



Think Paper 6: The Participative Citizen

Nicola Hall

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"Think Papers" aim to present strategic issues that will be explored with stakeholders and researchers. They are intended to be high-level summaries both of the issues and challenges, and of the ongoing work undertaken by the project team. They will be updated on the project web site <u>http://www.ccegov.eu/</u> where registered participants can contribute to interactive explorations of definitions and issues.

This paper looks at what it is to be a citizen, and what new technologies contribute to citizenship. It focuses on active or participatory citizenship and looks at examples of activity where the 'e' has been added to participatory citizenship. It defines e-democracy and then goes on to consider what factors or conditions need to be in place for the 'e' in participatory citizenship to work effectively.

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Think paper series editors: Trond-Arne Undheim and Michael Blakemore





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1 Key messages

Citizenship is a constantly changing and contested notion within which three core aspects can be identified: rights, duties and participation:

- The citizen with rights is the citizen as service user accessing public services either offline or online through electronic service delivery.
- The citizen with duties is the citizen paying taxes or voting in elections, who may be using electronic tools to do so, for example online voting or online tax returns.
- The participative citizen is one who actively engages in political life through a variety of mechanisms including public discussion and debate.

In the context of participation, the administration can learn from the citizen and vice versa in an environment of mutual enrichment. This is increasingly being facilitated through online tools and mechanisms such as online consultations and online petitions, although there are associated concerns about the extent to which such activities widen representative participation, or amplify existing participation.

The paper identifies several types of participative citizen:

- Disengaged citizen ranging from those who are apathetic or unwilling to engage, through to those who chose not to participate for legitimate reasons and prefer instead to be represented instead through local public bodies or officials.
- Expert citizen who participates in the capacity of their own life experience being respected as personal expertise.
- Activist citizen who participates at a range of levels of public issues: local to global. In extreme cases the activist becomes hijacker when special interests dominate a discussion or those who shout loudest crowd out other voices in the discussion.
- Excluded citizen who is not accessing the internet or new technology for a variety of reasons including lack of access, limited financial capacity or lack of interest or desire to engage through new technologies.

Finally, the paper identifies conditions that need to be in place for e-democracy to work effectively:

- Primarily these focus on engaging with citizens in an ongoing manner (in-between as well as at election times) in a way that is accessible and understandable to all who wish to participate.
- E-democracy initiatives should ideally be linked into political or administrative processes and people to ensure that the participants' views are listened and responded to and acted upon as appropriate.

The European Commission supports e-democracy in its widest terms – through an area of work termed eParticipation, which was launched in 2005. This area of work encompasses e-deliberation, e-petitions, e-consultation and e-legislation, and underlines the importance of this field in Europe. In mid 2006, the Council of Ministers recognised "the growing interest in eParticipation and the impact of ICT on activities in the political sphere and welcomes its inclusion in the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan." Furthermore, the Commission and member states were invited to "experiment with innovative eParticipation schemes aiming at increasing participation in democratic processes focusing on tools and addressing citizens' demands." ¹ The approaches and tools described in this paper demonstrate a good fit with this European agenda.

¹ Europe. (2006). The eParticipation Initiative. (August) European Commission, [cited August 17 2006]. http://europa.eu.int/information_society/activities/egovernment_research/eparticipation/index_en.htm

2 What is a Citizen?

This paper looks at what it is to be a citizen and what new technologies contribute to citizenship. It focuses on active or participatory citizenship and looks at examples of activity where the 'e' has been added to participatory citizenship. It goes on to consider what factors or conditions need to be in place for the 'e' in participatory citizenship to work effectively.

There is a direct link between the participation of citizens in the provision/consumption relationship with government (for example paying taxes, or receiving services) and the democratic participation of citizens in the processes of governance. The link exists in the context of building and maintaining trust, for example so that citizens feel safe when managing their identity online, do not have unnecessary concerns about surveillance through information integration, and that citizens and intermediaries are willing to invest in the intellectual capital required to engage with e-services, The UK Cabinet Office is particularly interested, for example, in raising levels of 'self-service' by citizens, noting that "we need to focus on citizen and business participation in the service provision process."²

The concept of citizenship is constantly changing and has been the subject of much academic and public debate. The literature generally moves towards a common understanding of citizenship comprising of three core aspects of **Rights**, **Responsibilities/Duties and Participation**.

In this typology, when we consider a citizen as a holder of 'rights', they can be viewed as a consumer, or a service user, who is accessing services or rights which they have the right to receive. In this context the citizen requires a certain level of customer service and expects effective and efficient service from public administrations. An example of a citizen's rights would be a citizen accessing public services such as welfare or health benefits.³

The citizen with responsibilities or duties is a relatively passive agent, who complies with or defers to accepted norms of behaviour, or undertakes the actions required by the public administrations. In this case the citizen would be complying with legal requirements such as paying taxes and applying for licences and permits.

The participative citizen is one who actively engages in local political life through a variety of mechanisms including public discussion and debate. Participative citizens are able to raise issues, ask questions, make proposals and provide initiative. In this case the citizen is 'part

² CABINET. (2006a). Multichannel Transformation in the Public Sector: Principles and an Emerging Framework for Practical Use. London: Cabinet Office, 28 p.

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/publications/delivery_council/multi_channel_trans/pdf/multi_channel_trans061129.pdf

³ Helene Michel (2005) gives a useful summary of these three core aspects within her analysis of information and communication technologies (ICTs) within a public management context Michel, H. (2005). *e-Administration, e-Government, e-Governance and the Learning City: A typology of Citizenship management using ICTs.* (Volume 3 Issue 4, pp 213-218) Electronic Journal of e-Government, [cited July 15 2006]. www.ejeg.com.

and parcel of the processes of politics' and enables the 'mutual enrichment'⁴ of both public and citizen spheres. The administration can therefore learn from the citizen and vice versa.

Electronic tools have been widely developed and implemented across Europe to underpin the processes of citizenship and interaction between citizens and public administrations. When we add technology – ICTs – to the mix identified above, we can see the ways in which technology is contributing to the already existing processes of citizenship⁵.

In the case of the citizen with rights the relevant ICT processes are those of online public service delivery, and automation of procedures, for instance online applications and payments, smart cards and public information kiosks. These processes should, in theory, improve the customers' experience of accessing public services as well as making service delivery more efficient. Other think papers in this series deal with this area of public service delivery in greater detail.

In the case of the citizen with responsibilities/duties Michel gives the example of e-voting whereby citizens' responsibilities to vote in elections are automated through an online voting system. E-voting ranges from systems such as electronic counting mechanisms through to online vote-casting through public kiosks. In the UK, approaches to this are being trialed by the Electoral Commission and in Estonia thousands have already cast ballots the national e-voting system.⁶ In this case a citizens' civic duty to vote is 'e' enabled.

Finally, in the case of the participative citizen, interactive tools such as online discussion forums are designed to facilitate the participation of the citizen. This is participation in-between election times and alongside and in addition to the duty-bound citizens' activities of voting and tax-paying. We would term these activities e-democracy because they are using electronic tools to facilitate participation. The remainder of this paper will focus on the participative citizen and the electronic tools of e-democracy being designed to facilitate participation.

⁴ Michel, H. (2005). e-Administration, e-Government, e-Governance and the Learning City: A typology of Citizenship management using ICTs. (Volume 3 Issue 4, pg 214, pp 213-218) Electronic Journal of e-Government, [cited July 15 2006]. <u>www.ejeg.com</u>

⁵ Trends such as increasing use of social software (instant messaging, email, blogs, wikis etc.) and/or the development of Web 2.0 are factors which currently stimulate eDemocracy developments. See Think Paper No. 3 in this series.

⁶ Sheeter, Laura (2005) *Estonia forges ahead with e-vote* BBC [cited 14th October 2005]

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4343374.stm

3 What is a Participative Citizen?

There are many different dimensions to participation to be considered. We will look at the following:

- The 'disengaged' citizen;
- The 'expert' citizen;
- The 'activist' citizen;
- The 'excluded' citizen.

3.1 Disengaged

There has been well-documented concern in European democracies about the decline of engagement in politics⁷. Academics, journalists and commentators point to declining voter turnout at elections, membership of political parties, newspaper readership and other such indicators of an increasingly disengaged electorate. The evidence suggests there is declining interest in party politics in its current state. However interest levels in single and localised issues remain and in some cases are being invigorated and facilitated by new technologies such as the internet and mobile telephony. The argument goes that new technologies can re-invigorate democracy and revive interest in civic life⁸.

Citizens are disengaged to a variety of extents. In the most extreme cases citizens are apathetic: unwilling to engage, interested neither in voting nor in expressing opinions and interacting with governments in-between election times. Cynical citizens should not be confused with apathetic citizens. Buckingham talks about young peoples' interactions with the media and makes a convincing case that cynicism should be viewed more positively than apathy since people have to make some sort of assessment or critique of the media, or similarly politics, in order to be cynical. It therefore involves some sort of critical thinking process.⁹

There is also a convincing argument that citizens have bona-fide reasons to be disengaged. Kann and others argue that citizens may choose not to participate for legitimate reasons, because they do not have the time to spare for 'burdensome' meetings, discussions and email-writing.¹⁰ There is also the need for an 'audience'. Not everyone can participate to the same extent and there is clearly a role for audiences to observe, and, where appropriate, critique the participation and contributions of others. Indeed, in many online discussion forums

 ⁷ Buser, Martine, Linda Cotti, Pierre Rossel, and Matthias Finger. (2003). Government and Democracy in The Information Age. Lausanne, Switzerland: Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne. August, 116 p. <u>http://mir.epfl.ch/egov/docspdf/government_democracy.pdf</u>
⁸ Europe. (2004). eDemocracy. (January 30) European Commission, [cited February 16 2004].

http://www.europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/egov_rd/focus/edemocracy/text_en.htm

⁹ Buckingham, David (2000) The Making of Citizens: Young People, News and Politics. Routledge

¹⁰ Kann, Mark E. (2005). From Participatory Democracy to Digital Democracy. (1.2 2005) Fastcapitalism, [cited April 1 2006]. http://www.fastcapitalism.com/

the literature suggests that in the region of ten times more people view the information online than there are numbers of people creating content and interacting with content.¹¹

In addition, many citizens may be happy enough with the way things are and do not see the need to be constantly engaged in civic life, a term Komito calls 'good enough governance'.¹² This is supported by survey research which suggests that while satisfaction with national public services/officials (for example in the UK 'the NHS as a whole', 'Members of Parliament') can fluctuate and be negatively affected by media coverage; people are generally more satisfied with their own local services/officials (for example 'your doctor or local member of parliament') with which they have interacted.¹³

3.2 Expert

The expert citizen is recognised as such by virtue of their own experiences and is encouraged to participate on those terms. This is the philosophy behind the work in the UK Hansard Society's e-democracy programme, where the individual experiences of citizens are recognised as 'expertise' and citizens are encouraged to participate in specific areas of online consultation, where their personal experiences are of relevance to policy-makers.¹⁴ For example, in their programme of online consultations, citizens with 'expertise' such as survivors of domestic violence, recipients of family tax credits or families who have been through the court service, participate and provide feedback to government departments and parliamentary officials¹⁵. In these cases online forms of consultation and discussion are often accompanied by intense offline promotion and support to target key groups of users with relevant 'expertise', to inform them of the activity and encourage them to participate.

3.3 Activist

The activist is the citizen who actively participates of their own accord, on local, national or global issues that affect or interest them. This type of activism may be on-line or off-line but there have been some interesting examples of where new technologies (web, email, mobile) have been used to initiate and organise demonstrations and activities on national issues, such anti-Iraq war and anti-globalization marches. Even at the very local scale the web is being used to organise parish council- and community council-scale activity in England and Scotland, using the web to publish official paperwork, elicit responses to local planning consultations and recruit new council members. At the extreme end of activism is the hijacker – an individual or group of individuals who take over or swamp an e-democracy activity with off-topic or 'angry' messages to the detriment of the project's overall inclusiveness.

¹¹ ARTHUR, C. (2006). What is the 1% rule? (July 20) Guardian (London), [cited August 10 2006]. http://technology.guardian.co.uk/weekly/story/0,,1823959,00.html

¹² Komito, Lee. (2005). e-Participation and Governance: Widening the net. *European Journal of eGovernment* 3 (1): pp. online. http://www.ejea.com/volume-3/vol3-iss1/v3-i1-art4.htm

¹³ See www.mori.com

¹⁴ http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/e-democracy

¹⁵ A full list of Hansard Society consultations are provided in Hansard Society (2006) *TellParliament.net Interim Evaluation Report 2003-2005* Hansard Society

This happened at the Hansard Society, where an online consultation on child and family tax credits for the House of Commons Select Committee for welfare and benefits was swamped overnight with hundreds of messages from an anti-Child Support Agency group¹⁶. Similarly, in a community council website in Scotland¹⁷ the blog was used by only a small number of local people and dominated by one or two individuals posting more than half of the comments using aggressive language, capitals letters and exclamation marks. A recent attempt by the UK Prime Minister to provide a petitioning service was disrupted by special interest groups, the pro-hunting lobby and the lobby against road charging, overloading the site with their views¹⁸. Indeed some technologies themselves, particularly blogs, are seen as inherently hostile towards politics and public officials, given they are widely acknowledged to be "rooted in libertarianism and anti-establishment attitudes".¹⁹

3.4 Excluded

A discussion has endured on access to new technologies - European governments and the European Commission are committed to ensuring that all citizens have equal access to ICTs namely the internet and broadband²⁰. Broadband subscriptions are growing rapidly across the EU25, but access is fragmented and limited in some member states. In some slower-todevelop states, leapfrogging is taking place as users skip dial-up and move straight to broadband.²¹ Those without access tend disproportionately to be from lower income groups, older people, people in rural areas, and migrant populations, among others. In the UK the following classification was recently developed to describe the types of usage of the internet currently evident. This classification illustrates that people are excluded from technologies for a variety of reasons including lack of interest in technology (personal choice) or preference for other channels such as cable/digital television or mobile phones, as well as for reasons of income or physical access.

¹⁶ Hall, N (2001) Building Digital Bridges: Creating Inclusive Online Parliamentary Consultations, Hansard Society

¹⁷ ECOTEC (2007) Forthcoming.

¹⁸ Kablenet. (2006). Petitioners hit PM's website. (December 18) Kable Government Computing, [cited December 18 2006]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/DC18D1DE26514AFB8025724800436CB5?OpenDocument

¹⁹ Wheeler, Brian. (2006). Web 'fuelling crisis in politics'. (November 17) BBC, [cited November 17 2006]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6155932.stm

²⁰ Europe. (2006). Internet for all: EU ministers commit to an inclusive and barrier-free information society. (June 12) European Commission, [cited June 13 2006].

http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/769&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en. ²¹ EU (2005) Information Society Benchmarking Report available at

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/benchmarking/051222%20Final%20Benchmarking%20Report.pdf

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Group	Internet usage types
Group A : E-unengaged	Type A01 : Low technologists
	Type A02 : Cable suffices
	Type A03 : Technology as fantasy
	Type A04 : Mobile's the limit
	Type A05 : Too old to be bothered
	Type A06 : Elderly marginalised
Group B : E-marginalised	Type B07 : The Net ; What's that?
	Type B08 : Mobile Explorers
	Type B09 : Cable TV heartland
Group C : Becoming engaged	Type C10 : E-bookers and communicators
	Type C11 : Peer group adopters
Group D : Entertainment and shopping	Type D12 : Small time net shoppers
-	Type D13 : E for entertainment
Group E : E-independents	Type E14 : Rational utilitarians
	Type E15 : Committed learners
	Type E16 : Light users
Group F : Instrumental	Type F17 : Computer magazine readers
E-users	Type F18 : E for financial management
	Type F19 : On-line apparel purchasers
	Type F20 : E-exploring for fun
Group G : E-business users	Type G21: Electronic orderers
Group H : E- experts	Type H22 : E-committed
	Type H23 : E – professionals

Table 1 Demographic classification of internet usage²²

Source: CASA (2006)

There are also those who do not wish to access the internet and public administrations and officials must ensure that non-users are not excluded from efficient services because of a lack of desire to use ICTs or a lack of access or skills.

²² CASA. (2006). The UK Geography of the E-Society: A National Classification. London: Centre for Applied Spatial Analysis. August, 48 p. http://www.casa.ucl.ac.uk/

4 Putting the 'e' in engagement

A wide variety of activities, models and tools have been developed with the aim of putting the 'e' into engagement. These have been European Commission or national government-led, or led by charities, public bodies, grass roots organisations or individuals and communities. For the purpose of this paper, only activities which actively engage the citizen in meaningful discussion, and enable the citizen to *raise issues, ask questions, make proposals and provide initiative* have been accepted as real e-democracy. E-democracy activities in this case should allow the citizen to directly influence and therefore *mutually enrich* the public sphere.

A number of studies have attempted to catalogue examples of e-democracy activity, for example a recent British Council study produced a typology of participatory activities²³ and catalogued e-democracy initiatives in England and Germany which included online discussion fora, e-petitioning, online surveys, scenario modeling and community building activities. Not all the examples stated in the typology fall within the definition of a participative citizen adopted by the author of this think paper. A selection of examples of e-democracy (as defined by this paper) from the British Council typology are presented below accompanied by examples of each type of activity.

²³ ECOTEC Adapted from Pol-di.net. (2006). Facilitating Active Citizenship. E-participation in the United Kingdom and Germany: A Status Report with Examples From Both Countries. Berlin: British Council Germany. June, i+82 p. http://www.britishcouncil.de/pdf/e_participation.pdf

Table 2 Examples of e-democracy activities

Participatory activities	Description of activity	Examples
Moderated, synchronised	Time-limited web chats with	wwwpolitik-digital.de
online chat	elected representatives or officials. Citizens able to ask questions, raise issues and set the agenda. Responses	(Germany)
	provided in real time.	
Thematically open, un- moderated discussion	Discussion topics not pre-set. No moderator although there is	www.HearFromYourMP.com (UK)
forum (a-synchronous)	a function to report abuse.	www.gov2u.org (Greece)
Thematically fixed online discussion forum (either moderated or un- moderated) (a-synchronous)	Moderated dicussions on pre- set topics being run on behalf of Parliamentary Select Committees and All-Party Groups and other public officials.	www.danmarksdebatten.dk (Denmark) www.TellParliament.net (UK) www.bundestag.de/forum/foru mdisplay.php (Germany)
Political simulation / scenario modelling	Citizens interact with scenario models of political campaigns, budget decisions. However rarely inputs directly to political processes.	www.delib.co.uk (UK)
Online petition	Online petitions being submitted to parliaments. Citizens can launch petitions on any topic and gather support.	http://epetitions.scottish.parlia ment.uk (Scotland) Other examples operating in Romania, and at the German Bundestag.
Community-Builder	Facilitates networking and community building on geographic or areas of interest. Collectivised interests lend political weight to the activity.	www.mobhaile.ie (Ireland) www.sie.schreiben-dir.de (Germany) www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnet work (UK)
Community-Editing	Public wiki areas allow citizens to communally edit content on public issues, which is then carried over into the political process.	www.electofix.de-wiki (Germany)

The case study database developed as part of this study provides further examples of these types of activities from across Europe.²⁴ Interestingly, the UK Government has recently announced a swinging cull of official websites, in the interests of 'making access to information easier', and in doing so intends to focus on a small number of 'supersites²⁵. If such a move indeed makes it easier for the citizen to find the information they need, so giving them a basis for participation, then this can only be good. On the other hand, some might argue that such a move betrays a desire on the part of government to regain control, thereby fatally compromising putative channels for increased citizen participation.

²⁴ See http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=Bibliography

²⁵ See www.ccegov.eu/blog/default.asp?id=22

But what is the best way of doing e-democracy? The following – developed from personal practitioner experience, from advice in the research literature, and other good practice guides to citizen participation – are thoughts on how e-democracy initiatives can be optimized to enable citizens and public officials to make the most out of online interactions.

Sustained engagement:

• The focus of e-democracy should be in engaging with citizens in-between election times in a sustained dialogue as well as in seeking citizens' support solely at election times.

Role of public representatives:

- E-democracy activities can be effective from the top-down (i.e. government or administration-led) or bottom-up (i.e. from the "grass roots"), but in both cases the link to decision making and influence on public life should be made clear.
- Public officials or administrations should be actively involved; not just as a distant audience, but in the most effective cases as fellow participants in the discussion, responding to queries and providing feedback and response.
- Participants should see how their contributions are making a difference. Feedback should be provided on who is listening/watching; how suggestions or comments are being taken into account; and ultimately whether any legislative or policy changes have taken place as a result. This can take the form of direct responses to individuals, public responses posted onton the communal site, or summary pages with details of actions taken.²⁶ Ideally, feedback will be provided directly by public administrations/ representatives.

Quality of the deliberation:

- Citizens should have the opportunity to raise issues and set the agenda either completely, or within the confined of a broader topic area.
- Discussions and interactions should involve issue-raising, consideration, reaction, critique and questionning as well as responding.
- Discussions should be moderated by skilled / experienced moderators who are able to play a number of important roles including summarising, negotiating, facilitating, arbitrating, caretaking, informing, and providing context and feeding or reporting back.²⁷
- The language used in e-democracy initiatives should be simple and straightforward; jargon and should be avoided where possible. Where possible, the 'lay' user should be able to participate on equal terms.

Lose the focus on technology:

- Technology is not the be all and end all; it is a means not an end. Technology should be used to improve processes or engagement, not simply electronify existing bad practice or make poor processes faster.
- Technically, e-democracy functions should be easy to use and participate in. For example search mechanisms and 'latest postings' or 'new' functions enable users to identify and follow the debate.

²⁶ For example in the Scottish e-petitioner model a petitioner can track their petition through all stages and look up any policy responses that were implemented.

²⁷ Also see Hansard Society (2006) TellParliament.net Interim Evaluation Report 2003-2005 Hansard Society

• Alternative feedback mechanisms should be provided for those without access to ICTs who wish to make contributions, and where possible offline contributions should be published within/alongide the online debate.

Inclusion:

- E-democracy should enable citizens to have their say who would not necessarily have been able to do so before. (It is not about giving another tool/mechanism to those already actively engaged in the process, or about allowing existing talkers to shout louder.) New and alternative perspectives should be encouraged and respected.
- E-democracy should make it easier or less time-consuming for citizens to participate in public administration/consultation processes by 'lowering the bar' in terms of the consultation requirements. For example, online there is less focus on drafting formal responses, composing letters; posting a message is a much simpler process.
- E-democracy needs to be publicised or marketed to as wide a range of target groups as possible; as appropriate to the scale/topic or area. For example, efforts should be made to inform all residents of a local community, or invite all representative groups in a special interest area to participate.

Authentication:

 Consideration should be given to identification or validation of users – this is beneficial in identifying who users are and where they come from, and enabling some validation of the initiative through useful web statistics. Conversely however, registration processes can be off-putting and complex for less experienced web users and a balanced approach is required.

5 Conclusions

In conclusion, the following messages emerge:

What is a participative citizen?

- The participative citizen is one who has rights and responsibilities and who takes an active role in public life through participation in civic activities such as discussion and debate.
- In reality, citizens participate to varying degrees according to personal circumstance, and level of interest and commitment to an issue. Many citizens are happy to be passive observers of public life and are satisfied for representatives to reflect their views. Others are 'activists' taking an active role in the critique of public life. A healthy debate requires a variety of levels of participation given that not everyone will be able to be heard and audiences are required to receive and critique materials as much as vocal participants or creators of content.
- E-democracy is the application of new technologies such as the internet to participative processes. The rhetoric suggests that enabling people to participate online (from home, in their own time) will re-invigorate participatory democracy and reverse the decline in voter turnout and general trend of disengagement.

Let's not get over 'e'-xcited?

- Only 'e' activities that enable the citizen to have direct influence on public administrations and access to officials should be classified as true e-democracy.
- Putting the 'e' into engagement is a means not an end advances in technology should be used to re-design and re-think participatory citizenship rather than simply make existing processes faster or spread existing poor practice.
- Evidence has shown that e-democracy activities that provide a clear link to public administrations and policies, and can demonstrate the effects of participation, will be the most effective. Citizens do not wish to spend their valuable time participating in seemingly pointless activities without clear purpose or influence.

6 Glossary

E-democracy	The application of electronic tools and techniques to processes of democracy
	and participation (e.g. online discussion, online voting, online petitioning)
GP	General Practitioner
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
MP	Member of Parliament