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The ALICE distributed computing framework

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The ALICE Computing Team has developed since 2001 a distributed computing environment implementing a Grid paradigm under the name of AliEn. With the evolution of the middleware provided by various large grid projects in Europe and in the US (EGEE, OSG, ARC), a number of services provided by AliEn are now provided and maintained by the corresponding Grid infrastructures. AliEn has therefore evolved from a vertically integrated Grid solution to a set of interfaces to common services offering to the ALICE users a seamless interface to the available Grid services, and a set of high-level services and functions not yet available from standard middleware. This hybrid setup has been thoroughly tested during the so-called data challenges and will be used for the processing and analysis of ALICE data. This talk will describe the present architecture of the AliEn system, the experience derived from its usage during the ALICE Data Challenges, and the plans and perspectives for its evolution.

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