

Recent EU developments for distribution to UKNeF members

The first 2016 European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on e-Invoicing (EMSFEI) meeting was held on 21 March in Brussels and was well attended. Lois Devey of the Crown Commercial Service and Charles Bryant represented the UK. The Forum endorsed the Guidance Paper on e-invoicing adoption in public procurement which was prepared by an Activity Group in the Forum led by the UK. The final approved paper will be distributed shortly by the Commission.

During a lively break-out session next steps for propagating the ideas set out in the paper were discussed. The Forum also endorsed a Background document on e-invoicing standards, which is discussed in the Activity Group on Standards. The Activity Group on Legal and Regulatory issues had two meetings during the week, and is planning a deliverable on lifting remaining legal barriers. During the meeting extensive reports were given on the Work of CEN TC 434 (see below), on the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)- also see below- and on a number of Member State experiences.

CEN TC 434 (it is now a full Technical Committee) continues the major project to create the core EU e-invoice standard as called for under Directive 2014/55/EU. The draft semantic model (EN) has completed its Public Inquiry stage and many comments received, and which are now being steadily worked through. UK contributed many suggestions. More work is clearly needed to complete a fit-for-purpose semantic data model. The syntax issue is being progressed both in terms of the allowable List of syntaxes that according to the Directive must be supported by public sector bodies and the syntax bindings work. Meetings with the Commission on Syntax was held in March and we should have a clearer picture by May. Other areas subject to discussion are the production of Technical Reports on Transmission Guidelines and on Invoice Extensions. The next Plenary meeting of CEN TC 434 was in Lisbon on 5 and 6 April. Tony Nisbett attended for UK. 38 attendees from 16 member states met to address the various issues around the new semantic standard. There had been 628 comments on the draft norm and work continues to resolve them all. Around 120 have been resolved so far.

The EU Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) programme has a telecoms component within which is an allocation for e-invoicing and e-delivery projects. The 2015 round is under adjudication. Although the grants are likely to consume most of the allocated budget, many projects did not reach application stage, partly due to eligibility rules and complexity. There is a 2016 call for applications for grants related to e-invoicing due in September and the rules are likely to be relaxed. UK public and private sector organisations may be interested in this next round and we will revert with information on this opportunity. The CEF team has a proposal to build an information web-site to support e-invoicing roll-out across the public sector including information on the State of Play in EU Member States and a so-called Match-Making Web-site to link solution providers to public sector bodies.

Please contact Charles.bryant@eespa.eu or Tony@Nisbetts.co.uk for any requests for further information

Tony,

Could you distribute to UKNeF members subject to any comments from Amabel, Lois and yourself (especially following the CEN TC 434 meeting in Lisbon this week).

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