Horizon 2020 project, MERIL-2, launches interactive tool mapping research infrastructures in Europe

Contributed by: ESF

The European Commission-funded MERIL-2 project (Mapping of the European Research Infrastructure Landscape) has introduced a new Data Visualisation tool that allows users to discover all of the European research infrastructures (RI) in the MERIL database interactively.

Strasbourg, 12 September 2018 – The European Commission-funded MERIL-2 project (Mapping of the European Research Infrastructure Landscape) has introduced a new Data Visualisation tool that allows users to discover all of the European research infrastructures (RI) in the MERIL database interactively. With the new tool, users can quickly see and explore data on the European research landscape, such as RI size and location, user profiles, and research capabilities of over 1,000 research facilities across the continent.

The tool provides a visual ‘big picture’ of the research infrastructure landscape in Europe, and gives the user the freedom to choose how to filter the dataset and visualise the results in the different interactive dashboards. Key features include:

• A European map with location points that map all research infrastructures included in MERIL, colour and size coded according to type of RI (mobile, virtual or single-site). Hovering over the points reveals information about the RI, including its scientific domain and coordinating country.
• Extensive filter parameters such as keywords, life cycle status and scientific domain, which enable users to intuitively find results, trends and correlations that might not be easily discovered in the database. Colour coded bars indicate the completeness of an RI’s data within the MERIL database.
• Access use and trends tool, which helps users to see the history of individual research infrastructures, such as numbers of users, staff and facility timeline. It also shows the breakdown of access modes, and research capacity across all European research infrastructures.
• Graphical representations of the number of research infrastructures in each scientific domain, allowing users to quickly see the number of facilities that specialise in common areas.

The data visualisation tool is designed to aid the discovery of information on research infrastructures, with the aim of encouraging new partnerships and collaborations within the scientific community. It will also enable policymakers to see the distribution of facilities across a country or the continent, and thereby identify where there may be capability hotspots or gaps in infrastructure accessibility.

The MERIL database has grown significantly under the MERIL-2 programme and currently holds information on over 1,000 research infrastructures. In recognition of the value of MERIL’s information, the database eligibility criteria has now been expanded to accept research infrastructures that are only open to national users. Previously, MERIL’s eligibility checklist stipulated that only research infrastructures of “more than national relevance” should be listed. As of 25 July 2018, the sixth criterion has been amended with the aim of expanding MERIL’s coverage and to broaden its usefulness.

“Scientists sometimes need access to research infrastructures that may be unfamiliar to them. Our vision for MERIL is to
support the scientific community by presenting a complete picture of the landscape of European RIs,” said Jean-Claude Worms, Chief Executive of the European Science Foundation. “The new visualisation tool is an important milestone for the project, and it aims at making the MERIL data easier to navigate, by presenting the information in a clear and accessible way. We hope that researchers who use our tool will discover new resources and opportunities for collaboration.”

**Contributor**

**Organisation**
- ESF
- France

**Contact**
- Jean-Claude Worms
  - E-mail
- See more news from this contributor

**Related information**

**Projects**
- MERIL-2 - MERIL-2 MAPPING OF THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE LANDSCAPE

**Countries**
- Switzerland, Germany, France, Netherlands, United Kingdom

**Subjects**
- Coordination and Cooperation - Scientific Research

**Keywords**
- Database, Research Infrastructure

**Last updated on** 2018-09-14
**Retrieved on** 2019-07-28


© European Union, 2019