

# DEMO-net

The eParticipation Network

Year: 2007, Period Covered: Jan 07-Jun 07

## DEMO-NET NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the second newsletter of DEMO-net Network of Excellence! This issue is dedicated to presenting 3 partner organisations of the DEMO-net Consortium, some results of the research conducted so far and finally several key events. Further information on the DEMO-net project can be found on the last page.

### DEMO-net Results so far

The ongoing survey conducted by DEMO-net indicates that there is lack of research in supporting interaction and comprehension and in content management which are crucial in supporting stakeholders of eParticipation in their understanding of the subject. The survey also indicates a lack of research on technology assessment and impact assessment, as technological systems as well as political and cultural outcomes are critical issues for studying eParticipation.

However, in Europe, several academic fields and disciplines are involved in eParticipation research, such as Political Science, Political Sociology, Communication Science, Public Policy Analysis, Social Informatics and Information Management. Thus, the eParticipation field is less represented in Cultural Studies, Political Communications, Participatory Design, Social Shaping of Technology, Knowledge Management, Environmental Management, Innovation Studies, Computational Linguistics, Knowledge and Software Engineering and Information Extraction.

In addition, DEMO-net has conducted research on state of the art in eParticipation, other relevant disciplines, key researchers and socio-technical research issues in order to identify existing approaches to socio-technical research as well as approaches that may widen understanding of the nature of eParticipation. In this regard, an extensive picture about the state of the art of socio-technical research in eParticipation has been developed. Many gaps and challenges have been identified in methods to evaluate the impact of eParticipation activities on communities, societies and democracy, in empirical studies of the role technology in shaping democratic practices, etc.

Furthermore, DEMO-net has performed an extensive analysis of the potential of new and emerging technologies for eParticipation. eParticipation services are delivered via a great variety of channels, such as PCs, digital TV and mobile phones. Collaborative environments, Argumentation Support Systems, Ontologies, Semantic Web Services, Knowledge management and Devices and Mobile Technologies represent a few of the schemes that apply the potential of technology to eParticipation.



## Upcoming DEMO-net Events

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> DEMO-net PhD colloquium

The 2007 DEMO-net PhD student colloquium will take place on September 2-3 in conjunction with EGOV'07. Contributions will be peer-reviewed and discussed by students and senior researchers in the eParticipation field. Certain tutorials will also take place on eParticipation aspects. Åke Grönlund from Örebro University, Maria Wimmer from the University of Koblenz-Landau and Kim Andersen from Copenhagen Business School will be chairing the event.

## Other Interesting Upcoming Events

Sixth International EGOV Conference 2007- Regensburg, Germany, 3-7 Sept.

Workshop on eParticipation in Converging European Regions as part of EGOV'07, Regensburg, 6 Sept.

Third EGOV PhD student colloquium as part of EGOV'07 -Regensburg, 2-3 Sept

European eGovernment Awards 2007-Lisbon, 20-21 September

## DEMO-net Dissemination activities

Several workshops were organized by DEMO-net partners in conferences and events, namely:

- The Scandinavian Workshop on eGovernment - Örebro, Sweden, February 2007
- DEMO-net session on eParticipation - EISCO conference-Finland, April 2007
- Turning Barriers and Challenges into Successful Implementation and Use panel - BLED conference, Bled, June 2007
- eGovernment Round Table, eGovernment Work Group - Brussels European Regional Information Society Association, March 2007
- eDemocracy Panel Discussion "Are we Moving Towards a More Participatory Representative Democracy"?, 5th international conference Eastern European eGov Days- Prague, April 2007
- eGovernment Policy Seminar, eGovernment Work Group of European Regional Information Society Association and IANIS+ regions - Brussels, May 2007
- eGovernment workshop, IANIS+ conference of European Regional Information Society Association regions- Bilbao, June 2007
- Workshop on "International Research Workshop on Analysing eParticipation Contributions" - DG.O 2007, Philadelphia, May 2007
- DEMO-net working group on addressing the Democratic Deficit - DG.O 2007, Philadelphia, May 2007
- Research Workshop on Argumentation support systems for eParticipation - DEMO-net project organisation - Fraunhofer, Berlin, March 2007

In parallel, DEMO-net has seen many publications in scientific papers, conferences and journals. Most of the publications are included in proceedings of eChallenges 2007, the 40th Hawaiian International Conference on Systems Sciences (HICSS-40), the 8th International Conference on Digital Government Research, the EGOS 2007 colloquium, Eastern European eGov Days 2007, as well as journals such as European Review of Political Technologies.



## DEMO-net past events

### DEMO-net PhD tutorial



On February the 7<sup>th</sup>, the DEMO-net PhD tutorial took place in Örebro, Sweden in conjunction with the Scandinavian Workshop in eGovernance, 5-6 February 2007. The workshop is the premier forum for researchers and practitioners involved with eGovernment development. The tutorial objective consisted of introducing the notion of eParticipation to PhD students by researchers of the Consortium. More information is available at the following address: <http://www.electronicgovernment.se/sweg.asp>

### DEMO-net Young Researcher Survey Workshop

This event took place at June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 at Aalborg, Denmark for interested DEMO-net researchers on survey research in the eParticipation field. The workshop aimed at developing a common structure for collection of introductory and demographic data, establishing survey objectives contingent to DEMO-net, evaluating theories and methodologies and discussing several eParticipation variables. Data repositories and other instruments also constituted a main theme.

### DEMO-net Workshop on Argumentation Support Systems for eParticipation

This DEMO-net workshop was organised on March the 5<sup>th</sup> 2007 at Fraunhofer FOCUS in Berlin. The aim of this activity was to bring together researchers in the field of argumentation support systems and exchange ideas about eParticipation requirements, as well as potential application scenarios of argumentation support systems. At the end of the workshop, several fields for further research were identified.

## Profiles Of DEMO-net Partner Organisations

**North Denmark Region:** The North Denmark Region is one of five Danish regional authorities and has a population of around 577.000 divided between 11 municipalities. The North Denmark Region is responsible for running and developing the regional hospitals, running highly specialised social and educational institutions and creating the best possible framework for regional development. The regional authority employs 13.600 people of which the large majority is employed in the health service (approximately 70%) and approximately 5% are working within administration. To cover its areas of responsibility, the North Denmark Region has a total budget of €1.250 million.

The North Denmark Region as a regional authority is an important player in the efforts towards securing the future growth and development of the region, and one of the main tasks in this effort is the creation of an action plan for regional development which will become the overall strategy for the North Denmark area. The work is carried out in cooperation with the other public organisations, the private business sector and the different knowledge institutions from across the North Denmark region which will help ensure that the regional development plan is representative of the region as a whole.

This type of public private partnership is often used in the North Denmark region when introducing change and no example is better than the Digital North Denmark ICT programme focusing among other things on eGovernment and eDemocracy. Examples of results are pilot projects concerned with empowering and engaging local communities in democratic processes by using various ICT tools including the Internet.

From the Digital North Denmark emerged a project on secure debate and voting on the Internet which was carried out in cooperation with a local it company and the Danish Ministry for Science, Technology and Development. The aim of this project was to develop a voting system which would combine debate with opinion polls using digital



signature. The vision was to strengthen democracy by inviting the political process into the living room of the voters.

This resulted in the first digital concept in Denmark which supports a live and interactive democracy. In the summer of 2007 the system is being launched on the number one public website ([www.borger.dk](http://www.borger.dk)) which is the entry point to all public information and services in Denmark. The system will be made available to all public institutions who are interested in incorporating it on their website.

More information about the Digital North Denmark is available at <http://www.detdigitalenordjylland.dk/en/welcome.htm>

**Copenhagen Business School:** Copenhagen Business School is one of the largest business schools in Europe with more than 15,000 students enrolled. The school offers several undergraduate and graduate programs, and several doctoral programs.

The eParticipation group at CBS is affiliated with the Department of Informatics and is approaching eParticipation from a multi-disciplinary perspective, embracing theories and methods from the fields of information-systems research, business administration, computer science, organization studies, political science, business economics, sociology, psychology, and educational theory and practice.



The department's involvement in eParticipation is anchored in two research groups:

The IT Systems Development and Distributed Systems group deals with analysis, design, construction, and implementation of IT based systems. The Scandinavian approach to system development emphasizes end user involvement as an integrating part of the development of applications. EParticipation is from this perspective a question of how to develop applications that are better aligned with end users' needs.

The Management and Organization of IT group focuses primarily on management and strategy aspects of eParticipation addressing questions as how to balance the costs of eParticipation with other IT projects in government, the impacts of eParticipation on the decision-making processes, and how organizations can improve interaction between policy makers, the executive body of administration, and citizens through organization-wide eParticipation technologies ?

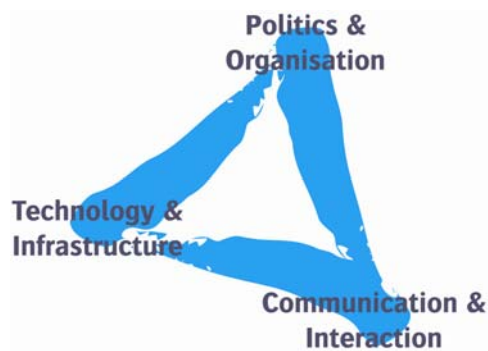
The eParticipation group at CBS includes Associate Professor Jacob Nørbjerg, Professor Karl Heinz Kautz, Associate Professor Helle Zinner Henriksen, Professor Mogens Kuhn Pedersen, Ph.D. student Christine Secher, & Professor Kim Viborg Andersen

More information about the CBS groups can be found at <http://www.cbs.dk/inf>

**Aalborg University:** Aalborg University is situated in the North Jutland region of Denmark, and is known for its project-based education, action based research style, and well-developed cooperation with local government and industry. The university is involved in the flagship development programmes in the region (such as the North Denmark Lighthouse project). Its Centre for Electronic Governance comprises nine active researchers with varying interests in eGovernment and eParticipation. It works closely with local, regional, and national government and particularly with North Jutland Region (who administer the Demo-net project). In the field of eDemocracy, the centre was responsible for the research work in the Hals local democracy project. We recently published a book on electronic governance (in English), and one on digital democracy (in Danish).

Aalborg University approaches eParticipation through three central perspectives which reflect the composition of the cross-disciplinary Centre for Digital Governance (<http://www.egov.aau.dk/>). The three perspectives are:





technologies).

Aalborg University has been largely responsible for developing Demo-net's research exchange programme, which has developed a number of interactive web-based services at the networks web-site, and funded over 70 visits to the networks workshops and research collaborations, as well as some longer research visits. It also developed the network's eParticipation article database and citation analysis, as well as running the European Workshop on e-participation in Venice.

- 1) politics and organisation (reflecting both the democratic dimension of digital governance and its location in government organisations with particular characteristics and ways of working).
- 2) communication and interaction (focusing on the roles of computer-mediated discourse, socio-technical interaction and technology-facilitated work in governance), and
- 3) technology and infrastructure (concentrating on emerging internet-based and mobile technologies enabling governance, and the physical and conceptual infrastructures that underpin these

## Suggested Reading

1. Kanstrup, Anne Marie, Nyvang Tom and E. Sørensen (eds) (2007). Perspectives on e-Government: Technology & Infrastructure, Politics & Organisation, Interaction & Communication Aalborg University. Available at: [http://www.forlag.aau.dk/index.php?id=10&tx\\_ttproducts\\_pi1\[backPID\]=2&tx\\_ttproducts\\_pi1\[product\]=365](http://www.forlag.aau.dk/index.php?id=10&tx_ttproducts_pi1[backPID]=2&tx_ttproducts_pi1[product]=365)
2. Andersen, K. V., & Henriksen, H. Z. (2007). Transfer of e-Participation Management: Budget Restrictions and Preferences. In R. Traunmüller (Ed.), Knowledge Transfer for eGovernment - Seeking Better eGovernment Solutions (pp. 133-144). Linz: Trauner Verlag.
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4. Coleman, S. (2007). E-Democracy: the History and Future of an Idea. In D. Quah, R. Silverstone, R. Mansell & C. Avgerou (Eds.), The Oxford Handbook of Information and Communication Technologies: Oxford University Press
5. Gordon, T. F., & Walton, D. (2007). Visualizing Carneades Argument Graphs. . Law, Probability and Risk.
6. Granberg, M. (2007, 17th April 2007). E-participation survey methods and substance. Paper presented at the eParticipation Survey Researcher Meeting (Demo-Net), University of Helsinki.
7. Grönlund, Å., Åström, J., & Hedström, K. (2007 12th March 2007). Understanding eParticipation Challenges from a Governance Perspective. Paper presented at the European Research Workshop on eParticipation Public Policy and Implications of eParticipation on Decision Making, Bergamo.
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12. Torpe, L. (2007). Local political deliberations on the Net. In A. M. Kanstrup, T. Nyvang & E. M. Sørensen (Eds.), *Three perspectives on e-government: technology & infrastructure, politics & organization, communication & interaction: electronic book*.
13. Winkler, R. (2007). E-participation in comparison and contrast: Online debates at the EU's platform 'Your Voice in Europe'. Paper presented at the ICEG 2007.
14. Åström, J., & Granberg, M. (2007, 12th March 2007). Interpretations of e-participation: focusing elite attitudes. Paper presented at the Workshop on E-Participation Policies, Demo Net, Bergamo University, Italy.

## DEMO-net Consortium

Austrian Academy of Sciences	Austria
European Projects and Management Agency (EPMA)	Czech Republic
Aalborg University	Denmark
Copenhagen Business School	Denmark
County of North Jutland – Digital North Denmark	Denmark
University of Helsinki	Finland
Fondation National des Sciences Politiques	France
Fraunhofer Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e.V.	Germany
Institut für Informationsmanagement Bremen GmbH	Germany
University of Koblenz-Landau	Germany
Institute of Communication and Computer Systems - National Technical University of Athens	Greece
University of Macedonia	Greece
University of Iceland	Iceland
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche - Istituto di Linguistica Computazionale	Italy
University of Bergamo	Italy
Technical University of Košice	Slovakia
Örebro University	Sweden
Napier University	United Kingdom
University of Leeds	United Kingdom
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly	United Kingdom
University of Southern California	USA

## DEMO-net Fact Sheet

**Project Acronym:** DEMO-net

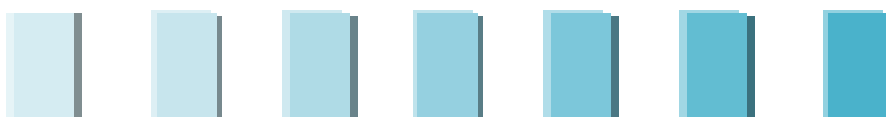
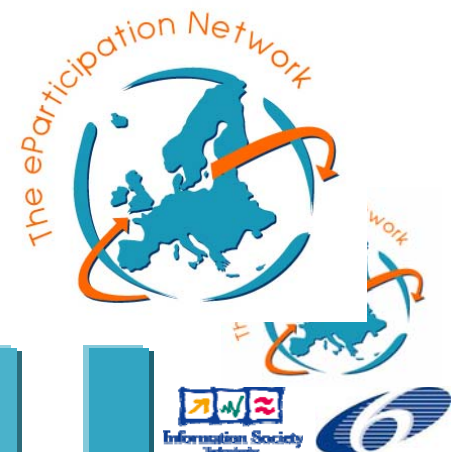
**Project Title:** The Democracy Network

**Contract Number:** FP6-2004-IST-4-027219

**Duration:** 4 years

**Budget:** 6.000.000 €

**EC Funding:** 6.000.000 €



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*Newsletter created by the University of Macedonia, Greece*



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