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D1.2 PRELIMINARY MODEL OF DIVERSITY

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Abstract	
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DEM: Demonstrator, pilot, prototype, plan designs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this deliverable, we have further developed the notion of diversity in the context of the WENET project introducing several conceptual clarifications to the aim of supporting the underlying model of the future platform:

- First (*section 1*), we introduce the distinction between diversity on “observable” demographic characteristics or “readily detectable attributes” or “surface level diversity” such as race or ethnic background, age, school years, or gender, and diversity with respect to less “visible/observable” demographic characteristics or “underlying attributes” or “deep level diversity” such as education, technical abilities, functional background, tenure in the organization, or socioeconomic background, personality characteristics, cultural, cognitive, or values. One reason for differentiating between observable and non-observable types of diversity is that when differences between people are visible, they are particularly likely to evoke responses that are due directly to biases, prejudices, or stereotypes.
- Second (*sections 1 and 2*), we want to leverage the similarity based on non-observable traits to favour encounters between individuals that differ in visible traits. Knowledge of attitudes, beliefs and the value of similarity between individuals forms the basis for continued attraction and affiliation. Research generally supports the idea that initial categorizations are accompanied by perceptions of similarity or dissimilarity that are based on surface-level demographic data; these perceptions change when deep-level information is obtained. In fact, as people acquire more information, their perceptions are based more on observed behaviours and less on stereotypes driven by demographic characteristics. We define the choice architecture of WENET in terms of suggesting social ties between individuals based on non-observable traits, in order to promote diversity between individuals that might be different from the point of view of observable ones.
- Third (*section 3*), the non-observable traits are operationalised through the notion of social practice. Social practices are defined by their materiality, competence and meaning and each individual can be ‘profiled’ on these three (sub)dimensions.

Last (*sections 4 and 5*), we present the exploratory empirical research that we have conducted so far and the one planned to model social practices based on survey data that allowed to test the instruments developed to collect information about social practices.