Q&A REPORT TOWN HALL MEETING 22/08/2022

This report provides a short summary of Questions and Answers from the EWP Town Hall meeting that took place on the 22nd of August 2022. It includes questions answered live as well as questions received via the Q&A.

A recording of the event can be found here.

What is the status of the Mandatory Business Requirements that are part of the Interoperability Reinforcement plan?

The Mandatory Business Requirements complement the technical specifications and are meant to be a checklist for providers of what is required to be implemented. It is meant to decrease the margin of error & interpretation in technical specifications and to assess systems are fit for purpose. The requirements are set up from a business perspective.

Several governance bodies will provide input. We aim to publish them in September.

How can HEIs help in testing? Should they send tickets to the ESCI service desk?

Ultimately end users should not take part in technical testing as that is the responsibility of the software providers before making the functionality available in production. If you would like to double check if the functionalities work, it is important to do testing in a testing environment. All providers have such an environment but not all of them make it available to IRO end users. Never ever test with dummy data in a production environment as the data you are exchanging is real.

Of course you can consider the first exchange in production of an IIA or LA with your partner "a test" as well but in such cases you are exchanging real agreements and e.g. the approval leads to a formal IIA or LA.

If you experience issues with exchanging IIAs and LAs, you can create a ticket at the ESCI Service Desk. As part of the Interoperability Action Plan we will include the mapping of interoperability issues across the EWP Network, namely identifying them in any of the platforms.

How are you planning to deal with risks and delays for future processes (nominations, TOR…)? Major changes require a huge amount of preparatory work at the level of the HEI.

Current focus is on IIAs and LAs. The EWP consortium is well-aware that preparation takes time and sharp monitoring should underpin the timing of enforcing new processes but ultimately it is a decision from the European Commission. Through regular meetings with the technical stakeholders via the so-called Infrastructure Forum, we hope to have a better mechanism to clear out what kind of issues and obstacles colleagues encounter.

After one year of work about 9% of IIAs are correctly finalized. Is there any way to get third-party providers to sit together? Providers often point to each other.

The consortium is facilitating communication between providers in different ways:
- There is a monthly Infrastructure Forum;
- Providers will gather in Warsaw for a developers workshop;
- As part of the Interoperability Reinforcement plan you will be able to flag any interoperability issues between systems in the ESCI Service Desk that will allow for more transparency;
- Recently Business User Groups were established per system where you can discuss common issues and share solutions how to overcome them with colleagues using the same system;
- As part of the Interoperability Reinforcement plan the EWP consortium will recruit relationship managers to enhance cooperation with and compliance of the third-party providers and in-house systems.

What is the European Student Identifier (ESI)?

It is a digital identifier enabling students to uniquely identify themselves when they access student mobility services online and for their student status to be automatically verified. Using ESI is crucial for all HEIs to be able to provide mobile students with an identification that will be used during the entire mobility journey to identify the student both at the sending and at the receiving institution. It will be used to make sure the nomination, Learning Agreement and Transcript of Records, among other processes, are connected to the right student based on ESI.

The ESI is generated by the home university and provides a harmonized unique code that allows a student, and information related to that person, to be recognized across borders and systems. The ESI code is a permanent code, meaning it stays with an individual throughout the academic journey.

More detailed information can be found here: https://myacademic-id.eu/faq/

Who generates the ESI

It is the home university who generates the ESI. In most cases this is done in the Student Information System. In some countries there is a national student identifier, so the ESI is unique across institutions. In other countries it is a local identifier. ESI is not stored centrally, it is always requested by digital services on the fly at the home HEI.

Will ESI be used for more things than just EWP?

The main use case for ESI is part of the mobilities under EWP but there is a lot of interest, e.g. from European University Alliances to use ESI, e.g. for giving access to Learning Management Systems (LMS).

Where do institutions find support for ESI?

Institutions can find information and support on the ESI deployment at the Wiki pages hosted by Géant and EUF and through the FAQ provided by MyAcademicID.

As a newby I wonder if EWP supports Traineeship LAs as well?

The digitalisation roadmap is a step-by-step process where we started with student mobilities. In the future we will also address new processes such as Traineeship LAs. But this will be something for the future.

There is a new statistics API and there are some concerns that this compromises other APIs. What is the priority?

It is currently possible to deliver statistics by hand but it will be much easier for systems to deliver this information via a simple API that is currently developed. Deploying the API for statistics is not comparable to the other more complex APIs. It shouldn't take more than a couple of days..

The request for this statistics came from the European Commission and the National Agencies.

How will EWP+ focus on needs from Alliances? Alliances are now creating their own solutions and infrastructures, wouldn't it make more sense that solutions like EWP and the Erasmus App would better cater for the needs from Alliances e.g. when it comes to sharing courses?

In the envisaged [EWP Governance structure](#), Alliances are included. Sharing courses is currently not in scope of the work of EWP but it may become part of the ecosystem in the future, especially when there is a high need amongst the Alliances. The current work under EWP may be of use for Alliances, e.g. for sharing grades via TOR API. Maybe it is not enough and more will come in time, but the network can already be used for sharing info on the business processes currently covered, especially because many mobilities will be covered by those Alliances.

If I would like to change systems, e.g. moving towards Dashboard, will I lose the IIAs that have been concluded via my current system?

Ensuring smooth switching between the solutions is on the agenda but currently this so-called data portability matter is not supported yet. It's a recurrent question and

there are already some ideas on how to deal with it that should be explored together with all the involved parties

When will the new Dashboard enhancements be available?

The enhancements of the Dashboard are scheduled to become available in early 2023. The planned updates were presented during the Erasmus goes Digital Spring Webinar. If you missed the presentation, the full recordings are available on the [European Student Card Initiative YouTube channel](#).

Should we wait to initiate IIAs and LAs via EWP until the Dashboard enhancements are available?

No, all functionality to start exchanging IIAs and LAs is already available in the EWP Dashboard so you can already start today.

In Dashboard we get stuck and there is a message: the partner has not shared an ID for this IIA, therefore no actions are available at this point. Please notify your partner to respectively contact their provider". What should we ask our partners to do?

The message is an indication for the EWP Dashboard users, so that they know that the partner has not shared the local ID of their instance of the IIA. This is a mandatory step and the system from your partner should share this ID before an IIA can be approved. That being said, you could always open an issue in [the Service Desk](#), so that we can check the specifics of the IIA or the relevant partner etc.

Language/country code. All our IIA's are based on the English language and we use en-GB. Should partners accept our IIAs if they register only 2 characters, like 'en' or 'GB' for example?

According to the technical specifications there are different variants of language/country codes and since the EWP specification doesn't say otherwise, all are allowed. So the answer is YES, your partners should accept them, but they can shorten them to 2 digits if they do not need/want to keep all four.

Can HEIs that are part of a consortia embark on digitalization?

Consortia are not in scope of the current EWP activities.

Will the workshops for mobility software providers in Warsaw also be online?

Yes, indeed it will be a hybrid event. Please, encourage your provider to take part in one of the workshops for mobility software providers. We still accept participants: on-site and remote. More information can be found here: https://developers.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu/workshop/.

What type of support can we get from the EWP Consortium?

- **Support materials:** you can use https://wiki.uni-foundation.eu/display/EWP/Erasmus+Without+Paper as a starting point.
- **Technical support material:** use https://wiki.uni-foundation.eu/display/WELCOME/Technical+documentation as a starting point for technical resources.
- **ESCI Service Desk:** http://support.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu, http://support.erasmusapp.eu