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D7.2.1 Report on Activities to Enlist BuB Organizations - a

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Authors:

guifi.net:

Roger Baig Viñas, Pau Escrich Garcia, Francisco Javier Jiménez Gómez, Miquel Martos Membrives, Lluís Dalmau Junyent, Marc Mundó Comerma, Pablo Boronat Pérez, Ramon Roca Tió

UPF:

Jaume Barceló Vicens, Miquel Oliver Riera, Albert Domingo Vilar, Francisco Javier González Manzano

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Abstract

Community networking, together with the Bottom-up-Broadband initiative, is an emerging model for the Future Internet across Europe and beyond where communities of citizens build, operate and own open IP-based networks, a key infrastructure for individual and collective digital participation. Although community based networks often extend or complement the coverage of networks of commercial ISPs, they differ in several key aspects: There is usually no central authority that is responsible for a precise network planning. Support is decentralized and open, provided by the community. The network nodes are often inexpensive off the shelf equipment and the network elements exhibit a high degree of heterogeneity in the hardware, software, and capacity. The network infrastructure belongs to the user and is shared to build the network. The network is very dynamic: the number of nodes may rapidly grow and change as new members join the network, or when nodes overload or fail. These community networks are usually built with low cost point-to-point wireless links, MANET networks, and an increasing presence of optical fibre links.

Work Package 7, *Bottom-up-Broadband for Europe*, of Commons4Europe project aims to support the creation of a pan European organization that could provide structure and support to the existing Bottom-up-Broadband initiatives in Europe from either public organizations or emergent from citizen activism. The present document is the first report on the achievements of task T7.2, *Enlisting BuB organizations*, task aim at creating awareness and enlisting the existing BuB organizations to the project. Its success will materialize with the constitution of a second layer organisation aimed at gathering BuB organisations.

Relationship with D7.3.1

In some situations the strong relationship between T7.2, *Enlisting BuB organizations*, and T7.3, *Building Support for BuB4Europe*, makes difficult to clearly assign an action to one task or to the other. The same happens with their deliverables, D7.2.1, *Report on activities to enlist BuB organizations - a* and D7.3.1, *Report on Building Support for BuB4Europe - b*. As a consequence, it is recommended to read both deliverables to have a complete view of the job done.

Index Terms

Bottom-up-Broadband (BuB), Community Networks (CNs), International organisation, Organisation of organisations

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I. INTRODUCTION

Although there are community networks (CNs) and Bottom-up Broadband (BuB) initiatives all around the world -some of them pretty active and successful- the fact is that the movement remains largely unknown to the general public and to the public administrations and the policy makers in particular. Moreover, although they have many aspects in common such as targets, principals, background, etc., the degree of interaction and collaboration among them is negligible in general. As a result, each of them must cope with the obstacles -most of which are common to the other initiatives- alone and only with its own resources.

Work Package 7 (WP7), planned for the second (the current reporting period) and the third year of the Commons for Europe project, is aimed at supporting the creation of a pan European organization that could provide structure and support to the existing BuB initiatives in Europe from either public organizations or emergent from citizen activism. Such organisation must help make the organisations work more efficiently (e.i. each of the three biggest CNs has develop its own software tools to manage the network) as well as more effective in terms of dissemination, lobbying and influencing the policy makers.

II. ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This report has been produced using open source tools such as \LaTeX ¹ and *git*². \LaTeX is widely used in academia to prepare print-class documents. It automatically takes care of numbering, cross-referencing, tables of contents, bibliography, etc. *Git* is a high performance distributed revision control which is used in many open source projects, such as the linux kernel. Git makes it easy and safe to collaborate as each contributor works on his or her own personal copy. Good contributions can be easily shared with others, and it is always possible to revert to a previous version.

Our git repository is publicly available in *github*:

<https://github.com/jbarcelo/C4EU-deliverables>

¹<http://www.latex-project.org/>

²<http://git-scm.com/>

Anyone who is familiar with \LaTeX and *github* can contribute to this document. The first step is to make a copy (a *fork* in *github* jargon). The contributor can work on this copy and make changes to improve the document. After that, it is necessary to request that these changes are merged into the original copy of the document (a *pull request* in *github* jargon).

If you see anything that can be improved, feel free to contribute. This document is alive in the sense that it will keep evolving as long as contributors make changes and improve it.

The system automatically keeps track of all the contributors and their contributions. It is possible to see who is contributing more actively and which are the exact changes made by each contributor. And everything is public on the web.

III. WORK DONE

The efforts of the first reporting period have have been mainly focused on creating the adequate tools to manage the information resulting of the project evolution and to handle the discussions and on learning about the existing BuB initiatives and make the initial contact with some of them.

A. Tools for BuBforEurope

The tools set up are websites and mailing lists. While generally mailing lists are meant for discussions and direct communication, websites are meant for longer term and more elaborated contents. All the tools are hosted at Community Networks (CNs) servers and managed by CNs members. All the contents are publicly available.

1) BuB mailing list: <https://listes.guifi.net/sympa/info/bub>

Hosted at guifi.net's mailing list manager³, this public list was the first public mean of communication set up. Started on May 2012, as of October 2013 it has over 500 mails in total and 59 subscribers, half of them without any kind of affiliation with the CommonsforEurope partners. It has become the place the facto to discuss not only about BuBforEurope but also about more general BuB issues. For instance, all project pilot's management (announcements, discussions, etc.) is done via this mailing list.

³Sympa <http://www.sympa.org/>.

2) *BuBforEurope website*: <http://bubforeurope.net/>

This website hosted at a guifi.net's data centre⁴. Operational since January 2013 is aimed gathering all the information of BuBforEurope. It is a Drupal⁵ based website with the wiki, news, forums and forms modules enabled. Figure 1 shows the website main page.

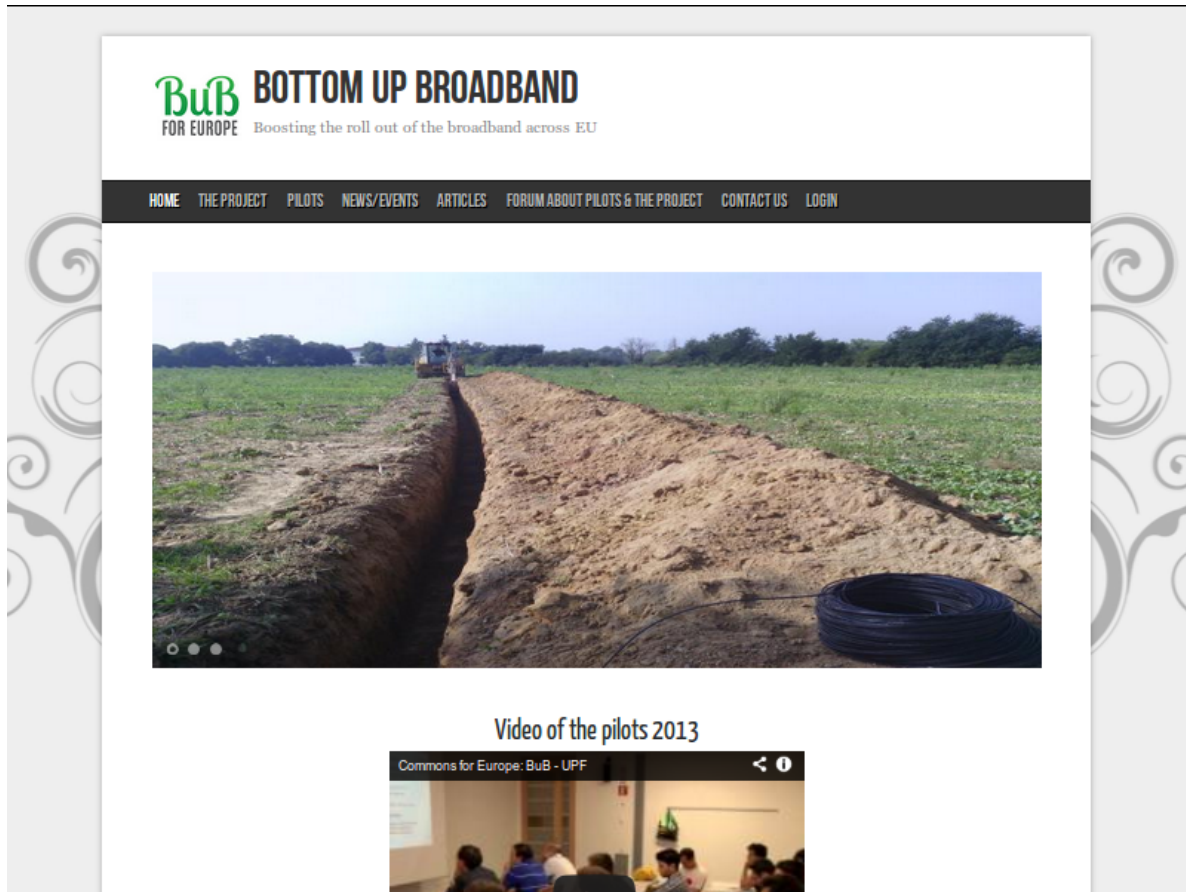


Fig. 1. Upper part of the BuBforEurope website main page.

This website includes a section to manage the whole BuB pilots process. It includes a form to submit the pilot's proposals, another to submit fellows proposals, and a wiki for each proposal selected. Figure 1 shows the pilots summary page.

⁴Telvent's PoP, Barcelona. See *D5.4.2 Report on Pilots on Fiber Deployment – a*.

⁵<https://drupal.org/>

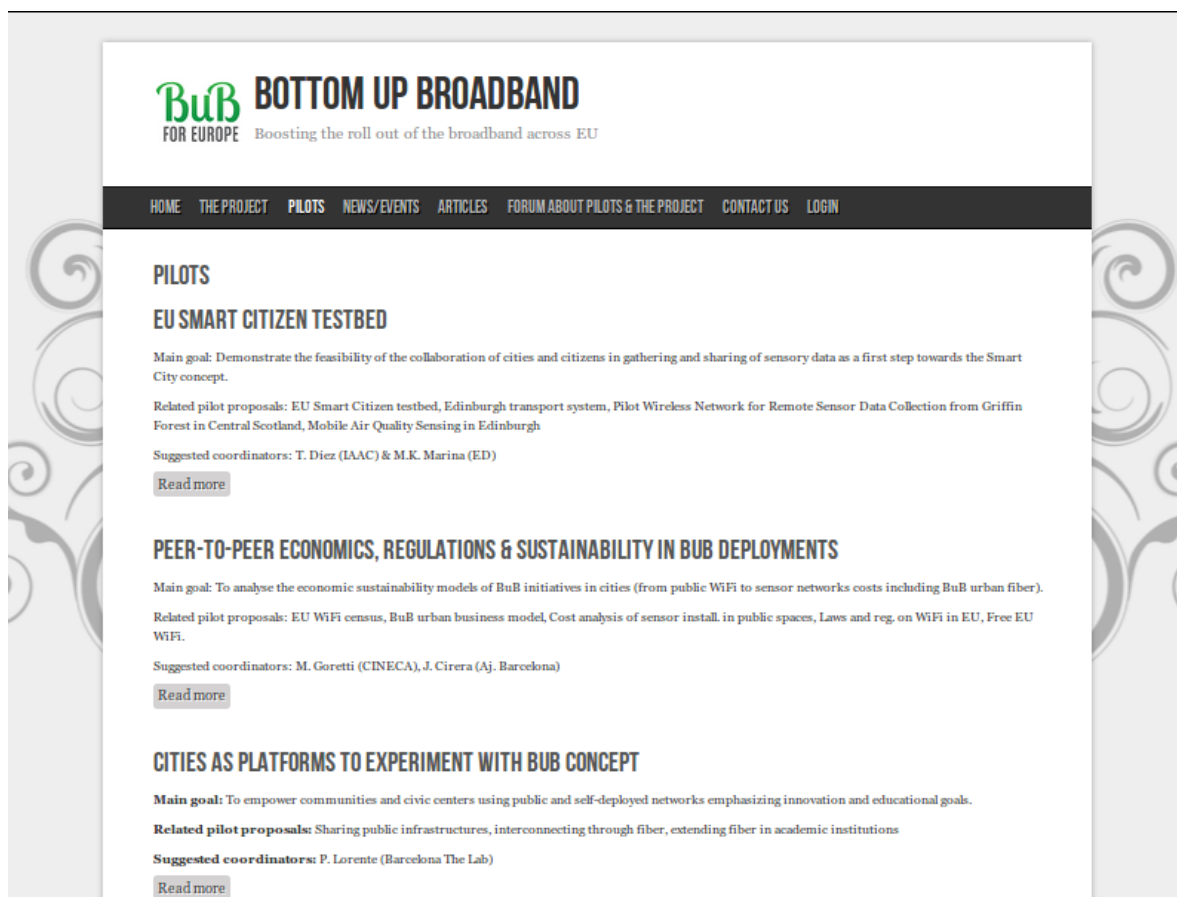


Fig. 2. Upper part of the BuBforEurope website pilots section.

This website has been mostly developed by Adriana Marti Hoppmann as part of her Final Degree Project. Her thesis⁶ includes a very accurate analysis of its design and implementation.

3) *tmpcommonsnet mailing list*: <http://lists.sudoroom.org/listinfo/tmpcommonsnet>

This mailing list, created in September 2013 at Sudoroom⁷ mailing list manager⁸, is meant for the BuB organisation that must be created as part of WP7 in the second reporting period. Its name has been chosen to reflect that the organisation project is a work in progress and that it has not even a name yet -idea stressed by the term *tmp*.

⁶<http://upcommons.upc.edu/pfc/bitstream/2099.1/18721/1/89496.pdf>

⁷A CN base in Oakland, USA, <https://sudoroom.org/>.

⁸Mailman<http://www.list.org/>.

Although it is been open since the beginning, its public announcement is foreseen by the beginning of next year, together with the organisation project announcement. At the moment it has around 25 subscribers of about 10 community networks.

4) *tmp-l2org wiki and pad*: <http://dokuwiki.tmp-l2org.guifi.net/>, <http://etherpad.tmp-l2org.guifi.net/>

These two tools, both hosted at a guifi.net server, complement the tmpcommonsnet mailing list. They have been set up in October 2013. While the pad⁹ is conceived for taking notes (i.e. meeting notes) and for drafts, the wiki¹⁰ is for meant for hosting more elaborate documentation.

Figure 3 shows the wiki main page.

[[start]] TEMPL2ORG WIKI

Show pagesource Old revisions Recent changes Search

Trace: • start

Intro

What? This is an on-going effort to create an international organization of community networks.

Why? Because we are convinced that such an organisation will make us more effective in sharing and building knowledge among us and more efficient in disseminate our ideas and activities to the world.

How? By working on topics. Discussions are announced in the mailing list, held on the pad (index) and the results stored in this wiki categorized by namespaces.

Workplan? The topics are develop the contributors according to their interests.

Who? So far we are these people (please add yourself to let us know that you are on board and alive).

Call for participation We want to be as inclusive, participative and representative, so anybody committed with community networks is encouraged to join.

Roadmap

Organization

Topic	Status ¹⁾	Dependencies	Due to	Next relevant date	Notes
Name	WIP				pad
URL	WIP	URL			
Mission	WIP				
Jurisdiction and legal personality	WIP				
Board	Prop	legal pers			
Membership	WIP	legal pers			
People	WIP				Add your name

Dissemination

- Events

Dictionary

Licensing

Topics

By namespaces:

- Organization** Topics related to the organization itself (i.e. Name, Mission, Jurisdiction and legal personality, etc.)
- Dictionary** Terms that need a formal definition (i.e. Community network) to avoid misunderstandings
- Licensing** An effort to write a license or a set of licenses suitable for most of the CNs?
- Dissemination / Awareness
- Policymaking

Fig. 3. Upper part of the BuB organisation wiki main page.

⁹<https://github.com/ether/etherpad-lite>.

¹⁰<https://dokuwiki.org>.

B. Enlisting BuB organisations

Three phases have been foreseen to create the organisation of BuB organisations (a so called second level organisation) and achieve the maximum enlistment and commitment:

Initial This phase has the main following tasks.

- Identify BuB initiatives.
- Informal contacts and meetings with some of the BuB initiatives identified to introduce the idea and get feedback.
- Set up the collaboration tools needed.
- Characterisation of the organisation.
- Set the roadmap.

Constitution

- Elaborate the issues identified during the initial phase.
- formalize the constitution of the organisation.
- Announce the nascent organisation.

Consolidation

- Attend the new members requests.
- Amend detected problems.
- Do the mandated tasks.

During this year the initial phase has been started. As already planned, all the documentation is being gathered in the wiki. The following subsections present the results achieved.

1) Identify BuB initiatives: Around 20 active BuB initiatives around the world have been identified¹¹. This task is now frozen. During the Announcement of the organisation of the second phase further identification research will be done in order to reach as many initiatives as possible.

2) Initial contacts and meetings: We have already introduced the idea of a second level organisation to many BuB initiatives. All of them welcomed it and the following have started contributing:

¹¹<http://dokuwiki.tmp-l2org.guifi.net/doku.php?id=organization:people>.

- Free Network Foundation, USA
- Altermesh, Argentina
- Sudo Room, USA
- Wlan0, Solvenia.
- Ninux, Italy
- FreiFunk, Germany

The most relevant face-to-face meetings we have had are:

- **Barcelona, Catalonia, May 2013** Altermesh, Free Network Foundation, Pangea, guifi.net
- **Oakland, USA, September 2013** Sudo Room, Wlan0, Free Network Foundation, guifi.net
- **Berlin, October 2013** Altermesh, Free Network Foundation, Ninux, FreiFunk, guifi.net

Aside from CNs, we have had informal meetings with other players like Internet Exchange Points (NaMeX) and Regional Internet Registries (RIPE-NCC).

The most relevant events where we have presented our initiative are:

- Wireless Battle Mesh v5, Athens (Greece), March 2012
- International Summit for Wireless Community Networks 2012, Barcelona (Catalonia), October 2012
- Wireless Battle Mesh v6, Aalborg (Denmark), April 2013
- International Summit for Wireless Community Networks 2013, Berlin (Germany), October 2013

3) *Collaboration tools*: The tools already set up are described in Section III-A. Together with some other tool hosted and maintained by a CN (like the VoIP service) are considered to be enough.

4) *Characterisation of the organisation*: The following issues to be worked have been identified¹².

- Name
- URL

¹²<http://dokuwiki.tmp-l2org.guifi.net/doku.php#roadmap>.

- Mission
- Membership
- jurisdiction and legal personality
- Board.

This is task where most of the efforts are currently focused.

IV. PLANS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

The third year, the last of the CommonsforEurope project, is crucial for WP7. The plans are to formally constitute the organization by the first half of the year and to devote the second half to promote it and enlist new members. Taking into account the results already achieve, the resources still available should suffice to successfully accomplish the aforementioned objectives.

In order to formally constitute the organisation the its characterisation must be finished. Afterwards the statutes drafted and the board of directors must be elected. We are convinced that the working dynamics already set will let us to conduct these tasks, some of which will involve long discussions and difficult decision making processes.

As regards the nascent organisation dissemination and new partners enlistment we plan to keep working on the websites and the mailing list as well as presenting our work results at the following major events:

- 68th RIPE meeting, Warsaw (Poland), May 2014
- Wireless Battle Mesh v7, Leipzig (Germany), May 2014
- International Summit for Wireless Community Networks 2014, Trieste (Italy), October 2014 (tentative place and dates)

We expect the vast majority of the active BuB initiatives around the world will have been informed about the organisation and we expect to already have a great number of them on board by the end of the project, thus to have fully accomplished the tasks T7.2 and T7.3.

V. CONCLUSION

Work Package 7 of Commons4Europe project aims to support the creation of a pan European organization that could provide structure and support to the existing Bottom-

up-Broadband initiatives in Europe from either public organizations or emergent from citizen activism. The present report accounts on the results of task T7.2, *Enlisting BuB organizations*, achieved during the its first year (second year of the project).

During this period the efforts have been focused on creating the adequate tools to manage the information resulting of the project evolution and to handle the discussions and on learning about the existing BuB initiatives and make the initial contact with some of them. As a result two websites and two mailing lists have been created and half a dozen of the BuB initiatives contacted have responded positively to our invitation and are actively contributing in the process of the organisation creation.

The results already achieve suggest that T7.2 as well as WP7 objectives will be fully accomplished by the end of the Commons4Europe.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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