



← take part

discuss →



← change

win →



DEMOS is an EU research and development project designed to support and encourage 'on-line democracy'.

Our Vision and Long-term Goal are to make political processes...

more democratic by motivating and enabling all citizens, whatever their interests, technical skills or income, to take an active and effective part in debate and decision-making.

more efficient than at present by exploiting the full potential of the internet as a communication medium.

This exciting project has now completed two very successful large-scale trials, one in Germany and the other in Italy with more extensive trials to come in 2002. User research from both trials to date confirms that the system is easy to use and that it offers a powerful new way for people to engage in discussions about any issues that concern them.

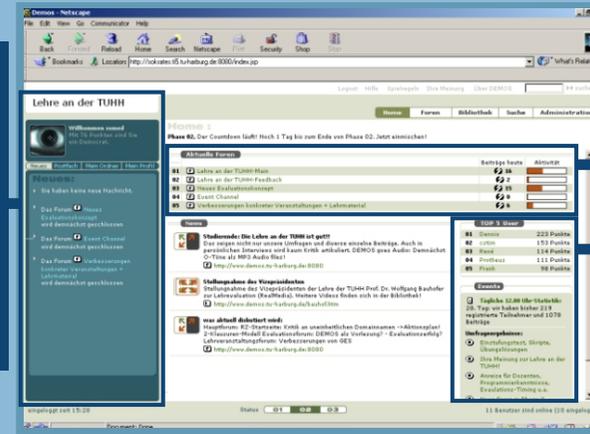
What makes Demos special?

1. Demos combines a sophisticated technical system with a novel approach to encouraging and helping citizens participate in democratic decision making processes.
2. Demos has a clear methodological foundation. It is based on a number of proven approaches to conflict resolution, argumentation and mediation.
3. Demos adds structure to political debates - discussions are organised as a process with clear, distinctive phases.
4. Demos is goal orientated - unlike conventional discussion forums, the DEMOS system is designed to result in clear outcomes within an agreed timeframe.
5. Demos has a number of features specifically designed to draw people into participating by entertaining and actively involving them in the process.
6. Demos incorporates a number of techniques for handling diverging interests and opinions, including survey techniques, mediation and the Delphi method.
7. Demos offers support for very large scale discussions - contributions are continuously summarised, the debate is condensed and visualised to enable participants to keep up-to-date, and text-mining tools and categorization help the administration of such debates.
8. Demos allows discussions to be purely web-based, thus exploiting the interactive potential of the Internet as well as adding speed and scope to communication.
9. Demos has been specifically designed to provide local authorities with a flexible communication tool which they can use to actively consult their citizens, for example through citizens' panels or mediation exercises.
10. Demos can be also used in any situation where e-participation is required or encouraged, for example in organisations wishing to consult their staff.
11. The Demos System is platform independent, technically robust and accessible via a very wide range of internet browsers.
12. Demos has been extensively tested at each level of its development and has proved itself in two substantial pilot tests.

Password Protected Private Area with ...

personal mailbox
private folder for bookmarks and "buddy list"
personal news & recommendations
user profile information

Users have to register to use the whole functionality of the system



Direct Access to the Forum of Discussion

users only need one click to enter the debate
"activity indicators" show which topics are "hot"
sub-forums are used to cover specific aspects

Top 5 User Ranking

competitive, game-like elements
awards motivate users to actively participate
surveys enrich the debate and measure the level acceptance

"DEMOS surpassed all of our expectations, because we had much more active participants than we expected... and they produced really helpful and practical suggestions."

Member of the moderation team, Hamburg

Pilot User Trials

Hamburg

At the Technical University of Hamburg-Harburg (TUHH), the DEMOS system was used to find out how teaching at the university could be evaluated and improved.

The DEMOS process ran for six weeks in November and December 2001 and some 228 students and staff registered for the trial and more than 100 took an active part in discussions. The trials produced a wealth of suggestions as to how teaching can be improved and both the staff and students who took part in it judged the system a success.

In a survey after the trial, 91% of participants thought that the TUHH should continue to use DEMOS and 86% said that DEMOS was better than or as good as other methods for communicating their views to the TUHH.

Bologna

In the City of Bologna, citizens were invited to discuss the issue of Traffic in Bologna.

Over 360 citizens took part in the debate either from home or at the iperbole open access facility in central Bologna. The DEMOS process ran for six weeks in January and February 2002. Participants were pleased to have been invited to take part and were anxious to make their views known. In particular, they felt that it was offering them a new and useful way of communicating with one another. The exercise produced a number of useful contributions and ideas regarding pedestrians, motorists, cyclists and public transport.

DEMOS is being developed by a research consortium comprising eight organisations from four different European countries, representing the fields of academic research, multimedia, software, market research and public administration.

Coordinator:

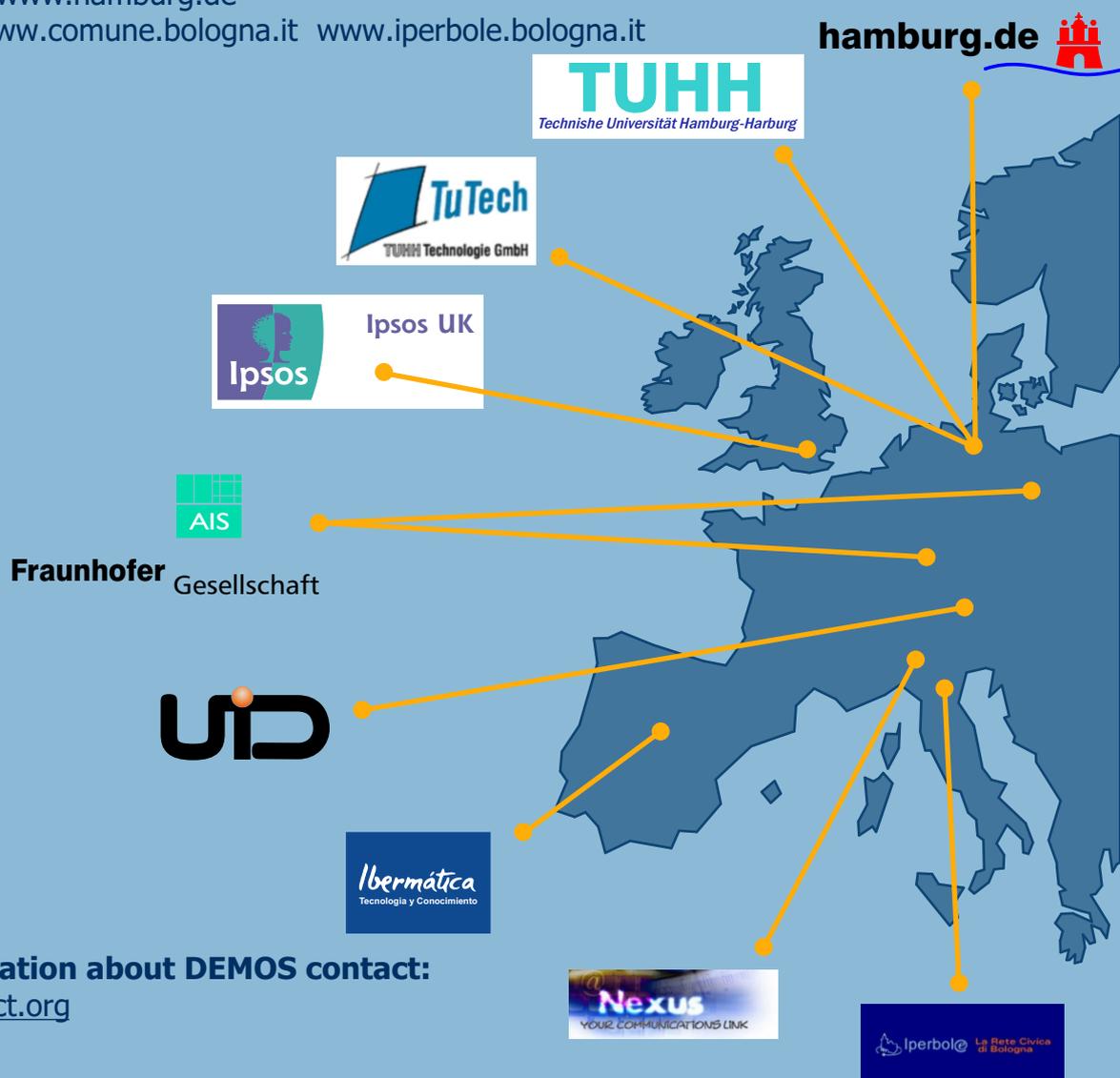
TUHH-Technologie GmbH (TuTech) www.tutech.de

Developers:

Technical University of Hamburg Harburg (TUHH) www.tu-harburg.de
Fraunhofer Institute www.ais.fraunhofer.de & www.fokus.fraunhofer.de
Ibermatica www.ibermatica.com
User Interface Design (UID) www.uidesign.de
Ipsos UK www.ipsos-uk.co.uk
Nexus www.nexus.org

Pilot Users:

City of Hamburg: www.hamburg.de
City of Bologna: www.comune.bologna.it www.iperbole.bologna.it



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