



Strategy Report on Research Infrastructures
ROADMAP 2021

José L. Martínez
TNA-Task Force

5th November 2019 La Palma

TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

- The TNA is highly supported by the political /societal level:
 - Competitiveness Council declarations/conclusions (29 May 2018, 30 November 2018)
 - Pillar on the ERA construction
 - EC support. Horizon 2020 priorities
 - European Charter for Access to RI

The goal is very clear: TNA is a very good idea, totally embedded of good European values and priorities, it should be a high priority... but...



TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

- **How is implemented TNA?**

- The MS/AC finance the ESFRI-RI and the domestic/national RI
- The EU-TNA scheme:
 - **Successive FPs, notably FP7 and Horizon 2020, have supported an increasing number of RI *communities* via the so-called “I3” and “Integrating Activities” to offer *free of charge trans-national access* to key research infrastructures of European interest. The typical I3 grant includes: Management, outreach, JRA and TNA. Probably TNA is aprox. 70% of the budget**
 - **This TNA support is the “main” financial part (share) of the Infrastructure budged of EU**



TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

- **However, the implementation presents different bottlenecks, in particular for the Financial Aspects:**
 - **In the practical way, the Main European (ESFRI) RI are not “allowed” to receive the TNA budget from EU. This is “reserved” to the national/domestic RI. They participate in the JRA and outreach...**
 - **ESFRI Projects and Landmarks, ERICs and other European RIs must find the appropriate balance, in their business plan, between incentive on membership and openness as regards TNA including EU supported TNA. Conflict of interests in the MS/AC for the ESFRI-RI.**
 - **Level of access fees or level of additional costs (e.g. including travel & subsistence costs for visiting researchers) might not be affordable by some user communities.**
 - **For highly demanded RIs with very limited access opportunities, access to non-national users (as PIs, including against access fees) directly restricts access by national PIs. This frequently confines TNA to well-established cooperation with national PIs even when EU support or alternative modality of access exist (e.g. bartering system among countries operating ocean-going research vessels).**



TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Some of the conflicting issues with financial aspects are:

- Single-site pan-european infrastructures whose policies go against TNA policies (e.g., preparing bilateral agreements with “favoured” countries instead of TNA) under the supervision of the MS/AC.
- EC funds for TNA do exist, but cannot be used for access to landmarks.
- National facilities getting funds for TNA and using them mostly to finance their full cost instead of the additional cost (which should be close to 10%).
- It's very costly to give time on national facilities. Need to bring in more money.
- Using funds from national grants is not always easily acceptable to investigators, funding agencies.
- A bartering system exists in some countries, where points are exchanged for using particular research infrastructures. This is a coherent approach for achieving fairness, but it does not solve the primary issue of covering the cost.



TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

In summary:

- ESFRI RI (landmark) are not happy to be excluded of the EU support to TNA, but from the other side they see a significant conflict between TNA policy, against bilateral long-term contracts for a scientific partnership with the ESFRI-RI
- EU would like to evolve the present financial schema of the TNA and to avoid a direct support to the running budget of National RI, which are already financed by MS/AC
- Some of the mature communities and national RI would like to keep the present TNA schema, otherwise the access to non-member (non-national) users will be strongly decreased



TRANS-NATIONAL ACCESS (TNA) OF RI: FINANCIAL ASPECTS

Are there new solutions?

- In analogy to national negotiations with commercial publishers for accessing their digital libraries of publications, one may consider having one office per country negotiating access to a facility in another country
- Are there solutions, inside the proposition of co-funding from the emerging elements of the landscape as for instance LEAPS or LENS?
- From my personal experience, people is the main driver to a real increase of new users from new communities and/or countries. Could be changed the TNA-EU support of payment for beam-days, for another one supporting post-docs contracts at the ESFRI-RI and National RI?





Strategy Report on Research Infrastructures
ROADMAP 2021

Thank you for the
attention!