

## eParticipation

*Take part in  
decision making  
using IT Services*

## Forthcoming

### WEB.DEP Events

- **2<sup>nd</sup> week of April 2008**  
*Albania National Workshop*
- **2<sup>nd</sup> week of May 2008**  
*Serbia National Workshop*
- **1<sup>st</sup> week of June 2008**  
*Former Yugoslav Republic  
of Macedonia National  
Workshop*
- **1<sup>st</sup> week of December 2008**  
*WEB.DEP Conference in  
Greece*

## WEB.DEP at a glance

The WEB.DEP project offers a cross-border approach in order to establish an important communication and information management network for the Western Balkans hosted by collaborating National News Agencies. This will be achieved through the establishment of a common and interoperable repository, an open communication system monitored by the European Commission and its national delegations, which will 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 is the active involvement of the national journalistic communities and the interconnection of news agencies and journalist unions in European communication directions.

WEB.DEP's 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

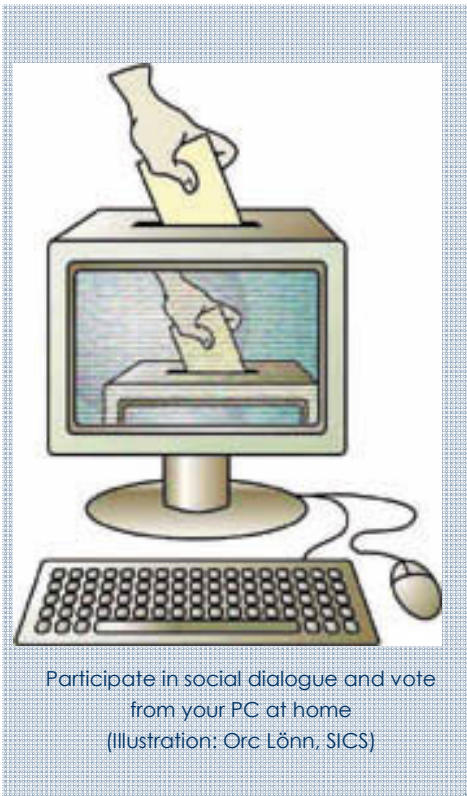
Agencies and citizens into the e-Democracy processes, supported through a unified environment, under a set of specified procedures and a common code of ethics. This will be achieved by reaching the following specific objectives:

- Establish a complete communication network, comprised of the relevant ministries, the public news agencies and social bodies which will process and develop e-Democracy key issues
- 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, governmental organisations as well as involve the citizens of the Western Balkans Countries
- Increasing awareness, by organizing events.
- Enhancing co-operation in the broader area of the Western Balkans with a view to facilitating gradual integration at a pan-European level.

*"It's not only about  
reading the news.  
It's about public  
dialogue for  
creating the news of  
the future!"*



News Agencies deliver the News and initiate public dialogue procedures.



## Presentation of the Project in eGOV07 Conference

The WEB-DEP Project was presented in the workshop "eParticipation in Converging European Regions" which was organized as an activity of the eGOV07 Conference in Regensburg. The eGOV07 Conference was organized by EGOV-Society and was a part of the DEXA 2007 Conference which took place between the 3rd and 7th of September 2007 in the town of Regensburg in Germany.

The workshop was organized by NTUA and NAPIER and targeted the hot issue of e-Participation in converging regions, like the Balkans.

The main ideas and project aims were presented and all the interesting issues about the barriers, possible solutions and future work of the project were analyzed. The audience was very interested in

the project and requested material for following up the project's progress, as eParticipation in converging regions is still an undiscovered scientific field.

### Electronic Participation Systems in the Western Balkans: WEB.DEP

Ella Taylor-Smith, International Teledemocracy Centre, Napier University  
and  
Sotirios Koussouris, National Technical University of Athens, eGovernment Research Unit



## An Inside Look at a WEB.DEP Portal

The WEB.DEP portal will consist of two major sub-systems:

- a **News Content Management subsystem**, managed by the journalists that will post news stories for the citizens to read, and,
- a **Communication Environment** in the format of **blogged discussions with integrated ePolls**, which will be initiated by the Journalists, based on articles that are derived from the active news and will be the focus of discussion for the citizens, specific domain experts and governmental representatives.

Discussion Themes will cover all aspects of the everyday life of the citizens such as:

- Art and Culture
- Economy & Business
- Education
- Environment
- Regional development
- Science & Technology
- Life style
- Human Rights
- Social Issues

Each WEB.DEP country will have its own portal, in their native language that will be managed by the journalists of the corresponding news agency (e.g. ATA, MIA, TANJUG). In parallel, an English speaking communication environment will also be available, for servicing common interest discussions and for facilitating the Diaspora users of the platform.



WEB-DEP enables the establishment of direct social dialogue between citizens, governmental organizations and other legal entities

## Western Balkans Democratic Participation

### Project Partners:

Athens Technology Center

National Technical University of Athens

Journalist Union of Macedonia & Thrace Daily Newspapers

Albanian Telegraphic Agency

International Teledemocracy Centre - Napier University

Macedonian Information Agency

Telegraphic Agency of New Yugoslavia

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### Web Site:

<http://www.web-dep.eu>



## E-Participation News

During December the International Journal of Electronic Governance (IJEG) has opened a call for papers on the special issue of "eParticipation Systems and Services in Converging Regions" which had a great number of contributions trying to offer solutions or explain the difficulties that lie in this domain. NTUA had an editorial position in this special issue and intends to bring the acquired knowledge of the submitted papers to the Project.

Moreover, NTUA has submitted a WEB.DEP related paper to the same journal

### 4 Forums will be available!

- **ATA Forum**
- **MIA Forum**
- **TANJUG Forum**
- **Central Forum (for English discussions)**

## Government Electronic Network in Albania – Phase II

GovNet is a project is jointly funded by the European Union and UNDP Albania and implemented by UNDP AL in close collaboration with the Council of Ministers as the key Government cooperating agency. This Project is the continuation of the first phase of GovNet. The specific objectives of the project are:

- the expansion of the network to include other governmental institutions
- the establishment of an Intranet system for the entire Government
- and the introduction of VoIP service to main Government institutions in addition to training of the IT staff from institutions that will be added to GovNet.

The expected results of the project are:

- 19 central government locations connected to high speed optic-fibre network of bandwidth of 100 Mbps
- 3,740 meters of Optic-Fibre
- Centrally-managed e-mail system set-up and implemented for the

- central government
- 1,129 employees of Central Government profiting from the Antivirus and Antispam protection of the new email system
- 20 IT mangers trained for operating and maintaining the network
- 72,767 USD spent in improving the IT infrastructure in line Ministries
- 4 studies for VoIP, Intranet/Internet services, Security Policy Document produced for the Government



ATC



NTUA



ESIEMTH



ATA



NAPIER - ITC



MIA



TANJUG