



# Citi-sense WP5:

Participation and Empowerment

## Newsletter No. 2

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### **To “e-” or not to “e-”: Re-locating innovation in “electronic” decision-making.**

This paper presents evidence from three global democratic organizations that “e-” is not a relevant modifier of decision-making concepts related to “democracy”. Defining “e-” as shorthand for decision-making skills and tools enabled by ICTs, including computer-mediated communication (CMC), it tests whether “e-” is an “incremental” innovation augmenting existing capabilities of democracy as a decision-making tool. It finds that “e-” acts as a “radical” innovation to democratic decision-making tools by providing different capabilities than democracy. It also finds that indicators of good democratic decision-making (participation, sustainability, and impact) say little about the ability of “e-” to achieve the same desirable goals aspired by democracy.

<http://www.jedem.org/article/view/40>

### **Involve 2012. November 13-14. Nottingham, United Kingdom.**

INVOLVE's national conferences bring together people with a common interest in public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research. This includes members of the public, service users, researchers, research commissioners and representatives of voluntary sector organisations. This 8th biennial conference aims to encourage critical thinking and discussion about: how people are involved in research, learning and support for involvement, researching impact and future directions.

<http://www.profbriefings.co.uk/involve2012/>

### **Apps for citizens.**

Public services are moving inexorably online. And as advances in consumer technology continue to raise citizen expectations, there will be a strong demand for government services to be accessible through apps and mobile devices as well as the traditional desktop browser. Apps with the community in mind, such as Love Newham, allow citizens to report problems like broken street lights and graffiti to the council direct from their smartphone. UK Pharmacy allows you to look up your nearest pharmacy based on your current location.

<http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/media-centre/blogs/category/item/apps-for-citizens>

### **Better Technology for Planners Also Means More Citizen Participation.**

The electronic communications and high-tech, computing revolutions have changed planning for the better since the 1970's and 1980's. The tools available today are powerful and much more effective at analyzing, arraying, and mapping important data. Laptops put into our hands the power of big, furnace-sized computers from a couple of decades ago. We can run alternative growth scenarios in real time right on those laptops, and model their impacts on local government budgets, water or air quality, or affordable housing. We can play with building designs, or bulk and density, how to manage stormwater runoff, and see what these designs might look like in a particular place. And we can obtain, view and analyze mapped information on hundreds of different parameters, depending upon the technical capacity of a particular state and region or what's available from the feds.

<http://www.theatlanticcities.com/politics/2012/05/better-technology-planners-also-means-more-citizen-participation/2023/>

### **Civic Engagement and Local E-Government: Social Networking Comes of Age. University of Illinois at Chicago. College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs.**

This study examined features on local government websites that could contribute to civic engagement, through 1) information about government and community, and 2) through interactive or participatory opportunities online. This included information on contacting local officials, local government organization, processes and regulations, neighborhoods, local policies and performance data, and



opportunities to participate offline (such as public hearings). We also examined online interactivity and opportunities for participation (such as social networks, townhall meetings, and open data portals), and the transparency and accessibility of the main website. Information is critical for government accountability, as well as for providing the knowledge necessary for civic engagement. Communication with citizens, through a variety of online tools, can potentially foster more responsive government.

<http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/ipce/interior/CELocalEGovSMExSum2012.pdf>

### **Digital Disconnect: The Gaps Between Government-to-Citizen Online Interactions.**

Citizens are continuing to move from the physical to the digital world to fulfill their local government needs. Are local governments satisfying their citizens' digital demands?

<http://go.civicplus.com/l/9522/2012-10-17/8pk62>

### **Collaborative e-government: public services that get better the more people use them.**

This definition provides a new way to think about public services which conveys the message that collaborative e-government is NOT about a few geeks developing apps with open data, but taking advantage of the skills and goodwill of large numbers of citizens, with different degree of e-skills.

<http://egov20.wordpress.com/2011/11/03/collaborative-e-government-public-services-that-get-better-the-more-people-use-them/>

### **Disruption and Empowerment.**

This paper describes a changing landscape of society and politics. Firstly it briefly situates current practices and methods of democratic engagement and representation within a recent historical framework. It then describes mediating factors relating to democracy, the media and civil society and contextualises these within the broader neoliberal shift from citizen to consumer. The paper then identifies some key transformational agendas in the modus operandi of citizen to government exchange that hint at a return to more civic-focused responsibility, the emergence of issues-based politics and discusses the transformative role that digital media can play in this. All of this pre-supposes that citizens have both the ability and opportunity to engage in democratic practices so, finally, the paper describes a transformative model for citizen- driven, issues-based democracy that might connect with the systems of power in a more effective and democratic way by harnessing digital media and by building on local skills, knowledge, ideas and partnerships.

<http://www.jedem.org/article/view/52>

### **Here Comes the Socially Driven City.**

The next phase of the smart city movement is already upon us. The move to make our cities more intelligent began with an IT-enabled, systems-driven approach: creating efficiencies through digitizing information, optimizing traffic systems, and using data-driven dashboards to aid decision making. But now, we're beginning to use new technologies to support the entrepreneurial, the spontaneous, the creative, and the humane.

[http://www.ubmfuturecities.com/author.asp?doc\\_id=523815&section\\_id=221](http://www.ubmfuturecities.com/author.asp?doc_id=523815&section_id=221)

### **Role of social design in public services.**

UK public services are gradually going digital, users are being asked to collaborate in service development and data is being made public. This is partly a natural evolution, partly provoked by the media, and partly driven by the government's open public services agenda: increase choice for citizens, release data, diversify the range of providers.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/public-leaders-network/2012/apr/18/social-design-public-services>



### **Social Networking on Climate Change.**

This paper reports on the deployment of a multilingual Social Networking Platform in three regions of Europe (Catalonia, Poitou-Charentes and Tuscany), in the context of an EU-funded Preparatory Action on eParticipation dealing with the issue of climate change and energy policy making at the level of the European Parliament. The US (“Obama”) approach and a novel (“European”) usage of social networks in political online discourses are compared. A recommendation to policy makers is that social networking can be useful whenever the topics under discussion are limited in scope, but also wide in implications, so that they require moving forward from “one-off” and “ad-hoc” participation experiments, towards the permanent coverage of “mission critical” Public Administration functions.

[http://academicpublishingplatforms.com/downloads/pdfs/jedem/volume1/201107172304\\_56-257-1-PB.pdf](http://academicpublishingplatforms.com/downloads/pdfs/jedem/volume1/201107172304_56-257-1-PB.pdf)

### **The Digital Engagement Guide: Ideas and practical help to use digital and social media in the public sector.**

These pages are managed by the Department of Health digital, channel strategy and publishing team. They bring together our advice and guidance about how to use digital tools, techniques and channels to help deliver DH objectives. The content is mainly aimed at communications professionals in the wider government and health community.

<http://www.digitalengagement.info/2012/10/30/digital-health-digital-guidance-and-best-practice-for-the-health-and-care-system/>

### **Participation Cymru Evaluation Toolkit.**

Evaluation of participation is vital to ensure that we learn lessons from how we engage the public and how we can do it better in the future. It’s something we often get asked about, as people want to know how they can show the value of public engagement.

Too often evaluation can be something that is tagged on to the end of participatory work. This toolkit can help you to ensure that you evaluate your work effectively and that you involve service users from the very beginning of any participatory work that you undertake.

<http://participationcymru.wordpress.com/2012/11/14/participation-cymru-evaluation-toolkit/>

<http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/principles>

### **7 Tips for Better Social Media Engagement.**

Tasked with building a social media program for a city or county government, but overwhelmed with the details? Don’t fret. IT and communications experts from three U.S. cities have suggestions to help cut through the clutter and engage with your local community.

<http://www.govtech.com/e-government/7-Tips-for-Better-Social-Media-Engagement.html>

### **Smart Citizens in the Data Metropolis.**

With the Smart City Expo taking place in Barcelona over the next few days, it is a good opportunity to pose some questions about how these ‘smart cities’ are prefigured, and about the forms and dynamics that cultural institutions and citizenship action will take within them. New opportunities, new challenges.

<http://abetterpeople.com/profiles/blogs/smart-citizens-in-the-data-metropolis#.UKuBiDI1q2E.twitter>