EUROPEAN LANGUAGE GRID

D7.5

ELG Conference 2019 and LTC Meeting 2019

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CEF AT	e-Translation system of the European Commission
EFNIL	European Federation of National Institutions for Language
ELG	European Language Grid
ELRC	European Language Resource Coordination
LTC	Language Technology Council
META-NET	Network of Excellence forging the Multilingual Europe Technology Alliance
NCC	National Competence Centre
NPLD	Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity

Abstract

This deliverable reports on META-FORUM 2019, first providing a brief description of the event series followed by an introduction of the 2019 edition and a brief summary (Section 2). In Section 3 we describe the participants and stakeholder groups and the programme including the awards session. Finally, we describe the main outcomes of the event. The financial aspects of the conference (costs of venue rent etc.) will be reported in the first project management report. Section 4 presents a summary of the first meeting of the European Language Technology Council that was co-located with META-FORUM 2019. The report concludes with an outlook on upcoming conferences and a small photo gallery.

1   Introduction

META-FORUM 2019 took place in Brussels, Belgium, on 8 and 9 October. This 8th edition of the META-FORUM conference series consisted of two days of presentations, panel discussions as well as a project expo. The decision of selecting Brussels again (after 2010, 2012 and 2017) as the location of META-FORUM 2019, was just the right one since this choice of location secured a high participation of representatives of the European institutions. META-FORUM 2019 was, again, a success with interesting presentations and interactive discussions. The organisers received very positive feedback from various stakeholders both during and after the event.

2   The META-FORUM Conference Series

META-FORUM is the annual international conference on Language Technologies in Europe, organised by ELG together with the META-NET Network of Excellence, dedicated to fostering the multilingual European information society. META-FORUM 2019 took place at the BluePoint conference centre in Brussels, Belgium, on 8 and 9 October 2019. The 2019 edition consisted, again, of two days, following the typical format of the series.

Previous META-FORUM editions were organised and financially supported through the EU projects T4ME (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) and CRACKER (2015, 2016, 2017). For 2019-2021, ELG is taking over the organisation of the three META-FORUM conferences. It serves as the annual ELG conference and will be used to demonstrate the current state of the ELG initiative. For the 2019 edition of the event we decided to continue using "META-FORUM" as the primary brand/logo of the event while "European Language Grid" was included in the title/motto of the conference ("META-FORUM 2019: Introducing the European Language Grid"). As of yet, it is not decided whether we will swap the primary and secondary branding for the 2020 and/or 2021 events.

The two main goals of the event are community building and outreach to the wider European Language Technology research and industry community. This year's edition also had the goal of promoting the ELG as the primary platform for Language Technology in Europe. It featured presentations and a project expo with a special collaboration focus in order to attract potential users of the ELG and also new providers of content for the ELG.

As the conference is foreseen also as a dissemination and promotion platform, the ambition is to attract a large and varied number of participants so that all relevant stakeholder groups are adequately and representatively covered. Moreover, the event usually showcases many relevant related projects and initiatives and – as of next year's edition – first results of the ELG pilot projects.

As the objectives of the ELG Annual Conference largely correspond to those of META-FORUM, we intend a seamless transition and interaction between META-FORUM and the ELG Annual Conference. For the time being, we decided to keep the name META-FORUM as it has become a well-known brand in the European LT landscape and we wanted to make use of this synergy for the ELG conference. Whether we will stick to this name for future events or rebrand the series to make a more obvious ELG reference remains to be discussed.[1]

All editions of the META-FORUM conference series are thoroughly documented with their own websites. The URL http://www.meta-forum.eu always redirects to the most recent edition (see Table 1).

Year	URL	Motto	City, Date
2019	https://www.european-language-grid.eu/meta-forum-2019/	Introducing the European Language Grid	Brussels, Oct 8/9
2017	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2017	Towards a Human Language Project	Brussels, Nov 13/14
2016	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2016	Beyond Multilingual Europe	Lisbon, Jul 4/5
2015	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2015	Technologies for the Multilingual DSM	Riga, Apr 27
2013	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2013	Connecting Europe for New Horizons	Berlin, Sep 19/20
2012	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2012	A Strategy for Multilingual Europe	Brussels, Jun 20/21
2011	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2011	Solutions for Multilingual Europe	Budapest, Jun 27/28
2010	http://www.meta-net.eu/events/meta-forum-2010	Challenges for Multilingual Europe	Brussels, Nov 17/18

Table 1: Overview of the META-FORUM conference series (2010-2019)

The timeline of ELG activities (Figure 1) shows the META-FORUM conference series until 2021 within the ELG framework. Figure 2 shows the landing page of the META-FORUM 2019 website.
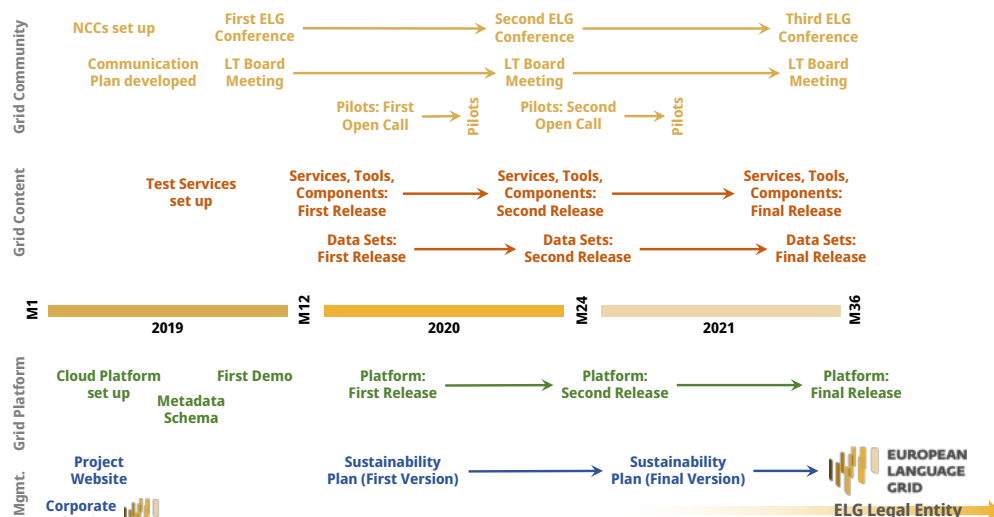
Figure 1: Key aspects of the ELG project's timeline

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[1] In this document, the phrases "ELG Conference 2019" and "META-FORUM 2019" are used interchangeably.

Figure 2: Landing page of the META-FORUM 2019 website

3 META-FORUM 2019: Introducing the European Language Grid

META-FORUM 2019 was the 2019 edition of the international series of conferences on powerful and innovative language technologies for the multilingual information society. The motto of the conference was "Introducing the European Language Grid". The first session on the first day was dedicated to a presentation of the ELG project including the current prototype version of the platform, which was demonstrated live on stage. A screencast video of the live demo is available in the "Programme" section of the event's website (see above).

After the description of the three project areas (Grid Platform, Grid Content, Grid Community) and the live demonstration of the prototype, the open calls for pilot projects were announced including conditions, procedures and timeline. A corresponding survey on the open calls was published on the ELG website[2] and promoted repeatedly during META-FORUM. Its aim is to get a better understanding of the interested companies and institutions and their intentions in preparing a pilot project. The survey can be found in Annex A.

One of the highlights was the first public demonstration of the ELG platform in Session 1. In this session, the ELG was introduced for the very first time to the LT community and to stakeholders of the EU institutions (thus the motto and subtitle of META-FORUM 2019). Session 2 focused on current EU LT research projects that include all projects funded under call ICT-29b-2018 "A multilingual Next Generation Internet" (ELITR[3], COM-PRISE[4], Bergamot[5], EMBEDDIA[6], Gourmet[7], Prêt-à-LLOD[8]). Session 3 was a discussion panel on the topic of LT and Artificial Intelligence; speakers of the four relevant initiatives and projects AI4EU[9], BDV[10], CLAIRE[11] and HumanE AI[12] had been invited. The last session of the first day discussed LT and Digital Public Services with a focus on CEF Automated Translation and INEA Projects. The second day kicked-off with news from the Language Communities and selected ELG National Competence Centres. The second session focused on ELG and the European LT Industry. Industry stakeholders, both from within the ELG consortium and from industry presented and discussed their ideas and demands for the primary marketplace for European LT. In the second half of the day, the projects WeVerify[13], Elexis[14], MeMAD[15], Lynx[16] and Fandango[17] were presented, followed by an overview of the sustainability plans of the ICT-29 Projects and ELG (Session 8). META-FORUM 2019 was closed with the keynote by Maxim Khalilov (Unbabel, Portugal) and the traditional award ceremony.

On both days of the conference, the coffee and lunch breaks gave the opportunity to visit the expo featuring currently running projects in the field of Language Technology and beyond (see Section 3.1.2).

Furthermore, the ELG consortium produced various dissemination and PR materials for META-FORUM 2019 including ELG lanyards for the name badges, bags with the ELG logo, several ELG rollups as well as ELG stickers (all of these materials can be seen in the photo gallery on the META-FORUM 2019 website[18]).

3.1   Main Content

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[2] https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=2naS4DT5hkC_CIgWogQUokLbIlhBaiJI-hqWHB7MLb19URDJCMllaVEY0RkxFQkVIWkZRQklNSEZVTCQlQCN0PWcu

[3] https://elitr.eu

[4] https://www.compriseh2020.eu

[5] https://browser.mt

[6] http://embeddia.eu

[7] https://gourmet-project.eu

[8] https://www.pret-a-llod.eu

[9] https://www.ai4eu.eu

[10] http://www.bdva.eu

[11] https://claire-ai.org

[12] https://www.humane-ai.eu

[13] https://weverify.eu

[14] https://elex.is

[15] https://memad.eu

[16] http://lynx-project.eu

[17] https://fandango-project.eu

[18] https://www.european-language-grid.eu/meta-forum-2019/gallery/

3.1.1 Contributions

As usual, speakers and panellists of META-FORUM 2019 were contacted directly by the organisers and asked to contribute to the event actively. The advantage of this approach was that the programme could be compiled in a coordinated and structured manner, which made it possible to put together a very coherent programme. As it was a main goal to strengthen the community and to foster collaborations between projects and initiatives, a strong focus was on presenting the wider landscape of currently funded projects in the LT area.

3.1.2 Project Expo

To enable in-depth discussions on different approaches in the various relevant projects, we decided to organise a large project expo where not only the general project idea was presented but that allowed also for project demos, detailed explanations and profound exchange between visitors and project organisers. The expo featured 16 projects, all of which had the opportunity to present their projects briefly in the sessions and attract the participants to stop by the stands to learn more details if interested. The following projects participated in META-FORUM 2019 with project booths: AI4EU, Bergamot, COMPRISE, Elexis, ELG, ELITR, ELRC, CEF AT, EMBEDDIA, Fandango, Gourmet, Lynx, MARCELL, Memad, Prêt-à-LLOD, QURATOR, SPEAKER, WeVerify. Figure 3: Two of the 16 project booths (ELG and Lynx) in the META-FORUM 2019 project shows some expo scenes during the breaks. More photos can be found on the META-FORUM 2019 website.

Figure 3: Two of the 16 project booths (ELG and Lynx) in the META-FORUM 2019 project expo

3.1.3 Keynotes: Maxim Khalilov and Nancy Ide

This year's first keynote was Maxim Khalilov (Unbabel, Portugal) who gave a presentation with the title "Unbabel – AI-Powered Translation Solutions for Multilingual Europe". In his talk, Maxim Khalilov described the translation system at Unbabel which processes a massive amount of translation data while guaranteeing that customers' standards for quality and speed are met. He also gave an overview of Unbabel's approach to scalability, quality control and data management, keeping customer-focused substantial improvements in the quality of the company's services in mind. With his keynote he presented a highly relevant example for the successful implementation of LT into user-oriented language services. While Unbabel, based in Lisbon, Portugal, can be considered one of the best European Language Technology success stories, the timing of this specific keynote could not have been better. Only a few days before the META-FORUM 2019 conference the news break that Unbabel has managed to secure a 60 million US-dollar Series C investment round.

The second keynote titled "Towards a Global Language Grid – Challenges and Opportunities" was foreseen to be given by Nancy Ide (Vassar College, USA) on 8 October. Unfortunately this keynote was cancelled by the speaker at rather short notice because of family reasons. At the time of writing this report (30 October 2019), ELG is preparing a workshop proposal ("1st International Workshop on the Collaboration and Interoperability

of Language Grids, Language Infrastructures and Language Platforms") for the LREC 2020 conference (Marseille, France). If the workshop proposal, which deals with the idea of identifying synergies in various LT-related platform initiatives, is successful we will ask Nancy Ide to present the talk which was originally foreseen for META-FORUM 2019, at our LREC 2020 workshop.

3.2 Participants and Stakeholder Groups

The event had approx. 175 visitors in total. Out of these, the majority of participants were from Belgium, Germany, France, Spain and the UK (see Table 2).

Country	Percentage	Country	Percentage
Belgium	16%	Portugal	1%
Germany	14%	Slovakia	1%
France	9%	Serbia	1%
Spain	8%	Bulgaria	1%
United Kingdom	7%	Estonia	1%
The Netherlands	4%	Poland	1%
Norway	4%	Switzerland	1%
Luxembourg	3%	Hungary	1%
Czech Republic	3%	Croatia	1%
Greece	3%	Malta	1%
Austria	3%	Israel	1%
Latvia	3%	Iceland	1%
Slovenia	3%	Finland	1%
Ireland	3%	Lithuania	1%
Romania	2%	Denmark	1%
Italy	2%	**Total**	**100%**

Table 2: META-FORUM 2019 – participants and country distribution

In terms of stakeholders, the distribution looks as follows: 16% of the conference attendants belong to various administrations, 26% come from industry and 58% of the visitors belong to the field of research (including researchers from commercial companies).

Although, we had hoped for a somewhat more balanced audience with regards to countries of origin, we are content with the fact that literally every European country was represented. As it is common that the country where the event takes place is usually the most represented, the largest group of participants is Belgian. In fact, this was somewhat intended, as Brussels was deliberately chosen as the location to allow many representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament other European bodies to attend.

3.3 Programme

The conference programme was discussed in phone meetings among the partners involved in the organisation of the event. It was clear from the outset that the highlight of the 2019 conference had to be the first live demonstration of the ELG platform. This is why, already during the technical kick-off meeting of ELG on 18/19 February 2019, we discussed and organised the development of the first fully-functional prototype (MVP, minimum viable product) of the ELG platform in such a way that we could demonstrate it in the autumn of 2019 at our first annual ELG conference. The slides of the first ELG demo explain this timeline in more detail; they can

be found in the Annex. As work in the project progressed, it became clear that the level of technical maturity had already developed much further than assumed initially. This enabled us to do a real live demonstration rather than to present a click dummy or mockup, adding to the credibility of the platform and project as a whole.

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META-FORUM 2019
Tuesday, 08 October 2019

08:00	Doors open – Registration
	Opening Session
09:00	**Welcome and Introduction** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
09:15	**Welcome Address** / *Jan Hajič (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic; Chair of META-NET Executive Board)*
09:30	**Opening Address** / *Jill Evans (Member of the European Parliament)*
09:45	**European Language Grid: An Overview** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
10:05	**Expo and Coffee Break**
10:45	**Opening Keynote** / **Gail Kent** / *(Director of Directorate G "Data", DG Connect, European Commission)*
Session 1	**Introducing the European Language Grid**
11:15	**Deep Dive 1 – ELG Community** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany), Katrin Marheinecke (DFKI, Germany), Katja Prinz (SAIL LABS, Austria)*
11:35	**Deep Dive 2 – ELG Platform** / *Stelios Piperidis (ILSP, Greece), Andrejs Vasiljevs (Tilde, Latvia), Florian Kintzel (DFKI, Germany)*
11:55	**Deep Dive 3 – ELG Content** / *Kalina Bontcheva (University of Sheffield, UK), Ian Roberts (University of Sheffield, UK), Khalid Choukri (ELDA, France)*
12:15	**First Public Demonstration of ELG** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany), Stelios Piperidis (ILSP, Greece), Kalina Bontcheva (University of Sheffield, UK)*
12:30	**Announcing the ELG Open Calls** / *Jan Hajič (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)*
12:45	**Discussion**
13:00	**Expo and Lunch Break**
	Invited Keynote / *Chair and moderator: Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
14:00	**Nancy Ide (Vassar College, USA)** / *"Towards a Global Language Grid – Challenges and Opportunities"*
Session 2	**Current EU Language Technology Research Projects** / *Chair and moderator: José Manuel Gómez Pérez (Expert System, Spain)*
14:45	**ELITR** / *Barry Haddow (University of Edinburgh, UK)*
14:52	**COMPRISE** / *Emmanuel Vincent (Inria, France)*
14:59	**Bergamot** / *Uli Germann (University of Edinburgh, UK)*
15:06	**EMBEDDIA** / *Matthew Purver (University of London, UK)*
15:13	**Gourmet** / *Barry Haddow (University of Edinburgh, UK)*
15:20	**Prêt-à-LLOD** / *John McCrae (Insight Centre, Ireland)*
15:30	**Expo and Coffee Break**
Session 3	**Discussion Panel – Language Technology and Artificial Intelligence – Collaborations and Prospects** / *Chair and moderator: Jan Hajič (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic – META-NET and European Language Grid)*
16:15	Panellists: **AI4EU** / *Patrick Gatellier (Thales, France)* / **BDV** / *Laure Le Bars (SAP, Germany)* / **CLAIRE** / *Morten Irgens (Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway)* / **HumanE AI** / *Paul Lukowicz (DFKI, Germany)*
Session 4	**Language Technology and Digital Public Services – CEF Automated Translation and INEA Projects** / *Chair and moderator: Stelios Piperidis (ILSP, Greece)*
17:15	**Overview of CEF AT and INEA Projects** / *Philippe Gelin (European Commission)*
17:25	**Project: CEF INEA NEC-TM Data** / *Manuel Herranz (Pangeanic, Spain)*
17:35	**Project: CEF INEA Neural Translation for the EU** / *Maite Melero (Barcelona Supercomputing Center, Spain)*
17:45	**ELRC Country Profiles** / *Lilli Smal (DFKI, Germany)*
17:55	**Discussion**
18:05	**End of META-FORUM 2019 Day 1**

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META-FORUM 2019
Wednesday, 09 October 2019

08:00	Doors open – Registration
Session 5	**News from the Language Communities and selected ELG National Competence Centres (NCCs)** / *Chair and moderator: Andrejs Vasiljevs (Tilde, Latvia)*
09:00	Panellists: **NCC Spain** / *Marta Villegas (Barcelona Supercomputing Center)* / **NCC Denmark** / *Bolette Sandford Pedersen (University of Copenhagen)* / **NCC Finland** / *Krister Linden (University of Helsinki)* / **NCC Iceland** / *Eiríkur Rögnvaldsson (The Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies)* / **Davyth Hicks** / *(European Language Equality Network, ELEN)*
10:15	**Expo and Coffee Break**
Session 6	**ELG and the European LT Industry** / *Chair and moderator: Gerhard Backfried (Sail Labs, Austria)*
10:45	**CEF LT Market Study** / *Luc Meertens (Crosslang, Belgium)*
11:00	The European Language Grid as the Primary Marketplace for European LT – with contributions from the ELG consortium partners from industry: **SAIL LABS (Austria)** / *Katja Prinz, Gerhard Backfried, Christoph Prinz* / **Tilde (Latvia)** / *Andrejs Vasiljevs* / **Expert System (Spain)** / *José Manuel Gómez Pérez, Andrés Garcia Silva*
11:30	European LT Developers and LT Users: Demands and Ideas – with contributions from: **K Dictionaries (Israel)** / *Ilan Kernerman* / **3pc (Germany)** / *Armin Berger* / **SDL (UK)** / *George Bara* / **Linagora (France)** / *Jean-Pierre Lorré* / **Kairntech (France)** / *Stefan Geißler*
12:10	Discussion
12:30	**Expo and Lunch Break**
Session 7	**Selected relevant EU projects** / *Chair and moderator: Khalid Choukri (ELDA, France)*
13:30	**WeVerify** / *Kalina Bontcheva (University of Sheffield, UK)*
13:40	**Elexis** / *Simon Krek (Institut Jožef Stefan, Slovenia)*
13:50	**Memad** / *Dieter Van Rijsselbergen (Limecraft, Belgium)*
14:00	**Lynx** / *Elena Montiel (Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Spain)*
14:10	**Fandango** / *Francesco Saverio Nucci (Engineering, Italy)*
Session 8	**Sustainability of the ICT-29 Projects** / *Chair and moderator: Georg Rehm (DFKI)*
14:20	**Overview of the Sustainability Plans of the ICT-29b) Projects** / *John McCrae (Insight Centre, Ireland)*
14:30	**European Language Grid – Towards a Legal Entity** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
14:45	**Discussion**
15:00	**Expo and Coffee Break**
	Invited Keynote / *Chair and moderator: Ulrich Germann (University of Edinburgh, UK)*
15:45	**Maxim Khalilov (Unbabel, Portugal)** / *"Unbabel – AI-Powered Translation Solutions for Multilingual Europe"*
	Award Ceremony / *Chair and moderator: Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
16:30	**Award Ceremony** / *META Seal of Recognition, META Prize*
	Closing Session / *Chair and moderator: Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
17:15	**Closing Remarks** / *Georg Rehm (DFKI, Germany)*
17:30	**End of META-FORUM 2019**

Figure 4: META-FORUM 2019 programme

The European LT community was another important focus of the conference. We wanted to bring people together who work in the same field – be it in industry or research. All of them will benefit from the ELG in one way or another. This idea is well reflected in the programme of the event (see Figure 4).

3.4   META Seal of Recognition and META Prize

One of the established components of META-FORUM is the award ceremony for the META Seal of Recognition and the META Price. At META-FORUM 2019 we awarded two META Seals of Recognition, one Honorary META Prize and one META Prize. META-NET and the ELG consortium were involved in the collection of nominations and in the final decision making. Tables 4 and 5 show all winners of the META Seal of Recognition and META Prize from 2011 to 2019.[19]

2019	Mozilla
	Explosion.ai
2017	Higher Functions, Lda.
	Acrolinx
	EventRegistry
2016	Universal Dependencies and UD Treebanks
	SyntaxNet/Parsey McParseface
2015	LT-Innovate
	Translated
	DBpedia
2013	Cereproc
	BlueGriffon by Disruptive Innovations
	memoQ by Kilgray translation Technologies
	MediaTalk by Tetracom Interactive Solutions
2012	Language Weaver
	Phonexia s.r.o.
	Audioma-Box by PerVoice SpA
	Asia Online
	XFST by Xerox
	IPTranslator by PLuTO
	Kantan MT by Xcelerator.ie
	European Media Lab GmbH
	Voxsigma Software Suite by Vocapia Research
	Extract! by Textkernel
	IRSTLM Toolkit by FBK
2011	Google Translate
	Loquendo TTS
	Lucy LT, Lucy Software and Services GmbH
	Media Speech, VecSys
	Vocable Karaoke, VecSys
	Personal Translator, LinguaTec GmbH
	Reverso, Softissimo
	SVOX TTS
	Systran7, Systran
	TAUS Data Association

Table 3: Winners of the META Seal of Recognition (META-FORUM 2011-2019)

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[19] At META-FORUM 2010, the first edition of the conference series, there was no award ceremony.

2019	**META Prize:** Jill Evans, Member of the European Parliament for Wales, received the META Prize for her outstanding and effective work regarding the European Parliament resolution "Language Equality in the Digital Age" that was published in 2018. **The Honorary META Prize** was awarded to former Member of the European Parliament for Lithuania, Algirdas Saudargas, for his continued support of Multilingual Europe and META-NET.
2017	**META Prize:** the European Parliament's Directorate-General for Translation (DG TRAD), DGT's MT@EC team and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (DGT) – For outstanding, mission-critical and also innovative human as well as automatic contributions to enabling multilingualism in two important European institutions and among European public digital services. The META Technology Council recognizes that this work is an important cornerstone on the way to enabling the European Multilingual Information Society.
2016	**META Prize:** The International Center for Advanced Communication Technologies (**InterACT**) – For outstanding and innovative contributions to cross-lingual and multilingual communication technologies. The META Technology Council recognises that this work is an important cornerstone on the way to enabling the European Multilingual Information Society.
2015	**META Prize**: BabelNet – for ground-breaking work in overcoming language barriers through a multilingual lexicalised semantic network and ontology making use of heterogeneous data sources. The resulting encyclopaedic dictionary provides concepts and named entities lexicalised in many languages, enriched with semantic relations.
2013	**META Prize:** The Rosetta Foundation – for their ground-breaking work enabling the global conversation in communities and social localization, making information available to individuals irrespective of their social status, linguistic or cultural background.
2012	**META Prize:** JRC Optima Activity/Language Technology – was awarded for the excellent use of language technologies to reduce information overload and overcome language barriers.
2011	**First META Prize:** Moses – The prize was awarded for exemplary and innovative contributions in statistical machine translation. **Second META Prize** Jibbigo Mobile Translators, Jibbigo – was awarded for an outstanding voice translator that can translate speech on mobile devices. Voxalead, Exalead – was awarded for outstanding software to provide video scanning and transcription services. ELRA (European Language Resources Association) – The prize was awarded for exemplary long-term preparation and distribution of language resources and technology. LDC (Linguistic Data Consortium) – The prize was awarded for exemplary long-term preparation and distribution of language resources and technology.

Table 4: Winners of the META Prize (META-FORUM 2011-2019)

3.5   Main Conclusions

Interest in the ELG platform was extremely high during and after the conference. There were many interested questions, for example, regarding security or sustainability. The discussions that took place in this context provided a lot of valuable feedback and fresh food for thought. All in all, the feedback regarding the event was consistently positive. Stakeholders of minority languages in particular expect ELG to make significant breakthroughs, because they hope to find data sets more easily, for example to train and further develop models.

During the expo and in the breaks, many discussions took place. In particular, the representatives of the projects took the opportunity to explore possibilities for cooperation. Following the conference, we received several enquiries from companies highly interested in including their services into the ELG platform.

As expected, interest in the Open Calls for pilot projects was extremely very high. The corresponding survey provided interesting feedback and information.

4 European LT Council: Meeting 2019

One of ELG's main objectives is to establish a structured dialogue with all relevant national and international stakeholders. Among these stakeholders are representatives of research centres, industry, national funding agencies, national language institutes, national and international stakeholder initiatives, associations etc. (among others, EFNIL, NPLD, EU/EC, LT Innovate, META-NET, ELG, and ELG NCCs). As described in ELG Deliverable D7.2 ("National Competence Centres and Language Technology Council"), which was submitted in September 2019 (M9 of the project), the ELG project is setting up a new body, the European LT Council (LTC)[20] that consists of the 32 National Competence Centre Leads (NCCs) as a backbone as well as representatives of seven stakeholder groups from research, government, language community and industry for each of the 32 participating countries. Moreover, it will include representatives of important pan-European associations, organisations and networks. The LTC will meet on an annual basis, co-located with the main ELG conference.

The initial blueprint for the LTC was the Language Resource Board (LRB), which was set up under the umbrella of CEF AT. The LTC will have a wider scope and broader coverage, including not only public administrations but representatives from all stakeholders relevant for discussing strategies, initiatives, projects and approaches towards achieving the joint goal of technology-enabled multilingualism throughout Europe.

The LTC is supposed to widen the reach of the ELG community while also taking on strategic tasks and it is expected to support the idea of technology-enabled and technology-supported multilingualism in Europe in general. While the ELG National Competence Centres are a means to support and strengthen the ELG and to make it known throughout Europe, the LTC is meant to be, first and foremost, a forum that enables easy and efficient communication and coordination at the European level, specifically with regard to ongoing and emerging international and also national activities relating to LT research, development and innovation.

The European LT Council will foster the coordination and strategic as well as political discussion, representing all relevant stakeholder groups. One of its crucial tasks will be the preparation of strategic recommendations, especially geared towards national and European administrations and funding agencies. The ELG project will compile the initial suggestions, which are then discussed, finalised and approved by the LTC, taking into account the ideas, demands, wishes, needs and suggestions of all LTC members.

4.1 Participants

The concept of the board was completed only in M9 of the project and the composition of the council is still under way. The only already established LTC members are the NCC Leads and the members of the ELG consortium. Therefore, at its inaugural meeting, the LTC composed of these members. The kick-off meeting on 7 October 2019 was attended by more than 40 representatives and generated many fruitful discussions (Figure 5).

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[20] In the ELG proposal and grant agreement, the European Language Technology Council is called "European Language Technology Board". We devised a new title for this body as it has more the character of an actual council that discusses and agrees upon strategic aspects and directions for the European LT community rather than governing or even "controlling" the European LT community.

Figure 5: Participants of the inaugural meeting of the European Language Technology Council

4.2   Agenda and Meeting Topics

The meeting was structured into three main blocks. In the introduction the composition and goals of the LTC were briefly presented and discussed. Other points of interest included upcoming EC programmes (Horizon Europe and Digital Europe Programme). The second part focused upon the preparation of a first LTC strategic position paper. The idea behind this paper is to prepare a small number of recommendations for European LT research, development and innovation, to be sent to the European Commission and the European Parliament. The discussion of potential recommendations was based on significant recent reports relevant to the European Language Technology area with an emphasis on multilingualism. The two main input documents were the EP Resolution "Language Technology in the Digital Age"[21] and the Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA) Study "Language equality in the digital age – Towards a Human Language Project"[22]. The discussion in the last part of the meeting focused on the invitation of additional LTC members. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants can be found in the Annex of this document.

4.3   Main Conclusions

All participants agreed that the number of LTC members should be increased to ensure a wide coverage. Occasional face-to-face meetings such as this kick-off meeting co-located with the META-FORUM 2019 are preferred

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[21] The European Parliament adopted a resolution on language equality in the digital age (2018/2028(INI), Rapporteur: Jill Evans) with 592 votes in favour and 45 against, with 4 abstentions, on 11 September 2018. The resolution includes 45 recommendations, structured into the following sections: "Improving the institutional framework for language technology policies at EU level", "Recommendations for EU research policies", "Education policies to improve the future of language technologies in Europe", "Language technologies: benefits for both private companies and public bodies".

[22] The study "Language Equality in the Digital Age – Towards a Human Language Project" was commissioned by the European Parliament's Science and Technology Options Assessment Committee (STOA) in 2017.

but should be kept to a minimum. In some smaller countries it may be difficult to find industry representatives of the LT community proper; in these cases it was suggested to concentrate on AI companies, given that language-centric AI has become such a crucial topic.

The question if very large non-European tech companies that are based – but not head-quartered – in Europe should be included with members in the LTC was discussed. Analogous to previous side-discussions the unanimous opinion was, that representatives from overseas should not be included. Instead, the "Multilingual Europe" challenge is an endeavour that Europe must accomplish and solve on its own. In addition, regarding the composition of the LTC, it was suggested to possibly include CLAIRE and ISCA.

Input for the position paper was collected on a by-country basis with all participants briefly stating those points from the EP resolution as well as the STOA study they consider most important. There was wide agreement on raising awareness of open language data, the creation of data resources and the need of more support for lesser used languages. In addition, minority languages are left behind in many fields. In this context, the creation of open educational resources was also seen as crucial. The vision of setting up a long-term coordinated funding programme that can achieve goals such as "Deep Natural Language Understanding" was shared by the majority of participants. It was also agreed that the translation of public websites should be made mandatory.

The September 2018 EP report inspired a very lively discussion which cannot be completely summarised in this deliverable. An update on this activity will be given in Deliverable D7.6 (due in M22).

5   Outlook

The next ELG/META-FORUM conference is foreseen for Q4/2020. The location has not been determined yet; however, it was suggested to choose a place in the south or south-east of Europe in order to widen the reach of the conference and to make it more known and accessible to those regions and parts of the LT community where it has not had a large impact yet. Decisions on the location as well as the dates will be made in Q1/2020.

A follow-up of the LTC kick-off meeting in form of a survey has been suggested in order to gather input in a more structured way and that can be compiled as a first draft of the emerging LTC position paper. The next face-to-face meeting of the LTC is planned for Q4/2020, it will be collocated with the next META-FORUM conference. The most pressing goal, besides the drafting of the position paper, will be the nomination and inclusion of more members. This process is foreseen to be completed by Q1/2020.

6   META-FORUM 2019 Gallery

A photographer documented META-FORUM 2019. Approximately 200 photos are available on the ELG website. In the following, we present a small selection.

A.   Annex

Inaugural Meeting European Language Technology Council

7 October 2019, 14:00-17:00
BluePoint Brussels, 80 Bd A. Reyers Ln, 1030 Brussels, Belgium
Room: Archimedes

Agenda

13:45 Registration

14:00 Introduction and Overview (Georg Rehm)
- Composition of the European Language Technology Council (LTC)
- LTC Operational Procedures
- Invitation letters
  - LTC (Invitations and acceptances) to be completed until Q1/2020.
- Presentation of LTC members on ELG website
- Goals of the LTC – strategic separation from NCCs
  - Upcoming EC programmes: Horizon Europe, DEP
- Procedures and approach
- Completing the matrix – suggested additional members
  - Criteria:
    - Standing and reputation
    - Reach and personal network
    - If industry, ideally a well-known, established company
    - Able to represent the whole national landscape in that tech sector

14:45 First LTC Paper
- Goal: work on the first strategic LTC paper with 10-25 recommendations
  - Based on print-out of EP resolution
  - Let's collect the most important recommendations and add to them
  - Also based on overview graphics of the 11 STOA report recommendations
- First strategic paper of LTC
  - Presentation of the paper
  - Discussion and additional items

Figure 6: Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the European Language Technology Council (1/4)

15:30 Coffee break

15:45 LTC Composition
- Discussion of additional LTC members
  - Scientific organizations (like EACL and EAMT)
  - Emerging AI PPP (like ELLIS, EUrobotics)

16:30 Misc.
- Timeline and upcoming activities
  - Publication of first strategy paper
  - Expected date of LTC completion/population
- Potential DEP project (*very* tentative)
- Next meeting
- AOB

17:00 End of Meeting

Expected Participants

Please note the following: the backbone of the LTC is the group of 32 National Competence Centre representatives. In addition, the LTC will ultimately consist of additional members representing various stakeholder groups. The current concept foresees up to seven members from each of the 32 countries plus members that represent pan-European initiatives. We plan to invite additional members to the 07 October meeting in Brussels in the second half of September.

Dagmar Gromann (sub for Gerhard Budin)	NCC Austria	Zentrum für Translationswissenschaft, Universität Wien
Walter Daelemans	NCC Belgium	Comp. Ling. and Psycholing. Res. Centre (CLiPS), University of Antwerp
Svetla Koeva	NCC Bulgaria	Institute for Bulgarian Language, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Marko Tadic	NCC Croatia	Inst. of Linguistics, Faculty of Hum. and Social Science, University of Zagreb
Jan Hajic	NCC Czech Republic / ELG Project consortium	Charles University in Prague
Bolette Sandford Pedersen	NCC Denmark	Centre for Lang. Technology, Department of Nordic Research, University of Copenhagen
Krister Linden	NCC Finland	Department of Digital Humanities, University of Helsinki

Figure 7: Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the European Language Technology Council (2/4)

François Yvon	NCC France	CNRS - LIMSI
Georg Rehm	ELG Coordinator NCC Germany	Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Künstliche Intelligenz
Maria Gavriilidou	NCC Greece	Institute for Language and Speech Processing (ILSP), R.C. "Athena"
Tamás Váradi	NCC Hungary	Research Institute for Linguistics, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Eirikur Rögnvaldsson	NCC Iceland	School of Humanities, University of Iceland
John Judge (sub for Andy Way)	NCC Ireland	School of Computing, Dublin City University
Bernardo Magnini	NCC Italy	Human Language Technology, Fondazione Bruno Kessler (FBK)
Inguna Skadina	NCC Latvia	Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Latvia
Albina Auksoriūtė	NCC Lithuania	Institute of the Lithuanian Language
Michael Rosner	NCC Malta	Department Intelligent Computer Systems, University of Malta
Jan Odijk	NCC Netherlands	Utrecht Institute of Linguistics, Universiteit Utrecht
Koenraad De Smedt	NCC Norway	Dept. of Linguistic, Literary and Aesthetic Studies, University of Bergen
Maciej Ogrodniczuk	NCC Poland	Institute of Computer Science, Polish Academy of Sciences
António Branco	NCC Portugal	Department of Informatics, University of Lisbon
Dan Tufiş	NCC Romania	Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence, Romanian Academy of Sciences
Cvetana Krstev	NCC Serbia	Faculty of Mathematics, Belgrade University (UBG)
Radovan Garabik	NCC Slovakia	Ludovit Stur Institute of Linguistics, Slovak Academy of Sciences
Simon Krek	NCC Slovenia	Jozef Stefan Institute
Núria Bel	NCC Spain	Institut Universitari de Lingüistica Aplicada, University Pompeu Fabra (UPF)
Hervé Bourlard	NCC Switzerland	Idiap Research Institute
Diana Maynard (sub for Kalina Bontcheva)	NCC UK ELG Project Consortium	Department of Computer Science, University of Sheffield

Figure 8: Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the European Language Technology Council (3/4)

Katrin Marheinecke	Germany Project Manager ELG	Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Künstliche Intelligenz
Andrejs Vasiljevs	LSP, MT, Multilingual ELG Project Consortium	CEO Tilde, Latvia
Christoph Prinz	Text Analytics, Social Media Analytics, Data Mining, Business Intelligence ELG Project Consortium	CEO at Sail Labs Technology
José Manuel Gómez Pérez	Text Analytics, Social Media Analytics, Data Mining, Business Intelligence ELG Project Consortium	R&D Director at Expert System Iberia
Stelios Piperidis	Knowledge, Resources, Data sets, Media ELG Project Consortium	Head of Department at ILSP
Khalid Choukri	Knowledge, Resources, Data sets, Media ELG Project Consortium	CEO ELDA SAS

Figure 9: Agenda of the inaugural meeting of the European Language Technology Council (4/4)

European Language Grid - Survey on Pilot Projects

European Language Grid will publish two open calls for demonstrator projects. The first call will be published in March 2020, and the second in September 2020. Take part in our survey in order to show your interest and focus of your projects. Outcome of the survey will help us to prepare the open calls accordingly to your needs.

1. Are you interested in taking part in the open calls for European Language Grid pilot projects?

○ definitely

○ probably, will decide later

○ don't know yet

○ probably not

○ definitely not

2. In case you are interested in pilot projects, what type of project would you like to submit?

○ Contribute data sets, tools and/or services to the European Language Grid

○ Develop applications using data sets and/or tools and/or services available in the European Language Grid

○ Both

3. In case you are interested in launching a pilot project, what would be your goal & project focus?

○ Provide or expand use of our software tools through a commercial platform

○ Launch new or further develop existing product

○ Don't know yet

○ Sonstiges

Figure 10: Survey on the ELG open calls (1/3)

4. In case you are interested in pilot projects, what would be the budget size approximately? (maximum budget size - EUR 200k)

○ Up to EUR 50k

○ Up to EUR 100k

○ More

○ Not clear yet

5. We want to make sure that we select the most appropriate project proposals for the pilot phase. Therefore, we are looking for qualified experts to evaluate the project applications (that will be appx. 5-8 pages long).
In case you don't want to submit your own pilot project, would you be interested in being an evaluator for the European Language Grid (expected evaluation period May and/or November 2020)?

○ definitely

○ probably, will decide later

○ don't know yet

○ probably not

○ definitely not

6. Who do you represent?

○ Small and medium-sized enterprise

○ Research organisation

○ Sonstiges

7. What is your primary (industry) sector? Please specify:

Ihre Antwort eingeben

Figure 11: Survey on the ELG open calls (2/3)

8. What languages do you intend to process? Please specify:

> Ihre Antwort eingeben

9. What is your project's intented technology focus? (multiple choice)

- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Speech
- ☐ Search
- ☐ Analytics
- ☐ Dialogue systems
- ☐ Resources
- ☐ Sonstiges

10. Are you interested in getting more information regarding the pilot calls? (multiple choice)

- ☐ About the open calls for pilot projects
- ☐ About the possibility to evaluate project proposals

11. In case of your interest please leave your e-mail address here:

> Ihre Antwort eingeben

12. And please provide GDPR consent (note that without giving the consent we cannot contact you even if you have left your email address):

☐ I grant a permission to Charles University, residing in Ovocný trh 560/5, 116 36 Prague 1, company registration No.: 00216208 to process my following personal data: e-mail for the purpose of providing more information about the open calls for pilot projects and possibility to evaluate project proposals within the EU project European Language Grid No. 825627.

Absenden

Figure 12: Survey on the ELG open calls (3/3)

Figure 13: Presentation used to introduce the first ever ELG live demonstration (1/5)
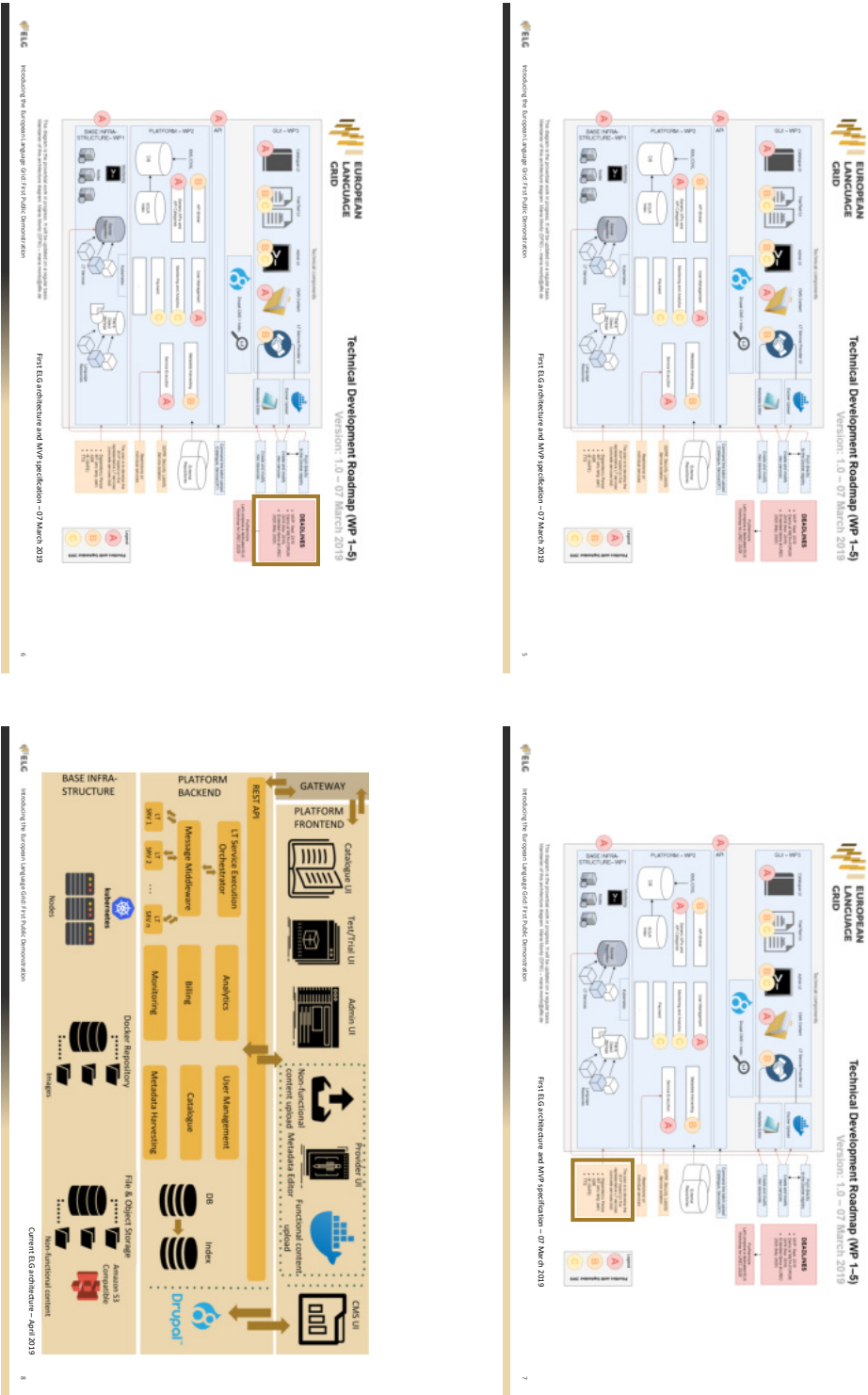
Figure 14: Presentation used to introduce the first ever ELG live demonstration (2/5)

Figure 15: Presentation used to introduce the first ever ELG live demonstration (3/5)

Figure 16: Presentation used to introduce the first ever ELG live demonstration (4/5)

Figure 17: Presentation used to introduce the first ever ELG live demonstration (5/5)