



**e-Infrastructure
Reflection Group**

Bylaws

2016-04-26

Bylaws

I. PREAMBLE

e-IRG acts on issues raised by one or more of its member delegations. e-IRG gives national authorities the opportunity to be informed of and to explore (i.e. without a priori commitments) international and national initiatives of European significance.

e-IRG is a self-regulated and independent body, operating an open method of coordination based on consensus. e-IRG itself decides when, where and what it will discuss. Issues put forward by at least one delegation in the e-IRG will be discussed.

For its internal operations, e-IRG adopts the following Bylaws.

II. e-IRG MEMBERS

Eligible entities

Eligible entities to join e-IRG as a Member include: EU Member States, Associated Countries to the EU Research Framework Programme and the European Commission.

The mandate of delegates is for a three-year period. Renewal of the mandate must be officially reconfirmed by the national government. Members may replace their delegates.

Responsibilities

By accepting the appointment as e-IRG delegate, a person commits to represent the views of his/her national government regarding the remit of e-IRG and to inform the organization delegating him/her about e-IRG recommendations and other activities. e-IRG delegates represent their governments or the European Commission, and not their personal or professional interests. Delegates commit to actively participate in e-IRG meetings and workshops and also actively contribute to e-IRG objectives and mission beyond regular events.

e-IRG Chair and delegations should provide their own funding for their participation in e-IRG activities.

III. OBSERVERS

e-IRG has the right to appoint observers representing realities particularly relevant to e-IRG.

Observers have no voting rights. They may be excluded from (parts of) e-IRG delegate meetings if so requested by one of the e-IRG delegates.

Procedure for appointment of delegates

Each Member of the e-IRG may appoint up to two delegates to e-IRG, with a specific attention for fulfilling the EU gender parity condition. Delegates representing a state are officially appointed by their national governments, either directly or through an entity that is explicitly mandated by the government to appoint the delegate. Delegates representing the European Commission are officially appointed by the European Commission.

Observers are elected by e-IRG on proposal of the Executive Board or a delegation in a decision by consensus. e-IRG has the right to revoke observer status by majority vote at any time. Terms of observers should be decided prior to granting the observer status. The observer's status has to be reconfirmed after two years.

Observers should provide their own funding for their participation in e-IRG activities.

IV. e-IRG PLENUM

The e-IRG plenum is the e-IRG delegates meetings, which will be held on a regular basis, normally four times a year. The exact number of annual meetings is decided upon by the e-IRG plenum.

V. e-IRG CHAIR

Mandate

The main tasks of the Chair are:

- to propose e-IRG activities and to encourage active contributions by the delegates
- to conduct meetings and to act as a moderator for discussions
- to propose draft agendas for meetings, and the corresponding draft summaries;
- to represent e-IRG in matters agreed by e-IRG.

The Chair shall be supported in his/her tasks by the Secretariat in the preparation of meetings, drawing up of minutes and other duties in the general interest of e-IRG as required.

The Chair is appointed for a three-year once-renewable term. The Chair may be replaced by the Co- Chair in the event of unforeseen absence.

The Chair shall act in the general interest of e-IRG and no longer as a country representative. The Chair's country may nominate a new delegate.

Election of the Chair

The Chair is chosen from among the e-IRG delegates representing states. A European Commission representative may not be elected as Chair.

The designation of the Chair is prepared by a search committee, which is formed by three e-IRG delegates from three different countries. The search committee should not include representatives from the same states as any confirmed candidates for Chair. The e-IRG plenum will discuss the proposal(s) of the search committee and reach a consensus. Renewing the term of the acting Chair is also by consensus.

The incoming or renewed Chair should be confirmed at the penultimate meeting of the sitting Chair, to take over responsibility in due time.

Exceptions

In the case that a strong and unresolvable conflict of ideas between the e-IRG delegates and its Chair arises, a qualified majority of e-IRG delegates, i.e. two

thirds, may decide to dismiss the Chair. The co-chair will act as chair until the new chair has been elected.

VI. EXECUTIVE BOARD

An Executive Board will help the Chair in his duties.

The Executive Board consists of the e-IRG Chair, three delegates that represent the three states that currently make up the EU Troika and a representative from the European Commission. A member may decide to request a delegate from another state to take its place in the Executive Board. The Executive Board may also request a delegate from another state to participate in the Executive Board if a country of the EU Troika has not nominated delegates to e-IRG or the delegates are not active in e-IRG. The Executive Board must be informed about such a substitution in the Executive Board at least one month before the start of the EU Troika session for which it applies.

The delegate representing the current EU Presidency country will act as second Chairperson (the so called 'Co-Chair'). The two delegates representing the Presidencies immediately preceding and succeeding the current EU presidency bear the title of Vice Chair.

At its own discretion the Executive Board may allow external advisers to contribute to specific discussions and/or participate in its meetings.

VII. DECISION PROCEDURE

Decisions in the e-IRG are taken by consensus in the e-IRG plenum and the delegates are encouraged to find full agreement on all decisions and recommendations. Consensus is defined as an opinion or position reached by the group as a whole or as the lack of persistent resistance to a certain proposal.

When the e-IRG needs to adopt official positions and documents, these are proposed by the Chair and adopted if there is consensus. When this is not the case the dissenting opinions are reported.

VIII. TASK FORCES

e-IRG may decide to set-up, for a limited period of time, Task Forces to analyse topical issues and to report to e-IRG. Task forces may include non e-IRG members. At least three members of a task force must be e-IRG delegates belonging to three different member countries.

All material produced by a Task Force remains confidential until released by e-IRG.

e-IRG may take part in other Task Forces and Working Groups set up by collaboration of other related activities.

IX. SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat assists the e-IRG in its operation. In particular, it assists the Chair and the Executive Board in preparing and circulating draft agendas, meeting summaries, and related documents and maintaining the e-IRG website. The cost of the Secretariat may be covered by possible funding from individual e-IRG members.

X. INFORMATION AND REPORTING

The main channel of information to national should flow through the country representations themselves. The e-IRG webpage is the official source of information on e-IRG.

XI. REVIEW

The Executive Board will review these Bylaws every three years. Changes suggested for the Bylaws have to be approved by the e-IRG Plenum, with consensus.