RANGER

H2020-700478

RAdars for loNG distance maritime surveillancE and Search and Rescue opeRations

RANGER WEB-BASED PLATFORMS

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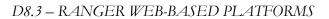|	
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Executive summary

This Deliverable presents the status of implementation of the web-based resource and communication platforms that are developed in Task 8.1 of the project. Awareness with regard to the RANGER project objectives, its results and scheduled events will be highly served by the developed internal and external web based platforms.

The aim of this deliverable is to provide: a) a brief description of the main functionalities of the RANGER online internal collaboration platform; b) a detailed description of the developed RANGER website, its main features, functionalities and current content; and c) a short description of RANGER social media accounts, that will be created to further support the online presence of the project towards external audience.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

1. Introduction

The present document entitled "RANGER Web-based platforms" is one of the deliverables relevant to project awareness strategies. It is dedicated to present the web-based platforms that the RANGER Consortium is developing, in order to promote its objectives, results and scheduled events.

RANGER Consortium brings together 10 key partners from 7 European countries. Internal communication tools and procedures amongst the partners are fundamental to better coordinate project activities and to successfully manage the project. To this end, at the beginning of the project, careful attention has been given to the creation of the RANGER internal collaboration platform, which allows sharing and storing documents in a structured way, assigning tasks among partners, and scheduling meetings.

Additionally, within WP8 all the activities linked to the dissemination of the project objectives, its news and results are highly served by external web-based means, that will promote the action to wider audiences. Following this rationale, a project website has been developed in view of disseminating project outcomes including project objectives, methodology and expected results, significant achievements, technology news, consortium contacts, as well as all project public documents (deliverables, presentations, scientific publications etc.). As one of the major project dissemination channels, the website will serve this purpose through the whole project duration and beyond. The RANGER website url address is www.ranger-project.eu emphasising the link to the European Union. The graphic layout follows the basic design concept used for all other dissemination materials of the project, respecting a common RANGER visual identity. The website will be maintained and updated in a regular basis during the project lifetime, and as a static webpage even beyond the project ends. This deliverable presents also the computing infrastructure used for hosting and running the website. Moreover, a detailed description of the content and features of the RANGER website is also provided.

Articulated with the RANGER external web based communication means is the RANGER presence on social media platforms that will be established on month 5 of the project life cycle.

It is crucial to be referred at this point, that we are going to handle Restricted Information within RANGER web based platforms respectfully to EU-Classified Information document guide lines.

2. RANGER Online Collaboration Platform Services

RANGER Consortium comprises 10 partners from 7 different European countries. To coordinate the activities of the consortium and keep every partner up-to-date with the developments within the project, it is essential to have an internal online collaboration platform.

The internal collaboration platform allows sharing and storing documents in a structured and user friendly way, assigning tasks, and scheduling meetings. E-mailing lists were set up as needed and they constitute an effective way for targeted communication and interaction. To increase transparency, a contact list with all project members was created and it will be updated as needed during the whole duration of the project. The following sections describe the online collaboration platform of RANGER and provide a snapshot of the platform's contents at the moment of writing.

2.1. Restricted Access

2.1.1. RedmineUrl and Infrastructure

The RANGER Online Collaboration Platform can be accessed at the following web address: **https://redmine.iccs.gr/projects/ranger**, ICCS is hosting a Redmine installation under: https://redmine.iccs.gr/, where a dedicated project exists for RANGER. The web access to https://redmine.iccs.gr/ is secured using a digital certificate from TERENA (https://www.terena.org). The server hosting the Redmine installation is located in ICCS premises in Athens, Greece in a secured rack in ICCS's server room. The server databases are backed up on a daily basis, while its files are backed up every second day. The server is built with multiple redundancies, network and disk wise, in order to ensure its constant operation and network access.

2.1.2. Redmine Description and Features

Redmine [1] is a free and open source, web-based project management and bug-tracking tool. It includes a calendar and Gantt charts to aid visual representation of projects and their deadlines. It can handle multiple projects. Redmine provides integrated project management features, issue tracking, and support for various version control systems. The design of Redmine is significantly influenced by Trac [2], a software package with some similar features. Redmine is written using the Ruby on Rails [3] framework. It is cross-platform and cross-database. It is part of the Bitnami [4] app library that provides an installer and virtual machine for ease of deployment. Redmine is released under the terms of the GNU [4] General Public License v2 (GPL). The following functionalities are offered to the users of the RANGER project Redmine:

- Flexible, role based access control
- Flexible issue tracking system
- Gantt chart and calendar

- News, documents and file management

- Feeds and email notifications

- Project wiki

- Members' address book

- Searching of project's files and wiki

2.1.3. Login

The Sign in page is used to login into RANGER project. Only members who have been authorized by the OCP administrator have login credentials to access the RANGER internal collaboration platform. The administrator (ICCS) uses email addresses to fill in the necessary information and create the login credentials for each member. During his/her first login, each member is requested to change his/her password by clicking on "My account" tab and then "Change password" as highlighted in red in Figure 2. After this is done, the system automatically sends the login credentials to each member. At the moment of writing, there are 42 authorised RANGER members, who have full access rights to the platform.
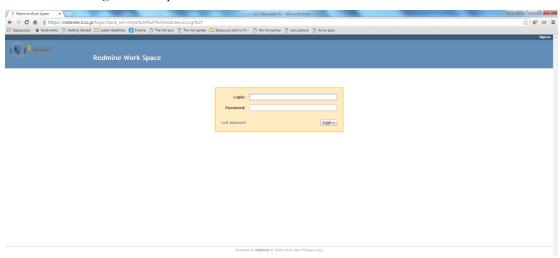

Figure 1: RANGER Redmine Login Screen

Figure 2: RANGER Redmine Change Password Screen

2.2. Project Overview

After a successful login the project member enters the project area. The initial screen is the Project overview. In the Overview area there is a high level description of the project and the project's website address. In the Members area, one can see who the members of RANGER are, and in particular the members who are administrators of the Online Collaboration Platform. By clicking on the news tab, the members can be informed about the latest news of the RANGER project. Issue categories allow the organisation of issues. Categories can for example correspond to the different components of the project. The administrator is able to configure your own set of issue categories for each individual project. It is also possible to auto-assign new issues to a specific user based on the chosen category of the newly created issues.

The following properties are configurable for (each of the) issue categories:

- Name: The text to be displayed to identify the issue category. This field is required.

- Assigned to: The project member to who newly created issues in this category will be assigned. This field is optional.

Advanced features of an online collaboration platform that is focused on project management include work monitoring tools such as GANTT charts, and tracking tools that allow every member of the project to follow the progress of a specific common task. Finally, the calendar provides an overview of the current project as a monthly view. This view displays all the issues that have at least a start date and indicates their start date and (if available) their due date. The whole platform will be updated continuously as more content from RANGER research and development becomes available.

Figure 3: RANGER Redmine overview screen

2.3 Document Management System (DMSF)

The internal collaboration platform at the moment of writing functions primarily as an online file repository, in which partners are able to access documents and also upload their own. In that way all partners have access to the same folders and files and can have access to the latest versions of the uploaded documents.

When the user selects DMSF, a screen with several folders appears. At the moment of writing the created folders aim to collect files relevant to administrative and planning issues and others for the project meetings, reporting and deliverables templates. By selecting a specific folder the user can view its contents.
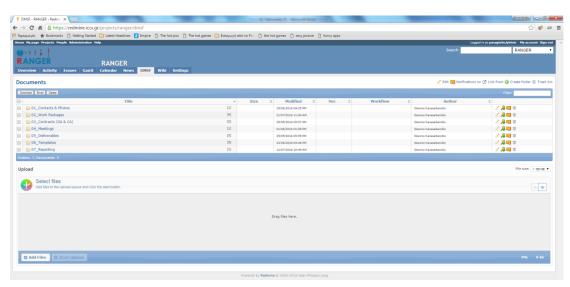

Figure 4: RANGER Redmine DMSF screen

2.3.1 File management

Each member can choose a specific already uploaded file or document, and the file can be downloaded to the user's desktops. Several file management options are available.

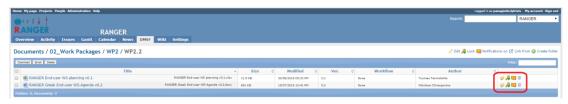**Figure 5: File management screen**

2.3.2 File upload

The uploading of files by authorized users (all RANGER members) is straight forward and several files can be dragged and dropped in the corresponding upload area or be selected from the desktop

computer in the conventional way, using the operating system's file selection dialog box. After the file is uploaded the user can enter a description for the file, comments and also the version number.
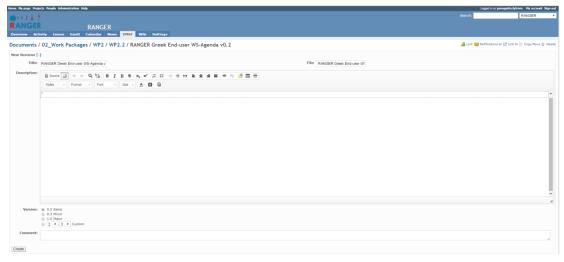

Figure 6: File upload screen

2.3.4 RANGER Wiki

The maintenance of the Wiki is an ongoing process and it will be updated throughout the project. Currently, the RANGER Wiki section contains a step to step description of the suggested dissemination procedures along with two more wiki pages related to the dissemination activities of the project. The first one is called "dissemination activities report" and it is actually an excel file that will contain important information regarding the performed dissemination activities and it will be continuously updated by ICCS, with the contribution of all partners. The second one is called "dissemination opportunities". This page will help partners to stay constantly informed about any relevant to RANGER upcoming events. This list will be updated regularly by ICCS, once more with partners' contribution. ICCS has already added a list of interesting future conferences and other events, related to RANGER topics. This list will also be constantly updated throughout project life cycle.
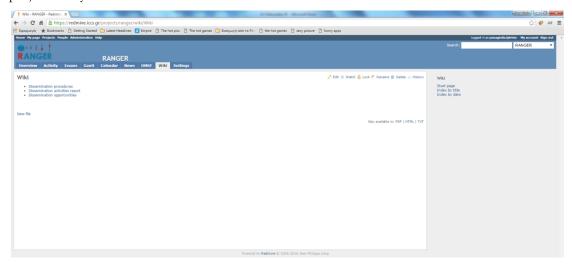

Figure 7: RANGER Redmine DMSF screen

3. RANGER website

The RANGER website http://ranger-project.eu/ is meant to be an effective tool for making the project's research and innovation results and latest developments available to interested third parties, namely the general public..

3.1 Infrastructure

3.1.1 Hosting and running

The web portal of RANGER website is running on a server with the following characteristics: CPU: Intel(R) Xeon(R) CPU E5530, Memory: 1.5GB, Storage: 200GB. Software wise the website is served by an Apache HTTP server 2.2.22 with PHP 5.3.10 and is compatible with all available web browsers (Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, etc.). The server is hosted in the facilities of the Institute of Communication and Computer Systems in Athens, Greece. The website has been developed in a responsive design mode by using Wordpress 4.6 Content Management System., adaptive to different screen sizes, to provide a presentation that is suitable for different kinds of devices, such as mobile phones or tablets, given the fact that web users increasingly use mobile devices to browse web sites. The content management system as well as the design are developed and customised by ICCS for the purposes of RANGER.
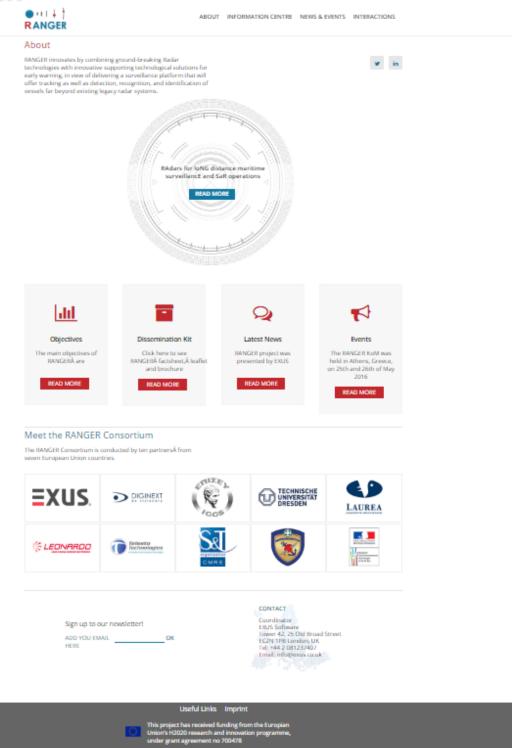
Figure 8: RANGER website Home page screen

3.2 Website Structure

RANGER website has two horizontal menus as described by the two following pictures

Figure 9: RANGER website header navigation menu

Figure 10: RANGER website bottom navigation menu

The structure of the main navigation (header) menu is comprised by the following sub-menu categories, so as to inform the users on the basic elements of the project:

- About
- Information Centre
- News and Events
- Interactions

The structure of the second (bottom) navigation menu consists of the following pages:

- Useful links
- Imprint

The purpose of the Useful Links section is to provide users quick access to related EU websites and important initiatives, while the Imprint page includes a disclaimer as regards to the RANGER website. Both basic navigation menus are visible on all website pages. The different sections of the website are described in details within the following sections.

3.2.2 Home Page

The RANGER website is accessible at the following link www.ranger-project.eu and for the homepage layout a minimalistic design was chosen, which provides users with a fast, clean and simple experience. At the Homepage, the visitor has the opportunity to be informed about the project at a glance through the slider placed below the upper basic navigation menu. At the header area, the project logo is presented, whereas at the top right corners links to RANGER project social media accounts are provided. The project full name is presented on the central photo of the website and by clicking the Read more button, the user is transferred to the project Overview section.

About

RANGER innovates by combining ground-breaking Radar technologies with innovative supporting technological solutions for early warning, in view of delivering a surveillance platform that will offer tracking as well as detection, recognition, and identification of vessels far beyond existing legacy radar systems.

RAdars for loNG distance maritime surveillancE and SaR operations

READ MORE

Figure 11: RANGER website central photo

By scrolling down the homepage, the user can be easily informed about the project objectives, download the dissemination kit, and read the latest news and events by clicking on the respective tabs as shown in the Figure below.
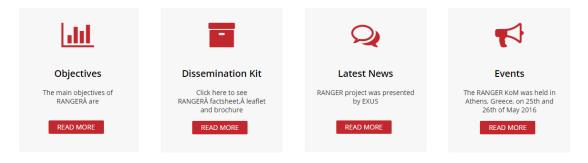
Objectives

The main objectives of RANGERÂ are

READ MORE

Dissemination Kit

Click here to see RANGERÂ factsheet,Â leaflet and brochure

READ MORE

Latest News

RANGER project was presented by EXUS

READ MORE

Events

The RANGER KoM was held in Athens, Greece, on 25th and 26th of May 2016

READ MORE

Figure 12: RANGER website Homepage easy access boxes

By scrolling further down, the user can be easily be informed about the RANGER Consortium, which is presented in a different section (entitled "Meet the RANGER Consortium) through partners logos. By clicking on each logo the user is transferred to each partner's website (see Figure below).
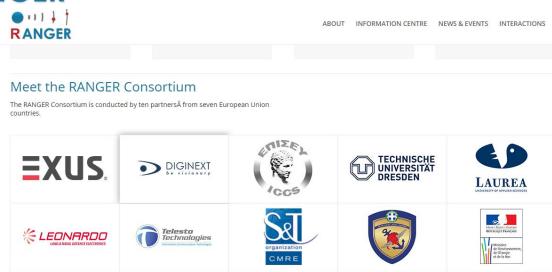
ABOUT   INFORMATION CENTRE   NEWS & EVENTS   INTERACTIONS

Meet the RANGER Consortium

The RANGER Consortium is conducted by ten partnersÂ from seven European Union countries.

Figure 13: RANGER website Homepage Consortium presentation

Through the Home page, interested users will also have the possibility to sign up in order to receive the project's Newsletter, by adding their email and clicking the OK button, and can see the contact details of the project Coordinator (see Figure below).
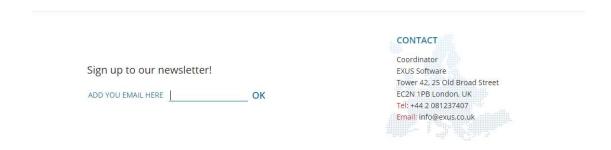

Figure 14: Newsletter registration and Contact Information section

At the bottom of the Home page the EC flag and the respective acknowledgement are placed. Website visitors can easily re-direct to the Homepage by selecting the RANGER logo, which features in all inside pages on the up-left side.

3.2.3 About

The menu item entitled "About", which can be reached via the upper horizontal navigation menu, includes the following subpages:

- Overview
- Objectives
- Technology Offering
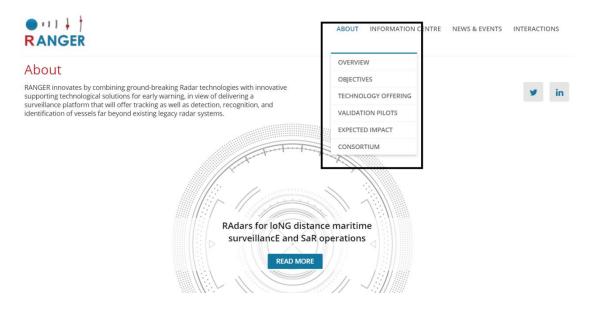- Validation Pilots
- Expected Impact

- Consortium

Figure 15: RANGER website About menu

The different subpages in the drop down menu of **About** explain in simple terms what the RANGER project is about, who is involved, the expected impact and why the general public, academics and expert should be interested in it. By selecting the "About" menu item the website users firstly visit the Overview subpage, in which a short descriptive text of the project's contribution is included. Within the **Objectives** subpage the detailed scientific and technical high level objectives of the RANGER project are featured, while the subpage **Technology Offering** presents the technological advancements in maritime surveillance technology that RANGER project intends to offer. In the subpage entitled **Validation Pilots**, the website visitor can find information related to the two cross-country and cross-organization pilots that will be performed in two phases each during the project duration. The **Expected Impact** of the project is briefly described in the respective sub-menu section, in a simple and easy to understand manner. The last item in the drop down menu of the About section presents in a detailed table the RANGER **Consortium**, which is composed by 10 partners in total. All project partners are listed in the Consortium subpage, through respective logos and website links.

3.2.4 Information Centre

The Information Centre drop down menu gives access to:

- **Dissemination Kit**: the digital version of the project's communication materials, which includes the RANGER factsheet, leaflet and brochure, will be available for download at this section.

- **Newsletter**: a regular RANGER eNewsletter is planned to be issued, presenting the project's work progress and main achievements to both expert and non-expert audiences.

It will contain several sections giving information on RANGER's research activities and future events. It will be electronically distributed via email to people included in the RANGER's mailing list and to users that subscribe through the website. The eNewsletter will be available for download in this section of the website.

- **Deliverables**: Within the RANGER Project 70 Deliverables are foreseen. These documents reflect the project results and are written and reviewed by the project experts. As soon as the documents are officially released the Public Deliverables (PU) as well as an executive summary of the Confidential (CO) ones will be provided in this section. The rest of the project Deliverables are considered classified according to Commission Decision 2015/444/EC.

- **Presentations**: RANGER partners will take every opportunity to participate in international conferences, workshops and other events in order to disseminate the project developments and achievements. In this section the performed presentations will be available for download.

- **Publications**: Project open access publications will be available for download in this page.

- **Videos**: Videos from events and online demonstrations of project developments will be available via this page.
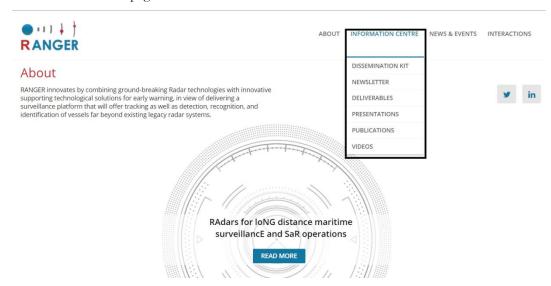

Figure 16: RANGER website Information Centre menu

3.2.5 News and Events

The main purpose of this basic navigation menu item is to keep the visitors of the website up to date by illustrating all the news related to the project, such as project meetings, workshops, seminars, and partners' participation in related events and conferences. The News and Events dropdown menu consists of two different subpages, namely News and Project events. The different subpages will be continuously updated until the end of the project lifecycle.
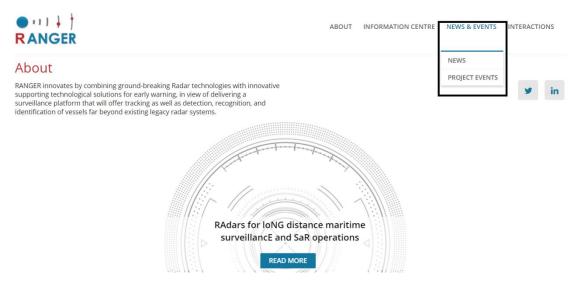
Figure 17: RANGER website News & Events menu

3.2.5 Interactions

In this section of the main navigation menu, clustering activities with relevant projects and initiatives related to the RANGER research field will be included. This page will be constantly updated during the whole project duration.
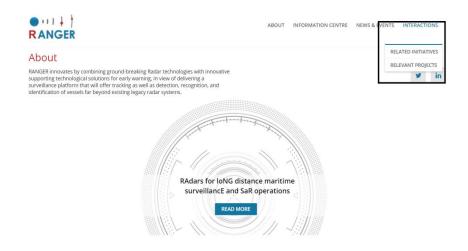

Figure 18: RANGER website Interactions menu

4. RANGER social media accounts

Connected with the project website is the RANGER presence on social media platforms. During the last years social media platforms are considered a powerful tool to gain extra awareness and exposure to wider audiences in a highly efficient and cost-effective way. Thus, RANGER consortium will explore the communication of the project's achievements and work progress through two very popular social networks channels, aiming to communicate RANGER's concept and results in Twitter and LinkedIn. Twitter allows users to send and receive short public messages (no more than 140 characters) and can include links to the project website, images, videos and all other material project dissemination material. Twitter is used by millions of people, and thousands more are signing up every day and can significantly contribute to successfully engage RANGER with stakeholder community and vice versa. LinkedIn is the social medium with the strongest reputation in the business world and it will prove useful to promote content that will connect the RANGER project with the business industry.

RANGER social media accounts will include tweets and posts covering the following:

- news stories and press releases;
- information on research projects and scientific findings related to RANGER;
- information relevant to events and meetings;
- additions to the RANGER website;
- new project publications and reports;
- general news in the broader research field of RANGER project

5. Conclusions

The main purpose of Deliverable D8.3 – RANGER web-based Platforms is the creation of a reliable document that describes:

 a) the main functionalities of the RANGER online collaboration platform;

 b) the main features, functionalities and current content of the RANGER website, and

 c) a short description of RANGER social media platforms that will be created to further support the online presence of the project towards external audience.

The RANGER internal collaboration platform, which is based on the free to use project management platform Redmine, is functional from the beginning of the project. More than 42 RANGER Consortium members have been registered and at the moment of writing have access to the platform. The platform is currently used mainly as a file repository. All partners have access to the same files and the latest versions of documents making collaboration efficient. The platform will be updated continuously during the project with all the relevant to the project news, such as:

-        Deliverables, milestones and internal reports.

-        Presentations, minutes from physical minutes and telephone conferences..

-        Administrative documents, descriptions of work, Consortium Agreement and financial data.

The RANGER website has been built so as to be attractive and interesting to both experts and non-experts visitors and aims to provide a concise overview of all latest news and achievements of the project. The website contains all information regarding the RANGER objectives, expected impact, significant achievements, technology news, consortium contacts, as well as all project public documents (deliverables, presentations, scientific publications etc.) serving the purposes of the Task 8.1, related to awareness raising strategies.. The website, as one of the main dissemination channels of the project will be continuously updated by the Dissemination Manager with latest information, public documents etc. even after the project end.

Articulated with the RANGER external web based communication means is the RANGER presence on social media platforms that will be established on month 5 of the project life cycle.

Annex A - References & Relevant Readings

[1] Redmine: www.**redmine**.org/
[2] The Trac project: **trac**.edgewall.org/
[3] Ruby on rails: **rubyonrails**.org/
[4] The GNU Operating System: www.**gnu**.org/

Annex B - List of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
CO	Confidential
DMSF	Document Management System Features
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
OCP	Online Collaboration Platform
PHP	Hypertext Preprocessor
PU	Public
URL	Uniform Resource Locator