



Homeserver Decentralization Working Group Report

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Introductions

Agenda

- Some History of the matrix.org Foundation
- The Journey of how the Working Group until now
- Goals & Challenges we wanna address
- Current Achievements
- Roadmap
- What now?

What History Predates the WG?

The history that predates the WG

[matrix]



The history that predates the WG



Introducing premium accounts to fund the matrix.org homeserver

As we need to take more concrete steps to improve the financial situation of the Foundation, we will be rolling out a freemium offer for the matrix.org homeserver users. The alternative is to turn off the server, which we want to avoid doing

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2025/02/crossroads/>

The history that predates the WG



We're at a crossroads

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So unless the Foundation manages to raise \$100,000 of funding by the end of March 2025, we will have to focus our resources on the critical lines of work, and consequently we will have to shut down all the remaining bridges hosted by the Matrix.org Foundation. This includes bridges to Slack, XMPP, OFTC (IRC), and Snoonet (IRC). We will also mark the software behind those bridges as archived, as we don't have the resources to accept new contributions.

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2025/02/crossroads/>

The history that predates the WG



How we discovered, and recovered from, Postgres corruption on the matrix.org...

Greetings from Element's backend/SRE team, who run the matrix.org homeserver on behalf of the Matrix.org Foundation.

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After a couple of weeks of hard work by a team of Element staff including backend developers and systems engineers, we were able to repair almost all of the affected rooms. Although we're still investigating exactly what went wrong and checking that everything is now working as it should, we'd like to share some details about what we know and the work we've done to date.

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2025/07/postgres-corruption-postmortem/>

The history that predates the WG



The Matrix Conference 2025 Strasbourg

The Matrix.org Foundation Report: Financial stability still not great...

<https://cfp.2025.matrix.org/matrix-conf-2025/talk/3RXLTQ/>

The history that predates the WG



Retiring the Slack Bridge on matrix.org

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However, maintaining and operating bridges, in particular to closed, proprietary platforms, is expensive: they need to be kept up to date with any change made by the platform on a regular basis and they're fiddly to keep up and running.

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2025/11/removing-slack-bridge/>

The history that predates the WG



The 2025 Matrix Holiday Special

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On the other hand, the Foundation itself is still not independently sustainable yet: while memberships have doubled over the last year, work on independently safeguarding the core of the protocol (especially Trust & Safety, Security, Spec and Advocacy work) is painfully underfunded.

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2025/12/24/matrix-holiday-special/>

The history that predates the WG



The first Public Annual Report is out!

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Third, we have been talking a lot about the serious financial situation the Foundation is in, so the report includes an overview of the financials for the financial year 2025 (Nov 2024-Oct 2025) to share more of the details.

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<https://matrix.org/blog/2026/03/annual-report/>

The history that predates the WG



Why is the foundation even hosting?

The history that predates the WG / Why is the foundation even hosting?

Foundation Mission:

The Matrix.org Foundation exists to act as a neutral custodian for Matrix and to nurture it as efficiently as possible as a single unfragmented standard, for the greater benefit of the whole ecosystem, not benefiting or privileging any single player or subset of players.

"Greater benefit" is defined as maximising:

- the number of Matrix-native end-users reachable on the open Matrix network.
- the number of regular users on the Matrix network (e.g. 30-day retained federated users).
- ...

<https://matrix.org/foundation/about/>

How did the WG get founded?

[**matrix**]

[the
matrix
conference]

~~Malinö 2026~~

Strasbourg 2025

Goals & Challenges

Goals & Challenges

[**matrix**]

- Easy on-boarding for everyone
- Direct people away from matrix.org
- Avoid Homeserver choice paralysis
- Publish a transparent and safe homeservers list
- Transparent and clear list maintenance process
- Maintain the list long-term
- Give UX guidelines for onboarding screens

What the heck is a Homeserver ?

Can I just use matrix.org ?

@john:doe.net
My email handle looks very weird

Hard things for newcomers (eg. your grandma)

- Knowing about Matrix
- They don't know about matrix **usernames** and that the **server domain** forms part of it
 - They are used to phone numbers or usernames from Whatsapp, Signal, Discord etc.
- They are not aware of the whole **concept of a homeserver**
- They are not aware that **longevity and sustainability of a homeserver** is important
- There is no **overview of servers** to join or **selection wizard**
- *If we had **account portability**, half of the challenges would be much less impactful*

Current Achievements

We are an official Working Group of the foundation

See: <https://matrix.org/foundation/working-groups/homeserver-decentralisation/>

Current achievements



We have a Server List Policy

<https://github.com/cleverer/matrix-wg-promote-alternative-homeservers/blob/main/documents/Matrix-Foundation-Server-List-Policy.md>

It

- Focuses on Trustworthy alternatives to matrix.org
- Requires some minimum standards for reliability and security
- Expects Transparency and user protection
- Sets some common values: Open federation and ongoing accountability

We have a Draft of the Operating Architecture

We have multiple possible variants and hope to discuss them in the Hackathon tomorrow.

Roadmap

Roadmap

- Finalize a first version of a process to apply
- Implement a rudimentary Web Server Picker

[**matrix**]

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- Start promoting the list (eg. reach out to homeserver operator communities)
- Talk to client & server implementers (how might a client UX look)
- Iterate on the application process as a server admin (automating as much as possible)
- Iterate on the "consuming" of the list (integrate into clients, more formal list format)

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Roadmap



- Start supporting and pushing guides and best-practices for server operators
- Work on Account portability

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What now?



What now?

Join the working group Matrix channel

matrix.to/#/#homeserver-decentralisation:matrix.org

Check out the working group effort in our git repository and get involved

github.com/cleverer/matrix-wg-promote-alternative-homeservers

Nudge your sysadmin friends to host safe community servers and check out Trust&Safety tooling

muninn-hall.com

Q&A Time!



Thanks for Listening!