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Abstract

This is the project Evaluation Criteria & Pilot Trials Monitoring Plan, providing evaluation of the CitizenScape Pilot service in 4 varied Legislative Authority contexts, countries and languages to measure how the CitizenScape service contributes to the Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Legislative Engagement in the 4 Regions, by a 25% increase in citizen participation in local legislative & democratic activities & interactions by the end of the 12 month Pilot Trials period.

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Executive Summary

This report is the CitizenScape project Evaluation Criteria & Pilot Trials Monitoring Plan, providing evaluation of the CitizenScape Pilot service in 4 varied Legislative Authority contexts, countries and languages to assess the legislative participation impact of CitizenScape and its relationship to wider aspects of e-governance, to establish the varying contextual issues that need to be addressed in implementing CitizenScape in different legislative, constitutional, political and linguistic environments. This will be a key input to the CitizenScape Viability Plan (D2.3.2).

This plan will also measure how the CitizenScape service contributes to the Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Legislative Engagement in the 4 Regions, by a 25% increase in citizen participation in local legislative & democratic activities & interactions by the end of the 12 month Pilot Trials period.

This CitizenScape evaluation plan looks at the full scope of the CitizenScape project and examines each of the following areas:

- Evaluation of the project against all stated objectives and business plan assumptions
- Evaluation of the system usage by the public and its democratic impacts
- Cost benefit analysis from the point of view of the actors involved
- Review of the CitizenScape methodology
- Technical evaluation of platform performance
- SWOT analysis for wider deployment

For each of those criteria, the scope of work is defined and actors are identified.

1. Introduction

Social networking is one of the greatest areas of internet usage and CitizenScape seeks to exploit and harness this within a democratic context.

Web 2.0 is a term which loosely groups together social networking technologies and websites. It represents a shift from websites which have a broadcast emphasis and moves towards far more collaborative spaces and content. In a local democracy context this shift should be seen as a chance to move from a position where the formal democratic bodies own the discussion to one where they are instead a leading participant in democratic debate with many other stakeholders also taking an active part. This change must however take place within the context of the existing democratic structures and must be used to enhance democracy and not create a parallel debate.

CitizenScape is a 2 year eParticipation Programme Trial Project that will integrate and test state-of-the-art Web 2.0 social networking ICT-based tools and solutions in a socially purposeful way in concrete legislative and decision-making processes - specifically looking at engaging Citizens to debate and engage with the implementation of EU environmental legislation at a local level. It will define the precise conditions to be fulfilled, the desires and needs expressed by citizens for collective participation in major EU issues, and the specific barriers to be overcome for deployment. The project will, in parallel with integrating "best of breed" components into the technological solution, adapt the very successful Public-i webcast methodology to create a framework for recruiting citizens to CitizenScape and then moderating their inputs. From this experience it is planned that the platform and approach will be applied and contribute to other EU policies as a key driver to sustain and expand the service after the trial period. The project seeks to create a 'democratic pathway' by attracting and recruiting citizens to use the Web 2.- style space of CitizenScape and then migrating them to more formal online democratic tools (such as petitioning). These formal tools will be the means to access the decision makers – in this case Local Councillors.

CitizenScape is unique in its combination of a strong and focused implementation methodology alongside the operational use of innovative technology. CitizenScape will be a flexible online space that will blend and integrate social networking and other Web 2.0 technologies with more formal online democratic tools. The Citizen eParticipation methodology will create an accessible and inclusive model for online and offline engagement with citizens which will ensure that CitizenScape implementations not only have effective technologies but also effective offline recruitment activities and support to guarantee that the Citizen Scapes are vibrant and active democratic centres. Experience with the eParticipate and LEGESE projects¹ has indicated that these offline plans and activities are essential for driving traffic and use of eParticipation tools and that a blended approach is essential to ensure high take-up and best value from services.

The CitizenScape Trial Project will include:

- Identifying and recruiting community activists
- Creating a frame of reference and then code of conduct for the CitizenScape
- Recruiting and training community moderators to help manage and maintain the site
- Integrating Web 2.0 tools with online democratic tools to provide an easy-to-use coherent service.
- Amending and extending the Public-i methodology to create an inclusive and accessible citizen eParticipation process
- Programme of offline recruitment and training activities in order to support the online space
- Implementing the trial with real-life users for a period of one year.

¹ See www.eparticipate.eu and www.legese.org

- Analysis of the results and assessment of the impact of the trial.
- Dissemination of the project objectives and results, and joined-up activities with other initiatives in the eParticipation Action.

CitizenScape is a citizen-driven initiative that will provide tools, applications and services that empower citizens to contribute to legislative and decision-making processes and address the implementation of EU initiated legislation by Local Authorities. CitizenScape will involve key stakeholders, i.e. actors from both civil society and public institutions in a shared environment that is moderated and managed by the Local Authority.

The CitizenScape Partners are:

Partner		Role		Web
1. National Microelectronics Applications Centre Ltd	MAC	Project Manager, Coordinator, user requirements, sustainability.	IE	www.mac.ie
2. Public-I Group Ltd	PI	Technology Platform service Provider/Evaluator.	GB	www.public-i.eu
3. Bristol City Council	BCC	ePetitioner/Viewfinder System & User Org/Field Trials	GB	www.bristol.gov.uk
4. Comune di Genova	CDG	User Org/Field Trials – Large City	IT	www.comune.genova.it
5. Donegal County Council	DCC	User Org/Field Trials – Remote Rural Area	IE	www.donegalcoco.ie
6. RDA Zilina	RDA	User Org/Field Trials – less favoured region.	SK	www.razsk.sk

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This plan will also measure how the CitizenScape service contributes to the Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Legislative Engagement in the 4 Regions, by a 25% increase in citizen participation in local legislative & democratic activities & interactions by the end of the 12 month Pilot Trials period.

This CitizenScape evaluation plan looks at the full scope of the CitizenScape project and examines each of the following areas:

- Evaluation of the project against all stated objectives and assumptions
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- Review of the CitizenScape methodology
- Technical evaluation of platform performance
- SWOT analysis for wider deployment

Deadlines for delivery will be staggered throughout the project with a mid project review point in June 2009 to ensure that all major assumptions required for the final Viability Plan deliverable will be addressed and results will be reported quarterly in the management reports.

The project team will be working to action research principles in order to develop best practice principles for the use and development of the CitizenScape project. This should lead to the development of a community of practice around the project which will be joined not just by the project team members but also by the community moderators who will be active during the project.

Where data needs to be gathered from actors outside of the project team or community moderator group then data collection will be rationalized into two main periods (up to June 2009 and up to December 2009) in order to ensure that it is done efficiently.

2. Evaluation in CitizenScape

Evaluation in CitizenScape is undertaken as an integral part of the WP2.1 Pilot Trials, Monitoring and Evaluation core workpackage of the project, as described in the DOW.

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation of the initial service deployment of the CitizenScape Pilot service in 4 varied Legislative Authority contexts, countries and languages are:

- To establish the varying contextual issues that need to be addressed in implementing CitizenScape in different legislative, constitutional, political and linguistic environments
- To evaluate the legislative participation impact of CitizenScape and its relationship to wider aspects of e-governance.
- To show how the services directly contributed to the Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Legislative Engagement in those Regions, by a 25% increase in citizen participation in local legislative & democratic activities & interactions by the end of the 12 month Pilot Trials period.
- To establish whether the CitizenScape methodology is transferable across the different regions as well as being repeatable within the regions
- To provide the critical input to the CitizenScape Viability Plan (D2.3.2)

The key aim of the 4 Pilot Trials operational sites and their evaluation will be to prove the sustainability and potential of the CitizenScape System scale-up and use at National and EU levels, and thus the Evaluation will particularly determine:

- That the CitizenScape platform does address the Legislative Process eParticipation needs of local government in various contexts (as defined in D1.1.1).
- That the methodology being applied to create the CitizenScapes is both effective and repeatable
- That a viable revenue model can be established to sustain the service in the various contexts.
- That the service can be delivered in multiple contexts and languages across Europe on an operational basis.
- That alternative solutions and services are accommodated.

2.2 Evaluation of the Pilot Trials

The CitizenScape pilot trials which will run for 12 months from January to December 2009, will focus on the implementation stage of the European-derived legislation process at local & regional level, in the 4 Regional Pilots, demonstrating and evaluating the impact of the use of CitizenScape ICT service and methodology, which will include:

- Tools to reduce the complexity of legislation – and to communicate that complexity more clearly - in order to improve access to its content by non-specialists
- Tools and services to allow access to relevant legislation content according to specific needs of citizens, socio-economic groups of geographical areas

The evaluation will define specific success criteria and institutional satisfaction criteria. It will also explore sustainable deployment revenue models for commercial deployment to the larger Legislative Authorities, and publicly subvented groupings of smaller Municipalities in less favoured regions across Europe.

Democratic legislative participative instruments can have three potential functions:

1. Aggregation – in which citizen preferences are recorded and accumulated in order to reach a majority decision. Most commonly, this function is fulfilled through voting but it can also be achieved through other means as a sub-democratic function.
2. Negotiation – in which competing groups that represent the interests of different sub-sections of the community negotiate or bargain across policies to achieve a consensus on outcomes.
3. Deliberation – in which citizens reflect upon and discuss issues and in which different interests seek to persuade citizens to adopt their position.

Democracy is most effective when all three of these functions are balanced.

CitizenScape will work in each of these three areas with an additional emphasis on building skills within the stakeholder groups to make the approach repeatable and cost effective.

The CitizenScape Evaluation approach will measure the contribution of CitizenScape across these three functions. The evaluation process will record objective measures of legislative democratic enhancement using its specific success criteria and institutional satisfaction criteria. At the same time, the evaluation team will also develop an iterative process of analysis to ensure that contextual issues are fed back into the implementation process throughout the lifetime of the project.

3. Evaluation Criteria & Pilot Trials Monitoring Plan

3.1 CitizenScape evaluation timeline

The CitizenScape evaluation aims to support the final viability plan in making a decision regarding the commercialization of the CitizenScape platform. The Evaluation plan timeline shows how the plan focuses on delivery to the final business plan.

CitizenScape evaluation plan	2008				2009											
	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Evaluation baseline situation in each regional site																
Service Provision evaluation																
<i>Service provision questionnaires to each partners (regions)</i>																
<i>Service provision input</i>																
Democractic Evaluation																
<i>Site usage log results reporting in QMRs</i>																
<i>User questionnaires</i>																
<i>User focus groups</i>																
<i>Democratic Evaluation Input</i>																
Process evaluation																
<i>Practitioner meeting to discuss actions and learning to date</i>																
<i>Input regarding business assumptions to D2.3.2</i>																
Technical Evaluation																
<i>Technical checklist for evaluation</i>																
<i>Recommendations for system enhancements – D2.3.2</i>																
<i>Recommendations for deployments models – D2.3.2</i>																
Business partners																
<i>Business partner selection criteria list- D2.3.2</i>																
Cost benefit analysis																
<i>CitizenScape Democracy formula applied to 4 sites results</i>																
<i>Cost benefit analysis input –D2.3.2</i>																
Opportunities and Threats																
<i>SWOT analysis</i>																
Pricing policy evaluation																
<i>pricing acceptance output – D2.3.2</i>																
Final evaluation																

3.2 Projects objectives evaluation

3.2.1 Objectives definition

From the outset the CitizenScape consortium has affirmed that in order to achieve a viable Deployment Plan for the rollout of the platform across Europe it was of critical importance to adequately quantify and analyse specific objectives and expected outcomes and criteria of success of the project.

The following table lists the CitizenScape project's 3 main objectives and targets. These objectives are applicable to the 3 European sites. Some have or will be addressed by other workpackages but for the purpose of the evaluation we will address the objectives which can be directly measured during our trials.

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Target</u>
1. Increased Citizen Participation in their Regional Legislative Processes.	(a) 25% increase in citizen participation in their regional legislative processes. (b) in 4 very different legislative regions across the EU during the project.
2. Demonstration of a viable on-line Service to provide easy participation in Legislative Processes	(a) Operation of a localised CitizenScape service in each of 4 Pilot Trial Regions. (b) Demonstration of the service scale-up potential to National and EU levels
3. Sustainable operation of the CitizenScape Service	(a) Viability Plan for subsequent sustainable operation of the service across Europe.

Based on those objectives it was decided that the main critical success factors for the CitizenScape Service are:

- Quantifiable increase in Citizen Participation in their local democratic institutions.
- Development of a repeatable methodology for engagement
- Acceptance & use of the service by Local Authorities in many contexts.
- Reliable and dependable access to and delivery of the service to all users.

In addition to this a number of assumptions from the initial viability plan need to be validated during these trials to ensure that the final viability plan and subsequent decision to deploy the CitizenScape platform can be made based on reliable data.

3.2.2 Measuring the objectives

As we have noted from other evaluations of eParticipation projects it is important that our objectives use measures that are pragmatic, realistic and that rely on data that can be obtained through the different methods of data collections we are proposing to use i.e.:

- Development of a community of practice around the project team and the community moderators
- Ongoing online data collection
- Observation and field interviews of actors
- Document review by project participants
- Structured questionnaires (delivered on and offline)
- Semi-structured interviews

CitizenScape consortium objectives		
Objective	What will be measured	How will it be measured?
Activate Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Engagement across Europe.	25% increase in citizen participation in local democratic activities & interactions especially with regards to council meetings attendance and consultation participation: - 4 very different local authority regions across the EU during the validation trials.	Stock take of Physical attendance before the introduction of the CitizenScape platform and measure increase based on viewership figures logged by the system Validation of 4 operational sites across Europe/ successfully webcast all agreed content
Validate the eParticipation Trans-European Network.	Positive Evaluation of Platform across 4 Local Authority contexts, countries and languages.	- Technical evaluation - Process evaluation - Democratic evaluation
Development of a repeatable methodology	Whether the same process is being followed in each of the regions and can be applied to other circumstances	- Expert evaluation: Community of practice discussions and observations

3.2.3 Online measurements tools available

When it comes to measuring some of the project's objectives the use of online statistics will serve as the main support tool especially with regards to:

1. having 25% more people accessing the formal democratic elements than were previously attending physically
2. the platform technically validated across Europe

So some of the important statistics that need to be extracted for each site include:

- No of live users accessing different types of content
- Breakdown of each function used
- No of users using feedback options
- Usage patterns
- Demographic information about registered users

3.2.4 Offline activity measurement

In addition to the online work the offline engagements which will include:

- Public meetings
- Training events
- Marketing activities

These will be measured by reporting through the expert group in the focus group meetings.

Outputs	Actors	Deadline
Define online tool capacity	PI	October 2008
Define baseline democratic activities	4 local sites evaluation managers	October 2008
Define surveys and evaluation mechanisms for each sites	Evaluation manager – PI and all partners	December 2008
Analysis against objectives for each pilot site	Evaluation manager – PI and all partners	October 2009

4. Methodology

4.1 Citizen centred approach

We have reviewed the relevant literature regarding eDemocracy projects evaluation methodologies and our preferred approach regarding eParticipation is a citizen-centred one. The reasons for this choice are explained in the ANNEX: Methodological considerations for evaluation

4.2 Formal data collection

The evaluation will run in five main phases for the formal data collection and evaluation process as shown in the following table:

Phase	Timing	Objective	Actors
Phase one: set up	September - December 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement key definitions • Online logged data selection • Create questionnaires • Focus groups • Define baseline of activity • Develop profile of community moderators • Establish community of practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partners • PI (logged Data) • PI-MAC • 4 Local sites evaluation managers
Phase two: data collection	January 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logged info – PI • Interviews & feedback forms (local sites evaluation manager)
Phase three: Analysis of initial data	February – March 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse data • Refocus definitions and questionnaires where required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation manager & MAC • Evaluation manager & MAC
Phase 4: Final data collection	September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final data collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logged info – PI • Interviews & feedback forms (local sites evaluation manager)
Phase 5: Final analysis	November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final data analysis and evaluation report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project and Evaluation Manager

4.3 Informal data collection:

Alongside these formal methods there will be 2 additional data collection methods:

1. Community of practice

The CitizenScape project combines technology with a specific implementation methodology. This process should be an active one which is developed throughout the course of the project with the project team working closely with the initial stakeholders to develop a truly shared experience. To this end a community of practice around the methodology will be the most effective expert evaluation of the project. The Community of practice will be formed around each region with the shared learning being discussed as part of the formal project meetings.

2. Focus groups

The project team run one of the focus groups which will be convened during each of the data collection periods. At least one other group will be convened which will not have had the detailed exposure the project – though will have been watching webcasts.

By using this mix of formal and informal data collection methods it should be possible to gather a full range of data and ideas rather than being dependent on the formal methods asking the right questions. This is especially important when trying to evaluate and develop an innovative and unique service such as CitizenScape.

5. Types of Evaluation

5.1 Evaluation type 1: Service Provision evaluation

This is the first layer of the evaluation process and will target overall service provision for the platforms installed in each of the 4 sites as such it is not the most detailed of evaluation but aims at giving a quick all round first take of what was delivered, what worked well, what could be improved and what could we do next;

The service provision evaluation will not look at the lifecycle of the service as this will be covered in the CitizenScape methodology (see evaluation type 3) but will cover:

- Description of benefits of the service with respect to democratic renewal and citizen engagement
- Scope of implementation (i.e. inclusion of audio / website integrations / review of external content etc)
- Description of content
- Scenarios of potential applications for the service

This evaluation will be carried out with each site administrative staff and look at the 3 following areas:

1. Functionality offered by the platform:

- Was the functionality adequate?
- What functionality was not used? Why?
- What other functionality could be added?

2. Benefits of the platform (benefits of the platform will be dealt through all evaluation types)

- What were the perceived benefits against expected benefits

3. Content review:

- What related content was created?
- How successful were the participants in sourcing other formats of supporting and background information?
- What percentage of new (as opposed to re-purposed) content was required?
- Were the content choices made adequate?
- What problems/ challenges did the chosen content bring about?

4. Future use of the platform

- Lesson learnt?
- Future webcast content planned (new possible uses)
- New applications and added features

This evaluation intends to test the actual technology, its effectiveness and its fit for purpose alongside the objectives of the community it is there to support.

Methodology:

This evaluation will be carried out in three ways:

- Document review by project team
- Semi-Structured interviews with 2-3 officers, members and community moderators within each pilot authority
- Measurement against any competitor offerings

Target:

To get a snapshot of the stakeholders first impressions regarding the service delivered to them. This is a useful exercise because it gives a global picture and general opinion of the offering

Output	Actors	Deadline
Circulation of service provision definition (including functionalities, additional application features)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Manager (PI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2008
Drawing up of questionnaires regarding: webcast outputs and future use of the platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Manager (PI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2008
Gap analysis of the CitizenScape service Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2009
CitizenScape Service provision evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Manager (PI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered in June 2009

5.2 Evaluation type 2: eParticipation impacts – Democratic evaluation

The project has a clear objective to activate Democratic Renewal & increased Citizen Engagement across Europe. This will be measured against the following target:

25% increase in citizen participation in local democratic activities & interactions especially with regards to formal democratic activities such as attending meetings and responding to consultations

In order to meet this basic level of assessment the project team will:

Measure against citizen participation objectives established in earlier sections of this document and this at two points during the project; in January 2009 and in June 2009

Citizen participation will need to be defined as part of the benchmarking process at the start of the evaluation process. Key areas to look at will be:

Increased virtual attendance at meetings
Increased numbers of enquiries
Any relevant legislation take up figures
Increased participation in online forums and other online contributions

The evaluation within the eParticipation definition however does not limit itself to this and will also need to be carried out using both qualitative and quantitative measures and data will be collected from a number of sources:

- Viewership and website behaviour statistics (as stated above)
- Short online survey from users
- Qualitative feedback gathered both online and in face to face focus groups

In addition to this more formal data collection the CitizenScape platform will be used to gather data itself with the feedback and survey features being used to collect feedback relating to each webcast and which will give punctual and on the spot reactions of the users to the platform.

One of the challenges of the evaluation will be the differences existing between the pilot sites and it is therefore important that the evaluation questionnaires and focus group identified the potential or challenges to the platform benefits regarding the following areas:

Styles of viewing – public access vs home usage
Levels of internet penetration and usage
Pre-existing levels of citizen engagement and participation
Parallel eParticipation exercise which are ongoing over the project period

As the content programmes are confirmed for each of the authorities these will be evaluated side by side to ensure that there are enough points of similarity to make evaluation across the whole group meaningful. Where there are significant differences these will be highlighted.

To balance this quantitative evaluation process the community of practice will be asked to consider the ongoing democratic benefits of the process and to provide expert feedback about the process.

Output	Actors	Deadline
Put in place mechanisms to collect data for each site: logs collection, questionnaires focus group	Evaluation Manager (PI) & all partners	October (logs) and platform feedback mechanisms November (questionnaires /focus groups)
Collection of logs and report results in CitizenScape Quarterly reports	Evaluation Manager (PI) & evaluation sites managers	November 2008 February 2008 May 2008
User feedback questionnaire	All sites	December 2008
User focus groups	All sites	June 2009
Input to D2.3.2 Final Viability Plan	Evaluation Manager (PI)	June 2009
Report back from Community of Practice	Community of Practice	Ongoing Final report in September 2009

5.3 Evaluation type 3: Process evaluation

The CitizenScape methodology has been initially defined as having the following discrete stages:

1. Define frame of reference
2. Identify stakeholders
3. Agree a code of conduct
4. Build site
5. Recruit
6. Market
7. Discuss
8. Deliberate
9. Decide
10. Feedback

The Project team need to refine and evaluate this methodology as they work with it and the main evaluation will be from the Community of Practice interpretation of the behavioral data gathered as part of the service evaluation. As a action research project the team are learning and reflecting on the process as they deliver the project. The methodology will be documented in a short briefing note as part of the evaluation and revisited as each of the expert meetings throughout the project.

Output	Actors	Deadline
Document mechanisms to collect data (including log time mechanisms for all parties staff)	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2008
Carry out evaluation	Evaluation Manager (PI)	ongoing
Process evaluation input for D2.3.2	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2009

5.4 Evaluation type 4: Technical evaluation

The technical strand of the evaluation is aimed at 2 areas:

- Ensuring the system works reliably (software and hardware perform satisfactorily (Test plan has been established as part of D1.2.1 and will be used to measure performance and acceptance by local users)
- Ensuring that the CitizenScape platform translates into the different regions both linguistically and culturally

In particular we will be looking at:

- Management issues with respect of a distributed production process.
- How much more sophisticated that process needs to be over and above the current Public-i operational production process is.
- Scale-up of quality assurance measures foreseen.
- Identify required supply / supplier(s) for the scaled-up production process.
- Quantify the present and projected production capacity.

Output	Actors	Deadline
Technical checklist for evaluation	Evaluation manager (PI)	December 2008
Recommendations for system changes	4 sites evaluation managers	April 2009
Recommendations for deployments models	4 sites evaluation managers	June 2009

5.5 Evaluation type 5: Cost benefit analysis

A Cost benefit analysis is needed for each part of the actors in the project:

- Local Authorities
- Citizen
- Business partners
- CitizenScape

The cost benefit analysis will look at hidden costs, such as staff time, as well as more obvious costs such as equipment expenditure in order to make a thorough assessment of the projects impacts.

Democratic benefits

As with any democratic project the main difficulty is to assigning a value, i.e. benefit, to public engagement. While the project will look at non-democratic benefits it will also be important to define a suitable metric for the democratic element of the benefits which a platform such as CitizenScape can bring. Desk research has already been carried out and in particular the work of Stephen Colman² and Ann Macintosh³ have been looked at to see and it has been decided that the overall evaluation would look at answering some of the following questions:

- To what extent and in what ways can our eParticipation service and methods make policy information more accessible and understandable to citizens?
- Did the platform and methods contribute to more openness and accountability in policy-making?
- Did the CitizenScape platform and methods encourage and assist the public to participate and facilitate consultation?
- Did it enhance participation of the socially excluded
- To what extent did the eParticipation affect policy? To what extent was it meant to affect policy?

Other benefits and cost savings

Other benefits will be defined in consultation with the project partners and will be gathered in the semi-structured interviews to be carried out in January and June 2008.

To date the following specific potential cost savings have been identified:

- Time and travel savings for residents (i.e. can 'attend from home')
- Time and travel savings for Officers / members (reduction in need to pay travel expenses)
- Reduction in printed matter required to communicate with residents / officers / members
- Reduction in telephone costs to brief staff
- Meeting management efficiencies and hence reduction in overtime
- Potential reduction in legal costs through actual full record of event maintained
- Electronic storage of meetings reducing storage costs of meeting papers

Costs

Costs will be defined by the pilot authorities and will be structured in two ways:

Alongside the CitizenScape Methodology

² http://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/people/?rq=faculty_professors

³ http://itc.napier.ac.uk/ITC_Home/ITC/Ann_Macintosh.asp

In line with the cost of democracy formula currently being used by the Public-i UK Webcasting user group

The cost of democracy formula is a financial calculation which works out the cost of a Council's democratic infrastructure (e.g. staff time required to run a meeting/election/ballot) and expresses it per capita population. Its a useful comparator when looking at eParticipation projects.

Output	Actors	Deadline
CitizenScape democracy formula results applied to all sites	All partners	March 2009
Cost benefit analysis input for D2.3.2	Evaluation manager (PI)	June 2009

5.6 Evaluation type 6: Opportunities and Threats – SWOT Analysis

The main opportunity arising from the potential eParticipation Deployment for the consortium and its members is the use of the ICT platform and CitizenScape services to grow democratic renewal and citizen engagement both in the public sector partners' local regions, and generally across Europe, and to provide a commercial return for the partners' investment and contribution to the project.

Potential risks in the deployment of CitizenScape are:

- Lack of a credible Business/Deployment plan for all of Europe.
- Users have shown very little interest in EP-related legislation and other matters to date.
- Reliance on 3rd party suppliers e.g. hosting service, Public-i platform, communications network providers etc.
- Substitute technology/ products may be developed
- Big difference in detailed democratic processes make localisation more demanding
- A rise in costs of hosting services or network provision
- Loss of vital staff
- Lack of funding in identified marketplace

The evaluation results will be directly used to inform the D2.3.2 Final Viability plan on whether to commercialise the platform or not. It is therefore important that the evaluation SWOT analysis clearly identifies whether the strengths and opportunities outweighs the weakness and threats if it is the case the evaluation plan will inform the viability plan to go ahead with commercialization plan.

Output	Actors	Deadline
SWOT analysis	Evaluation manager (PI)	January 2009 – iteration 1 June 2009 - iteration 2
Input to D2.3.2	Evaluation manager (PI)	December 2009

6. Evaluation Timelines

6.1 Data collection

Element	Questionnaire/ log Creation Deadline	Delivery Deadline	Analysis deadline
Viewership and website behaviour statistics	October 2008	November 2008 February 2009 May 2009 August 2009	December 2008 September 2009
Semi-structured interviews with participating officers and members looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost benefit analysis Customer service satisfaction Pricing (see below) 	November 2008	January 2009 September 2009	March 2009 October 2009
Pricing questionnaire	December 2008	September 2009	November 2009
Cost benefits interviews and questionnaire	December 2008	September 2009	November 2009
Questionnaire for CitizenScape service users & webcast viewers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> quantitative questions qualitative questions 	December 2008	January 2009 October 2009	March 2009 November 2009
Webcast viewer focus groups	December 2008	January 2009 October 2009	March 2009 November 2009

Ongoing data collection:

- Monthly CitizenScape Service accesses and webcast viewership statistics
- Citizen's panel
- Community of users

6.2 Summary of outputs timeline

The evaluation will be continuous in nature. Data will be reported in the CitizenScope quarterly reports and a the final evaluation report will feed into the D2.1.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Report at the end of the project.

Service provision		
Output	Actors	Deadline
Circulation of service provision definition (including functionalities, additional application features)	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2008
Drawing up of questionnaires regarding: webcast outputs and future use of the platform	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2008
Gap analysis of the CitizenScope service Provision	All partners	January 2009
CitizenScope Service provision evaluation	Evaluation Manager (PI)	Delivered in June 2009 Delivered in December 2009
Democratic Evaluation		
Output	Actors	Deadline
Put in place mechanisms to collect data for each site: logs collection, questionnaires focus group	Evaluation Manager (PI) & all partners	October (logs) and platform feedback mechanisms November (questionnaires /focus groups)
Collection of logs and report results in CitizenScope Quarterly reports	Evaluation Manager (PI) & evaluation sites managers	November 2008 February 2009 May 2009 August 2009
Users questionnaire	All sites	December 2008
Users focus groups	All sites	June 2009
Input to D2.3.3 Final Viability plan	Evaluation Manager (PI)	August 2009
Process evaluation		
Output	Actors	Deadline
Document mechanisms to collect data (including log time mechanisms for all parties staff)	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2009
Carry out evaluation	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2009
Process evaluation input for D2.3.2	Evaluation Manager (PI)	November 2009
Technical evaluation		
Output	Actors	Deadline
Technical checklist for evaluation	Evaluation manager (PI)	December 2008
Recommendations for	4 sites evaluation	April 2009

system enhancements	managers	
Recommendations for deployments models	4 sites evaluation managers	September 2009
Cost benefits evaluation		
Output	Actors	Deadline
CitizenScape methodology budget	Evaluation manager (PI)	January 2009
Defined metric for democratic engagement	All partners	January 2008
Cost benefit analysis	Evaluation manager (PI)	November 2009

6.3 Other evaluation timelines

Pricing policy	
Output	Deadline
Pricing questionnaire	June 2009
Opportunities and Threats	
Output	Deadline
SWOT analysis	January 2009 – iteration 1 June 2009 - iteration 2
Input to D2.3.2	November 2009

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation planning needs to strike a balance between the need to stagger data collection and analysis throughout the project and the need to ensure that the evaluation exercise is able to look at all the changes and innovations created by the project teams over the project duration. This phased evaluation plan should enable the project team to do this and to produce ongoing and meaningful outputs from the process.

The CitizenScape evaluation consists of several strands of data gathering. Because CitizenScape is as much about methodological considerations as technical ones the most important evaluation will be with the community of practice and their judgement as to whether or not this is a repeatable and cost effective approach to engaging the public in the democratic process. However there will be some more formal data collection methods:

- The first one is the collection of online web logs including CitizenScape service and webcasts usages, etc
- The second one is the collection of online feedback through the content used, the emails received, the feedback comments,
- The third one related to users qualitative data collected using survey, questionnaires but also focus groups and citizen panels
- Finally it must be taken into account that some of the important knowledge is held within the consortium itself and data must be collected from the project participants.

The recruitment of citizen panels and other participants will be an important factor in delivering the final evaluation, as will the participation of each of the 4 pilot sites in the gathering of data. To help start this process a formal briefing will be arranged as part of the next project meeting to ensure that all project partners are fully aware of their responsibilities in this area.

Annex: Methodological considerations for evaluation

The project will be 24 months in duration and this will be split approximately 25:75 development time to pilot time. Because the evolving nature of the subject, the technological landscape and the content of each CitizenScape the principal research methodology will be an action research one with the core project team working closely together to adjust and update the core methodology.

There are some necessary tensions within the project design which needed to be identified and then accommodated within the project design:

1. Creating a dynamic tension between online and offline activities

Web 2.0 is a social phenomena as much as a technological one and as such the the project needs to blend online and offline tools to create a dynamic tension which provides all participants with the best opportunity to engage with the process. One of the assertions of the project team is that practitioners tend to use technology as a 'magic bullet' solution to problems and that a successful methodology will more accurately reflect the real lives of citizens who move in between channels and media. However this brings with it issues of evaluation as it becomes necessary to use online and offline evaluation techniques across both online and offline activities. Two questions then become pressing:

- Do you need to ascribe different values to online and offline activities and if so how do you do this and ;
- How do you draw an assumption as to how an online activity has drawn a citizen to an offline activity and vice versa.

The project team is keen not to overburden participants with evaluation during the project duration and instead has decided on three distinct evaluation phases for face to face offline evaluation of participants and combine this with in-depth data collection from the technology platform which will infer citizen behaviours.

2. Accountability vs anonymity

The project team believes that expectation setting is critical for the success of each of the CitizenScapes however the risk is that we lose one of the big web 2.0 benefits by insisting on this accountability. The ability to create a different online identity to your physical one has been cited widely as a major contributor to the success of various online communities (Rheingold [1], Turkle[2]). Even with the emergence of services such as Facebook or Twitter which are predicted on connecting to your existing social network (however tenuously) there seems to be a separation between from your physical life as can be evidenced by the number of cases of people being disciplined by employers for statements on Facebook which they cannot have expected to 'leak' into their physical world ("118 118" August 2007, Argos August 2007). However is we accept that people do create separate digital persona's online then the Citizenscape team want to tap into the phenomenon that exists of people actively creating persona online. We want to make this the "good citizen" persona. We want to motivate citizens with positive role models and by demonstrating tangible results from democratic engagement.

3. Enskilling or social engineering

This social engineering approach to engagement where social networks are artificially created with a defined democratic objective encapsulates another tension within the project. Democracy is about the expression of the will of the citizen body. Implicit in this is the citizens free choice – though that free choice is made on the basis of information from the democratic parties and candidates. The CitizenScape methodology goes beyond

just informing citizens and instead aims to actively encourage them to take action. Given this ambition to change the citizen is it still a free choice? By engineering people to participate are we depriving them of the option of apathy? Apathy, or dis-engagement, annoys to engaged citizen and offends the practitioner – however does this make it a less than valid choice? This is a tension which practitioners in local government are very familiar with – the tension between supporting the process and supporting the politics. The project team have in this instance decided that the decision to encourage citizens to participate democratically by better equipping – enskilling – them to do so is a justifiable position. However in order to maintain transparency and trust in the environment the team are directly addressing this as part of the code of conduct defined for the Citizenscape. Democratic bodies such as Local Authorities commonly have to carefully manage the vital difference between consultation and communication and as they act as host organisations for the Citizenspaces this will be exacerbated.