Analytical framework for researching citizen participation in the era of e-democracy

Izabela Kapsa, *Kazimierz Wielki University (Bydgoszcz, Poland)*
E-mail: izabela.kapsa@ukw.edu.pl
ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2342-3682

Abstract

Universal access to new technologies influences citizen participation, and its growth is recognised as one of the most important goals of electronic democracy. Apart from presenting the most important approaches to citizen participation in the context of e-democracy, the main aim of this article is to present the analytical framework for researching e-participation. Even though it is a relatively new area of scientific research, it is the subject of numerous theoretical reflections and empirical verification. Recognising e-participation as one of the dimensions of e-democracy, the author aims to answer the following research question: how to analyse e-participation from the democratic perspective? Apart from presenting the most important approaches to citizen participation in the context of e-democracy, the author indicates the analytical framework based on the own research and the literature review.

Keywords: e-democracy, e-government, e-participation, citizen participation

Ramy analityczne badania partycypacji obywatelskiej w dobie e-demokracji

Streszczenie

Powszechny dostęp do nowych technologii wpływa na partycypację obywatelską, a jej wzrost jest traktowany jako jeden z najważniejszych celów demokracji elektronicznej. Oprócz prezentacji najważniejszych koncepcji partycypacji obywatelskiej w kontekście e-demokracji, głównym celem artykułu jest przedstawienie wskaźników analizy e-partycypacji. Mimo iż jest to stosunkowo nowy obszar badań naukowych, stanowi przedmiot licznych refleksji teoretycznych oraz empirycznych weryfikacji. Uznając e-partycypację za jeden z wymiarów e-demokracji, autorka dąży do odpowiedzi na pytanie badawcze: jak analizować e-partycypację z perspektywy demokratycznej? Oprócz przedstawienia najważniejszych podejść do partycypacji obywatelskiej w kontekście e-demokracji, wskazuje na ramy analityczne wynikające z badań własnych i przeglądu literatury.

Słowa kluczowe: e-demokracja, e-government, e-partycypacja, partycypacja obywatelska

Nowadays, there has been much interest among researchers and international organisations, and state and local government institutions in citizen participation. It is related to the influence of modern technologies on civil society and the changes in civil-state relations. Thanks to the universal access to new technologies, citizen participation may increase, which is notifying as one of the most important goals of electronic democracy (Hacker, van Dijk 2000; Norris 2003; Manoharan, Holzer 2012; van Dijk 2012; Lindner, Aichholzer 2020). The global network has created space for individuals, social groups, and various organisations and institutions to interact in recent years. It seems that the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused a limitation of direct contacts and carrying out business and public services remotely, is making a significant contribution to accelerating the revolution already rapidly progressing.

Even though citizen electronic participation is a relatively new area of scientific research, it is the subject of numerous theoretical reflections and empirical verification. Most of them are focused on narrow perspective of a scientific discipline (e.g. political science and administration, management sciences, sociology, law, information technology, and economics) or quantitative analysis (e.g. based on EPI index). Not all of them refer to e-democracy directly. Some researchers identify e-participation as a significant factor in the growth of citizens' abilities to participate in digital governance (Sanford, Rose 2007) and in promoting a more effective society (Sæbø et al. 2008) or as achieving service improvement and innovation (Frederickson 1996; Dunston et al. 2009; Denhardt J.V., Denhardt R.B. 2015). As an emerging research subject, it is characterised by a diverse research perspective and methods of analysis. Recognising e-participation as one of the dimensions of e-democracy (Kneuer 2016), the author aims to answer the following research question: how to analyse e-participation from the democratic perspective? Which factors should be taken into account when analysing e-participation in order to make a qualitative assessment of the phenomenon and verify whether it serves the purpose of increasing the participation of citizens in democratic processes? Apart from presenting the most important approaches to citizen participation in the context of e-democracy, the author indicates the analytical framework based on a critical reflection resulting from own research and literature review. Many previous studies were focused on the quantitative aspect of the solutions studied (also international reports comparing individual countries' achievements in the field of e-participation on the basis of quantitative values), however, a qualitative perspective was definitely missing.

Citizen participation approach in the context of e-democracy

Citizen participation is an essential element of democracy. Some theories of democracy consider the level of citizen involvement as one of the primary criteria for determining its strength (Barber 2003) or the participation of citizens in the political decision-making process as the ground of the model of deliberative or participatory democracy (Chadwick 2003; Wright, Street 2007; Papadopoulos, Warin 2007). This participation covers all political and social practices by which citizens influence public affairs - from participation in elections,

referenda and consultations, to civic activity to implement social or political initiatives (Parés, March 2013: p. 7). Therefore, civic participation includes social participation treated as collective activities that individuals may be involved in as part of their everyday lives and public participation, which concerns the engagement of individuals with the various structures and institutions of democracy. Individual participation covers the choices and actions that individuals make as part of their daily lives, which are statements of the kind of society they want to live in (Brodie et al. 2009: p. 4).

The importance of civic participation was emphasised already in the 1970s in Western Europe (Pateman 1970; Verba, Nie 1972). Currently, this concept returns in the discussion on the crisis of representative democracy, understood as a decline in voter turnout, a decreasing number of political party members, a lack of trust in the institution of power or even social anomie. Along with the development of new technologies, it was treated as a panacea to this crisis (Sartori 2016). The modern form of electronic citizen participation differs from the traditional one in that it is based on the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the participation process. Meanwhile, technology influences the change of communication processes (information is delivered easier, faster, without time and space constraints). It also affects mobilisation processes (it can involve and involve many people). The development of technologies has become an essential accelerator of changes in civic involvement resulting in an active and innovative adaptation of new solutions as tools for civic activity (Lubik-Reczek et al. 2000: p. 16).

E-participation is mainly defined as involving citizens in political decision-making through ICT (Macintosh, Whyte 2006: p. 2; Medaglia 2012: p. 346; ONZ 2014: p. 61). It is also described as "the use of digital media to mediate and transform the relations of citizens to governments and public administrations in the direction of more participation by citizens" (van Dijk 2010). For some researchers, electronic citizen participation refers to the relationship between the public sphere of politics and administration and civil society (Fuchs et al. 2006; Sanford, Rose 2007). It covers both grassroots initiatives of citizens and actions of public administration to deliver public services, make decisions, or prepare and implement public policy. Nevertheless, it is also recognised as providing better communication and relationship opportunities for civil society organisations, citizens and politicians. Thanks to the evolution of many related communication services influenced by the rapid growth and acceptance of the Internet, e-participation enables and supports democratic initiatives (Sanford, Rose 2007: p. 407). Likewise, in this democratic context, participation is framed as achieving increased democracy, service improvement, and innovation (Frederickson 1996; Dunston et al. 2009; Denhardt J.V., Denhardt R.B. 2015).

Citizen participation often appears in e-democracy, which is nowadays also called: electronic democracy, cyber-democracy, e-democracy, democracy 2.0 (Hague, Loader 1999; Coleman, Norris 2005; Päivärinta, Øystein 2006; Ferber et al. 2007; Schaal 2016; Carr et al. 2018). Kenneth L. Hacker and Jan van Dijk (2000: p. 1) indicate that digital democracy uses ICT and CMC in all kinds of media to enhance political democracy or the participation of citizens in democratic communication. Some researchers indicate that "electronic democracy developed through citizens' electronic participation influences the citizens,

the enterprises, the public administration and the society" (Spirakis et al. 2010: p. 77). While the others argue that e-democracy refers to the use of ICT in political debates and decision-making processes, complementing or contrasting traditional means of communication, such as face-to-face interaction or one-way mass media (Päivärinta, Sæbø 2006: p. 818). As there is no one approach to e-democracy, citizen participation is understood as a concept broader than e-democracy (van Dijk 2012), one of the dimensions of e-democracy (Kersting 2013; Aichholzer, Strauß 2016; Kneuer 2016; Lindner et al. 2016) or even a narrow one – as one of the dimensions of e-government that contributes to e-democracy (West 2000; Grönlund 2002).

In Marianne Kneuer's theory (2016: p. 671), e-participation is one of the three dimensions of e-democracy, next to free and equal access to technology and e-government. It runs in two directions – top-down, the essence of which is citizens' access to information and the ability to react to government initiatives (via websites, online consultations, polls, participatory budgets, e-referenda and e-voting) and bottom-up, in which citizens have the opportunity to influence political projects as their initiators and creators (tools: blogs, FAQs, e-mails, e-petitions, popular initiatives, online campaigns). Thanks to the combination of both dimensions, a strong partnership is created, and new technologies are a factor enhancing participation.

Apart from those two directions of e-participation, Kneuer also categorised its four levels: e-information, e-consultation, e-monitoring and e-decision-making. Thus, she developed the OECD (2001) approach on government-citizen relation in policy-making in which they indicated three levels of strengthening by the governments the relations with citizens: information, consultation and active participation. However, the scale is also expanded to five levels, as by United Nations (2018): information, consultation, collaboration, involvement and empowerment. Despite such an approach that orders the division of citizen participation tools into new categories, it seems more beneficial for stakeholders than researchers. Interestingly, only three dimensions indicated by the OECD form the E-Participation Index (EPI) framework, a well-recognised global source of data on e-participation that is often used in comparative analysis (Lee-Geiller 2020; Lubik-Reczek et al. 2020).

The argument against the excessive expansion of e-participation levels is that it does not capture the quality of participation. Nevertheless, this does not simply mean that the fewer factors, the better the measurement. The Survey containing E-Participation Index (see: United Nations 2020), presented every second year, provides information on the supply side of e-participation (opportunities offered by the governments) but does not measure the demand side (the uptake of opportunities and the quality of e-participation). It is the weakness of many reports designed to compare different countries in quantitative terms. EPI 2020 indicates that three countries (Estonia, Republic of Korea, USA) achieved the highest score (1.0), which mainly follows from the number of online services, not the outcomes of e-participation (e.g. impact on the quality of policies and decisions or even on the quality of public services). The reason is that EPI is based on the information provided by the governments, not by the citizens.

Apart from underestimating the quality of participation, which is particularly important in the democratic context, the author also sees that most of the analysis concentrate on political decision-making as defined by the approaches mentioned above while omitting other forms of citizen participation. As Lindner and Aichholzer (2020) rightly pointed out, the impact of electronic communication tools in the public sphere concerning civic participation manifests itself in political decision-making (formally institutionalised mechanisms) and new social movements (informal civic engagement). Further, they indicated that e-democracy represents a wide variety of uses of ICT in support of democratic communication and includes all levels and modes of involvement of the public (individual citizens, informal groups and civil society organisations). Digital communication tools have contributed to the emergence of different, frequently radical new social movements expressing political reality contestation (Touraine 2009). The lack of social trust in the institutions of the state, as well as the communication and mobilisation potential of the Internet, mean that the demands for more participatory forms of democracy are growing.

Summarising, it is worth noting that the author is not discussing the best model of democracy or the conviction about striving to increase participation as a guarantee of better democracy. Being aware of many critical voices regarding actions to increase participation, which recognise that it is not democratic in the traditional sense (Parvin 2018), the author is convinced that there is no homogeneous pattern of e-participation. Despite the dynamic development of technology, citizens do not have universal access to new technologies (according to Internet World Stats, in 2020, more than 5 billion people worldwide use the Internet, which constitutes 63.2% of the world's population) what among other things generates participatory inequalities. Considering some opportunities and threats of using new technologies in democratic processes, in this article, the concept of the analysis of citizen participation is presented in the context of e-democracy.

The analytical framework for researching e-participation

Just as there is no single model of democracy, there are also several models of e-democracy (Hacker, van Dijk 2000; Bellamy 2000; Päivärinta, Sæbø 2006; Grazian, Nahr 2020; Lindner, Aichholzer 2020). Most of them identify citizen e-participation in e-democracy via formal tools, mainly e-government services (as a subset of e-government; see: Le Blanc 2020). The basis of the author's approach is a broad understanding of e-participation, including both formally institutionalised mechanisms and informal civic engagement (Lindner, Aichholzer 2020). As citizen participation is considered in the context of e-democracy, another assumption comes from the conception of electronic democracy that refers to the use of ICT in political debates and decision-making processes (Päivärinta, Øystein 2006). Moreover, wider for purposes of enhancing political democracy or the participation of citizens in democratic communication.[1] Also, electronic participation is broader here than

---

[1]   The authors even use the term *digital democracy* here and distinguish it from e-democracy considering it as too general as the old media of broadcasting and telephony were electronic as well (Hacker, van Dijk 2000).

participating in public decision-making processes and the governance mechanisms; it refers to all forms of citizens' engagement in the public sphere.

The main aim of the analytical framework presented in this article is to examine the quality of electronic participation from the citizens' perspective. A citizen-oriented approach leads to a complete picture of the phenomenon and is not limited to its presentation by the authorities. It refers to both formal and informal forms of participation and also contains essential qualitative aspects. This approach results from a review of theoretical and empirical inquiries, including own research, and the conclusion that in many of them, the information about the number of available e-participation tools dominates over their qualitative analysis. Agreeing that ICT is a powerful means to promote and improve public participation, enhance democratic debates and facilitate citizen engagement, it should be considered that it does not work by itself. The usage of technologies is an important factor in increasing e-participation, but it should not be the only factor for analysing. Thus the author does not emphasise quantitative indicators of participation tools (often treated as the primary indicator of e-participation, especially in the context of formally institutionalised mechanisms as e-government tools or even for EPI). The tools are also the subject of the most numerous analyses of e-participation as case studies or the largest possible participation of citizens in the process. The author assumes that analysing citizen participation in the era of e-democracy should be based on such indicators that primarily take into account the qualitative aspect. These are as the following:

- **Availability** understood as access to the Internet and the ability to use it by the citizens. Although we recognise universal access to the Internet (which is not universal as almost 40% of the world's population do not have this access; see: Internet World Stats 2020), there is also great interest in verifying if access to the Internet means the ability to use it. It seems particularly important from the democratic perspective as no ability to use electronic tools means being excluded from the electronic democracy processes.

The need to take this factor into account results from those researches that criticise technical determinism based on the expectation that digital technologies empower all kinds of users and solve complex democratic problems (Helbig et al. 2005; van Dijk 2010). Most research on the digital divide indicates that technology often increases socio-economic inequalities rather than reduces them, and these differences are not primarily about access to technology but rather about how to use technology to take part in democratic processes online (Norris 2001; Macintosh, Whyte 2006; Sæbø et al. 2008; Davis 2010).

Greater in-depth knowledge of the citizen as an e-participant results in greater participation. There is some evidence for this statement – the positive and negative. The example of South Korea where a high level of teaching people to use the Internet has been achieved, and its result in high citizen participation both in formal (e.g. usage of e-government services) and informal (e.g. Red Devils and candlelight protests in 2002) forms (Park 2010). Unlike in the United Kingdom (Kapsa 2019a) or in some cases in Japan (Granier, Kudo 2016), where the mere existence of ICT tools does not determine their use,

on the contrary, instead of leading to social inclusion, it excludes the elderly in particular. All those countries are on the top of the E-Participation Index (EPI); however, their result does not reflect the citizens' perspective. That is why relying only on the number of available e-tools does not reflect the complete state of e-participation, and aiming to analyse it in the context of its availability is crucial for researchers and officials.

- ▪ **Adjustment** – another element worth considering is verifying if the tools of e-participation are desirable in the opinion of citizens. Adjustment means here such adaptation of e-participation tools that are adequate to the needs and expectations of their users. It is based on the need to analyse citizens' opinions, expectations, and experiences as an essential part of their satisfaction as users and creators.

This criterion seems relatively easy to meet in informal civic engagement because citizens as initiators decide which tool or channel of communication they chose. So it may be assumed that they choose a kind of digital tool tailored to their needs. Thanks to multimodality, diversity, and ubiquity, communication networks can encompass numerous and culturally diverse messages much more than any public space (Castells 2013). It is implemented in various forms of cyberactivity. Among many examples of such activism, the different tools of communication were used by The Zapatista Movement (1994, disseminating a book about the Chiapas uprising by emails), the National League for Democracy in Myanmar (1996, running the website and online newsgroups by Burmese diaspora), Colour revolutions (e.g. Ukraine 2004/2005, Iran 2009, where the most crucial channel of communication was YouTube for publishing videos from protests and other social media in aim to communicate and mobilise) and the greatest in such scale – Arab Spring (2010/2011, again with the crucial role of social media).

In formal forms of participation, citizens do not have such ease in choosing a tool. It is therefore worth recognising citizens' expectations and their opinions on the available e-services. Questionnaire surveys will certainly be helpful in this respect, as they will allow for the identification of citizens' assessments, their concerns or expected benefits, for example, people using e-services are also eager to see more of them (Kapsa, Musiał-Karg 2020). The conclusions of such studies, in addition to the scientific knowledge, could form the basis of a citizen-oriented government policy. As Strokosch and Osborne (2020) rightly point out, most narratives of public services locate experts, officials, public managers as decision-makers and citizens as consumers, service users. They present a conception of Public Service Logic that proposes a multi-dimensional model of value creation with the integral role of service users, participation as part of the production of public services and their use. In their opinion, nowadays, the challenge is the need for significant cultural change, particularly regarding traditional power relations and the understanding of how and by whom public services are designed and delivered. It seems like an essential condition for e-democracy to strengthen participation and make sure e-democracy tools are functional and embedded in the political process. Evaluation of the e-participation adjustment is essential for the qualitative assessment of the participation itself.

- ▪ **Activeness** – there is also a need to verify if the participation works actively or passively. Apart from the fact that participation is somewhat active by definition,

many studies use three levels of government-citizen relation as a basis of their analysis: information, consultation and active participation (see: OECD 2001). The most abundant level quantitatively indicates an extensive range of participation in the least active form – information, causing a distorted picture of the phenomenon.

As the OECD indicates, citizens' influence on policy-making rises from information to consultation and active participation. While e-information is the least active, it is the most common and the most widely included in the surveys and analysis of e-participation. As the example of Poland shows, there is a need to recognise the level of activity and evaluate the studied forms of e-participation taking these differences into account. Although Poland advances in the e-participation rankings, the qualitative analysis concludes that this promotion results from a more significant number of available e-information tools; however, in terms of consultation and active participation, there is still much to be done (Kapsa 2019b). Despite public consultations and participatory budgets implemented, ICT tools are still not used on a sufficient scale to carry out these tasks. Citizens are not active participants in these processes. Therefore, analysing e-participation should also take into account its activeness.

▪ **Effectiveness** of citizens' influence on the institutions of power. Assuming that e-participation aims to increase citizens' abilities to participate in the political process (Sanford, Rose 2007), it can be achieved by supplying citizens with information on public policies and allowing them to co-create them.

The authorities and opinions usually set the need to take this factor into account results from numerous conclusions that even governments use the Internet to facilitate the communication of citizens' opinions, the parameters for discussion outside of those boundaries may be excluded (Ainsworth et al. 2005) or public discussion tools are not meeting deliberative quality (Witkowska 2017). In this aspect it is worth to evaluate integrating e-tools of participation with the political process and its contribution to the public sphere. This also includes verifying if the authorities provide feedback to citizens on the decisions they made. It based on a belief that e-participation in not only a policy instrument aiming at ensuring the acceptance of a measure or a project of the governments, but mainly to consider citizens' input. The effectiveness of civic activities should also be an element in assessing the quality of their participation.

These indicators of analysing e-participation allow it to be qualitatively assessed and applied to its various forms. Regardless of whether we accept three or more levels of e-participation, by examining it according to the above indicators, we may obtain information about its quality and not be content with its existence only. It seems that after years of optimism about the participatory potential of ICT, we now know that the technical possibility and democratic feasibility are not always consistent. Therefore, its critical qualitative analysis should be the next step in developing citizen participation in e-democracy.

Conclusions

The technological revolution caused many consequences not only in technology but also in many spheres of human life. Widespread Internet access means any user can

support some ideas, become a member of the organisation or participate in various initiatives (Omotoyinbo 2014). Electronic democracy, especially in the initial phase, seemed to be an opportunity to overcome the crisis of civic activity and increase the participation of citizens in decision-making processes. Currently, we are facing new challenges – both citizens and governments. Even if we do not consider the communicative exclusion causing that many groups of citizens are disengaged due to lack of access to the tool, we should consider the quantity and the quality of participation since it may also affect the quality of democracy. Thus electronic communication tools perform many functions facilitating or generating a new dimension of communication, mobilisation, information, popularisation, and citizen participation; they are still just tools. After optimistic thought that the development of digital technologies is enough factor for increasing participation, there is a time for criticisms about its relevance and efficacy.

Assuming that not more participants nor e-participation tools but available, adjusted, active and effective participation make it better, in this article, those four criteria shaped an analytical framework for researching and implementing citizen participation in the era of e-democracy. For this reason, the meaning of willingness and competence of ordinary citizens to contribute to policy-making is highlighted here. This applies to formal and informal e-participation to achieve more effective and representative participation by trust and satisfaction of the citizens. It implies a more prominent role for social organisations and individual citizens. By indicating the criteria for its analysis, the author contributes to scientific knowledge and improves the actual practice of e-participation.

Izabela Kapsa – Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Faculty Coordinator for International Cooperation at the Faculty of Political Science and Administration, Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz. She has been involved as a team member in the research project on e-voting, financed by National Science Centre (Poland). Her main research interest focuses on citizen participation, assuming that e-participation is becoming one of the key factors in developing the decision-making process in e-democracy.

Izabela Kapsa – doktor, adiunkt i wydziałowa koordynatorka ds. współpracy międzynarodowej na Wydziale Nauk o Polityce i Administracji Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy. Jako członek zespołu była zaangażowana w projekt badawczy dotyczący e-głosowania finansowany przez Narodowe Centrum Nauki. Jej główne zainteresowania badawcze koncentrują się wokół partycypacji obywatelskiej, uznając, że e-partycypacja staje się jednym z kluczowych czynników rozwoju procesu decyzyjnego w e-demokracji.

❯ References:

AICHHOLZER Georg, STRAUß Stefan (2016), *Electronic participation in Europe*, in: Ralf Lindner, Georg Aichholzer, Leonhard Hennen (eds.), *Electronic democracy in Europe. Prospects and challenges of e-publics, e-participation and e-voting,* Cham: Springer.

AINSWORTH Susan, HARDY Cynthia, HARLEY Bill (2005), *Online consultation: E-democracy and E-resistance in the case of the development gateway*, "Management Communication Quarterly", vol. 19(1).

BARBER Benjamin (2003), *Silna demokracja*, in: Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves, Bogdan Szlachta (eds.), *Współczesna filozofia polityki. Wybór tekstów źródłowych,* Kraków.

BELLAMY Christine (2000), *Modelling electronic democracy, Towards democratic discourses for an information age*, in: Jens Hoff, Ivan Horrocks, Pieter Tops (eds.), *Democratic governance and new technology, technologically mediated innovations in political practice in Western Europe*, London.

BRODIE Ellie, COWLING Eddie, NISSEN Nina, ELLIS PAINE Angela, JOCHUM Véronique, WARBUR-TON Diane (2009), *Understanding participation: A literature review*, National Council for Voluntary Organisations.

CARR Paul R., HOECHSMANN Michael, THÉSÉE Gina (eds.) (2018), *Democracy 2.0: Media, political literacy and critical engagement*, Rotterdam.

CASTELLS Manuel (2013), *Communication power*, Oxford University Press.

CHADWICK Andrew (2003), *Bringing E-democracy Back in: Why it matters for future research on E-governance*, "Social Science Computer Review", vol. 21(4).

COLEMAN Stephen, NORRIS Donald F. (2005), *A new agenda for e-democracy*, "Forum Discussion Paper", no. 4, Oxford.

DAVIS Aeron (2010), *New media and fat democracy: the paradox of online participation*, "New Media & Society", vol. 12(5).

DENHARDT Janet V., DENHARDT Robert B. (2015), *The new public service revisited*, "Public Administration Review", vol. 75(5).

DUNSTON Roger, LEE Alison, BOUD David, BRODIE Pat, CHIARELLA Mary (2009), *Co-production and health system reform – from reimagining to re-making*, "Australian Journal of Public Administration", vol. 68(1).

EPI (2020), *E-Participation Index*, https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/E-Participation-Index (27.04.2021).

FERBER Paul, FOLTZ Franz, PUGLIESE Rudy (2007), *Cyberdemocracy and Online Politics: A New Model of Interactivity*, "Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society", vol. 27(5).

FREDERICKSON George H. (1996), *Comparing the reinventing government movement with the new public administration*, "Public Administration Review", vol. 56(3).

FUCHS Christian, BERNHAUPT Regina, HARTWIG Christiana, KRAMER Mark A., MAIER-RABLER Ursula (2006), *Broadening eParticipation: Rethinking ICTs and Participation*, Salzburg.

GRANIER Benoit, KUDO Hiroko (2016), *How are citizens involved in smart cities? Analysing citizen participation in Japanese "Smart Communities"*, "Information Polity", vol. 21.

GRAZIAN Flavio, NAHR Hendrik (2020), *Next level participation: Citizen Driven e-Democracy Tools*, Brussels.

GRÖNLUND Åke (ed.) (2002), *Electronic Government: Design, Applications and Management*, London.

HACKER Kenneth L., VAN DIJK Jan (2000), *What is digital democracy?,* in: Keneth L. Hacker, Jan van Dijk (eds.), *Digital democracy. Issues of theory and practice*, London.

HAGUE Barry N., LOADER Brian D. (eds) (1999), *Digital democracy: Discourse and decision making in the information age*, London.

HELBIG Natalie C., GIL-GARCIA J. Ramon, FERRO Enrico (2005), *Understanding the Complexity in Electronic Government: Implications from the Digital Divide Literature,* "AMCIS Proceedings", vol. 139.

INTERNET WORLD STATS (2020), https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm (23.04.2021).

KAPSA Izabela (2019a), *Electronic forms of political participation in Great Britain - intensions and experiences*, "Przegląd Politologiczny", no 3.

KAPSA Izabela (2019b), *Citizen e-Participation in Cities: Poland as Compared to Other Countries*, in: Magdalena Musiał-Karg (ed.), *E-voting and e-participation. Experiences, challenges and prospects for the future,* Poznań.

KAPSA Izabela, MUSIAŁ-KARG Magdalena (2020), *E-Government in Poland in public data and opinions of Poles: empirical analysis*, in: Yannis Charalabidis, Maria Alexandra Cunha, Demetrios Sarantis (eds.), *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance*, New York.

KERSTING Norbert (2013), *Online participation: from 'invited' to 'invented' spaces,* "International Journal of Electronic Governance", vol. 6(4).

KNEUER Marianne (2016), *E-democracy: A new challenge for measuring democracy,* "International Political Science Review", vol. 37(5).

LE BLANC David (2020), *E-participation: a quick overview of recent qualitative trends,* DESA Working Paper No. 163.

LEE-GEILLER Seulki (2020), *Conditions influencing e-Participation: a cross-country comparative mixed methods analysis*, in: Yannis Charalabidis, Maria Alexandra Cunha, Demetrios Sarantis (eds.), *Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance*, New York.

LINDNER Ralf, AICHHOLZER Georg, HENNEN Leonhard (eds) (2016), *Electronic democracy in Europe. Prospects and challenges of e-publics, e-participation and e-voting*, Cham: Springer.

LINDNER Ralf, AICHHOLZER Georg (2020), *E-Democracy: Conceptual Foundations and Recent Trends*, in: Leonhard Hennen et al. (eds.), *European E-Democracy in Practice*, Cham: Springer.

LUBIK-RECZEK Natasza, KAPSA Izabela, MUSIAŁ-KARG Magdalena (2020), *Elektroniczna partycypacja obywatelska w Polsce. Deklaracje i opinie Polaków na temat e-administracji i e-głosowania*, Poznań.

MACINTOSH Ann, WHYTE Angus (2006), *Evaluating how eParticipation changes local democracy*, eGovernment Workshop '06 (eGOV06), West London.

MANOHARAN Aroon, HOLZER Marc (2012), *Preface*, in: Aroon Manoharan, Marc Holzer (eds.), *Active Citizen Participation in E-Government: A Global Perspective*, Hershey.

MEDAGLIA Rony (2012), *eParticipation research: Moving characterization forward (2006–2011)*, "Government Information Quarterly", vol. 29(3).

NORRIS Pippa (2001), *Digital divide: Civic engagement, information poverty, and the Internet worldwide*, Cambridge.

NORRIS Pippa (2003), *Democratic Phoenix. Reinventing Political Activism*, Cambridge.

OECD (2001), *Citizens as Partners*, OECD Handbook on Information, Consultation and Public Participation in Policy-Making, DOI: 10.1787/9789264195578-en.

OMOTOYINBO Femi Richard (2014), *Online Radicalisation: the Net or the Netizen?*, "Social Technologies", vol. 4(1).

ONZ (2014), *E-government survey 2014: E-government for the future we want,* https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2014 (26.04.2021).

PÄIVÄRINTA Tero, SÆBØ Øystein (2006), *Models of E-democracy*, "Communications of the Association for Information Systems", vol. 17(37).

PAPADOPOULOS Yannis, WARIN Philippe (2007), *Are innovative, participatory and deliberative procedures in policy making democratic and effective?*, "European Journal of Political Research", vol. 46.

PARÉS Marc, MARCH Hugon (2013), *Guide to Evaluating Participatory Processes*, Government of Catalonia.

PARK Soyang (2010), *Inoperative Community in Post-Authoritarian South Korea: Football Fandom, Political Mobilization and Civil Society*, "Journal for Cultural Research", vol. 14, no. 2.

PARVIN Phil (2018), *Democracy Without Participation: A New Politics for a Disengaged Era*, "Res Publica", vol. 24.

PATEMAN Carole (1970), *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge.

SÆBØ Øystein, ROSE Jeremy, FLAK Leif S. (2008), *The shape of eParticipation: Characterizing an emerging research area*, "Government Information Quarterly", vol. 25.

SANFORD Clive, ROSE Jeremy (2007), *Characterizing eParticipation*, "International Journal of Information Management", vol. 28(1).

SARTORI Giovanni (2016), *The Theory of Democracy Revisited,* in: Ricardo Blaug, John Schwarzmantel (eds.), *Democracy,* New York Chichester, West Sussex.

SPIRAKIS Grigorios, SPIRAKI Christina, NIKOLOPOULOS Konstantinos (2010), *The impact of electronic government on democracy: E-democracy through e-participation*, "Electronic Government. An International Journal", vol. 7, no. 1.

SCHAAL Gary S. (2016), *E-Democracy*, in: Oliver W. Lembcke, Claudia Ritzi, Gary S. Schaal (eds.), *Zeitgenössische Demokratietheorie. Band 2: Empirische Demokratietheorien,* Wiesbaden.

STROKOSCH Kirsty, OSBORNE Stephen P. (2020), *Debate: If citizen participation is so important, why has it not been achieved?*, "Public Money & Management", vol. 40(1).

TOURAINE Alain (2009), *Thinking Differently*, Cambridge.

UNITED NATIONS (2018), *Working together: Integration, institutions and the Sustainable Development Goals*, World Public Sector Report 2018, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York.

UNITED NATIONS (2020), *United Nations E-Government Survey 2020*, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/2020%20UN%20E-Government%20Survey%20(Full%20Report).pdf (27.04.2021).

VAN DIJK Jan A. G. M. (2010), *Participation in Policy Making,* in: *Study on the Social Impact of ICT. Report for European Commission*, Information Society and Media Directorate-General, Luxemburg.

VAN DIJK Jan A. G. M. (2012), *Digital democracy: Vision and reality*, in: Ig Snellen, Marcel Thaens, Wim van de Donk (eds.), *Public administration in the information age: Revisited,* Amsterdam.

VERBA Sidney, NIE Norman H. (1972), *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York.

WEST Darell M. (2000), *Assessing E-Government: The Internet, Democracy and Service Delivery by State and Local Government*, www.insidepolitics.org/egovreport00.htm (30.04.2021).

WITKOWSKA Marta (2017), *Deliberation as a tool to find solutions to overcome the crisis in the European Union,* "Przegląd Europejski", no. 1(43).

WRIGHT Scott, STREET John (2007), *Democracy, deliberation and design: the case of online discussion forums*, "New Media & Society", vol. 9(5).

.