

Input for SURF's position paper on eduGAIN

How to move forward?

eduGAIN Townhall meeting, Stockholm, 10 October 2023

Successes of eduGAIN!

- Global R&E Trust Fabric
- Global coverage of > 75 countries
- Realised in 12.5 years of production service

Successes of eduGAIN!

- With international examples as:

Publishers (global)

Trusted Certificate Service (EU)

MyAcademicID (EU) facilitating Erasmus+ Student Exchanges.

Challenges

Complexity

- Complexity for IdP's and SP's to properly support (all) REFEDS standards/profiles
- Different in “local” trust between federations
- Lack of a baseline

Challenges

User Experience

- (Lack of) Attribute Release
- Bad implementations
- Vague error messages for end-users
- Bottom-line: it's great when it works, but when it fails, where can a end-user go to?

Challenges

Governance

- With the growth of eduGAIN the governance didn't change, reflecting slow decision making for changes [*]

[*] Until now as the new governance structure got accepted and ratified, so hopefully this is solved.

Challenges SURF

- For large "corporate" apps like publisher or TCS, it still seems very promising. For smaller SPs that want to bring together a number of people from different universities, we recommend now to work with eduID, because for these SPs, eduGAIN is now challenging and the amount of work is disproportionate to the return.
- For institutions, eduGAIN is far away. They want the benefits but expect it to 'just work'. They have 100,000 things to do and not the time nor the motivation to understand and implement specific things thought up. It is up to us, the experts, to facilitate them.
- With SRAM, we tried to make MFA mandatory. We did not succeed within eduGAIN/REFEDS MFA, and hence have implemented TOTP ourselves

Forward looking

- With the new governance structure, can we also look forward in enhancing eduGAIN?
- Evolution or Revolution?
- eduGAIN as a federation (with its own policy and baseline)?
- Technically complexity is currently at the edges (IdP and SPs): desirable to keep this or to become more central?
- User Centric Identities, like eduID and SSI will create a paradigm shift on the IdP side?
- Nurture the trust framework!

Advanced Use Cases (and how to support them)

European University Alliances

- 41 European University Alliances, each consisting of 7 to 10 universities in Europe, collaborating on for instance on shared education and courses
- A need to share identities between the collaboration partners and to share resources
- How can we as the community support them?

Advanced Use Cases (and how to support them)

Health RI, EuroHPC and NIH

- Services need more assurance information of user, both Identity Assurance and MFA
- In the current situation it's hard to assess if an IdP is capable of providing this information
- The services must do heavy lifting of improving assurance. They question the value of federation.
- And even if so, not all IdPs can or will provide this information
- What would be needed to solve this?

Questions and discussion

- Do you recognise the use cases?
- Are these use cases in your circle of concern?
- How to leverage eduGAIN so we can make the use cases better work?
- What would be needed?
- What is our way forward?