



Public summary of the 43rd e-IRG delegates meeting

23 November 2015

Campus Belval of the University of Luxembourg

Reports and News

Report from the e-IRG Chair and Board

The e-IRG Chair Sverker Holmgren informed the delegates about the main meetings/events where he was present or invited, including:

- pre-RDA plenary workshop “e-Infrastructures and RDA for data-intensive science”, September 22, Paris.
- ERA Forum, 19 October. Could not participate; was replaced by Lajos Balint.
- ESFRI Forum meeting, 20 October, Prague.
- European Parliament event, 10 November, Brussels. “Open innovation, open scholarship and open infrastructures – insights to the European Digital Single Market”. Members of the DG CNECT cabinet presented the new strategy on HPC, OSC and other aspects of computing and data. The figures presented are 6 billion euro (4 billion for HPC). Funding has to be provided by the Member States so a lot of discussion is expected. e-IRG can play an important role.

It was suggested to the e-IRG Chair to visit Member States and participate in national events. The Chair stated that he is open to receiving specific invitations.

News from the Commission

DG CNECT

Anni Hellman informed on the following activities of DG CNECT:

- The information day on 30 November will go on.
- Draft Council Conclusions on ERA related groups. Working Groups on the knowledge transfer area are proposed to be merged under that domain to increase efficiency.
- In general terms some discussions in EC about organisational changes, also in DG CNECT. Outcome expected in April.
- Work on the Communication on OSC is still on-going.
- Work is starting for WP18-20. There is a first draft of the timetable. Foresights exercises are already on-going. Consultations with e-IRG and the Advisory Group on RIs including e-Infrastructures will start in March 2016 (until 1st of June). There is also a strategy for consultation with stakeholders. Consultation with the committees ends in 3Q16. Strategic programming document by end of 3Q16. Drafting the programme will start in 4Q16. The DG RTD WP18-20 is mainly based on consultation with ESFRI.
- The mandate of the Expert Advisory Group on RIs expires end of 2015 and the final report is expected then. That report will contain 3 parts (data, innovation, sustainability). The draft can be circulated. Renewal is on-going. 25-50% of the members have to be changed. The Chairs of ESFRI and e-IRG will be invited again. There will be a meeting on 3 December to agree.

DG RTD

- The NCPs are the first entry point for support in WP16-17.

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- RTD will have a stakeholder meeting on OSC on 30 November. The Chair cannot attend and the Executive Board has appointed Arjen van Rijn to present the e-Infrastructure Commons there. Arjen has 2 slides on the Commons and how it relates to OSC.
 - The High Level Expert Group on the European Open Science Cloud has been created by the EC. It is chaired by Barend Mons (NL). Arjen van Rijn has been appointed to be the link with this group and has already exchanged material.

It was stated that e-IRG has now the opportunity to give the Member States an opinion about the OSC. The main purpose would be to give a coherent view of what the OSC is. This has to be done rather quickly to be of any importance.

News from ESFRI

Yannis Ioannidis reported that the new roadmap will be launched in a special event in March 2016. e-IRG had an important contribution in the process. 16 RIs have been approved (not final yet, some fine tuning to be done). In the ESFRI meeting in December in Brussels the main parts of the Roadmap will be agreed. Planning for the 2018 Roadmap update has already started.

On the invitation from the Competitiveness Council to ESFRI to align national efforts for funding e-Infrastructures Yannis Ioannidis said that ESFRI wants to do that with e-IRG. The group has not yet started because besides technical expertise policy and financial expertise is required. The final grouping is to be formed.

Report from e-IRGSP4

A written report was included in the agenda package. The report of the joint ESFRI e-IRG networking session at ICT2015 is available at the e-IRG web site.

Rosette Vandenbroucke informed that a consultation for the Charter of Access on RIs is ongoing. In a meeting on 27 November the consultation feedback will be discussed and it will be decided if any changes are needed.

Report of recent developments in the member countries

Sergi Girona has stepped down as Chair of the PRACE Board of Directors. Alison Kennedy is the new Chair.

Bulgaria has a new supercomputer. It will be fully operational in December and be accessible to all SEE countries.

The next European University Information Systems (EUNIS) meeting will be held in Thessaloniki on 6-10 June 2016.

The new French RI Roadmap is being prepared and will be presented on 24-25 March 2016. In December a draft version will be available.

Croatia: The national roadmap will be updated in the next few months. A call has been launched for Centres of Excellence (to be included in the roadmap). New supercomputer in the top-500 list. National Fedora-based system to setup repositories. New 7-year project to digitise all primary and secondary schools. Preparatory work on documentation cloud.

Italy: IPERION (Integrated Platform for the European Research Infrastructure ON Culture Heritage) became an ERIC. The EC announced an Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) for building a big HPC machine. It will be led by Luxembourg and Italy, France



and possibly Spain will participate. New initiative on machine learning. €100 million investment in GARR network (fibre everywhere including the schools).

Belgium: The Flemish region has decided on a new supercomputer and has selected NEC. The Belgian e-Infrastructures day will be held on 14 December 2015. Anni Hellman will be one of the speakers.

Estonia: Next call for RI Roadmap projects. Next year more funding will be available for developing the national infrastructure. A data cloud is being setup that will mainly be used for the government services.

Germany: National Grid Initiative in 2014 and now in 2015. The institutions are paying, not the government. Austria will be under the umbrella of the German NGI.

The Netherlands: A majority in Parliament is in favour but the Ministry of Economic Affairs does not provide the money promised for infrastructure. There is a permanent committee for research infrastructures including e-Infrastructures probably as a sub-committee.

Norway: The new Roadmap will distinguish between RIs and e-Infrastructures. Not decided yet about data. If grouped under e-Infrastructure there may be a risk for not gluing with the thematic areas and vice versa.

Nordforsk's Nordic Action Plan was submitted to the Nordic Council of Ministers. The Council decided to implement it but unfortunately did not allocated money so Nordforsk has to get funding from the Nordic member states. NEIC will deal with the implementation.

Collaboration with ESFRI and other initiatives

Draft text for the e-Infrastructure landscape analysis of the ESFRI 2016 Roadmap

ESFRI has invited e-IRG to draft the text on e-Infrastructures as horizontal layer for ESFRI projects. The support project has created a text based on the guidelines document. It was discussed in the OAWG that was engaged in the ESFRI evaluation and in the Executive Board and was sent to ESFRI. ESFRI discussed it on 8th December with the goal to agree on the text. The Chair said that although the text is in a fairly final version comments are now still possible.

Several comments were made:

1. There is no explicit reference to data-driven science, just a generic reference. Open data should be more highlighted.
2. There is no reference to the OSC. It could be useful to present the e-Infrastructure Commons as basis for OSC and include references to existing projects on clouds.
3. An innovation test-bed for researchers can be also included. E.g. GEANT dark fibre service.
4. A mechanism is needed to enable synergies between international, national and regional levels.

The first two can be easily integrated in the first part. The last one can be also brought into the Roadmap.

It was agreed to include the proposed changes and to send the document for a check to the main e-Infrastructure initiatives. The Executive Board was mandated to finalise the document.



New ToR for the ESFRI Working Group on e-Infrastructures

The Chair summarised the progress on the working group to address the invitation from the Competitiveness Council to ESFRI to look at the mechanism for coordinating investments of e-Infrastructure. A new ToR has been created which gives the ESFRI Executive Board a stronger role by being able to invite experts from ministries. ESFRI will reopen the nomination process. ESFRI wants to collaborate with e-IRG. The Chair proposed to send the message to ESFRI that e-IRG is happy to contribute and also that e-IRG would like to contribute to the work on the roadmap 2018 update.

Digital ERA Forum meeting in Lisbon

The Chair was invited to this event but could not attend due to other commitments. Lajos Balint first explained the historic roots of DERAf and briefly reported on the 5th meeting in October 2015 in Lisbon. Jan Wiebelitz also met the Chair of DERAf who said that a subgroup of DERAf led by Dean Flanders (Switzerland) will write a document on OSC. He has sent him the landscape analysis document. It was reported that the DERAf subgroup on OSC might be kept after the mandate of EOSC Expert Group ends. More details about the timeline of the subgroup will be sought.

EGI Community Forum and Workshop on the Open Science Cloud

Rosette Vandenbroucke reported from the EGI Community Forum and Workshop on the Open Science Cloud in Bari. Augusto Burgueño explained in his WP16-17 presentation that there will be a group that will evaluate all proposals/projects including KPIs/costs across all projects (the EINFRA-12-2017 projects). Anni Hellman explained that projects will collect KPIs and ingest into e-IRG. The support project will collect the KPIs and e-IRG will work at the strategic level. Sergi Girona said that the HPC project EXDCI has a dedicated work package dealing with KPIs. The workshop itself was mostly made of panels. The discussions addressed limitations and barriers, ownership, long-time sustainability of data. Last session on governance. The slides with the conclusions of the panels of the workshop on the Open Science Cloud are available¹.

e-IRG Roadmap

At the September e-IRG meeting it was agreed to have available at the November meeting the roadmap structure, agreement on its *raison d'être* and on the method to create it, and candidate topics with explanatory text. Marcin Lawenda and Erik Fledderus presented the progress.

In the presentation and the discussion with the delegates the following issues were addressed.

- The document structure is: Introduction, Executive Summary, Vision, Landscape Analysis, Policy Actions, Concrete 'hot' topics, OSC.
- It was agreed that a Landscape Analysis is definitively needed besides the one in the ESFRI Roadmap because we address more than RIs.
- The *raison d'être* is to provide a view on the main trends of the e-Infrastructure developments (technology and beyond, e.g. open science). It summarises and organises

¹ <https://indico.egi.eu/indico/getFile.py/access?contribId=159&sessionId=62&resId=0&materialId=slides&confId=2544>



our knowledge on e-Infrastructure aspects and underlines the-IRG position at the EU level.

- The target audiences of the Roadmap are the EC and national organisations (ministries, research organisations), organisations both for large RIs and for the long tail of science and large collaborations (e.g. Human Brain Project). The primary target audience of the e-IRG Roadmap is the Member States.
- The focus is a shift from technical to policy related (stewardship including funding schemes, governance models, incentive structure and policies).
- It was agreed that the title Roadmap is still appropriate. It is better to keep it for continuity. Subtitles were suggested but no decision on these was taken.
- The delegates were invited to look in their national roadmaps at the balance between policy and research aspects.
- The delegates were invited to suggest key technology developments that the roadmap should discuss. What are the main challenges?
- Investigate various scenarios in the Roadmap as input to decision makers because the situation is much more complex than a few years ago.
- Analyse the different pathways/opportunities and provide concrete conclusions/recommendations or if we agree that we disagree on some points, then at least a few options.
- It was agreed to link sections 3 (Vision) and 7 (Open Science Cloud) explaining in section 3 that the Open Science Cloud is an incarnation of the Commons.
- It was decided to inform ESFRI that they will be invited to provide contributions for the e-IRG Roadmap.
- The delegates were invited to contribute to the creation of the Roadmap. The roadmap working group is still open and delegates can sign in for only one topic. The support project will send an invitation with a call for contribution.
- It was concluded that the e-IRG Roadmap is a policy-oriented document that can also include technology areas that may influence e-Infrastructures and are relevant for scientific users.

e-IRG bylaws, mission and vision

The updated mission and vision, objectives and bylaws were presented.

Mission and vision

The text was approved with the addition of the word 'both'. The new mission and vision is:

e-IRG is a strategic body to facilitate integration in the area of European e-infrastructures and connected services, within and between member states, at the European level and globally.

The mission of e-IRG is to support both coherent, innovative and strategic European e-infrastructure policy making and the development of convergent and sustainable e-infrastructure services.

At the next meeting it can be discussed if a register of the delegates' interests should be kept.

Bylaws

In the discussion of the bylaws the following comments were made:



- It was agreed to review the bylaws every three years. Also observers are to be reconfirmed every three years.
- It was concluded that there should be a voting procedure when there is no consensus..
- Stay with two delegates per country (historically one expert one from the Ministry), however, one vote per country.
- Remove the sentence “Members may replace their delegates whenever they deem appropriate”.
- Add the Chair in the sentence where delegations should provide their own funding.

AOB

Ivan Maric said that the 11 March event coincides with a GÉANT symposium so a joint calendar would be useful.

Closing

The Chair thanked all participants for the constructive discussion.