

38th e-IRG delegates meeting

Milan, Italy, 15 September 2014

Public Summary

Reports and News

e-IRG Chair and Board: The e-IRG Chair Sverker Holmgren informed the delegates about the main activities since the last meeting. The Executive Board had two meetings in July and August. He had participated in the DG CONNECT consultation meeting with GEANT, and in a meeting about the future of PRACE. Roar Skålin attended the ESFRI meeting held in June.

The e-IRG Chair informed the delegates about the list of upcoming events where he has been invited including: the new ESFRI Roadmap launch event in Trieste and ESFRI meeting, a RDA Europe & ESFRI event on data aspects and the next Digital ERA Forum meeting both in Brussels.

European Commission: Anni Hellman reported on the new European Commission structure under Jean-Claude Juncker, with 7 Vice Presidents (VPs). DG CONNECT is under two Commissioners: the VP on Digital Single Market (Andrus Ansip) and the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society (Guenther Oettinger), which is the follow-up of Digital Agenda for Europe. e-Infrastructures stay within DG CONNECT, while RIs stay within DG RTD. In DG CONNECT there will be more focus on Innovation and Industry including entrepreneurship and the Internet of Things.

The next meeting of the national delegates of the Research Infrastructures Programme Committee will be on 5.11.2014, where the Work Programme of 2016-2017 will be discussed. The scoping papers are already drafted, including the input by the Advisory Group (AG) on RIs and e-Infrastructures and a consolidated document will be prepared by the end of the year that will be sent to the Commissioner. The next meeting of the AG on RIs and e-Infrastructures will be on 13.11.2014, while the next meeting of the Digital ERA forum will take place most probably in December.

Anni Hellman reported further on the calls that closed on 2nd September. The National Delegates on the Research Infrastructures Programme Committee (RI PC) will receive the results around the end of January.

Philippe Froissard reported on the new ESFRI roadmap 2016 process and the gap analysis of respective areas and the new EC structure related to DG RTD. DG RTD is under VP Growth, Jobs, Investments and Competitiveness (Jyrki Katainen) and Research, Science and Innovation (Carlos Moedas). He mentioned the new focus and missions of RIs: applied research, increase private sector, the link with JRC.

Philippe Froissard further reported that a letter from Ukraine has been received to become an associated state and while they are still in negotiations, the EC will propose to Ukraine to become an observer in ESFRI.

ESFRI: Yannis Ioannidis reported all emphasis and focus is on the meeting in Trieste (26.9.2014), the day after the ESFRI Roadmap launch event. He also mentioned that the e-Infrastructure-related questions sent by e-IRG for the ESFRI roadmap update have been included.

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e-IRGSP3 and e-IRGSP4: e-IRGSP3 ended at the end of June 2014, and e-IRGSP4 started in June with an intentional overlap of one month.

The e-IRGSP3 review took place on 12 September in Brussels, the final report is expected in around 2 weeks' time. The initial feedback received was that it will be a positive review, all deliverables are accepted, and that the collaboration with ESFRI is much appreciated. The review report will also include recommendations for e-IRGSP4, one of these being to evaluate the impact of e-IRG policy papers.

On the new roles in e-IRGSP4: Leibniz Universität Hannover takes over the coordination of the project, with two new partners involved, Barcelona Supercomputing Centre and Vrije Universiteit Brussel. The e-IRG Secretariat remains the same, staffed by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO. Jan Wiebelitz, as the project manager, is now the new interface to the e-IRG Board.

Czech Republic: The Czech Ministry of Education initiated the evaluation of all e-Infrastructures by an international panel of experts. There will be two stages; the first stage with the list of e-Infrastructures has already been completed. In October the second round of evaluation will start. The process will be used for the update of the national RI Roadmap.

Estonia: The process of updating the Estonian RI roadmap process includes e-Infrastructures. The government asked to reduce the number of projects in the list among the approved ones, which is a hard task and caution is needed. This is also related with the ESFRI roadmap projects and the update process that will start in Trieste.

Finland: There is a big effort of the ministry underway on Open Science and Research. There is also a cookbook on data management freely available. At the policy level the Prime Minister used to appoint the Finnish RIs committee, but now this is appointed by the Academy of Finland that is the financing body. Finland's Strategy and Roadmap for Research Infrastructures 2014–2020 is currently being updated. The Kajaani Petaflop system (Sisu) was approved and is up and running, while it has recently undergone a major upgrade to reach 1.7 PFlops. Finland has signed the Consortium Agreement joining ELIXIR.

France: Is in the process of updating their national RI Roadmap. The data issues are considered as cross-disciplinary/ transversal topics and are in the heart of the discussions.

Germany: The Federal Government of Germany adopted a strategy on the European Research Area with related guidelines and a national roadmap.

Norway: A new data policy for research has been adopted, i.e. open by default. It is a soft policy, i.e. not strongly imposed. The reason is that not all infrastructures are ready to adopt it. The need for data management for RIs was also another point reported.

Poland: The national roadmap has been updated in the beginning of September. In total there are 36 big projects on RIs and e-Infrastructures. Some of them are co-synchronised with the ESFRI roadmap, but some others not. There is also a special action in the structural funds, dedicated for building some of them in the 2015-2020 timeframe.

Election of the e-IRG Chair

The first term of the e-IRG Chair Sverker Holmgren will end at the end of December 2014. A search committee responsible for coming up with candidates for the next two years was approved, formed by: Mark Asch (France), Panos Argyrakis (Greece) and Arjen Van Rijn (The Netherlands). The search committee will report in the next meeting.

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Collaboration with ESFRI and other initiatives

e-IRG representatives have become members to the ESFRI SWG groups. The Chair stated that ESFRI assumes that they will contribute with their perspective on the data management needs during the landscape analysis. A gap and landscape analysis summary will be given in Trieste.

Roar Skålin presented the ESFRI 2016 Roadmap process, to be launched on 25.9.2014 in Trieste. Submission of proposals is due by 31.3.2015, while decisions on the proposals are planned for 15.9.2015. The new ESFRI roadmap identifies new RIs of Pan-European interest likely to be realised in the next 10-20 years. The roadmap will contain a landscape analysis, a gap analysis, an outlook section, and a list of projects. Approximately 25 projects will be on the new roadmap, out of which 8-10 new projects are expected. Projects being more than 10 years without being implemented will go out, unless they re-submit. Only those projects with real chances of being implemented have good chances. And in fact they should be on a stage where there is some progress already. The submission and evaluation process will be finalised in the ESFRI meeting in Trieste.

Roar Skålin closed his presentation by presenting the questions on e-needs. He stated that ESFRI has taken into account the e-IRG inputs. The first 3 questions were the ones that e-IRG proposed plus two more, one on the data policy and one on training and data analysis tools.

Sergi Girona stated that the SWG Health and Food members welcomed him and asked him for input for the landscape and gap analysis. He reported on the issue of common e-Infrastructure needs across the groups and being able to access and discuss such information across groups for their work.

Françoise Genova reported on the SWG Physical Sciences & Engineering. The SWG is also doing the landscape analysis, while data and computing needs are of interest.

Leif Laaksonen reported on the WG Innovation, which had a meeting in June. The WG is working on a document with 5 main parts including innovation management models, industry relations, IPR, metrics and recommendations. He was not aware of whether there is a connection to the ESFRI roadmap process. The next WG meeting will be on 9th October. Philippe Froissard noted that the economic impact of RIs will be influenced by this WG.

Arjen van Rijn reported on SWG Environment, that will meet the day after the delegates' meeting. He will attend physically for the first time and he has been participating in the discussions over e-mail up to now. The WG is also working on the landscape analysis and in particular on the data and e-Infrastructure needs. Panos Argyrakis joined the SWG Social Sciences and Cultural Innovation last month, no meetings attended yet. He reported that there are 5 SSH projects implemented properly and now focus is on long-term sustainability.

Norbert Meyer reported on SWG Energy. The landscape and gap analysis started 2 years ago but stopped in order to focus on the ESFRI prioritisation work. They are working on the landscape analysis trying to finish it by Trieste. The document has 4 chapters including nuclear energy, efficient energies and conversion, storage and cross-energy RIs.

The Chair informed the plenum that there was a meeting of the Overarching WG just before the plenum meeting. The Overarching WG concluded that sharing information about e-Infrastructure issues inside the Overarching WG, i.e. across WGs, would be useful, however there is a confidentiality issue. e-IRG should explicitly ask ESFRI to allow exchange of information among the members of the e-IRG OWG for the e-Infrastructure parts. Such e-Infrastructure information can be taken up, synthesised on higher level and provide joint best practises.

The Chair concluded stating that the roadmap process is moving along the lines discussed and asked for comments on the confidentiality issue. The ESFRI representative in e-IRG Yannis Ioannidis, highlighted the importance of taking advantage of the knowledge on the other side, and ensured that the confidentiality issue could be resolved.

Gabriele von Voigt stated that a slide set on major e-Infrastructures is being prepared by asking the relevant major e-Infrastructure projects and that it will be ready very soon.

Yannis Ioannidis reported on some differences among WGs involvement and that major projects may get into the roadmap even mid-flight (special case). The joint e-IRG-ESFRI meeting in Athens during ICRI 2014 was very useful and such joint meetings should continue to take place. e-IRG and ESFRI secretariats will coordinate for organising a joint meeting next year.

White Paper 2014 and Roadmap 2014

The White Paper 2014, championed by the e-IRG Overarching Working Group, will be focused on best practices that can be generalised for ESFRI and others. It will be entitled “Best practices for using e-infrastructures in large scale Research Infrastructures”, and will act as input to the ESFRI Roadmap process and act as a common basis.

The Chair stated that the Commons should be the basis for the discussion on the new White Paper. Arjen van Rijn presented the status of the e-Infrastructure Commons. The objective of the Commons is to realise an ecosystem of public and commercial services, where users can easily find the service they want and providers can innovate. This will be achieved through a joint strategic effort between users and primary strategic actors and suppliers.

The e-IRG Roadmap will be renamed as live Strategy document, and a rolling update of its content will take place providing new sections. The following sections will be added by the end of the year:

- a. Data analytics and computing, championed by Sergi Girona, Spain
- b. Long tail needs and best practices, championed by Françoise Genova, France, and Fiorenzo Scaroni, Switzerland

Input from H2020 Advisory Group

The Chair reported on the work of the Horizon 2020 Advisory Group on RIs and e-Infrastructures in preparing for the next RI Work Programme 2016-2017. The group finalised its input to the EC through a document with two main tracks being worked out: a set of 7 questions posed by the EC (presented in

Athens by Anni Hellman) and a set of self-defined topics. The group will continue to work and the synthesis of the group may change every two years. The next meeting will take place in November.

New e-IRG website

e-IRGSP4 will provide a new e-IRG web presence switching to a new and better platform based on Liferay that will be combined with a modernisation of the layout and appearance. Ad Emmen gave a presentation about the new website, presenting the new layout and logo and some of the content. All related web presence, i.e. the e-IRG one, the e-IRGSP4 one, the internal web space of e-IRGSP4 and the e-IRG Knowledge Base is now integrated in a single platform.

Update on INFRASUPP-5 and INFRASUPP-7

Two calls related to e-IRG closed on 2 September, namely INFRASUPP-5 from DG RTD that addresses policy measures for Research Infrastructures and is expected to support ESFRI and its partnership with e-IRG, and INFRASUPP-7 from DG CONNECT that addresses e-Infrastructure policy development and international cooperation. The outcomes of the calls are officially expected around February 2015, while the national representatives in the RI PC should be receiving the news a bit earlier. Two proposals linked with e-IRG were submitted.

StR-ESFRI (Support to Reinforce ESFRI) proposal, INFRASUPP-5: The proposal is led by STFC, ESFRI's Chair home institute, and the other partners are: University of Milano, ATHENA Research Center and German Aerospace Center (DLR). The main goal of the StR-ESFRI project is to reinforce the work of ESFRI under the guidance of its Chair, providing additional resources, tools and expertise in performing its activities and supporting its structures. If the project is granted, Fotis Karayannis will be acting as the link between the ESFRI support and the e-IRG support projects. In that case, a formal link between e-IRG and ESFRI for the StR-ESFRI proposal would be formalised.

e4ERA (e-Infrastructures for the European Research Area project), INFRASUPP-7: The proposal aims at working towards the e-Infrastructure Commons that is an important goal of the e-IRG strategy. e-IRG strongly supports the proposal and provided a letter of support. The proposal is coordinated by EGI.eu and the partners are: Leibniz Universität Hannover, PRACE AISBL, CSC, CERN, ATHENA RC, TERENA and DANTE. e4ERA brings together, for the first time, the leading e-Infrastructure service providers, namely PRACE (HPC), GEANT represented by DANTE and TERENA (network), the European Grid Infrastructure (grid, cloud and data services) and EUDAT (data services) coupled with high-level policy initiatives (e-IRG, ESFRI) and OpenAIRE (publications, data publication, policies). The project aims to enhance scientific research and improve user experience by harmonising e-Infrastructures for the benefit of the European Research Area and developing countries. It is thus in the heart of the European e-Infrastructure Commons idea presented in the e-IRG Roadmap 2012 and that was strongly supported in Athens meeting.

Activities during the Italian EU Presidency

The next e-IRG workshop will be held in Rome on 10.11.2014 (whole day) and 11.11.2014 (until noon). The e-IRG delegates meeting will be also in Rome on 11.11.2014 (afternoon) and 12.11.2014 (until noon). The goal of the workshop is to work further on the requirements of RIs and ESFRI projects. On 13.11.2014 and 14.11.2014 there will be an RI workshop on Cultural Heritage in Rome.

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Activities during the Latvian EU Presidency

Latvia will have the EU presidency in the first half of 2015. The initial plans include a meeting around February and a workshop and meeting around May-June. A joint meeting with ESFRI may not be possible during the Latvian EU presidency due to scheduling problems.

Activities during the Luxembourg EU Presidency

Luxembourg will have the EU Presidency in the second half of 2015. A first meeting is proposed for 17.09.2015 in Luxembourg. This meeting may be combined with a joint meeting with ESFRI (possibly on 16.09.2014), since the ESFRI meeting is proposed on 15.09.2014. Antoine Barthel and the e-IRG secretariat will coordinate with the ESFRI secretariat for the organisation of the joint meeting.