



## eParticipation Preparatory Action

**EP-08-01-011**

**HUWY: Hub Websites for Youth Participation**

### D7.4 Results

Deliverable Form	
<b>Project Contract No.</b>	EP-08-01-011
<b>Deliverable No.</b>	D7.4 Results
<b>Relevant work package:</b>	WP7
<b>Nature:</b>	R
<b>Dissemination Level:</b>	PU = Public
<b>Document version:</b>	Final
<b>Date:</b>	2/6/2011
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<b>Document description:</b>	The final results report of the HUWY project summarized the outcome of the pilot trial. It includes an assessment of HUWY's impact on decision-making, policy, and user engagement, as well as the implementation and outputs of the project analysed against its objectives.

## Summary

HUWY (Hub Websites for Youth Participation) was an eParticipation Preparatory Action project, which piloted a distributed (networked) discussion. The pilot ran in Estonia, Germany, Ireland and the UK. HUWY aimed to find good ways to support groups of young people to discuss what changes are needed to the Internet and its regulation and, further, to encourage policy-makers to interact with young people's ideas. Young people in each country chose topics (e.g. Cyberbullying, Privacy) to focus the project, also specifying an "open thread" about their experiences, relevant to the Internet.

The eParticipation innovation of the HUWY project is a new method to bring people into policy-making: distributed discussion. A family of "hub websites" support a networked discussion. Hubs contain information about the project, well-structured background materials about chosen topics, the results of young people's discussions and feedback from policy-makers. There is one hub website for each of the pilot countries, with localised information and language. This is the central node for that country. Young people hold discussions on their own websites (organisational or social) or in offline settings. These discussions post their results on their country's hub. The four country hubs are linked by an EU hub <http://huwy.eu/>: a global entry point for the project and the place to summarise results for EU policy-makers.

The distributed discussion model was devised to be as flexible and inclusive as possible: to enable young people to get involved in issues that were important to them, while they controlled the format and place of this involvement. It was designed to include established groups, like youth fora or parliaments, who had their own online spaces, especially those already talking about HUWY topics. It was also designed to include more casual groups, meeting on social networking pages or even offline.

An extensive evaluation process focused on impact, sustainability, scalability, user engagement and the effects of involvement for young people. Three reports contain the methodologies, data and results. Through this process the HUWY partners have identified the following outcomes of the pilot:

1. Young people who got involved had an enjoyable and rewarding experience that furthered their engagement with democracy and their awareness of best practice in using the Internet. HUWY got young people thinking and talking about Internet policy issues. Using group discussions as the basic node of participation increased engagement and learning.
2. Very few groups chose to hold discussions online. Participants valued structured and well supported discussions, more than the freedom to organise their own groups. Facilitators played a key role. Facilitators need to be rewarded for their hard work.
3. A distributed discussion can bring together a wide variety of online and offline participation opportunities. For this, the hub websites need to be of good quality and available throughout the process. Their use needs to be integrated with all events.
4. The hub website model can support the integration of social networking tools. However, HUWY partners found that young people did not favour SN sites as forums for discussion.
5. Young people feel that they should be able to influence policies which affect the Internet and that it is important for policy-makers to take time to listen to and understand their ideas. It was also important to them to choose the discussion topics most relevant their lives.
6. However, policy-makers found it difficult to use ideas that were not integrated into their specific policy-making and consultation schedules. We cannot identify direct paths for the results of young people's discussions to influence regulation of Internet topics, though we can identify places in which their ideas are in line with current policy.
7. The hub website information structure used short scenarios (stories) to engage and lead to more detailed factual information. This worked well, but took a lot of work to establish and keep up to date.
8. The distributed discussion model is resource intensive: establishing and supporting online and offline elements in parallel. However, it can support extensive, good quality engagement, especially through further involvement of youth organisations and media as partners.

This deliverable is the final results report of the HUWY project. As the final project deliverable, this report reflects on all project results and analyses the political and user engagement impacts of the

project in relation to its objectives and actions. Its main objective is to summarise and analyse the outcomes of the project, as the primary resource for the Commission:

- To measure political impact by the end of the project, according to the objectives, Key Evaluation Factors, output and outcomes;
- To summarise the effects of user engagement, good practice and lessons learned;
- To derive technical recommendations for future use or re-implementation of the Hubs website and distributed discussion models in eParticipation.

Annex 1 describes how the reviewers' suggestions, after the interim-review, were incorporated into the rest of the pilot.

Annex 2 contains the data collection templates to collect additional information from project partners for the impact assessment and publicity review. Annex 3 contains the data collected this way.

A one page summary of the HUWY pilot project and its outcomes is provided as Annex 4: HUWY pilot summary for EC.

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# 1 Objectives

## 1.1 The HUWY Project

The HUWY project (Hub Wbsites for Youth Participation) was co-funded under the European Commission's eParticipation Preparatory Action. It aimed to get young people engaged in the sphere of Internet policy-making and governance by involving them in on- and offline discussions on Internet issues and necessary potential improvements. HUWY Hub websites were designed to channel the results and ideas of the young participants to policy-makers working on respective policies and, ideally, to function as an interaction platform for a dialogue based on these ideas. Discussion topics are not pre-selected by policy-makers or HUWY partners: broad themes were identified through working with young people in the requirements phase of the project. Specific discussion topics could then be chosen by groups of young people themselves, who would host their own discussions in any kind of online or offline settings, and post the results on the Hub websites. This distributed discussion model harnesses distributed knowledge and ideas about Internet policies, as discussed by young people, by pooling information and discussion results on central and public websites: the HUWY Hubs.

Thus, the HUWY trial **aims** are

- To support young people to influence policies related to the Internet
- To publish feedback from policy-makers about this influence
- To pilot a distributed discussion model for eParticipation, centred on the Hub websites

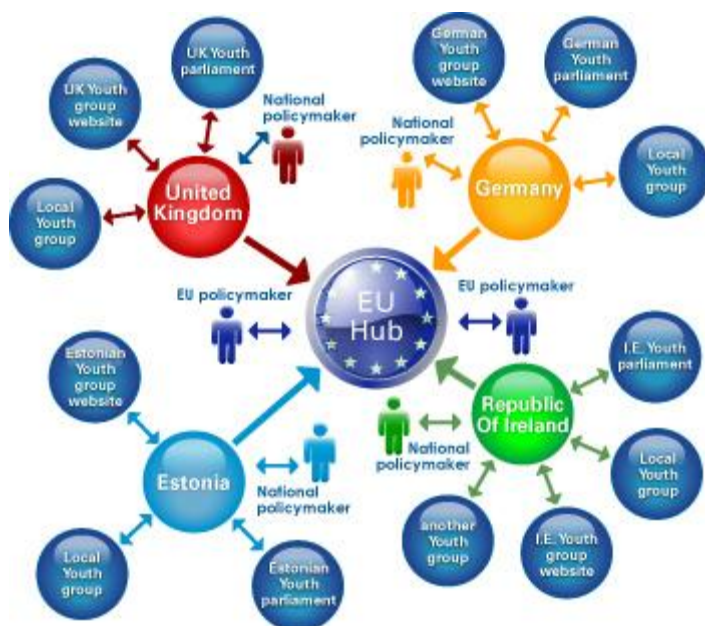
The HUWY project is piloted in Estonia, Germany, Ireland and the UK. Implementation and dissemination strategies are adapted to the circumstances in each country, while the evaluation methodology and instruments are based on common project objectives and goals and common to all.

There are four national Hubs: one in each pilot country. These are linked by one European HUWY Hub. The partners provide background materials and further information about the topics selected in the requirements phase, if necessary, sensitive to national contexts or policy agendas. Partners recruit and train facilitators, support the discussion groups, and liaise with policy-makers to get them involved in the project. The partners also carry out dissemination actions in terms of involvement of young people and youth groups, in establishing and supporting discussion groups and encouraging people working on Internet policies to comment on young people's result posts. The online Hubs hold information about the project, supporting information about the topics and participation process, space for the results of young people's discussions and feedback from policy-makers. Youth groups' and policy-makers' involvement is further encouraged and supported through offline workshops and other local dissemination events, organised by the HUWY team and external cooperation partners.

## 1.2 HUWY Objectives

The HUWY project team has developed its objectives in line with the high level aims of the HUWY trial. In order to meet the aims of involving young people, as well as policy-makers, through a distributed discussion model, a decentralised project structure has been developed and implemented. That is, the partner(s) responsible for each country's pilot is responsible for the activities in that country and for adapting common strategies to meet their local context. These partners are referred to as "Country Coordinators": University of Tartu in Estonia, Fraunhofer ISI in Germany, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Youth Work Ireland in Ireland and Queens University Belfast in the UK. This de-centralisation is mirrored online with national websites (national Hubs) in the local language, organised around a central platform: the EU Hub. See Figure 1: HUWY Hub Structure.

The basic idea of this model is to support national approaches, online activities and local offline events, to get young people engaged in Internet policy-making and, at the same time, provide a comprehensive framework at the European level with the EU Hub. The model also promotes country-specific strategies to get policy-makers and other supportive partners, like youth organisations, involved: this strongly depends on regional policy structures, topics, agendas and actor constellations. Another advantage of the model is that it provides a platform for the participants' contributions to a broad public, including policy-makers and decision-makers in governments and parliaments.



**Figure 1: HUWY Hub Structure**

So, in each of the four EU-countries that HUWY is piloted in, HUWY websites have been implemented as information and communication platforms for young people, offering background information about the project and the topics, materials to support discussions, profiles of youth groups and policy-makers, posts of discussion results and feedback comments from policy-makers. The HUWY pilot aims for a “grassroots” approach in which local distributed discussions on specific topics are, ideally, self-organised, but with strong organisational and regional context-sensitive support by the project partners. The specificity of HUWY is the combination of distributed actions on the one hand and centralised actions on the other hand, by sharing all content, discussions results, collected facts and arguments as well as ongoing policy actions on the national and EU-HUWY Hub websites.

As a consequence, the HUWY approach relies strongly on successful user involvement. Although the eParticipation aim of HUWY is to develop and implement a family of online tools to support young people’s participation, it also needs to implement offline, face-to-face, communication activities to “get the grass growing”. This leads to the **three main objectives** of the project:

- **Increase involvement in democracy:** HUWY aims at creating a platform for *distributed discussions to support participation in policy-making processes*, offering background information and Internet-based communication tools for young citizens to interact with each other and with policy-makers.
- **Involve young people in policy developments related to the Internet and its governance:** HUWY specifically aims at addressing young people as a target group, in order to increase their political engagement. Internet governance is a topic that is in need of increased input from all EU-citizens, especially the young. The Internet’s future governance is expected to be of particular interest to them and needs their understanding and acceptance to be successfully implemented.
- **Advance eParticipation:** HUWY is a trial project in line with the Commission’s objectives to advance eParticipation and thus aims at deriving recommendations for future eParticipation projects.

### 1.3 Objectives of this Report

This report is the final report of the HUWY pilot and records the methodology and results of the final impact assessment. It identifies the main outcomes of the HUWY project, including impacts on policy-making, contribution to eParticipation research and practice and the European public sphere.

Four tasks have been dedicated to the evaluation, among which this report is the final step:

1. To identify impact criteria related to the target groups (young people and policy makers) and further specify the methods to be used (Recorded in D6.1 Impact and Engagement Criteria Report)
2. To assess the implementation of the hub websites and distributed discussions, leading to recommendations for future users (D7.3 Sustainability and Scalability Report)
3. To measure the level and effects of young people and policy-makers' participation (D6.2 User Engagement Report)
4. To assess political impact and provide an overview of the success of the pilot (D7.4 Results: *this report*)

The results contained in this report summarise the outcomes of the previous evaluation reports, with additional assessments of impacts and dissemination. The impact assessment is carried out within a self-evaluation process of the HUWY project to analyse its output, outcomes and impacts at the end of the trial. The data collection tables are included in Annex 2 Impact assessment template and the inputs as Annex 3 HUWY impact assessment responses. These inputs are cross analysed to enable the project partners, the project reviewers and the European Commission to conclude whether HUWY was successful in meeting its objectives.

As the final project deliverable, this report reflects on all project results and analyses the political and user engagement impacts of the project in relation to its objectives and actions. Its main objective is to summarise and analyse the outcomes of the project, as the primary resource for the Commission.

Specific **objectives of this deliverable** are

- To measure political impact by the end of the project according to the objectives, key evaluation factors, output and outcomes
- To summarise effects of user engagement, good practices and lessons learned
- To derive technical recommendations for future use or re-implementation of the Hubs (or similar) and distributed discussion models in eParticipation.

The impact assessments approach is based on an **Impact Logic Chart** (Figure 5: Objectives and Tasks as Input in HUWY). This shows the relationships between input, output, outcome and impacts.



## 2 The HUWY Pilot Approach

Between 2006 and 2008, a total of 21 pilot projects were selected and supported through the European Commission's eParticipation Preparatory Action<sup>1</sup>. With the launch of this programme, the EC, responding to an initiative of the European Parliament, refocused its funding approach in the area of eParticipation: while previous projects were mainly research oriented and dealt with eGovernment and e-voting, this new action specifically funded eParticipation trial projects. The rationale behind the drive to fund eParticipation pilots was "to harness the benefits of ICTs to improve legislation and legislative processes at all levels of government decision-making and to enhance public participation in such processes."<sup>2</sup> The trials intended "to demonstrate how using modern ICT tools can make it easier for people to participate in decision-making and can contribute to better legislation."<sup>3</sup>

A survey of 255 eParticipation initiatives in Europe, in 2009, revealed that projects were carried out at all levels of policy-making (local, regional, EU-wide) and that most of these addressed phases like information, consultation and deliberation<sup>4</sup>. The survey concluded that there is a link between policy level and degree of participation, as smaller, topic-specific projects at local or regional level lead to more active participation in terms of mobilisation of citizens to engage in the process<sup>5</sup>.

HUWY was part of the third and, for the time being, last round of funding under the preparatory action. The relevant work programme was issued in 2008; the seven trial projects within this group ran up to early 2011. The 21 trials covered an impressive range of approaches, technologies, policy areas, target groups and EU-member states, and concentrated on different phases of the policy cycle and levels of the political system. Compared to the other trials funded under the preparatory action, HUWY is characterised by a number of distinctive features:

1. The content dimension of HUWY was situated in the policy area of Internet governance. This area was suggested as a priority focus in the call for proposals issued by the EC. Other projects which dealt with specific policy domains focused on environmental issues (e.g., eCommittee, Ideal-EU, FEED, CitizenScape, Wave, eMPower), consumer protection (VOICES) or health policy (Demos@Work).
2. HUWY's main target group were young people. Among the other trials funded under the action, only VEP and LEX-IS shared this specific focus.
3. At the centre of the HUWY trial was an innovative deliberation process – the distributed discussion model. Technology development and/or improvement were not a major objective of HUWY. Instead, existing and readily available ICT solutions<sup>6</sup> were applied in order to facilitate the distributed discussion model.

The 'i2010 EU Policy framework for the Information Society and Media'<sup>7</sup> emphasises the facilitation of commercial expansion, whereas 'Safer Internet Plus'<sup>8</sup> emphasises the protection of Internet users. Yet, there is little evidence of convergence between these two objectives and conflicts arise regarding regulation aspects. Regulation in the field of Internet services and content is indeed a contentious issue, challenging policy-makers in all Member States, and requiring cross-border cooperation. It is in the public interest to balance freedom and protection and the skills for all age groups to use the Internet positively and safely. The HUWY pilot project addresses the issue of Internet governance by focusing on topics selected by young people (4 broad topics, plus an open thread about experiences of the Internet, in each country) in the discussions. "The Digital Agenda will require a sustained level of commitment at both EU and Member State levels (including at regional level). It cannot succeed

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/implementation/prep\\_action/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/implementation/prep_action/index_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> DG Information Society and Media 2007

<sup>3</sup> eParticipation Preparatory Action Website, Online available on:

[[http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/egovernment/policy/eparticipation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/egovernment/policy/eparticipation/index_en.htm)](5/24/11)

<sup>4</sup> Panapoulou et al. 2009: 13f

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Specifically WordPress and Drupal

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/eeurope/i2010/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/index_en.htm)

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/information\\_society/activities/sip/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm)

without a major contribution by other stakeholders, including young "digital natives" who have much to teach us"<sup>9</sup>.

Hopes and new ideas for the use of mass media for deliberation and political participation came up in social sciences, not only since the diffusion of the Internet into our everyday life, but with the emergence of print and broadcasted mass media in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. For example, in his "radio theory", Bertold Brecht saw the opportunity for two-way communication via the Radio which would give the public the power of representation<sup>10</sup>. In line with the idea of giving power to the people through mass media, during the 1990s new digital technologies were discussed as key opportunities for participatory and democratic approaches in politics<sup>11</sup>. The Internet currently seems to fulfil the promise of multi-directional communication for the broad public, and in addition, provides many feedback channels. It can thus facilitate participation in public discourses and political decision-making. Further promises arose with the emergence of Web 2.0, which stands for a second generation of web applications designed to facilitate participatory information sharing and collaboration on the WWW<sup>12</sup>. The term does not just refer to technical innovations, but rather to changes in the ways the Internet is used and content is produced and shared. Since then, arguments about the positive uses of the Internet for democracy and participation (Internet makes us intelligent, free, and more socialised) versus negative impacts (Internet makes us ignorant, watched, lonesome) have created a lively debate<sup>13</sup>. Some recent empirical studies even negate the participatory potential as they show a decrease of active political participation despite an increase of the number of users of the Internet<sup>14</sup>.

Although not all promises of the Web as enabler for eParticipation have come true yet, some impacts of the digital public have been validated. Recent examples are the efficient use of social software and twitter by the organisers of the "Arab Spring" revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt and the use of social software for public opinion formation during the "Stuttgart 21" conflict in Germany<sup>15</sup>. Although the degree of impact is widely debated<sup>16</sup>, some studies show positive effects on public opinion towards democracy through the use of social software<sup>17</sup>, other studies indicate that the people who use the Internet for participative purposes are mainly those who are already more active in participatory processes in the offline world. So, on the one hand we have the thesis of mobilisation through the Internet<sup>18</sup> and on the other the thesis of amplification through the Internet<sup>19</sup>, both defining the Internet as having impact on political participation.

The HUWY project explores *Participation* via different mechanisms for the public to express opinions, and ideally exert influence, regarding political, economic, management or other social decisions. EParticipation refers to ICT-supported participation processes. This may concern administration, service delivery, decision making and policy making and is closely related to e-government and (e-) governance participation. EParticipation includes the use of ICT by citizens to connect with their elected representatives. The European IST project DEMO-net<sup>20</sup> also attached great importance to the interaction between different actors during the policy-making process and realised that, first of all,

<sup>9</sup> Communication from The Commission To The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and The Committee of The Regions: A Digital Agenda for Europe, p.7 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0245:FIN:EN:DOChT>

<sup>10</sup> Brecht, B. 1967

<sup>11</sup> Oates, S. & Gibson, R.K. 2006

<sup>12</sup> Examples of Web 2.0 are social networking sites, blogs, wikis, video sharing sites, hosted services, web applications, mashups and folksonomies. See Wiliamson 2011 for a discussion of Web 2 and Web 3 technologies and civic participation

<sup>13</sup> Fuchs, C. 2010

<sup>14</sup> Busemann, K. & Gscheidle, C. 2010

<sup>15</sup> "Stuttgart 21 is one of Germany's and Europe's largest urban renewal projects on train tracks that cut through the center of the Stuttgart city placed underground, creating entire new neighbourhoods. Many residents are deeply opposed to the multibillion euro undertaking and their protests lead to an arbitration process and account to a change of government with a first-ever state-governor from the Green party

<sup>16</sup> GlobalVoices Blog 2011

<sup>17</sup> Emmer, M. & Wolling, J. 2010: 52f

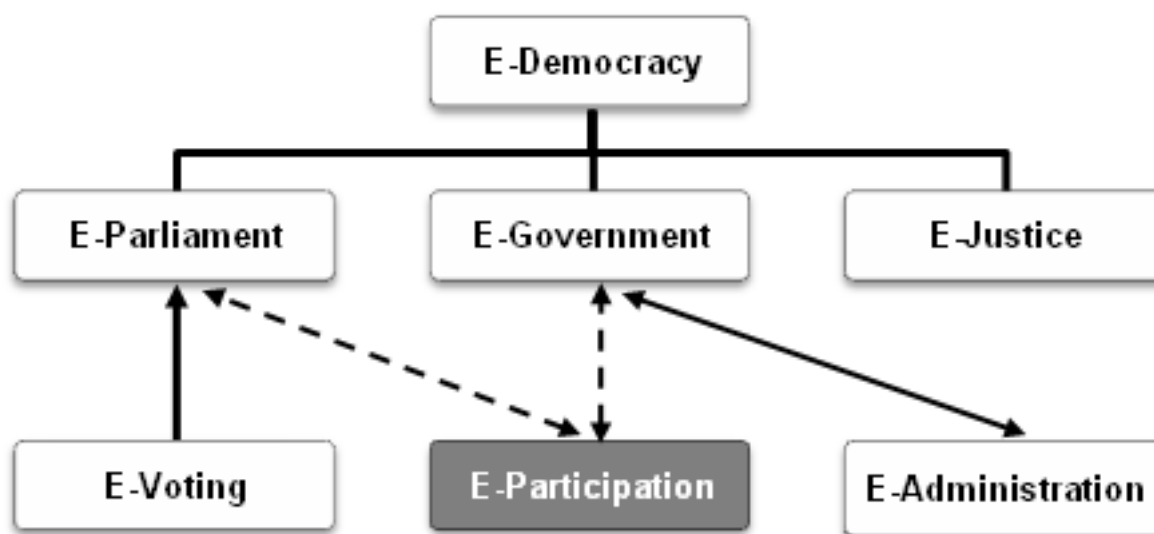
<sup>18</sup> See Rheingold 1993; Negroponte 1995

<sup>19</sup> See Davis & Owen 1998; Hill & Hughes 1998; Davis 1999

<sup>20</sup> DEMO\_net was a Network of Excellence in eParticipation project, funded under the European Commission's sixth framework programme: Information Society Technologies IST (FP6-2004-27219) (2006 - 2008). See [<http://www.demo-net.org>] (5/24/11)

much effort is needed to mobilise them for this interaction<sup>21</sup>. Thus, if participation requires concrete action from all participants, it becomes apparent that target-group specific mobilisation of participants, as well as the facilitation of appropriate communication platforms and channels is a prerequisite for successful eParticipation. The integration of Web 2.0 applications, such as social networks, into a platform for eParticipation provides new opportunities for eParticipation pilots, possibly helping with this mobilisation.

At the same time, it becomes clear that eParticipation is an element of eDemocracy that does not focus on election processes; nor is it limited to a simple transformation of offline into online participation processes. Instead offers new opportunities for participation in policy-making processes as a whole. Early phases of policy-making processes, like identifying stakeholders, information, consultation, discussion and other discursive elements for opinion-formation, are more in focus than the later phases of decision-making (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2: eParticipation as element of eDemocracy<sup>22</sup>**

To sum it up, the basic characteristics of an eParticipation pilot are

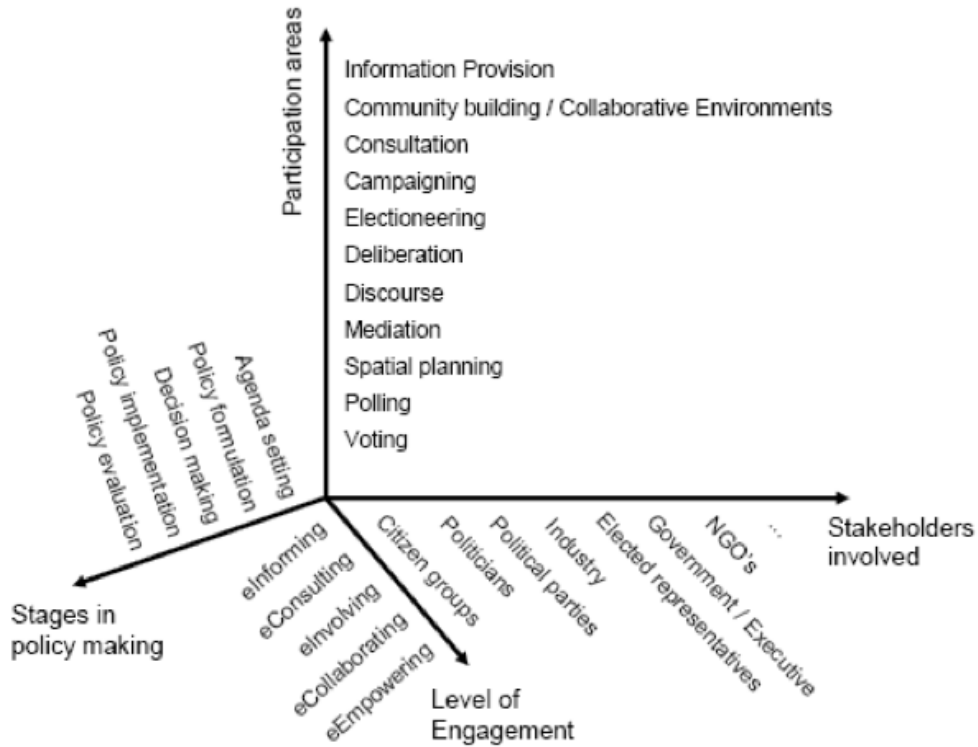
- To enable citizens to participate in different phases and levels of political decision-making processes;
- To use ICT and the Internet for direct communication between different actors and for information provision to a broad public;
- To involve different stakeholders in the dialogue;
- To dedicate special effort and energy to the mobilisation of participants, both citizens and policy-makers.

Furthermore, eParticipation projects could be characterized by stages of policy-making in focus, levels of engagement, stakeholders involved and specific areas of participation<sup>23</sup> (See Figure 3).

<sup>21</sup> Tambouris et al. 2007: 9

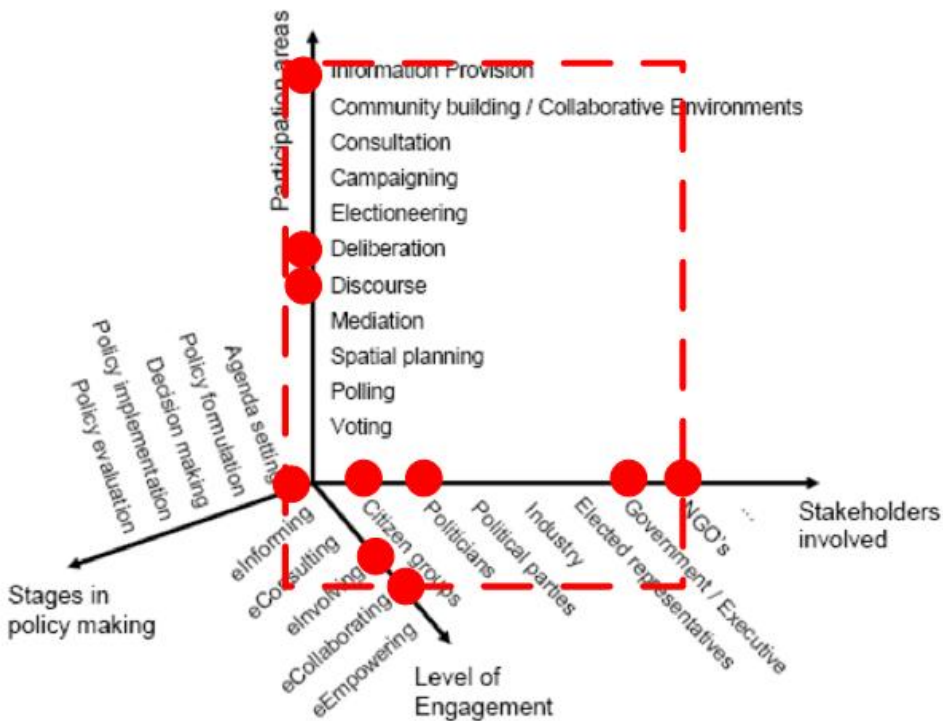
<sup>22</sup> Source: adapted from Heise 2010

<sup>23</sup> Wimmer 2007: 91



**Figure 3: Analytical model for eParticipation projects<sup>24</sup>**

Within the four dimensions of the analytical model, the HUWY project can be positioned as shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: eParticipation Levels addressed by HUWY<sup>25</sup>**

<sup>24</sup> Source: Wimmer 2007: 91

<sup>25</sup> Source: Fraunhofer ISI, 4-levels model based on Wimmer 2007: 91

- **Stakeholders** involved are citizen groups (specifically discussion groups of young people) and policy-makers: HUWY has involved government departments, elected representatives and NGOs.
- **Participation areas** targeted are information provision for both user groups, young people and policy-makers, community building/collaborative environments (provisioning of the hubs as virtual communication and information spaces) and deliberation (in the heart of the project approach).
- **The Stage in policy-making** addressed by HUWY is agenda setting, because the participants are able to choose the topics that are important to them for their distributed discussions and the discussion results posted reflect the topics of high relevance to the users.
- **The Level of engagement** in the focus of HUWY is eCollaboration, because the aim is to foster the dialogue among young people *and* between young people and policy-makers. This includes levels of engagement like eInforming (HUWY Hub provides background information for citizens, especially young people holding discussions). The platform was designed for bi-directional communication (between policy-makers and young citizens) and supports eInvolving (getting young people engaged in policy-making processes).

## 3 Pilot methodology

### 3.1 Objectives and activities

In order to make use of the advantages of the Internet as one of the most important communication platforms for young people, the use of an Internet-based communication platform is crucial for the project and addressed by the implementation of the HUWY Hubs. The HUWY project structure integrates young people as facilitators and as participants to discuss challenges and threats of the current and future Internet, supported by online technologies. Table 1 lists the topics chosen for discussions in the different countries.

**Table 1: Topics chosen for youth discussions in HUWY pilots**

Topics in UK and Ireland	Topics in Estonia	Topics in Germany
Cyberbullying	Cyberbullying	Cyberbullying
Child abuse	Child safety online	Censorship and freedom of opinion
ID theft, privacy and phishing	Safety online (related to ID theft, shopping etc)	Safety online (related to ID theft, shopping etc)
File-sharing	Copyright	File-sharing
Open thread	Open thread	Open thread
Our experiences	Our experiences	Our experiences

So, in each of the four EU pilot countries, HUWY Hub websites were implemented, offering background information about the topics, guidelines for online discussions, posts of discussion results, comments and policy-makers feedback.

The HUWY project partners provide (national) contextualised information on the chosen Internet policy related topics in each country (Table 1) and support the users in information seeking, holding discussions and posting results, plus any additional user-generated content.

EParticipation is encouraged via the online Hubs: designed to hold supporting information, space for the results of young people's discussions and feedback comments from policy-makers.

The **high level objectives** of the project thus are to

- Increase involvement in democracy
- Involve young people in policy developments related to the Internet and its governance
- Advance eParticipation.

In sum, the HUWY project proposes a "grassroots" approach to various current issues: the problems of low user engagement in Internet policy-making; scalability and localisation in eParticipation projects and services. It uses an approach of distributed discussions on specific topics at local or national levels, ideally self-organised but with strong organisational and regional context-sensitive support provided by the project partners. The specificity of HUWY is the combination of distributed actions on the one hand and centralised actions, on the other by sharing all content, discussions results, collected facts and arguments, as well as ongoing policy actions, on the national and EU HUWY Hub websites. As a consequence, the HUWY approach relies strongly on user involvement through workshops, and focus groups throughout the requirements phase: from definition of the scope and themes for discussions, to usage scenarios to support development and content specification. Users are also involved in identifying and prioritising evaluation factors and as sources of input in the evaluation process. Needless to say, the users are also at the heart of the online and offline discussion processes of the live pilot. This means that, although the major aim of HUWY is to develop and implement an EU-wide tool for Internet-based eParticipation for the young people, it has to implement offline, face-to-face communication activities right from the beginning of the project – to "get the grass growing".

In the inception phase of HUWY the project partners defined **11 objectives**, grouped under the 3 high level objectives:

#### **Increase Involvement in democracy**

Objective 1: To increase young people's involvement in democracy through a positive

experience that follows best practice established in eParticipation.

Objective 2: To demonstrate that young people's views are sought and that their opinions are valued.

Objective 3: To contribute to the development of a European public sphere.

### **Involve young people in policy developments related to the Internet and its governance**

Objective 4: To involve young people in discussions on issues related to the Internet, its use and regulation.

Objective 5: To support young people to become involved and gain understanding of relevant issues, through providing information in accessible formats and supporting their deliberation; and to provide a useful resource about Internet policy issues, in national and EU contexts.

Objective 6: To map chosen areas of the topic agenda to policy and legislative responsibility (national / EU level) clarifying political structures relevant to the topic.

Objective 7: To illustrate the role of national governments and parliaments, in designing and applying EU legislation, especially via the working relationships between EU and national bodies, as set out in the Treaty of Lisbon.

Objective 8: To support young people to develop and follow best practice in using the Internet, thus contributing to their own safety, their peers' safety and increasing positive experiences of the Internet.

### **Advance eParticipation**

Objective 9: To trial an innovative model for distributed discussion.

Objective 10: To provide a specific and transparent connection between young people and decision-making bodies.

Objective 11: To increase young people's skills in using online tools for deliberation and eParticipation.

Four *additional objectives* were designed during the user engagement evaluation to reflect the priorities of young people and policy-makers, as explored in the requirements phase of the project (see D6.1):

Objective 12: Project evaluates well using young people's evaluation factors.

Objective 13: Young people's preferred outcomes are met.

Objective 14: Project evaluates well using policy-makers' evaluation factors.

Objective 15: Policy-makers' preferred outcomes are met.

Furthermore, the project team differentiated **concrete tasks** out of the objectives which lead to the action plan summarised in Table 2.

**Table 2: HUWY Tasks at the Input Level**

Tasks	Description
Topic selection	Young people are an important user group of the Internet, especially Web 2.0 applications. Their experience places them (to some extent) as experts in the debates. They are major current and future users of the Internet, so they need to be stakeholders in policy decisions on Internet governance and related issues. At the same time, they are also particularly worried about cybercrime. Where young people are the addressees of an information campaign, it is necessary to develop target-group-specific communications and youth-specific informed content. During the requirements phase, the project teams in each participating country worked with young people to identify the broad topics that were most important to them, within the wider theme of Internet policy. In addition, partners added the topic "file-sharing", as it was prominent in policy-making and the media at that time.
National hubs as	The project teams in each country were responsible for their national hub and

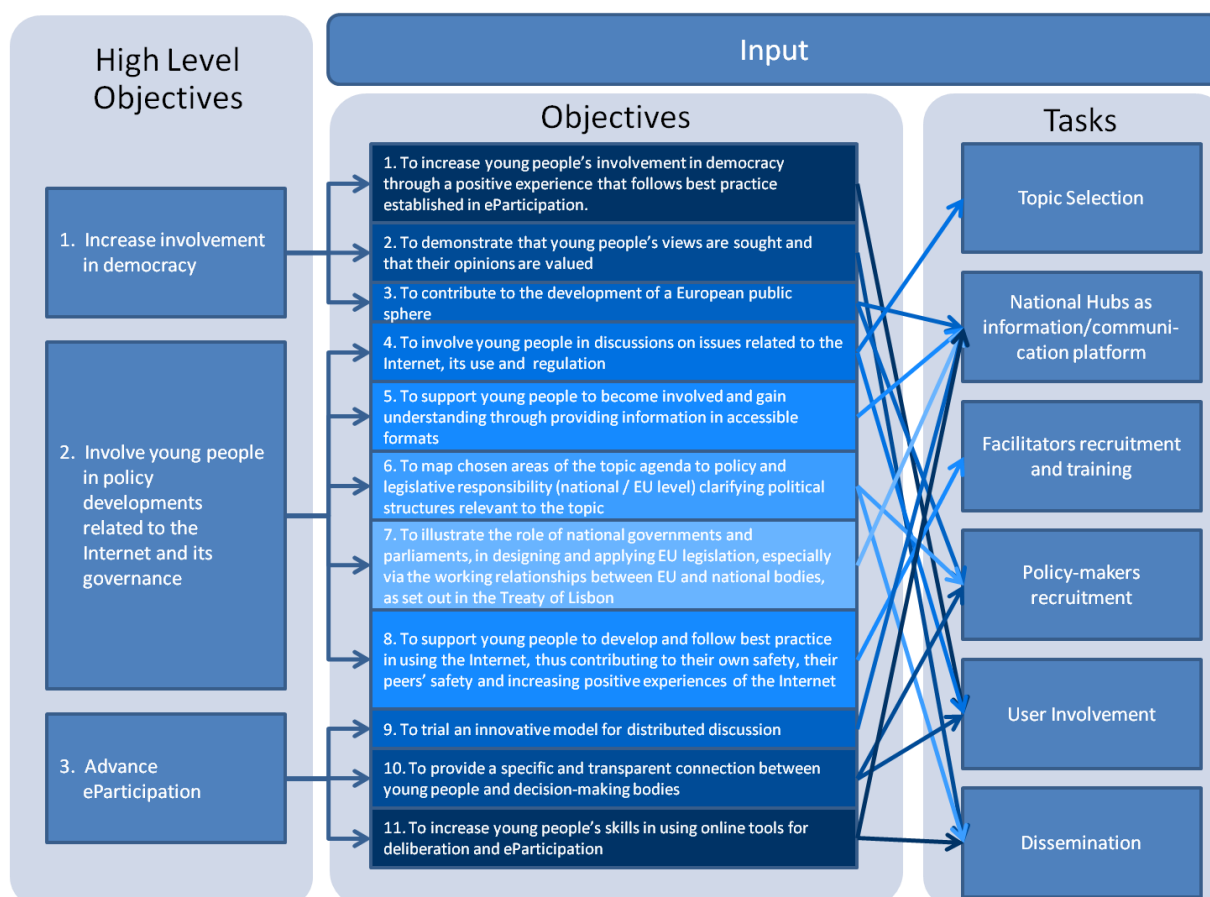
information and communication platform	thus managed the content provided, e.g. background information, news on related topics, documentation of events and discussions (both on and offline). HUWY partners had designed a content structure, which used short scenarios (stories about the topics <sup>26</sup> ) to engage young people and a range of factual materials in various formats to support deeper topic exploration.
Recruitment and training of facilitators	One main prerequisite for the mobilisation of young people is to get in touch with them and attract their attention to the project. Several experiences during the project confirmed that this was the main challenge. Workshops were used to recruit facilitators and to mobilise young people. Facilitators played a key role and received extra training. They were trained to recruit and involve young people, to facilitate online or offline discussions, to document the discussion outcomes and ideas and to use the HUWY hubs, both to find material to support discussions and for the presentation of their results.
Recruitment of policy-makers	As one aim of the project was to get young people engaged into policy-making issues and processes, it was clear that the involvement and active contribution of policy-makers was crucial for success in terms of providing feedback on the young participants' thoughts and ideas. The project team expected this to be a task to be fulfilled without major problems due to the hypothesis that policy-makers should be interested in a dialogue with young people. Policy-makers engaged in Internet policy are likely to be interested in the ideas of one of their main target groups, as well as future voters in particular. During the planning and requirements phases, policy-makers were enthusiastic about the project and keen to find out about young people's ideas (though cautious about possibilities of impact on policy-making outside of their own consultation initiatives). HUWY was relatively successful in getting policy-makers engaged in providing their user profiles on the hubs. But it was more difficult to persuade them to provide comments or other feedback on the results posts. This will be explored further in HUWY Output section.
User involvement	User involvement in HUWY means, not only to get young people to provide opinions, but to get them engaged in a process of dialogue and deliberation in order to explore the topics and possible solutions with their peers. Young people were also encouraged to produce own content for the platform, to post their discussion results and comment on each other's posts. This task was supported by workshops, collaboration with youth groups, joint events, HUWY presentations at youth events and conferences etc.
Dissemination	Besides the general importance of dissemination actions for this kind of project, it was crucial for HUWY to develop dissemination content and actions that targeted young people. As young people are using social software like Facebook, messaging and chats at the heart of their communication, it was important to include these channels in the dissemination activities of the project.

### 3.2 Relationships between tasks and objectives

Figure 5: Objectives and Tasks as Input in HUWY, below, illustrates the logic of the HUWY project at the input level, by explicitly revealing the links between the three high level objectives, their related objectives and performed tasks.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. <http://huwy.eu/uk/stories>





**Figure 5: Objectives and Tasks as Input in HUWY**

### 3.3 Evaluation methodology

The HUWY evaluation approach resembles current best practice in eParticipation evaluation as it

- works with stakeholders to integrate their objectives;
- addresses objectives from social, technical and political perspectives (macro-level);
- uses a triangulation of instruments to gather data, verify results and derive recommendations for future actions.

During the first phase of the evaluation, the HUWY team worked with young people and policy-makers to investigate the evaluation factors that would be most important to them. Their ideas added specific detail to the project objectives and are preserved as objectives 12 to 15. While in places these overlap with the initial 11 objectives, by keeping their separate identity, we were clearly able to evaluate the project's success in terms of young people's and policy-makers' separate preferences. These preferences also helped to identify which objectives to choose as **Key Evaluation Factors** for the assessment of the pilot, especially user engagement<sup>27</sup>.

The Key Evaluation Factors assessed are:

- KEF 1: To increase young people's involvement in democracy through a positive experience that follows best practice established in eParticipation
- KEF 2: To demonstrate that young people's views are sought and that their opinions are valued
- KEF 3: To involve young people in discussions on issues related to the Internet, its use and regulation

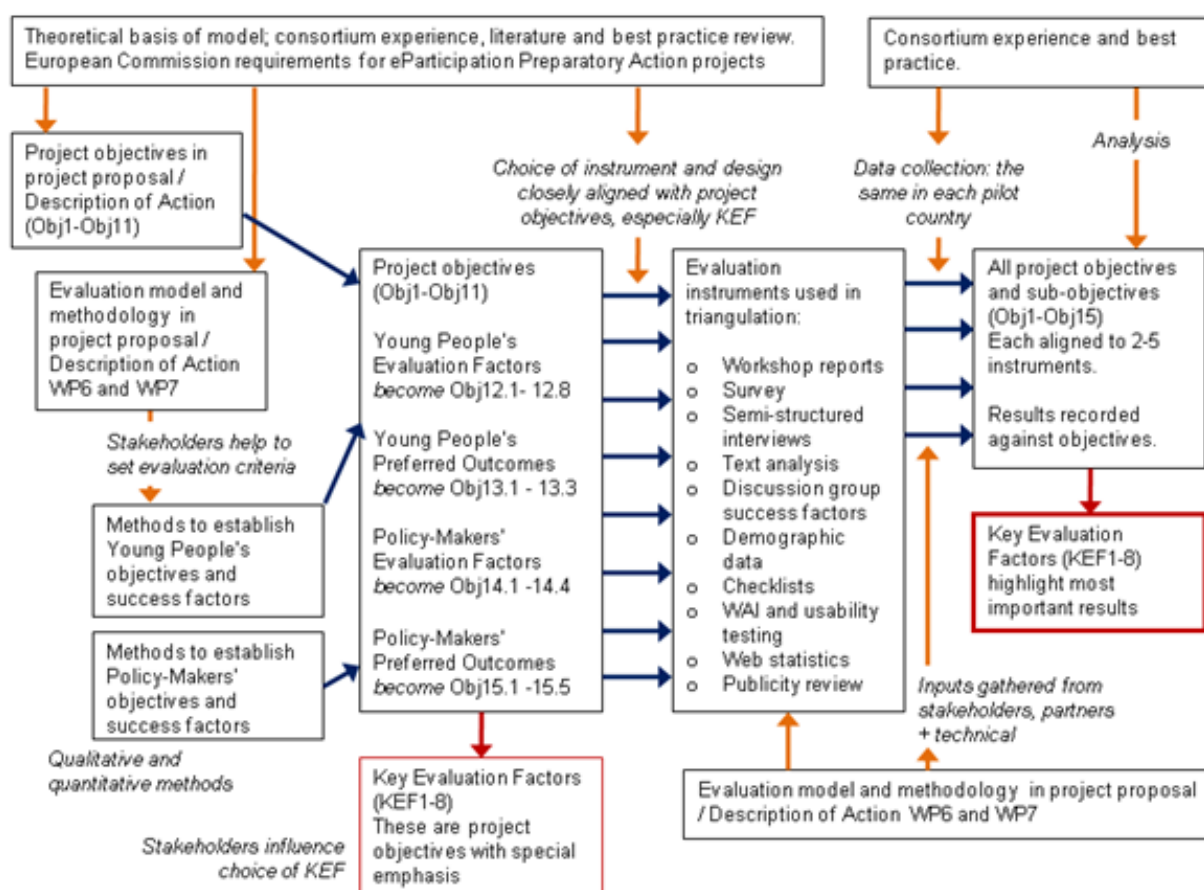
<sup>27</sup> The methods used to identify objectives 12 to 15 and choose the 7 key evaluation factors are described in D6.1. Impact and Engagement Criteria Report

- KEF 4: To support young people to develop and follow best practice in using the Internet, thus contributing to their own safety, their peers' safety and increasing positive experiences of the Internet
- KEF 5: To contribute to the development of a European public sphere
- KEF 6: The amount of ideas that will be taken into account in the policy making process
- KEF 7: To trial an innovative model for distributed discussion

The HUWY evaluation methodology is based on a triangulation of data and information collection techniques that guarantees that user perspectives (young people and policy-makers) are taken into account when assessing the success factors of the project. The output in terms of fulfillment of the objectives and related tasks has been assessed based on specific "engagement and impact criteria" (cf. D 6.1) and analysed together with the outcome in terms of contribution to the full 15 objectives (cf. D 6.2 User Engagement Report).

A set of instruments, ranging from web statistics, survey instruments, interviews and text analysis to detailed protocols and structured narratives, was designed to implement the evaluation process. The choice of instruments is described in D6.1 Impact and Engagement Criteria. The data collected is contained and analysed in D6.2 User Engagement Report, except the Publicity Review which is included in this report as Annex 3 HUWY impact assessment responses.

The evaluation model is summarised in Figure 6<sup>28</sup>.



**Figure 6: The HUWY Evaluation Model**

### 3.4 Impact Assessment Methodology

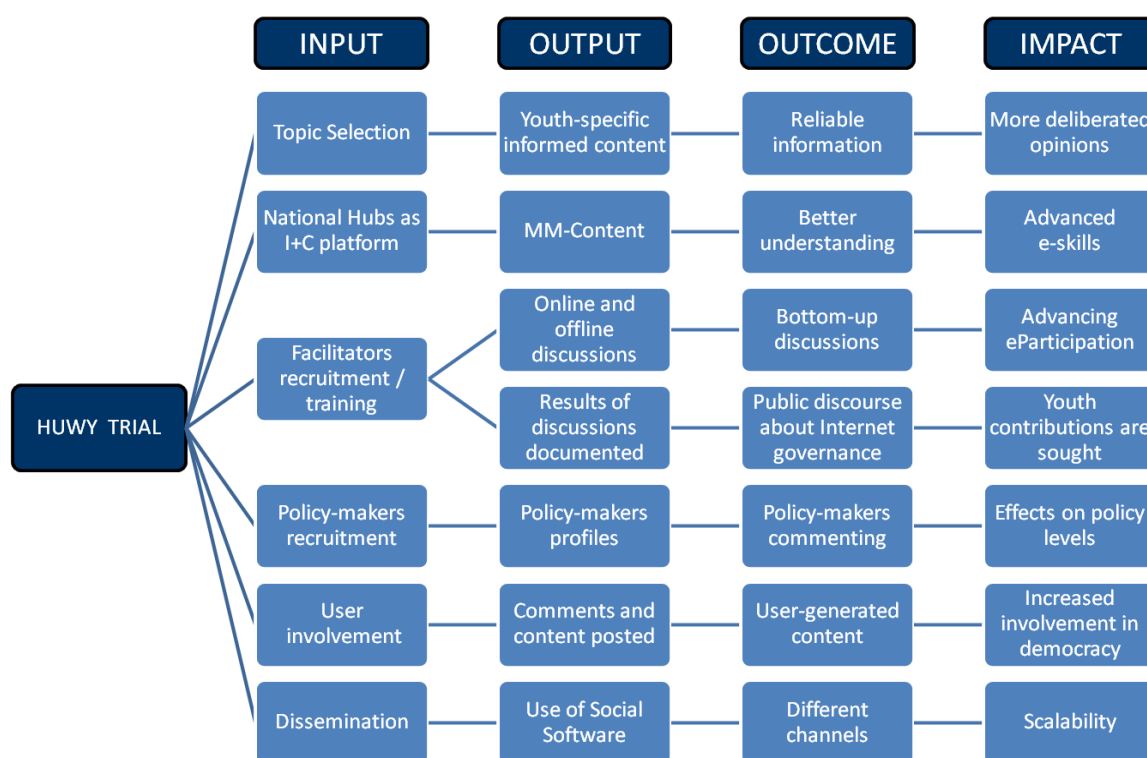
For each task at the input level the project team defined one or more expected key outputs to be measured in the evaluation process (Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart). The impact is assessed by a meta-analysis of evaluation results in terms of:

<sup>28</sup> For a detailed description see D6.1, p.14

- the user engagement in the distributed discussions;
- technical quality and sustainability of the implementation of the Hubs;
- the content provided;
- future eParticipation actions;

The HUWY eParticipation trial should ideally also have *political* impact, which is specifically evaluated in this report.

In order to make sure that the tasks developed out of the objectives and the concrete actions carried out to fulfil the tasks were in line with HUWY's expected impacts, an impact logic chart has been designed (Figure 7). The chart shows the relation of each input to its expected key output, direct and indirect outcomes and impacts. The chart serves as a model: the project team is aware that there are no simple causal effects from input to impact. It is, however, helpful to organise the impact assessment by links between different input and output strands. Some cross-effects and interrelations of success factors, as far as assessed, are described in more detail in the following chapter.



**Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart**

Following this basic logic, the expected impacts of the HUWY trial are:

- **More deliberated opinions:** The basic idea of this project was that the youth group discussions, supported by an Internet-based communication platform (with well sourced and structured background information, examples, ideas and valid arguments from young people's peer group) not only increases the knowledge base of the young people about Internet policies, but also enables a deeper, more deliberated participation, increasing the quality of young people's ideas, posted as results. It can also broaden the knowledge base of policy-makers who have to decide on Internet laws and regulation in terms of user needs.
- **Advanced e-skills:** Right from the beginning of the project, the HUWY team tried to integrate user-oriented multimedia content and links to social networks and other Web 2.0 applications to make sure that the project used adequate communication channels, both to reach the target group of young people and also to integrate them directly in content production and diffusion. Besides the direct outcome of increased understanding of complex Internet policy topics, a further expected impact of the project was in advancing e-skills of the young people working with HUWY through (advanced) use of video (YouTube), social

networks (Facebook etc.). The project provided some opportunities to learn how to use the technologies and how to communicate via different channels.

- **Youth contributions are sought:** Policy-makers are integrated into the discussion process, by offering them the opportunity to attend workshops and events with young people, create own profiles on the hubs, help to provide background information and, above all, give direct feedback by posting comments. This was expected to demonstrate clearly that policy-makers appreciate the engagement of young people in Internet policy-making and future developments.
- **Effects on different policy levels:** HUWY planned to aim at all levels of policy-making, from local initiatives to regional, national, and European, including both parliamentary, ministerial and related NGO decision-making processes. Partners tried to realise this by inviting policy-makers at all levels to participate in discussions on the HUWY Hubs and attend offline events.
- **Increased involvement in democracy:** This is a major impact expected from the project as user-engagement with good quality information and positive experiences in dialogues among young people and between young people and policy-makers could influence the future engagement of young people in a positive way. Furthermore, policy-makers might feel encouraged to integrate distributed discussion mechanisms into decision-making more often in the future<sup>29</sup>.
- **Scalability:** The distributed discussion model implemented on a public Internet platform is open to anyone and network effects could increase number of participants within days, if the topic is of high relevance and dissemination strategies are successful.

The following table provides an overview over the methods and indicators applied for the evaluation of each objective relevant to the expected impact.

**Table 3: HUWY Impact Assessment Methodology**

Aims of Impact Assessment	HUWY Objectives addressed	Methods
To measure political impact by the end of the project	O2: To demonstrate that young people's views are sought and that their opinions are valued. O3: To contribute to the development of a European public sphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensity of use of Hubs by policy makers</li> <li>• Text analysis of groups and discussion results on Hubs</li> <li>• Text analysis of policy-makers' feedback to discussion results</li> <li>• Structured interviews with policy-makers</li> <li>• Analysis of participant demographic tables</li> <li>• Young people's assessment of policy-makers' responses (through survey and in interviews)</li> <li>• Publicity review ( See Table 8: PR Review template and responses on p41)</li> </ul>
To summarise levels and effects of user engagement	O1: To increase young people's involvement in democracy through a positive experience. O4: To involve young people in discussions on issues related to the Internet, its use and regulation. O5: To support young people to become involved and gain understanding of relevant issues, through providing information in accessible formats and supporting their deliberation. O8: To support young people to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of participants' feedback from HUWY events</li> <li>• Text analysis of Hub content provided by users (youth groups results' posts)</li> <li>• Online survey of users</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews with users</li> <li>• Analysis of increase in awareness of best practice use of the Internet through text analysis of results posts</li> <li>• Analysis of policy-makers' feedback in interviews (focus on usefulness of information)</li> </ul>

<sup>29</sup> The UK government is currently conducting a "listening exercise" into plans to reform the English National Health Service. A process similar to the HUWY distributed discussion model has been used. [<http://hale.dh.gov.uk/2011/05/25/the-mechanics-of-listening/> ]

	develop and follow best practice in using the Internet, thus contributing to their own safety, their peers' safety and increasing positive experiences of the Internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quantitative analysis of participant demographics for events, discussions and users in general</li> <li>Analysis of evidence of any increased enthusiasm for democratic participation, including any views of the EU, in results and comments posted on the hubs (text analysis), feedback from events and comments</li> </ul>
To assess the technical quality and suitability of the implementation	<p>O9: To trial an innovative model for distributed discussion.</p> <p>O10: To provide a specific and transparent connection between young people and decision-making bodies</p> <p>O11: To increase young people's skills in using online tools for deliberation and e-participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usability and accessibility testing</li> <li>Scalability analysis</li> <li>Policy-makers feedback</li> <li>Feedback and outputs from HUWY events and interviews</li> <li>Participant demographic tables</li> <li>Analysis of strengths/weaknesses in the model, tools, and processes (See Table 7 on p34 )</li> <li>Identification of good practices and improvements</li> </ul>
To analyse the content provided by the consortium on the Hubs	<p>O6: To map chosen areas of the topic agenda to policy and legislative responsibility (national / EU level) clarifying political structures relevant to the topic.</p> <p>O7: To illustrate the role of national governments and parliaments, in designing and applying EU legislation, especially via the working relationships between EU and national bodies, as set out in the Treaty of Lisbon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Note: mapping of HUWY topics to policy and legislative responsibility turned out to be not feasible<sup>30</sup></i></li> <li>Content analysis of discussion groups by country</li> <li>Content analysis of further information provided by Hubs/project partners</li> <li>Analysis of surveys and interviews regarding usefulness of Hubs</li> </ul>
To include suggestions for best practice in terms of future use of the Hubs (or similar) and the distributed discussion model	<p>O9: To trial an innovative model for distributed discussion.</p> <p>O10: To provide a specific and transparent connection between young people and decision-making bodies.</p> <p>O11: To increase young people's skills in using online tools for deliberation and eParticipation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice analysis within HUWY's national actions</li> <li>Comparison to other initiatives, good practice analysis</li> </ul>

The full analysis of 15 project objectives was carried out in the User Engagement Evaluation (D6.2). The analysis of the HUWY distributed discussion model in terms of technology and processes was analysed in the Sustainability and Scalability Review (D7.3). This identified the main issues for future use and recommendations for anyone following the model. The results of these reports are used as input for this final impact assessment.

<sup>30</sup> The mapping would be too complex and also subject to constant change, as responsibilities for topics like "Cyberbullying" run across many government and non-government organisations.

## 4 Assessment of the HUWY Trial

See Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart on p19

### 4.1 HUWY Inputs

HUWY partners established a project website in the first year of the project. This contained information about the project and a news events blog. It was divided into four –with the blog and information for each country in separate sections and in the appropriate language. The website went live in June 2009. Its content was subsumed into the Beta hub websites, when these went live in March 2010. The HUWY hubs were further revised, based on the experiences of the pilot, and Gamma hub websites replaced Beta hubs in December 2010.

Thus, the eParticipation mechanism developed to support the HUWY pilot consists of a network of Hub websites designed:

- to support a distributed discussion on Internet policy topics;
- to provide well-structured, user-friendly information about the chosen topic area in a variety of formats, including outlines of current legal positions;
- to collate the results of the discussions in a form useful both to youth groups and policy-makers. The Hubs support youth group representatives to add the results of their discussion categorised by youth group and topic(s);
- to record feedback from policy-makers through comments on results posts.

#### 4.1.1 Topic Selection

HUWY addresses the issue of Internet governance by focusing on **selected topics** (See Table 1 on p14). These topics were chosen by working with young people in workshops and focus groups in the first year of the project. The discussion groups investigated some of these issues within their discussion agenda. By uploading their results in whatever format chosen, they provide information and arguments both to young Internet users and policy-makers engaged in Internet regulation (and to a broader public).

#### 4.1.2 National hubs

The key innovation of HUWY is that it is based on a system of **national hubs** and that the discussions are hosted and managed by youth groups (including casual groups of young people). Some discussions take place in off-line contexts and others within different online community spaces, possibly including social network sites. This model is eminently scalable as youth groups are encouraged to use their own forums and all results are collated and structured on the hubs. This approach allows a great variety of participants and technologies without creating separate forums. The discussions may take various formats and be hosted on all sorts of websites, including social networks. If discussions are online, results posted on the hubs can link to more detail within the original discussion.

#### 4.1.3 Facilitator Recruitment and Training

The HUWY teams ran a series of workshops and events to **recruit and train facilitators** and promote the project to different audiences (e.g. students, youth NGOs, teachers, youth workers, etc.) It turned out that offline work with facilitators and cooperation with partners at local and national levels were key to user involvement.

#### 4.1.4 User Involvement

Communication and dialogue about policies related to the Internet are at the core of the HUWY model. As a consequence, **user involvement** was an important activity right from the start of the project. The emphasis within the early phases of the project was on engaging with young people and politicians to ascertain their interests and needs in this context. In each of the partner countries, focus groups and workshops were held to define the key topics that young people felt were of greatest relevance to them and to identify ways to engage them. Participants of the discussion groups were invited to national and international HUWY events, during the project, and facilitators were encouraged to host their own events.

#### 4.1.5 Recruitment of policy-makers

Young people are HUWY's main target; policy-makers are the second target group. The Hub websites aim to provide policy-makers with good quality, structured information about young people's informed views on topics related to the Internet and its governance. As a consequence, the **recruitment of policy-makers** is a key success factor for the project. The HUWY consortium includes some policy-making bodies as partners. The HUWY team endeavoured to recruit additional policy-makers, including policy-makers at local and regional level. They were invited to upload a profile and to participate in the discussions by giving feedback on the youth groups' results by adding comments on the Hubs. They were also encouraged to attend HUWY events and interact with young people directly. HUWY worked with policy-makers to find the most helpful ways to organise youth group results, to identify the most appropriate policy-makers to respond to young people's posts and to find ways to convince these policy-makers to become involved in the project and participate in the discussions. A third user group is the broader public. All supporting information provided for and by the youth groups is available as open access on the Hubs.

#### 4.1.6 Dissemination

The Hub structure is the key element of the **dissemination** strategy, together with target-group specific recruitment actions like events and liaisons with facilitators and policy-makers. Furthermore, the HUWY project is not about developing new integrated software but about using the Internet and social software which are already the first choice of media for information and communication by most of the young people in Europe. The HUWY consortium has taken up the challenges set by Coleman and Rowe (2006):

"When seeking to engage with young people, decision makers should utilise those sites and methods of communication that young people already use, rather than simply building new websites and expecting young people to come to decision makers".<sup>31</sup>

The project has been designed to support the use of whatever sites and software for online communication youth groups choose. The hubs are created from open source social network components<sup>32</sup>. The involvement of youth groups is further supported in face-to-face settings through (offline) workshops. Thus, the dissemination strategy of the project did not specify or restrict the media, technology or ways of communication the youth groups should use.

## 4.2 HUWY Outputs

The D7.3 Sustainability and Scalability Report shows that the HUWY project finally was successful in creating and testing Gamma versions of the online hubs in all countries and that these can be used after the project. The User Engagement Evaluation (D6.2) indicates that the distributed discussion model, as applied in the HUWY project, was successfully implemented, although some challenges remained in engaging youth groups, holding online discussions, and bringing policy-makers into the project and onto the Hubs to read and respond to youth group ideas. Table 4 notes the evaluation instruments that this assessment of outputs is based on. The data and detailed analysis for each instrument is provided in the report, as listed in the table.

**Table 4: Evaluation instruments**

Evaluation instrument	Report
<b>Workshop reports</b>	D5.2 Workshop reports
A <b>survey</b> of young people (a final questionnaire)	D6.2 User Engagement Report
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b> with young people/facilitators	D6.2
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b> with policy-makers	D6.2
<b>Text analysis</b> of results & feedback posted on the hub websites	D6.2
Templates collecting <b>discussion group success factors</b> (identified by HUWY partners)	D6.2 and D7.3 Sustainability and

<sup>31</sup> Coleman, S./Rowe, C. (2006) Remixing Citizenship Democracy and young people's use of the Internet; Carnegie Trust, UK, <http://www.carnegietrust.org.uk/files/main/Remixing%20Citizenship.pdf> (5/30/11)

<sup>32</sup> The early project website and Beta hub websites were created from WordPress Multi User, with additional plugins and some bespoke functionality. The Gamma hub websites were created from Drupal components.

	Scalability Report
Templates collecting quantitative data about discussions ( <b>demographic data table</b> )	D6.2
Project/ <b>model checklist</b>	D6.2
<b>WAI rating</b> (accessibility testing) and <b>usability testing</b>	D7.3
Template for a <b>Hub content check</b>	D6.2
<b>Web statistics</b> (Google Analytics)	D6.2
Template for a <b>publicity review</b>	D7.4 Results this report <sup>33</sup> .

The following sections describe how the output goals of the project have been reached, based on the data gathered through the evaluation instruments and following the schema in Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart.

#### 4.2.1 Youth-specific informed content

Due to the focus on the target group of young people, the HUWY project put specific effort into developing and providing **youth-specific informed content**. The HUWY consortium conceives young people as valuable expert stakeholders in current Internet governance issues such as cyber bullying, child abuse, ID theft, privacy, phishing, and file-sharing. The discussion results uploaded on the HUWY hubs confirm that, as a major user group, they are often confronted or involved in one way or another in these issues. The content analysis of the youth groups' results posts, in combination with the user survey results, reveal that content of interest to the young participants was provided by the project. HUWY's approach - to encourage young people to choose the most important topics to them and to allow them to produce own content within their discussion group - seemed to have been successful.

#### 4.2.2 Multimedia content

In addition, some discussion groups, e.g. the 'Fraunhofer Talent School' and European Youth and Social Media Exchange<sup>34</sup>, generated their own content in multimedia formats. The HUWY hubs contain **multimedia content** and URL-links to other information sources like documents, videos, etc. This content was not only provided by the HUWY project team, but also by the young participants, which shows that some of them were highly engaged in the discussions, searching for and producing further relevant and reliable/engaging information.

#### 4.2.3 Online and offline discussions

During the project, distributed **online and offline discussions** were facilitated, run by different youth groups (or causal groups of friends), using their own choice of platform and instruments<sup>35</sup> or shared services (e.g. Facebook groups). It should be noted that most groups favoured holding their discussions offline in face-to-face environments. Despite the modus of space (online/offline) in which the discussions were held, all groups **documented their results** and uploaded them to their national Hub.

#### 4.2.4 Policy-maker profiles

As mentioned above, the involvement of policy-makers turned out to be quite challenging, varying both in terms of approach and success between the four countries. First of all, the success of getting policy-makers involved depended on the policy levels and their roles and positions. It needed personal attention and constant liaison activities to keep them interested and get them to upload **personal profiles** to the HUWY Hub (or provide them to HUWY partners to post). The policy-makers' profiles were an important signal to the users that the whole project was of interest to people in power/decision-makers. Furthermore, one idea was that policy-makers could use their profiles to encourage young people to get in touch with them or to communicate about ongoing actions from their side (e.g. consultations, petitions, arguments, white papers). Unfortunately this option was not taken by the policy-makers and reasons for this have to be examined further.

#### 4.2.5 Comments and content posted

<sup>33</sup> Annex 2 Impact assessment template

<sup>34</sup> <http://eyism.eu/>

<sup>35</sup> See demographic table about discussions in D6.2. User Engagement Report



It was not only a challenge to persuade users to start discussion groups, but also to keep the discussions going and get **results and comments posted**. This holds true for both target groups: young people and policy-makers. The discussion groups were supported by the HUWY teams during the whole project. For example, the facilitators were trained and received relevant background information about the project and the topics. Hotlines were implemented to support people to in use the HUWY hubs, to answer any questions occurring during the project or to receive feedback from users. Guidelines for the organisation, facilitation and documentation of the discussions, as well as lesson/activity plans, topic guides and templates for results were provided.

#### 4.2.6 Use of social software

It was a specific aim of the HUWY project to integrate **social software** tools in the concept of the distributed discussion model, both as tools to support discussions and for recruitment and dissemination. The Social Web is a constantly developing and changing field, both in terms of motivations for its use and the range of basic and comparable functionality. Social software changes permanently, even though mainly in details. There are three main motivations for the use of these tools: identity management, relationship management, and information management.<sup>36</sup> Recent studies reveal that the younger generations are overrepresented among the users of social software tools<sup>37</sup>.

### 4.3 HUWY Outcomes

#### 4.3.1 Overview

Young people are HUWY's most important user group. The initial objectives of the trial were based on possible positive impacts on engagement and skills for young people taking part in the project. Through working with young people, the project team was able to be more specific about ways to measure the quality of the HUWY project, to consider young people's point of view (for example young people valued the quality of results posts and interactions with policy-makers) and identify the most important outcomes to measure. Young people wanted outcomes that are real and public: changes to the law; public discussion of their ideas; meaningful feedback from policy-makers.

The main user engagement evaluation results are that the HUWY project successfully engaged young people in discussions about Internet policies and that it has been a positive experience for most of the participants. It gave participants an insight into the policy-making process and increased their knowledge and skills in terms of good practice use of the Internet and their rights. So the learning effects for young participants happened at the level of informed and deliberated opinions on the topics discussed *and* at the level of developing skills to make use of the Internet as an information and communication tool. As most of the eParticipation actions in the HUWY project took place offline, the eParticipation aspects of the project were less successful. While the Estonian team exceeded their target number of participants, participant numbers in Germany, Ireland and the UK were disappointing. All HUWY teams succeeded in getting policy-makers involved in the project. Policy-makers posted feedback on young people's discussions group results, as comments on the hub websites. Some of these posts were of good quality, but the volume was rather low.

The evaluation of user engagement in the HUWY project leads to the following conclusion:

- HUWY has increased involved young people's involvement in democracy and has provided positive experiences for participants. eParticipation elements were less successfully realised.
- Overall, the project has only partially fulfilled the aim of policy-maker involvement. However, the project confirms the importance and relevance of involving policy-makers in a participation project and emphasises the rewards of bringing young people and policy-makers together at events.
- Once involved, the different young people and their groups provide considered, topical and relevant input about internet, its use and regulations. However, the project was only partially successful with respect to the numbers of participants which remained low in most countries.

<sup>36</sup> Schmidt, J.-H./Paus-Hasebrink, I./Hasebrink, U. 2009

<sup>37</sup> Franz 2010

- The project has supported young people's skills in deliberation and better understanding of group processes and, through this, has supported the development of the EU public sphere.
- There is no evidence of young people's ideas being taken into account in the policy-making process.
- The distributed discussion model is relevant and provides valued opportunities to support young people's informed participation. All feedback mechanisms show that the offline discussions and events were vital components of the model and should be included in any distributed discussions.

The results of the user engagement evaluation, both for policy-makers and young people, show that not all expected outcomes of the project have been successfully accomplished. The following sections describe the outcomes of the project, based on the data gathered through the evaluation instruments and following the schema in Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart.

#### 4.3.2 Reliable information

The **reliability of information**, a prerequisite for deliberation, has been achieved, according to the feedback from the users. All project partners prioritised reliable and well investigated high quality information on the hub websites, following good standards of online publishing, e.g. naming the authors of articles, providing pro and contra arguments where possible, indicating sources of information and links to further reading and other websites.

#### 4.3.3 Better Understanding

The diversity and broad range of information supported a **better understanding** of complex topics by the young participants. The Estonian partners commissioned materials specifically to be used by high school teachers in discussions on HUWY topics.

A better understanding was also reached *through discussion*, because young people not provided evidence to defend their own views and ideas in discussions with each other. They also gained insight into different views and perspectives, broadening their outlook. In Germany, some of the discussion groups held scenario workshops to develop joint perspectives on possible futures. This helped the participants to imagine outcomes and impacts of current developments in the use of the Internet and regulatory options. Another method used by some discussion groups in Germany was role play. By taking different roles (e.g. teachers, parents, police), young people learned, and better understood, their points of views and arguments. Interestingly, discussion groups who used role play came up with more clearly expressed demands for stricter Internet laws and regulation than other groups.

#### 4.3.4 Bottom-up discussions and public discourse about Internet governance

More elaborated discussion methods need well-trained and well-prepared facilitators. The facilitators need to know, and be able to use, different workshop facilitation methods and instruments. A very important aim was to support **bottom-up discussions**, in which a facilitator played a guiding, rather than leading, role. Furthermore, the facilitator was asked to take care of the project's documentation (results) and posting of it on the HUWY hub. Well documented discussions offer a variety of different critical views and statements, ideas and solutions, which contribute to a richer **public discourse about Internet governance**. HUWY project partners tried to recruiting a variety of suitable facilitators, training them adequately and providing relevant tools and guidelines as necessary. The Irish partners created a peer facilitation guide, refined through intensive workshops with young people and youth workers, which was translated by other partners and provided on their hubs. In these ways the HUWY teams supported the bottom-up discussions and public discourses. Co-operations with experienced facilitators from youth groups and schools also had network effects, as they were sometimes able to recruit new facilitators or recommend the HUWY project to people working with other youth groups or young people.

#### 4.3.5 Policy-makers commenting

The expected outcome of having **policy-makers commenting** on youth group discussions and posts was not really successfully reached. Although some countries, like Estonia, had been quite successful in engaging policy-makers, others, like Germany, had problems in motivating policy-makers to post comments on the HUWY hub. The liaison activities with policy-makers were not as successful as expected and, for some partners, it was extremely difficult to even reach them on the phone. It

seems as if the overall topic Internet Governance too often gets squeezed out of the policy agenda by other (perhaps simpler) topics.

#### 4.3.6 User-generated content

The user involvement led to the outcome of **user-generated content**. Although the discussion groups preferred to hold their discussions offline, in schools, at home or in youth clubs for example, most of them posted their results on the HUWY Hub websites<sup>38</sup>. Few discussion groups, even those with well equipped and engaged facilitators, produced multimedia content and posted it on the Hubs or on YouTube. The expectations of a strong involvement of social network tools were not met at all. The HUWY posts on Facebook and Twitter came from HUWY project team members and cooperation partners like the German Youth Press<sup>39</sup>.

#### 4.3.7 Different channels

However, a few HUWY discussion participants used their Facebook profiles to link to HUWY and to comment on results. But no real discussions were generated or groups built on social networking sites. Thus **additional channels** were not really used.

## 4.4 HUWY Impacts

### 4.4.1 Challenges for eParticipation in Europe

At the beginning of the project, eParticipation in Europe was facing a number of challenges, including:

- Increasing the scale to involve a significant number of people and have a real impact on democratic culture, while avoiding repetition and duplication;
- Involving a wider range of people (culture, age, education and abilities);
- Integrating the increasingly popular Web 2.0, especially social-networking tools (SNT) into decision-making processes;
- Having a measurable impact on policy and legislation;
- Dealing with cross-border challenges, like political structures, language and alphabet.

All of these challenges have been addressed in the pilot: see Table 5.

**Table 5: Challenges and specific measures**

Challenges for eParticipation	Measures in the HUWY Pilot
Increasing scale to involve a significant number of people, while avoiding repetition and duplication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On- and offline discussion groups have been integrated via national Hubs</li> <li>• Groups are encouraged to use external platforms (e.g. social networks) and links to other sites</li> </ul>
Involving a wider range of people (culture, age, education and abilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-demographic characteristics have not been pre-defined by the HUWY team</li> <li>• Instead, the definition of group structure, agendas/topics, technologies and platforms are yielded to the groups/group leaders</li> <li>• Working with established youth groups can help to bring in young people from diverse backgrounds, as some of the groups have specific goals to include marginalised young people</li> <li>• Results are available to the public on HUWY hubs</li> </ul>
Integrating Web 2.0, especially social-networking tools, into decision-making processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Groups are encouraged to use external platforms (e.g. social networks) and links to other sites</li> <li>• Web 2.0 and social networking tools are integrated both in the communication of the project to the public and within the discussion groups<sup>40</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>38</sup> Or sent them to HUWY teams to upload. Some UK groups provided results via Google forms and content was extracted and added as results posts by QUB's team.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.jugendpresse.de/>

<sup>40</sup> See the top referrals to the hub websites, recorded in the Website Statistics (via Google Analytics) in D6.2.

Having a measurable impact on policy and legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving policy-makers as partners to get “buy in” throughout the project and try to create processes that could involve them</li> <li>• Encouraging the most relevant policy-makers to read young people’s ideas</li> <li>• Encouraging policy-makers to be specific about possible influence in their feedback posts</li> <li>• Inviting policy-makers to events to meet young people directly</li> </ul> <p><i>However, these methods can only encourage impact via policy-makers. This impact is unlikely to be direct and measurable</i></p>
Dealing with cross-border challenges, like political structures language and alphabets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressed right at the beginning: the hub structure allows national activities in line with national framework conditions and links to other countries via the EU Hub</li> <li>• Content of national hubs address problems and solutions at national and regional levels</li> <li>• At the same time, consolidation at EU-level can be realised by the project’s EU Hub</li> <li>• Gamma hubs are implemented in Drupal, which has extensive language, alphabet and translation support.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4.2 Impacts and objectives

Table 6 shows the results of evaluation, based on how the objectives have been met by the project, with a specific focus on the impacts identified in Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart. The analysis is based on both quantitative assessments documented in previous deliverables and qualitative assessments, through additional information provided by the project partners.

**Table 6: Objectives, evaluation and impacts**

Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Results
To increase young people's involvement in democracy through a positive experience that follows best practice established in eParticipation	Did HUWY provoke topic relevant discussions? (defined by topics related to future of Internet/ Internet governance).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, young people in Estonia, Germany, Ireland and the UK discussed the topics cyber bullying; phishing, ID theft and privacy/data protection; (child) safety on the Internet and file sharing.</li> <li>• In Germany Internet censorship was also a topic. This means that the same chosen topics were relevant in the decentralised discussions in the trial countries.</li> </ul>
	Any new topics arising?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most relevant topics vary from country to country. Whereas in Estonia the topic (child) safety was most often discussed, the UK discussed primarily phishing, ID theft and privacy.</li> <li>• A lot of posts on the Estonian and UK hubs deal with other themes (48) or experiences of Internet use (72). Also in Ireland.</li> </ul>
To demonstrate that young people's views are sought and that their opinions are valued	Are young people's views sought - by the HUWY partners, by policy-makers, by any others?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The HUWY team made use of newsletters and social networking sites to communicate new result posts from young people.</li> <li>• Policy-makers’ feedback comments, on the hubs, demonstrated that the opinions of the young people are sought.</li> <li>• Some countries were more successful than others in getting policy-makers involved and engaged on the Hubs. This seems to depend on factors like policy level structures in the country/region, proximity to policy-making institutions, government/election</li> </ul>

		timetables/competing topics on their agendas (e.g. crises) etc.
	Are young people's opinions valued - by the HUWY partners, by policy-makers, by any others?	All policy-maker statements and comments were positive and most of them showed that they agree with at least some of the ideas in the young peoples' posts.
To contribute to the development of a European Sphere	Has the European Sphere been addressed, referred to?	Most of the discussions dealt with the topics in general, not specifically with the European Sphere.
To provide useful resources about Internet policy issues, in national and EU contexts.	Did HUWY provide the necessary information?	Yes, all hubs provided background information related to the four HUWY-topics in a variety of formats, including legal information, videos, podcasts and articles.
	Did it provide useful information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information provided on the hubs and at events was rated as useful by the participants.</li> <li>In addition, useful information was provided via blogs posts (on and off the hubs), Social Communities and Twitter.</li> <li>Estonia supported teachers with specific information; Germany encouraged youth workers, teachers, pedagogues, community education workers to become involved.</li> <li>Regularly newsletters were sent out and over 50 events organised within the 4 pilots<sup>41</sup>.</li> </ul>
To set up a pilot for youth eParticipation	Did the HUWY model work? Have all the objectives been met?	All objectives have been met, but the involvement of policy-makers did not work well, numbers of young people participating were a little low on ¾ countries, online options weren't as well used or integrated as planned.
	Are there any good practices on the project level (cross-country)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most successful groups were those that already knew each other. They did not spend much time on building trust and the personal contact was vital.</li> <li>Events (e.g. workshops) with good numbers of participants also worked well to build different single discussion groups.</li> </ul>
	Are there good practices in different types/countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estonia addressed teachers and provided lesson plans.</li> <li>Estonia also paid some facilitators for their hard work</li> <li>Germany organised a scenario workshop for one discussion group and at a two-day workshop for participants from one discussion group, which produced its own multimedia content for the HUWY Hub.</li> <li>Ireland developed a well-received Facilitators' Guide, including a peer facilitation model.</li> <li>UK had success in working with a specific youth group (Young Scot) and involving many young people through personal contacts in a specific school.</li> <li>All partners were successful when they organised discussion groups in their own university/institute sessions.</li> </ul>
	What are the top	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offline discussions are favoured by the young</li> </ul>

<sup>41</sup> Workshops and dissemination events are recorded in D5.2 Workshop Reports.

	learnings?	<p>participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy-makers need more persuading to be active users of projects and platforms like HUWY.</li> <li>• From participants' feedback: HUWY was an interesting approach to involve young people in policy-making related to Internet topics with a decentralised discussion model.</li> <li>• But for successful dissemination and involvement of much larger number of young people/discussion groups' strategic marketing mechanisms have to be applied.</li> <li>• More partnerships with NGOs and youth organisations could also increase the number of participants.</li> <li>• Teachers need guidelines, lesson plans (and possibly more expert support) to tackle certain topics.</li> </ul>
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These results can be used to check how the HUWY project succeeded in meeting the expected impacts. (See Figure 7: HUWY Impact Logic Chart).

#### 4.4.3 More deliberated opinions

The topic focus and provision of youth-specific content and background information for the discussions effectively supported **more deliberated opinions**. This could be seen by the positive assessment of the HUWY project in the user survey and in the demonstrated engagement of young people in the discussions at specific events where HUWY workshops were held.

#### 4.4.4 Advanced e-skills

The implementation of the HUWY Hubs was conducive to the development of **user skills and Internet literacy** of the young participants. Young people not only learned about the Internet in theory through the discussion of threads, challenges and possible solutions; they also had the opportunity to practice eParticipation by searching for information on HUWY hubs and other sources, learning about topics and tasks of policy-makers, creating results posts and commenting on other posts.

#### 4.4.5 Advancing eParticipation

The **advancement of eParticipation** was also stimulated by the distributed discussion model, developed throughout the pilot, which combined offline discussion with online elements like information searching and comments posting etc. The facilitators recruited for the HUWY project were sensitised and trained to support deliberative thinking, listening to others and to managing their groups. As a result, some of the participants gave feedback that they really enjoyed the debates and learned more about the duties and responsibilities of policy-making. The young participants who did role-playing during their discussion events often developed a much more critical attitude towards the use of certain Internet applications or topics like file-sharing. This often resulted in a demand for more restrictive Internet use and legal consequences.

HUWY's engagement with policy-makers was less successful. The recruitment of policy-makers was disappointing in all countries, which made it difficult to assess HUWY qualities like the model's support for national policy-systems or the hubs' as a place where young people could interact with policy-makers. Including policy-makers as consortium partners had mixed results. It was most effective where engagement with young people was specifically part of their remit within their job<sup>42</sup>.

#### 4.4.6 Youth contributions are sought and impact on policy levels

<sup>42</sup> For example, the UK's Ministry of Justice became partners through their Citizen Engagement Initiative and were active in the requirements phase. After the initiative finished in February 2010, it was difficult for MoJ to devote time to the project, especially after the change of government in May 2010. State Chancellery of Estonia sustained their involvement, as e-consultation is important to their work. However, they had limited paths to use young people's ideas to influence policy-making.

Partners worked hard to liaise with policy-makers. For example, the German project team put much effort in talking to the relevant policy-makers in person and meeting them at parliamentary events, but other topics seemed to have more immediate relevance (importance?) than the contribution to HUWY. At the end, this did not support the expected impact of demonstrating to the youth that their **contributions are sought**. It is possible, for example in the German pilot, that, because policy-makers agreed to be involved and have their profiles posted on the HUWY hub, but did not participate in discussions, this might have left the impression to the young participants that their contributions are not sought. Only one policy-maker was really engaged and posted comments on several discussion results. Other countries had slightly better experiences with policy-maker involvement, with some good quality posts and valued interactions at workshops and events. However, the volume of feedback posted was low in all countries and none implied measurable feedback.

The low involvement rate of policy-makers indicates that the HUWY project is unlikely to have much **impact on policy levels**.

#### 4.4.7 Increased involvement in democracy

A major positive impact of the HUWY project is a measurable **increased involvement in democracy**. A qualitative increase in involvement in terms of engagement and interest in democratic processes at the individual level was observed, although, out of the 4 countries, only Estonia met their target number of participants.

#### 4.4.8 Scalability

**Scalability** impacts have been reached as the trial successfully demonstrated that a distributed discussion model is scalable, via an Internet platform, in technical terms. The recruiting and training of facilitators turned out to be a good way to support e-skills learning effects of users and positive group processes: discussions were positive experiences for the participants. However, scalability effects have not been remarkable through the integration of social networking tools. A further analysis of the role of social software tools in the HUWY project revealed that the potentials of using social networks to support discussions were probably very limited in practice, though they are potentially powerful for dissemination.

## 4.5 The potential and impact of social networking tools for eParticipation and distributed discussions

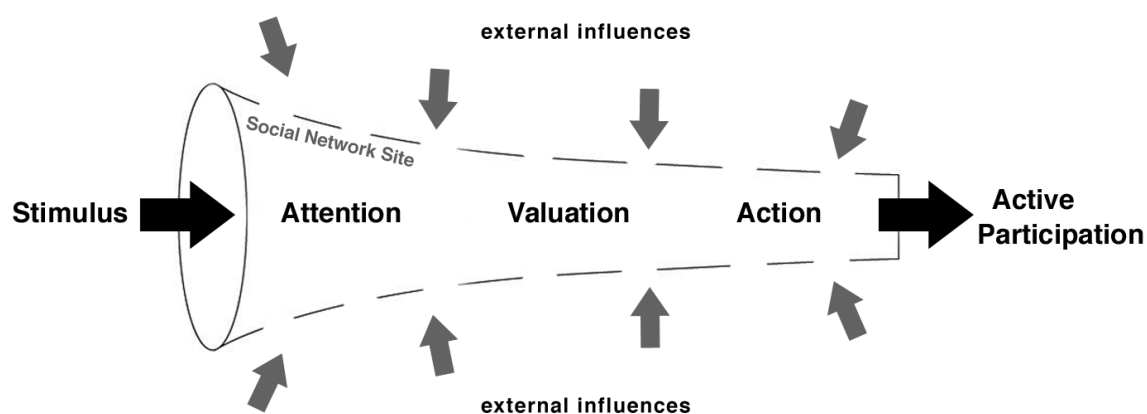
In this section, we focus briefly on the potential impact of Facebook as a channel for distributed discussions. The analysis of the impacts of social software tools within the HUWY project was based on seven qualitative interviews with German<sup>43</sup> participants (4 female and 3 male). At the time, these were all active Facebook users. The main aim was to get a more detailed idea of young people's behaviour on Facebook and the potential to integrate social software tools into eParticipation projects. The interviews were structured into four categories, which were derived from the Mobilisation Chain model (Figure 8: Mobilisation Chain Model for eParticipation). The categories comprise

- Frequency of use
- Functions and motives for use
- How young people received "Wall-Posts"
- User-generated content and active behaviour
- Memberships of Groups and Fan-Pages.

The method applied to analyse the interviews was qualitative content analysis of transcribed interviews.

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<sup>43</sup> This investigation was only carried as part of the German pilot, so its findings may not all apply in other cultures. It is also closely based on FaceBook, so findings may apply to similar community sites, but are unlikely to apply to less similar tools, like Twitter.



**Figure 8: Mobilisation Chain Model for eParticipation<sup>44</sup>**

The theoretical framework for this analysis is a Mobilisation Chain model, which has been further developed for the use in the HUWY project. The chain model depicts how important external influence factors during a participatory effect are for the successful negotiation of a participatory action. It is suggested that such a process starts with a stimulus. For example, possible stimuli in HUWY may have been an experience with Internet fraud or the invitation to join a discussion group where topics of relevance to the participant are to be discussed. A successful stimulus is defined by attention attracted and has to be kept interesting through a phase of validation, in order to finally lead to a concrete action, which is defined as active participation. This chain model was used to develop an idea of the steps to be negotiated by the participant if he/she participates in a discussion on topics like the ones of HUWY on their social network site.

The analysed cases (interviews) provide insight into the potential of use of social software tools like Facebook.

Based on current knowledge about the reasons why young people use Facebook and for what purposes (management of identity, relationships, and information)<sup>45</sup> the hypothesis was that the benefit of implementing Facebook pages (or similar) in eParticipation initiatives is limited. The results validated the hypothesis in the following ways:

- When using Facebook, the young interviewees focus mainly on private communication and management of their peer-group relationships.
- Active participating actions, like spreading information, sharing recommendations and managing information, are only of secondary relevance.
- If web content is shared via Facebook with friends, awareness is subject to imprecise scanning of new Wall-Posts, ignoring certain recommendations and less frequent visiting the platform.
- Interviewees were more likely to arrange private appointments and try to stay up to date about daily topics with their closer friends and people they did not see for a while.
- Incoming information via Wall-Posts is limited by extensive use of filter functionality.
- Joining Pages or Groups is mainly done to simplify information management.

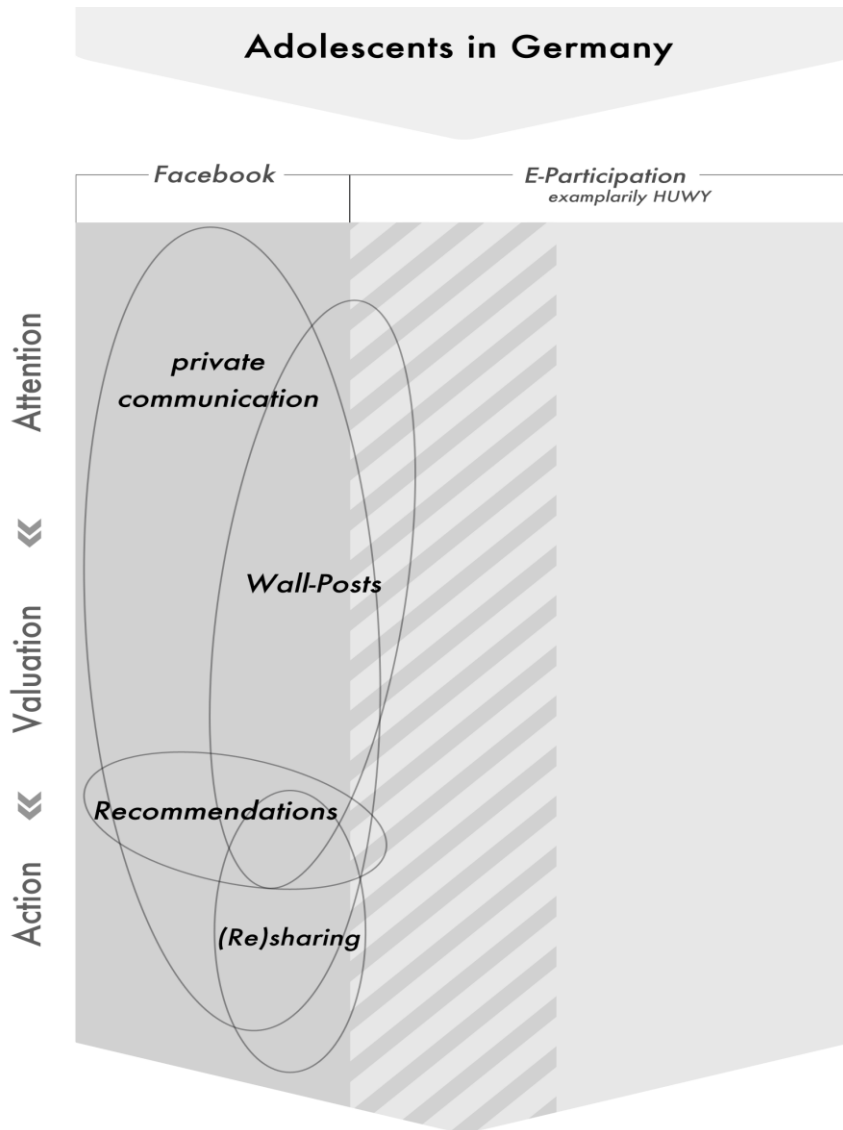
As result of these insights the real potential to use FaceBook to support eParticipation swiftly declines over the course of the Mobilisation Chain (figure 9). The highest (theoretical) potential can still be assumed in the approach of an appropriate stimulus (e. g. a Wall-Post) when it is spread by young people among themselves (depending on the respective relationship between two young people) and when topic and media format are orientated towards the target group. Therefore, to win over young people into political participation, it is highly important to be aware of their potential role as effective networkers (ambassadors) among their peers. The insights about the use of Pages as a presence for an eParticipation initiative (e.g. in the form of a Fan-Page) could encourage teams to support and

<sup>44</sup> Source Fraunhofer ISI, based on "Paradigm for Attention & Participation" by Michelis, 2009

<sup>45</sup> Schmidt/Paus-Hasebrink/Hasebrink 2009



retain already active participants with a supply of frequent information. However, it's not clear how well this supports mobilisation of new participants.



### Active Participation

**Figure 9: eParticipation and the Use of Facebook**

The model in Figure 9 shows a comparison of the theoretical and analysed potentials of social network tools (in this case Facebook) within the process of mobilisation (Chain of Mobilisation) in eParticipation initiatives.

Use of Facebook in the German HUWY pilot demonstrated that simply "being present" on Facebook is not enough to harness the potentials of social network tools. Young people are more or less active Facebook users but reaching them via social networks depends on the quality of understanding of their behaviour on this platform.

## 5 Conclusion and lessons learned

The HUWY project successfully engaged young people in discussions about Internet policies. User feedback mechanisms show that it has been a positive experience for most of the participants. It gave participants an insight into the policy-making process and increased their knowledge and skills in terms of good practice use of the Internet and their rights. So the learning effects for young participants happened at the level of informed and deliberated opinions on the topics discussed and at the level of developing skills to make use of the Internet as an information and communication tool. As most of the discussions (participatory actions) in the HUWY project took place offline, the eParticipation aspects of the project were less successful. While the Estonian team exceeded their target number of participants, participant numbers in Germany, Ireland and the UK were disappointing, though the number of groups involved and results posted was good. All HUWY teams succeeded in getting policy-makers involved in the project, though levels of feedback posted online about young people's discussions group results were rather low.

The assessment of the technical quality and suitability of the implementation showed that the trial was an innovative model for distributed discussion and, due to the high flexibility of the partners involved, it was possible to develop offline actions to support the online posting and information provision. In some countries, like Germany, and at the EU event in Letterkenny, the team invited young participants to produce content for the Hub and this turned out to further increase their e-skills in using online tools for deliberation and eParticipation.

For using social software tools and networks to reach and mobilise young people for eParticipation, the initiatives will have to manage several challenges in the future. Young people who are already participating are probably the best way to convince other young people to join in via social networks. The challenge is to persuade/support these participants to do that. Examples of critically discussed marketing strategies which make use of social networks, especially Facebook, in this context show that conflicts occur between ethical aspects of persuasion on the one hand and strategic communication on the other. These are especially relevant in eParticipation projects. Technical possibilities can be implemented to realise a strategy, but may not be successful. EParticipation projects can probably still learn from successful Social Media Campaigns realised by NGOs and youth organisations. EParticipation initiatives will have to follow current developments and implement carefully targeted strategies to profit from existing and new potentials.

Table 7 summarises the HUWY project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

**Table 7: SWOT analysis**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports engagement of a variety of youth groups</li> <li>• Aggregates young people's opinions and minimises extremes through deliberation processes</li> <li>• Aggregates youth group opinions</li> <li>• Enables policy makers to get overview of variety of ideas without investing too much time</li> <li>• Can include groups without ICT access or with less sophisticated digital skills</li> <li>• Technical structure could be implemented at low cost</li> <li>• Content of the project is exiting and highly relevant to the youth groups</li> <li>• Young people who have been involved have found the experience valuable</li> <li>• Increased young people's knowledge of safe internet use and regulatory processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weaknesses of the Beta version of the online-platform meant that the whole distributed discussion model is only partially tested</li> <li>• Extensive resources needed to provide up to date and relevant background data</li> <li>• Extensive resources needed to motivate and support group discussions</li> <li>• Can produce too many ideas and, without additional moderation and summarising, the ideas can be overwhelming for a policy maker to use<sup>46</sup></li> <li>• Too few policy makers are involved at the moment/difficult to create clear paths for impact</li> <li>• Lack of formal structure to support project in this particular area of work</li> </ul>

<sup>46</sup> If larger volumes of results had come in earlier in the HUWY project, we would have explored ways to support policy-makers here.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be integrated into formal education and informal youth and community work</li> <li>• Can distribute youth group ideas to a variety of policy makers (levels, type, theme) at the same time</li> <li>• Discussion groups summarise their own ideas for policy makers</li> <li>• These can be used to recruit more policy-makers</li> <li>• Cooperation possibilities with existing initiatives (preparatory work for youth parliament, connected with internet safety)</li> <li>• Content of the project can easily be replaced and the platform can be used separately from the initial content</li> <li>• Model could be used by groups of all ages and on any topic</li> <li>• More international aspects could easily be integrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of policy debates that the model can handle is limited</li> <li>• By aiming to provide accurate and useful supporting information, the model is open to introduction of bias</li> <li>• Lack of awareness in the different policy levels</li> <li>• Cost and capacity intensive in terms of providing information, recruiting/supporting groups, public relations and liaison to stakeholders at policy level</li> </ul>

The flexible approach has been the biggest strength of the project. Differences in implementation between the countries increased the value of the pilot in terms of bringing global issues of Internet governance together with regional contexts and topics. Each country's pilot also worked as a case study for certain aspects of their national context.

HUWY team were keen to involve young people in content production and provision, to get them actively involved in the project, by collecting and providing background information, and to support positive experiences of using the Internet, through the distributed discussion approach and the production of multimedia content.

Although the project plan was adapted to the context in places, almost all high level model phases were completed. In terms of the model checklist, all tasks were completed or mostly implemented. However, the project implementation differed from the project vision in the low levels of use and integration of online tools. Most discussions were held offline. A series of problems with the hub websites meant that their central position in the project was lost. Thus discussions were atomised, rather than networked. Young people were less likely to visit the hub websites, read and discuss the results of other groups. Unstable hubs could not provide a reliable focus for recruitment and dissemination through most of 2010.

The Gamma hub websites coming out of the project are rated A under WAI. The website developed throughout the pilot: Beta and Gamma versions of the hubs were tested with users, improvements made and problems fixed, though there are still some small outstanding issues. A successful implementation of the model requires both good quality online tools and high levels of skilled staff support. The detailed needs of the project, especially in terms of supporting groups of users to add content to the sites, required sophisticated community software components like Drupal, rather than basic components like WordPress.

Policy impact at the national level is difficult to measure due to a lack of clarity or transparency of decision-making processes and the influence of numerous factors. So the basic idea of HUWY was to involve policy-makers into the engagement actions to help mitigate the confusion. This turned out to be quite difficult in some countries, probably in relation to complexity of different policy levels (federal, state, etc) and thus different cross-responsibilities. However, policy impacts may also arise after the project has ended. To make sure we also include these impacts, all partners have tried to anticipate HUWY's likely impact over the 6 months following the end of the project.

The policy impacts of the HUWY project are focused strongly on learning processes and deliberative information processes, through participation of individuals in the distributed discussion. However, HUWY has not succeeded in having a measurable impact on policy. It was not possible for the project to demonstrate that young people's views are sought and that their opinions are valued in all partner countries, beyond limited interactions online and at events. Reasons for this are discussed above and

in the Sustainability and Scalability Report (D7.3). However, more insight really is needed on this, through further studies.

HUWY partners felt that young people involved in the project would value coming together at events with young people from all 4 countries. A European Youth and Social Media Youth Exchange, was organised by some of the HUWY partners in July 2010 and young people from Estonia, Germany and Ireland attended<sup>47</sup>. This was a valued opportunity to explore HUWY topics in international groups. Youth groups from Germany, Ireland and the UK also came together at the First Dissemination Workshop in December 2009. However, beyond this, European level or cross border youth groups were involved in this initial pilot. Any project following the HUWY model could usefully include planning to bring young people together in international workshops, at various points throughout the project. The HUWY team would value the opportunity to be involved in a similar event, perhaps using the HUWY outputs as inputs to the discussion.

Contribution to the development of the public sphere worked through increasing groups' positive experience of democracy. Opportunities young people from the pilot countries to network, contributed to the European Public Sphere, were well-received and should be more central to future, similar projects.

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<sup>47</sup>organised by HUWY partners and sponsored by Léargas <http://eysm.eu/>

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## Annex 1 Incorporation of reviewers' suggestions from interim-review

This annex describes how the HUWY partners have addressed the reviewers' suggestions the project's interim review meeting in April 2010.

### Evaluation

**Suggestions:** The project should focus on the evaluation and assessment of the proposed "distributed discussions" model for user engagement, based on specific criteria according to objectives. Both qualitative and quantitative criteria should be incorporated, reflecting both the young users' views (in terms of impact, satisfaction, etc) and objective success factors (use, popularity) possibly leading to the trial's benchmarking. A detailed breakdown of the objectives would be necessary, plus specific success criteria for each objective, e.g.:

- All stages of model fulfilled (checklist for requirements, content and evaluation against criteria)
- Measures for political impact
- Measures for quality and suitability of the implementation (including content, etc)
- The level and effects of young people and policy-makers engagement
- Accessibility via WAI rating AA and Usability testing
- User satisfaction - Users find information provided accurate and helpful - feedback about involvement in HUWY (from young people and Policy Makers)
- Increase in skills and awareness (related to topics)
- Organisations want to use Hubs in the future
- Intentions to vote in elections
- Information about users –numbers and demographic spread.

**Implementation:** The HUWY evaluation methodology was indeed based on the 11 initial project objectives and an additional 4 objectives established through working with young people and policy-makers. Many of the more abstract objectives were broken down into several detailed sub-objectives for this process. A triangulation of methods was used to gather data to measure progress on each objective. All the methods suggested were implemented, except "Intentions to vote in elections". Partners did not think that self-reporting would provide accurate data on this, so looked for increased interest, enthusiasm and knowledge about democracy and how government works through survey and interview inputs and text analysis of young people's comments. The full methodology for evaluating the project against its objectives is described in D6.1 Engagement and Impact Criteria. Benchmarks are specified for each input used and several inputs are used to assess each sub-objective. The evaluation process, data, analysis and results are recorded in D6.2 User Engagement Report. The Specific objectives, methods and results table (p73 in D6.2) contains the objectives and sub-objectives, chosen data sources (to an individual question level of detail) and results according to benchmarks.

**Suggestion:** The results evaluation should leverage the trial's experience to cover all aspects of the proposed model.

**Implementation:** D7.3 Sustainability and Scalability Report contains the technical assessment of the hub websites (including WAI rating and usability testing) and information about possible uses and users of the model in the future. It includes relevant information from the user engagement data collection to assess the implementation of the trial. Valuable contextual information is added by structured narratives provided by HUWY partners in each pilot country, in order to inform anyone implementing a similar initiative.

### Schedule

**Suggestion:** Because the project was 3 months behind schedule, any delay in submitting D6.1 Engagement and Impact Criteria (beyond M19) should correspond to an equal extension of the project duration, in order to ensure that there was enough time for the evaluation and the analysis of results.

**Implementation:** D6.1 was submitted in M21 (September 2010) and a corresponding 2 month extension was agreed<sup>48</sup>.

## Cross-project collaboration

**Suggestion:** The project partners should investigate common areas of interest with other Youth e-Participation projects co-funded by the EC (possibly leveraging on MOMENTUM experience). Working together with the European Youth Parliament is also recommended in order to explore the application of the “distributed discussions” methodology to other domains (such as School Communication Policy) and promote sustainability. Contacts to other pan-European networks such as the parties who produced the leaflet “Under Surveillance” funded by Fundamental Rights & Citizenship programme may also be beneficial.

**Implementation:** Partners worked with Léargas to implement a European Youth and Social Media is a Youth Exchange Project, under the EU funded Youth In Action Programme <http://eyism.eu/>. Partners worked with the IGF Remote Participation Working Group to provide remote hubs for the Internet Governance Forum meeting in Vilnius, September 2010<sup>49</sup>. Partners also discussed their experiences with people working in related projects, including Safer Internet projects, EU Kids Online 2, IDEAL EU and EuroPetition<sup>50</sup>. However, we did not manage to establish contact with the European Youth Parliament or involve established EU or international bodies in the HUWY pilot, because implementing the pilot was so resource intensive.

## Sustainability after contract ends

**Suggestion:** It is recommended that dissemination and marketing activity is now geared towards sustainability, targeting non-profit organisations involved in Internet policies (at national, EU and international levels), which may be keen to extend use of this facility to more territories, age groups and over a new time period, as the importance of involving people in discussions about the Internet and its governance becomes apparent. In this context, the Hubs content should be further developed, it should be given a European dimension and it should be used to systematically engage external promotion partners.

**Implementation:** With this in mind, partners prioritised creating stable, good quality hub websites that would last beyond the project period and be easy for facilitators to use: a Gamma implementation, in Drupal, was added to the project plan, as it became clear that the Beta hub websites (implemented in WordPress) could not support the distributed discussion. Partners also arranged a hosting and maintenance contract for the 12 months following the project end. However, partners only had limited resources to update the content and increase its European dimensions. HUWY partners spoke with a number of non-profit organisations about using the distributed discussion model and/or hub websites to support their future work. A number of possibilities were identified and these are described in detail in D7.3 Sustainability and Scalability Report.

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<sup>48</sup> HUWY was originally scheduled to end on 31/01/2011. It was extended till 31/03/2011

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.huwy.eu/uk/news-blog/2010/08/26/have-your-say-igf>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>; <http://www.ideal-eu.net/> and <http://europetition.eu/>

## Annex 2 Impact assessment template

All Partners to answer the following questions (in bullet points only). Answers to be combined with secondary analysis of content extent on the hubs and publicity materials and user evaluation inputs, as recorded in the User Engagement Report.

The template was completed by the German team first to provide example answers, for level of detail etc

1. Have there been any references, acknowledgements, statements on cross-country issues/EU level in the HUWY communication (posts, discussions, on- and offline)? (a) Online; (b) Offline (in the press or press releases, in participants' feedback of Letterkenny summer school)  
*Please tell how many in total for a) and b) and give 2 examples for each.*
2. Has there been any feedback or reference to feedback from policy-makers besides on the HUWY website, demonstrating that the opinions of the young are sought? (anything not yet analysed by policy-maker interviews or content-analysis, any statements or declarations by policy-makers in the press, in declarations, speeches, quotations in HUWYs own press releases/newsletter, also talks given at HUWY events.

Please list and give detailed source information (e.g. press release on policy-makers homepage), also about policy level of person (local/national/regional/EU) In the case of press: press /media type and title, date, quoted person, coverage details like no. of recipients if available)

"..."referring sentence (translated in English)	Date	Role/function of Person quoted/speaking	Policy level	Source

3. **Has there been any additional feedback from policy-makers in external sources** like Facebook, homepages, press releases of policy-makers? Please list them with date and source.

Feedback quotation (translated to English)	Date	Role/function of Policy makers	Source

4. **Did HUWY provide useful resources?** Number of documents/online articles provided by you plus no. of links to other sources provided by you, sorted by topic. (*To answer to objective 5a, will be combined with secondary analysis of content analysis and results of user survey by ISI*)

Topic Name	Number of different articles/stories (all media types, including video)	Number of links to external sources /incl. YouTube etc.

5. **Please further describe your national approach for content provision (production and structuring, see D3.1 Content)**

- Starting from the overall HUWY approach addressing the young and policy-makers, did you address additional target groups or sub-groups (e.g. in Estonia also teachers...)?
- Did you provide specific content for the additional target groups? Give examples (e.g. guidelines, class material, with links)
- Did you integrate multimedia content (video/audio, also if only by link)? Give examples (e.g. links)

6. Online marketing actions. Please give the following further information about your national PR strategy in terms of:
  - social media use (Facebook and others): No. of posts per media, No. of friends/followers per media).
  - use of twitter (no. followers, of tweets, re-tweets)

Media	URL	Number of posts	Number of followers/friends etc.

7. Did you see any relation between your PR actions and the HUWY user statistics (see Website Statistics in D6.2). Give 2-4 examples (topic, date, PR activity and user statistics rising).

PR action (which kind?, how many recipients/coverage)	Date	Resulting change in user statistics



## Annex 3 HUWY impact assessment responses

**Table 8: PR Review template and responses**

	Estonia	Germany	Ireland	UK
1	Have there been any references, acknowledgements, statements on cross-country issues/EU level in the HUWY communication (posts, discussions, on- and offline)?			
1	None	None	None	None
2	Has there been any feedback or reference to feedback from policy-makers besides on the HUWY website, demonstrating that the opinions of the young are sought? (not yet analysed by policy-maker interviews or content-analysis, like statements or declarations by policy-makers in the press, in declarations, speeches, quotations in HUWY's own press releases/newsletter, also talks given at HUWY events.			
2	None	None, only on the Hub (policy-makers profiles)	None	"Getting more dialogue on the future of youth engagement can only be a good thing." 2/11/2010 Activist NGO <sup>51</sup>
3	Has there been any additional feedback from policy-makers in external sources like Facebook, homepages, press releases of policy-makers?			
3	A blog post of an Member of Parliament was about the HUWY event and referring to the ideas presented there <sup>52</sup>	None	None	None
4	Did HUWY provide useful resources? Give Number of documents/online articles provided by you plus no. of links to other sources provided by you, sorted by topic			
	<p><u>Cyberbullying</u>: 7 articles, 7 videos, 14 external links. <u>Internet safety</u>: 6 articles, 7 videos, 14 external links. <u>Child safety in the internet</u>: 4 articles, 6 videos, 9 external links. <u>Copyright</u>: 3 articles, 5 videos, 9 external links. <u>Open thread</u>: 5 articles, 5 videos, 10 external links.</p>	<p><u>Cyberbullying</u>: 2 stories, 1 video, 2 podcasts (not online anymore), 1 article, 2 external links. <u>Internet safety</u>: (ID theft, privacy and phishing) 2 stories, 10 videos, 2 articles, 24 external links. <u>Censorship and freedom of expression</u>: 2 stories, 3 videos, 1 article, 17 external links. <u>File sharing</u>: 2 stories, 1 article, 4 videos, 3 articles, 8 external links. <u>Open thread</u>: 2 articles, 2 videos, 1 article, 13 external</p>	<p><u>Cyberbullying</u>: 11 Articles, 2 Podcasts, 3 Videos, 5 external links. <u>Child Abuse/ Safety Online</u>: 6 Articles, 3 Videos, 6 external links. <u>Phishing, ID Theft and Privacy</u>: 15 Articles, 2 Podcasts, 9 Videos, 16 external links. <u>File sharing</u>: 10 Articles, 3 Podcasts, 9 Videos, 12 external links. <u>Open Thread</u>: 1 article, 3 videos, 3 external links.</p>	<p><u>Child abuse</u>: 9 documents, 9 external links. <u>Cyberbullying</u>: 19 documents, 19 external links. <u>Filesharing</u>: 23 documents, 23 external links. <u>Privacy, Phishing and ID Theft</u>: 30 documents, 32 external links. <u>Open thread</u>: 2 documents, 2 external links. 2</p>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.timdavies.org.uk/2010/11/02/youth-participation-in-the-big-society/>

<sup>52</sup> <http://hannesrumm.blogspot.com/2011/01/eestlaste-rahvuslikust-eriparast.html>; This was also posted on Estonian Social Democrat's website <http://www.eestieest.eu/2011/01/eestlaste-rahvuslikust-eriparast-facebookis-ei-julge-sobrakutsele-ei-oelda/>. One of the Estonian biggest newspaper's website: <http://poliitika.postimees.ee/?r=635&blog=4426>

	Estonia	Germany	Ireland	UK
		links.		
5	Please further describe your national approach for content provision: Starting from the overall HUWY approach addressing the young and policy-makers, did you address additional target groups or sub-groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you provide specific content for the additional target groups?</li> <li>• Did you integrate multimedia content?</li> </ul>			
	First tried to use schools to get in contact with the young people. It did not work in the first round. Secondly contacted all Estonian bigger youth networks, but as they were at the time busy with many other projects they were highly interested in the topic, but did not join. After that decided that we needed a new kind of approach and you can divide that into 3 different stages: <sup>53</sup>	The final workshop was targeted to youth workers, community education workers, teachers, pedagogues in media education and teachers <sup>54</sup>	Specific attention was given to Youth Work Practitioners with a scheduled briefing exercise in the use of the Facilitator Guide HUWY Summer Exchange. The incorporation of the Multimedia content that was derived from the exchange <sup>55</sup> Large scale Presentations to groups in LYIT	Content was provided in line with the strategy described in D3.1 Content. Additional content was provided in the form of structured activities/workshops on specific topics that we held with students and at youth events. Some of these were made available for download as activity sheets.
	<p><i>Estonia Q5 continued:</i> (1) Lesson plans: For secondary school teachers about some of the HUWY topics. The lesson plans included myths about internet, stories, articles and ideas how to hold discussions. Were introduced to Estonian history and civic studies teachers, language Estonian and Russian.</p> <p>(2) Workshops held by HUWY: Estonian team held many discussions offline and online themselves – at schools, at youth organization conventions etc. Some with longer discussion models and at some places lesson plans.</p> <p>(3) Recruited a few extra facilitators to hold discussions at various Estonian schools: these were students, who agreed to hold discussions at several schools across the country and with that gave us the possibility to get ideas from schools outside of bigger towns.</p> <p>At school lessons multimedia content was used if there was internet access and computers: - showed some of the results of the youth project held in Letterkenny</p>			
	Estonia	Germany	Ireland	UK
6	Please give the following further information about your national PR strategy in terms of: - social media use (Facebook and others): No. of posts per media, No. of friends/followers per media). -use of twitter (no. followers, of tweets, re-tweets)			
	Facebook A <sup>56</sup> (3 posts, 12 followers) Facebook B <sup>57</sup> Twitter: @HUWY_ee (30 followers)	Facebook <sup>58</sup> (90 posts, 53 followers) StudiVZ <sup>59</sup> (34 posts, 25 followers) Wer kennt wen? <sup>60</sup> (17 posts, 4 followers)	Facebook A <sup>61</sup> (14 followers) Facebook B <sup>62</sup> (554 followers) Facebook C <sup>63</sup> (Event) (150 attendees)	Twitter: @HUWY_eu (85 posts, 29 followers) Twitter: @HUWYuk (86 posts, 41 followers)

<sup>53</sup> Youtube video: Don't download this song. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGM8PT1eAvY>; plus HUWY website stories

<sup>54</sup> Flyer: <http://git.mixxt.de/networks/files/file.47260>

Presentations that are published online: <http://git.mixxt.de/networks/files/file.57415>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.eysm.eu/outcomes>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/pages/HUWY-Eesti/#!/pages/HUWY-Eesti/323036078953?sk=wall>

<sup>57</sup> Institute of Journalism and Communication, University of Tartu, [http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=179725305399893&id=155080321210609](http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=179725305399893&id=155080321210609)

Estonian Parliament: <http://www.facebook.com/posted.php?id=125877820801285>

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=114793091884563>

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.studivz.net/Groups/Overview/af707dace062ad94>

	Estonia	Germany	Ireland	UK
		Twitter: HUWYde (57 posts, 84 followers)		
7	Did you see any relation between your PR actions and the HUWY user statistics.			
	<p>Invitation to HUWY event – many lists, approx. 1000-2000 recipients, (11-27/1/2011) = User numbers increased more than 4 times EGA newsletter January 2011 = User numbers increased more than 4 times</p>	<p>2 Newsletter with: information about facilitator-workshops in Karlsruhe and Berlin (5/7/2010, 23/7/2010)<sup>64</sup>. = highest number of visitors at website in July 2010 Press Release<sup>65</sup> published on 5 different websites<sup>66</sup> (17/5/2010, 17/5/2010-19/5/2010) = Second highest number of website-visitors in June and August 2010 2 Newsletter<sup>67</sup> about workshop in Letterkenny (4/8/2010, 24/8/2010) = Second highest number of website-visitors in June and August 2010</p>	<p>Online PR at St. Patricks Day Promotional Event (17/3/2011) = Over 100 attendees during the 3 hour event Online (Facebook) promotional campaign for final dissemination event (31/3/2011) = Over 100 confirmed attendees</p>	<p>Interview on BBC Outriders show (17/6/2010) = Second highest number of website-visitors in June and August 2010  Increase in visitors to hubs around Edinburgh and London workshops in summer 2010. Each was accompanied by PR activities.</p>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.wer-kennt-wen.de/club/5yj8m5s3>

<sup>61</sup> [www.facebook.com/pages/HUWY-Ireland/198551330172842](http://www.facebook.com/pages/HUWY-Ireland/198551330172842)

<sup>62</sup> [www.facebook.com/pages/Letterkenny-Youth.../130808430305816](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Letterkenny-Youth.../130808430305816)

<sup>63</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=148518131876236&ref=nf>

<sup>64</sup> Newsletter No.1: <http://us1.campaign-archive.com/?u=47607dffcc5c85b8819961113&id=0610ca518f;>

Newsletter No.2: <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=47607dffcc5c85b8819961113&id=3c878810dc>

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.huwy.eu/de/node/368>

<sup>66</sup> [http://www.jugendhilfeportal.de/wai/showdbdb.asp?action=view&db=3&c\\_msgid=DE0010009330;](http://www.jugendhilfeportal.de/wai/showdbdb.asp?action=view&db=3&c_msgid=DE0010009330;)

<http://www.lizzynet.de/wws/1008932.php>

<sup>67</sup> Newsletter No.3: <http://us1.campaign-archive.com/?u=47607dffcc5c85b8819961113&id=2d5b42bcf1;>

Newsletter No.4: <http://us1.campaign-archive.com/?u=47607dffcc5c85b8819961113&id=2cb4569726>

## Annex 4: HUWY pilot summary for EC

HUWY (Hub Websites for Youth Participation) was an eParticipation Preparatory Action project, which piloted a distributed (networked) discussion. The pilot ran in Estonia, Germany, Ireland and the UK. HUWY aimed to find good ways to support groups of young people to discuss what changes are needed to the Internet and its regulation and, further, to encourage policy-makers to interact with young people's ideas. Young people in each country chose topics (e.g. Cyberbullying, Privacy) to focus the project, also specifying an "open thread" about their experiences, relevant to the Internet.

The eParticipation innovation of the HUWY project is a new method to bring people into policy-making: distributed discussion. A family of "hub websites" support a networked discussion. Hubs contain information about the project, well-structured background materials about chosen topics, the results of young people's discussions and feedback from policy-makers. There is one hub website for each of the pilot countries, with localised information and language. This is the central node for that country. Young people hold discussions on their own websites (organisational or social) or in offline settings. These discussions post their results on their country's hub. The four country hubs are linked by an EU hub <http://huwy.eu/>: a global entry point for the project and the place to summarise results for EU policy-makers.

The distributed discussion model was devised to be as flexible and inclusive as possible: to enable young people to get involved in issues that were important to them, while they controlled the format and place of this involvement. It was designed to include established groups, like youth fora or parliaments, who had their own online spaces, especially those already talking about HUWY topics. It was also designed to include more casual groups, meeting on social networking pages or even offline.

An extensive evaluation process focused on impact, sustainability, scalability, user engagement and the effects of involvement for young people. Three reports contain the methodologies, data and results. Through this process the HUWY partners have identified the following outcomes of the pilot:

1. Young people who got involved had an enjoyable and rewarding experience that furthered their engagement with democracy and their awareness of best practice in using the Internet. HUWY got young people thinking and talking about Internet policy issues. Using group discussions as the basic node of participation increased engagement and learning.
2. Very few groups chose to hold discussions online. Participants valued structured and well supported discussions, more than the freedom to organise their own groups. Facilitators played a key role. Facilitators need to be rewarded for their hard work.
3. A distributed discussion can bring together a wide variety of online and offline participation opportunities. For this, the hub websites need to be of good quality and available throughout the process. Their use needs to be integrated with all events.
4. The hub website model can support the integration of social networking tools. However, HUWY partners found that young people did not favour SN sites as forums for discussion.
5. Young people feel that they should be able to influence policies which affect the Internet and that it is important for policy-makers to take time to listen to and understand their ideas. It was also important to them to choose the discussion topics most relevant their lives.
6. However, policy-makers found it difficult to use ideas that were not integrated into their specific policy-making and consultation schedules. We cannot identify direct paths for the results of young people's discussions to influence regulation of Internet topics, though we can identify places in which their ideas are in line with current policy.
7. The hub website information structure used short scenarios (stories) to engage and lead to more detailed factual information. This worked well, but took a lot of work to establish and keep up to date.
8. The distributed discussion model is resource intensive: establishing and supporting online and offline elements in parallel. However, it can support extensive, good quality engagement, especially through further involvement of youth organisations and media as partners.