EOSC Tripartite Governance Meeting

7 November 2024, Budapest

Report

The sixth EOSC Tripartite Governance Meeting was organised by the Hungarian EU Presidency and brought together 52 participants from the European Commission (EC), the EU Member States (MS) and Associated Countries (AC) that make up the European Open Science Cloud Steering Board (EOSC-SB), as well as representatives of the EOSC Association.

The meeting was opened by the Head of the International Affairs Department of the Hungarian National Office for Research, Development and Innovation, followed by representatives of the EC, the EOSC-SB and the President of the EOSC Association. It focused on the state of play of the EOSC EU Node, the development of the EOSC Federation, on resuming the EOSC post-2027 topic and on updating the policy narrative for EOSC.

State of play of the EOSC EU Node

The **EOSC EU Node** was officially launched at the EOSC Symposium in Berlin that took place on 21-23 October 2024. Since then, it has already registered nearly 1000 users. During the meeting the EC presented a short live demonstration of the EU Node functionalities as well as the current state of play of its policies, architecture and operations.

Towards an operational EOSC Federation

Since its last meeting in April 2024, the Tripartite Governance has made important progress towards developing an operational **EOSC Federation** that will consist of several national, thematic or institutional EOSC Nodes. During the summer the EOSC Association initiated the process of reaching out to the wider community by publishing a questionnaire to gauge the community's interest in providing services and establishing EOSC Nodes. 121 organisations replied to the questionnaire, confirming the high level of interest in contributing to the development of the EOSC Federation.

In the weeks that followed, the Tripartite Group developed and endorsed criteria for sequencing the large number of interested organisations, taking into account factors such as maturity and diversity of resources, inclusivity and geographical representation. It also discussed the opportunities for engagement of the broader community.

A two-stage dialogue process was agreed upon to identify the first wave of Candidate Nodes by February 2025. The first stage will involve group dialogues to reaffirm commitments and discuss objectives, while the second stage will focus on organisational and technical details.

The first wave of EOSC Candidate Nodes should start its activities in early 2025. During the second half of 2025 additional organisations will have the opportunity to join the build-up phase, according to the capacity of the developing EOSC Federation. The process will also allow for the participation of organisations that did not initially respond to the questionnaire or wish to update their previous responses. The current plan is to develop a 'nucleus' of an operational EOSC Federation including several Nodes by the end of 2025[1].

At the same time, the EOSC Assocation, in feedback with the Tripartite Group, is developing a **Federation Handbook for EOSC**, and the current status of which was presented at the meeting. The handbook will provide practical guidance for organisations interested to join the Federation, including the key components of the EOSC Federation, such as its architecture and governance, its operations, scientific resources and its policies. More than forty volunteers and the community are involved in its development. The first version of the Handbook aims to answer important questions about what the EOSC Federation will enable and provide to researchers, and how to measure the success of the EOSC Federation. The early results of an ongoing open consultation on the first three chapters and drafts of the remaining chapters indicates that more work needs to be done to clarify how to become a Node and how to operate the federation, including governance aspects. The aim is to have a first full version of the Federation Handbook ready by the end of 2024 and then run an open community consultation.

The future of EOSC after 2027

The European EOSC Tripartite Meeting in April 2024 took stock of the results of an analysis of models for **EOSC post-27** developed by the EOSC SB Policy Subgroup and the EOSC Association and agreed on a set of principles for the future model of the EOSC initiative. In that meeting it was also agreed that further discussions around the post-2027 future of EOSC should count on developing the added value of an operational EOSC Federation.

As the EOSC EU Node developments and the EOSC Federation formation activities take shape, the EOSC SB agreed to resume the EOSC post-27 discussions within the EOSC Tripartite Governance. To this end, the EOSC SB agreed to organise a workshop involving EOSC SB members, the EOSC Association and possibly other experts, in order to explore key issues such

---

[1] EOSC Tripartite Governance establishes process to sequence enrolment of Candidate EOSC Nodes

as the financial contributions of Member States and Associated Countries and the governance of EOSC in the future.

This workshop will include an exchange of best practices in EOSC engagement and national approaches to Nodes development. It will give the opportunity to analyse in more detail the potential for national contributions to the EOSC after 2027 and the roles of different bodies in a potential future governance. In order to make this workshop efficient and productive, it was agreed that an input note shall be prepared by the EOSC SB policy subgroup, if resources allow, and EOSC SB members were reminded on the need to participate in this subgroup.

At the same time, the workshop will be the first step in a phased approach towards developing a model for EOSC post-2027. At a later stage more focused discussions on potential governance and funding models will follow, taking into account the activities of building up the EOSC Federation and the EC proposal for the future framework programme.

The Tripartite Governance was also informed about the intention of the EOSC SB to adopt an opinion for EOSC in the next framework programme at its meeting on 24 March 2025. The EOSC SB opinion will be developed on the basis of the four principles[2] as agreed during the April Tripartite Meeting and considering the conclusions of the workshop.

Updating the policy narrative for EOSC

The last few months have seen a number of important publications on European policy developments, dealing with issues directly or indirectly related to EOSC. One of these publications was the report by Enrico Letta *Much More than a Market[3]*.

The EOSC Association took the initiative to write a **reflection paper on the Letta report** from an EOSC perspective, drawing a number of important links between Letta's conclusions and the objectives of EOSC, and outlining why EOSC is crucial for Europe's competitiveness[4].

In continuation of these efforts, the EOSC Tripartite Governance decided to further elaborate an updated **narrative for EOSC**, taking into account other important works such as the report by Mario Draghi on *The future of European competitiveness[5]* and the *Strategic recommendations on maximising the impact of EU research and innovation programmes in*

---

[2] The four principles as derived in the supporting material of the April Tripartite Governance Meeting are: i. the Tripartite governance, ii. the contribution of the research community, iii. Funding and the financial contributions of the Members States and Associated Countries, iv. the Federation of Nodes.
[3] Enrico Letta - Much more than a market (April 2024)
[4] EOSC Association publishes reflection paper on Letta report - EOSC Association
[5] EU competitiveness: Looking ahead - European Commission

the future[6] by Manuel Heitor, representing the EC High Level Expert Group. It is planned to endorse this narrative at the next EOSC Tripartite Governance Meeting on 25 March 2025.

The meeting was closed by final statements from the Co-Chairs of the Tripartite Governance summarising the main conclusions:

- **Clear path forward for EOSC Federation build-up:** The Tripartite governance endorsed the proposed process for identifying Candidate Nodes for the first wave, including the format and timeframe for dialogues. It also highlighted the key importance of communication and community engagement to ensure a seamless build-up of the EOSC Federation.

- **Federation Handbook finalisation on track:** The current version of the Federation handbook was endorsed, with a clear emphasis on clarifying next steps and meeting the end-2024 deadline for a first complete version. This timeline is crucial for the successful implementation of the EOSC Federation.

- **Roadmap for EOSC Post-27 discussions agreed:** The expectations, process, and objectives for the EOSC post-27 discussions was progressed, particularly in preparation for the next meeting in March. A workshop will be organised to further refine the principles, aiming to produce an opinion paper by the end of March, which will serve as a living document.

- **Updated narrative for EOSC:** The reflection paper on the Letta report was acknowledged, and a collaborative effort will be made to develop an updated narrative for EOSC, incorporating other important policy works.

- **Effective communication and governance are crucial:** The importance of communication processes and the interlinkage between the community and governance bodies were underscored as essential for the effective development of EOSC provisions on both national and European levels.

---

[6] Align, act, accelerate - High Level Group presents recommendations on the future Framework Programme | European Research Area Platform