

## Availability of Reduction Software for HARPS Data at ESO Headquarters in Garching

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From the start of the year 2011 the HARPS data reduction software will be also available at ESO Headquarters in Garching. This new initiative will enable users to apply for access to the system locally in Garching.

The experience of the past few years of operations of HARPS has shown that sometimes the data reduced online at the La Silla Observatory might require further reprocessing and analysis. This is usually because the wrong set of initial parameters have been specified in the observing template (such as stellar spectral type or

initial guess for the radial velocity). In these cases the spectral extraction is not affected, but the precision and the accuracy of the radial velocity measurement are generally not optimal. Although these cases are not frequent, they do happen from time to time and require re-computation of the radial velocities. We aim to address such needs by allowing individual users to visit ESO Headquarters in Garching and give them access to the same data reduction software that is available at the La Silla Observatory site, both in its on- and off-line flavours.

Users wishing to take advantage of this service are encouraged to check the details at the web page<sup>1</sup>. The user should then contact ESO giving a brief scientific and technical rationale as to why reprocessing is required, together with the amount of data that needs to be reduced and the intended dates of travel to Garching. ESO, after checking availability, will make available desk space and will grant access from the user's laptop to the data reduction computer. Limited on-site user support will also be provided

(e.g., introduction to the data reduction system, etc.). Regrettably ESO will not be able to cover any expenses (travel, accommodation, etc.) for these "data reduction missions". The visitor will use her/his own laptop to run the data reduction software remotely via the standard GUIs. The raw data will then be transferred to the reduction machine, either from a laptop (i.e. via ftp) or from the archive ftp site after an archive request has been processed. Saving the reduced data is the responsibility of the user. Visitors are expected to spend at most five days on each data reduction mission, and the service will be available during normal office hours from Monday to Friday at ESO Headquarters in Garching.

Users wishing to employ this HARPS reduction service in Garching should send an email to [re-harps@eso.org](mailto:re-harps@eso.org).

### Links

<sup>1</sup> Details of the service at: [www.eso.org/sci/facilities/lasilla/instruments/harps/tools/reprocess.html](http://www.eso.org/sci/facilities/lasilla/instruments/harps/tools/reprocess.html)

## ESO Participation at the Joint European and National Astronomy Meeting in Lisbon, Portugal

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The Joint European and National Astronomy Meeting (JENAM) that took place in Lisbon, Portugal, during the week of 6–10 September 2010, was the 18th Annual Meeting of the European Astronomical Society (EAS) and the 20th Annual Portuguese Meeting of Astronomy and Astrophysics. JENAM brings European astronomers together to discuss frontline topics in astronomy, space science and instrumentation technology.

ESO was extensively involved in the meeting, highlighting its role as a driving force in ground-based astronomy at the European level, as well as globally. Several key ESO people participated in the meeting and there were also an ESO plenary and special session, an ESO exhibition with free educational and informational material and a book launch.

During the first day of the meeting, ESO participated in the special session on Astronomy Challenges for Engineers and Computer Scientists with talks by Bruno Leibundgut, Director for Science, on science projects at ESO and Andreas Kaufer, Director of La Silla Paranal Observatory, on ESO's infrastructures. Roberto

Tamai, Head of ESO's Technology Division, showcased the technology of the VLT/VLTI, while Roberto Gilmozzi, Head of ESO's Telescope Division, presented the principal technological features of the European Extremely Large Telescope (E-ELT); a project that incorporates many innovative developments. A presentation on control software and data reduction and analysis was delivered by Michèle Péron, Director of Engineering and Software Development.

On Tuesday, 7 September, there was a dedicated ESO plenary session. Bruno Leibundgut gave a comprehensive talk about recent developments at the La Silla Paranal Observatory, including plans for

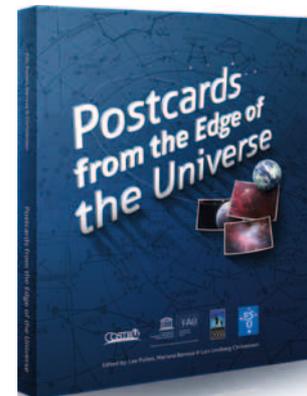


Figure 1. The ESO stand at JENAM in Lisbon, Portugal shown during the launch of the book *Postcards from the Edge of the Universe*. Catherine Cesarsky, former ESO Director General and past President of the IAU, is shown discussing the book.

the E-ELT. He was followed by the leader of the ESO Survey Team, Magda Arnaboldi, who presented the status of the Public Surveys that have recently begun with VISTA.

A special session on ALMA Early Science took place on the same day. The session included presentations on the current status of the construction project, the ALMA development plan and its opportunities, and the European ALMA Regional Centre plans for user support in preparation for Early Science. The session also included a demonstration of the ALMA software that will be used to apply for observing time on ALMA, to prepare observations, interact with the ALMA archive and reduce the data.

ESO also participated in the session dedicated to Education and Outreach after IYA2009 in Europe. Pedro Russo, Global Coordinator for the International Year of Astronomy 2009, talked about his experience in spearheading this project.

During the five days of the conference, ESO exhibited its astronomical discoveries, and the telescopes that made these discoveries possible. The E-ELT project attracted the interest of many passers-by who admired the telescope model and went on to learn more about

the instrument that will be the world's biggest eye on the sky.

In order to encourage interaction between participants and foster debates on topics related to astronomy in a more relaxed environment, ESO ran the ESO Hour at its stand on three days of the meeting. The event proved to be successful, gathering numerous participants from the meeting who engaged in conversation with people from the organisation.

One of the highlights at the ESO stand was the launch of the book *Postcards from the Edge of the Universe*. This book is based on the science carried out by a hand-picked selection of the best bloggers from the Cosmic Diary<sup>1</sup>, one of the 12 Cornerstone projects of the International Year of Astronomy 2009. Twenty-four astronomers from all corners of the globe explain their science in articles edited by Lee Pullen, Mariana Barrosa and Lars Lindberg Christensen.

Announced several days in advance and kept as a surprise, the book launch took place on Tuesday, when several of the authors and editors talked about the book (see Figure 1). A special talk was given by a guest of honour — the former ESO Director General Catherine

Cesarsky. A book signing session took place and free postcards signed “Greetings from the Edge of the Universe” were distributed to people, who were encouraged to post them to their family and friends. More information on obtaining PDF copies of the book, or information on how to order a hard copy or send electronic postcards, are available<sup>2</sup>.

Among other highlights of the meeting included the inauguration of the EAS Lodewijk Woltjer Lecture award talks with Woltjer himself giving the first talk. Under his leadership as Director General, ESO signed the VLT contract and established itself as one of the world's leading astronomical institutes. Lodewijk Woltjer also made significant contributions to theoretical astrophysics from his fundamental work on the Crab Nebula and his studies on the energy source of radio galaxies and quasars. Another highlight of the JENAM meeting was the award of the EAS Tycho Brahe Prize for 2010 to telescope designer Ray Wilson (see the article on p. 41).

#### Links

<sup>1</sup> Cosmic Diary: <http://www.cosmicdiary.org>

<sup>2</sup> *Postcards from the Edge of the Universe*: <http://www.postcardsfromuniverse.org>