Evaluation framework to assess eParticipation projects in Europe

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Agenda

• Intro to MOMENTUM and project evaluation
• MOMENTUM evaluation method
• Results of evaluation
• Recommendations from first evaluation
• Concluding remarks
MOMENTUM aims to monitor the eParticipation projects funded under the eParticipation Preparatory Action of the European Commission (EC)

Overall, MOMENTUM

- Monitors, evaluates and consolidates projects’ results
- Collects feedback, best practices and lessons learnt from the projects
- Assesses the eParticipation projects’ overall impact
- Organises concertation meetings, workshops and demonstrations with the projects and with other stakeholders such as MEPs, EC representatives and other experts
- Supports in dissemination and disseminates results of the projects to wider audiences
Aims of eParticipation

Project Evaluation

• Evaluate eParticipation project results
• Assess potential impact of project results
• Investigate dialogue between stakeholders and the public over time and its outcomes to assess whether projects are
  – Reaching out widely
  – Reaching sustainable interest
• Receive feedback from stakeholders interested in eParticipation results
Projects evaluated in the first round

**Projects of 2006**

- DALOS: Drafting Legislation with Ontology-Based Support
  - [http://www.dalosproject.eu/](http://www.dalosproject.eu/)
- Legese: Easing Participation in Legislative Processes
  - [http://www.legese.org/](http://www.legese.org/)
- LEX-IS: Enabling Participation of the Youth in the Public Debate of Legislation among Parliaments, Citizens and Businesses in the European Union
  - [http://www.lex-is.eu/](http://www.lex-is.eu/)
- LexiPation: An advanced ICT Tool for enhancing Citizen's Participation in the Legislative Process
  - [http://www.lexipation.eu/](http://www.lexipation.eu/)
- SEAL: Smart Environment for Assisting Legislative Drafting
  - [http://www.onderzoekinformatie.nl/en](http://www.onderzoekinformatie.nl/en)
- TID+: Smart Environment for Assisting the drafting and debating of Legislation
  - [http://tidywork.pbwiki.com/](http://tidywork.pbwiki.com/)

**Projects of 2007**

- CitizenScape: eParticipation in Legislation Implementation
- Demos@work: Enable European-wide discussion between elected representatives and civil society
- eCommittee
- FEED: Federated eParticipation Systems for Cross-Societal Deliberation on Environmental and Energy Issues
- Ideal-EU: Integrating the Drivers of e-Participation at Regional Level in Europe
- VEP: The Virtual European Parliament
- VOICE: Giving European People a voice in EU-legislation
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eParticipation impact evaluation grounds

• Theoretical background and related work
  – Evaluation theories in general
  – E-government and e-participation project evaluation frameworks
  – Technology Acceptance Theories
  – Diffusion of innovation
• Benchmarking, measurement indicators, and related cases of project evaluation
  – Most single issue evaluations focus on tools, neglecting processes, outputs and impacts
  – Comparative studies facilitate the identification of relevant benchmark and measurement indicators
Evaluation Methodology

Platforms of eParticipation projects

- Tools / Technologies deployed
  - Usability
  - Appropriateness
    - Appeal
    - Attractiveness
  - Interest, Perceived Importance
  - Policies supported

Processes supported

Topics discussed

Policies supported

Target groups

- Reaching the target group
- Achieving sustainable interest

Impact

Evaluation approach

- (external)
  - End-user Questionnaire
  - Expert Questionnaire
  - Peer review
  - Evaluation project reports

- (internal)
  - Self-assessment Questionnaire
  - SWOT-analysis

Point of departure

- Assets to be assessed

Evaluation criteria

- Main target of evaluation: impact towards target groups

Target goal

Approach:

- How to perform the evaluation?

What to evaluate?

How to evaluate?

Instruments of evaluation

Dr. Maria A. Wimmer
Different assets

• **Tools and Technology:**
  ICT deployed and used for participation

• **Processes supported:**
  different stages within the legislation process

• **Topic tackled:**
  different topics addressed in the legislation process

• **Policies supported:**
  strategic directions and policies addressed in the project
# Coding Projects’ Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description of the different levels of impact</th>
<th>Degree of impact achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>The platform could neither attract sustainable interest nor reach the target group</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The platform could not attract sustainable interest but it reached the target group</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The target group could be reached and the platform could attract sustainable interest of the target group</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Two-sided data collection approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal assessment</th>
<th>External assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-assessment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured questionnaire</td>
<td>End user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts in the field</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-structured SWOT-analysis</td>
<td>Peer review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>Structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation reports</td>
<td>Unstructured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation tools:
Examples

Example 1: self-assessment questionnaire

Example 2: expert evaluation form
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Results of analysis:
Level of impact

Awareness raised by the 2006 and 2007 projects - number of people contacted per project
Results of analysis: Level of impact

People reached per project - Percentage of participants effectively contributing in relation to the people contacted
Results of analysis:
Level of impact

People reached per project - % of people effectively contributing in relation to the people reached
Results of analysis: Tools and technologies

From expert evaluation vs self-assessment: Does ICT comply with the WCAG 2.0 standards?

**Self-assessment**
- 4 projects (WCAG-A)
- 3 projects (WCAG-AA)
- 1 project (WCAG-AAA)

**Expert evaluation**
- 11 projects (ICT deployed does not comply with the WCAG 2.0)
- 2 projects (No indications)
Results of analysis: Processes supported

From self-assessment:
How would you judge the impact users have in the process?

1 project
2 projects
4 projects
5 projects

- strong
- medium
- low
- no
- not applicable
Results of analysis:

Topic(s) discussed

From expert evaluation:
Assess whether users like or dislike the topic(s) under discussion at the platform?

- Users fully like the topic(s): 5 projects
- Users rather like the topic(s): 3 projects
- Users rather dislike the topic(s): 2 projects
- Users fully dislike the topic(s): 3 projects
- Not applicable: 6 projects
Results of analysis: Policies supported

From expert evaluation:
Would you recommend any specific policy (or policies) to which the project should direct its efforts?

- Transportation, environment, security, welfare, and migration policies
- Anti-smoking
- Innovative models, laws and regulations for SME energy producers
- The revision of the Lisbon strategy
- Accessibility in order to ensure inclusive eParticipation
- Harmonization of legal systems within EU

- Yes: 6 projects
- No: 7 projects
- Not applicable: 0 projects
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First recommendations

• Sustainable motivation builds capacity and active citizenship
• Involvement and responsiveness of elected representatives
• Full-time, active moderation
• Maintenance to ensure dynamic web sites
• Having strong partners
• Personal contact
First recommendations

• Improve usability through user-centric and participatory design
• Accessibility
• Language barrier: diversity of languages
• The choice of the right topic
• The right combination of topics, processes and technologies
• Fun factor in participation
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Conclusions and Outlook

• eParticipation projects impact evaluation is methodological difficult, as
  – the trial projects start at different times and
  – last too short in time to allow for judgments on impact after the operating system has been established

• Debates concerning the earliest point in time to start making assessments of consequences
Conclusions and Outlook

• “Impact" implies change over time => iterative approach

• Next round of eParticipation projects evaluation in a few months
  – Preparations ongoing
  – Evaluations will cover projects of 2007 and 2008
Thanks a lot for your attention!!!

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