



United Nations



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



Global Centre for ICT in Parliament



World e-Parliament Conference 2008

25 - 26 November 2008 // European Parliament // Brussels



Improving dialogue with citizens: *the challenges we face*

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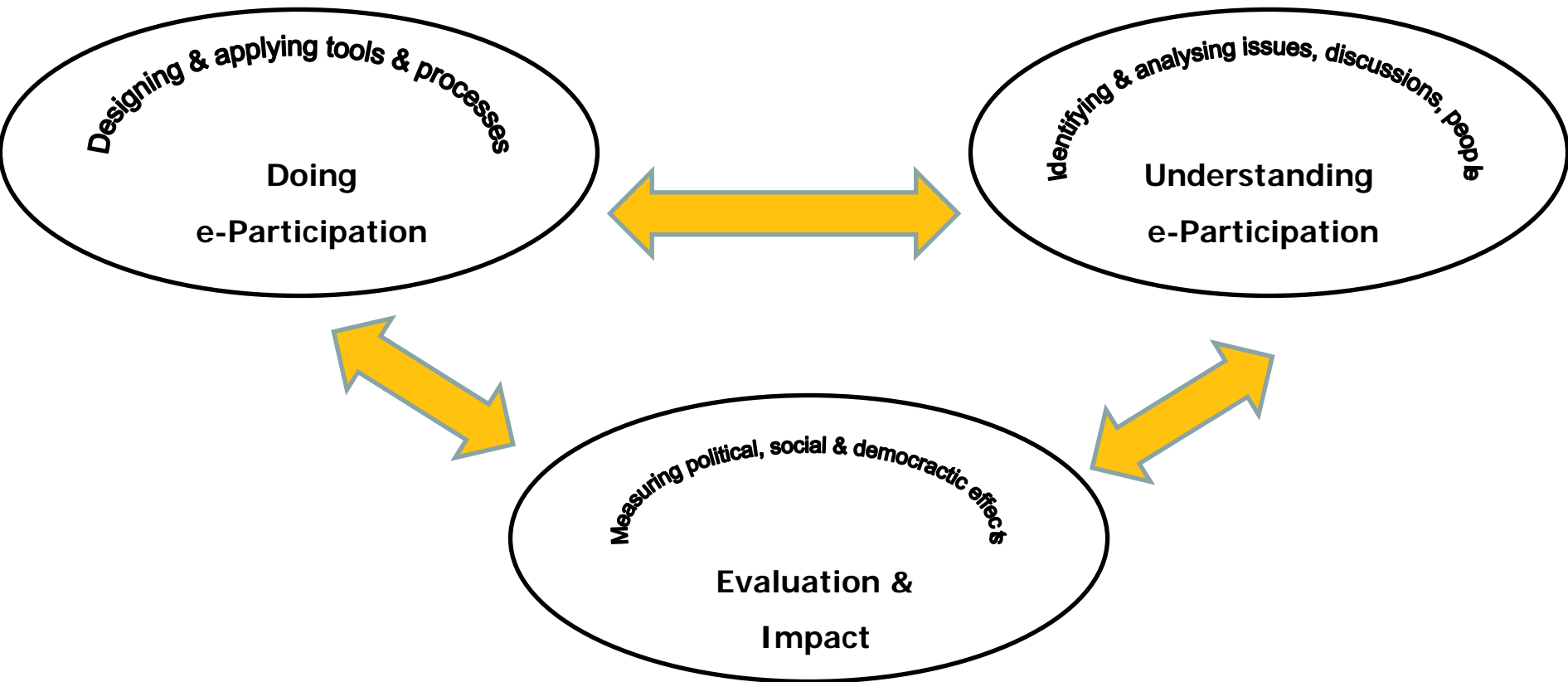
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Overview

- Current obstacles & future goals
- Cooperation & collaboration

e-Parliament – e-Participation



1. Parliaments & participation

Barriers to future goals:

- Institutional & political resistance to e-Participation
- Lack of online visibility of representatives
- Implications of participatory decision-making



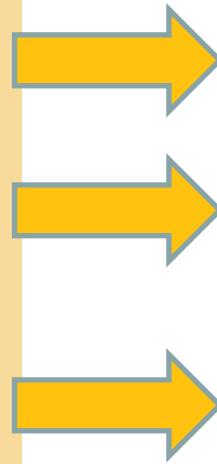
Need to understand:

- Relevance & added value of e-Participation for parliaments
- How to create environment for online visibility – when, where & how.
- Participatory problem-solving & power-sharing

2. Society & participation

Barriers to future goals:

- Implications for society of joint decision-making
- Lack of trust in engagement process
- Lack of take up of formal consultations by public



Need to understand:

- Joint problem-solving & joint responsibility
- Different motivations & expectations
- How consultations are inter-connected with social networking sites; listening to online policy discussions

3. Equity & Inclusion

Barriers to future goals:

- Lack of understanding how divides impact on representativeness of e-Participation
- Major divides – digital, civic, language
- Limited reliability and acceptability of e-Participation decisions



Need to understand:

- How to take account of growing multi-ethnic, multi-cultural shape of society
- Relevance of e-Inclusion research of mobile technology devices
- Role of mass media to reach excluded sections of society

4. Supporting online deliberation

Understanding the discussion

Barriers to future goals:

- Tensions between democratic theory & technology design
- e-Participation does not support deliberation
- Lack of formal representations of information & open standards



Need to understand:

- How to create online environment for reflection, justification of claims, reciprocity, transformation of claims
- Support for facilitation & moderation
- Analysis of online discussions

5. Cultural & normative differences

Barriers to future goals:

- Each parliament is unique; each country is unique
- Lack of common understanding of vocabulary
- Shared goals for e-Participation



Need to understand:

- 'political participation' across countries & different social actors
- How key terms relating to e-Participation are used by actors/countries
- How design of e-Participation is effected by cultural contexts

6. Evaluation & impact

Barriers to future goals:

- Lack of rigorous evaluation processes & metrics
- User satisfaction surveys
- Implications of participation on democracy



Need to understand:

- What does evaluation of e-Participation mean
- How to integrate qualitative research methods
- How e-Participation affects democracy & long term impacts

How can parliaments work with academia?

- **DEMO-net: Network of Excellence**

- To strengthen scientific, technological & social research excellence in e-Participation
- Funded by European Commission
- www.demo-net.org



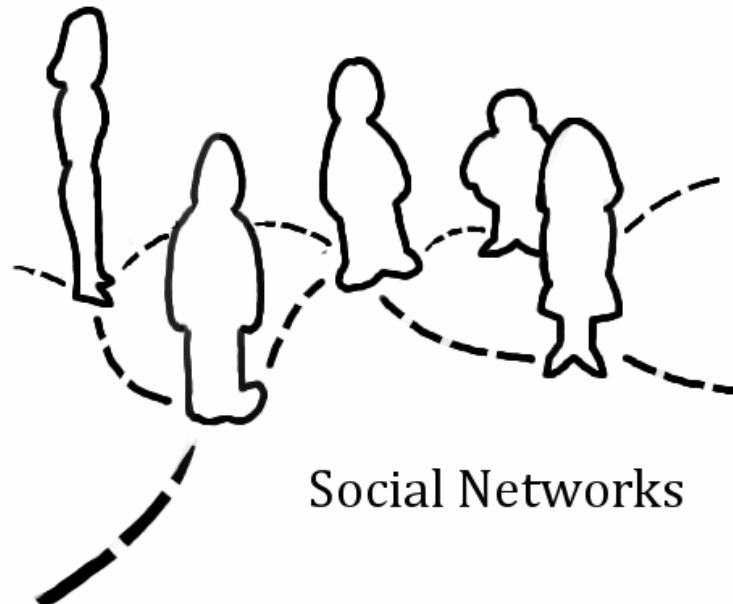
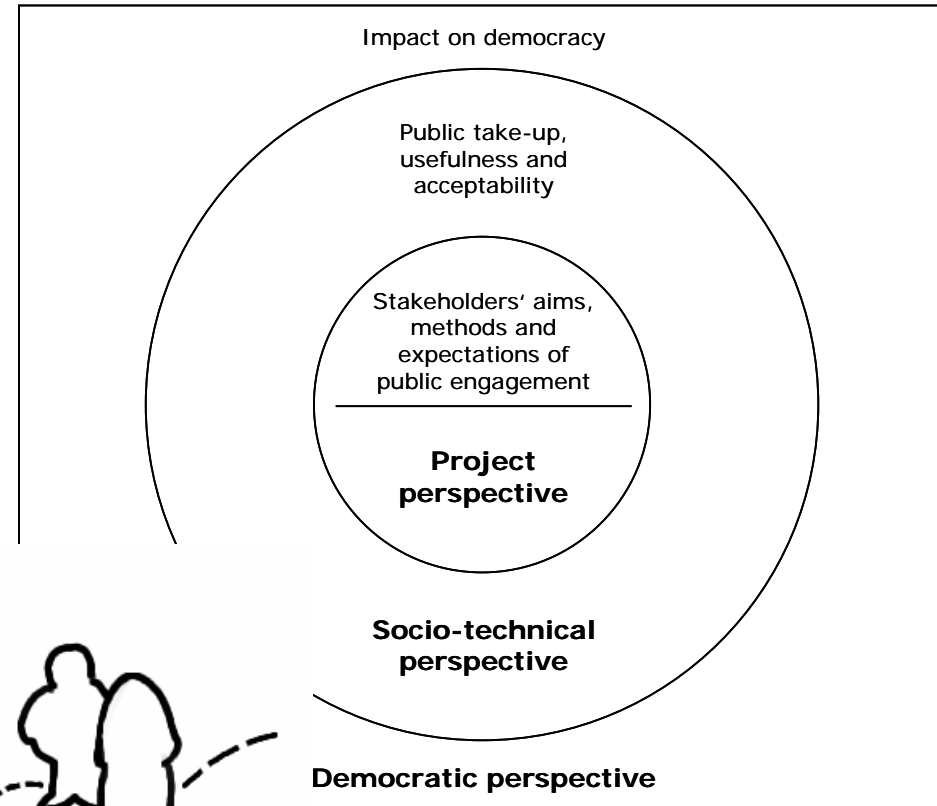
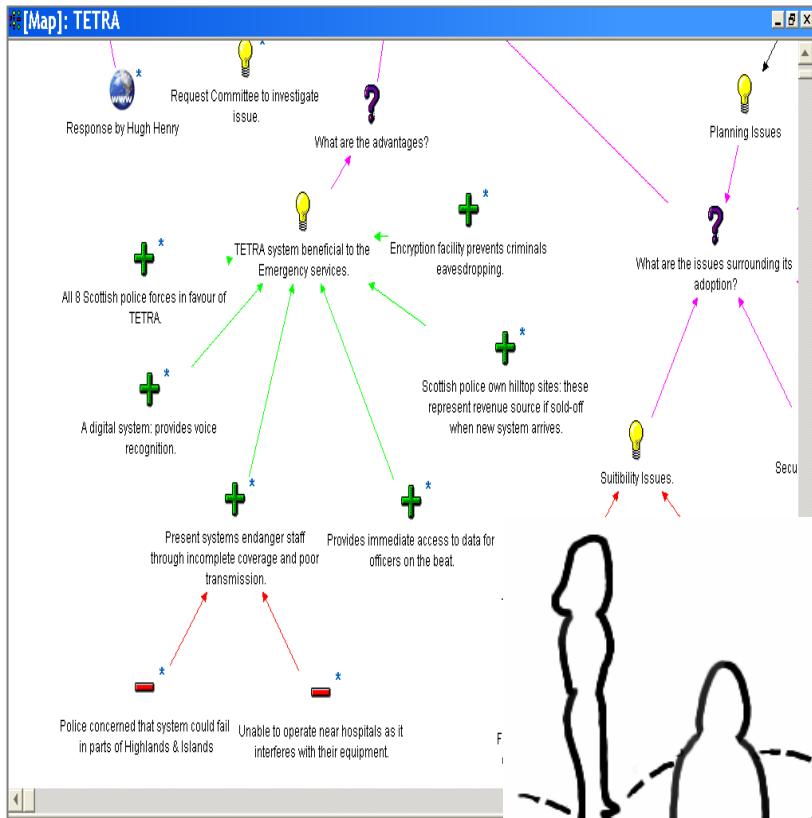
- **e-Participation Study**

- To produce recommendations to assist European Parliament & European Commission in harnessing benefits of ITC for enhanced public participation
- Funded by European Commission
- www.european-eparticipation.eu



Thank you

Argument visualisation



An evaluation Framework



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