Universities Estonia - example of the collaboration of universities (initiated by rectors)

Universities Estonia

Hanna Kanep, Secretary General, Universities Estonia

From consortium to centralization and decentralization - short term cost saving in decision making and neater division of institutional responsibilities

ELNET - Estonian Libraries Network Consortium, online catalogue ESTER and the database of Estonian articles, and the integrated library system Sierra/Millennium
Consortium will continue, but new catalog and related system will be centralized

Rektorite Nõukogu

Admission Information System (SAIS) - **started as a consortium** model of state and HE institutions.
Currently in the process of **becoming part of a centralized system EHIS** - Estonian Education Information System

ETAIS (**consortium**) provides cloud services, high-performance computing (HPC), hosting and management of scientific web applications and resources for data repositories. ETAIS also provides access to Europe's fastest supercomputer, LUMI, located in Finland.partners are the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, the Institute of Chemical and Biological Physics, and the Ministry of Education and Research.

Administrative reforms
Availability of funding and funding criteria

From decentralization to NGO - high initial level of expenses hope for bigger gains in the future

University	SIS in use	Development Partner
University of Tartu	UT SIS2 (some SIS1 elements still in use)	Own development team
Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech)	TalTech SIS (old SIS still maintained)	Fujitsu
Tallinn University	Based on TalTechâ€™s old SIS	Fujitsu
Estonian University of Life Sciences	UT SIS1 (no longer developed)	No development
Estonian Academy of Arts	Tahvel	Fujitsu
Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre	Based on Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Sciences (EUAS) SIS	EUAS

Presentation of results

Analysis of the Cooperation, Management and Funding Model of the Joint Study Information System of Universities

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March 24, 2025

Level Lab

Iceland Liechtenstein Norway grants

Norway grants

The aim of the analysis is to support the finding of a suitable cooperation and funding model for the development of the joint study information system (SIS) of universities, by analysing and describing other similar cooperation models both between universities and more broadly, in other fields

- What are the possible cooperation and funding models for creating a joint SIS for universities?
- How do the different models affect the potential benefits, system efficiency, costs, management and legal situation?
- What are the opportunities and risks for cooperation between large and small partners in different models?

Collaborative information system vs. single-client solution-opportunities

✓

The scale effect resulting from increased funding

✓

The synergy generated through partner collaboration for finding innovative solutions

✓

A decision-making process requiring consensus (at least in the consortium model) also helps prevent poorly thought-out and hasty development decisions

✓

Supporting partner cooperation and spreading best practices in the business process supported by the information system (in the case of universities' SIS, the study process)

Collaborative information system vs. single-client solution-threats

✓

The development of a collaborative information system is more complicated

✓

The need for flexibility for universities

✓

The biggest challenge: building consensus in decision-making processes

✓

For users, a collaborative information system may seem uncomfortable at first

✓

The interests and needs of smaller partners may be pushed into the background

Pros

Well-thought-out management leads to good results

+

Clearly defined owner

+

Faster development process

Disadvantages

–

Lack of voting rights of the parties

–

Process transparency may be low

Pros

+

A common solution and shared responsibility

+

Sharing experience and knowledge

+

Easier interpretation of needs

Disadvantages

–

Slow decision-making process

–

Dispersion of responsibilities

–

Funding

Pros

Flexibility in cooperation

+

Developing services according to needs

+

Efficient resource allocation

Disadvantages

Unequal development

–

Dependence on individual projects and technical solutions

–

Lack of a clearly defined owner

Pros

+

Decreased administrative burden

Disadvantages

–

Increase in development and maintenance costs over time

–

Dependence on external parties

Pros

+

More efficient use of resources and cost sharing

+

Sharing best and innovative practices

Disadvantages

–

The complexity of coordination

–

Customization limitations

–

The risk that larger organisations have more influence

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Funidata

- Consortium (company)
- Co-financing / usage tax

Ladok

- Consortium
- Co financing

APUC/ISC

- Selective collaboration
- Project-based funding

Stuudium

- Service provider
- Usage tax

Tahvel

- Central control
- Central funding

Project-based funding

Co-financing

Central funding

Usage tax