# DEPLOYING A HYBRID INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESEARCHERS IN AWS

Ihona Maria Correa de Cabo

H O L 0 2

High-performance and distributed computing for big data

2023-2024

# INDEX

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this assignment is to create a hybrid cloud infrastructure within Amazon Web Services (AWS) to support a research team that uses Jupyter Notebooks for data analysis. This setup will involve a mix of public and private resources to allow secure analysis of data while providing a way to share findings with the public.

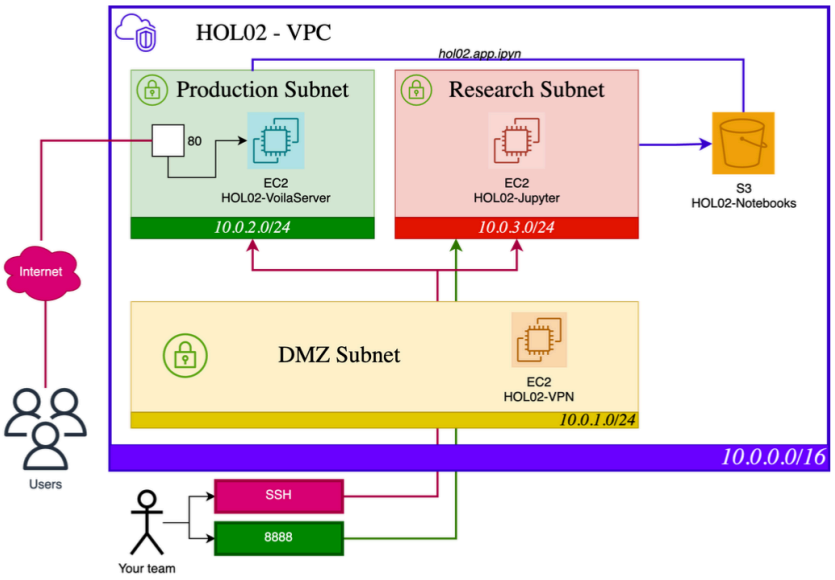


*Figure 1.- Architecture of the proposed hybrid infrastructure.*

This architecture contains a Virtual Private Cloud named HOL02 - VPC, which is an isolated cloud environment within AWS that holds all the resources. Inside this VPC, there are 3 subnets:

a) Production Subnet: Contains the HOL02-VoilaServer EC2 instance, which is exposed to the internet via port 80 (HTTP). Ideally, by using the Voila Server, which turns Jupyter Notebooks into web applications, the team can share their results publicly without exposing the data or analysis environment.

b) Research Subnet: Contains the HOL02-Jupyter EC2 instance, which hosts the Jupyter Notebook server. It is private and can only be accessible through the VPN.

c) DMZ (De-Militarized Zone) Subnet: Contains the HOL02-VPN EC2 instance. It is a semi-secure area that provides a buffer between the untrusted internet and the protected internal network. This subnet hosts the VPN server that the team can use to securely connect to the research subnet.

The VPC is connected to the internet via an internet gateway named HOL02-IGW, allowing the HOL02-VoilaServer to share content to the public internet.

Each server (VPN, VoilaServer, Jupyter) is an EC2 instance, which is a virtual server in AWS's cloud.

The architecture is designed to provide a secure environment for the research team to analyze data using Jupyter Notebooks while at the same time ensuring that the results can be shared with the public through a web server, without compromising the research environment's security.

# 2. INFRAESTRUCTURE SET UP

## 2.1. VPC and subnets

First of all, the VPC is created. In order to achieve that, we must log into the AWS management console and navigate to the VPC dashboard. Then, we create the VPC named “HOL02-VPC”. The "IPv4 CIDR block" field is set to "10.0.0.0/16".

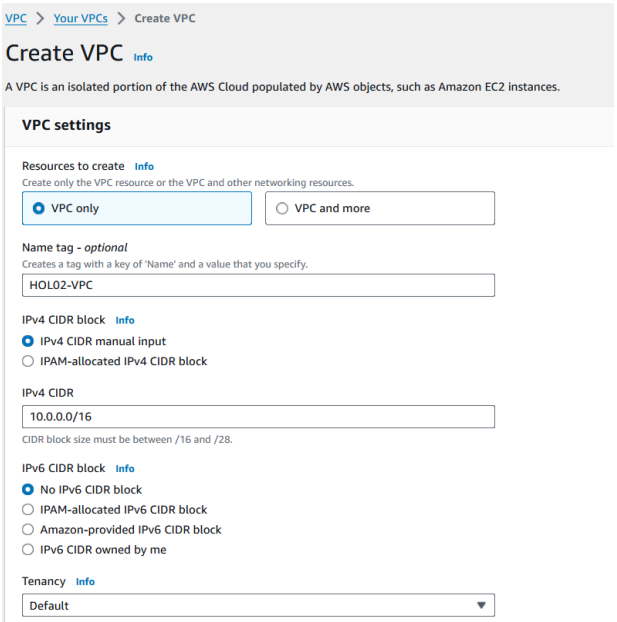


*Figure 2.- VPC creation.*

Next, from the VPC Dashboard, we select "Subnets" in the sidebar.

A subnet is a segmented portion of a VPC that allows to partition this VPC into smaller networks to better organize and secure the resources.

According to the assignment, we must create 3 subnets, one for the production, another for the research group, and finally the DMZ subnet.
When creating the subnets, we select the newly created HOL02-VPC from the drop menu and then create each of the subnets in the same way as *Figure 3*, each subnet with a different IPv4 subnet CIDR block.

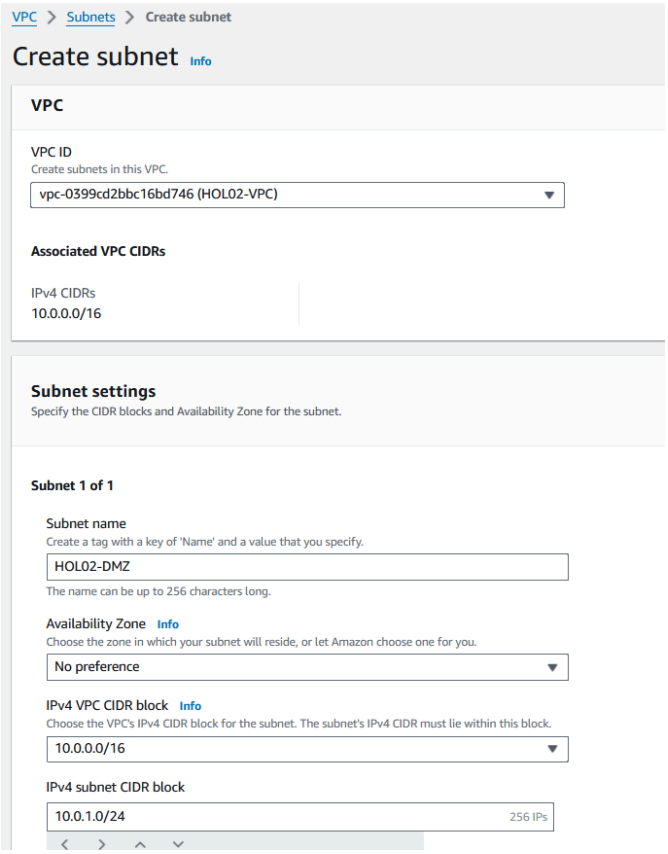


*Figure 3.-DMZ subnet creation.*

**Subnets (9)** Info

Find resources by attribute or tag

| Name | Subnet ID | State | VPC | IPv4 CIDR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HOL02-DMZ | subnet-08dbf0a9677464b08 | Available | vpc-0399cd2bbc16bd746 | 10.0.1.0/24 |
| – | subnet-0065246d17372ef01 | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.0.0/20 |
| – | subnet-0bc0075288d7efcc5 | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.64.0/20 |
| – | subnet-085274192e19b9165 | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.32.0/20 |
| – | subnet-0598bcf1a085db18e | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.80.0/20 |
| – | subnet-07a4580da069fa397 | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.16.0/20 |
| – | subnet-0f8bca81519fb3d54 | Available | vpc-0ce649878ba820244 | 172.31.48.0/20 |
| HOL02-Production | subnet-0e0f5e298977dbc58 | Available | vpc-0399cd2bbc16bd746 | 10.0.2.0/24 |
| HOL02-Research | subnet-05430e9d59aeeecca | Available | vpc-0399cd2bbc16bd746 | 10.0.3.0/24 |

*Figure 4.- All the subnets created.*

Each CIDR block represents a range of IP addresses that can be assigned to resources within that subnet. By assigning different CIDR blocks to different subnets,

we ensure that the IP addresses used in one subnet do not overlap with the ones used in another subnet within the same VPC.

## 2.2. Route tables

In AWS, a route table is a set of rules, called routes, that are used to determine where network traffic from the VPC should be directed. Each subnet in a VPC must be associated with a route table, and the route table controls the routing of traffic within that subnet.

To proceed, we go back to the VPC Dashboard and select "Route Tables" from the sidebar. We create one route table per each subnet:

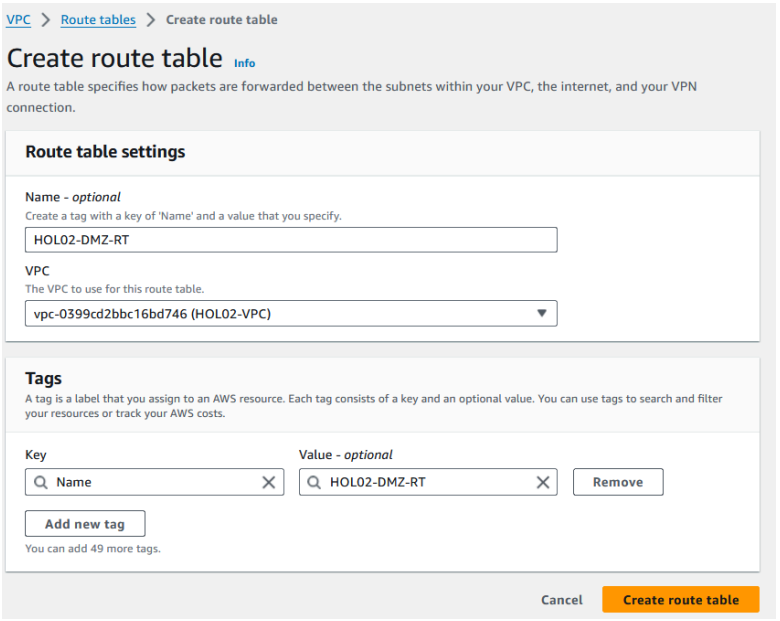


*Figure 5*

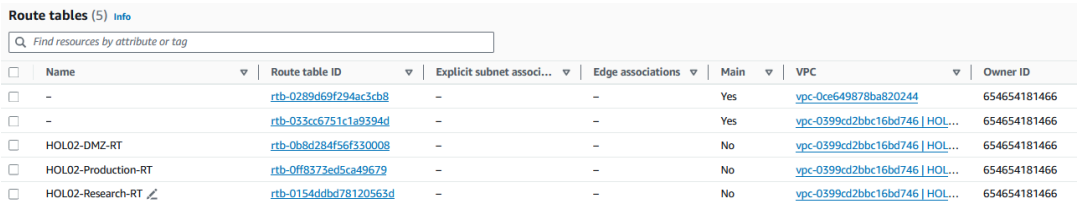


*Figure 6*

Afterward, we associate each route table with their subnet:

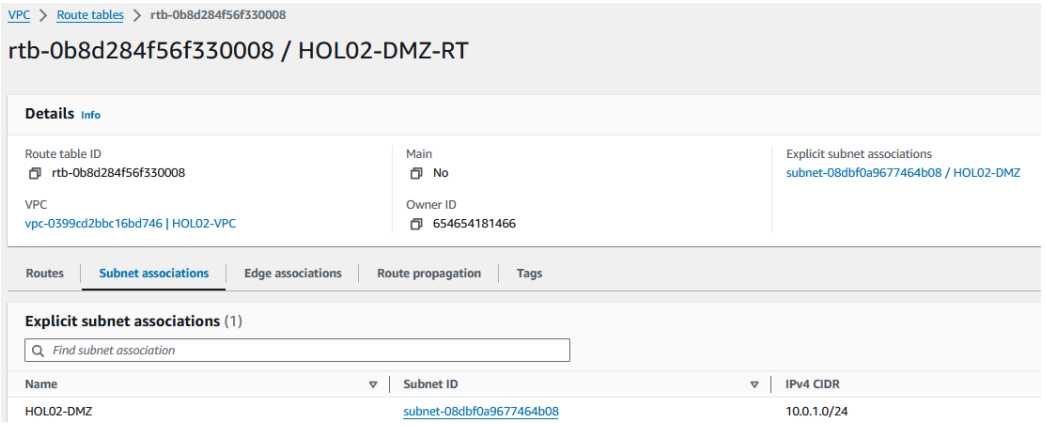


*Figure 7*

Moreover, the subnet that should be accessible from the internet is the one hosting the HOL02-VoilaServer, since this server is meant to share the team's findings with the public. Therefore, we must ensure that the subnet associated with the VoilaServer (the Production Subnet), has internet access.

To do that, first we create an internet gateway (*Figure 8*) and attach it to our VPC.

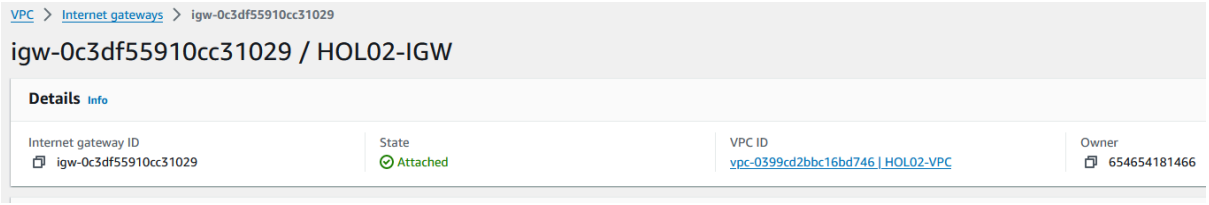


*Figure 8*- Internet gateway creation.

Then, we edit the route table associated with the Production Subnet (HOL02-Production) by adding a new route with 0.0.0.0/0 as the destination and the Internet Gateway as the target (*Figure 9*).

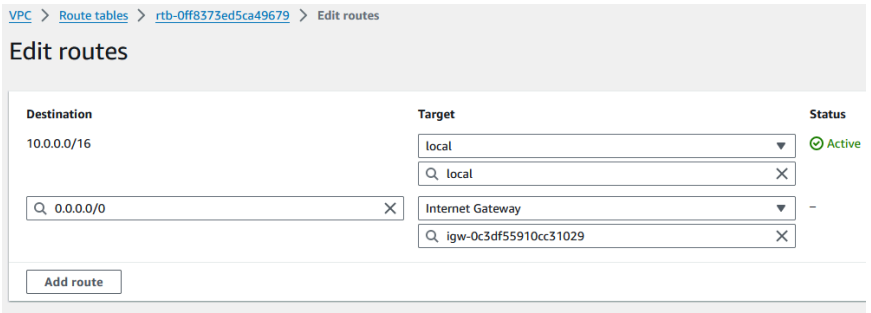


*Figure 9*

We follow the same steps for the route table associated with the HOL02-DMZ subnet. At the moment, the final network configuration is as follows:

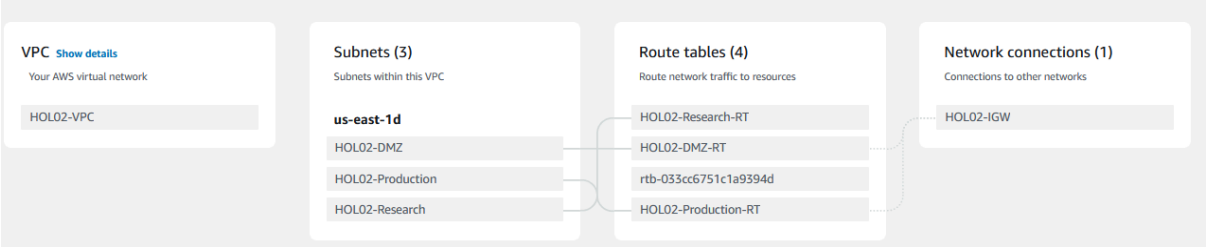


*Figure 10*

## 2.3. Security groups

In AWS, security groups act as virtual firewalls for EC2 instances and other resources within the VPC. They basically control inbound and outbound traffic at the instance level, and this enables to specify which traffic is allowed to reach our instances.

- I*nbound Rules*: These rules define the traffic that is allowed to reach the instances.

- *Outbound Rules*: These rules define the outbound traffic that is allowed to leave the instances. For instance, we can specify that all outbound traffic is allowed, or restrict it to specific protocols and ports.

Still within the VPC Dashboard, we click on "Security Groups" in the sidebar. We create 3 different security groups (HOL02-DMZ-SG, HOL02-Production-SG and HOL02-Research-SG) with the specified ports from the assignment instructions (*table 1*). The security groups are created in the same way as *Figure 8:*

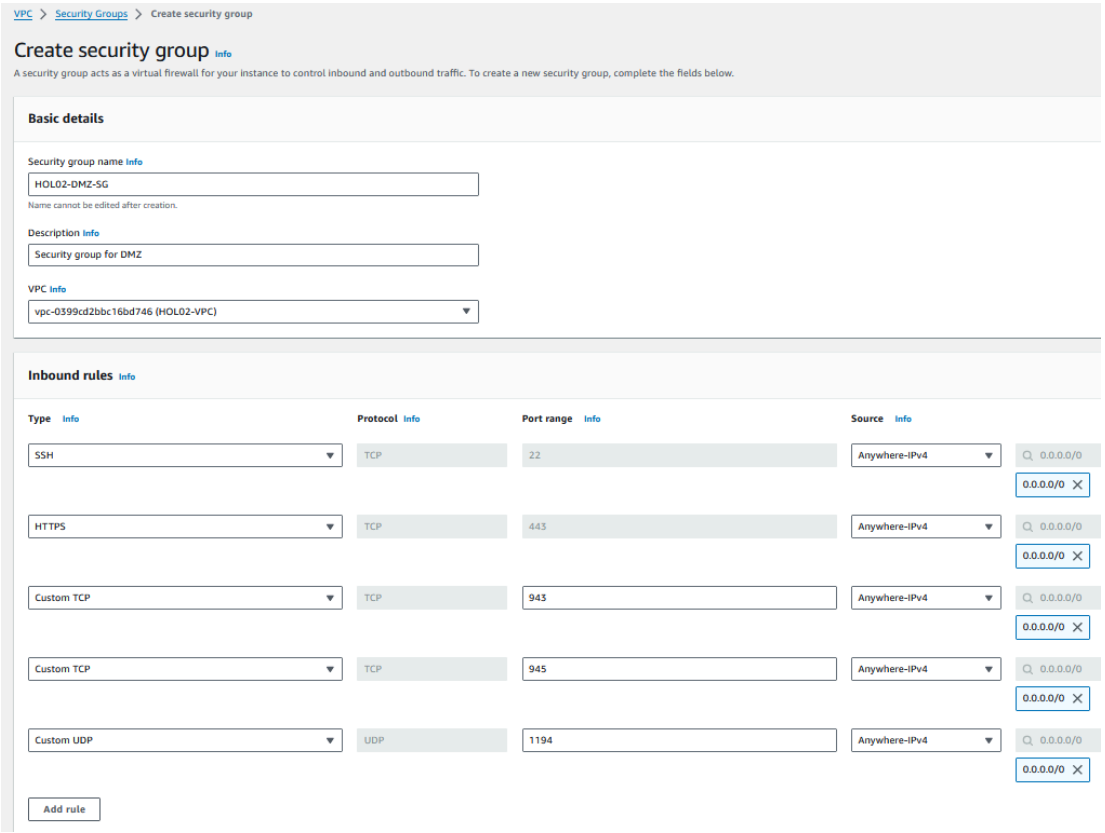


*Figure 11*

| Security group | Inbound rules | Outbund rules |
|---|---|---|
| HOL02-DMZ-SG | 22(SSH)<br>443 (HTTPS)<br>943 (TCP)<br>945 (TCP)<br>1194 (UDP) | All traffic |
| HOL02-Production-SG | 80 (HTTP)<br>443 (HTTPS)<br>22 (SSH) - only from HOL02-DMZ-SG | All traffic |
| HOL02-Research-SG | 22 (SSH) - only from HOL02-DMZ-SG<br><br>8888 (TCP) - only from HOL02-DMZ-SG | All traffic |

*Table 1*

For the Production security group, we will be allowing HTTP and HTTPS traffic from anywhere, and SSH traffic only from the DMZ security group.

## 2.4. EC2 instances

An EC2 instance is a virtual server in Amazon's EC2 for running applications on the AWS infrastructure. When creating an instance, we are essentially renting a virtual server from AWS to run our own applications.

For this assignment, we have to create three EC2 instances: HOL02-VPN, HOL02-VoilaServer and HOL02-Jupyter.

We go to the EC2 dashboard and launch an instance. For each instance, we select the characteristics following *Table 2:*

| **EC2 instance name** | **Subnet associated** | **AMI** | **Instance type** |
|---|---|---|---|
| HOL02-VPN | HOL02-DMZ | Ubuntu 22.04 LTS | t2.micro |
| HOL02-VoilaServer | HOL02-Production | Amazon Linux 2 | t2.micro |
| HOL02-Jupyter | HOL02-Research | Amazon Linux 2 | t2.micro |

*Table 2*

Here is an example of the EC2 instance configuration for HOL02-VPN:

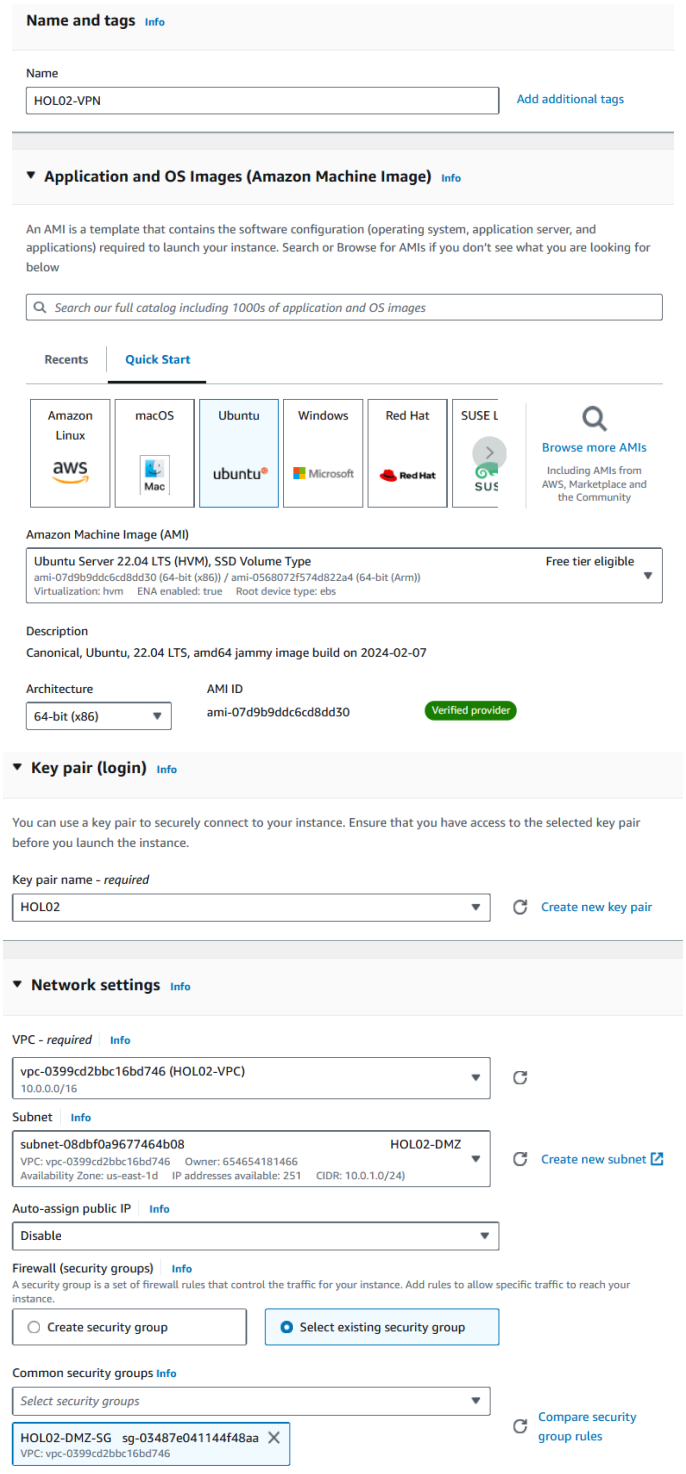


*Figure 12*

HOL02-VPN requires an elastic IP, as specified in the assignment, so we have to go to the "Elastic IPs" section in the EC2 dashboard, create an Elastic IP and associate it with the EC2 instance HOL02-VPN:

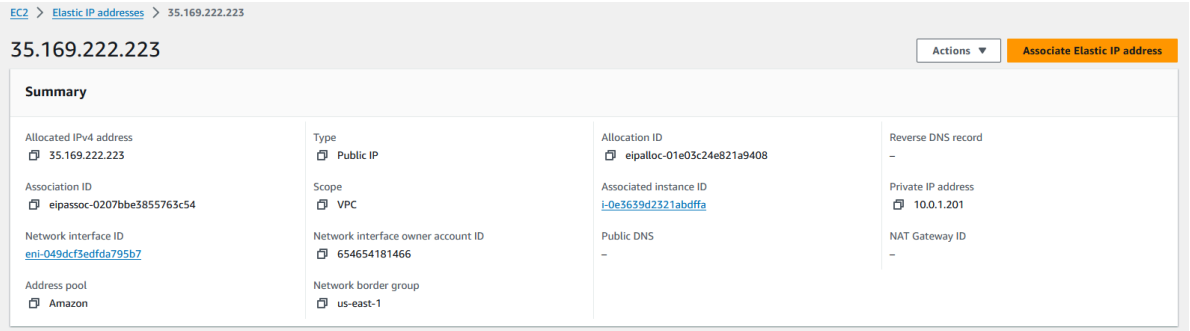


*Figure 13.-Elastic IP creation*

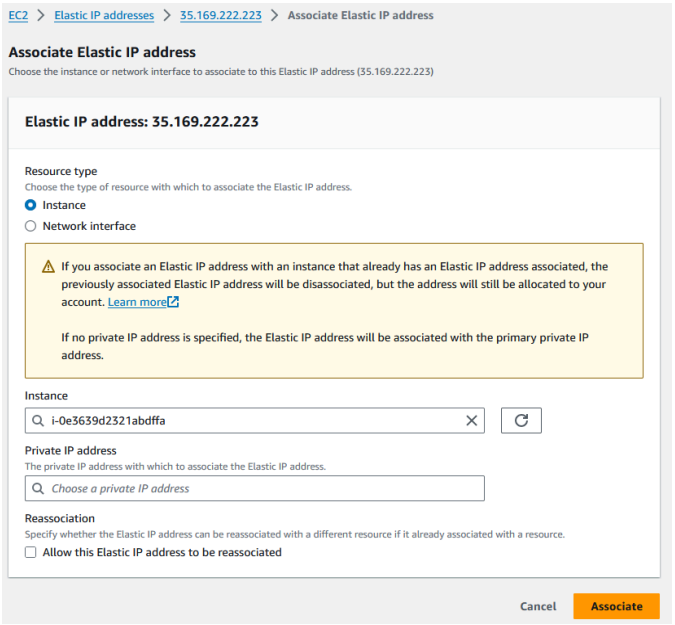


*Figure 14.- We associate the elastic IP to the instance.*

Here is an overview of the instances created:

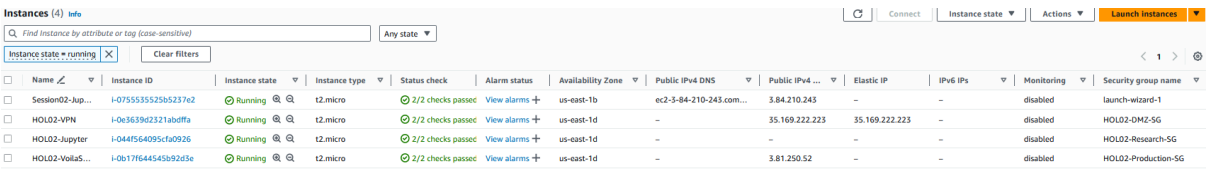


*Figure 15*

## 2.5. S3 buckets

Finally, we must create the S3 bucket that will include all the notebooks used by the research team. We navigate to the S3 dashboard, select S3 and click on “create bucket”. The bucket is named “hol02-notebooks-ihona”.

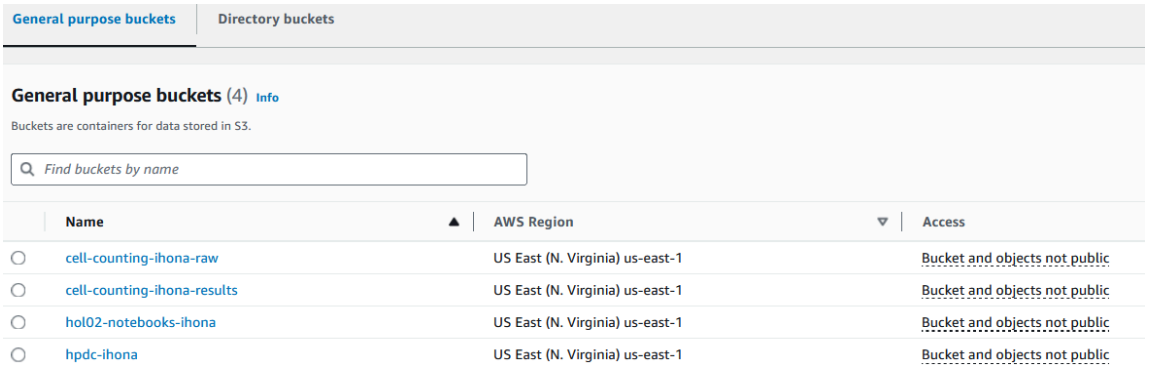


*Figure 16*

# 3. OPEN VPN CONFIGURATION

OpenVPN is a robust and configurable VPN solution that allows to securely connect devices to a remote network over the internet. In this context, OpenVPN allows us to securely access the Jupyter server, which is not directly exposed to the public internet, by routing the connection through the VPN.

Firstly, we must connect to the EC2 instance named HOL02-VPN. To do it, we open a terminal in the computer and go to the directory where there is our private key.Then, we execute this command,

*ssh -i aws01 ubuntu@35.169.222.223*

where “aws01” is the name of the private key and 35.169.222.223 is the public IP of the instance. Once connected to the EC2 instance, we use the following commands to install OpenVPN on the EC2 instance:

```
ubuntu@ip-10-0-1-201:~$ sudo apt update -y
```

*sudo apt update -y*
*sudo apt install ca-certificates gnupg wget net-tools -y*
*sudo wget https://as-repository.openvpn.net/as-repo-public.asc -qO /etc/apt/trusted.gpg.d/as-repo-public.asc*
*sudo echo "deb [arch=amd64 signed-by=/etc/apt/trusted.gpg.d/as-repo-public.asc] http://as-repository.openvpn.net/as/debian jammy main" | sudo tee /etc/apt/sources.list.d/openvpn-as-repo.list*
*sudo apt update && sudo apt install openvpn-as -y*

```
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
Access Server 2.13.1 has been successfully installed in /usr/local/openvpn_as
Configuration log file has been written to /usr/local/openvpn_as/init.log


Access Server Web UIs are available here:
Admin  UI: https://10.0.1.201:943/admin
Client UI: https://10.0.1.201:943/
To login please use the "openvpn" account with [redacted] password.
(password can be changed on Admin UI)
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++
```

The previous commands install OpenVPN Access Server, which is a package that simplifies the setup and management of OpenVPN connections.

The next step is to configure the OpenVPN. For that, we open a browser and go to this direction:

*https://35.169.222.223:943/admin/*

This redirects us to this page and we log in with the default username and password obtained from the terminal:

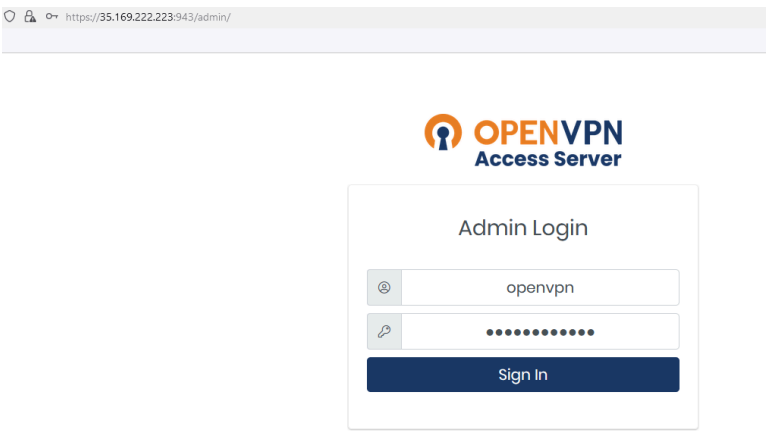


*Figure 17*

After the log in, we can access the OpenVPN web interface, so we navigate to Network Settings and change the hostname to the elastic IP as follows:


*Figure 18*

Then, we navigate to VPN Settings and add the subnets CIDR one per line:

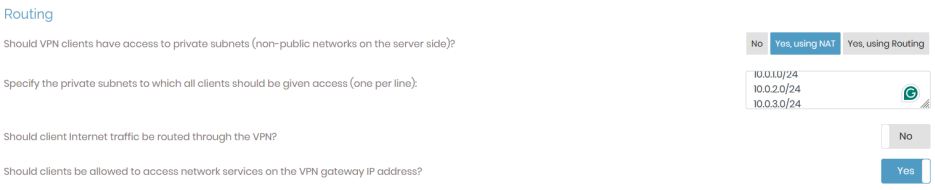


*Figure 19*

After configuring OpenVPN, we have to install the OpenVPN client. To achieve this, we open the browser and go to this direction:

*https://35.169.222.223:943*

We install the Yourself (user-locked) profile (*Figure 16*):

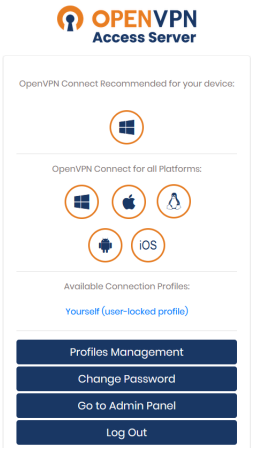


*Figure 20*

Now, if we provide the password obtained from the terminal, we are able to connect to the VPN (*Figure 17*). It will be necessary to be connected to the VPN in order to access the Jupyter server (port 8888 and port 22).

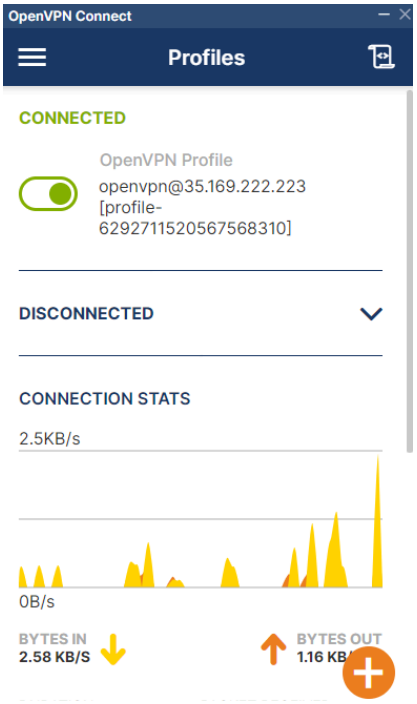


*Figure 21- VPN connected*

## 4. JUPYTER NOTEBOOK SETUP

First, we connect to the HOL02-Jupyter EC2 instance. Since the connection is over the VPN, we have to put the private IP address (*10.0.3.152)*:

*ssh -i aws01 ec2-user@10.0.3.152*

Afterwards, we create a new python environment and we automatically activate it with this command:

*echo "source jupyter-env/bin/activate" >> ~/.bashrc*

We create a directory for the notebooks and run the command to initialize jupyter:

```
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$ mkdir notebooks
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$ cd notebooks
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 notebooks]$ jupyter notebook --ip=0.0.0.0
```

Finally, we go to the browser and paste this direction to be redirected to jupyter:

http://10.0.3.152:8888/

Once in the provided address, we must paste the token prompted in the terminal to access:

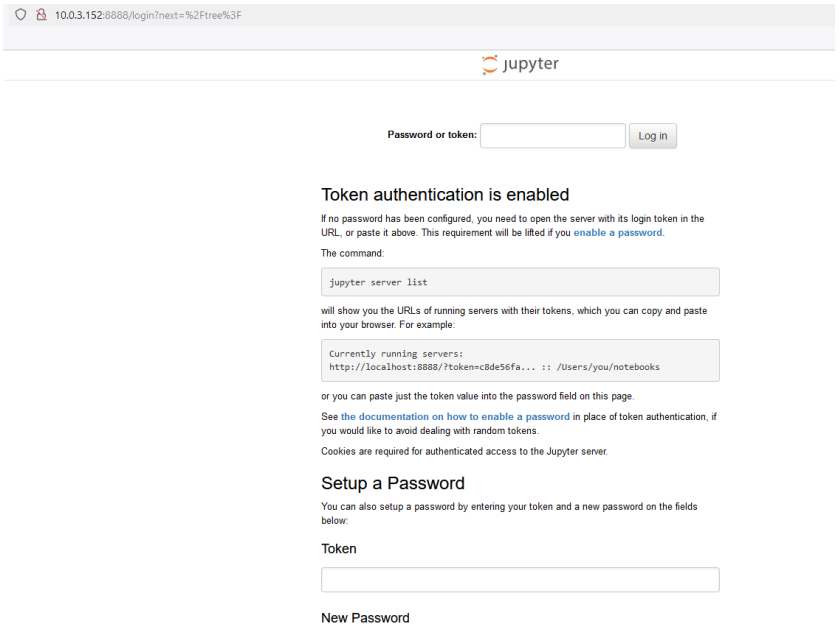


*Figure 22*

For convenience, we can run this command to to run Jupyter Notebook in the background and do not be asked for the token each time:

*nohup jupyter notebook --ip=0.0.0.0 --notebook-dir=/home/ec2-user/notebooks --no-browser > /home/ec2-user/notebooks/jupyter.log 2>&1 &*

We create a sample Jupyter Notebook named “hol02-app.ipynb”.

It has been decided to use the file data.csv, which contains genomic data. This dataset is in an s3 bucket named hpdc-ihona. We download the dataset from the bucket by doing the following commands:

2. Import necessary libraries

```
[12]: import boto3
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import seaborn as sns
import pandas as pd
from botocore import UNSIGNED
from botocore.client import Config
```

3. Import data from s3 bucket

```
[13]: session = boto3.Session()
s3 = boto3.client('s3',
region_name='us-east-1')
s3.download_file('hpdc-ihona','data.csv', 'data.csv')
df = pd.read_csv('data.csv')
```

4. Basic statistical analysis

```
[4]: df.head()
```

[4]:

| | ID | Chromosome | Position | Reference_Allele | Alternate_Allele | Genotype | Quality | Depth |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 100001 | A | T | AA | 30 | 50 |
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 150002 | C | G | CC | 28 | 45 |
| 2 | 3 | 2 | 500003 | G | A | GG | 35 | 60 |
| 3 | 4 | 2 | 750004 | T | C | TT | 32 | 55 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 300005 | A | G | AG | 25 | 40 |

```
[7]: df.shape
```

```
[7]: (10, 8)
```

*Figure 23*

After doing the analysis of the data (which contains some basic statistical analysis and visualizations), we can synchronize the jupyter notebook we just created with the s3 bucket created in the 2.5 section. We can do this either manually or with a tool named cron.

a) To do it manually, we have to run this command:

*aws s3 sync /home/ec2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude "*.ipynb_checkpoints*"*

Where /home/ec2-user/notebooks/, is the path where the notebook is stored, and hol02-notebooks-ihona the bucket we want to save the jupyter notebook in:

```
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 notebooks]$ aws s3 sync /home/ec2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude "*.ipynb_checkpoints*"
upload: ./data.csv to s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona/data.csv
upload: ./hol02-app.ipynb.ipynb to s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona/hol02-app.ipynb.ipynb
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 notebooks]$
```

We can check the bucket to ensure that everything has worked out fine:

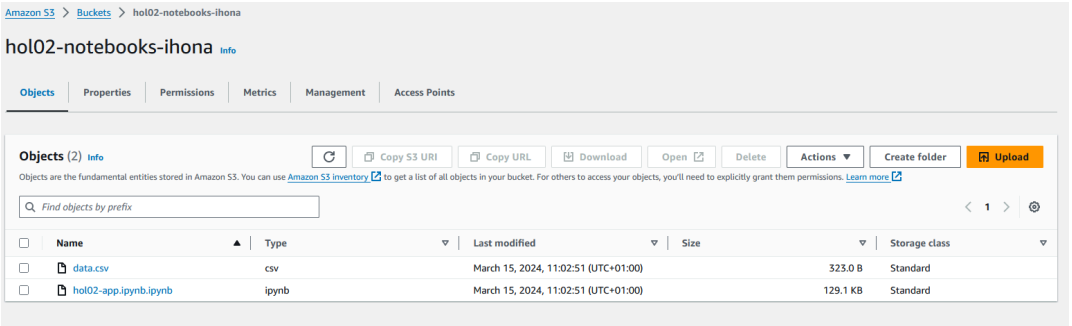


*Figure 24*

b) Cron jobs are a powerful tool for scheduling tasks automatically at specific times. In order to do the synchronization with cron, first we have to install it using this command:

*sudo yum install cronie -y*

Then we start the cron service:

*sudo systemctl start crond*

And enable Cron Service to Start on Boot:

*sudo systemctl enable crond*

Then we execute this command:

*echo -e "0 0 * * 0 sudo yum update -y\n0 3 * * * /usr/bin/aws s3 sync /home/ec2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude \"*.ipynb_checkpoints*\"" | crontab -*

The first cron job *0 0 * * 0 sudo yum update -y* is scheduled to run at 00:00 (midnight) on Sunday (day 0 of the week). This job will update the system's packages automatically using yum.
The second cron job *0 3 * * * /usr/bin/aws s3 sync /home/ec2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude "*.ipynb_checkpoints*"* is scheduled to run at 03:00 every day. It synchronizes the Jupyter notebooks from the specified directory (/home/ec2-user/notebooks) to the S3 bucket (hol02-notebooks-ihona), excluding any Jupyter checkpoint files.

We can verify the job scheduling with the command *crontab -l*

```
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$ echo -e "0 0 * * 0 sudo yum update -y\n0 3 * * * /usr/bin/aws s3 sync /home
2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude \"*.ipynb_checkpoints*\"" | crontab -
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$ crontab -l
0 0 * * 0 sudo yum update -y
0 3 * * * /usr/bin/aws s3 sync /home/ec2-user/notebooks s3://hol02-notebooks-ihona --exclude "*.ipynb_checkpoints*"
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$
```

This command lists all cron jobs for the current user. The output confirmed that both jobs are correctly scheduled.

# 5. VOILA SERVER CONFIGURATION

Voila turns Jupyter notebooks into standalone web applications, where the content of the Notebook's is displayed, with the option to hide the code. This is very useful for sharing data visualizations, reports, or interactive dashboards derived from Jupyter notebooks.

Nginx, on the other hand, is a high-performance web server software. In a real case, it could be used as the web server that hosts the Voila web application, making it accessible from the internet.
However, in order to simplify the activity, we will assume that the default page of nginx is the Voila server.

First of all, to configure the server, we connect through SSH to the EC2 instance named HOL02-VoilaServer, also accessible via its private IP.

Then, we use the following commands to install Nginx on the EC2 instance:

*sudo dnf install nginx*
*sudo systemctl start nginx*
*sudo systemctl enable nginx*

```
Installed:
  generic-logos-httpd-18.0.0-12.amzn2023.0.3.noarch          gperftools-libs-2.9.1-1.amzn2023.0.3.x86_64
  libunwind-1.4.0-5.amzn2023.0.2.x86_64                      nginx-1:1.24.0-1.amzn2023.0.2.x86_64
  nginx-core-1:1.24.0-1.amzn2023.0.2.x86_64                  nginx-filesystem-1:1.24.0-1.amzn2023.0.2.noarch
  nginx-mimetypes-2.1.49-3.amzn2023.0.3.noarch

Complete!
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-2-96 ~]$ sudo systemctl start nginx
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-2-96 ~]$ sudo systemctl enable nginx
Created symlink /etc/systemd/system/multi-user.target.wants/nginx.service → /usr/lib/systemd/system/nginx.service.
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-2-96 ~]$
```

We can check that we can access the Voila Server from the internet by going to the browser and using the public IP address of the HOL02-VoilaServer EC2 instance:

*http://3.81.250.52*

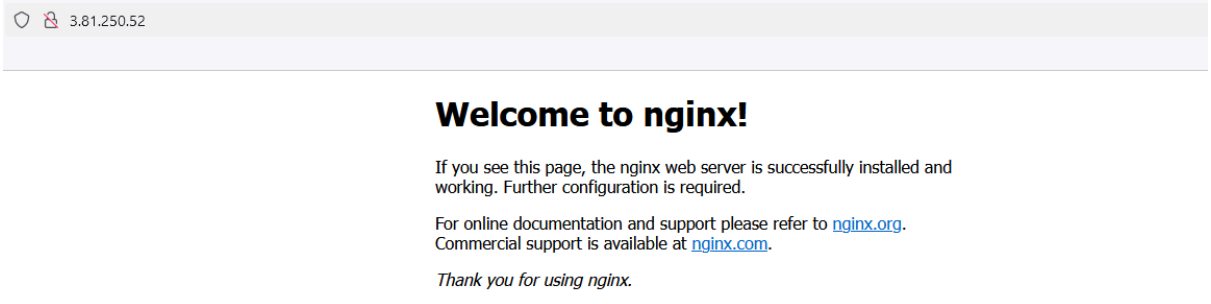


*Figure 25*

# 6. CHALLENGES AND TROUBLESHOOTING

During this assignment, we had to face several challenges and perform some troubleshooting to overcome them.

The first issue was regarding the connection to the HOL02-VPN EC2 instance. When trying to connect, we would get a time out message:

```
PS C:\Users\Ihona\AWS_Master> ssh -i aws01 ubuntu@35.169.222.223
ssh: connect to host 35.169.222.223 port 22: Connection timed out
```

To troubleshoot the problem, we had a look at the HOL02-DMZ subnet configuration and the correspondent route tables. We realized that the EC2 instance had an elastic IP attached but its route table was not linking to an internet gateway. If the subnet where the instance resides is not public or is not associated with a route table that has a route to the internet, the instance is not able to communicate to the internet or allow SSH access.

Therefore, we solved the issue by adding a new route with 0.0.0.0/0 as the destination and the Internet Gateway as the target.

Also, at the beginning, we were not able to connect to the VPN via OpenVPN client. The reason was that the connection was not taking the elastic IP so there was a connection time out. This issue was solved by downloading the user-locked profile.

Moreover, after connecting to HOL02-Jupyter EC2 instance, and creating and activating a virtual environment, we could not create a jupyter notebook. There was an error because we had not installed jupyer:

```
(jupyter-env) [ec2-user@ip-10-0-3-152 ~]$ jupyter notebook --ip=0.0.0.0
-bash: jupyter: command not found
```

However, we were not able to install jupyter because the HOL02-Research subnet, where the Jupyter instance is located, was effectively acting as a private subnet and did not have a direct route to the Internet Gateway. Therefore, the instance could not reach the internet directly to install packages. After doing some research, we found that to enable instances in private subnets access the internet (for software installation, updates, etc.) without being directly exposed to the internet, a **NAT Gateway** was used. This gateway is placed in a subnet that has access to the internet and allows outbound internet access for instances in private subnets.

We decided to create a NAT Gateway in the HOL02-Production subnet (*Figure 22*). Then, the route table for HOL02-Research subnet was updated to route outbound internet traffic (0.0.0.0/0) through this NAT Gateway (*Figure 23*).

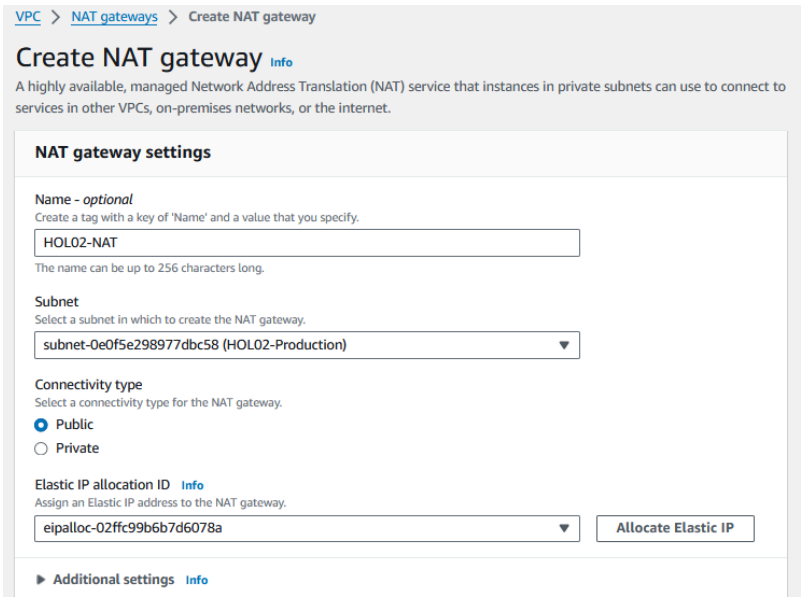


*Figure 26*

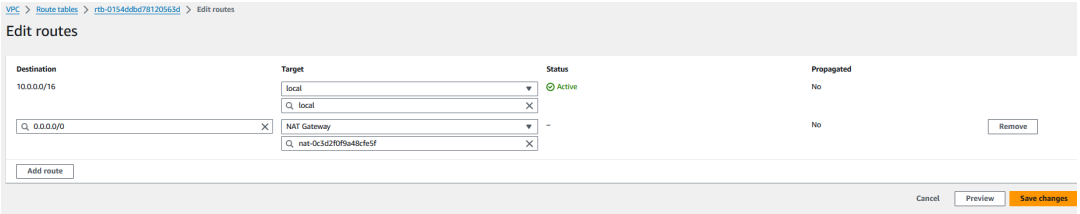


*Figure 27*

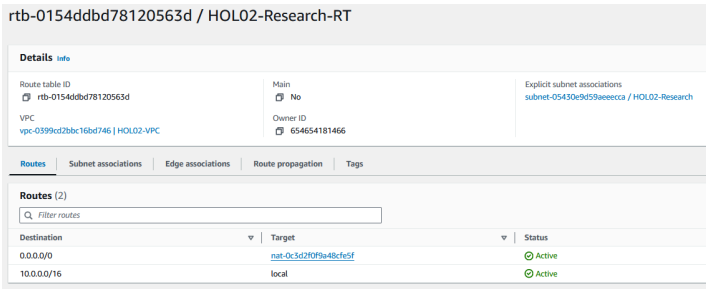


*Figure 28*

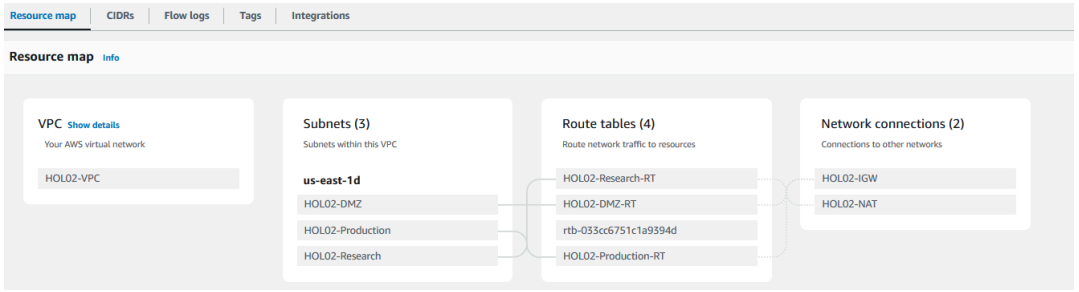


*Figure 29.- Network configuration.*

After doing these network configurations, we were able to successfully install jupyter in the research instance while maintaining a secure environment.

Lastly, there was an issue regarding the jupyter notebook used for the assignment. At first, it was thought that the notebook would get the data.csv file from the bucket hpdc-ihona. However, this made that for every time we wanted to run the notebook, we had to grant access to the virtual machine to access the bucket through the commands *aws configure* and *aws_session_token.* This was not very effective so it was decided to put the data directly in the bucket (hol02-notebooks-ihona) where the notebook is saved. To read the file, we only need to execute: *df = pd.read_csv('data.csv').*

# 7. CONCLUSIONS

During this laboratory session, the requested infrastructure (VPC, subnets, route tables, security groups, EC2 instances and s3 buckets) was successfully set up.
The OpenVPN was also successfully configured and was necessary in order to connect to the VoilaServer instance via SSH and the Jupyter instance. Moreover, a Jupyter notebook was set up in a safe environment only accessible through the VPN and also synchronized with the s3 bucket, both manually and through cron jobs.

On the other hand, the Volia Server was properly configured and the default Nginx page is accessible from the internet via the public IP, enabling the “production team” to share results with the public in a safe way.
Throughout the report, screenshots providing evidence, tests and troubleshooting have been provided.

In conclusion, AWS services were used to provide a solution and built an hybrid infrastructure for researchersin the cloud. This practical session has been very useful to learn new concepts regarding cloud computing with AWS and has undoubtedly improved my solvem-problem abilities.