

Final Version, 20th November 2007

The EuroVO-DCA Board and Project Coordination Team (PCT) held a common meeting on October 4 & 5, 2007, with the following main objectives:

- Assessment of Cycle 1 activity;
- Preparation of the revised Project Plan for Cycle 2 (D3);
- Preparation of the first periodic report to EU (D15);
- Discussion of the data centres census information collection and collation.

Meeting attendees were the partners' Board members and PCT representatives.

A list of actions to be taken (Annex 1) has been issued and is attached to this document.

PARTICIPANTS LIST

Board members:

CNRS	Françoise GENOVA (Project Coordinator and CNRS PCT member)
CNRS	Mark ALLEN (IST Chair)
ESA	Martin KESSLER represented by Christophe ARVISET
ESO	Paolo PADOVANI
INAF	Fabio PASIAN
INTA	Enrique SOLANO
MPG	Wolfgang VOGES represented by Gerard LEMSON
NOVA	Edwin VALENTIJN
LU	Mike WATSON represented by Jonathan TEDDS

PCT members:

CNRS	Mathias DEPRETZ (Project Manager)
ESA	Christophe ARVISET
ESO	Andreas WICENEC
INAF	Giuliano TAFFONI
INTA	Raul GUTIERREZ
MPG	Gerard LEMSON
NOVA	Andrey BELIKOV
LU	Anita RICHARDS represented by Jonathan TEDDS

The agenda proposed by the Project Coordinator and Manager was approved by the Board and the PCT as follows:

- 1 - For Each WP and sub-WP: presentation of WP progress during Cycle 1 and revised project plan for Cycle 2 by the WP or sub-WP lead, including relevant activities from all partners
- 2 - Wrap up on the updated project plan
- 3 - Coordination between EuroVO-DCA and EuroVO-AIDA
- 4 - Discussion about the census of data centres
- 5 - Self-evaluation Matrix and Risk Register update
- 6 - Amendment to the Consortium Agreement
- 7 - Any other business

1 - Presentation of Work Packages progress during Cycle 1 and revised project plan for Cycle 2

Françoise GENOVA launched the meeting with an overview of the meeting objectives. Then each WP lead presented their activities during Cycle 1 and their updated program for Cycle 2.

These presentations are not reproduced in full in these minutes since the information is permanently available on: <http://cds.u-strasbg.fr/twikiDCA/bin/view/EuroVODCA/PCT2>.

WP1 - Management

Concerning the project monitoring, an action is still pending: the creation of the Board, PCT, IST and TEG mailing lists. The Project Manager (PM), Mathias DEPRETZ, will contact Strasbourg Observatory system manager to create these mailing lists (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A1).

The amendment to the Consortium Agreement has been agreed by all partners after verification by their legal departments. The discussion about how to adopt the new version of the Consortium agreement is summarized in section 6 (Amendment to the Consortium Agreement) of these minutes.

The PM presented the milestones reached during Cycle 1 and reports delivered (all in due time) since the beginning of the project. In particular, D6 - First EuroVO-DCA Workshop (initial date: August 2007 – Actual date: June 2007) was to be delivered to EC before 15th October 2007¹. Next reports scheduled until the end of Cycle 1 are D3 – Revised Project plan (October 2007), and D15 - First Periodic Report (October 2007), which includes in particular an activity report and a management report.

The PM presented the content of the periodic activity and management reports and the input needed from all partners. The PM will send detailed e-mails to Board members and

¹ D6 report delivered on time to EC.

WP leads in the next days with instructions to manage the production of these reports in the most effective way (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A2.1). The Board and the PCT will provide the necessary information for the production of these reports (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A2.2 and (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A2.3).

Christophe ARVISET indicates that he will replace Martin Kessler as ESA's "authorized contact person / Team leader". An action is taken by ESA and CNRS to prepare the paperwork necessary for an official notification to EC (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A3).

Concerning financial and administrative matters, it is reminded that DCA partners will provide their list of expenses for the First Periodic Report (D15 - October 2007), including hiring of personnel and travel expenses. A financial audit is also scheduled for the end of Cycle 1 (October 2007). As indicated during the first Board meeting, Board members will contact their administrative authorities, to identify the information needed by their local audit authorities for the deliverance of these certificates (BOARD1-WP1-A12). Useful information is available at:

<http://cds.u-strasbg.fr/twikiDCA/bin/view/EuroVODCA/ReportingGuidelines>.

Finally, the DCA external presence has been assured through participation to meetings and events, and through the project website and TWiki. The project external presence has also been assured by providing input for several EC produced brochures, including the "e-Infrastructures: success stories" brochure which reflects 25 success stories of the Sixth Framework Programme (FP6). The PM still has to provide a "communication package" (brochure, poster, elements for talks) for communication about the DCA project (PCT1-WP1-A4.4).

WP1 activities for Cycle 2 will continue as agreed in the Preliminary Project Plan, since no major change is planned.

WP2 - Definition of European DCA strategy

Concerning the project monitoring, one of WP2 objectives, the milestones since the beginning of the project have been reached. Françoise GENOVA reminds that the revised Project Plan (D3) is planned for the end of October 2007, so as the "Draft strategic document for medium term development of the EuroVO-DCA". The content of this latter document is discussed. Main keywords are transition to operations and sustainability, with several levels, national projects, the European level and IVOA. Also "important" data archives have to be identified since their inclusion in the VO framework is of fundamental importance for the VO success (see below in WP2-2 and WP3).

The Astronet ERA-NET is consolidating a global European strategy for Astronomy. The "Science Vision for European astronomy" document was released in September 2007. The press release mentions the VO and data archiving. The medium term Infrastructure Roadmap is being discussed, and Virtual Observatory is tackled by Panel D "Theory, computing facilities, and networks, Virtual Observatory", co-chaired by Paolo PADOVANI. A very detailed questionnaire was sent to the European astronomy communities and a majority of projects is ready to be VO compliant. The next deadline is the submission of the "VO activity report in Europe" to Panel D by October 13th. The first draft of the Infrastructure Roadmap is foreseen for spring 2008. A symposium will be held in Liverpool on 16-18 June 2008 to gather input and feedback.

The medium term strategic plan also has to address concertation with other disciplines, e.g. with planetary sciences and in particular the Europlanet Coordination Action. The adequate level (organisations, European, IVOA) for the interactions between communities has to be defined.

WP2-2 - Oversee the scientific aspects of the project (IST)

As the additional "Astronomical Spectroscopy and Virtual Observatory" Workshop has been a success, the IST is eager to organize another similar Workshop.

The IST also participated in the WP3 "EURO-VO Workshop on how to publish data in the VO". The IST would like to participate still more actively in the organisation of the next major Workshop organized by WP3 in June 2008.

The IST will participate in the common WP4 and WP5 "Theory and Grid Workshop" (more information about this common Workshop is available in WP4 and WP5 sections below).

Mark ALLEN, proposes to set priorities (Target archives) with the aim to help more specifically these data centres to make their services accessible through the VO. At present, the preliminary Census of European data centres and the Euro-VO SAC list of "essential data centres" are a starting point. The SAC list is available at: http://www.euro-vo.org/internal/Fc/SacMeeting01/sac_1.pdf. Mark ALLEN has checked that most archives identified in the SAC list appear in the VO registry, but upgrades may be needed. The partners will identify projects important for their national communities to be added to the EuroVO-SAC list (BOARD/PCT-WP2-A1).

The EuroVO-DCA project, with the cooperation of national partners, might organise a focused WP3 Workshop, restricted to key data centres. The idea would be also to advertise more the already VO compliant archives, to produce incentive to become VO compliant. An alternative is to include this aim in the major Workshops and to identify contact persons at the Target archives to ensure the proper level of participation. The role of national projects towards their data centres is also underlined.

WP3 - Support to take-up and implementation of the VO framework

Participants to the "EURO-VO Workshop on how to publish data in the VO" presented their immediate feedback at the end of the Workshop. The presentations are available at: <http://esavo.esac.esa.int/EuroVOWorkshopJune2007/SpeakersMonday.html>. The scope and possible improvements for the next Workshop are discussed.

From now on, here are the main conclusions of the Workshop:

- Spanish and French participants (2 communities used to organise such Workshops) were the most represented. This enhances the importance of the action of the national partners and raises the interest for regional/local Workshops. The discussion concludes that organizing local Workshops is the responsibility of the national projects, rather than the one of Euro-VO, for countries which are Euro-VO members;
- The participation came more from small projects than from large projects;
- Single astronomers can also be interested to publish their data in the VO;
- The Workshop was a very good forum for discussions, as expected.

The comparison between the Workshop participants (the list of participants is available at: <http://esavo.esac.esa.int/EuroVOWorkshopJune2007/jsp/participant.jsp>), the preliminary census of data centres and the list of target archives will be useful to improve the participation of large projects to the next major Workshop (see also action BOARD/PCT-WP2-A2 above). The partners will take a look at the cross-match between the Workshop participants and the Census and check participants (BOARD/PCT-WP3-A1).

In view of the next WP3 Workshop, they will also gather requirements from their national communities (BOARD/PCT-WP3-A2).

The on-site support to data centres is going more slowly in WP3, since a priority has been put on the Workshop for which there is a high demand. Money is still available for this kind of visits and more may be organised as follow-up of the Workshops. A webpage about WP3 technical visits, to be filled by all partners, still has to be created (PCT1-WP3-A1.4). On the other hand, these actions are very successful in WP6 and they may be better suited for initiating contacts with new communities.

It is also noted that the technical Euro-VO pages on software should be updated as reference for data centre managers (BOARD/PCT-WP3-A3).

WP3-2 Technical feedback

WP3-2 presented the technical feedback gathered from the feedback questionnaire on the "EURO-VO Workshop on how to publish data in the VO". Nearly half of the participants filled the questionnaire, which is an excellent response rate. The overall feedback is very positive. Here are some points raised in the feedback and in the discussion (among many others):

- Astronomers wanted to have a better idea of the VO and the Workshop fulfilled their need.
- Sessions on software installation and data ingestion should be included in the programme of the next Workshop and the outline programme made available early.
- Security problems are not in the astronomy data centres minds for the moment. The EuroVO-DCA project can advertise this issue, but cannot manage it. However, this question can be included in the DCA strategy, as the aim is the long-term sustainability and there will be problems for everybody if a single element of the system is not secure enough. A plan for "security certificates" has to be defined, requested by WP4 and WP5 which are more aware of security aspects.

Jonathan TEDDS also presented possible priorities for Cycle 2. More technical feedback is to be expected now that all the basic IVOA standards are in Recommendation form. The organisation of a "mini Workshop" to go deeper on technical aspects, with a few participants of the June 2007 Workshop who indicated an interest, is proposed. This could be called a "Coup de pousse" (i.e. hedge in the right direction) Workshop. It is objected that on-site visits might be more adapted. This point is discussed in more details in section 7 (AOB) below.

WP4 - Theory in VObs

WP4 and WP5 propose to postpone their Workshops, initially scheduled for January 2008, to April 2008. The two main reasons are that, for WP5 EGEE3 will hopefully be launched at the beginning of year 2008, and that WP4 needs the results of the Census questionnaire to invite people. It is decided to hold the Workshop on 8-11 April 2008. CNRS, MPG and INAF will check availability respectively in Paris, Munich and Trieste for the common WP4 and WP5 Workshop (BOARD/PCT-WP4-A1). WP4 will organise a TEG Teleconference to discuss the WP4-WP5 Workshops. G. Taffoni will investigate the possibility to broadcast these two Workshops.

The draft document "Framework for inclusion of theory data and services in the VObs" will be delayed to December 2007, in order to include the information gathered in the Theory census questionnaire.

An additional focused Workshop will be organised to discuss the SNAP protocol, as proposed during the IVOA Theory Interest Group meeting in Cambridge. Partners are allowed to fund travel to this meeting, on their EuroVO-DCA funds.

WP5 - Coordination with computational grid projects

WP5 lead has produced a Census of the main national and local GRID initiatives, available on: <http://cds.u-strasbg.fr/twikiDCA/bin/view/EuroVODCA/WP5Grid>. Giuliano TAFFONI will indicate the date of the last update on the document. At present, the coordination with OGF, EGEE, DGRID (Germany) and regional Grid initiatives (in Spain) has started.

Coordination with EGEE is on track with the creation of the DCA Virtual Organization, the coordination with NA4/NA3 and participation to EGEE User Forum 2007. Contacts have been developed during the OGF meeting in Manchester (May 7 - 11, 2007) to participate in EGEE JRA1.

The next important step will hopefully be the launch of EGEE III at the beginning of year 2008 in which the astronomy community is fully supported (this is one of the reasons to postpone the WP5 Workshop to April 2008). WP5 will inform DCA partners of the results of the first meeting (BOARD/PCT-WP5-A1).

WP5 also works with VO-TECH DS3, the IVOA, DCA WP3 and WP4, the OGF, AstroWise and AstroGrid. For WP4, WP5 will provide input on BaSTI, as the GRID usage for theory has to be developed in the WP4 white paper.

The next important milestone for WP5 is the "EuroVO Computational Grid Workshop" (D12). The participants will be people interested in using or knowing about the GRID. Giuliano TAFFONI will provide information about the Workshop aims and content to the partners (BOARD/PCT-WP5-A2) and each partner will advertise the Workshop to its national community to identify the potential participants (BOARD/PCT-WP5-A3).

WP3 indicates that an ESAC-GRID Workshop is organised on 29-30 November 2007 in Villafranca.

WP6 indicates that Portugal is also interested to participate in WP5 activities.

WP6 - Support to data centres from other European countries

The preliminary census of the astronomy data centres in other European countries, updated on a regular basis by WP6, is available at: <http://cds.u-strasbg.fr/twikiDCA/bin/view/EuroVODCA/WP6Newcountries>.

At present, interested data centres are: the University of Lisbon (Portugal), the Konkoly Observatory (Hungary), the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Ondrejov Observatory (Czech Republic), and the Vatican Observatory. WP6 presentation on the Board-PCT meeting TWiki page: <http://cds.u-strasbg.fr/twikiDCA/bin/view/EuroVODCA/PCT1> describes in more details the contact established with these data centres. Portugal has identified a VO coordinator and several laboratories are interested in the VO activities.

Other possible data centres have been identified: the Institute for Astronomy (Austria), and the University of Athens. These data centres may not join the DCA, in particular because they would need to engage financial resources that they do not have.

The main activities of WP6 during cycle 2 will be:

- Update of the objectives to be achieved at the end of the project.
- Development of already identified partnerships (Helsinki) and identification of possible new data centres (Lithuania).
- Presence in meetings with high participation of potential newcomers for advertisement.

EuroVO-DCA Info-days will be organised in 2008, possibly in Portugal, Hungary and Bulgaria.

2 - Wrap up on the updated project plan

The "lists of actions" from all Board and PCT meetings organized during Cycle 1 are reviewed. The actions which are still pending or will be on-going for the whole project duration are included in the list of actions from this Board-PCT meeting (Annex 1).

The project Manager will propose a draft of the revised project plan (D3) to the PCT members, which will provide their comments and complements. The deliverable is scheduled for the end of October 2007.

Françoise GENOVA reminds that the partners should engage funds for the project. Each partner will check if they expect to spend the money on time and inform the Project Coordinator (BOARD/PCT-WP2-A2).

3 - Coordination between EuroVO-DCA and EuroVO-AIDA

The EuroVO-AIDA project is in negotiation with EC. If the project is accepted, it will likely start on 1st February 2008. The plan for EuroVO-AIDA has been adapted taking into account that EuroVO-DCA and EuroVO-AIDA overlap during 11 months. To ensure the best coordination between EuroVO-DCA and EuroVO-AIDA, Françoise GENOVA, as the EuroVO-AIDA Project Coordinator, will make a proposal to the EuroVO-AIDA Board to invite EuroVO-DCA Board members who are not represented in the EuroVO-AIDA Board, to attend the EuroVO-AIDA kick-off meeting (BOARD/PCT-WP2-A3).

4 - Discussion about the census of data centres

The data centres Census questionnaire is discussed, taking in particular into account the comments received from several partners. The project Manager will update the census questionnaire and divide it into 5 questionnaires:

- Introduction and identification of the data centre (questionnaire #1) which is mandatory.
- Archive / Data Product (questionnaire #2).
- Services / Tools / Software Suite (questionnaire #3).
- Theory Archive (questionnaire #4).
- Theory Service (questionnaire #5).

The new version of the questionnaire will be available on October 15th (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A4.1) and partners will ask one of their national data centre to test it, provide comments and indicate the time needed to answer each questionnaire (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A4.2).

5 - Self-evaluation Matrix and risk register

The EuroVO-DCA Self-evaluation Matrix and the Risk Register have been reviewed by the Board and the PCT members and the updated versions are available as Annex 2 and Annex 3 respectively. Comments on the current situation have been added to the Risk Register.

6 - Amendment to the Consortium Agreement

The amendment to the **Consortium Agreement** (art. 9.2: *Intellectual Property Rights*) has been agreed by all partners after verification by their legal departments. MPG has signed the previous version of the Consortium Agreement.

ESA has asked to get a new version of the CA text. The coordinator will contact partners to inform them of the present situation and ask for their agreement on the next steps of the procedure (BOARD/PCT-WP1-A5).

7 - AOB

- *"Coup de pouce" Workshop*

The discussion gets back to WP3-2 proposal to organise a focused technical Workshop ("Coup de pouce"), as follow-up of the June 2007 Workshop, for a selected subset of participants. This kind of Workshop would be interesting to identify examples to be included in the programme of the next major Workshop and get feedback on the standards implementation. It could be a good complement to the major Workshops, but confusion is possible and re-allocation of funds might be needed to support travel. The open question is whether to provide customized technical help in the frame of a specific focussed Workshop or to organize technical visits. The IST is in favour of the organisation of the "Coup de pouce" Workshop, which may be helpful to identify science cases from specific projects to show to the June 2008 Workshop. Jonathan TEDDS will provide the list of potential participants to ESA, ESO and CNRS (BOARD/PCT-WP3-4.1). Several of them are French and Françoise GENOVA will investigate their interest for a specific focussed Workshop (BOARD/PCT-WP3-4.2).

- *e-Infrastructure Success Stories Brochure*

Comments are received from INAF on information to be provided for the e-Infrastructure Success Stories Brochure.