

e-IRG releases new Roadmap on e-Infrastructure

Since the publication of the previous e-IRG Roadmap in 2007, the e-Infrastructure field has undergone several fundamental changes. The crucial importance of e-Infrastructures for European research, innovation and competitiveness is universally acknowledged, while at the same time networking, grid, data, high performance and commodity computing services are witnessing major organisational and technical changes. The ongoing expansion of the e-Infrastructure user communities is also already producing new and updated requirements for the common e-Infrastructure.

The e-IRG Roadmap for e-Infrastructures provides policy makers, as well as e-Infrastructure users and providers, valuable insights on the new European e-Infrastructure landscape. In particular, the document looks at the current move – visible in all the e-Infrastructure components domains – towards a service-oriented e-Infrastructure, and at the issue of the commoditisation of some of the e-Infrastructure services, pointing out the benefits, but also the challenges related to these trends.

"Service-orientation, commoditisation and interoperability were identified as key topics and placed under close scrutiny", says Matti Heikkurinen, editor of the Roadmap. "We hope the document will stimulate further reflections on these important topics." Other trends for future e-Infrastructure include the emergence of data intensive science, and the threatening "software crisis".

Rather than looking at these changes independently, the Roadmap analyses their impact from the points of view of users, service providers and the society as a whole. Ultimately, the document makes several recommendations aimed at maximising the positive socio-economic impact of new innovation opportunities that are opening up.

"Providers and users will have to cooperate to drive the e-Infrastructure evolution towards an integrated global service facility. Its diversity, flexibility and cooperative spirit make Europe a strong candidate to play a major role in this continuous innovation process", notes Kees Neggers, e-IRG delegate for the Netherlands and member of the e-IRG Roadmap Editorial Board.

The e-IRG Roadmap 2010 is the result of a collective effort synthesizing numerous insights provided by the e-IRG experts. It also includes numerous valuable external contributions, in particular from the user communities belonging to the ESFRI network.

Please visit the e-IRG website www.e-irg.eu to access the e-IRG Roadmap (Publications/Roadmap), and to join in the discussion on the future of European e-Infrastructures.

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