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Deliverable 3.2

Report on the harmonization of the distributed architecture

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Abstract (for dissemination)	This report outlines how WP3 strengthened EHRI's distributed architecture by supporting the establishment the National Coordinators Committee (NCC); harmonizing National Node operations; creating frameworks for services, governance, and transnational cooperation; developing the Initial Catalogue of National Services; coordinating the launch of National Node websites; and preparing the structure for Working Groups. These actions ensured coherence between the Central Hub and National Nodes, laying the groundwork for a sustainable and integrated EHRI-ERIC.
Management Summary	A report on WP3 achievements in consolidating EHRI's distributed structure. WP3 supported the establishment of the NCC, developed the Initial Catalogue of Services, and created the framework for Working Groups, transnational activities, and National Node websites, ensuring coherence and interoperability across the network. These actions laid the foundation for a sustainable and integrated EHRI-ERIC.

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1. Introduction

Deliverable D3.2 “Strengthening and Harmonizing EHRI’s Distributed Architecture through National Nodes” presents the outcomes and progress of Work Package 3 (WP3) within the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure Implementation Phase (EHRI-IP). This deliverable documents how WP3 has advanced the establishment, coordination, and operationalization of the National Nodes (NNs), the distributed components that form the core of EHRI-ERIC. It details how WP3 has promoted coherence, interoperability, and sustainability across the national and transnational levels of the research infrastructure, ensuring that EHRI’s scientific, technological, and societal objectives are implemented effectively.

WP3’s overarching mission is to strengthen and harmonize EHRI’s distributed architecture by connecting local archival, research, and documentation initiatives with EHRI’s central structures. Acting as the operational link between the Central Hub (CH) and the National Nodes, WP3 has been instrumental in consolidating EHRI’s transition from a project-based framework (EHRI-3 and EHRI-PP/IP) to a permanent European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). Through targeted coordination, structured governance development, and the creation of shared standards, WP3 has ensured that EHRI operates as an integrated, collaborative network while maintaining flexibility to reflect national specificities.

This deliverable provides a comprehensive account of the strategic, organizational, and technical achievements realized under WP3 between the start of EHRI-IP and mid-2025. It highlights how WP3 supported the establishment of the National Coordinators Committee (NCC), which now serves as EHRI-ERIC’s formal governance body for the distributed infrastructure. The report also documents WP3’s coordination of the National Coordinators’ Workshops, the development of the Initial Catalogue of Services of the National Nodes (Deliverable 3.1), and the creation of the procedural and strategic framework for EHRI’s Working Groups (WGs).

In addition, D3.2 also details WP3’s contributions to the development of National Node websites, ensuring both technical and visual coherence across the distributed infrastructure. Furthermore, it describes the harmonization of national planning and reporting processes, which has strengthened coordination and strategic alignment between the National Nodes and the Central Hub.

By integrating these diverse strands of activity, WP3 has provided the essential coordination mechanisms that support EHRI’s distributed architecture. It has significantly contributed towards establishing both the governance and operational frameworks that allow the NCC and National Nodes to function as cohesive components of a sustainable European research infrastructure.

Deliverable 3.2 therefore serves as a record of progress and a strategic framework for the continued development of EHRI’s national and transnational structures. It lays the groundwork for the Deliverable 3.3 “Report on the Development of National Nodes” which will focus on the ongoing consolidation, expansion, and long-term sustainability of EHRI’s distributed network.

2. Strengthening and Harmonising EHRI's Distributed Architecture through National Nodes

The primary goal of WP3 in the EHRI-IP is to manage the distributed components of EHRI-ERIC by ensuring the cohesion, growth, and operationalization of the NNs. WP3 contributes to the overall objective of “Implementing EHRI” through a set of interlinked goals: establishing, strengthening, and expanding the National Nodes; promoting communication, cooperation, and coordination among them; and ensuring that EHRI's scientific, technological, and societal policies are implemented effectively at both the central and national levels. WP3 serves as a platform for National Coordinators (NC's) to share experiences, align activities, and promote coherence across countries while maintaining sensitivity to local needs and contexts. A key part of WP3's mission is to finalize EHRI's distributed architecture by optimizing and formalizing the interactions between the Central Hub and the National Nodes, thereby consolidating EHRI as a unified European research infrastructure.

To achieve these objectives, WP3 organizes its work into two major tasks. Task 3.1 “Scaling-up National Nodes” focuses on supporting the internal and external development of the NNs. It includes monitoring NN activities, strengthening national consortia, facilitating negotiations with ministries and other stakeholders, and helping National Coordinators incorporate EHRI into national roadmaps and funding frameworks. It also guides the drafting of national scientific and technological work plans using standardized templates and coordinates the development of national websites and communication tools in collaboration with WP7. Task 3.2 “Harmonisation of Distributed Architecture” aimed to strengthen transnational collaboration and integration mechanisms. This included promoting joint activity among NNs, establishing the NCC as a regular forum for exchange and coordination, and preparing initial proposals for WGs in cooperation with WP4. WP3 also developed and harmonized the catalogue of national services contributed by the NNs and integrated these verified services into the overarching EHRI Service Catalogue, ensuring consistency, transparency, and interoperability across the distributed infrastructure.

2.1 Workshops of National Coordinators Organized and Coordinated by WP3

From its inception and building on the groundwork laid by EHRI-PP WP 4, WP3 played a fundamental role in organizing and coordinating meetings that shaped the distributed governance structure of EHRI-ERIC, most notably through the establishment and facilitation of the NCC. Under Task 3.2 (Harmonization of Distributed Architecture), WP3 undertook the preparatory work required to establish the NCC as the permanent governing body representing the NNs.

To achieve this, WP3 initiated and managed a series of regular workshops for National Coordinators, designed to harmonize the activities, structures, and strategic plans of the NNs. These meetings served multiple purposes: they provided a platform for sharing experiences, coordinating the development of EHRI national websites with a unified and recognizable design, and collaboratively drafting key strategic and policy documents. They also functioned as a forum where leaders of other EHRI-IP work packages

could present, consult, and align themes and documents of relevance to the NNs and the emerging NCC.

Beyond their administrative function, these meetings played a formative role in strengthening the professional identity and capacity of the NC's. They helped national partners develop the skills and strategies needed to engage effectively with government stakeholders, secure funding, and build sustainable national consortia within the EHRI framework.

Beginning with the EHRI-IP kick-off meeting in Amsterdam in February 2024, and continuing through to the formal establishment of the NCC in Zagreb in March 2025, WP3's coordination meetings provided continuity, structure, and strategic direction until their agenda and responsibilities were formally assumed by the NCC.

2.1.1 List of National Coordinator Workshops organised as a part of WP3

Below, main areas of work of WP3, as discussed in the National Coordinators' Workshops and on the ongoing bases, are detailed.

Date	Location	Main themes
28.2.2024	Amsterdam	Services of the NNs; EHRI National Websites; Initial brainstorming on WGs
27.5.2024	Online	EHRI National Websites; Scientific and Technological Policies of the NNs
9.9.2024	Online	Services of the NNs; In-kind Contributions of the NNs to EHRI-ERIC
30.9.2024	Online	Strategy for Establishing WGs within EHRI-ERIC; Process of Establishing the NCC
26.11.2024	Online	EHRI National Websites; EHRI WGs; Establishment of the NCC
16.12.2024	Online	Initial Registry of Services of the National Nodes
20.1.2025	Online	In-kind Contributions of the NNs and their Reporting; Initial Catalogue of Services of the NNs (Deliverable D3.1); EHRI WGs
17.2.2025	Online	EHRI WGs; Deliverable D3.1; In-kind Contributions of the NNs; Preparation for the First Meeting of the NCC

2.2 Development of the Services Catalogue (D3.1)

A crucial activity in 2024 and early 2025 was the creation of the formal inventory of services offered by National Nodes.

WP3 initiated an intensive discussion on NN services and conducted a structured survey to collect detailed information on both ongoing and planned activities. These discussions aimed to harmonize the understanding and definition of services across all NNs, ensuring consistency within EHRI's distributed framework. The resulting deliverable 3.1 "Initial Catalogue of Services of the National Nodes" was submitted in April 2025 and included 67 services contributed by 11 National Nodes. All service descriptions adhered to metadata standards aligned with the EOSC Resource Profile, guaranteeing interoperability within the European Open Science Cloud. The catalogue categorized services into two main types: digital and data services (39 in total), which include online access to collection inventories, victim name databases, and Holocaust geographies such as MemoMap Prague, and user community services, including training sessions, lectures, workshops, conferences, placements, and collaborative pairing initiatives. Future plans include establishing mechanisms for approving new services in the EHRI Service Registry and developing a sustainable content model that clearly defines the responsibilities of the Central Hub and National Nodes in maintaining EHRI's central services.

2.3 Core Priorities and Work Streams of NNs

The NNs are the backbone of EHRI-ERIC, implementing its strategies at the national level while contributing to the wider distributed research infrastructure. Their core priorities span four main areas: strategy and governance, ensuring alignment with EHRI-ERIC's objectives through annual work plans and structured reporting; sustainability and funding, focused on securing long-term financial and political support and strengthening national consortia; data integration and digital services, which include contributions to the Catalogue of Services, mandatory participation in Data Integration and Portal Content WGs, and the development of digital tools, repositories, and portals; and transnational collaboration and outreach, where NNs lead and participate in WGs, host Conny Kristel Fellowships, and deliver training, seminars, and public engagement activities. Together, these work streams ensure the cohesion, sustainability, and international impact of EHRI-ERIC.

3. Working Groups (WGs) Establishment and Structure

To maintain the transnational cooperation developed within all EHRI projects and to further develop EHRI services to users, significant attention was devoted to the preparation of the EHRI WGs. These were envisioned as bodies consisting of several EHRI NNs and, where relevant, of external experts engaging in work around shared themes, goals and services. In many ways, the WGs are intended to replace the work packages from the EHRI-1, EHRI-2 and EHRI-3 projects.

WP3 played a central role in preparing the framework for the establishment and operation of EHRI-ERIC WGs, laying the groundwork for the NCC to assume full responsibility for their implementation and oversight. Recognizing that cross-border collaboration is essential for Holocaust research, WP3 designed WGs as flexible and self-organized instruments to strengthen EHRI's transnational cooperation and ensure the integration of national and thematic expertise across the distributed infrastructure.

Throughout 2024 and early 2025, WP3 developed the strategic and procedural basis for the creation of WGs. A comprehensive WG Strategy Paper was prepared, defining the rationale, structure, and governance model for the groups, and distinguishing between two main types: strategic WGs, intended to address long-term, essential areas of activity and replace former project-based Work Packages, and ad hoc WGs, designed as short-term exploratory initiatives with the potential to evolve into strategic groups. WP3 also drafted a standardized proposal template to ensure consistency in WG submissions, detailing required components such as objectives, expected outcomes, membership, leadership structure, and duration. Additionally, procedural guidance was developed for WG approval, outlining the review, voting, and monitoring process to be carried out by the NCC once established.

Apart from the preparation of the formal structure and procedures, attention was devoted to defining the areas of work of the WGs and preparation of their leadership and membership. This was of utmost significance also because of the end of the EHRI-3 project and the need to sustain key activities and services. Starting with the first meeting, the National Coordinators' Workshops were used to map joint interests as well as potential gaps, to provide guidance to the NNs and built kernel WGs.

At the March 2025 meeting in Zagreb, upon the establishment of the NCC, these preparatory efforts were presented and adopted, enabling the Committee to initiate the formal ratification of the first WGs. WP3 coordinated the transition process by organizing discussions, collecting proposals from NNs, and providing templates and criteria for evaluation. The NCC subsequently agreed to use the WP3-developed structure to approve and monitor WGs, noting that most WG activities would be financed through national in-kind contributions. However, it was also recognised that a limited pot of funding is available at the Central Hub to support transnationally important WG activities that cannot be financed nationally. This Central Hub funding is separate from the EHRI-IP project budget. The NCC therefore decided to prioritise the use of this limited Central Hub funding in 2025 for the Editorial Board WG, to sustain key communication services such as the EHRI Document Blog, webinars, and podcasts.

By June 2025, based on WP3's preparatory framework, the NCC had ratified three strategic WGs: the Data Integration WG, focusing on the technical integration of data into the EHRI Portal and requiring mandatory participation from all NNs; the Portal Content WG, approved by the German NN and tasked with coordinating access and quality control of EHRI resources; and the Editorial Board WG, chaired by the Czech NN and responsible for specific EHRI's editorial and outreach activities. In September 2025, two ad hoc WGs proposed and shaped during WP3 coordination were formally ratified: the Natural Language Processing and Holocaust Research WG, continuing

EHRI's cooperation with CLARIN, and the Ego-documents in Holocaust Studies and Collections WG, focusing on personal narratives and digital methodologies.

WP3 also initiated discussions for additional WGs addressing areas such as the development of a comprehensive Names Database encompassing both victims and perpetrators, Geospatial Data, and Religious Archives, and cooperated in establishing a framework to align WG activities with EHRI's overall funding and reporting mechanisms.

Through these activities, WP3 ensured that the NCC inherited a clear, well-structured system for establishing and managing WGs. Its preparatory work spanning strategy development, documentation, consultation, and pilot coordination provided the procedural and conceptual foundation that now enables the NCC to oversee and expand EHRI's WGs as sustainable, transnational instruments for collaboration and innovation within the EHRI-ERIC framework.

The proposals for the following WGs were suggested and/or drafted, in different stages of completeness, when the NCC took over the agenda from WP3:

Working Group	Status	Lead(s)	Role of NNs	Notes
Data integration (strategic) WG	Ratified (June 4, 2025)	Chair: Mike Bryant (Hub); Vice-Chair: Herminio Garcia González (Hub)	Mandatory participation for all NNs (at least one person nominated by June 13).	Focuses on technical aspects, harmonizing components of the technical infrastructure, and promoting archival standards. Hub leading due to technical nature was accepted as an exception.
Editorial Board (strategic) WG	Ratified (June 4, 2025)	Chair: Michala Jandák Lônčíková (CZ); Vice-Chairs: Wolfgang Schellenbacher (AT) and Katharina Freise (Hub)	Non-mandatory , but contributions encouraged to expand network.	Continuation of existing services (EHRI Blog, Webinars, Podcasts). MUA leads this WG.
Portal Content (strategic) WG	Ratified in principle (June 4, 2025)	Johannes Meerwald and Veerle	Mandatory participation for all NNs (at least one	Continuation of EHRI-3 work (WP9), focused on access to resources.

Working Group	Status	Lead(s)	Role of NNs	Notes
		Vanden Daelen	person nominated by June 13).	
Natural Language Processing and Holocaust data and archives WG	Ratified September, 2025 as an ad hoc WG	Chaired by: Michal Frankl (CZ/DE) Vice-Chaired by: Martin Wynne (EHRI-UK / CLARIN-UK)		NCs were urged to provide participants for this WG by the end of September . The Basecamp group was to be created.
Ego-documents in Holocaust studies and collections WG	Ratified in September, 2025	Éva Kovács, Marianne Windsperger (EHRI-AT, VWI) Co-Chair: Ana Barbulescu (EHRI-RO, INSHR-EW)	Intended to allow younger NNs to join easily.	This group focuses on methodological discussions and on questions related to archival description and categorization, surveying, and transnational activities concerning ego-documents.
Educational Hub WG	Proposed	INSHR-EW		Promote Education through Research. Train Educators, Encourage Methodological Exchange
Geospatial data	Proposed	The proposal was written, Michal Frankl as a pro tempore Chair; leadership TBD.		Focus on continuing work on the Geospatial Repository and use of spatial data.

Working Group	Status	Lead(s)	Role of NNs	Notes
Victims' database and standard personal data WG	Proposed	The Chair and Vice-Chair are yet to be decided, with representation expected from DE, AT, and CZ.		Potential scope expansion to include perpetrator names.
Restitution of cultural movable property WG	Interest expressed	EHRI-NL interested in leading.		Focused on a topic with existing expertise and international interest.
Refugees	Proposed	EHRI-UK		

4. Development of National Node Websites

As part of the meetings held under EHRI-IP, WP3 played a key role in coordinating, aligning, and supporting the development of National Node (NN) websites to ensure their functionality, coherence, and integration within the broader EHRI-ERIC infrastructure. WP3 was responsible for coordinating the creation of NN websites and related communication instruments, working in close cooperation with WP7 on Communication, Dissemination, and Exploitation. This activity, as outlined in the implementation plan, assigned responsibility to the NCC for supervising the development of national websites and related communication instruments. The effort was related to WP7's branding and marketing strategy, which aimed to consolidate EHRI's identity across all National Nodes. The Central Hub provided ongoing technical and content support for these activities and maintained responsibility for the main EHRI-ERIC website (www.ehri-project.eu), which was in the process of transitioning from a project website to a fully branded ERIC platform in 2025. Each NN operates its own (mostly bilingual) website that serves as a public-facing access point, linking to central EHRI resources while highlighting specific national services and events. WP3 ensured continuous exchange between these distributed websites and the central EHRI platform.

From a technical perspective, WP3 also documented and reviewed the infrastructure supporting NN websites. A technical overview prepared by the Central Hub detailed the structure, design, hosting, and maintenance of the national websites developed

during EHRI-IP. WP3 gathered updates on specific website development initiatives planned for 2025: EHRI-AT worked on updating its site and enhancing user-friendliness, EHRI-CZ developed both the graphic design and the new EHRI-CZ Portal, emphasizing Holocaust victims' databases and integrated search tools, EHRI-NL prepared final adjustments for launch, EHRI-RO designed its national website, and EHRI-HR began planning the *ehri.hr* portal to mirror its activities and services. EHRI-BE has already set up a website, and the other NNs have also established their local EHRI-NNs sites.

Below are several examples of NN websites that have been established:

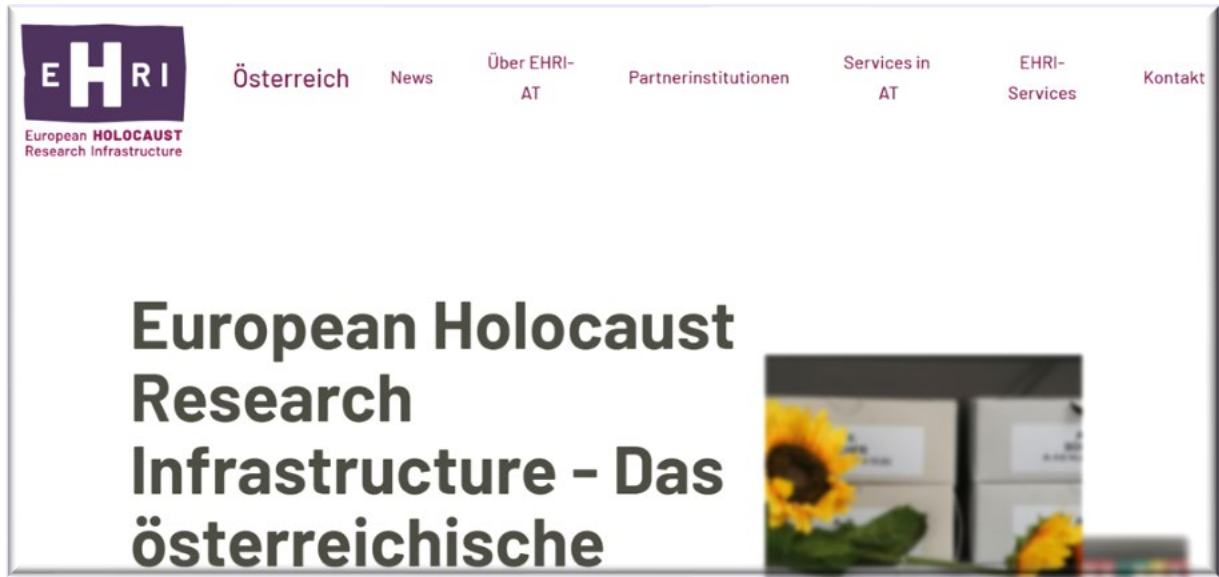


Figure 1:EHRI–Austrian National Node website



Figure 2: EHRI-Czech National Node Website



Figure 3: EHRI-Netherlands National Node Website

These websites also serve as digital gateways to the online services catalogued in Deliverable 3.1. For example, the Czech NN developed the *MemoMap Prague* Historical GIS, the Netherlands NN operates the *Oorlogsbronnen* and *Joods Monument* portals, and the Romanian NN maintains an interactive Holocaust map and a victims' database. Beyond offering access to digital resources, NN websites function as central hubs for disseminating training opportunities, research events, and outreach activities. Collectively, these websites represent a vital communication channel within EHRI's distributed architecture; strengthening visibility, accessibility, and engagement across

national and international audiences, including researchers, educators, policymakers, and the general public.

4.1 Overview of live websites

Drawing on the technical groundwork and documentation (walkthrough) created in the EHRI-PP project, WP3 supported NNs in creating and managing their websites with the Hugo static site generator. The walkthrough provides a comprehensive, step-by-step process covering both local development workflows and GitHub-based solutions, ensuring accessibility for users with different levels of technical expertise.

The first section of the guide addressed the setup of a Hugo site using the EHRI template. It outlined the installation of the extended version of Hugo, the local deployment of the site, and methods for customizing configuration files, themes, and templates. Detailed instructions were provided for adjusting site appearance, managing multilingual content, structuring new pages, and applying Hugo features such as front matter, content types, and short codes. Additional guidance covered handling images, customizing layouts, and integrating data-driven sections for services and updates. The walkthrough also included instructions for publishing websites via GitHub Pages and generating static versions for self-hosting. To ensure sustainability, it documented the process for updating the EHRI Hugo theme, managing Git submodules, and resolving common technical issues.

In addition to the local setup, a parallel tutorial was produced for creating NN websites directly on GitHub, without requiring local Git tools. This workflow explained how to fork the EHRI Hugo template repository, configure GitHub Pages using GitHub Actions, and automatically deploy a live site. Once the site was created, NNs could edit configuration files, update Markdown-based content in the content/ directory, add static files such as logos and images in the static/ directory, and manage structured data through the data/ directory. The tutorial also described the overall architecture of the site, including the roles of themes, layouts, and translation files.

To demonstrate practical use, the tutorial included an example of adding a news item. This involved creating a Markdown file with metadata, committing the changes, and optionally attaching a featured image. Each update triggered the GitHub Actions deployment workflow, ensuring that modifications were reflected on the public NN website within minutes.

Taken together, these resources lowered technical barriers for National Nodes while maintaining the flexibility and consistency of the Hugo framework. The guides ensured that NN websites could be set up, customized, and maintained in line with EHRI's design standards, thereby supporting sustainable and harmonized web presence across the distributed infrastructure.

Currently, all ten EHRI NNs have a national website combining information about EHRI as a whole and the activities in the specific country. The websites are an important step towards making information about EHRI available in national languages, building national consortia and reaching out to diverse, multilingual user groups.

5. Support for National Nodes and Planning

WP3 actively supported the NNs in their foundational and operational development, ensuring alignment with EHRI-ERIC's strategic objectives and providing tools for sustainable national growth. A key component of this work was the coordination of National Work Plans for 2025 and 2026, designed to harmonize scientific and technological activities across all participating NNs. National Coordinators (NCs) were asked to complete standardized templates for the EHRI-NN Work Plans 2025 by May 23, 2025, and by June nearly all submissions had been received. Planning for the 2026 cycle began immediately thereafter, with a submission deadline set for December 2025. The 2025 work plans reflected a diverse range of activities, including research fellowships (EHRI-UK), technical development of national portals (EHRI-CZ and EHRI-PO), and conferences and seminars (EHRI-PO and EHRI-AT).

6. Establishing EHRI-ERIC's Governance Framework (NCC)

WP3 supported the building of the national nodes, their negotiation with governments, applying for funding, creating of formal structure, etc. By creating a forum for National Coordinators to discuss and harmonise EHRI policies, it prepared the grounds for the establishment and smooth operation of the NCC, the formal governance body representing EHRI-ERIC's distributed NNs. By the time of the approval of the EHRI-ERIC and the establishment of the NCC, this group counted 11 National Nodes, with one of them having the Observer status.

WP3 significantly contributed to the preparation of the first meeting of the NCC by ensuring that the formal criteria for the appointment of the National Coordinators were met and the necessary documentation about the appointment of National Coordinators available. It also helped to prepare the agenda of the first NCC meeting. In the framework of WP3 and the help of WP2, NCs commented on and approved the initial Rules of Procedure (RoP) that define the NCC's structure, composition, and operational procedures. The RoP were prepared by WP2 and adopted by the General Assembly on 19 February 2025 and recorded at the NCC's inaugural meeting on 10 March 2025.

The inaugural meeting of the EHRI-ERIC NCC took place on 10 March 2025 at the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb, marking the committee's formal establishment. Chaired initially by EHRI-ERIC Director Reto Speck, the meeting focused on adopting the Rules of Procedure, electing leadership, and defining the NCC's initial operational framework. Rachel Pistol (UK) was unanimously elected Chair and Marianne Windsperger (AT) Vice-Chair, formally launching the NCC's governance functions. Members agreed to meet monthly during the committee's formative phase and at least once annually in person.

The meeting also addressed the alignment of NN work plans with the Central Hub's strategy, the framework for WGs, and the resumption of in-person services such as fellowships, seminars, and workshops. In doing so, the NCC established itself as EHRI-ERIC's key governance forum, setting the foundation for strategic coordination, sustainable collaboration, and long-term integration across the distributed infrastructure. The NCC also discussed sustainability challenges and funding models for NNs, emphasizing the need for clearer national "business cases" demonstrating their long-term value. Technical guidance for data submission and sharing was proposed as a priority for future collaboration.

Finally, the NCC addressed the resumption of in-person services such as fellowships, seminars, and workshops, confirming available funding for at least one fellowship call and one seminar in 2025. National Coordinators reported on their institutional priorities and activities for the coming year, including the development of national portals, databases, and training initiatives. Collectively, the Zagreb meeting laid the foundation for the NCC's governance, operational structure, and collaborative agenda, firmly integrating it into EHRI-ERIC's long-term strategic framework.

6.1 Coordination Between NCC and WP3

Coordination between the NCC and WP3 remains essential for the transition of EHRI from a time-limited project structure (EHRI-IP) into a permanent EHRI-ERIC. WP3 played a central role in preparing the ground for the NCC by ensuring its initial operational links to both the CH and the NNs. Following the establishment of the NCC, WP3 oversaw the transition of its coordination functions, ensuring a smooth handover of responsibilities. For the remainder of the project, WP3 and the NCC will operate in parallel, with WP3 providing ongoing support and transferring key agenda items, such as the coordination of NN activities, work plan development, and strategic discussions to the NCC, ensuring its successful integration into EHRI's long-term governance structure.

While WP3 originally functioned as a forum for coordinating NNs and overseeing their activities, this role has been permanently transferred to the NCC, which provides continuity, transnational coordination, and governance. Key deliverables of WP3 most notably D3.2 and D3.3 (Report on the Development of National Nodes) are developed in close collaboration with the NCC, with NCC leadership actively coordinating national contributions. In practice, many strategic activities required joint effort and shared responsibility between WP3, the NCC, and the CH, including the establishment and monitoring of Working Groups, drafting of NN work plans, defining a sustainable a strategic framework that ensures consistent and coordinated management of digital content across EHRI-ERIC. Its implementation ensures harmonized, sustainable development of central services, content integration across the EHRI network, coordinating access to external funding sources, contributing to scientific and user access monitoring, and ensuring harmonized branding and communication across the distributed infrastructure.

In summary, WP3's efforts laid the groundwork for a sustainable transnational cooperation model, transferring operational responsibility to the NCC while ensuring that the NNs were structurally, procedurally, and financially equipped to carry out EHRI-ERIC's international mission. Further details on these activities will be presented in Deliverable D3.3.

7. Conclusion

Deliverable D3.2 outlines the progress achieved by WP3 and its instrumental role in advancing EHRI's distributed architecture, establishing the foundations for sustainable coordination, governance, and service integration across the NNs of EHRI-ERIC. Over the reporting period (February 2024 – June 2025), WP3 contributed to moving the infrastructure decisively from a project-based mode of operation toward a mature,

federated, and permanent structure within the European Research Infrastructure Consortium framework.

Through systematic coordination, WP3 prepared the establishment of the NCC as the formal governance body representing the distributed infrastructure. The NCC now functions as the key operational link between the CH and the National Nodes, providing continuity, transparency, and participatory governance across EHRI-ERIC. This achievement marks a significant milestone in the institutional consolidation of EHRI's European governance model.

The creation of the Initial Catalogue of Services of the National Nodes (D3.1) has provided the first harmonized inventory of national contributions to EHRI's service portfolio. This catalogue not only illustrates the diversity and strength of the participating NNs but also ensures interoperability with the European Open Science Cloud through shared metadata and technical standards. WP3's coordination of this process has led to a structured mechanism for integrating and maintaining national services within the central EHRI Service Registry, thereby supporting both technical and strategic alignment across the infrastructure.

Equally important has been the development of the WGs framework, which now allows to continue key transnational efforts and services under the structure of the EHRI-ERIC. WP3 designed and piloted the procedures, governance models, and documentation templates that have enabled the NCC to ratify the first five WGs by mid-2025. These groups, covering topics from Data Integration and Portal Content to the Editorial Board and thematic research initiatives, ensure that the infrastructure remains dynamic, community-driven, and scientifically responsive.

The coordination and support provided for the creation of NN websites have further strengthened EHRI's distributed identity and visibility. By providing shared technical guidance and visual standards, WP3 ensured a coherent digital presence that connects national initiatives with the central EHRI platform, enhancing both accessibility and user engagement.

Finally, WP3's contribution to strategic alignment and sustainability planning has laid the groundwork for future growth. Through the coordination of national work plans, negotiation support with ministries and stakeholders, and facilitation of national funding pathways, WP3 has ensured that EHRI's distributed architecture is embedded within national research and policy ecosystems.

Overall, Deliverable 3.2 demonstrates that WP3 has achieved its core objectives in Task 3.2. It helped to prepare a durable and participatory governance framework through the creation of the NCC, harmonised operational and service structures across the National Nodes to ensure coherence within the distributed architecture, and designed effective mechanisms for transnational coordination through Working Groups and related frameworks. In parallel, WP3 has strengthened the technical and communication foundations that underpin EHRI's distributed infrastructure, ensuring consistency, accessibility, and interoperability across national and central components. Finally, it has advanced long-term sustainability by embedding strategic planning, standardisation, and stakeholder engagement into the operational fabric of EHRI-ERIC.