

Open e-IRG Workshop

17 June 2010, Madrid, Spain

Over 70 participants attended the e-IRG workshop in Madrid, on 17 June 2010. The workshop was organised by the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC) and the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), under the auspices of the Spanish Presidency of the European Union. Even if the Icelandic volcano affected the initial plans, it did not prevent the workshop to attract participants nor speakers – most of which rescheduled their own agenda on short notice to attend the new event in Madrid.

A very interesting period for European e-Infrastructure

Luis Ruiz, from the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, and **Kostas Glinos**, from the European Commission, opened the workshop by reflecting on the national and European experiences of e-Infrastructure and the role it plays in society. At European level, “a very interesting period is just beginning”, Glinos said. In addition to the opening of the new funding cycle (FP8) in 2013 for e-Infrastructure projects, the EU 2020 agenda, and in particular the Digital Agenda which sets actions and guidelines to maximise the social and economic potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), are likely to be reflected in the coming calls and projects. According to **Leif Laaksonen** (e- IRG Chair), e-IRG will continue, through its workshops, to be the forum for discussion on the future of e-Infrastructures, and to strengthen the dialogue among all the e-Infrastructure actors.

In a session focusing on lessons learnt from the major e-Infrastructure projects, **Francesc Subirada** presented the current status of the PRACE initiative and re-iterated the crucial role HPC plays in boosting European competitiveness in science and engineering. **Steven Newhouse** reported on the first steps of the European Grid Initiative (EGI) which aims to provide a sustainable production e-Infrastructure in Europe. The EGI initiative was also discussed by **Jesús Marco** who presented the Spanish and Portuguese initiative to join efforts in EGI by creating a federated NGI called Ibergrid. Steven Newhouse also presented the results of the recent survey conducted by the European e-Infrastructure Forum (EEF) on ESFRI projects requirements for pan-European e-Infrastructure resources and facilities. **Neil Geddes**, e-IRG delegate for the UK, introduced the e-IRG Blue Paper. In October 2009, ESFRI invited e-IRG to produce a report on e-Infrastructure services, to be used as input for the 2010 update of the ESFRI roadmap. The e-IRG Blue Paper will be formally delivered to ESFRI at the end of June 2010. It provides an assessment of Europe’s e-Infrastructure service portfolio and trends, and sets out policy recommendations on several key areas.

Uses and users of the e-Infrastructure

The second session of the workshop was entirely dedicated to use cases of the e-Infrastructure. Ensuring optimal use of the e-Infrastructure has always been one of the highest priorities on the e- IRG agenda. **Ramon Soriguer** from CSIC showed how the e-Infrastructure is used to monitor the Doñana Biological Reserve in Andalusia. **Fernando Liello** from the University of Trieste, Italy, presented the European project AugerAccess which seeks to enable remote access to the Pierre Auger Observatory in Argentina to study cosmic rays. **Antonella Fresa** presented the DC-NET project which is building a new data and service e-Infrastructure for research in the field of Digital Cultural Heritage. **David Fergusson** from the National e-Science Center of the University of Edinburgh addressed the issue of training the users to best use the e-Infrastructure, and presented the lessons learned from the EGEE project. All the presentations showed how important the e-Infrastructure is for many user communities, often supporting very different uses and practices.

e-Infrastructure in Latin America and the Mediterranean region

The third session focused on e-Science and e-Infrastructures in Latin America and the Mediterranean region. **Raul Ramos** presented the EELA-2 and GISELA projects supporting European and Latin American scientific collaborations. **Florencio Utreas** gave a general overview of e-Infrastructures in Latin America focusing on the RedCLARA network which interconnects the national advanced academic networks from Latin America among themselves and with networks in Europe, the United States, Asia and the rest of the world, thus linking scientists, academics and researchers in the region with the global scientific community. **Federico Ruggieri** presented the e-Infrastructure projects in the Mediterranean area, namely Eumedconnect2 and Eumedgridsupport, providing connectivity and commodity computing facilities and linking the related user communities with Europe and beyond.

Preparing the future: Managing and funding the e-Infrastructure

The workshop ended with a round table on managing and funding the e-Infrastructure. **Matthew Scott** (DANTE), **Karel Vietsch** (TERENA), Francesc Subirada (PRACE) and Steven Newhouse (EGI.eu) were invited to reflect the practices and experiences learnt in their respective areas and projects. Several issues were raised such as Member States representation and voting rights, legal frameworks, user involvements and participation.

In the closing summary talk **Matti Heikkurinen** (e-IRGSP2) listed some of the themes brought to the foreground by the workshop. Integration seemed to be a common theme, with Europe looking into common approaches with other geographical regions and e-IRG Member States aligning their national agendas with the Pan-European one. Clear need to simplify the user experience in the basic e-Infrastructure usage scenarios was also often mentioned, even if there is an ongoing trend towards more complex palette of implementation technologies used to provide the e-Infrastructure services.

Leif Laaksonen closed the workshop and thanked all the participants and the excellent support from the Spanish presidency that made rescheduling of the workshop possible. He also thanked the team from the GLOBAL project that made possible a remote participation to the workshop through webcast.

All the presentations of the workshop can be downloaded at the e-IRG website: www.e-irg.eu