

Catania Workshop, 2 March 2009

Summary Report

Around 150-200 people attended the “Transition Towards EGI” workshop, on Monday 2 March 2009, in Catania, Italy. This workshop was held during the 4th EGEE User Forum / OGF 25 event. It provided an overview of the situation of the EGI project, and focused on the processes associated with the transition from EGEE and other existing Grid infrastructures in Europe to the EGI model. The EGI workshop was composed of a series of presentations from the EGI_Design Study (EGI_DS) team, to which users and representatives of non European Grid infrastructures answered by sharing their expectations and their views about EGI.

Jürgen Knobloch (EGI_DS Technical Director, CERN) welcomed the participants, and introduced the few presentations of the day.

Ludek Matyska (EGI_DS Project Director, CESNET) began the series of presentations by providing an overview on the **Status of the EGI_DS**. He presented the different project partners and the goal of the EGI Design Study: to design a new organizational model of a sustainable pan-European Grid Infrastructure (the Blueprint and the function description); to secure the endorsement of the proposed design; and to prepare and set up the new organization (the EGI.org and the EGI project). He pointed out that the two first tasks have been successfully achieved (the EGI Policy board endorsed the Blueprint on 20 January 2009), and called for a rapid achievement of the last step – the set up of the EGI organization. Matyska then presented the EGI Blueprint document, which includes practical information on the relevant requirements regarding the implementation, operation, user interaction with, and management of the corresponding infrastructure, as well as the preliminary budget outline. Matyska detailed the EGI business and financial model, and emphasised the need for a rapid set up of the coordinating body in order to complete the transition towards the EGI model. The next steps, according to Matyska, will involve the identification of the National Grid Initiatives (NGIs) which are prepared to collaborate within the EGI project.

Jürgen Knobloch then gave a presentation entitled **From Blueprint to EGI implementation**, in which he summarised the key points of the EGI Blueprint document, and detailed the next steps towards the implementation of the EGI project. Knobloch presented EGI as a partnership between NGIs, and a coordinating body (EGI.org), and explained the four main functions that will be carried out within EGI: Operations and security; Middleware; User community services; and External liaison tasks. He also pointed out that most activities will be performed by the NGIs. Knobloch then presented the main EGI actors, the EGI Management/Governance structure, the division of tasks between EGI.org and NGIs, and the resource allocation. Knobloch detailed the transition milestones, and the next steps towards the establishment of EGI.org. “Will it be possible to have EGI in place before the end of EGEE?” Knobloch asked. According to him, the Catania event is an excellent opportunity to make good progress towards this objective.

A discussion with the participants followed the two first talks, and the series of presentation continued, with **Diana Cristi** (INFN) addressing the topic of **User Community Services in the European Grid Infrastructure**. Cristi first talked about the representation of user communities and EIROForum members in the EGI Management structure. She then addressed the issue of the EGI Specialised Support Centers, which are established and governed by the user communities. She presented the EGEE perspective, and the example of Life Science SSC. As a conclusion, Cristi noted that the SSC model is generally viewed as a viable means of organizing the user community, and presented the future work that will have to be conducted in order to further clarify and develop the relationship between EGI and SSCs.

Mirco Mazzucato (INFN) introduced the fourth topic of the EGI workshop (Middleware), and the **Status report on UMD implementation**. He presented the main aims in this area, and the three working groups that have been created in order to begin the implementation work immediately. His general introduction was followed by the report from the Technical Working Group (presented by **Lawrence Field**); the report from the Software Process Working Group (presented by **Steven Newhouse**); and the report from the Operation and User Requirement Working Group (presented by **Michael Gronager**, NDGF Director). The three reports provide a UMD vision in these three specific areas.

Tiziana Ferrari (INFN) addressed the issue of **EGI Operations and Security** functions, and provided information on “the basic ingredients for a smooth EGI transition” in this field. She presented the e-infrastructure and its components, the EGI offer and its added value for research teams, resource providers,

and funding agencies. She also provided more information on NGI national and international tasks, NGI resources, and presented some of the issues that remain to be tackled concerning NGIs and Grid Infrastructure projects. Ferrari concluded saying that an Operation and Security task force is needed to technically define a transition plan and tackle the various related issues. Infrastructure projects operations, NGIs and EGI_DS representatives, as well as developers of operational tools should be involved in the discussion.

Guy Wormser (Institut des Grilles, CNRS) provided an overview of the **Actions required for NGIs**. Wormser encouraged the establishment of NGIs within each country. He summarised the NGI guidelines, and presented a survey realised among NGIs. The survey shows that 95% of NGIs are aware of these guidelines, with 85% seeing them as appropriate. 45% of NGIs are already complying to them, and 87% say that they will comply to them by the end of the year. Wormser then addressed the issue of the MoU, its rationale and goals, and told that an interim MoU is proposed by the Design Study to allow performing the following essential tasks: to identify the NGIs ready to formally commit; to identify and recruit the EGI.org director; and to prepare the EGI_EU project(s) for EGI cofinancing. The current MoU template is very similar to the MoU of the ILC Global Design Effort initiative, which was signed in 2006 by many funding agencies and research laboratories all over the world. Wormser concluded by recalling that the support for the project by the European Union and by Member States, but also by NGIs is crucial for the implementation of the project.

Per Öster (CSC) concluded the series of talks by presenting the **EGI Timeline**. He presented the latest milestones achieved (such as the call for egi.org location; the Blueprint final draft; its endorsement, etc.), and described the forthcoming ones: the decision on the location of EGI.org, the signing of MoU by NGIs, the hiring of the EGI.org Director, the preparation of the EU proposal, and the launch of the EGI.org.