Contribution ID: **115**   Type: **Presentation**

Comparison of Authentication and Authorization e-Infrastructures for Research

Thursday, 12 November 2015 09:40 (20 minutes)

Today there exist several international e-Infrastructures that were built to address the federated identity management needs of research and education in Europe as well as the rest of the world. While some of these e-Infrastructures were specifically built for particular groups of research communities (DARIAH, ELIXIR AAI, CLARIN SPF), others were built with a more general target group in mind. The second group includes eduGAIN, EGI, EUDAT, Moonshot and to some extent also Stork. All of these "general-purpose" e-Infrastructures are international or even global. They differ in characteristics, coverage, governance and technology even though they all share the same goal: Provide an infrastructure to facilitate the secure exchange of trusted identity data for authentication and authorization.

As most of these five e-Infrastructures use different and quite complex technologies, it is often difficult to know and understand even the basic concepts they are based on. Even operators of one particular e-Infrastructure often don't know sufficiently about the technical mechanisms, the policies and the needs of the main users of the other e-Infrastructures. Having a good overview about the different e-Infrastructures in these regards is even more difficult for research communities that are about to decide which and how to use one of these e-Infrastructures for their own purposes. It is thus no surprise that it is hard for research communities to learn and understand the differences and commonalities of these e-Infrastructures.

Therefore, the presentation aims at shedding light on the uncharted world of e-Infrastructures by providing a comprehensive and objective overview about them. It will cover the differences, coverage, advantages, known limitations, as well as the overlaps and opportunities for interoperability. The presentation will be based on an e-Infrastructure comparison document that is written by the GÉANT project in collaboration with and involvement from the described e-Infrastructures that will be invited to contribute to the document.

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Session Classification: Current status and evolution of the EGI AAI