

# First Trials in Webocracy

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**Abstract.** The Webocracy project aims to empower citizens with innovative communication, access and polling system, supporting increased participation in democratic processes. One of the main project goals is to develop an open source web-based system called *Webocrat* as a multi-channel communication platform supporting e-government and e-democracy applications. Some of the *Webocrat* modules were tested in first trial of our two pilot applications, one of them running in Wolverhampton, UK and the other one in Kosice, Slovakia. Currently, whole integrated *Webocrat* system is being tested within the second trials.

## 1 Introduction

There are three roles in a political system: citizens, politicians, and government administrators. E-Government and e-democracy embrace transmission of political information and opinion among and within all the groups involved in politics. Proponents of e-government, in addition to advantages of improved communication - without constraints of place and time, point to an array of other new opportunities, such as electronic delivery of many public services to people's homes or multimedia kiosks, more access to a wider variety of public information, the creation of electronic forums, direct democratic participation through online voting and interactive polling (Dutton et al. 1999), electronic competitive public procurement etc.

At the first International Conference eGOV 2002 in Aix-en-Provence, 2002, proposed architecture and functionality of the *Webocrat* system, which is to be developed within the IST project Webocracy (IST-1999-20364 "Web Technologies Supporting Direct Participation in Democratic Processes") were presented (Paralic et al. 2002).

The Webocracy project aims to empower citizens with innovative communication, access and polling system, supporting increased participation in democratic processes. *Webocrat* system will support: communication and discussion, publication of documents (including notices for competitive tendering), browsing and navigation, polling, intelligent retrieval (access to requested documents), various types of reporting in order to provide evaluation and analysis tools. Moreover, personalised access to published resources as well as active delivery of new information within the system by means of alerting services will be offered (Paralic & Sabol 2002).

One of the novelties of our approach is the knowledge management part. Documents of all kinds produced by various modules (e.g. published documents,