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**Draft Minutes of COST Action C21 Meeting
Urban Ontologies for an improved communication
in urban civil engineering projects
Geneva, 8 of November 2006**

Participants

Jacques Teller, Claudine Métral, Guri Krigsvoll, Stefan Trausan-Matu, Anne-Françoise Cutting Decelle, Giovanni Rabino, Kostas Karatzas, Gilles Falquet, Jaques Guyot, Chris Tweed, John Lee, Anssi Joutsiniemi, Chantal Berdier, Catherine Roussey, Sylvie Calabretto, Javier Nogueras Iso.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Report from the Scientific Officer and News from the COST Office

We are now in the Transport and Urban Development domain. The new management scheme (new grant system) is shortly presented on the basis of slides received from the scientific officer of the Action. The institution of the MC chair or vice-chair will be in charge of managing the action's budget.

Chantal Berdier will contact INSA de Lyon to check whether it is possible to take this in charge. Jacques Teller will contact Isabel Silva to get more information about the possibility to subcontract the management of the budget, to check whether an annual auditing of the accounts has to be integrated into the costs and to understand better how privacy rights will be transferred from COST to the grant holder (access to private information like bank account number).

Status of the Action

We did not receive requests for new signatories. Three new WG members are approved by the MC: Celson Lima for WG1, Jacques Guyot for WG2 and Eduardo Camacho Hübner for WG3. Gilles Falquet is nominated as the new Leader of WG2 in replacement of Paolo Ventura.

Year Budget status and planning

Jacques Teller confirms there is enough budget for WG3 in Torino (now in Politecnico di Milano, 6. December). All members of the WG3 will be invited to the meeting. The agenda of the meeting will be drafted by C Tweed and J Teller at the end of the meeting.

STSM status, applications



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A proposal of STSM of Kostas Kostas Karatzas to Edimburg (J. Lee) is approved by the MC. The objective of this STSM is to explore the domain of air quality and possible use of ontologies for communicating about air quality issues in cities. The idea is to make complex concepts (e.g. related to air quality) understandable by citizens through graphical presentations. This STSM will take place from the 23 to the 30 of April 2007.

Publications, annual report

We did not receive any comments from our first annual report. This annual report has to be updated for the 6th of December. Jacques Teller will circulate the existing report and ask all Action's member to update it with new publications and activities. WG Leaders are in charge of updating the description of WG work progress.

Web update

All conference presentations will be placed on the main Towntology web site. A link will be done from the web site to the INSA web site.

Time and place of next meeting

The meeting will be hosted by the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Miguel Angel Bernabé, ma.bernabe@upm.es). It will take place on the 14th and 15th of May in Madrid.



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ORGANISATION OF THE SECOND TOWNTOLGY CONFERENCE

Roundtable discussion about the Geneva workshop

The C21 members generally agreed that the number of participants was appropriate to in-depth discussions and that there was a good share between internal and external experts. The contributions of the different keynote speakers were highly valued as they provided important insights for future developments of the Action and a wider identification of possible applications of urban ontologies. Keynote speakers will be invited to submit a paper for inclusion in the workshop proceedings.

The workshop highlighted that there have been serious advances from the MoU, and how different approaches may be adopted for different types of use cases. The evolution of ontologies appeared as an important topic in different presentations, as was already expected in the MoU. References to object and process points of view may help to better address these issues. Another approach is to consider urban ontologies as temporary by nature (the “design it to throw it” approach).

A series of ontologies / classification schemes / thesauri were introduced during the two days workshop. It should now be a priority of this action to build a repository of “urban pre-ontologies”, to document them and make them accessible to the wider urban research community.

The final debate may have been better focused if introduced by summaries by rapporteurs. This will have to be taken into consideration for the next workshop. Also it was probably to soon to consider a possible proposal for FP7, although it was good to synthesise the main research topics of the future ICT programme.

From an organisation point of view, it was good to have a paper version of the articles during the presentation during the conference, and to leave some time to authors to revise their paper after presentation/discussions. Avoiding parallel sessions was regarded as a positive option by all participants.

The wiki pages for storing both papers and reviews is a good way to share knowledge about articles and have an access to possible remarks from reviewers. It should be kept open and accessible to COST members during the next months.

Finally it was generally agreed that next conference in Torino should focus on the application of ontologies and their possible use in the context of urban development. Reinforcing contacts with the urban research community should hence be the priority for the next months.



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Second COST C21 conference in Torino

The theme of the next conference will be focused on "Ontologies in Action".

Proposed dates: 12-14 Nov. or 19-21 Nov. 2007. Turin or Turin Politec. or Milan Politec

Title: "Ontologies for Urban Development"

Subtitle: "Conceptual models for urban practitioners"

Organisation committee: Giovanni Rabino, Chris Tweed, Jacques Teller, Guri Krigsvoll, Beniamino Murgante.

Future tasks

1) Repository of Ontologies

It is agreed that the group will develop a repository of ontologies in the months to come. A first list of "candidates" for this repository is established after the presentation made during the conference, with expected responsible.

- ISO 12006 [Guri]
- IFC / IFG [Guri]
- EUKN [Jacques]
- URBISOC [Javier]
- Risk management [Beniamino]
- City GML [Claudine]
- Urban systems [Mateo]
- Urbamet [Gilles/Jacques]
- English Heritage [Chris]

This list is expected to grow as the project develops obviously...

The notion of ontology is interpreted broadly, as it includes thesaurii and glossaries. We don't expect to introduce "perfect" examples here, as the intention is precisely to discuss merits and limitations of different approaches.

The following information will be collected for each of these ontologies: Formalisation (language) - proprietary or open source, Expressiveness (heavyweight, lightweight), Purpose, Author / Organisation, Support, Specificity, Main Challenge, Limitations, Languages, Public/Private, Alphanumeric, visual, Supports spatial descriptions (Includes geometrical or topological concepts), OWL version of the ontology.



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It is agreed that WG Leaders will complete this list and circulate a form for documenting each ontology. Ontologies will be translated in .two format and place on the wiki web site of the Action (private access).

Gilles Falquet will provide pointers to tools and technologies for alignment between ontologies.

2) Multilingual Ontologies

Gilles Falquet and Jaques Guyot will work on technologies for handling many languages in the same ontologies (interconnecting ontologies). Sylvie Calabretto will integrate the multi-lingual ontology developed by Calderón and Ventura in a multi-lingual software.

3) Use cases of Ontologies

The objective of this task is to develop case studies of end-users experience of using an ontology. As this work is no desk-based research, it requires a strong involvement from the members of WG3. Three main areas of interest are defined: problems people have with existing knowledge, methodologies used by researchers and what are the actual practices of the people who use the ontologies.

The following case studies are proposed by the group

- Scottish building (JL)
- Urban planning agency (JT)
- Life cycle costing as a process (GK)
- Urban renewal project in Bari (FR)
- Architectural organisation of information (CT)

Chris Tweed will circulate draft guidelines for conducting interviews and survey work in application fields. Everybody is invited to contribute to this draft and to propose alternative methodologies.

This work will serve as a basis for the next conference in Torino.

Project outputs

A lot of good presentations in PPT are now on the website. Authors are now encouraged to produce short reports on these subjects.



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