Identifying PSI re-use value chains

Submitted on 07 Mar 2010 by

Determining the economic indicators that could be used to measure the economic activity from the re-use of public sector information is but one part of the process of preparing to undertake regular economic measurements. To undertake a measurement one needs to identify the value chain that is the subject of the intended measurement. The economic studies undertaken over the past decade have adopted the cascade approach as a way of establishing the value chain that may exist. An alternative approach is that which the European Commission intends to adopt when the Commission initiates regular economic measurements at three monthly intervals commencing in the September to October 2010 timeframe.

The approach the European Commission has adopted is to use a sampling technique whereby a subset of any particular value-chain is pre-established prior to commissioning an organisation (via an open competitive competition) to undertake regular periodic economic measurements. The European Commission led PSI Group has formed a number of economic indicator subgroups. One of the tasks these subgroups have been set is to determine the sample value-chain that relates specifically to an information sector. That is to identify the various bodies on both the supply (public sector) and the demand (the re-users) sides of the value-chain. Once the bodies in the value-chain have been identified the next task is to seek approval from each body in the chain that they are willing to participate in the periodic measurements. That is the organisation will provide information when the economic measurement is undertaken. The information to be provided will be for a small number of indicators chosen by the Commission but based on recommendations from the PSI Group.

Determining the entire length of the value chain requires an appreciation of the type of information involved and the information flows between organisations within the value chain. For example Business Registers (Company Registration information). It is for this reason that the Commission has established five subgroups each of which is handling one thematic category of public sector information. As a result the membership of each subgroup comprises of stakeholders that have knowledge pertaining to the particular information sector that the subgroup is responsible for.

One's first thoughts when constructing the value-chain maybe that the main difficulty is determining the demand side of the value chain. In particular the organisations adding value after the first organisation down stream of the public sector information holder that added value. This is based on the premise that the value chain starts from one public sector body. This is the simplest approach to developing the value chain but in reality the value chain even on the supply side maybe far more complex. On the demand side the value chain also includes service providers that provide services to the bodies that are adding value to the information as the information passes along the value-chain. For example legal services, language translation services.

The number of public sector information holders is numerically large and these public sector bodies are distributed across different levels of government from the local level right though to the Member State level. In some European Member States the public sector information may flow across four or more levels of government. One consequence of this is that depending on the category of information there maybe within the public sector a value-chain that exists as each public sector body undertakes its assigned public task. In the process each public body in the value-chain adds value by adding further data to that passed to it by an upstream public sector body. From the public sector information re-use perspective the data can be obtained from each of the public bodies within the value-chain on the public sector (supply) side of the overall value chain. A further complexity is that

each European Member State has a different organisational structure. As a consequence this will also likely to impact the value-chain. This then raises the question as to how many value-chains to measure in order to take into account these Member State differences.

One of the value-chains to be constructed by the PSI Group subgroups is that related to Address Information. In this context the work of the European Union eContent*plus* funded project European Address Infrastructure (EURADIN) is of interest. The EURADIN report titled: **Business Model: Social and Economic Benefits**, considers 5 value-chains related to address information:

1. The Navigation and Location Based Services value-chain (Section 7.4.1, page 34)
2. The E-Commerce value-chain (Section 7.5.1, page 46)
3. The Geomarketing value-chain (Section 7.6.1, page 49)
4. The Delivery Logistic value-chain (Section 7.7.1, page 51)
5. The Telecommunications value-chain (Section 7.8.1, page 53)

The report indicates that even within an information sector various value-chains are likely to exist.

In considering the value-chain related to the re-use of public sector information it becomes apparent that this is a complex area to understand and measure. It is not surprising that the techniques for measuring economic activity with respect to the re-use of public sector information are still evolving.

Views on the above and other questions and concerns related to measurement of PSI re-use economic activity would be very welcome.

If your organisation would like to participate in the regular measurement then please contact the European Commission's facilitator for this activity by email. The resources expended by participating once every three months are considered to be minimal.