

Third European Conference on Research Infrastructures

Report of Session 1
"Policy"

Nottingham – 6-7 December 2005

Towards better Coordination

Towards Large international RIs

Optimizing financial instruments

Use of Research Infrastructures

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Towards better Coordination

Why coordination?
To share costs and risks, to propose attractive solutions and to offer high level services on the most effective way, based on a common strategy.

How? Countries with similar scientific priorities should be able get together to explore possible jointly funded actions.

- benchmarking, analysis of needs: ERA-NET seems an adequate scheme for preparing actions (marine, WBC);
- analysis of proposed solutions: ESFRI's increased role in shaping Europe's future for RIs;
- Need of well understood principles, in particular when different schemes are involved, e.g. SFs, FP, EIB, etc.
- Coordination means Information;

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Towards Large international RIs

The next generation of new RIs is evolving towards facilities funded by different partners.

Two current models in Europe:

- intergovernmental agreements: CERN, ESO, EMBL...
- private status: ILL, ESFR...

For "global" projects the situation is more complicated... since many countries have different approaches. One should follow what is happening with ITER.

Recommendation: ESFRI and EC should take the initiative to study problems of large facilities, together with relevant stakeholders; topics of interest should include legal, administrative, budgetary as well as negotiation issues.

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Optimizing financial instruments

Why? Costs and ways to finance construction of large facilities of pan-European interest are paramount elements.

How?

- optimal use of different + needed funding sources;
- need to transcend the national interests;
- Role of MS central; of the EIB crucial, of the EC necessary (FP, SFs), of the private sector welcome and challenging;
- excellence is necessary but not sufficient; cost-benefit analysis is also necessary;
- other factors include contribution to capacity building at various levels;
- need to coordinate national roadmaps + funding mechanisms allowing such transition;

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Use of Research Infrastructures

Europe has a wealth of world class infrastructures, but:

- are existing resources managed and used in an optimised and sustainable way? Access? Are the current support schemes at European level adequate?
- Examples of how existing infrastructures can coordinate their activities and how to pave the way towards new ones have been presented.

Important messages are:

- process is important but vision and energy are much more factors of success;
- stability of funding is needed
- business plan + life-cycle mngt
- mix of bottom-up + top-down
- cross-linking with e-infrastructures

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