## Issue 410: Layout of the CIDOC CRM official version (continuation)

The sig reviewed the e-vote results about compatibility statement. The e-vote and the answers are in the appendix.

**DECISION**: The compatibility statement needs more work., **HW**: MD

## Appendix – compatibility statement e-vote and results

### Posted by CB on 22/10/2019

Dear All   
  
Following the decisions of the current working group meeting, we invite you to vote if you accept the text  about the compatiblity with CRM in the version 6.2.6. This text is the same with the one found in the iso version(rev 2014).   
  
The text is the following:   
==================================================   
  
Compatibility with the CRM   
  
Users intending to take advantage of the semantic interoberability offered by this International Standard should ensure conformance with the relevant data structures. Conformance pertains either to data to be made accessible in an integrated environment or intended for transport to other environments. Any enconding of data in a formal language that preserves the relations of the classes, properties, and inheritance rules defined by this definition of the CIDOC CRM(definition document), is regarded as conformant.   
Conformance with this definition document does not require complete matching of all local documentation structures, nor that all concepts and structures present in this definition document be implemented. This definition document is intented to allow room both for extensions, needed to capture the full richness of cultural documentation, and for simplification, in the interests of economy. A system will be deemed partially conformant if it supports a subset of subclasses and subproperties defined by this definition document. Designers of the system should publish details of the constructs that are supported.   
The focus of this definition document is the exchange and mediation of structured information. It does not require the interpretation of unstructured (free text) information into a structured, logical form. Unstructured information is supported, but falls outside the scope of conformance considerations.   
Any documentation system will be deemed conformant with this definition document, regardless of the internal data structures it uses; if a deterministic logical algorithm can be constructed, that transforms data contained in the system into a directly compatible form without loss of meaning.   
No assumptions are made as to the nature of this algorithm. "Without loss of meaning" signifies that designers and users of the system are satisfied that the data representation corresponds to the semantic definitions provided by this definition .   
======================================================================   
  
PLEASE VOTE :   
  
YES for accepting,   
  
NO for not accepting,   
  
by Oct. 25 2019.

### Posted by Robert Sanderson on 22/10/2019

Mu.

Some issues that could be fixed, but don’t lead me to conclude that it should be a straight No … however if it is about conformance (which I believe it is) then it is a potentially legal issue as to claims of systems and we should be careful with what we say.

Suggested edits:

* Typo:  “enconding” for “encoding” in the first paragraph.
* The title is about “compatibility” but the text is about “conformance”. These are very different things. I think the title should be Conformance with the CRM.
* The sentence starting “Conformance pertains” doesn’t make sense as currently structured. Skipping the first part of the or clause, it reads:  “Conformance pertains either to […] or intended for transport to other environments.”  I think it should be:  Conformance pertains to data which is either made accessible … or intended to be transported to other environments.
* The conformance rule is ambiguous. I can claim conformance by supporting one class, as “conformance does not require complete …”.  Given the introduction later of “partially conformant”, the first paragraph should define “fully conformant” as supporting all of the classes and properties defined in the document. The next paragraph talks about conformance again, with a very different rubric.  I can be fully conformant in a system that manages only Identifiers, but the previous paragraph would require this to be partially conformant.
* The documentation system paragraph talks about compatibility and conformance. It should only talk about conformance, or we would need the definition of “compatible”
* The “without loss of meaning” is based on the subjective opinion of an indeterminate audience, yet is a core part of the determination of conformance. My Identifier system is thus fully conformant, yet implements only one class and no properties because I, as the audience, judge it to be so.

### Posted by Дарья Юрьевна Гук on 23/10/2019

YES

### Posted by Christos Papatheodorou

YES

### Posted by Richard Light on 23/10/2019

I think no.

In addition to Rob's comments below, and the need to change 'intented' to 'intended', I have reservations about the definition of partial conformance (and by extension of full conformance).  For a start, are we trying to characterize systems, or data?  The text starts off talking about data, then later on talks about systems. They are different things.

My view is that it is useful to define conformance for data, because that helps people decide what they can do with that data. Conformance of systems I think is a less useful concept.  In particular, I don't think that having a system support every single CRM class and property is something to push for.

As regards data instances, I see 'full conformance' as meaning that the data is already in a form, or can be programmatically converted into a form, where all the classes and properties expressed by the data are taken from the CRM and meet the CRM's cardinality constraints. (I don't think we need to mention inheritance: this is 'baked into' the CRM model.)

'partial conformance' is where, after a similar optional conversion, some of the classes and properties in the data are taken from the CRM.  However, that raises another question: what is the conformance level of data where some of the classes and properties are non-CRM, but an 'extension ontology' is provided which defines all of these classes and properties, and maps them all to 'parent' classes and properties in the CRM?  Surely this is to be encouraged, and should be seen as 'more' conformant than data in which some classes and properties are CRM, and the rest is 'any old stuff'?

I agree with Rob's reservations about letting users decide what counts as 'no loss of meaning'.  One suggestion is that we could ask them to implement round-tripping between the native form of the data and its CRM-compatible expression.