

Virtual Environment for Innovation Management Technologies (VERITE)

European Commission - DG ENTERPRISE

Kick-off meeting minutes

Date: 29-30 November 2001

Place: Thessaloniki, URENIO premises, Aristotle University farm

LIST of participants

URENIO Research unit	Nicos Komninos Dimitris Milossis Panagiotis Tsarchopoulos Sotiris Zigiariis
TEKES Technology Agency	Esa Lindqvist
LEIA Development Centre	Sergio Larreina Jose Manuel Nogales
Province of Mantova	Andrea Tosi
Region of Valle d' Aosta	Giorgio Broglio
PRO NOVUM Association	Norbert Buzas Daniel Ladanyi
FUNDECYT	Carolina Grau Consuelo Dominguez
Institute " Jozef Stefan"	Uros Stanic
Archimedes Foundation	Rene Tonisson
Nicosia Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Andreas Antoniadis
University of Thessaly	Yiannis Bakouros
Regional authority of South West Oltenia	Anca Tuhai
University of Wales – CMI	Sophie Mavor
Tech Tirol Technology Centre	Peter Hotter
Region of Lorraine	Pierre Bourgogne
Ministerium für Wirtschaft und Mittelstand, Energie und Verkehr NRW	Michael Guth

Thursday 29th November

1. Welcome address

Nicos Komninos, the director of URENIO Research unit and co-ordinator of VERITE, welcomed the partners of VERITE in the meeting that took place in the URENIO premises, which is in the University Farm of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He asked the members to give their reaction to the following matters:

Whether VERITE will stay a closed network or work for the enlargement of the activities to the IRE network. He said that the co-ordinator of this network is aware of the VERITE activities and he expressed his interest to it.

2. Presentation of partners

The representatives of the VERITE members presented their organisations and activities and their perspective from this network.

3. VERITE: The contract

Dimitris Milossis (URENIO Research unit) analysed the activities of VERITE as described in the contract. He described the following:

- The activities – work packages of the project.
- Financial and management matters concerning the network.
- Specifications for the activities.
- The on-going evaluation included in the contract.
- The role of the co-ordinator and the role of the network members.
- The web site of VERITE (temporary URL: <http://www.urenio.org/verite>) that is under construction by URENIO.
- The classification of the VERITE budget.
- The expectation from the VERITE members.
- The expectations from the subcontractors.

Dimitris Milossis also clarified some practical co-ordination issues answering to questions of the participants.

4. Innovation and knowledge processes

Nicos Komninou (Urenio Research Unit director) presented the way VERITE is connected to the Innovation and knowledge processes. In the beginning he presented a table, which expressed the Innovation process in EU countries in comparison to the average performance in Europe. He said that innovation as a policy appears both in multinational and in local business processes.

He presented in brief the INNOREGIO and ONLI projects because VERITE is a follow-up of these. He said that, VERITE is based into some fundamental knowledge development processes. These processes correspond into specific Innovation Management Technologies. These technologies concern: technology watch, technology transfer, new knowledge into products, industrial informatics and knowledge sharing. In the end of his presentation he gave an overview of the matters of discussion expected during the VERITE activities:

- The encouragement of innovative companies and innovative regions
- The state of the art about fundamental innovation processes
- The way IMTs act or could act as facilitators of knowledge creating processes
- The Innovation processes at a virtual level and the corresponding IMTs and
- The Geography of Innovation and the related processes in regional, national and EU level.

He stressed that the success in this discussion and exchange of experiences depends on high profile conferences and strong regional dissemination

He said that the high profile of the conferences will be based on the following:

- To organize the discussion on innovation processes, knowledge-creating companies and intelligent regions (conferences)

- To enlarge the discussion using virtual environments for IMT (portal of providers, discussion group, articles database)
- To organize the dissemination of IMTs at the regional level
- To promote joint projects on innovation processes and IMTs development and application

He proposed the promotion of the activities into one or more newsletters produced by URENIO. He also proposed the publishing of a collective book in the end of the project duration that will conclude the activities of VERITE and the perspectives of these activities in the future.

5. Workshops – Conferences

According to the contract, the work programme of VERITE includes 5 workshops – conferences with the following discussion subjects: (a) **IMTs** (organised by Province of Mantova), (b) **Benchmarking** (organised by STEINBEIS), (c) **Supply Chain Management** (organised by CMI UK S.A.), (d) **Material Requirement Planning (MRP)** (organised by LEIA) and (e) **Technology Clinics** (organised by TEKES).

Nicos Komninos (URENIO) proposed that it would be better to expand discussion in the conferences for the increase of interest in the local and international participants. He proposed the following:

- (a) Include in the conference about IMTs, the discussion about new product development as an outcome in the application of IMTs.
- (b) Include Economic Intelligence as a supplement in Benchmarking processes
- (c) Include Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and industrial informatics in the discussion about MRP, considering that these thematic areas practically complement each other.

As a result of this, the initial discussion about the workshops-conferences included:

- (a) the presentation of the organising institutions,
- (b) the way their expertise could facilitate the success of the meetings they will organise
- (c) the discussion subjects the propose to be included in the conferences.

There were representatives from 4 of the conference host institutions:

- **Andrea Tosi** (representing the Province of Mantova and Polytechnic School of Milan) presented some ideas about the workshop on New Product Development and IMTs
- **Esa Linqvist** (TEKES) presented some ideas about the workshop on Technology clinics
- **Jose Manuel Nogales** (LEIA) presented some ideas about Workshop on MRP/ ERP and industrial informatics by
- **Sophie Mavor** (CMI UK) presented some ideas about the workshop on Supply chain management by

- **Dimitris Milossis** (URENIO Research unit) presented some ideas about the planned workshop-conference about Benchmarking. This workshop will be hosted by STEINBEIS.

6. Software applications

The rest of the presentations concerned the software applications, which are included in the VERITE work programme and will facilitate exchange of experience between partners.

Panagiotis Tsarchopoulos (URENIO Research unit) presented some ideas about the architecture and the features of the “Web Portal of European IMT providers”. His presentation included overview of existing commercial and non-commercial portals and some proposed features of the VERITE portal. He proposed that the institutions included in the portal could be production companies (manufacturing, services etc.), research institutions (university labs, research institutes etc.) and funding institutions (e.g. public institutions, venture capitalists). The portal will present the profile of the companies as well as overview of the services provided, as long as these services are related to adoption of IMTs. The application will include a search process where classification will be made by region-country and by IMT.

The partners of VERITE, mainly stressed that the portal should include some new features comparing to existing portal so as to attract the audience and proposed that the VERITE partners have to consider possible ways of attracting funds for the existence and further development of the portal after the end of the project.

Gerti Mager and **Hendrick Obst (GIB)** presented some ideas about the design and the features of the discussion forum and the database GIB is about to implement.

The partners agreed that both applications should be developed as soon as possible and they could be a good means for communication between partners during the preparation of the forthcoming activities.

There was a wide discussion about the scope of the applications and the way these applications will give something different from other commercial and non-commercial portals and databases. The main idea is to consider additional features comparing to portals-directories and have concrete aims for the software applications.

The opinions expressed in the meeting proved that the aim of the software applications should be targeted to the facilitation of “Management of Innovation” in the participating regions and not to produce just one more portal directory of institutions.

Considering that the database will be technical anyway, the presentation of the companies included in the portal will be based on the services companies provide and the relation of these services to Innovation Management Techniques. The outcome of this will be to facilitate application of IMTs into the partner and other regions. The specifications of these will be defined in the technical meeting in Berlin.

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7. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

Nicos Komninos (Urenio Research Unit) presented some ideas about the operational plan of VERITE. The work program consists of 5 components: (a) the workshops, (b) the software applications, (c) the dissemination plans, (d) the on-going evaluation process and (e) the management of the project.

a) Workshops-conferences: The aim of the thematic conferences will be the following:

- Inform about the state-of-the-art for the IMT under discussion.
- Review of relevant literature.
- Presentation and discussion about offline and Online applications (existing or under development)

The conferences will last 2 days and the number of participants is estimated to be approximately 90 people: 20 participants from the VERITE members, 10 external speakers, 30 participants from local authorities and innovation organisations and approx. 30 people from the IRE network. It is estimated that the participants will follow approx. 20 presentations (10 per day). From the conference duration 1,5 day will include the open discussion and 0,5 day will be closed to the Steering Committee of VERITE so as to discuss the added value of the current conference to the network as well as discuss the current progress of VERITE. This last was decided during the kick-off because the work program and the budget do not cover separate Steering Committee meetings.

The structure and the details of each conference will be defined with the following procedure:

- Circulation of a position paper or a proposal of thematic structure
- Input from VERITE partners
- Finalisation of thematic structure

Each host institution has to disseminate the conference with a press announcement and the dissemination of a invitation to experts, companies executives from the area. They will also have to invite experts on the discussed subject in agreement with the co-ordinator of VERITE.

The deliverables from each conference are the presentations in electronic form as well as related articles and case studies. URENIO will distribute all the conferences material through the VERITE web site.

VERITE members agreed in the following initial timetable for the rest of VERITE activities:

Subject	organiser	place	date
Technical meeting for IT applications	GIB GmbH	Berlin	21-22/2/2002
Benchmarking	STEINBEIS	Stuttgart	6-7/6/2002
IMTs and Product development	Province of Mantova Polytechnic School of Milan	Mantova	September 2002

Supply Chain Management	CMI UK S.A.	Wales	December 2002
Technology Clinics, Technology transfer	TEKES	Helsinki	April 2003
MRP, ERP	LEIA	Bilbao	July 2003

b) *Software applications:* The applications of VERITE are the web portal for IMT providers, a database concerning Innovation Management and a discussion forum. The portal will be developed by URENIO Research unit. The database and the discussion forum will be developed by GIB GmbH following a subcontracting agreement with URENIO (the co-ordinator). GIB GmbH was represented by Gerti Mager and Hendrick Obst. The subcontracting agreement with GIB will be finalized soon.

According to the contract, all the software applications will be fully operational around May-June 2002, so as to be presented in the first conference (about Benchmarking).

c) *On going evaluation:* According to the contract, and external evaluator, Mr Alasdair Raid will produce two on-going evaluation reports in September 2002 and June 2003. Before the first report, VERITE members have to define the local awareness campaign for the activities of the network.

d) *Network Management:* URENIO presented the initial form of the VERITE web site with temporary URL: <http://www.urenio.org/verite/> . The site will soon work in <http://www.e-innovation.org> . The current form of the site is:



This site will present all the activities of VERITE, the material (schedule, presentations, case studies etc.) of the conferences and information concerning the software applications of VERITE.

The other responsibilities of URENIO are:

- *Reporting:* Two progress reports (approx. in April 2002 and April 2003), the interim report (December 2002) and the final report (November 2003).

- *Management:* URENIO, being the single contractor of VERITE, will coordinate the execution of the contract. This activity includes, the supervision of the subcontractors, the collection of the dissemination activity reports.
- *Dissemination activities:* URENIO will produce 1-2 newsletters, which will describe the activities and the progress of VERITE. They will also produce a brochure, which will be sent to all partners for promotion and awareness purposes, and a collective book, which will include all the work during the project duration.

8. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTRACT OBLIGATIONS

Dimitris Milossis (Urenio) notified the VERITE members about some contractual matters:

- The membership agreements collection
- The specifications for the eligible costs
- The financial audit, which will be submitted after the end of the project duration.
- The definition of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee of VERITE is composed by the following member representatives.

No	VERITE member	Representative
1	URENIO Research unit	Dimitris Milossis
2	TEKES Technology Agency	Tapani Nummelin
3	LEIA Technology Centre	Cristina Murua Etxeberria
4	Province of Mantova	Andrea Tosi
5	Region of Valle d' Aosta	Giorgio Broglio
6	PRO NOVUM Innovation Association	Ditta Ladanyi
7	FUNDECYT	Carolina Grau
8	Institute Jozef Stefan	Uros Stanic
9	Archimedes Foundation	Rene Tunisson
10	Nicosia Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Andreas Antoniadis
11	University of Thessaly	Yiannis Bakouros
12	Region of South West Oltenia	Anca Tuhai
13	Agropolis	Mark Puygrenier
14	University of Wales – Cardiff	Meirion Thomas
15	Tech Tirol	Peter Hotter
16	Region of Lorraine	Pierre Bourgogne
17	ZENIT GmbH	Michael Guth

Considering that there are no any co-ordination meetings in the work programme of VERITE, the participants agreed that the Steering Committee of VERITE will meet in the conference places so as to estimate the progress of VERITE and give guidelines to the responsible institutions of the forthcoming activities.

9. Local awareness campaign and dissemination plan

Sotiris Zigiariis (Urenio) presented some ideas about the dissemination activities for VERITE. He presented some principles of a dissemination plan and activity and distributed a questionnaire the members have to fill so as to define a common based dissemination plan. This questionnaire will be filled by partners and the result will be part of the deliverable for WP11: Local Awareness Campaign, as defined in the contract.

The VERITE members decided that their next meeting will be in Berlin at 21-22 February 2002 discussing the software applications (web portal, discussion forum and database).