

Measuring Quality of Participation Processes: A Literature Review and Case Study to Determine Criteria for the Influence of Digital Tools

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Abstract : Digital tools and e-participation processes have seen a steady increase in popularity in recent years. While online trends come with the premise of new opportunities and easier participatory possibilities, there are still manifold challenges that smart city initiators and developers need to face. In this paper, innovative quality criteria of citizen participation processes was suggested by defining meaningful and measurable evaluation categories. Considering various developments, including the global megatrend of connectivity, a need for a fundamental examination of the basic structure of citizen participation processes was identified. To this end, the application of methods and tools through different points in the policy cycle is required. In order to provide an overview of the current challenges and problems in the field of participation, this paper analyzes those issues by carrying out a literature review that also focuses on disparities in the civic sector that might hinder residents in their desire for engagement. Additionally, a case study was chosen to demonstrate the potential that e-participation tools offer to planning experts and public authorities when integrating citizen's creativity and experience at a large scale. This online co-creation process finally leads to offline events - such as local co-design workshops - with professional planners. The findings of this paper subsequently suggest a combination of e-participation and analogue forms to merge the benefits of both worlds, resulting in a broader audience and higher quality for participation processes.

Keywords : citizen participation, disparities, e-participation, integrated urban development, sustainable development goals, sustainable urban development

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