Decentralised and privacy-aware tools for democratic participation
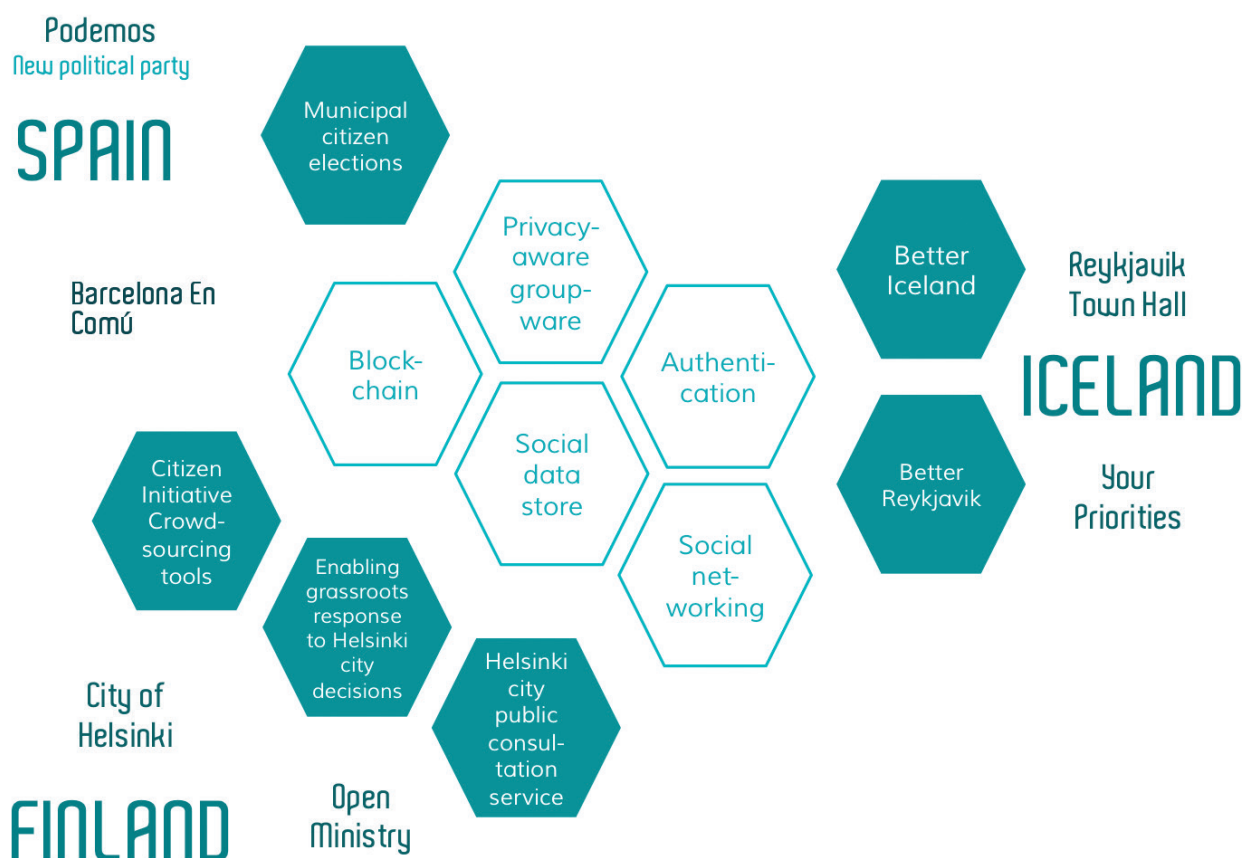
D-CENT (Decentralised Citizens ENgagement Technologies) is a Europe-wide project bringing together leading European examples that have transformed democracy in the past years, and helping them in developing the next generation of open source, decentralised, and privacy-aware tools for network democracy and economic empowerment.

Lean UX development: from users' need into features

In 2014 we conducted workshops with communities of users to identify their needs. These were translated into the first Minimal Viable Products (MVPs) for the D-CENT platform to be piloted further with communities in Spain, Finland and Iceland.

What does D-CENT do?

D-CENT allows people to discuss and share content, engage in mass scale deliberation, collaborative policy-making, and voting. D-CENT is based on a distributed, federated and privacy-aware architecture. The modular platform will include open source tools for network democracy: large-scale deliberation, debates, voting, collaborative policy-drafting, and collective filtering algorithms.

Podemos
New political party

SPAIN

Barcelona En Comú

Municipal citizen elections

Privacy-aware group-ware

Block-chain

Authenti-cation

Social data store

Better Iceland

Reykjavik Town Hall

ICELAND

Better Reykjavik

Your Priorities

Citizen Initiative Crowd-sourcing tools

Social net-working

Enabling grassroots response to Helsinki city decisions

City of Helsinki

Helsinki city public consul-tation service

FINLAND

Open Ministry

Pilots, Spain:
Podemos and and Barcelona En Comú

Spain is seeing the radical emergence of citizen-led political movements involving the whole society, since the rise of the indignados social movement (15M). The new political parties such as Podemos, and the new wave of citizen municipal coalitions such as Barcelona en comù and ahora Madrid are expressing a new form of politics characterized by a prioritization of participatory democracy, citizen empowerment, and social justice.

We are collaborating with Podemos and Barcelona En Comú, an emerging municipal coalition of citizen movements and civil society. They are using D-CENT tools to engage citizens in writing the coalition political programme and voting candidates.

D-CENT is now running large scale pilots in collaboration with Laboratorio Democrático, a digital strategy Lab driving the participatory infrastructure of Podemos at national and municipal level.

We are developing new prototypes and tools that allow experts and citizens to get involved in policy making processes, ranging from citizen initiatives, collective policy-drafting, to meaningful large scale debates and voting.

Pilots, Finland:
Open Ministry and City of Helsinki

In Finland, D-CENT will pilot new crowdsourcing tools with Open Ministry. They will help citizens involved in conducting Citizens Initiative campaigns to better organise their operations.

The project will also test a newsfeed based on open decision-making data that will enable inhabitants of Helsinki to quickly engage in effective collective actions to respond to the issues that are being processed in the Helsinki City's decision making bodies. The piloting is ongoing and began in November 2014.

Pilots, Iceland:
Improving eDemocracy tools

The Icelandic Pilot uses the open source Your Priorities eDemocracy software that has been in lean user centric development in Iceland since 2008 by the Citizens Foundation and others. The Icelandic pilot will be focused on upgrading Your Priorities by adding functionality needed by the users of Better Reykjavík and Better Iceland. The plan is to package Your Priorities as a Docker application that can be installed in a D-CENT node for other governments, groups or citizens across Europe to easily deploy and use.

Xavier Valls

Modular, distributed and open source

The architecture of the D-CENT platform is modular and privacy-aware. It is based on open source software and open standards. The code is published on Github.

D-CENT principles

- community ownership of social data
- security and privacy by design
- open standards
- access to knowledge and open source
- mass scalability

Multidisciplinary research

D-CENT research has focused on new forms of democracy, citizen empowerment and participation. An integrated techno socio-economic analysis has been carried out of organisational models of emerging social movements, new economic models based on knowledge commons, distributed social networking, identity systems, new models for citizen control of personal and social data, privacy and security by design.

In the development of a socio-technical framework on collective intelligence, IN3-UOC and Barcelona Media have analysed global network-movements, creating data-driven insights for D-CENT.

Digital social currency research and pilots

The Centre d'économie de la Sorbonne, Nesta and Dyne investigated the most significant experiences of alternative currencies and digital social currencies in Europe at the light of the Bitcoin revolution. The work on digital social currencies will be developed further through an iterative process with lead-users. The Digital Social Currency pilots will start in June/July 2015, and the blockchain technology to manage community trust, reputation, and exchanges in a distributed system will be integrated as a service in the D-CENT platform.

Outreach and dissemination

Since October 2013, D-CENT has published research reports that are public and available on our website. These reports include in-depth analysis and description of our research, methodology, technical architecture, use-cases, technical features and dissemination activities.

In March 2014, the D-CENT launch event Democracy reboot: Re-imagining democracy and currency in Europe introduced the project to the wider audience. The event attracted high-level policy makers, academics, activists, communities and hackers. Twenty-three video interviews from the event have been published on our website. In May 2015, D-CENT mid-term event will be held in Barcelona, Spain. The conference will discuss network democracy for a better city.

D-CENT team has attended various other events, including World Democracy Forum 2013, Open Knowledge Festival 2014, CAPS2020 Conference, the Internet Governance Forum 2014 in Istanbul, W3C20 Anniversary Symposium and FutureFest 2015, among others.

In short

Full title: Decentralised Citizens ENgagement Technologies
Project acronym: D-CENT
Starting date: 1 October 2013
Duration: 2,5 years (until May 2016)
Budget: 2,5 million euros

Website: www.dcentproject.eu
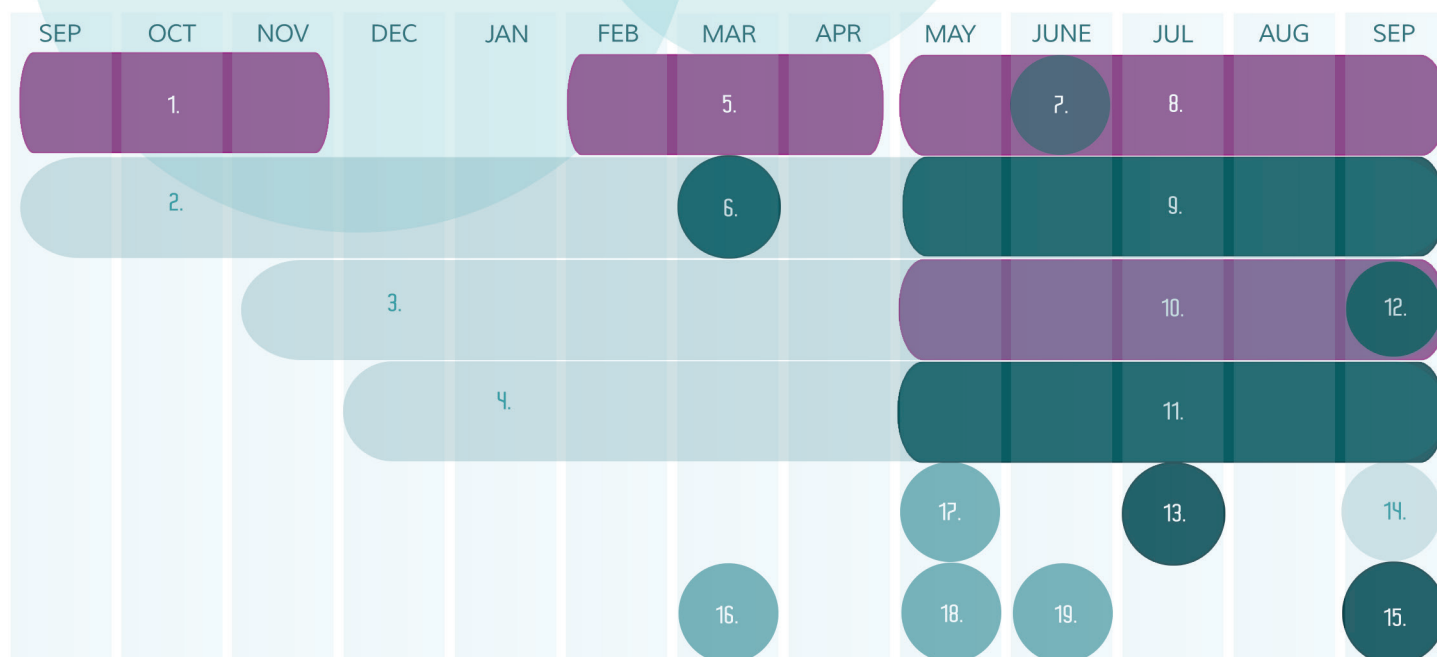Twitter: @dcentproject, #DCENT
Vimeo: vimeo.com/dcentproject
Slideshare: slideshare.net/dcentproject
Facebook: facebook.com/dcentproject
GitHub: github.com/d-cent

D-CENT 2nd year roadmap 2014-2015

SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JUL	AUG	SEP

Legend:
- Software Development
- Piloting
- Academic research
- Events

Roadmap items:
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
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- 14.
- 15.

1. Launch of first network democracy prototype

2. Spanish pilots ongoing (Podemos & Barcelona en comù)

3. Finnish pilots ongoing

4. Icelandic pilots ongoing

5. Blockchain design

6. Selfgovernance models for knowledge commons

7. Identity research

8. Bitcoin for the social good: pilots implementation

9. Collaborative policy-making tool and pilots

10. D-CENT platform development (collaborative policy-making, mass deliberation, voting)

11. Open social web specifications

12. Economic frameworks for implementing digital social currencies

13. Voting platform

14. Large scale pilots on democracy and money across Europe

15. Data analysis results

16. Future Fest, March 14-15, London, UK

17. Web We Want, May 29-31, London, UK

18. D-CENT mid-term event, May 5, Barcelona, Spain

19. CAPS 2015, 7-8 July, Brussels, Belgium