37th e-IRG delegates meeting

Athens, Greece, 10-11 June 2014

Public Summary

Status of Switzerland

In February 2014, following a referendum, Switzerland imposed quotas on the free movement of persons. In response, the EU has decided to freeze the negotiations on the participation of Switzerland as an Associated State in Horizon 2020 and the Erasmus+ programmes. According to the e-IRG bylaws, the e-IRG membership is limited to the EU Member States, Associated States within the EU Research Framework Programmes and the European Commission. In result, Switzerland cannot continue to be a full e-IRG member. Following a proposal of the e-IRG Executive Board, the e-IRG delegates decided to accept Switzerland as an observer.

Permanent observer DG RTD

Regarding the increased collaboration with ESFRI and DG RTD, the e-IRG Executive Board proposes to the plenum to grant the observer status to DG RTD. This would enable a bidirectional information flow between DG RTD and e-IRG. The e-IRG delegates decided to accept DG RTD as an observer. The Head of Unit of the Research Infrastructure Unit of DG RTD (Unit B3) will be invited to participate in e-IRG or they will nominate another person as the main participant.

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 four meetings in April, May and June 2014. He had participated in a meeting of the Horizon 2020 Expert Advisory Group on Research Infrastructures including e-Infrastructures and gave an e-IRG presentation. Furthermore, he had had an informal meeting with ESFRI chair John Womersley.

The e-IRG Chair informed the delegates about upcoming events; Roar Skålin will represent e-IRG at the ESRFI meeting on 17 June in Bergen, Norway, Rosette Vandenbroucke will represent e-IRG in the meeting of the Horizon 2020 Expert Advisory Group on Research Infrastructures including e-Infrastructures on 18 June in Brussels, Belgium. Furthermore, e-IRG is invited to participate in a meeting of the Connect Advisory Forum on 20 June 2014 and in the Digital Are Forum in November 2014 as an observer.

Finally, the e-IRG Chair reported on the following areas where input from e-IRG is needed: input to the EC regarding the strategic direction of the Work Programme 2016-2017 and input to ESFRI regarding the "Call for Proposals" for the updated ESFRI roadmap. The Chair stated further that EC

Calls INFRASUP-7 and INFRASUP-5 provided an opportunity to facilitate the implementation of the e-Infrastructure Commons.

European Commission: Anni Hellman reported that there would be a Programme Committee meeting on Research Infrastructures on 12 June 2014. The European Commission will be proposing some changes mostly on the RIs part (on the legal form). There is also a change by the EC on the prioritised funding proposal by ESFRI that may raise different opinions. Anni Hellman added that according to new Horizon 2020 rules there was a maximum of 8 months to finalise contracts. Finally, Anni Hellman added that after the European Parliament elections a New Commission was expected around November but it might be in the beginning of 2015. Changes at the DG or directorate-level are possible. The new Commissioner will be briefed most probably late January 2015 and the next Work Programme will be gradually approved after that.

ESFRI: Yannis Ioannidis reported that the Competitiveness Council had asked ESFRI to assess the status of the ESFRI projects (ranking in three categories: good, kind of ok, not ok) and then again asked for prioritisation. In addition, the prioritisation exercise was also linked with EC funding support. In the end, ESFRI came up with 3 projects considered as key priorities, 9 very important ones that would benefit from more funding, 4 more in the Cultural Heritage area that need some an injection of extra funding. Yannis Ioannidis stated that it was not clear how the EC would react. He then mentioned that the top 3 projects were ELIXIR (The European life-sciences Infrastructure for biological Information), EPOS (The European Plate Observing System), and ESS (European Spallation Source). Concerning the new ESFRI Roadmap, Yannis Ioannidis stated that the applicants for the new ESFRI Roadmap most probably should be discipline-based to provide a cohesive picture. He said further that the acceptance "bar" would be put higher, so it was expected that there would be fewer projects in the Roadmap.

e-IRGSP3 and e-IRGSP4: Rossend Llurba explained that the extended e-IRGSP3 project ended at the end of June, while e-IRGSP4 was expected to start retroactively in the beginning of June with an overlap of one month. The new project will be coordinated by Leibnitz University of Hannover. The Chair thanked Rossend Llurba for having successfully led the support project for more than 3,5 years and the plenum applauded Rossend Llurba.

Greece: Panos Argyrakis referred to the GRNET Cloud initiative Okeanos (Ocean), whose software license created a dilemma and split the decision makers in two: those who believed that the software license should be open since Okeanos is funded publicly, and the others supporting that the intellectual property needs to be protected and exploited.

The Netherlands: Kees Neggers reported that as of 1 July 2014 he would be acting as the interim director of SURF, which is the umbrella organisation for e-Infrastructures in the Netherlands.

Spain: Juan Miguel Gonzalez Aranda (ES) highlighted the regional perspective of Europe that needs to be supported and referred to the recommendations and conclusions from a workshop "on the use of structural funds for the construction of distributed e-Infrastructures supporting environment initiatives" that took place in Brussels on 12 May co-organised by DG CONNECT, DG RTD, and DG REGIO. Juan Miguel Gonzalez Aranda referred to the report from the workshop entitled Conclusions, Main Recommendations & Risks Identified stating that "special attention must be paid to the expected impact on the regional industrial sectors", that "a bottom-up approach from regional nodes is essential", that "existing knowledge and services related with biodiversity and environment information from cooperating initiatives among territories should be better connected" and that all the related topics "demand the involvement of the interested regions".

France: Françoise Genova reported that in France work had been done to establish a national numeric strategy dealing also with e-infrastructure services, numeric modelling etc.

ESFRI

Relation between e-IRG Roadmap and ESFRI Roadmap: The Chair reported that on 7 May he had an informal meeting with the ESFRI chair, John Womersley, and discussed the Working Groups, the ESFRI membership in e-IRG and its groups, the role of the e-IRG overarching WG and the process for setting up the call for proposals for the Roadmap. There will be a call for proposals for the ESFRI roadmap update and the call will include e-Infrastructure related questions/issues. The Chair also reported that e-IRG should provide this set of e-Infrastructure questions and he mentioned that this set of questions would be discussed in the ESFRI meeting in Bergen (17 June) and thus e-IRG needs to act very quickly. The e-IRG delegates agreed to provide such input to ESFRI and formulated the following questions:

- Specify the data policy and the plan for data management, storage and access. Describe the use of electronic services and portals, databases, sample and publication archives, etc.
- Specify needs and requirements for the use and development of e-infrastructure, such as resources for data storage, computing and networking, tools for data management, access, security, collaboration and other types of electronic services.
- How do you envision addressing these needs?

In addition, it was agreed to include the following points in the accompanying letter to ESFRI:

- e-IRG agrees to contribute to the ESFRI roadmap process, by providing this set of e-Infrastructure-related questions.
- The e-IRG Overarching WG can offer assistance in the evaluation of the proposals with emphasis on the e-Infrastructures issues, and in particular with the above questions.
- The current questions help the projects to consider their needs for e-infrastructure services and their policy and plans for data management. This includes possible use of existing European e-infrastructure services and contribution to common e-infrastructure services in Europe.
- Ask for the other questions included in the ESFRI Roadmap process, and in case the above

questions are not in-line with the rest of the questions, offer support to adapt them.

Reports from the e-IRG ESFRI working groups and the ESFRI Strategic working groups:

Norbert Meyer (ESFRI SWG Energy) reported that he would act as a member only.

Arjen Van Rijn (ESFRI SWG Environmental Sciences) reported that he was warmly welcomed in the WG and that he brought the discussion on the e-Infrastructure requirements for the Environmental projects into the group. The top e-Infrastructure priorities identified were data and software, PIDs, service discovery and catalogues, reference models, education and training.

Sergi Girona (ESFRI SWG Health & Food) reported that the WG had organised a meeting in Athens in April but that he was not able to attend.

Françoise Genova (ESFRI SWG Physical Sciences & Engineering) stated that she was also warmly welcomed as a full member of the group and that a landscape document was being prepared. The group has requested input on data management from Françoise Genova.

Panos Argyrakis (ESFRI SWG Social and Cultural Innovation) reported that he had not received any news from the Working Group.

Roar Skålin (ESFRI Implementation Group) reported that there would be a meeting in Bergen in the 29th weak of the year, during which David Bohmer would present the updated ToR of the WG.

Leif Laaksonen (ESFRI Innovation WG) attended the Innovation WG meeting, which takes place in parallel to the e-IRG delegate meeting.

Coordination of European e-Infrastructures

The Chair reported that there had been several activities related to the coordination of e-Infrastructures including several Horizon 2020 calls and the preparation of the Work Programme 2016-17. He stated that e-IRG could help people come together, as it had happened at the Athens workshop, and thus catalyse the discussions on coordination activities. e-IRG can also provide input to the EC on what is needed for the realisation of the e-Infrastructure Commons so that this information can be used in the evaluation of the call topics. The Chair explained that the Executive Board had asked the Working Group on e-Infrastructure Commons to do some preparatory work to provide input for the Work Programme 2016-17. The Chair added that Anni Hellman had presented during the workshop a set of questions posed to the Advisory Group on RIs, on which input will be received.

Anni Hellman explained that the e-IRG input should be received as soon as possible and preferably before 18 June when the Advisory Group on RIs would meet and provide its feedback. The EC will take into account all inputs and prepare a draft document after that. It was explained that the format was not important. In the end, it was agreed to provide input in time for the Advisory

Group meeting by 17 June. The WG on e-Infrastructure Commons in collaboration with the secretariat will prepare the document. A short feedback cycle with the e-IRG delegates will be attempted.

INFRASUPP-5 and INFRASUPP-7 Calls

Rosette Vandenbroucke reported that e-IRGSP4 had investigated the contents of Call INFRASUPP-7 and had seen opportunities to realise the collaboration with the main e-Infrastructure initiatives and possibly work towards their coordination, a topic on which e-IRG has already invested much energy.

e-IRG strongly supports such an e-Infrastructure coordination activity and the submission of a proposal in INFRASUPP-7. The e-IRG as a neutral body encourages the proposal consortium partners to report regularly to the e-IRG plenum and to actively seek the e-IRG plenum for advice during the execution of the project.

Jan Wiebelitz reported that the INFRASUPP-5 Call was about the continuation of CoPoRI[1] (Communication and Policy development for Research Infrastructures in Europe), a support project for ESFRI activities. e-IRGSP4 will be establishing a link with the CoPoRI follow-up. Yannis Ioannidis added that the CoPoRI follow-up will provide close support to ESFRI and the ESFRI chair and become *the* support project of ESFRI, similar to the e-IRG support projects.

White Paper 2014

Rossend Llurba stated that the last e-IRG White Paper, published in 2013, elaborated the vision towards the European e-Infrastructure Commons that was introduced in the e-IRG Roadmap 2012. The next e-IRG White Paper was originally planned for 2015. However, at the previous delegates meeting in Athens it was decided to start now the production of a White Paper focusing on current issues. The Overarching Working Group was appointed as Editorial Board for this White Paper and the Support Programme was asked to draft the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the White Paper. The Support Project will also support the Overarching WG in the editorial work.

Roadmap 2014

The Chair stated that at the previous delegates meeting in Athens it had been decided to create an update of the e-IRG Roadmap with a new structure as a living document. The main idea is to update the Roadmap when it is needed to reflect progress and changes in the e-Infrastructure

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[1] www.copori.eu

landscape. Regular assessments, e.g. annual, should be done. Each update will include new or adapted recommendations and actions. It was proposed that the first assessment of the e-IRG Roadmap (whether it needs to be updated) is done in September 2014. Regarding the responsibility for the update it was proposed that each delegate could propose to update (a specific part of) the roadmap. A request is sent to the EB and the EB then initiates the update process and includes the update as agenda item on the next delegates meeting. A small assessment team appointed by the plenum will do the annual assessment. Each update of the Roadmap requires endorsement by the plenum. When a major update of the Roadmap is needed, the plenum will appoint an editorial team led by a delegate.

Major horizontal e-Infrastructure initiatives and other stakeholders can be invited to provide input and feedback from the beginning of the production process on. The exact model for their contribution needs to be defined further.

Activities during the Italian EU Presidency

The schedule for e-IRG related events during the Italian EU Presidency:

- e-IRG delegates meeting, 15 September, 11:00 am – 4:30 pm Milan Location: University of Milan Biccoca, Rectorate meeting room.
- CoPoRI/ESFRI workshop on 2015-2016 – Roadmap launch event: 25 September, Trieste
- ESFRI meeting: 26 September, Trieste
- E-IRG workshop: 10 November 11:00 am – early afternoon, Rome
- E-IRG delegates meeting, 11 November, early afternoon – 12 November noon, Rome
- Workshop on Cultural Heritage, 13-14 November, Rome

Activities during the Latvian EU Presidency

Latvia will have the Presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2015. The related Ministry was informed about the e-IRG events. Most probably the meetings will take place in Riga, Latvia. In addition, a Latvian delegate will join the Executive Boards starting on 1 July.

secretariat for the organisation of the joint meeting.