

EGI Geneva workshop discusses blueprint for sustainable grids

The third European Grid Initiative (EGI) workshop was organized at CERN on 30 June, and was followed by the EGI Policy Board meeting on 1 July. More than 100 attendees took part in the CERN workshop and discussed the EGI blueprint proposal prepared by the EGI Design Study.

The purpose of this EGI blueprint draft is to assess a possible model for the future sustainable Grid infrastructure in Europe and to get feedback leading to the final blueprint that should be produced by September this year.

The director-general of CERN, Dr Robert Aymar, welcomed the participants, emphasizing the increasingly important role of Grids for science in Europe in many domains and in particular for CERN and its community. He underlined the importance of the ongoing and exceptional support given by the European Commission to European Grid projects. He wished success to the EGI project in building on these achievements by establishing a sustainable Grid infrastructure.

The organizer of the workshop, Jürgen Knobloch (CERN), expected feedback and critical questions from the national representatives and from Grid users, leading to a final blueprint in time for the next workshop in September. This will take place during the EGEE'08 conference in Istanbul, Turkey.

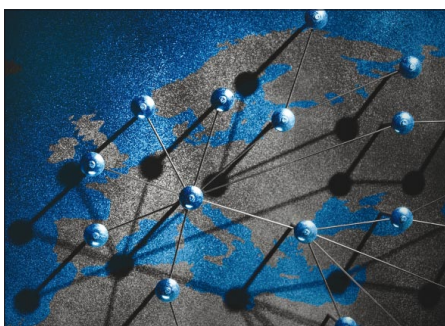
The EGI blueprint draft was presented to the audience by different members of the EGI Design Study team. Dieter Kranzlmüller (GUP) stressed in his overview the need for a sustainable European Grid infrastructure. Grid users need to be assured that their investment in Grids and long-term perspectives in the field will be protected. The EGI Grid infrastructure should be a large-scale production infrastructure built on national Grids that interoperate seamlessly at many levels. The infrastructure should offer reliable and predictable services to a wide range of applications.

Kranzlmüller also named the key players. The EGI will include both the EGI organization and National Grid Initiatives (NGIs), which are recognized national bodies that ensure operations of the Grid infrastructure in each country. Representation will include that the requirements of the scientific community and the resource providers are met.

The role of the EGI organization will be to facilitate interaction and collaboration between the NGIs and to provide a



The participants enjoy a break at the EGI Geneva workshop, which was held at CERN.



The main reach of the EGI Design Study.

common managerial framework for the pan-European Grid infrastructure. The EGI Council would be the sole governing and decision-making body of the EGI.

The EGI operations, middleware and user support questions, awoke vivid discussions. Tiziana Ferrari (INFN) introduced the EGI operations. They will include a set of services, such as the coordination of resource allocation, central repositories and ticketing, security and middleware roll-out. These services are needed to ensure the optimal functionality of the pan-European Grid infrastructure and overall seamless effective interoperation of national and regional Grids.

Ludek Matyska (CESNET) concentrated on the middleware evolution. He stated that the middleware is considered an essential part of EGI, and its existence and further development are of utmost importance for the EGI Grid.

The EGI blueprint proposes a common middleware solution based on the Universal Middleware Toolkit (UMT), with common policies, rules, quality and standard compliance criteria for UMT components. Patricia Mendez Lorenzo (CERN) introduced the EGI user-support section of the blueprint. She highlighted

the need to ensure a smooth transition to an NGI support infrastructure for users. The goal is to ensure that all current communities will continue to be supported and that the infrastructure will be ready to admit new communities.

Legal aspects and NGI guidelines for EGI were expanded by Anne-Claire Blanchard (CNRS). She presented plans for the location bidding process, which will be launched soon. Michael Wilson (STFC) made a presentation of the plans for EGI resources and finances.

It became clear that for the initial period, and to sustain innovation, co-funding by European sources will be crucial.

Bob Jones, the EGEE project director, presented some key issues for the transition from EGEE (Enabling Grids for E-science) to EGI, seen from the EGEE side. He emphasized the need for co-operation with other infrastructure projects. EGI should also take into account the experiences and knowledge gained from the EGEE project.

The closed Policy Board (PB) meeting, chaired by Gaspar Barreira, followed the workshop, where a great number of NGIs were represented. Kyriakos Baxevanidis presented the European Commission's view on the future of e-infrastructures in Europe. Otherwise, the EGI PB discussion concentrated on the EGI blueprint proposal, focusing on EGI functionality, NGI responsibilities and the EGI funding model.

The next EGI workshop will be organized during the EGEE'08 conference in Istanbul, Turkey, on 22 September. The workshop will concentrate on planning the transition to the future EGI model (EGI Organisation and NGIs) and will be followed by an EGI Policy Board meeting.

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