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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 progress of task T7.3, *Building Support for BuB4Europe*, task aimed at enlisting support for the nascent organization of T7.2 and creating a favourable opinion towards it among policymakers that could facilitate its integration in the existing forums.

Index Terms

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

CONTENTS

I	Introduction	5
II	About this document	5
III	Achievements	6
III-A	State level	6
III-B	European/International level	7
IV	Plans for the next year	7
V	conclusion	7

LIST OF FIGURES

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. ACHIEVEMENTS

T7.3 is aimed at enlisting support for the nascent organization of T7.2 and creating a favourable opinion towards it among policymakers that could facilitate its integration in the existing forums. Thus, it has a high dependency on T7.2, specially on the existence of the foreseen organisation, which is expected during the first half of the next reporting period. As a result, most of the efforts of T7.3 are planned for the coming period. The following subsections describe the actions have been carried out during the first reporting.

A. State level

Interacting with the local governments, from city councils to the Catalan and the Spanish government is part of the standard activities of the guifi.net Foundation. Aside of those contacts that are merely formal administrative and legal proceedings (communications, notifications, etc.), the rest are aimed at creating awareness of the BuB model and at exploring forms of partnership. In most of these meetings the BuBforEurope initiative has been presented to a greater or lesser degree. A non-exhaustive list of public administrations we presented the initiative follows:

- **City Councils**
- **Catalan Government**
- **Spanish Telecommunications national regulatory authority**

B. European/International level

Although the vast majority of the efforts on international dissemination and collaboration are planned for the coming year, we have already attended the following international events.

- International Summit for Wireless Community Networks 2012, Barcelona (Catalonia), October 2012
- FFTH Conference 2013, London (United Kingdom) February 2013
- International Summit for Wireless Community Networks 2013, Berlin (Germany), October 2013

IV. PLANS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

As already said, the vast majority of the efforts of T7.3 are planned for the next year, once the organisation of T7.2 had been created. The identification the appropriate forums for creating a favourable opinion towards BuBforEurope among policymakers is planed for the first half of the next year, in parallel to the organisation creation. The dissemination and lobbying tasks are planned for the second half.

It is worth to mention that we have been invited to participate to the 68th RIPE meeting (Warsaw, Poland, May 2014).

V. CONCLUSION

Work Package 7 of Commons for Europe 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 T7.3, *Building Support for BuB4Europe*, achieved during the its first year (second year of the project).

T7.3 has a strong dependency on the outcome of T7.2, foreseen by the first half of the next year. As a consequence, the activity in T7.3 during this period has been limited at (informally) presenting the initiative to some local administrations and attending some international meeting.

Since T7.2 is being developed according to schedule and suffice resources have been allocated to T7.3 it is expected that this task as well as WP7 objectives will be fully accomplished by the end of the Commons for Europe.

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