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Research infrastructure map revived

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By Eleni Courea

A resurrected version of a database for mapping European research infrastructures has been unveiled.

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The updated version of the Mapping of the European Research Infrastructure Landscape database was previewed at an event in Rome on 20-21 June. Meril-2 is intended to help raise researchers' awareness of facilities, and allow policymakers to identify infrastructure gaps and complementarities.

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The project is building on a database developed between 2010 and 2012 with funding from Framework 7. Funding was renewed for three years through Horizon 2020 in 2016.

Meril-2 will cover a broader range of facilities than its predecessor, and contain more information about them, a European Commission press release said. Over 900 research infrastructures across all disciplines will be included.

The project is being managed by the European Science Foundation, the Agency for the Promotion of European Research, and the National Documentation Centre of Greece. Ana Helman, Meril coordinator at the ESF, said in a statement that the original Meril project was valuable but had significant limitations.

The coordinators of Meril-2 aim to learn from past mistakes and use their renewed funds to transform the database into "much more than a simple repository for information," she added. The team's ambition "is to provide a destination website with dynamic content about research infrastructures" and "lay the groundwork for similar initiatives" in the future, she said.

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