

EOSC Horizon Europe Partnership EOSC Partnership Board

Minutes of the 4th Meeting, 19 December 2022

Date/Time:	19 December 2022 9:00 – 12:00 CET
Location:	Online Meeting via: https://eosc-eu.zoom.us/j/8837793620
Chairs:	[AP] Anna Panagopoulou (EC, RTD) Anna.Panagopoulou@ec.europa.eu [KL] Karel Luyben (EOSC-A) k.c.a.m.luyben@tudelft.nl
Secretariat:	[UG] Ute Gunsenheimer (EOSC-A) Ute.Gunsenheimer@eosc.eu
Participants:	[MA] Michael Arentoft (EC, RTD) [VB] Volker Beckmann (EOSC-SB, FR) [DD] Dejan Dvorsek (EC, RTD) [JK] Justyna Kramarczyk (EOSC-A) [ML] Marialuisa Lavitrano (EOSC-A) [JLA] Javier Lopez Albacete (EC, RTD) [PM] Panayotis Moschopoulos (EC, RTD) [IL] Ilaria Nardello (EOSC-A) [GR] Giorgio Rossi (EOSC-SB, IT) [MS] Michel Schoupe (EC, RTD) [SM] Magdalena Szwochertowska (EC, CNECT) [PT] Pantelis Tziveloglou (EC, RTD) [TW] Tobias Wiesenthal (EC, CNECT) (part of the meeting)

Item 01: Opening and Welcome

The Chairs, Anna Panagopoulou (AP) Director ERA & Innovation at the European Commission, DG RTD, and Karel Luyben (KL), President of the EOSC Association, open the 4th Partnership Board meeting and welcome the participants.

AP thanks everyone for their contributions to the successful EOSC Symposium that took place in November in Prague. She recalls her Prague expectations of demonstrating the added value of EOSC by 2025 and hopes that the Additional Activities of the Members of the EOSC Association (EOSC-A) will contribute to this as well as activities funded through Horizon Europe. AP informs that she plans to address the usage of the new EOSC logo in the context of the EOSC Partnership.

KL requests to dedicate sufficient time for discussion on the operation of the EOSC Partnership and in particular the management of expectations.

The Chairs give the floor to representatives of DG CNECT and EOSC-SB to welcome the participants.

Tobias Wiesenthal (TW) provides a brief up-date on the status of the upcoming procurement. He reminds that the publication is planned to happen this year in line with the updated indicative timetable, and that the contracts with selected suppliers will be signed in 2023. He highlights that the recently published calls of Work Programme 2023-24 support the development of strategies for federating research infrastructures and the provision of secure data spaces to work with sensitive data.

Volker Beckmann (VB) points out that ERA Action 1 is considered progressing well and delivering. The work plan of the EOSC-SB for 2023 is ambitious and focuses on monitoring and the identification of use cases. The discussion on EOSC post-2027 will be an important item of discussion in the EOSC-SB as well as on a national level.

Giorgio Rossi (GR) informs about the two additional priority topics of the EOSC-SB for policy development: the role of EOSC for digitalisation of research, and production of high-quality FAIR data sets.

Lastly, AP welcomes Dejan Dvorsek, new Deputy Head of Unit A.4 in RTD to this group.

Item 02: Adoption of the minutes of the previous Partnership Board meeting #3 Paper A – Minutes of the Partnership Board meeting of 07.04.2022

The Minutes of the previous Partnership Board meeting #3 of 07 April 2022 are adopted.

Item 03: Adoption of the Agenda

The draft agenda is adopted, adding the expectations management with regard to the operations of the EOSC Partnership under other relevant agenda items throughout the meeting.

Item 04: State of play on EOSC implementation

4a) EOSC Association

- Reporting on the implementation of the EOSC Partnership Monitoring Framework and its evolution.
- Progress towards the alignment of EOSC monitoring and the relationship to the EOSC Observatory.
- Interaction with Horizon Projects.
- Reporting on the EOSC Focus project.
- Tripartite collaboration in the context of ERA.

The update on the state of play of the EOSC implementation for the EOSC Association is provided by President Karel Luyben (KL), Secretary General Ute Gunsenheimer (UG), and Senior Policy Officer Ilaria Nardello (IN) starting with a summary of the key activities and achievements in 2022 before addressing the items listed in the agenda.

KL starts his presentation by showing the current thinking of the EOSC-A Board on the scoping of EOSC and the role of the EOSC-A relative to it. KL highlights the importance of the European contributions to creating the web of FAIR data and the importance of the Minimum Viable EOSC including the upcoming procurement.

He presents the corporate design that has been developed based on the new EOSC logo featuring its modular use.

In collaboration with the EC and MS representatives to the EOSC Steering Board, nine national or regional Tripartite Events were organised in 2022 targeting 16 countries and reaching over 1.200 participants in person or remotely.

KL also stresses the efforts EOSC-A has made to establish a closer collaboration with the research infrastructures pursuing multiple routes via the ESFRI Forum, leading the parallel session on “Sharing data globally” at the International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI) 2022 and establishing an ESFRI RIs Working Group as an operational body within the Association to better interact with the 20 Research Infrastructures on the ESFRI Roadmap that are Members or Observers in EOSC-A.

As members of the EOSC Symposium programme committee and host of several sessions and meetings, EOSC-A actively contributed to the success of the EOSC Symposium.

In summary, EOSC-A has made a major leap in 2022 by growing its Secretariat, establishing structures to support the productivity of its Task Forces, and contributing to all its obligations of the EOSC Partnership in a timely and qualitative manner.

UG presents a summary of the decisions at the latest General Assembly of the EOSC Association which took place on 28-29 November 2022. These include the growth of the membership to 168 Members and 81 Observers, including VPC as the new Mandated Organisation for Latvia.

Karel Luyben as President and Sarah Jones (GEÁNT) and Ignacio Blanquer (UPV) as Directors have each been re-elected for a 3-years-term.

The annual budget of EOSC-A is 2,4 MEUR, three quarters of which are financed by the contributions of its members. Together with its membership, EOSC-A is working on establishing its Bylaws and assessing possible membership fee models.

The 2023 Work Plan of EOSC-A includes all mandatory activities in the context of the Horizon Europe Partnership as well as the EOSC Focus project. Relative to its member base, the Association will focus on broadcasting the voice of the community from multiple sources using appropriate communication platforms.

IN updates on the implementation of the EOSC Partnership Monitoring Framework and its evolution and introduces the discussion on the EOSC Observatory.

The baseline survey for the Monitoring Framework of the EOSC Partnership was implemented earlier this autumn and is currently being evaluated. As agreed, the results will be shared with the EC in February 2023.

The EOSC Observatory that is built in the framework of the Horizon 2020 project EOSC Future consists of four layers, where layer 1 is informed by the surveys of the EOSC Steering Board, layer 2 by the Monitoring Framework of the EOSC Partnership, layer 3 by the in-kind contributions¹ of EOSC-A as part of the Partnership MoU, and layer 4 captures policies relevant for the EOSC ecosystem.

IN reports on the effort made by EOSC-A adhering to the pledge made at the first Tripartite Event in December 2021 to establish a single joint monitoring capacity for EOSC. In view of accelerating progress, the EOSC-A issued a position paper to the other two parties on 26 September 2022 addressing its technical, legal, and financial concerns. The EC responded to this on 7 October 2022, reaffirming the EC commitment to the monitoring capacity and expressing the EC views on the progress and next steps, and subsequently it convened a technical meeting with EOSC-A and EOSC Future on 24 October to address these concerns in more detail.

IN thanks Michel Schouppe (MS) for arranging this “technical meeting on working level” with representative of EOSC Future in October 2022. A follow-up meeting is foreseen for early 2023.

IN confirms that EOSC-A is still committed to work towards the Tripartite pledge of a single joint monitoring capacity, and regrets that the public release of the EOSC Observatory (EOSC Symposium, 16 November 2022) did not fully reflect this concept yet.

KL repeats the key messages of the EOSC-A position paper stating the discontent with the lack of alignment and collaboration with the EOSC Future partners and invites the EC and the EOSC-SB to continue all efforts to establish a single joint monitoring capacity.

AP opens the floor for a round of feedback and comments on the presentation by the EOSC-A so far:

Michael Arentoft (MA) acknowledges the increased operational capacity and productivity of the EOSC-A, which has resulted among others in delivery against the Partnership commitments such as the Multi-Annual Roadmaps, the monitoring and reporting activities.

Magda Szwochertowska (SM) reflects on the EOSC Observatory relative to the description of action of the EOSC Future project stating that the development was in line with the scope and timing. The first related deliverable is due in January 2023 and SM offers to share it with the parties for comments on their views on the progress.

Michel Schouppe (MS) points out the continued willingness of the EC to act as a mediator between the EOSC Future project and EOSC-A. He reminds the outcomes of the technical

¹ Currently covering in-kind contributions to Additional Activities.

coordination meeting on 24 October where EOSC Future representatives confirmed their willingness to test layers 2 and 3 with support of the EOSC-A and is surprised to hear from the EOSC Association that no progress has been made yet despite the respective commitments. He calls on the EOSC-A for making an effort to exploit the next 10 months before the end of the EOSC Future project to understand the technical possibilities (including through exploiting a test dataset) for integrating layers 2 and 3 in the Observatory and advocates for decoupling this integration test from the discussion on the legal aspects. It is expected that the documentation of the draft IPR and licensing conditions for the EOSC Observatory would be made available in January 2023 by EOSC Future for comment by the EOSC Governance .

Volker Beckmann (VB) explains the view of the EOSC Steering Board pushing for a timely launch of the Observatory, which might have compromised inclusiveness. Going forward, this should be improved like other lessons learned from the first round of survey implementation.

In this context Karel Luyben (KL) makes a special point to complain about the fact that the EOSC Association, who is an Observer to the EOSC Steering Board, and who has been contributing to one of the Board's sub-groups (the EOSC-SB sub-group on National contributions to EOSC) for more than a year, recently was removed from having access to shared folders on the respective EC's Teams channel.

Ute Gunsenheimer resumes the presentation of EOSC Association's state of play presenting the collaboration with Horizon projects. Regarding Horizon 2020, EOSC-A in collaboration with RDA has collected the Key Exploitable Results (KERs) of EOSC-related projects which have been transformed into a brochure that was presented at the EOSC Symposium in Prague. Relative to the collaboration with EOSC Future, UG reports that so-called KERs' couples of EOSC-A Board members and EOSC Future project representatives were established in June, but that no significant progress can be reported here.

Regarding the collaboration with the EOSC-related projects which have been selected under Horizon Europe, UG reports on the development of the "Vademecum – a handbook for effective collaboration within the EOSC co-programmed Partnership", which includes co-branding guidelines for INFRAEOSC projects. The Vademecum has been developed in the context of the EOSC-A led project EOSC Focus, and it was reviewed by the EC and tested with project coordinators before the draft was shared with the INFRAEOSC projects. Both the Vademecum and the co-branding guidelines are non-compulsory materials issued by the EOSC Association. They were presented to the INFRAEOSC project coordinators at a meeting on 30 September 2022, which was organised and hosted by DG RTD in collaboration with REA, DG CNECT and the EOSC-A.

In addition to the Vademecum, EOSC Focus, which started in June 2022, has submitted three deliverables and just launched its first amendment. On its work plan for 2023 are the preparation of the first periodic report and the associated review, several deliverables, and the extension of the collaboration to the INFRAEOSC projects that have been selected under the 2022 call.

UG concludes her presentation with reference to the ERA Forum, where EOSC-A will represent the Research Infrastructure stakeholders in the next six months and expresses her hopes that the ERA Forum members could help making closer connections on a national level supporting the implementation of ERA Action 1.

AP opens the floor for feedback on the second part of the EOSC-A presentation, especially regarding the respective roles in the Partnership:

Michael Arentoft (MA) appreciates the efforts EOSC-A is doing relative to the INFRAEOSC projects. However, he points out that these projects are funded by the EC and managed by REA. With regard to the Additional Activities of the EOSC-A Members, he would have appreciated more information on top of what is provided in the AAP.

Volker Beckmann (VB) agrees that attention should be paid on a good flow of information about ERA Action No. 1 on a national level between the respective ERA Forum and EOSC-SB Delegates. Anna Panagopoulou (AP) offers to support this initiative since she is co-chairing both forums.

AP comes back to the point about the collaboration with Horizon Europe INFRAEOSC projects. She stresses that it is not the role of the EOSC Association to steer or coordinate these projects that are funded by the EC and that an effort should be made to avoid confusion among the beneficiaries.

Karel Luyben (KL) points out that the EOSC Association, as coordinator of the EOSC Focus project, is only delivering against the requirements of the respective CSA call, which is dedicated to support the EOSC Partnership as a whole – and not EOSC-A in particular – which includes the collaboration with the INFRAEOSC projects as well as stimulating collaboration among them. He makes clear that EOSC-A has neither the intention nor the resources to attempt the coordination of INFRAEOSC projects. This is the role and responsibility of REA. The participation of the projects in EOSC Focus-initiated collaboration activities is voluntary.

Giorgio Rossi (GR) takes the floor and reminds of the maturing of EOSC from Horizon 2020 to Horizon Europe. He regards the establishment of the new logo a good thing and demands from the EC and EOSC-A as parties of the co-programmed Partnership to work towards a unified monitoring in 2023. GR also wishes to see a unified EOSC portal materialise.

AP highlights the importance of the Tripartite Collaboration with the Member States actively contributing through the EOSC Steering Board and via the Mandated Organisations in EOSC-A. Relative to the interaction with the INFRAEOSC projects she emphasises the need to avoid confusion in the interpretation of each other's roles and responsibilities.

AP raises the point of the ownership and use of the new EOSC logo. KL explains that the new EOSC logo is owned by the EOSC Association. Since there was consensus that the old logo did not establish an impactful EOSC brand, EOSC-A has called for a competition and invited the EC as well as the EOSC-SB to the selection of the new logo.

Michel Schouppe regards the new modular EOSC logo as an asset that should be capitalised on since it can be adapted to the context it is used in. However, clarification is needed regarding the use of the stand-alone EOSC logo by the other two parties in the Tripartite Collaboration and by the wider community stakeholders that are not members of EOSC-A.

In response to AP's question regarding the ownership of the new EOSC logo, KL explains that although the logo is owned by EOSC-A, it is not used to promote the work of the Association, but the development of EOSC. He offers to jointly discuss how to optimally use the logo to reflect this objective.

AP brings up the website of the EOSC Association and how it could be confused with the EOSC Portal. KL responds that the EOSC-A website is not different to any other corporate website with its purpose to share information and communicate to stakeholders. The EOSC Portal however, which has been developed by EU-funded projects under H2020 and HE is unanimously regarded by the Board of Directors of EOSC-A as "an interesting catalogue of possible contributions to EOSC". It is not considered as the EOSC by the EOSC-A.

The ensuing discussion reveals that the multi-stakeholderism of EOSC faces major communication challenges. Having evolved from EU-funded projects, which were all requested to establish their own websites and communication, the launch of the EOSC Portal, the EOSC-related communication of all community stakeholders, and the initiatives driven by the Member States have resulted in a rather confusing picture of EOSC, which is difficult to grasp for outsiders. To overcome this cacophony, Anna Panagopoulou suggests pursuing the idea of a one-stop-shop concept for EOSC's online presence. KL and MS do not think that such an approach is adapted to an EOSC developed as a system of systems. However, and VB supports that, a common branding and a cross-referencing could be the way forward in the current state of EOSC development to ensure better awareness and mutual recognition.

AP points out the importance of scoping and recognising EOSC and suggests taking time for internal discussions within the EC, the EOSC-SB and the EOSC-A first and to then reconvene and to develop a common understanding and way forward. KL supports this proposal.

4b) European Commission

- Implementation of the INFRAEOSC destination including the EOSC-core procurement.

Pantelis Tziveloglou (PT) presents an update on the implementation of the INFRAEOSC Destination.

The Horizon Europe Work Programme 2021-2022 has addressed in total 10 topics through calls and the public procurement of the EOSC Core and services with a total funding of 124 MEUR. These calls address issues relevant to the 14 Action Areas identified in the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA). PT presents a mapping of the awarded projects against these Action Areas to demonstrate their balanced coverage. All 2021-selected projects – including the three neighbouring projects BY-COVID, WorldFAIR, and e-IRGSB-7– kicked-off in the course of 2022, whereas all 2022-selected projects will start on 1 January 2023. Most of the projects have a duration of 36 months and all together 221 unique participants. Several organisations participate in a number of consortia, such as CNR from Italy (10) or CSC from Finland (7).

PT presents the objectives of the first coordination meeting with the INFRAEOSC projects that was organised by RTD.A4 on 30.09.2022 in collaboration with CNECT, REA, and EOSC-A. These were:

- Update on the latest developments of the EOSC Partnership and its implementation
- Explore means to improve the collaboration between the projects as well as with the Commission and the EOSC-A
- Identify collaboration areas and eventual gaps to be addressed, taking the EOSC SRIA as a reference

PT continues his presentation with an overview of Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-24, which was launched on 6 December 2022 with the first calls closing on 9 March 2023. It intends to develop EOSC in a more cohesive and structured manner so that it becomes a fully operational enabling ecosystem for the whole research data lifecycle. 6 topics with a total funding of 69 MEUR are addressed in 2023, while in 2024 61 MEUR will be allocated to 5 topics.

PT concludes his presentation with an outlook to the planning for the remaining years of Horizon Europe. The public consultation on the “past, present and future of the European Research & Innovation Framework programmes 2014-2027” will remain open until 23 February 2023. The consultation covers the H2020 ex-post and the Horizon Europe interim evaluations, as well as the Horizon Europe Strategic Plan for 2025-2027. The drafting of the Horizon Europe Strategic

Plan for 2025-2027 will start in Q2 2023 and is currently planned to be adopted in Q1 2024. The time frame of the corresponding Work Programmes for the years 2025-2027 is not yet fully decided.

In the ensuing discussion the scope of the mid-term evaluation of Horizon Europe Partnerships was addressed. It could not be clarified in the meeting if each Partnership will be assessed individually, or all Partnerships together based on their biennial reporting. The EC services will clarify this point after internal consultation.

By analogy to the mapping of the calls to the SRIA Activity Areas, it was suggested that EOSC-A also maps its Additional Activities against these areas. EOSC-A will investigate the effort it would take to deliver such an assessment starting with a subset of the use cases that is provided in the AAP.

Regarding the call texts for the years 2025-2027, KL advises to keep them as flexible as possible in order to address recent developments and achievements that might happen between the first draft and the publication of the call. AP confirms that the process does provide quite some flexibility and that the EC is ready to utilize that when needed.

Magda Szwochertowska (SM) provides an update on the procurement “Delivering the EOSC core infrastructure and services” included in the Research Infrastructures Work programme 2021-2022.. The call for tender is expected to be published by end 2022 and the timing for the implementation is more or less the same as initially anticipated.

Item 05: Approval of the Additional Activities Plan 2023
Paper B – AAP 2023

Justyna Kramarczyk provides a summary of the establishment and content of the EOSC Association’s Additional Activities Plan (AAP) for 2023: a total of 84 Member organisations of EOSC-A have contributed to AAP 2023, which includes a consolidated number for Germany, where most of the contributions have been reported by NFDI. The contributing Members are based in 26 countries, representing mostly national organisations. The total amount of Additional Activities planned is EUR 383.929.296 and equals 2.105 FTEs. The categories with the highest amounts are category No 1 (Support to additional R&I), No 3 (Demonstrators), and No 7 (Supporting ecosystem developments).

Following the presentation, the following topics were raised in the discussion:

Michel Schouppe (MS) asks whether it is possible to obtain a budget plan on a country-level, ideally split out by category. KL confirms that this should be possible in the future. Furthermore, MS suggests the EOSC-A to look into the details of the planned activities in category No 3, Demonstrators to feed the next version of the EOSC catalogue. He expects that there is valuable information that can contribute to the overarching objective of delivering and demonstrating results by 2025. The Chairs agree with this anticipation, however KL points out that such an analysis will require resources from EOSC-A which are not available. MS suggests using EOSC Focus resources for that. UG will investigate how this could be done and come back with a proposal.

The Additional Activities Plan 2023 is approved.

Item 06: Partnership reporting in 2023

Ilaria Nardello (IN) summarizes the status of information available regarding the first Biennial Reporting on the EOSC Partnership. It is expected to cover the period 01.06.2021 – 30.06.2023 and to present the contributions by the Partners, the progress towards the objectives of the Partnership, the functioning of the Partnership, some first lessons learnt and a short outlook to the next period. It is due by the end of 2023.

The EC shared the latest version of the reporting template with EOSC-A on 16.12.2022. EOSC-A will review it and provide feedback as soon as possible in January.

The EC is expected to provide a reporting tool / platform for the Additional Activities and EOSC-A had volunteered to be one of the pilot users of it, however, no information on the tool has been shared so far and the EOSC-A would appreciate an update by the EC on the status of the tool development.

Based on the experience and lessons learnt from the establishment of the first two AAPs as well as the KPI Baseline Survey, Ilaria Nardello proposes to re-consider the frequency and timing of the Additional Activities of the Members of the EOSC Association.

To reduce survey fatigue and to increase the number of high-quality responses, IN suggests combining the monitoring of the forecast contribution (for the following year) with the monitoring of the actual contribution (from the previous year) into one survey. This survey would stay open for a considerable time, e.g. between the 3rd and 4th quarters of the year, when accounts from previous year are closed and the forecast for the following year is being prepared. In addition, IN proposes to allow forecasts for a 3-years-period and annually update these forecasts against the actual contributions.

Anna Panagopoulou informs that the tool that is being developed by the Partnerships coordination unit (RTD.G.4) will be ready in January 2023. It is expected to be used by all HE Partnerships. The reporting will be due in April 2023.

Regarding the reporting tool, the EC offers to check internally whether the tool that is being launched in January is the pilot or already the full version. Regarding the reporting frequency and timelines, it is agreed to set-up a dedicated meeting with the Partnerships coordination unit to address this point. In addition, it is suggested that EOSC-A reaches out to other Partnerships to understand if they face the same challenges and make a joint request to the Partnerships Coordination Unit to re-consider the reporting deadlines.

Item 07: Adoption of the SRIA 1.1 including the Multiannual Roadmap 2023-2024 Paper C – SRIA 1.1

Paper C – SRIA 1.1 including the Multiannual Roadmap 2023-2024 is adopted.

Item 08: Planning for adoption of the SRIA 1.2 including the Multiannual Roadmap 2025-2027

Karel Luyben (KL) briefly summarizes the activities of EOSC-A on sketching-out the first headlines for MAR 2025 – 2027: The EOSC-A Task Forces had been invited to provide first input in November. Based on that the EOSC-A Board established a list of topics that was shared with

the EC on 10 December 2022. However, EOSC-A keeps on further enriching and developing this first draft.

Anna Panagopoulou informs that the final decision of the approach to the Work Programme(s) covering the years 2025 – 2027 is pending.

It is agreed to develop MAR 2025-2027 with a focus on the first year (detailed priorities for 2025 and possible headlines for 2026-2027) by the summer break 2023 in order to provide timely input for the Research Infrastructures Work Programme as well as the EC's Strategic Plan 2025-2027. EOSC-A will continue evolving the draft, integrating community input and feedback. The EOSC-A Board and the EC will hold technical meeting(s) in February to jointly elaborate the MAR's scope.

Item 09: Supporting paper on EOSC Post-2027
Follow-up after the Tripartite Event in Prague

It is agreed to address this agenda item separately in a dedicated meeting in February 2023, which allows to take the input from the EOSC-A Members as well as the Members States and Associated Countries into account. The EOSC Steering Board is expected to provide its feedback by 10 February 2023.

Item 10: Any Other Business

There is agreement that the reflections on the status of the collaboration during today's meeting have been valuable and constructive and should be followed-up in the new year.

Item 11: Closing of the Partnership Board Meeting

The Chairs conclude the meeting appreciating the open and fruitful discussion and agree on continuing the discussions after internal reflections and consultations in 2023 with dedicated focus on the collaboration with the INFRAEOSC projects and the Partnership reporting.

The Chairs thank everyone for their hard work in 2022 and wish everyone a good holiday period.