

The CEN Standards for Metadata About Cinematographic Works: Overview and Current Status

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Ronny Loewy
Deutsches Filminstitut (DIF)

Background

The European Union has:



- A rich cinematographic heritage ...
- spread across dozens of film archives ...
- most of which organise filmographic data in their own ways.

A Mandate

In 1994, the EU Commission issued a mandate to create a common metadata specification for the identification of cinematographic works.

This work was delegated to the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) which appointed the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) as the secretariat.



Why even more standards?

We already have:

- Library standards (AACR, ISBD, MARC, ...)
- Archival standards (ISAD, EAD, ...)
- Museum standards (Spectrum, CIDOC, ...)
- International Standard Audiovisual Number (ISAN)
- MPEG-7 Multimedia Description Scheme
- Standards for television archives (P/META)
- Visual Resources Association VRA Core
- ... and many more to choose from.

Some Requirements

A simple metadata element set which supports:

- basic identification of cinematographic works,
- and is suitable for OAI-based infrastructures and browsing of databases

An extended schema which supports:

- coverage of detailed catalogue records
- interoperability with current metadata specifications
- data exchange between existing databases
- the design of new filmographic information systems

A Two-Part Standard

Part 1 (EN 15744:2009)

- Names and semantics of fifteen basic metadata elements

Part 2 (in preparation as EN15709)

- A comprehensive metadata element set for cinematographic works in all their variants and manifestations

EN 15944

Not unlike the Dublin Core Element Set (ISO 15836)

... and to be used for similar purposes

Defines:

- Title
- Series/serial
- Cast
- Credits
- Production company
- Country of reference
- Original format
- Original length
- Original duration
- Original language
- Year of reference
- Identifier
- Genre
- Relationship
- Source

prEN 15907

Defines:

- Basic entities (cinematographic work, variant, manifestation, item, agent, event)
- Major metadata elements (not identical with EN 15944)
- Properties of basic entities, some complex data types
- Relationship types
- Controlled extensibility of elements
- Mappings to EN 15944

prEN 15907

Does *not* define:

- Elements for collection management tasks (e.g. loans, conservation activities, etc.)
- Value lists for data elements and elements for authorities (non-film entities). Where applicable, use of existing vocabularies and formats will be recommended.
- Cataloguing rules (i.e. how to determine the various element values from available sources). This is handled by the FIAF Cataloguing Commission.
- A detailed data model for system developers (i.e. it can be implemented using different technologies)

Cataloguing vs. Metadata Exchange

Cataloguing rules define:

- what kinds of statements should be made
- how to obtain these from available sources
- how to enrich them for searching and display

Metadata standards define:

- how statements should be structured for processing by machines
- how statements should be composed and how the elements of a statement should be named

Levels of Granularity

Film catalogues vary widely in levels of detail.

The FRONT PAGE

The Front Page U.S. (Original title)

Prima pagina Italy / Romania

Spéciale première Canada (French title) / France

A Primeira Página Brazil

Etusivu uusiks' Finland

Extrablatt West Germany

I proti selida Greece

Koteret Rashit Israel (Hebrew title)

Primera plana Spain

Ryd forsiden Denmark

Stoppa pressarna! Sweden

Szenzáció! Hungary

Levels of Granularity

What does it mean to be from 1962?

- 1962 – year of reference; reference is „unknown“
- 1962 – year of reference; reference is „production“
- 1961-1962 – year of reference; reference is „production“; syntax is time-span
- 1962.02.14-1962.04.12 – „production event“; attribute type is „time-span“; event type is „studio (indoor) shootings“

Note: all statements conform to the standard

Names vs. Authorities

Some catalogues use authority files, others don't.

A record without authority control may have e.g.

Credits / Screenplay: **John Doe**

A record with authority control can simply have an added identifier:

Credits / Screenplay: Person / Name: **John Doe**

Person / ID: **P093948**

... or a full copy of the authority record, including biographical details.

Description levels

- A cinematograph work can exist in several variants and manifestations.

Cinematographic work *directed by* **Federico Fellini**

- this statement is valid for all versions and editions of the film

DVD edition *produced by* **Kinowelt GmbH**

- this statement is valid only for a particular DVD edition of the work

Many sources - many records

Merging of filmographic data from different sources into a single database can produce confusing results:

Search results (4)

Specify Search »

Title	
HURDES LAS TIERRA SIN PAN	Spain
HURDES, LAS (Tierra sin pan) (Terre sans Pain)	Spain
Las Hurdes	Spain
LAS HURDES O TIERRA SIN PAN	Spain

Is this the same cinematographic work?

Many sources - one work, a variant and several titles

based on ↑

Directed by Luis Buñuel; produced in Spain, 1933

Original version, mute

Las Hurdes, tierra sin pan [Spanish, original]

1936 sound version in French

Additional credits to Abel Jacquin (narrator); Darius Milhaud (music) and Johannes Brahms (musical score)

Terre sans pain [French, distribution title]

Las Hurdes o tierra sin pan [Spanish, distribution title]

1936 dubbed version in Spanish

Land Without Bread [English, translated]

Terra senza pane [Italian, translated]

Las Hurdes - Land ohne Brot [German, translated]

Where are we now?

EN 15944 has been issued and is available from European standards bodies.

EN 15907 is in the final draft stage and will be published in 2010.

What's next?

- Consultations with FIAF Cataloguing Commission (already under way)
- European Film Gateway has adopted prEN 15907 als guideline for metadata
- Dissemination activities for promoting the use of EN 15944/15907 (applicaton for EU funding under way)

Planned Dissemination Activities

- Seminars in several places throughout Europe
- Materials and prototype applications for hands-on training within and outside seminars
- A workbook for implementors and users of the standards
- Public domain schemas and software components for re-use

Staying informed

<http://www.filmstandards.org>