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Project abbreviation: ELG

Project name: European Language Grid

Project coordinator: Prof. Dr. Georg Rehm, German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI)



Project consortium:

- German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence
- Institute for Language and Speech Processing
- University of Sheffield
- Charles University
- ELRA-ELDA European Language Resources Association
- Tilde
- Hensoldt Analytics
- Expert System Iberia
- University of Edinburgh

Funding: European Commission

Project duration: 1 January 2019 – 31 Juni 2022

Main key words: Language technology, Language-specific AI, Multilingualism, Under-resourced languages, LT services

Background of the research topic: The history of the European Language Grid dates back to 2010 and the original META-NET cluster of projects (T4ME, CESAR, METANET4U, META-NORD). The first ideas and concepts in which we suggested the creation of, what we called in 2013 the “European Service Platform for Language Technologies”, were published in the META-NET Strategic Research Agenda for Multilingual Europe 2020.

Already back then we suggested to make use of powerful multilingual, cross-lingual and monolingual technologies to support the emerging Multilingual Digital Single Market. Later on, projects such as CRACKER and the Cracking the Language Barrier federation of organisations and projects joined the Multilingual Europe initiative.

Now, with the ELG project, the time has finally come to build upon all these different technology and strategy development as well as community building activities when developing the European Language Grid as the primary platform for Language Technologies in Europe.

Goal of the project:

Business Objectives

- O1: Contribute to the establishment of the Multilingual DSM
- O2: Provide LT companies with a scalable platform & market place

Societal Objectives

- O3: Provide a vast set of LTs to the European citizens, including stakeholders such as public administrations and NGOs
- O4: Help address the threat of digital language extinction

Community and Coordination Objectives

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- O5: Grow a vibrant and active community around the ELG
- O6: Coordinate between the ELG and other activities

Technology and Innovation Objectives

- O7: Provide European LT research organisations but also industry with a reliable and scalable platform and market place
- O8: Design, develop and deploy a unique LT grid architecture

Project abstract: With 24 official EU and many more additional languages, multilingualism in Europe and an inclusive Digital Single Market can only be enabled through Language Technologies (LTs). European LT business is dominated by thousands of SMEs and a few large players. Many are world-class, with technologies that outperform the global players. However, European LT business is also fragmented; by nation states, languages, verticals and sectors. Likewise, while much of European LT research is world-class, with results transferred into industry and commercial products, its full impact is held back by fragmentation. The key issue and challenge is the fragmentation of the European LT landscape. The European Language Grid (ELG) project will address this fragmentation by establishing the ELG as the primary platform for LT in Europe. The ELG will be a scalable cloud platform, providing, in an easy-to-integrate way, access to hundreds of commercial and non-commercial Language Technologies for all European languages, including running tools and services as well as data sets and resources. It will enable the commercial and non-commercial European LT community to deposit and upload their technologies and data sets into the ELG, to deploy them through the grid, and to connect with other resources. The ELG will boost the Multilingual Digital Single Market towards a thriving European LT community, creating new jobs and opportunities. Through open calls, up to 20 pilot projects will be financially supported to demonstrate the usefulness of the ELG. The proposal is rooted in the experience of a consortium with partners involved in all relevant initiatives. Based on these, 30+ national competence centres and the European LT Council will be set up for European coordination. The ELG will foster language technologies for Europe built in Europe, tailored to our languages and cultures and to our societal and economical demands, benefitting the European citizen, society, innovation and industry.

Publications: <https://www.european-language-grid.eu/about/publications/>