



EMREX User Group

Yearly plan 2021



## 1. The EMREX User Group (EUG)

According to the statutes, the EMREX User Group is formed by organizations in the EMREX network and other interested parties to manage the network and to advance the use of EMREX. The abbreviation is EUG.

The purpose of the EMREX User Group is to:

- maintain the EMREX network including architecture and specifications,
- support the uptake of EMREX in new countries and with new services,
- plan and support dissemination activities around EMREX,
- maintain the EMREX policy agreement to be signed by all full members,
- contribute to relevant standardization work, especially around ELMO.

## 2. Yearly activities at a glance

The activities apart from “regular activities” such as membership, information dissemination consists mostly of building a more robust technical network and taking part in ongoing activities around us. It is no surprise that many of the items in this document are the same as last year. Since funds are limited, the tasks must be shared between the members according to their own capacity. Mainly the activities are the following.

- Industrialize the EMREX registry.
- Investigate new needs for changes to the ELMO format.
- Maintain the emrex.eu website and maintain information material.
- Strengthen the collaboration with ongoing EU-projects as well as other parties.
- Send regular newsletters to the members.
- Seek to increase membership

Specific goals and targets are set in the detailed descriptions. The outcomes of all activities should be presented at the Annual Assembly in 2022.



### **3. Funding**

During 2020 the Executive Committee received a grant from the Vietsch foundation, for costs related to dissemination, support and information/marketing. Since no travel activities existed in 2020 the goal is to extend the project until end of 2021 and hopefully use the funds in autumn 2021.

### **4. Information**

All information material should be written in English as a standard but it is in a format that can be changed (like MS Word) so that every member may translate material to their own language.

#### **4.1. Website [emrex.eu](http://emrex.eu)**

In 2020 the website was improved and in a stable condition. During 2021 the goal for the [emrex.eu](http://emrex.eu) is that all relevant information can be found on the web easily. Another goal is that the enrollment process as members is made easier.

#### **4.2. Information material**

Information material should exist mainly on the webpage. It should be updated at all times and easily accessible by the members. Material that should be available is:

- A general PowerPoint presentation of EMREX
- An electronic document with an overview of EMREX
- A text suitable for email with a summary of EMREX.
- A contact list for all NCPs and SMPs, plus partners.

#### **4.3. Newsletter**

A newsletter with highlights from activities, conferences and other events should be sent out to the members, at least three times during 2021.

#### **4.4. Dissemination**

When this document is being prepared we are all still heavily affected by the COVID19-virus so it is now impossible to know what conferences will be available during the year. Therefore



the goal for 2021 is to take part in conferences and other relevant occasions as much as possible.

- At the [TAICEP 2021 Digital Docs Provider Fair](#), a presentation of EMREX will be included both the Dutch and Norwegian diploma registry sessions.
- EMREX will be presented at the yearly [EUNIS conference](#) in June.
- Contacts will be taken with European University Alliances.

## 5. Industrialization of Emreg

Emreg is the only single point of failure in an otherwise very robust architecture of the EMREX parts. Therefore the need to change this to a more stable way has been identified and the best solution seems to be to use the same method as Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) and merge the two registries. Whereas Emreg consist of a single file at one location, the EWP registry consists of a manifest file stored at each data supplier. The location of this file is distributed in the network and there could never be an outage of all nodes.

## 6. Collaboration

There are lots of initiatives going on in the area of IT solutions for student data exchange. EMREX plays an important part in this domain which must be communicated at every possibility.

### 6.1.Ongoing EU-projects

EMREX has working communication channels with EU projects that work in the same area. It is still important to strengthen the collaboration with ongoing or recently finished EU projects. We aim at creating lasting partnerships with all projects concerning student mobility. One more goal for 2021 is to proactively connect with European projects regarding digitalization of education:

- EMREX participates in the PIM-project, led by the Bundesministerium fur Bildung und Forschung, for exchanging result data between Germany and existing EMREX countries



- EMREX has a liaison with Europass on cooperate on the future format of Europass, to ensure the compatibility with ELMO.
- EMREX is participating in the steering group of the Erasmus+ KA3 project [DigiNet - Digital innovations in credential evaluation and the networks](#), a project preparing plans for digitalization of the recognition process at a number of Enic/Naric organization in Europe and Canada.
- Work will be done to industrialize the EMREX registry. This involves merging the EMREX registry into the EWP registry, and common work on the data models and formats, including maintenance of the ELMO format. This is done in cooperation with the EU CEF project [The European Digital Student Service Infrastructure \(EDSSI\) project](#).

## 6.2. Other collaboration opportunities

It is equally important to seek collaboration outside EU. EMREX does not set any boundaries. There are some connections known already and they should be continuously maintained. New possible collaborations should also be proactively looked for and followed up. The following is a non-exhaustive list of open collaborations:

- CHESICC
- PESC
- VTAC
- Digitary

We will also keep in close contact with the Groningen Declaration Network.

EMREX is involved in a project run by the Nordic Council of Ministers, [Achieving the World's Smoothest Cross-Border Mobility](#). EMREX is the protocol brought forward for supporting exchange of credentials in *Studying in another Nordic country or the Baltic region*.

## 7. Membership retention and marketing

EMREX User Group does not need members just for attaining high numbers. Each member should support the EMREX idea, for instance by building an NCP, SMP or by other forms of



collaboration. However, it is imperative in the long run that more countries start using EMREX. Therefore, energy must be focused on marketing and helping interested parties to install EMREX software, especially for increase the use of the existing network which has great potential.

The specific goal for 2021 is that at least three new parties start using EMREX.

## **8. Standards work**

The standard used for data transport, the ELMO format, needs to be maintained and updated according to new demands. Better support for recognition and including results of recognition into EMREX will be the first task. Also the connection to block chain will be further investigated. During the year the goal is to assemble current demands, discuss them between the members and make a resolution of changes, if deemed necessary.

Furthermore, we intend to take part in and support projects with the goal to utilize eID national and cross-border nodes for authorization in the EMREX network.

The work on ELMO has a strong link to the EDSSI project, maintaining the format to support updated data models for student mobility.

Including results of recognition will also be done within a liaison with Europass to ensure portability between the ELMO and the EDCI formats. It is also in the plans of Europass to enable EDCI-support for results of recognition during 2021. The first studies on comparing these two formats have already been concluded within the Europass digitalization project, and in 2021 concrete work on converting data from ELMO to EDCI will be done as part of EMREX.

Another important area to build EMREX support for is licenses for professions. EMREX is already involved in processes for issuing licenses, there is a need to support exchanging licenses within the EMREX network.