

39th e-IRG delegates meeting

Rome, Italy, 11-12 November 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 three meetings in October and November. He had participated in the ESFRI Roadmap launch event in Trieste and a meeting with EC officials in November.

During the ESFRI Roadmap launch event the clear role of e-IRG in the new ESFRI Roadmap process and related evaluation was confirmed. The e-IRG members in the ESFRI strategic working groups will participate in the scientific evaluation of the proposals for the new ESFRI Roadmap. The evaluation of the e-Needs will be done on a common basis. e-IRG will provide input for the assessment, which will be included in the e-IRG White Paper 2014.

The meeting with EC officials was attended by Thierry Van der Pyl, Director, Excellence in Science (Directorate C), DG CONNECT, Anni Hellman, Deputy HoU, e-infrastructure (Unit C1), DG CONNECT, Sverker Holmgren, Panos Argyrakis and Ilmars Slaidins from e-IRG, and Yannis Ioannidis as the ESFRI member in e-IRG. The Chair reported that it was a very positive meeting. There was genuine interest in the e-IRG activities, including the e-Infrastructure Commons, the e-IRG-ESFRI coordination and the role of e-IRG as advisory body. In the discussions it was stated that providing input and documents to the Competitiveness Council, who can give clear mandate on some actions, e-IRG can earn its status by providing advice (as ESFRI is currently doing). Furthermore EC has two clear requests to e-IRG: e-IRG should deliver the White Paper 2014 by February 2015 and e-IRG should make a proposal for the structure of the e-Infrastructure Work Programme 2016-2017 in order to facilitate the implementation of the Commons.

The Chair informed further that Rosette Vandembroucke has represented e-IRG at the Workshop on the Charter of Access in October in Brussels and the Françoise Genova has represented e-IRG at the RDA Europe workshop about data sharing and interoperability in October in Brussels. Key conclusions of the RDA workshop are the clear need for an exchange forum about data sharing amongst the ESFRI projects and secondly the usage of generic data elements to avoid duplication of work.

European Commission: Anni Hellman reported that DG RTD welcomed e-IRG involvement in the new ESFRI Roadmap process. Further Anni Hellman reported that the EC received input from the

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e-IRG Secretariat
P.O. Box 93575
NL-2509 AN The Hague
The Netherlands
Phone: +31 70 344 0526
secretariat [at.] e-irg.eu

Visiting address
c/o The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)
Java Building, Laan van Nieuw Oost-Indië 300
NL-2593 CE The Hague
The Netherlands

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Advisory Group on Research Infrastructures including e-Infrastructures on the next Work Programme 2016-2017.

Anni Hellman referred to the meeting between the e-IRG Board and EC representatives where Thierry van der Pyl stated that he was impressed by the experience and knowledge of e-IRG, that the EC does need e-IRG a lot, and that the EC is expecting from e-IRG a one pager for the next Work Programme 2016-2017.

ESFRI: Yannis Ioannidis reported that ESFRI is breathing in the tune of the new roadmap exercise and that its next meeting will take place on 28 November in Brussels. He also mentioned that e-IRG is well-included in the roadmap exercise.

e-IRGSP3 and e-IRGSP4: Jan Wiebelitz reported that the e-IRGSP4 activities since the last delegates meeting included support of the Chair and the Executive Board, preparation of the Rome workshop and delegates meeting, transition to the new e-IRG web, and the regular secretariat activities.

Bulgaria: Aneta Karaivanova reported on the update of the Bulgarian Research Infrastructures roadmap that was approved by Council of Ministers. There are 9 RIs, one of which is e-Infrastructure-related, namely the National Centre of Computing. Her centre as part of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is responsible for that. She reported on an on-going 2 million euros tender process for the centre upgrade, for which they are expecting offers at the end of November.

France: Françoise Genova reported news from Mark Asch, namely that France is working towards seamless e-Infrastructures in the areas of network and HPC Tier 1 and 2. She added that this vision is interesting and important at EU level.

Spain: Sergi Girona reported that Spain concluded the map of large RIs. In total there are 56 infrastructures; 53 in operation and 3 are being prepared. Furthermore there are 3 e-Infrastructures.

Collaboration with ESFRI

The Chair recapped that the launch of the 2016 ESFRI Roadmap update took place on 25 September 2014 in Trieste. The presentations are available at the CoPoRI website: <http://www.copori.eu/1435.php>. The Chair presented at this meeting “The Development of the European e-Infrastructure Landscape”. The deadline for new proposals for ESFRI projects is 31 March 2015. Proposals should be submitted through the ESFRI country delegates with support from at least 3 countries. Proposals will be required to answer five questions related to e-Infrastructures. The Strategic Working Groups (SWGs) will evaluate the proposals and the e-IRG delegates in the SWGs will evaluate the e-needs (e-Infrastructure needs). To have a common view

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these e-needs will be discussed in the overarching working group. The 2016 ESFRI Roadmap will contain a landscape analysis of RIs in the EU and internationally. e-IRG will provide input on data management and e-Infrastructures to this landscape section.

Health and Food: Sergi Girona stated that after Trieste the Health and Food SWG members will have the next meeting on 12 January 2015. However, there are more frequent calls and the next one will take place next Monday 17 November.

Physical Sciences and Engineering: Françoise Genova stated that the PSE group is chaired by Giorgio Rossi and that they had a meeting to prepare for the Trieste launch. Their next meeting is next week (on 17 November also). For Trieste they prepared a physical map of all RIs (which for this group is telescopes, accelerators, etc.). They are also collecting draft inputs from the different sub-groups on the different elements for the landscape analysis.

Innovation WG: Leif Laaksonen reported that the group had a meeting on 9 October in Paris. The group is working on a document with 5 main parts (including innovation management models, industry relations, IPR, metrics) and there is good input for the different parts, but not a homogeneous document. It may require a professional editor to make it coherent. It was not clear whether this will be used for the new ESFRI roadmap.

Environment: Arjen van Rijn stated that he attended the Environment SWG meeting in September, where he presented the vision of the e-Infrastructure landscape in Europe. The questions received from the SWG members were like how should I apply for PRACE resources or for other computing resources at EU scale, or how is the ESFRI and e-IRG cooperation evolving. Overall it was a fruitful meeting.

Social Sciences and Cultural Innovation: Panos Argyrakis reported that he received a first version of the landscape analysis and that a meeting of the group will be organised on 18 December 2014. He will be sharing the document as part of the Over-Arching Working Group.

Energy: Norbert Meyer stated that the Energy SWG meeting was clashing with the e-IRG meeting in Milan in September and that the next meeting will take place in the beginning of next year. He also received a draft landscape analysis, for which a final version is planned for March next year.

Implementation Working Group: Roar Skålin reported that from now until the end of March the 16 ESFRI projects from the previous roadmap will first be assessed. The implementation SWG is currently discussing the methodology, which will be concluded by the 27 November. The areas that they deal with are planning, governance, cost and financial commitments, HR policies, etc. Then in April the group will start working on the new Roadmap proposal. He reminded that it is a small group of 7 people and already 3-4 are from the EC. There is heavy work and there is a plan

for several meetings. On a question of the Chair whether he was considered a full and active member, he answered positively.

On a question from Norbert Meyer, Yannis Ioannidis stated that people in ESFRI really welcome e-IRG involvement and the experts in the SWGs. Many people realise the horizontal nature of e-Infrastructures and that building the thematic RIs should be based on using as much as possible from the horizontal ones. Obviously there are still different levels of understanding (e.g. some still want to make their own e-Infrastructures), but the level of cooperation is significant. Overall, he stated that there are no red flags and that so far all look good and exciting.

Collaboration with other initiatives

Leif Laaksonen stated that RDA will be also working and producing policy documents in the next period, thus he proposed to discuss how e-IRG can benefit from such other efforts, avoiding competition and possibly reorganising itself (taking into account such efforts). He added that RDA is mentioned as a stakeholder in the data area of the EC Work Programmes and that it will be providing input to the next Work Programme 2016-2017.

The Chair agreed that there are indeed other efforts that can provide policy input. The niche of the e-IRG group is that it is an independent body of national delegates, representing their countries not affiliated with any specific initiative or project. He mentioned that RDA is welcome to produce policy documents and then e-IRG may provide feedback from its view (independent national delegates).

Ivan Maric stated that there is a difference between e-IRG and the other initiatives in that e-IRG is overlooking e-Infrastructures, while the other initiatives are specific for some component, and that e-IRG can invite such other members as observers. But e-IRG should look into such other papers and see how to work on these, and possibly influence the e-IRG White Papers and Roadmaps.

There were also another views stating that it may be the case that e-IRG is seen as competitor, as it may be influencing Work Programmes to specific directions in the different areas (e.g. HPC). It was also mentioned that some of the RDA efforts and consequences will be impactful to be reaching the e-IRG meetings.

White Paper 2014

Rosette Vandenbroucke presented the current state of the White Paper 2014, which addresses “Best practices for the use of e-Infrastructures by large scale Research Infrastructures”. She explained that it will be used as background material for both the ones who prepare proposals for the new ESFRI Roadmap and ESFRI when evaluating the new ESFRI Roadmap proposals. Therefore the final version has to be available before ESFRI’s deadline of 31 March 2015. Rosette Vandenbroucke then discussed the structure and contents of the White Paper 2014. The

introductory part for the networking area (GEANT) was already included as an example and similar ones should be prepared for the other areas. It would be great if delegates have suitable documents from other projects/initiatives (GEANT, EGI, PRACE, RDA, EUDAT, OpenAIRE, etc.). Regarding the timing she proposed two versions, an early version available for the ESFRI Roadmap proposal writers (possibly before Christmas) and a final version to be approved in the first Riga meeting in February. The indicators however need to be prepared before the early version.

The Chair stated that in the Guidelines for Application for the ESFRI roadmap, the related indicators are of pretty general nature and recommended that e-Infrastructure-related indicators should be of the same type.

A very concrete plan of how the e-Infrastructure will be used may not be always feasible. Possibly an analysis of how they arrive on e-needs may be enough. References to the national infrastructures can be given, possibly as points of access to EU ones. The definition of e-Infrastructure vs. Research Infrastructure and a definition of the Commons will be very useful. It was recommended to give some advice on how to budget the cost of e-Infrastructures and also on sustainability of the e-Infrastructure components, especially if the proposers plan to integrate with the existing e-Infrastructures. It was proposed to consult and/or refer to existing documents such as the e-IRG Blue Paper on Data Management.

Charter of Access to RIs

Rosette Vandebroucke presented the status of the Charter for Access to Research Infrastructures document. The document was evaluated by several RIs including e-Infrastructures, while on 24 September there was a stakeholders meeting (without the evaluating RIs) looking at the results of the evaluations. On 8 October there was a follow-up workshop with both the stakeholders and evaluators and useful discussions took place. On a meeting on 24 November consensus on the text and a formal approval for publication will be sought within the EC. The document is expected to go for publication at the end of December or January. Rosette Vandebroucke also commented that this is a final draft and there is no intention to make significant changes. Regarding the e-IRG comment that e-Infrastructures were not included in the title, Rosette Vandebroucke stated that in the very first page (preamble) there is a sentence stating “including e-Infrastructures”. The Chair agreed that the document has been steadily improved and now it is in a much better state. And also the inclusiveness of e-Infrastructures in the preamble is better. And he reminded that as e-IRG is one of the stakeholders behind this document, it should not endorse it but only comment and try to integrate its comments. The Chair closed the topic by thanking Rosette Vandebroucke for putting a lot of work on the document.

Legal Issues

The Chair introduced the topic stating that the e-IRG Task Force on Legal Issues chaired by Bob Day with many external experts produced a very good report. The EC wanted to follow-up on this

report in an EC-funded tender project, but did not receive good proposals on the tender issued. The goal of the tender was to examine the current situation on legal issues and tackle the barriers. Other goals were to provide support to EC for the identification for seamless access for researchers, to strengthen the ERA communication and align national and EU approaches. EC is now turning back to e-IRG, on whether it can take this further, or this topic can be included in the upcoming Work Programme WP2016-2017.

The Chair stated that the paper includes recommendations and that it may be better to include the follow-up in the next Work Programme. It may be difficult for e-IRGSP4 to take this up and it requires special skills (legal ones). The Chair proposed to arrange a small meeting with Bob Day, Andrew Cormack and possibly other legal experts to discuss the follow-up actions. It was agreed that the EC will call for the meeting (Action), and e-IRG provides the list of names to invite.

Plan-E

On 29-30 September 2014 the Platform of National eScience Centres in Europe ("PLAN-E") has been created in a constituting meeting in Amsterdam. This platform aims to bundle present knowledge and expertise across Europe and to define a practical work program towards close cooperation between centres involved in conducting eScience. Patrick Aerts (NL) has presented PLAN-E during the e-IRG workshop. e-IRG Chair Sverker Holmgren has participated with his Swedish capacity in the PLAN-E meeting in November. The Chair explained that the main idea of PLAN-E is to get a platform for discussions among e-Science centres. It is a research effort, which was deemed relevant to the Nordic eScience Globalisation Initiative (NeGI). And NEGI reacted positively on this stating that they should participate. The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the initiative were then explained and it was stated that it includes a sentence "to communicate best practices on e-Science". In the first meeting there was a large scale of actors (e-Science centres, providers, research bodies, etc.) and it was pointed out that in the Nordic countries the e-Infrastructures part (Nordic e-Infrastructure Collaboration) is separated from the e-Science one. The Chair closed saying that there is a limited number of research efforts using advanced ICT tools.

Election of the e-IRG Chair

Sverker Holmgren was re-elected for another two years (2015-2016)

Activities during the Italian EU Presidency

Enzo Valente reminded that the following events will be taking place:

- The next day and the day after there is the Cultural Heritage conference taking place.
- On 11-12 December there is the RDA conference in Rome, organised and sponsored by RDA and CNR.

The Chair thanked Enzo Valente for the excellent hosting and the dinners both in Milan and in Rome.

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Activities during the Latvian EU Presidency

Ilmars Slaidins reminded that Latvia will have the EU presidency in the first half of 2015. The proposed dates for the first delegates meeting during the Latvian EU Presidency are 16 February 2015 (whole day) or 16-17 February 2015 (noon-to-noon). The meeting will be held at the Riga Technical University, which is 15 to 30 minutes from the airport under normal conditions. The dates for the workshop and the second delegates meeting are being discussed with the Ministry. Then on the next event in June there were several options, including a joint meeting with ESFRI, again in Riga. This could be on 2-3 or 2-4 June, combined with the WIRE conference taking place on 4-5 June. It was agreed to investigate whether the e-IRG meeting will be co-located with the ESFRI event, and then finalise the date.

Activities during the Luxembourg EU Presidency

Antoine Barthel explained that Luxembourg will have the EU Presidency in the second half of 2015. The proposed date for the first delegates meeting during the Luxembourg EU Presidency is 17 September 2015. This meeting will take place in Luxembourg City in the conference premises of the Ministry. The idea is to have a joint meeting with ESFRI on 16 September 2015 if ESFRI has its meeting on 15 September 2015. The workshop and second delegates meeting will be organised by the NREN of Luxembourg (RESTENA) most probably on the New University Campus in Esch Belval, near Luxembourg City.

AOB

Dietmar Kuhn decided not to stand for another period as Austrian Delegate and to step down because he is a friend of rotating jobs and someone possibly more familiar with IT stuff can take up his position. He remarked that he profited a lot from his e-IRG position and reported back a lot of good messages. He hopes to be able to follow the e-IRG workshops in the future. The Chair thanked Dietmar Kuhn for his contributions and gave his best wishes.