

## SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

**FP6-045003-WEB-DEP**

**Western Balkans Democratic Participation**



### D1.1: Project Presentation

Deliverable Form	
Project Reference No.	045003
Deliverable No.	D1.1
Relevant workpackage:	WP1: Project Management
Nature:	R (Report)
Dissemination Level:	PU
Document version:	V1 Final
Date:	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2007
Editor(s):	ATC
Document description:	This Deliverable provides information about the WEB-DEP Project Presentation, including the project objectives, its potential impact and the expected results.

## History

Version	Reason	Revised by
01	First Draft	Anna Triantafillou (ATC)
02	Editorial changes	Andreas Kalligeris (ATC)
03	Final Draft after peer review comments	Anna Triantafillou (ATC)

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary .....	4
1. Introduction .....	5
2. Project Presentation .....	6
3. Conclusions .....	8

## Executive Summary

The WEB-DEP Consortium has prepared and published a brief project presentation in English of two pages. This presentation has also been made available on the project web site.

The Project Presentation, being set out in this Deliverable, has been structured according to EC Guidelines. In that respect, it outlines the description of the project concept and provides an overview of the work that has been planned to be performed within the 24 months of the project's duration.

The Project Presentation also includes details concerning the challenge that the project is liable to deal with, the objectives to be met, the approach and the anticipated results.

# 1. Introduction

The consortium prepared and published a brief project presentation in English of two pages, structured according to EC guidelines. The presentation provides the following information:

- Project acronym
- Project full name
- Contract number
- Coordinator contact details
- Project logo
- List of participants (organisations' names, country)
- Total cost (€)
- Commission funding (€)
- Priority /Priority Component (e.g. Strategic Objective, etc.)
- The challenge that the project is liable to deal with
- Project main Objectives
- Project Approach
- Expected Results
- Links for provision of further information

The project presentation is available on the project web site and in the form of project brochures that will be produced. The presentation indicates clearly that the work takes place with the financial support of the European Community. Any updates on the content of the Project Presentation will be applied to its published version as soon as accepted by the Consortium, the Reviewers and the Project Officer.

The project web site presentation has been available and will be maintained and updated at least throughout the duration of the project.

The next section provides a version of the Presentation in Word formatting.

## 2. Project Presentation

### Western Balkans Democratic Participation

#### At a Glance

WEB-DEP 045003

#### Project Coordinator

ATC S.A.

Tel: +30 210 687 43 00

Fax: +30 210 685 55 64

<http://www.atc.gr>

Contact: Anna Triantafillou

Email: [a.triantafillou@atc.gr](mailto:a.triantafillou@atc.gr)

**Project website:** [www.web-dep.eu](http://www.web-dep.eu)

**Partners from:** Greece, United Kingdom, Albania, Serbia and FYROM

**Partners:** Athens Technology Center S.A., National Technical University of Athens, Journalist Union of Macedonia & Thrace Daily Newspapers, Athens News Agency, Albanian Telegraphic Agency, Napier University, Macedonia Information Agency, Telegraphic Agency of New Yugoslavia

**Duration:** Jan 2007 – Dec 2008

**Total Cost:** 845.437 €

**Commission funding:** 799.500 €

#### Programme:

Sixth Framework Programme (FP6)

**Strategic Objective:** 2.6.5 "International Cooperation" with main focus on "International cooperation for eGovernment & eParticipation targeting the western Balkans Region"

#### Project Logo:



#### The Challenge

The recent (post 1990) history of the western Balkans is deeply engraved by ferocious wars between the various nations that has created a deficit of co-operation and mutual understanding between different national, religious and social groups. Furthermore, the post WW2 history has left the region with a deep democratic deficit. However, the *long term* history of the region is probably one the finest examples of co-operation between nations in the overall European History.

In the light of the above background, in recent years, the countries of the Western Balkans have made considerable progress in stabilisation and reconciliation, internal reform and regional cooperation. *These developments show that the people and governments of the region are seeking a better future in the mainstream of European political and economic life.* The region has significantly moved forward in terms of achieving lasting macroeconomic stability and increasing its competitiveness but progress is uneven and much remains to be done. As progress is made on stabilisation and status issues are addressed, *the Western Balkan countries will increasingly focus on the reforms needed to approach European standards.* Hence, **the major challenge** in the region is *to establish co-operation and mutual understanding and to return in the larger European family, overcoming the forced separation from it.*

An important pre-requisite for promoting the above targets and for converging to the European standards and observing the European *acquis communautaire*, is to dramatically improve the concepts and infrastructure for information exchange and to strengthen the principles and practices of democracy and international co-operation.

In this context, a network of co-operation that exists and can be further developed and exploited in order to contribute to the democratic processes in the area is that of the local News Agencies in the region. Such network of co-operation will greatly enhance the present situation and can help address a number of challenges in terms of communication and public dialogue by overcoming present limits, such as:

- Information provided to the general public on current affairs concerning the overall region is hardly adequate;
- Communication within the Western Balkans is virtually non-existent
- The promotion of activities undertaken by Western Balkans countries is usually confined at a national level

Thus, the establishment of a Western Balkans Information point, built around the infrastructure of

the local News Agencies, aiming at meeting the need to bridge the democratic gap in this region by disseminating the information throughout the public sector, the establishment of translational co-operation in the Western Balkans Region as well as the immediate exchange of information, appears to be critical for the Western Balkan Countries.

### The project objectives

The **WEB-DEP** primary aim is to establish an important communication and information management network hosted by the National News Agencies of the Western Balkan countries. The project involves policy makers and stakeholders from Western Balkans such as relevant Governmental Organizations (Ministries), Public News Agencies and citizens into the e-Democracy processes, supported through a unified environment, under a set of specified procedures and a common code of ethics.

This will be achieved by reaching the following specific objectives:

- **Establishing the WEB-DEP Network:** Establish a complete communication network, comprising of the relevant ministries, the public news agencies and social bodies which will process and develop e-Democracy key issues
- **Establishing a 'single area' of communication:** Setting-up a single area of communication, for sharing visions and experiences, practices and activities between the governmental institutions and the shapers of public opinion from one country into the other
- **Bringing together the 'core players'** such as public news agencies, relevant governmental organisations as well as involve the citizens of the Western Balkans Countries
- **Increasing awareness**, by organising events & communication channels in order to strengthen and further explore the WEB-DEP network to a wider audience primarily in the Western Balkans and eventually in the EU25, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey by sharing experiences through the WEB-DEP forum and by creating liaisons with existing related initiatives
- **Enhancing co-operation** in the broader area of the Western Balkans in a view of facilitating gradual integration at a pan-European level.

### The Project Approach

The WEB-DEP project proposes a **cross-border approach** in order to establish an **important communication and information management for Western Balkans** hosted by collaborating National News Agencies. This will be technically achieved through the establishment of a common and interoperable repository, an open communication system monitored by the European Commission and its national delegations, which would allow any civil organization and/or citizen to submit complete proposals, plans or simple ideas for democratic

integration, social reconstruction, development, education and culture, health, emigration etc.

A key issue in this process will be the active involvement of the national journalistic communities and the interconnection of news agencies and journalist unions in European communication directions.

The role of journalists in the management, conveyance and flow of information will be of fundamental importance. Their contribution to disseminating the results of the social dialogue will mark the overall success of this endeavour. As such, the participation of news agencies and journalists' unions is predominant in this project: news agencies, as state-managed media, will serve as the backbone of news distribution, while journalists' unions, as independent bodies, will ensure that professional standards are upheld. Their bilateral cooperation will ensure the successful implementation of a modern observatory of the progress attained in the Western Balkans. By having complete and thorough access to news and information concerning each country, the EU bodies will be called upon to contribute in a unified and balanced manner to the democratic integration of this sensitive region.

### Expected Results

WEB-DEP has set itself the demanding target of contributing to the development of infrastructures and permanent bodies that will facilitate co-operation and mutual understanding in the western Balkans Region and to the convergence of the region to the rest of Europe in terms of democratic practices and adoption of the Equis Communautaire.

To this end, WEB-DEP will build on and expand the existing collaboration network of local News Agencies which will work together with Academic and Technology partners in order to produce a complete communication environment, in the form of a thematic portal, for handling large volumes of multimedia content. Thus, WEB-DEP will offer a complete and secure electronic environment for storage, management and delivery of public information. Through the successful deployment of the thematic portal, WEB-DEP will apply measures and deploy infrastructure for:

- Catering for the democratic deficit in the region
- Establishing means for edemocracy and co-operation and can assist in developing social cohesion in the region
- Establishing a paradigm for future development for e-collaboration that can improve the competitiveness of the Regional economies
- Establishing a paradigm for future development that can assist knowledge based development and co-operation among individuals, institutions and companies in the region

### Further Information

Website Home Page: [www.web-dep.eu](http://www.web-dep.eu)

### **3. Conclusions**

This Deliverable set out the WEB-DEP Project Presentation, including the challenges, the project objectives, the project approach and the expected results. This presentation will be used as initial dissemination material, until new publications that will reflect project developments will be developed in Year 2 of the project.