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Directorate B - Digital Business Solutions
DIGIT B1 - Solutions for Grants and Procurement

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DIGIT.B.1/JPE

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF
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Subject: Training environment in the corporate target architecture

Context

The purpose of this note is to explain the status and way forward in the availability of the training environment in the corporate target architecture used by eProcurement and OPSYS. This note doesn't cover PPMT, for which JRC will provide the necessary input separately.

Introduction

OPSYS and eProcurement (for the new corporate target architecture) programmes have been under development since 2017. The new corporate target architecture is based in the eGrants architecture in production since beginning of 2014.

The main characteristics of this architecture are:

- It is a highly distributed and complex architecture, following the new EC Digital Strategy paradigm of re-using and co-creating. Namely, this translates in the usage of many different modules and solutions, both business modules (including interfaces and micro-services) like SYGMA, eSubmission, eRequest, MAP, JAgate, ERIS, PPCMS, etc and business-agnostic modules coming from the Reusable Solutions Platform (Corporate Notification System, EU search, etc), including the Myworkplace and Compass corporate platform.
- In addition it is highly coupled with other corporate systems: Hermes/ARES for document management and ABAC for financial management.
- Overall the distributed architecture relies in more than 50 modules developed by services across the EC: DIGIT, RTD, NEAR, AGRI, REGIO, etc.
- It is not anymore a monolith architecture like the one currently in use in BUDG for ABAC or DEVCO for CRIS and the other ancillary systems (ROM, EVAL, AUDIT, etc).

This architecture was originally underpinned by several environments, needed to support the software delivery process: DEV → TEST → ACC → PROD. And it allowed the deployment to more than 30 EU entities, with more than 5000 users internally and hundreds of thousands externally.

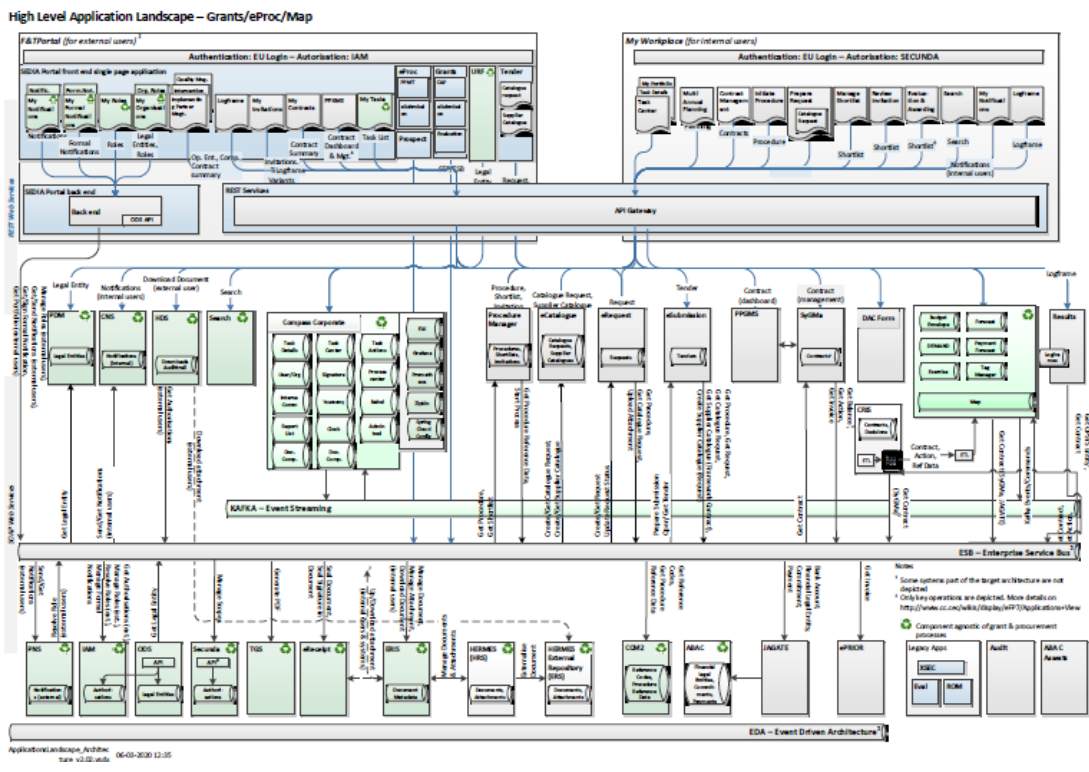
In what regards OPSYS, the Partnership Agreement didn't make any reference to the number of environments required to implement the solution, as it was relying in the reuse of the eGrants architecture based on the above mentioned four environments DEV, TEST, ACC and PROD. In eGrants training needs are catered by the mix use of TEST and ACC environments.

This is the requirement regarding training that was mentioned in the Partnership Agreement and that is currently implemented:

Online Guidance/Help: The system must propose end-users appropriate guidance in order to perform their operations (e.g. tooltips and embedded training regarding the application of operational/financial/contractual/... methodologies. the guidance on methodologies must be accessible from the system and could be embedded.

During the implementation of OPSYS and eProcurement since 2017, together with the launch of Compass corporate, the need of having extra environments became evident and this number increased with the addition of the following environments: Integration (INT) used for integrated testing, Training (TRN) originally conceived for training but mostly used for Production Maintenance due to its close alignment with PRD release and Data Load (DLT) used for performance testing and data testing.

Due to the complex and distributed architecture (see image below) the setup and maintenance of any additional environment is, currently, very heavy and resource intensive. Furthermore, it relies on the same workforce that delivers the main development stream from DEV → TEST → INT → ACC → PROD.



Way forward

In view of the key milestones that were approved by the OMB for 2020 and by the eProcurement governance:

- 1) Readiness of OPSYS for the new MFF and anticipation of related features.
- 2) Phase-out of legacy systems:
- 3) Results Reporting Exercise 2020 and EAMR reporting through OPSYS.
- 4) Establishment of interfaces and/or integration between OPSYS and the following existing IT systems.
- 5) Support to Production (requested by the governance after the Production releases in 2020);
- 6) Submission of negotiated procedures;
- 7) Submission of restricted procedures;
- 8) Roll out of the specific contracts under framework contracts with reopening of the competition for services.

IT provider resources are fully busy working in the delivery of new features (using the DEV, TEST, INT and ACC environments) and the fixing of Production bugs (using DEV, TRN environments). **Therefore all IT efforts put in extra activities will have a direct impact on and will jeopardise the delivery required to fulfil the key milestones.**

This is why:

- Training environment is available and currently used by the IT providers for bug fixing. URL is known to the change management and can be accessed by them at any time for focused training sessions without involving complex corporate services such as ABAC.
- The IT providers will apply reasonable efforts to maintain the TRN environment in working order, especially after the hotfix updates, however:
 - o IT resources will not be in a position to provide any extra support to the training activities that the change management teams are planning and implementing;
 - o OPSYS team is not responsible for providing assistance, guarantee uptime or configuring corporate services such those of Compass Corporate, ABAC, eDomec.
 - o The IT providers don't take any responsibility on the status and availability of the training environment outside of the bug fixing process;
 - o In alignment with DIGIT's reply on the subject of the availability of IT environments: we can discuss with your business team alternative scenarios to exploit the environments for the purposes of training and change management, which may give some earlier intermediate benefits. This could translate in providing *demos, e-learning material, wiki documentation, power points, interactive videos, etc.*
 - o EULOGIN wise, all environments, including training will have to connect to the non-Production EULOGIN environment. And this will have an impact on the access for non-technical users.

- The change management team in DIGIT B1 is already following this approach and they are:
 - o giving trainings with minimal use of any environment;
 - o targeting all users in the EU institutions.

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