



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

EGI Foundation

and

the Black Sea Universities Network

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This Memorandum of Understanding (“MoU”) is made between:

EGI Foundation, a not-for-profit foundation established under the Dutch law to coordinate the EGI federation (abbreviated as “EGI”)

and

The Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) initiative, which aims at the development of a collaborative platform between the universities from the Black Sea Region.

EGI and BSUN shall hereinafter be referred to individually as a “Party” and collectively as the “Parties.”

The MoU is composed of:

- Article 1. Parties
- Article 2. Purpose and Scope
- Article 3. Communications
- Article 4. Rights and Responsibilities
- Article 5. Funding
- Article 6. Entry into Force, Duration and Termination
- Article 7. Amendments
- Article 8. Annexes
- Article 9. Miscellanea
- Annex 1. EGI Foundation
- Annex 2. BSUN
- Annex 3. Joint Work Plan

ARTICLE 1. PARTIES

(a) EGI Foundation

The EGI Foundation is a not-for-profit foundation established under the Dutch law to coordinate the EGI federation (abbreviated as “EGI”), an international collaboration that federates the digital capabilities, resources and expertise of national and international research communities in Europe and worldwide. The main goal is to empower researchers from all disciplines to collaborate and to carry out data- and compute-intensive science and innovation.

The EGI Foundation has participants and associated participants drawn from representatives of national e-infrastructure consortia (NGIs), EIROs, ERICs, and other legal entities. These entities provide the physical resources and shared services that enable EGI to deliver, improve and innovate services for communities.

A more detailed description of EGI Foundation is attached as Annex 1.

(b) Black Sea Universities Network

The Black Sea Universities Network is an ad-hoc International Organization aiming to develop a collaborative platform between universities from the Black Sea Region. The BSUN was founded to develop education, scientific and cultural cooperation and exchange among the Universities of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation¹ as well as other relevant institutions. The objectives of the BSUN include promoting the exchange of information as well as supporting scientific and educational cooperation among universities, research institutions, NGOs and other entities. Its objectives also include working together for a sustainable development of the Black Sea Region and to protect the environment.

A more detailed description of BSUN is attached as Annex 2.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

(1) The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is to define a framework of long-term collaboration between the Parties to enable the vision of jointly providing sustainable e-Infrastructure services within the region of the Black Sea Universities Network and supporting educational and international scientific research activities.

(2) The Parties will continue exploring collaboration opportunities to:

- Enhance the capacities of both Parties by exchanging solutions and good practices for federating resources (particularly cloud and data) across countries, by collaborating on pilots and experimental activities to support the need of research communities of interest to the Parties, and by developing and integrating advanced information technologies and applications to ensure cross-infrastructure interoperability. Existing regional initiatives and national entities such as NGIs will be utilized to leverage existing work and expertise, avoid duplication and to maximise the benefit of this work across different communities..
- Establish a governance framework defining policies, procedures, operational tools and Operation Level Agreements (OLA) that ensure interoperability of federated e-infrastructure service management across the infrastructures operated by the Parties.

¹ <http://www.bsec-organization.org/>

- Strengthen the collaboration by establishing working groups on technical, policy and operational topics of joint interest, by exchanging expertise and staff members as necessary and by coordinating support activities towards research communities of common relevance.
- Jointly coordinate user communities support activities, including outreach, training, coordinated expert support, coordinated infrastructure provisioning, for example through the organization of jointly supported open calls and the organization of international support teams.

A detailed collaboration plan (the “Joint Work Plan”) is defined in Annex 3.

ARTICLE 3. COMMUNICATIONS

(1) The Parties shall keep each other informed on all their respective activities and on their progress and shall consult regularly on areas offering potential cooperation. Joint working groups may be established to examine in detail proposals in areas assigned to them by the Parties referred to in Annex 3 (Joint Work Plan) and to make recommendations to the Parties.

(2) The Parties acknowledge their obligations taken by this MoU and by the Joint Activity Plan (Annex 3) to disseminate their results, and the task to support and promote the coherent and coordinated dissemination of information on activities such as joint events and workshops.

The Parties shall support efforts by providing relevant inputs and ensuring attendance at events.

(3) No Party is allowed to publish or allow the publishing of the other Party’s results unless the owner Party agrees to the publication.

(4) Each Party shall designate a “point of contact” that shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this MoU and for taking measures to assist in the further development of cooperative activities. Such points of contact shall be the ordinary channel for the Parties' communication of proposals for cooperation.

Any approvals, notices, and other communications between the Parties under this MoU shall be sent to the applicable Party as follows:

EGI Foundation Liaison:

Matthew Viljoen
Service Delivery and Information Security Team
Leader
EGI Foundation
Science Park 140
Amsterdam 1098XG
matthew.viljoen@egi.eu
+31 615149036

BSUN Liaison:

Eden Mamut
Secretary General
Black Sea Universities Network
124 Mamaia Avenue
900527 Constanța, Romania
emamut@bsun.org
+40 748 142 615

Questions of principles or problems that cannot be solved at primary contact level are escalated to the director of two parties *or Highest Role applicable*.

ARTICLE 4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. GENERAL

1. Each Party agrees to adhere to applicable policies and procedures relating to the use of the production infrastructure.
2. A Party which makes material, equipment or components available to the other Party, for the purposes of activities under this MoU, shall remain the proprietor of such material, equipment or components.
3. Each Party shall remain fully responsible for its own activities, including the fulfilment of its obligations.

B. PERSONNEL

1. Each Party shall be solely responsible for any personnel hired to carry out work under this MoU.
2. In case personnel employed by one Party temporarily carry out work under this MoU on the premises of another (hereafter referred to as "secondment"), the following provisions shall apply:
 - a. The personnel seconded shall be subject to all regulations, including, in particular, safety regulations, applicable on the site of the Party they are seconded to.
 - b. The personnel seconded by a Party to another shall remain employees of the Party having seconded them and such Party, as employer, shall bear exclusive responsibility for the payment of salary and for the procurement of adequate social security and insurance, including third-party liability insurance and health insurance.
 - c. Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties concerned, Intellectual Property Rights generated by personnel seconded by a Party to another shall be owned by the Party having seconded such personnel.

C. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND LICENCE

1. "Intellectual Property Rights" shall mean all intellectual creations including but not limited to inventions, know-how, layouts, drawings, designs, specifications, computer programs, reports, processes, protocols, calculations and any other matter and protected by intellectual property rights, whether registered or not, including patents, registered designs, copyrights, design rights and all similar proprietary rights and applications for protection thereof.
2. Intellectual property rights generated by a Party under this MoU shall be the property of that Party who shall be free to protect, transfer and use such Intellectual Property Rights as it deems fit.
3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, each Party shall grant the other a non-exclusive royalty-free licence to use the Intellectual Property Rights generated by the Party under this MoU for the implementation of the Joint Work Plan (Annex 3). Such licence shall include the right to sublicense the entities involved in the Joint Activity Plan.

D. OWNERSHIP OF RESULTS

1. Results are owned by the Party that generates them.
2. The Parties give each other – under fair and reasonable conditions – access to results of this MoU needed for exploiting their own results.
3. Results that were jointly generated by both Parties will be jointly owned by the Parties, hereinafter referred to as (“Jointly Owned Results”) and each of the Parties shall be free to use these Jointly Owned Results for non-commercial research activities on a royalty-free basis, and without requiring the prior consent of the other joint owner(s).
4. Each of the joint owners shall be entitled to otherwise commercially exploit the Jointly Owned Results and to grant non-exclusive licences to third parties (without any right to sub-license), if the other joint owners are given: (a) at least 45 calendar days advance notice; and (b) Fair and Reasonable compensation. Each Party shall be entitled to disclose such Jointly Owned Results without restrictions unless such Jointly Owned Results are confidential information or contain a Joint Invention in which case no disclosure must be made prior to the filing of a priority application.
5. With respect to any Joint Invention resulting from this MoU (i.e. any invention jointly made by employees of both Parties), the features of which cannot be separately applied for as Intellectual Property Rights and which are eligible for statutory protection requiring an application or registration (herein referred to as “Joint Invention”), the Parties shall agree on which Party will carry out any filing as well as any further details with regard to persecuting and maintaining relevant patent applications.

E. PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Any publication by a Party resulting from the activities carried out under this MoU shall be subject to prior agreement of the other Party which should not be unreasonably withheld.
2. The Parties may each release information to the public, provided it is not confidential and related only to its own part of the activities under this MoU. In cases where the activities of the other Party are concerned, prior consultation shall be sought. In all relevant public relations activities, the contribution of each Party related to activities covered by this MoU shall be duly acknowledged.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

1. The Parties may disclose to each other information that the disclosing Party deems confidential and which is (i) in writing and marked “confidential”, or (ii) disclosed orally, and identified as confidential when disclosed, and reduced in writing and marked “confidential” within fifteen (15) days of the oral disclosure (hereafter referred to as “Confidential Information”). Confidential Information shall be held in confidence and shall not be disclosed by the receiving Party to any third party without the prior written consent of the disclosing Party.
2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a Party is entitled to disclose Confidential Information which it is required by law to disclose or which, in a lawful manner, it has obtained from a third party without any obligation of confidentiality, or which it has developed independently from any Confidential Information received under this MoU, or which has become public knowledge other than as a result of a breach on its part of these confidentiality provisions.

G. LIABILITY

1. Each Party shall use reasonable endeavours to ensure the accuracy of any information or materials it supplies to the other Party and of any other contribution it makes hereunder and promptly to correct any error therein of which it is notified. The supplying Party shall be

under no obligation or liability other than as stated above and no warranty or representation of any kind is made, given or to be implied as to the sufficiency, accuracy or fitness for a particular purpose of such information, materials or other contribution or as to the absence of any infringement of any proprietary rights of third parties through the possession or use of such information, materials or other contribution. The recipient Party shall be entirely responsible for its use of such information, materials or other contribution and shall hold the other Party free and harmless and indemnify it for any loss or damage with regard thereto.

2. Except in case of gross negligence or wilful misconduct, neither Party shall be liable for any indirect or consequential damages of the other Party, including loss of profit or interest, under any legal cause whatsoever and on account of whatsoever reason.

H. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES

1. Parties are not prevented by this MoU from participating in activities similar to those described in this document with third parties. There is no obligation to disclose any similar activity to the other Party. However, when considered of mutual benefit, both Parties are encouraged to involve the other Party in similar activities to the goal of disseminating the knowledge about both Parties.

ARTICLE 5. FUNDING

Each Party shall bear the costs of discharging its respective responsibilities under this MoU, including travel and subsistence of its own personnel and transportation of goods and equipment and associated documentation, unless otherwise agreed in this MoU or by the parties on a case-by-case basis.

Each Party shall make available free of charge to the other Party any office space or meeting facility needed for the joint activities.

The Parties' obligations hereunder are subject to their respective funding procedures and the availability of appropriate funds. Should either Party encounter budgetary problems in the course of its respective internal procedures that may affect the activities carried out under this MoU, the Party shall notify and consult with the other Party in a timely manner in order to minimise the negative impact of such problems on the cooperation. The Parties shall jointly look for mutually agreeable solutions.

In order to reduce the impact on travel costs, face-to-face meetings should be co-located with other events that participants are likely to attend. Meeting via teleconferences should be considered when the nature of the discussion does not strictly require a face-to-face presence.

ARTICLE 6. ENTRY INTO FORCE, DURATION AND TERMINATION

This MoU will enter into force when signed by the authorised representatives of the Parties.

Either Party may terminate this MoU for any reason upon 30 days written notice to the other Party.

In the event of termination, the Parties shall endeavour to reach agreement on terms and conditions to minimise negative impacts on the other Party. In the event of the continuation of the present cooperation, the MoU may be extended and/or amended by mutual agreement in writing.

ARTICLE 7. AMENDMENTS

The MoU may be amended only by written agreement of the Parties. Amendments shall be valid only if signed by the authorised representatives of the Parties.

ARTICLE 8. ANNEXES

Annexes 1, 2, 3 attached hereto, have the same validity as this MoU and together constitute the entire understanding and rights and obligations covering the cooperation accepted by the Parties under this MoU. Annexes may be amended following the provisions of Article 7: Amendments.

ARTICLE 9. MISCELLANEA

- 1) Notwithstanding anything in this MoU to the contrary, neither Party shall have any legally binding obligation to the other Party as a result of the execution of this MoU, or otherwise relating to this MoU or the subject matter hereof. Although the Parties will try to reach one or more future agreements as to the matters described herein, this MoU shall not require the Parties to reach any future agreement, and, notwithstanding anything in this MoU to the contrary, neither Party shall have any liability to the other Party as a result of the Parties' failure to reach one or more future agreements.
- 2) Neither Party shall reassign this MoU or any of its responsibilities without the other Party's prior written consent.
- 3) The failure of either Party to enforce any term hereof shall not be deemed a waiver of any rights contained herein.
- 4) If any provision of this MoU is determined to be invalid or unenforceable under any controlling law, the invalidity or unenforceability of that provision shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this MoU.

**Memorandum of Understanding between EGI Foundation and
Black Sea Universities Network**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused their duly authorised representatives to sign two originals of this Memorandum of Understanding.

The following agree to the terms and conditions of this MoU:

DocuSigned by:
Dr. Tiziana Ferrari
465881FE0D144C8...

DocuSigned by:
Professor Pericles A. Mitkas
F1C1DC17776F46D...

Dr. Tiziana Ferrari
Director
EGI Foundation
Science Park 140
1098 XG Amsterdam, Netherlands

Prof. Pericles A. Mitkas
President
Black Sea Universities Network
124 Mamaia Avenue
900527 Constanța, Romania

Date Jun 23, 2021 | 13:38 CEST

Date Jun 23, 2021 | 11:07 CEST

ANNEX 1. EGI FOUNDATION

The Stichting EGI (also known as the EGI Foundation and abbreviated as EGI.eu) is a not-for-profit foundation established under the Dutch law to coordinate the EGI federation (abbreviated as EGI), an international collaboration that federates the digital capabilities, resources and expertise of national and international research communities in Europe and worldwide. The main goal is to empower researchers from all disciplines to collaborate and to carry out data- and compute-intensive science and innovation.

The EGI Foundation has participants and associated participants drawn from representatives of national e-infrastructure consortiums (NGIs), EIROs, ERICs, and other legal entities. These entities provide the physical resources and shared services that enable EGI to deliver, improve and innovate services for communities. The EGI Foundation coordinates areas such as overseeing infrastructure operations, user community support, contact with technology providers, strategy and policy development, flagship events and dissemination of news and achievements.

The EGI Federation – coordinated by EGI.eu – is one of the largest distributed computing infrastructure for researchers. It leverages the local investments of national research funding agencies by bringing together hundreds of data centres worldwide. It also includes the largest research cloud federation in operations in Europe with tens of participating cloud providers across most of the European countries offering IaaS cloud and storage services.

The EGI offering includes a federated IaaS cloud to run compute- or data-intensive tasks and host online services in virtual machines or docker containers on IT resources accessible via a uniform interface; high-throughput data analysis to run compute-intensive tasks for producing and analysing large datasets and store/retrieve research data efficiently across multiple service providers; federated operations to manage service access and operations from heterogeneous distributed infrastructures and integrate resources from multiple independent providers with technologies, processes and expertise offered by EGI; consultancy for user-driven innovation to assess research computing needs and provide tailored solutions for advanced computing.

The EGI Cloud Federation aggregates resources by defining a set of standard open-source interfaces and protocols to access the different cloud functions - such as resource discovery, user authentication, compute and data access services - in a uniform way at all the sites, enabling workloads to span and seamlessly migrate across resource centers. Through the EGI Virtual Machine image library – the Application Database – EGI offers the possibility to share and reuse virtual appliances and to dynamically deploy them in a federated cloud infrastructure. Besides cloud compute and storage services, the cloud will offer the capability of accessing open datasets of public and commercial relevance for scalable access to big research data, fostering a culture and environment for sharing and reuse of open research data. EGI supports the implementation and adoption of cloud open standards.

The EGI technical platforms are co-developed with research communities and technology providers. In order to do so, EGI has established processes and technical infrastructures for requirements gathering, software validation, verification and distribution through the Unified Middleware Distribution.

Over the last decade, EGI has built a federation of long-term distributed compute and storage infrastructure that has delivered unprecedented data analysis capabilities to tens of thousands of researchers from many disciplines (e.g., Medical and Health Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Agricultural Sciences, and Art and Humanities).

Examples of the supported research include the search for the Higgs boson at the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator at CERN; the search for gravitational waves of the LIGO-VIRGO collaboration, finding new tools to diagnose and monitor diseases such as Alzheimer's, or the development of complex simulations to model climate change.

Further information (e.g. governance; services) can be found at: www.egi.eu/about/

ANNEX 2. BSUN

The Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) is an initiative aiming the development of a collaborative platform between the universities from the Black Sea Region.

The network has the legal status of an international ad-hoc organization and was established on the occasion of the 2nd Conference of the Black Sea Universities Rectors, held in Constantza between 9th and 12th of July 1998, on the premises of the "Ovidius" University of Constantza.

The network includes more than 120 member universities from the 12 member states of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization as Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and Serbia.

BSUN has the status of Sectoral Dialogue Partner to Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), is in a close cooperation with Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), is a member of the European University Association (EUA) and a founding member of the UN "Academic Impact" Initiative.

BSUN has signed collaborative agreements and develops a close collaboration with the Eurasia Universities Association coordinated by Lomonosov Moscow State University, the Caspian Universities Association, the Baltic Sea Cooperation Program and the Mediterranean network of schools of engineering (RMEI). BSUN also signed a strategic partnership with Hewlett Packard Romania for cooperation in high performance computing and cloud computing and with ENEA from Italy to cooperate in developing joint activities in the field of education and research on green economy, sustainable development, renewable energy sources.

According to the [BSUN Charter](#), the priorities for the Network activity are approved by the Conference of Rectors from the Black Sea Region / BSUN General Assembly.

Between the ordinary sessions of BSUN General Assembly, decisions are taken by the [Executive Board](#).

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The implementation of the BSUN program is coordinated by the [Presidential Troika](#).

The official contact point of the BSUN is the [BSUN International Permanent Secretariat](#) .

The activity of the International Permanent Secretariat is coordinated by the [BSUN Secretary General](#).

ANNEX 3. JOINT WORK PLAN

To support the collaboration objectives defined in article Article 2 (“Purpose and scope”), a joint work plan is defined and will be regularly reviewed and updated at least annually.

The Parties will jointly deliver e-infrastructure services and support the needs of global scientific communities. The cooperation is focused, but not limited to the following areas:

- 1) Develop and adopt interoperable e-infrastructure services and federation resources, specifically a) developing a federated Authentication and Authorization Infrastructure (AAI) across BSUN and regional research institutions for the benefit of end users (students, staff and researchers), achieved by offering expertise in integration activities with community AAI solutions and b) enabling the federation of BSUN cloud resource providers. There will be a particular emphasis on sustainability and interoperability in the choice of tools and methodology.
- 2) Define a governance framework and align access policies, rules for participation, Operation Level Agreements and mechanisms that facilitate joint e-infrastructure federations. Ensure that policies are defined following international best practice and in accordance to international legislations (e.g. GDPR) to support technical integration activities.
- 3) Explore the benefits of the European Open Science Cloud and the Global Open Science Cloud Initiatives and look at ways to participate for the benefit of both Parties.
- 4) Show case demonstrated approaches, services and tools for open science.
- 5) Attendance of events, workshops, meetings and project events beneficial for execution of the Joint Work Plan outlined in this MoU.

In this broad context, the specific goals of the collaborations are as follows:

Joint Activity 1. MoU definition

The two parties aim to have an official MoU (this MoU) prepared and signed by Q2 2021. A joint permanent working group (the “Working Group”) of experts from the Parties will be established to define, implement, maintain, and review this joint work plan over time.

Expected results: MoU finalized and agreed

Task duration: 2 months.

Joint Activity 2. Analysis of Federation of the BSUN infrastructure

This Joint Activity will analyse the feasibility of a federating cloud and data providers within the BSUN infrastructure taking into consideration the nature of resources that could be federated, the solutions that may be used to enable interoperability and define the benefits of doing this. This work will also include a use case analysis and identify any challenges that would need to be addressed.

Expected results: Document, feasibility study, use case analysis

Task duration: 4 – 6 months.

Joint Activity 3. Testing of Federation of the BSUN infrastructure

The Joint Activity will identify BSUN resources available for testing federated AAI, data and cloud resources and will propose and implement the first steps in enabling federation and testing the use cases defined in Joint Activity 2. Where possible this activity will involve real end users and elicit feedback from them.

Expected results: working proof of concept involving a small number of test sites with integrated IdP/SPs in AAI and access to federated data/cloud

Task duration: MoU Duration

Joint Activity 4. Governance and interoperability framework

The Joint Activity will establish and maintain a technical and governance framework that includes a set of policy and interoperability recommendations to facilitate cross-infrastructure data sharing, processing and analytics workflows. This framework will include policies and procedures for cross-infrastructure access, user support, trust and identity management, security incident management and co-provisioning of infrastructure capacity. It will also include technical interoperability guidelines.

Expected results: Policies for security aspects of AAI, data sharing, GDPR compliant

Task duration: MoU Duration

Joint Activity 5. Transition to Production of the Federation of the BSUN infrastructure

This Joint Activity will execute the steps necessary to rollout into production the federation of the BSUN infrastructure involving all resource providers wishing to participate. This involves identifying further work that needs to be done building on work done in Joint Activities 3. and 4. and the establishment of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Operational Level Agreements (OLAs) as appropriate.

Expected results: all the participant SPs in production supported by SLA

Task duration: MoU Duration

Joint Activity 6. Community Engagement, Dissemination and Training

This Joint Activity will seek to disseminate the results of the collaboration in conferences, symposia, and workshops, and also coordinate efforts in training towards user communities. Such results may include success stories based on the joint work.

Expected results: joint success stories disseminated through EGI/BSUN channels.

Task duration: MoU Duration

Joint Activity 7. Community Engagement & Training activities

This Joint Activity will promote knowledge transfer within the BSUN communities on topics of common interest, potential new communities in the region will be invited to submit Applications in the open calls organized by the EGI-ACE project.

Moreover, focused training activities, including at least one Joint Summer School involving BSUN and experts from EGI, will be held covering the access of federated digital infrastructures for scientific research.

Expected results: New communities are brought to the EGI SMS, joint training activities are organized.

Task duration: MoU Duration

Joint Activity 8. Digital Innovation Hub

This Joint Activity will set up a Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) within the BSUN region involving organizations and industrial partners in order to take advantage of digital opportunities. EGI will assist in this work by using its expertise and networks of other DIH's that are active.

Expected results: DIH setup

Task duration: MoU Duration