**Notes from “Portal Technologies for EGI Communities ” workshop of EGI Technical Forum 2011**

**Workshop page:** [**https://www.egi.eu/indico/sessionDisplay.py?sessionId=64&confId=452#20110920**](https://www.egi.eu/indico/sessionDisplay.py?sessionId=64&confId=452#20110920)

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The “Portal Technologies for EGI Communities” workshop was a 2x90 minutes long track within the “EGI Technical Forum 2011” event. The required outputs from the workshop where best practices, latest developments, requirements, services and reusable software from the field. These can contribute to the process of tracking EGI user requirements[[1]](#footnote-1).

The workshop brought together three groups from EGI:

* Software developers who produce reusable applications for portal developers.
* Providers of portal services in EGI: both software based services (the portals themselves) and human services such as consultancy and support for portal developers.
* Scientific communities who require and/or already use portals from EGI to interact with the e‑Infrastructure.

The goal of the workshop was to discuss the following series of questions:

* What kind of portal-related technologies and best practices are the most widely used and are emerging within the EGI community? How many and which Virtual Research Communities (VRCs) and National Grid Infrastructures (NGIs) are supporting these?
* What requirements do the user and operation communities have concerning the usage, operation, integration and further-development of portals, portlets and [web gadgets](http://www.egi.eu/user-support/gadgets)?
* How could a wider and harmonised adoption of these technologies be facilitated within EGI? What role should EGI.eu and the NGIs play in this process?

The first session of the workshop was filled with 15 minutes long presentations. The second session included structured discussion about topics that were chosen by EGI.eu in advance (based on the existing user requirements about data management) and by the workshop participants during the event.

The workshop was attended by around 50 participants. Most of the attendees had committed themselves to attend both sessions and actively participated in the discussion. All the presentation and discussion slides can be downloaded from the workshop agenda page: <https://www.egi.eu/indico/sessionDisplay.py?sessionId=64&confId=452#20110920>

During the discussion session the presenters of the previous session emphasised that several NGIs (e.g. Italian, Hungarian, Swiss) and several projects (e.g. DEICDE, INDICATE, SCI-BUS) provide reusable portal technologies for those who would like to create customised gateways to interact with EGI services. These portal technologies range from fully ready-to-use portals to development frameworks, to sets of portlets, to individual portlets, to back-end APIs for specific functions. The technologies provide services for end users and reusable solutions for portal developer who’s work can be significantly simplified by these technologies.

The discussion session concentrated on the topic “how could the presented portal solutions be made more visible for EGI communities (NGIs, VRCs, VOs, etc.)?” The attendees agreed that meanwhile the EGI [Application Database](http://appdb.egi.eu/) provides visibility to these portal tools, comparing multiple entries from this database is difficult and therefore communities may have difficulties in identifying the right solutions for their use cases.

The participants agreed on an action plan *to increase the visibility and comparability of portal technologies within EGI*. According to this action plan portal technology providers with the support of EGI.eu will create a “comparison table” to describe EGI portal technologies. Portal frameworks, portal elements, portlets, APIs, gadgets, etc. should be describable and comparable using this table. The comparison table aims to support new communities in recognising, comparing existing solutions and in identifying best options for their particular use case. The comparison table should include questions/topics that are important for a community or developer to know about a portal technology before engaging with it. The participants agreed on the following responsibilities to create the comparison table:

1. The first draft of the questions/topics by which the portal technologies will be described in the table should be defined by EGI.eu User Community Support Team (UCST).
2. This draft must be then circulated to the key portal technology providers for review and possible modification and extension.
3. The final list of questions/topics must be answered (filled by) the portal technology providers. (Each provider fills the table for his own technology.)
4. EGI.eu UCST collects, reviews and checks the validity of the answers before publicising the comparison table to new communities.
5. The comparison table will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as a collaborative effort by all the stakeholders (UCST and portal technology providers).

The attendees agreed that the workshop provided an excellent opportunity for EGI portal developers, service providers and users to get better know each other and to exchange information on available tools, services and projects.

1. To browse EGI User requirements or to submit new EGI requirements please refer to <http://www.egi.eu/user-support/getting_help/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)