd-->

<meta name="DC.Identifier" content="">

<meta name="DC.Type" scheme="IPSDT" content="">

<!--IPSDT mandatory types=legislation-press release-speech-form-policy-report-->

<!--end of mandatory IPSMS elements-->

<meta name="DC.Title.alternative" content="">

<meta name="DC.Description" content="">

<meta name="DC.Contributor" content="">

<meta name="DC.Type" content="">

<meta name="DC.Format" content="text/html">

<meta name="DC.Source" content="">

<meta name="DC.Language" scheme="ISO 639-1" content="en">

<!--language format english=en irish=ga-->

<meta name="DC.Relation" content="">

<meta name="DC.Coverage" content="">

<meta name="DC.Rights" content="© Government of Ireland">

<!--end of IPSMS DC metadata-->