

# EMRRT - Community

## The European Mission Researchers Round-Table

### A Conceptual PAPER

#### **0 SUMMARY**

This Paper introduces the concept of a collaborative community of mission researchers: The European Mission Researchers Round-Table. This Community was actually initiated in 2004 and currently is being further developed. This paper tries to cover a number of conceptual aspects related to the development of this community. First, the approach is positioned in the framework of a European research perspective much like one would do for the European Commission. In this respect the whole effort can be understood as a Research Coordination Action. This Coordination Action is complemented by the Specific Targeted Research Project that the EMRRT is working towards. Both aspects are closely interrelated, but for the purpose of clarity and detail are treated separately here. For the Research Project please refer to the Paper "Toward an open research model and a secure environment that can serve church planting needs across Europe" presented by my colleague Paul Dzubinski.

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# **1 OBJECTIVES**

## **1.1 Vision: A “European Research Area“ in MISSIONS**

We are living in a time of increasing collaboration.

As usual - if I may say so - we as Christians are clearly behind the mark, following the trends instead of setting them, as compared to developments in secular European Commission-driven research. Just consider the huge investments of the EC in all sorts of research, and especially of coordination actions to structure their research field and synergize the many efforts.

Yet we can gladly witness an increasing awareness and trend toward networking, collaboration and the pursuit of synergy within the Christian arena as well.

Established networks like the major Lausanne Initiative, the EEA<sup>1</sup> or the EEMA<sup>2</sup> are increasingly complemented by newer initiatives like the umbrella networks of the “Hope for Europe”, the recent Round-Table on Saturation Church Planting or the “Vision Synergy” Network.

Consequently, as researchers in our European or national missions contexts, we should clearly ask ourselves whether purposefully working together as missions researchers on a European scale can still be regarded as dispensable. I and many colleagues with me think not.

Thinking backwards from the end, I would then call the vision of a full-fledged missions research collaboration arena the “European Research Area” in Missions<sup>3</sup> where complementarily structured research efforts would flow together towards the common purpose of furthering MISSIONS in Europe.

*“European Missions Research Area” (EMRA) - working together as RESEARCHERS for the common purpose of furthering MISSIONS in Europe*

## **1.2 State-of-the-art**

### **1.2.1 Missions Related Research in General**

All of us involved in missions research are aware of the vast unworked fields where research would be helpful to further missions in Europe. We are also aware that even at the basic descriptive layer large gaps of mission data still exist, such as the monitoring of basic population demographics against various Christian demographics per region or per country. This is actually quite deplorable as we know that many a missions organisation, active church, prayer group or financial sponsor are on the look-out for reliable<sup>4</sup> missions data for their various, often strategic, purposes. It becomes even more deplorable when large-scale mission strategies are set against an incorrect statistical background leading to wrong conclusions such as when American missions agencies conclude that “Europe is largely Christian”<sup>5</sup>.

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1 European Evangelical Alliance

2 European Evangelical Missionary Alliance

3 compare the „Framework Programmes“ of the Research Activities of the European Commission: <http://www.cordis.lu/>

4 detailed, accurate, relevant, up-to-date..

5 as many American Missionaries would tell you from their shrinking budget as Americans tend to give “for the unreached”



Mapping the field of missions research would certainly be one of the primary tasks to be performed in order to work toward cohesiveness, cooperation and collaboration<sup>6</sup>.

- I think what we can say so far pretty reliably is that existing missions research is a heterogeneous field ranging from academic missiological research to local lay research. While missiological research is involved in many different subject areas, one increasingly important keyword being “empirical missiology,” lay research is often associated with a strong personal interest in a certain geographical region and the desire to understand its spiritual status, needs and dynamics.
- We could say that very different research disciplines partly based on quite different theological backgrounds work alongside each other with little interconnectedness. Thus the potential complementarity of quantitative, qualitative and descriptive<sup>7</sup> research approaches is not given.
- We observe that there are a few well known “giants” in the field of missions research, names like David Barrett, Patrick Johnstone and Peter Brierley, together with their affiliate organisations or products<sup>8</sup>. On the other hand we have a significant number of dedicated missions research practitioners, mostly unknown, and a host of interested lay researchers.
- Speaking of coordination efforts we will also find some, though obviously not many initiatives, mainly of the conference type, one of which we have the pleasure to enjoy today. As missions research is carried out on the various different geographical levels ranging from local site assessment to global trends, coordination activities also exist in their various spheres of interest and influence.
  - o On the global level we would find this in the Lausanne Researchers Conferences, the Society for Religious Geography, the Harvest Information System<sup>9</sup>, the Joshua and former AD2000 Project, and others of which I am probably not aware.
  - o On the European field we have the European Church Growth Association (which has just recently been reinvented under the label EuroChurchNet) and we find academic cooperations like the “Gesellschaft für Bildung und Forschung Europa” (i.e. Association for Education and Research in Europe)<sup>10</sup>.
  - o We find established or developing missiometric quasi standards set by the “big guys” associated with the names already mentioned. The “4k Grid”<sup>11</sup> that YWAM has just recently been developing together with David Barrett’s organisation<sup>12</sup> should be named here as well.
- However, all in all, the different research disciplines are forming dispersed “denominations of research” rather than flowing into a big whole picture, resulting in a multitude of parallel labour especially on the missions practitioner’s level.

I conclude – and would be happy to be refuted on that – that presently Europe knows no such thing as a cohesive “European Missions Research Area” which would

6 I do not count all Christian research or general church related research, like the consumer-type research of Barna in the US, as “missions research”. “Missions” is understood in its evangelical use of a purposeful activity in obedience to the “Great Commission” Command.

7 often in the form of demographic statistics or visualised mapping

8 World Christian Encyclopedia, Operation World, UK Christian Handbook/ Christian Research

9 which is actually very relevant for our purpose in that it strives for compatible missiometric standards on a global scale

10 still Germanic in scope, but with a European vision

11 a recent major effort to structure the world in comparable units as based on population numbers

12 personal information by Jeff Fountain



constantly provide to the interested missionary practitioner a reliable picture of the status of missions on this Continent down at least to the national if not to the regional level.

### **1.2.2 Missions Research Related to Church Planting in Particular**

- Being aware of the now mapped broad field of missions research I want to zoom in and focus on just one area of it, an area which I would regard as the core of missions research per se. Working with DAWN as I do, it of course does not come as a surprise to you that I speak of the area of “church multiplication” or “church planting”.
- I should add that DAWN is a strategic approach towards “Saturation Church Planting” from a national level perspective. It had its roots in the church growth movement of US American evangelicalism and over the last three decades became popular in many quarters of the world. Today DAWN is a truly international network, still with an American funding base, but with its main operations in Asia, India, Africa and the Latin Americas. Europe – as so often – is “the exceptional case”<sup>13</sup> again.
- Considering research that is performed as supportive to church planting strategies within Europe, we again find a diversified field of research approaches. If I may try to map that specific interest field of missions research again on the various geographical levels I would say that...
  - On the regional level we find individual church planters doing “demographic studies” in preparation for their fieldwork with various applications ranging from evangelistic outreach to regional or city-wide missionary coalitions of various churches or agencies.
  - On the national level we have national missions committees like those of the national Evangelical Alliances, denominations with church planting activity and various independent, partly academic researchers with their different focuses, like a PhD student doing his doctorate on the religiosity patterns of a certain population.
  - On the European level, finally, are missions agencies that are operating in several countries and are performing statistical research tasks either for their own use in placement or priority decisions or for the sake of the wider missions community<sup>14</sup>. Other ministries or affiliations as well are gathering national level information for the whole of Europe for their various purposes, like the EEA for lobbying evangelical standpoints in the EU<sup>15</sup>.
- Actually, only few statistical church planting related research is being performed on the European scale purposefully and continually as far as I can see. Among the creditable exceptions I would certainly like to name the major MARC Europe effort that Dr. Brierley did in the ‘90s and the ongoing research of our colleague Darrell Jackson for the CEC<sup>16</sup>.

13 alluding to Grace Davie's book “Europe: The Exceptional Case” (2002)

14 GEM, ASPC, and DAWN would be among that last category

15 TWR and other Christian media would be “randomly compiling data users” as well

16 mapping of missions trends for the Council of Ecumenical Churches



- In addition to the various research activities performed for some different interests, we find that a whole row of church planting-related research models exists and is in use today, each with a different purpose or focus. A comparison of these cp-related research models together with an application-oriented analysis of their core indicators is one of the subjects covered by my colleague Paul Dzubinski in his paper<sup>17</sup>. So I will mention them only briefly here:
  - o The descriptive mapping of the harvest force against the harvest field is certainly the most well-known and most widely-pursued approach as employed in different forms by OW<sup>18</sup> and a series of statistically active missions organizations like the ASCP<sup>19</sup>, GEM<sup>20</sup>, and DAWN<sup>21</sup>. The sheer success of OW as *the* statistical source book for the missionary practitioner has forcefully demonstrated the huge interest in this kind of information while the restriction to the national level sets natural limits of scale to its reliability and practical value for the church planter or the missions strategist.
  - o The City Reaching approach by Jack Dennison
  - o The People Group and Church Planting Movement approach by David Garrison and IMB<sup>22</sup>
  - o The Spiritual Mapping Approach as coined by G. Otis Jr. and his Sentinel Group
  - o The Compu-Coach approach by Bob Logan<sup>23</sup>/ C. Schalk related to NCD<sup>24</sup>

To summarize the status-quo it might be said that there are different research activities running in parallel, especially in relation to the data that would be of interest for church planting purposes. These research efforts are generally not very well connected and it can safely be assumed that a lot of information is not of the ideal quality, that an awful lot of labour is spent in duplication of parallel efforts, that extremely little exchange and mutual learning is possible on a peer-to-peer basis and that no momentum is built towards the continually updated provision of the "big picture of the missions status" of our Continent.

Therefore I dare to say: An ongoing collaborative research movement, clearly contributing to church multiplication, is the need of the hour.

That is what the EMRRT, The European Mission Researchers Round-Table is all about.

*The "European Mission Researchers Round-Table" (EMRRT) – a COLLABORATIVE LEARNING NETWORK for missions researchers to jointly gather and effectively*

17 "This is an evaluation of the seven major research models connected with church planting in Europe, with a view to developing a core set of research data that can be used equally by all seven. I further want to describe how that data can be organized into presentations that reflect the common purposes of these same seven research models. Lastly I would like to describe the open yet secure environment where that data can be both collected and retrieved. This paper is one of two papers. The second paper which will be presented by my colleague Andreas Wolf describes how and under what conditions a European researchers' community can function and mature together." P. Dzubinski

18 Operation World, Johnstone and Mandryk

19 Omega Courses of the Alliance for Saturation Church Planting, mainly operative in Eastern

20 Greater Europe Missions has a currently running Research Project

21 where the classical DAWN approach would be modified for European use by the DAWN European Network

22 International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention

23 CRM (Church Resource Ministries) at that time

24 Natural Church Development



*communicate accurate, relevant research in order to catalyze the multiplication of believing fellowships throughout Europe.*

### 1.3 Delta to the Vision

The lack of research collaboration has clear disadvantages.

The need is for a “**continual provision of increasingly relevant** information for **church multiplication** and missions”.

The following objectives and measures are proposed in order to close that gap.

CURRENT SITUATION		CLOSING THE GAP	
NEED	STATUS QUO	GOAL (SO)	MEASURE
<i>increasingly</i> → relevant information for strategic prayer, decision and action in the context of church multiplication and missions	- fragmented, incomplete	- synergetic (building “momentum”)  - comprehensive	- shared definitions, standards  - expansion of network
	- redundant	- complementarily collaborative	- templates, knowledge management
	- varying quality	- best data sources - cross-correction	- identification - collaboration/interaction
	- low communicative force	- supportive visualisation	- target group specific visualisation
continual provision	- static/ periodic	- ongoing updates	- long-term committed researchers
		- durable cooperation - “researchers’ movement” involving and empowering more and more lay researchers	- multiplication of researchers (mobilization, training, mentoring) - decentralised system (avoiding bottle-necks) - low entry barriers (simple and easily multiplied approach) - involving national key actors and organisations - resource mobilisation (students, retired missionaries)
sharpening of research tools for changing Europe		- ongoing improvement	- exploration of needed innovations



## 1.4 Potential Impact

### 1.4.1 A 10 Year Scenario

If indeed a course like that were consistently followed and successfully perpetuated over the next 10 years, the following optimistic scenario could be imagined:

- The “**European Missions Research Area**” (EMRA) provides the supportive framework for a variety of missions research activities all over Europe and across denominational boundaries. Complementarily structured research efforts flow together towards the common purpose of furthering Missions in Europe through the “**continual provision of increasingly relevant information**” merging in “**the one Big Picture**” of missions in Europe.
- This EMRA allows **international** partners from all user groups to identify competent partners for accurate specific information on the European mission field. It provides the strategic information that **European** missiologists, missionary directors, missional practitioners and prayer people desire for their specific subject of interest. And it accelerates and improves the delivery of **national** research results through a comprehensive support structure including research training, templates and peer-to-peer fellowship.
- EMRA's knowledge structure is a self-organizing “emergent system” based on knowledge hubs and facilitated by different network services. It is not a modern hierarchical organisation, but an expression of the networked knowledge society.
- EMRA is the framework for the strategic complementarity of the most distinct research disciplines. One of these disciplines is the area of “church multiplication.” This research area is served by the “European Missions Researchers Round-Table” (EMRRT)<sup>25</sup>.
  - o **EMRA** is the wider vision for all of missions research in Europe. In scope, vision and nature it corresponds to the meta-network of “Hope for Europe” in that it includes the broader field of missiological and missional research, e.g., in business, politics, education and arts<sup>26</sup>.
  - o The **EMRRT** is the expert group of evangelical researchers within the field of church multiplication in Europe<sup>27</sup>. It is the first network of the EMRA and serves as a model for other research networks and the EMRA meta-network itself.
  - o The EMRRT has stimulated the emergence of the EMRA and contributed strongly to the development and application of formalized best-practices and recommended research policies in European missions research.
- The EMRRT is a full-grown “**researchers movement**” involving and empowering more and more lay researchers to allow for continual research down to the local neighbourhood level<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> another name might be appropriate to clarify the specific focus of this group

<sup>26</sup> HFE is a meta-network for networks of Christian activity in each of the many fields of society. The HFE vision is to synergize broadly for a maximum kingdom impact on Europe in all its dimensions (geographical, cultural, and societal).

<sup>27</sup> It is evangelical in the background of its initiators and its mission statement. This does NOT exclude cooperation or collaboration beyond the “evangelical border” in the organisational sense of the word.

<sup>28</sup> some several hundreds would be expected to be involved after the first 5 years



- Over the last years it has continually provided increasingly relevant information which has catalyzed the multiplication of believing fellowships throughout Europe.
- Effective working **standards** and best-practices have been formulated out of the cooperation between the EMRRT and other relevant actors in European missions research. Comparability of data and compatibility of visualisation is achieved across Europe to the advantage not only of the European strategists, but also of the national and regional users.
- The EMRRT is strongly linked to the EEA, the EEMA, and HFE, and entertains good working **relations** with the various national Evangelical Alliances, mission organisations and other research-relevant agencies. It is a fully independent relational network, supported and resourced by partner organisations. It aims to serve all users<sup>29</sup> of strategic missions information who share the vision of church multiplication in Europe.

#### **1.4.2 Tangible Benefits to Users**

Examples of concrete benefits for the target users of the EMRRT are:

- Missions directors and strategists deciding on priority target fields and staff placement for church planting.
- Short-term missions coordinators deciding on an outreach area and target group and looking for regional contacts.
- Evangelists and church planters to a specific area, people group, or subculture seeking to understand the worldview and patterns of conversion in their target group.
- Personnel and funding recruiters for mission work in Europe looking for promotional information and proof data for the spiritual need of Europe.
- Prayer mobilisers seeking visualised statistical and anecdotal information to enhance the general awareness and concretely direct the efforts of intercessors and the general Christian public.
- Young dedicated Christians seeking their place in missions in Europe and looking for a general Big Picture as a reference of understanding, and for specific needs, trends, and opportunities with a personal attractiveness.
- Researchers, especially those involved in the harvest field – harvest force mapping, looking for easy-to-use research guidelines, personal mentoring or a learning community.
- Christian media like world encyclopedias, prayer atlases, national magazines and international broadcasters looking for reliable figures and stories for publication.
- Bible school students and doctoral candidates looking for a valuable field or a state-of-the-art overview for their specific scientific contribution.
- National or denominational researchers that want to improve their work and share their expert knowledge.
- Independent distance researchers looking for a mission agency that would both direct and use their research.
- City or regional strategists looking for existing research of all kinds relevant to their area.

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<sup>29</sup> Target groups are missions strategists, researchers, intercessors, missional networks and agencies, the media, et. al.



- The EEA looking for reliable figures of the number of evangelicals in Europe to use in lobbying at the EU.

All of these would obviously profit immensely from a Researchers Movement and the Big Picture of Missions in Europe.

## **1.5 Proposed Objective**

### **1.5.1 The EMRRT Vision**

For all of the reasons detailed before, this paper proposes the “**European Missions Researchers Round-Table**”, EMRRT for short, as a necessary platform for collaborative missions research. Actually, the EMRRT has already been in existence since September 2004<sup>30</sup>.

The EMRRT is a relational network of missions researchers who are united under the **Vision** to see “**Mission-oriented research catalyzing the multiplication of believing fellowships throughout Europe**”.

*What exactly is the type of research in focus here?*

- “Mission-oriented research” is NOT understood as being necessarily missiological research on an academic level, but rather stresses simple easily multiplied lay research. Nevertheless, interfaces with academic research are sought and the need to operate on a scientifically sound basis is affirmed.
- The focus includes “applied research” which is geared towards direct use, as opposed to more long-term “basic research”. Nevertheless, the need for a constant sharpening and re-invention of research methods is affirmed.
- The focus includes the search for the “critical management information” with high leverage effect for missions advance (motto: “not much - but the right! - information – much application”).

*How is research understood to have a “catalyzing” effect on missions?*

- Knowledge is seen as a power to direct decision and action. Therefore the impact of research is high on areas of strategy (like placement decisions or resource allocation), prayer (informed intercession) and action (like the choice of methods and the people for cooperation).
- Research is affirmed to have a biblical basis, and the church is understood to be mandated and instructed to go about it. Research is understood to play a prophetic role in the body Christ.

*What exactly is to be understood under the “multiplication of believing fellowships”?*

- The background to the understanding is the evangelical missions activity of purposefully initiating new Christ believing fellowships. This is the chosen focus of application, understood as being central to the completion of the Great Commission, the expansion of the kingdom of God and the transforming impact of Christians on the world.
- “Believing fellowships” is a broader expression for “church” in order to include any newly emerging forms of church.

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<sup>30</sup> As the author of this article is a founding member of that group, the personal pronoun “we” might turn up in the following and is used to describe the “EMRRT” as such.



- "Church Multiplication" is used as a broader term for "church planting" in order to include any God-initiated spontaneous movements, as well as clearly human-initiated efforts.<sup>31</sup>

*How exactly is "throughout Europe" to be understood?*

- The 45 formal European countries<sup>32</sup> form the more or less clearly distinguishable geographical focus of our work. While this area is the focus of our joint work, some partner agencies are involved in countries outside of that boundary<sup>33</sup> and cooperation with researchers of countries beyond that scope is of course possible.

### **1.5.2 EMRRT – Its Mission and Strategy**

Striving to contribute to the previously described vision, the EMRRT pursues the **Mission to "Gather and effectively communicate accurate, relevant research in order to influence strategic decision making and to stimulate prayer and action."**

- "Gathering research" implies that a lot of research activity is being done currently, but is done in duplication and fragmentation. The EMRRT wants to be a central collector of all missions research relevant to church multiplication. E.g. see the Chart of National Church Censuses.
- To "effectively communicate" implies that not all research that is available achieves its potential impact, often due to an ineffective presentation and especially visualisation. The EMRRT wants to provide training and support to researchers to improve on this and to facilitate the optimum use of available research data.
- "Accurate, relevant research" speaks of the necessity to provide quality information. It must be trustworthy, transparent, and as up-to-date as possible. The EMRRT sees its main task in contributing to the reliability of European missions data under circulation.

In short this means that the EMRRT wants to be an encouragement and support to the individual missions researcher 1. to do research and 2. to improve on it. What this means in detail will be explained in the later on.

*Now, with that vision and mission in mind, what is the **Overall Strategy** of the EMRRT?*

- The strategy employed is clearly a long-term process of **collaboration and cooperation**<sup>34</sup>.
  - We are passionate about collaboration and want to "PAINT THE BIG PICTURE OF MISSIONS IN EUROPE TOGETHER!"

<sup>31</sup> If I use the term "church planting", it is out of my personal background in "Saturation Church Planting", but that is not meant to narrow down the meaning.

<sup>32</sup> Acc. to a geographical definition incl. Russia to the Ural and Turkey while excl. the Caucasus countries: city states counted (Andorra, Monaco, Monte Carlo, Vatican, Liechtenstein), Caucasus not counted (Georgia, Armenia, Aserbaidjan), islands not counted separately (Faroers, Medittereneans); cp. as DAWN we separately include the exclave: Kaliningrad and the regions of Great Britain (N-Ireland, Eng, Wal, Scot), but do not include the city states (makes 41 of the full 45 and the potential total of either 48 or 53).

<sup>33</sup> e.g. the Caucasus or pan-Mediterrenean area

<sup>34</sup> used as defined by Interdev: collaboration = working together = close relationship with one shared outcome, cooperation = operating/ partnering together = looser relationship with mutual benefits



- We want to initiate a RESEARCHERS MOVEMENT mobilising “the whole church for the whole research.”<sup>35</sup>

*Following the Overall Strategy, what are the **Strategic Objectives** of the EMRRT?*

- There are two main routes of action of the EMRRT: the Core Processes building the **Product** and the Support Processes providing the **Production Capacity**.<sup>36</sup>
  - The Support Processes center on the development and sustaining of a Researchers Community and involves a number of **network management** activities.
  - The Core Processes provide the real value in that they work towards the cooperative result: the "complete" European research. It can be understood as the **product management**.

How these strategic perspectives - built on the rationale for the whole enterprise – translate into practice is the subject of the next section.

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<sup>35</sup> in connotation to “whole church, whole Gospel, whole harvest)  
<sup>36</sup> production and production capacity as used by Stephen Covey



## **2 IMPLEMENTATION**

Before elaborating on the “how” of the proposed network, I want to provide a clearer picture of **who** the people are that are behind it so far.

### **2.1 EMRRT – Its Current Status**

#### **2.1.1 History and Initiators**

- Over the last two years, research coordinators from GEM, the ASCP and DAWN discovered that they shared the same dream about research collaboration.
- So, the **first three-day meeting** of the EMRRT was jointly initiated and took place in September 04 in Budapest with an open invitation to any interested missions researchers.<sup>37</sup>
  - o A group of eleven met, coming from different agencies<sup>38</sup> and nations,<sup>39</sup> incl. researchers, research coordinators, and prayer mobilisers.
  - o We focused on the building of confidence and community through listening to each other’s research background and interests, and invested some good time in prayer to explore His guidance in our efforts. We were blessed with real progress in hammering out our purpose statement and laying the foundations for future collaboration which would be open for other colleagues to join in.
- Since that time **online collaboration** has been developed by means of email and different web-based workspaces.<sup>40</sup>
- Soon it became clear that – very naturally - the different network members have different amounts of time to spend in it and different priorities and interests.
  - o An informal core group of 4 has currently emerged. They are interacting on a nearly daily basis to drive the development of the network itself.
  - o 4 other members are regularly contributing to the exchange of research results, methods and experiences.
  - o 3 others again are at the moment following things more passively.
- The **members so far** are well suited key persons in research bringing their own specific contributions and national or international perspectives to it. The complementary expertise that is combined in just these 11 initiators is very encouraging and could already serve in providing strategists and researchers with information, connections and inspiration. The synergy effect is easily observable – and that is greatly encouraging. How much greater could the synergy become when the network grows in number, strength and clarity of action!
  - o We are currently facing a number of action points and are in the process of identifying suitable task-champions.
  - o A second EMRRT meeting is being prepared for May in Prague. – You are invited to join us there!

<sup>37</sup> invitations went by email, web-announcement and personal contacts incl. Dr. Brierley and the EEA

<sup>38</sup> GEM, ASCP, IMB, DAWN and independent

<sup>39</sup> Ukraine, Czech, Spain, Poland directly; Hungary, Slovenia, France, Germany indirectly

<sup>40</sup> Areopagus Disc. Forum, Groove P2P-Workspace, Sharepoint-Server, Instant Messaging



- The **initial structure** up to this point is that of an informal network of peers meeting on a voluntary and equal basis united by a shared vision and God's family love.
  - o We are a moderated network in order to keep control over development. There is no voted network leader or moderator so far as everything is developing pretty organically where everyone takes initiative in the role that suits him or her best.
  - o Working on a consensus-driven decision model, it also means that – while I am mandated to represent the group – not everything that I say today will necessarily be the course of the network in the end.
  - o We are learners developing this network structure, and try to draw from current insights in the disciplines of network management, collaborative virtual organisations, and knowledge management.
  - o Of course who we are defines what we are doing: most of us are representing evangelical missions organisations working towards church planting. We are aware of the resulting limitations and hope to increase interaction with other researchers beyond this primary sphere of reference in the course of time.

### **2.1.2 EMRRT – Its Community Values**

While we have not formally approved any values so far, I have tried to summarize the style and atmosphere that we have started out with towards a fruitful interaction and joyful collaboration:

- **Love/ compassion:** The more we explore the status of church and missions in Europe, the more we want to be moved by God's love, moved to rejoice with HIM and cry with HIM. "Love-sick research" inevitably drives us to prayer. This means that we give room to joint prayer when we come together and grow in the understanding of our role as researchers.
- **Relaxation/ faith:** We trust in HIM to lead us HIS way, we do not try to accomplish "our thing" in any way. We are curious about what will be the end of this venture. This means that we do not "own" the research or the network, but try to flow with God's leading.
- **Bold/ experimental:** We are aiming for the highest goals and are committed to quality while creatively exploring new ways of reaching our goals. We believe God is with us, not because we asked HIM to bless us, but because we strive to work out HIS actions. This means that we are daring to aim for challenging objectives and want to see a collaborative research movement making a difference in Europe.
- **Voluntary/ personal:** What we contribute, we bring from our heart, not acc. to extern demands, nor do we put each other under pressure. This means that we make room for various levels of participation and welcome every contribution. We act as individuals rather than organisational representatives.
- **Participative/ teamwork:** Everyone is encouraged to engage in shaping our community. Authority comes from the others' consent and the joint acknowledgement of God's guidance. This means that we as initiators do not want to dominate, but rather stimulate fruitful participation of all.



- **Sharing/ learning:** We share content and know-how in order to build towards a joint product and to enhance each other's competence in that way. This means that we are happy to learn from each other, and provide mentoring for interested researchers. Together we are much stronger than alone.
- **Humility/ realistic:** We want to SERVE, not to KNOW. We are NOT the "know all, have all, be all" in research. This means that we are very open for any criticism and collaboration.
- **Trust/ transparency:** To value the trust put in us and the efforts of work performed we respect existing restrictions on confidentiality and cite our sources where appropriate. This means that we strive to cultivate trust through clear standards of confidentiality and by indicating the data's degree of reliability.

## **2.2 EMRRT – Its Strategic Objectives**

I said that there are two main routes of strategic action of the EMRRT: the core processes building the product and the support processes providing the production capacity. We have identified and agreed on 5 strategic objectives<sup>41</sup>:

- The **Support Processes** include the following Strategic Objectives
  - o **Network Management:** We want to "collaborate in an open, moderated learning community: share resources, knowledge, and tools to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance competence and improve methodology". (WP1)
  - o **Knowledge Management:** We want to "create standards towards comparability and compatibility (definitions, research processes, software if possible...) and transparency/reproducibility". (WP2)
  - o **Training/ Mentoring Service:** We want to "multiply researchers in order to avoid bottlenecks and to mobilize a large number of contributors"<sup>42</sup>. (WP5)
- The **Core Processes** include the following Strategic Objectives
  - o **Product Management:** We want to "work towards a cooperative result: the "complete" European research". (WP3)
  - o **Consultancy Service:** We want to "help others to apply it in the field (prayer, action, decision)". (WP4)

***Precaution:** As community development is an organic process shaped by the unforeseeable interaction of its participants the final settling on things is still quite open and much of the following reasoning is rather the snapshot of a current status or an idea of where the journey might lead us.*

*EDITOR REMARK: The paper is not fully developed further beyond this point.*

### **2.2.1 EMRRT - Its Network Management**

This section deals with the "how-to" of the researchers network and covers aspects like intern and extern cooperation, types and levels of participation, coordination,

<sup>41</sup> actually it was only four voiced by the group and one is added by me – need validation

<sup>42</sup> not explicitly issued by the EMRRT group so far, but implied – needs validation



facilitation, decision making, as well as the mobilisation of resources, and the assessment of risks.

*a. Intern Structures and Collaboration*

- philosophy: organic bottom-up approach, CoPs
- bodies: core group, whole group, extended group, user groups
- Types and Levels of Participation/ membership
- job profiles and network roles: network manager, product manager, scientific manager, pr manager... 3 functions...?!
- complementary partner profiles/ specific contributions
- meetings and computer-supported communication flows/ Online Collaboration Platforms

*b. Extern Cooperation and Interfaces*

- Extern interfaces
- cooperation partnerships (other researchers, established entities, liquid structures)
- related bodies for exchange and correction
- accountability structures
- dissemination ways and publication planning (media/ journalists)
- Synergies with education at all levels (Academics, Research assistance)

*c. Coordination, Facilitation and Decision Making*

- approach of organic group facilitation (moderation methods, energy flows)
- shared coordination (different ones of us might have experience or insight in one area or another and be better equipped to lead the decision-making process in that area)
- consensus based decision making: example
- progress monitoring and evaluation criteria (progress tracking of EMRRT performance)
- authority and influence, intern and extern
- robust security mechanisms ensuring the research to meet its goals
- **Charts: Country-Grid, National Census, National Researchers**

*d. Mobilisation of Resources*

- Major resources needed (Personnel, Equipment, Finances)
- Integration, synergies and resource sharing
- Overall mobilization strategy
- Funding modules
- estimation over time
- difference that funding makes (On scale, On ambition, On outcome)
- options and limitations of exploitation/ marketing

*e. Assessment of Risks*

- Risk/ Opportunities Chart with Contingency Plans
- esp. security and trust issues



### **2.2.2 EMRRT - Its Knowledge Management**

This section deals with the handling of knowledge<sup>43</sup> in the peer-to-peer network. It involves aspects like trust, transparency, confidentiality, intellectual property, knowledge exchange, codification, filing, standards, definitions, templates, and progress tracking of EMRRT performance. The Country-Grid and the How-to-Grid are introduced.

#### *f. trust and transparency*

- essential role of keeping our trustworthiness in handling the data entrusted by different people
- quality is reflected in the transparency about data sources, interpretation ambiguities and the degree of reliability

#### *g. confidentiality and intellectual property*

- different data comes with different restrictions on publication and different degrees of confidentiality -> clearly marked as confidential, restrained and public
- IP is respected in that sources are cited, due credit is given and data not separated from the information about its confidentiality status
- background and foreground knowledge distinguished -> basic rules
- documentation of data includes contributors to the knowledge generation process

#### *h. knowledge exchange, codification and filing*

- philosophy of knowledge exchange, explicit and tacit
- codification strategy (purpose, explanation and example)
- document management system through document coding and joint filing databases

#### *i. standards, definitions, and templates*

- the development of shared standards of research methodology (-> templates), and shared definitions of core research terms (-> glossary) is a major goal of the network
- reasons and purpose....
- work done...
- work envisioned....
- priority indicated...
- How-to-Grid

### **2.2.3 EMRRT – Its Training/ Mentoring Service**

The different training and mentoring services are described in their current status and future planning. The Mentoring-Grid is introduced.

#### *j. training services*

#### *k. mentoring services and Mentoring-Grid*

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<sup>43</sup> which includes data, information, best-practices, and tacit knowledge like personal expertise



### **2.2.4 EMRRT – Its Product Management**

The "complete European picture" as the ideal collaborative result is described as the center of the whole effort, together with its research spectre, its priorities, limitations, and strategic focus. Samples of the resulting product are given, as well as the timetable for the milestones of the workplan<sup>44</sup>.

- l. the ideal collaborative result*
- m. system engineering framework*
- n. research spectre*
- o. priorities, limitations, and strategic focus*
- p. Samples of the resulting product*
- q. timetable for the milestones*
- r. phases and rough workplan: short-term, middle-term, long-term*

### **2.2.5 EMRRT – Its Consultancy Service**

The different consultancy services are described in their current status and future planning together with questions of dissemination and publication. The Application-Grid is introduced.

- s. consultancy services and Application-Grid*
- t. dissemination and publication*

## **3 CONCLUSION**

Invitation to join and different possibilities of future interaction...

## **4 ANNEX**

- Personal and organisational profiles of involved researchers
- Research samples across the targeted research spectre
- Methodological Backgrounds
- Referral list
- Bibliography
- Others

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<sup>44</sup> This subject is further elaborated in the related presentation of Paul Dzubinski.