

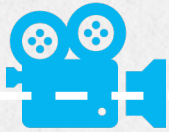
WEBINAR

Shielding Democracy in the Digital Age: Foundations of Digital Democracy Analysis

21 October 2025



Housekeeping



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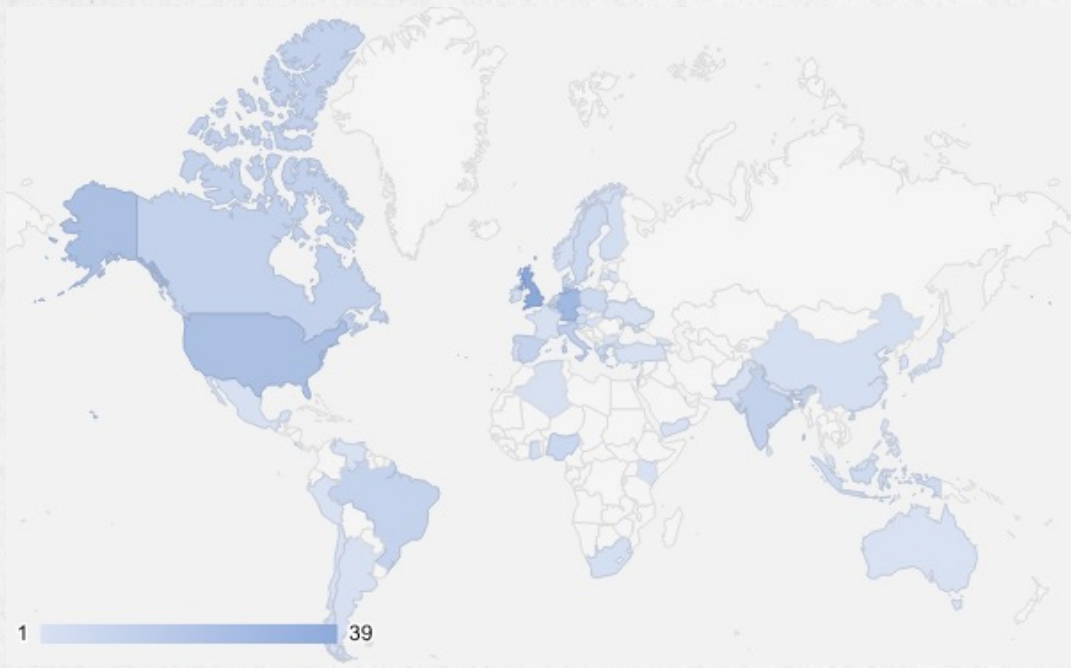
Feel free to write your questions in the Q&A box during the presentations, we will answer them at the end of the webinar



You can follow the chat to be informed and receive links on the main INNOVADE.

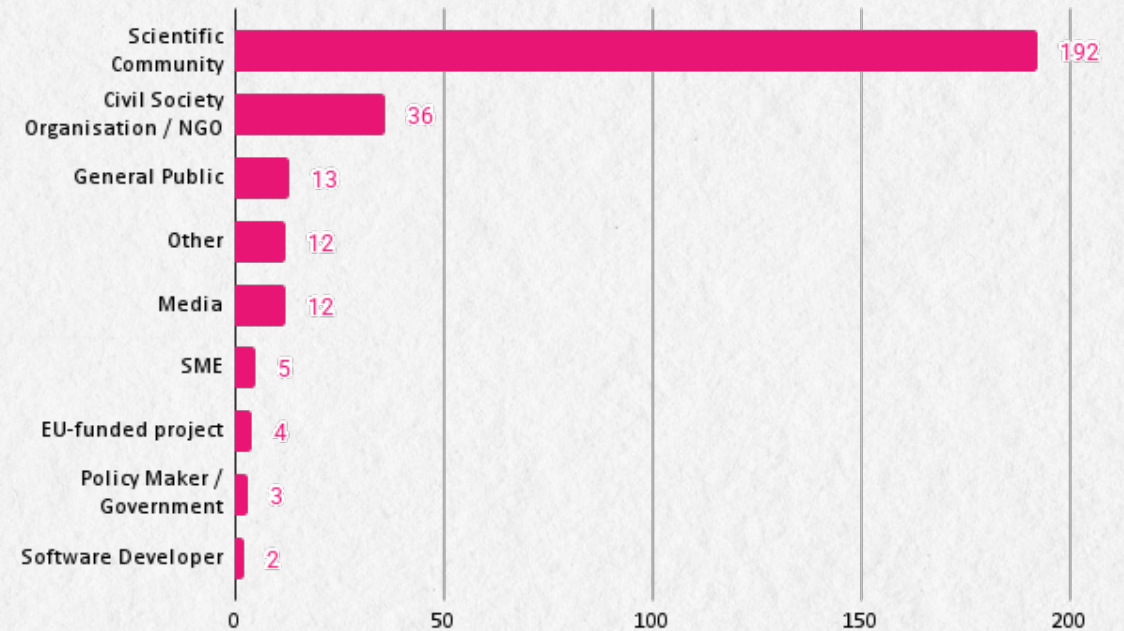
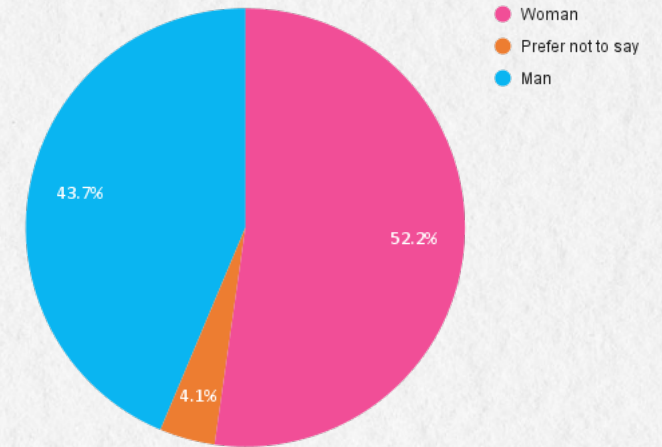
It's also a space to introduce yourself and say hi 🙋

310 registrants from 58 countries

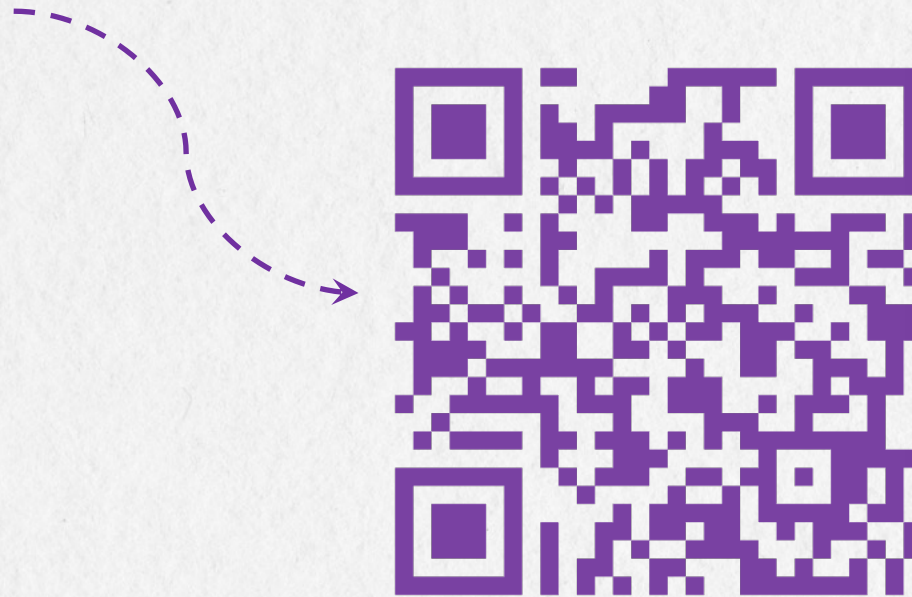


TOP 6 countries:

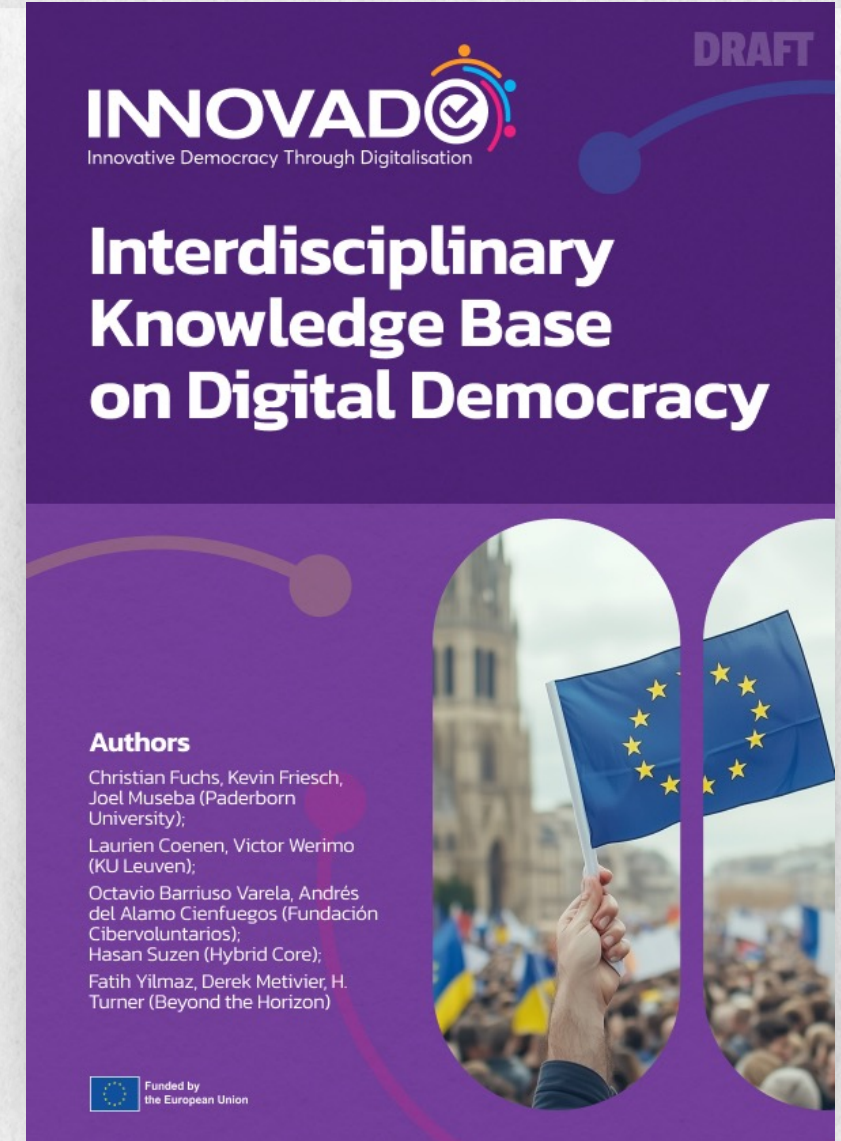
UK (39)
Germany (29)
US (24)
Belgium (17)
Italy (14)
Canada (12)



Download the
Interdisciplinary Knowledge
Base on Digital Democracy



<https://zenodo.org/records/17079016>



Agenda

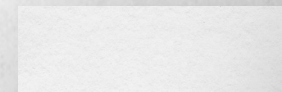
- © 15:00-14:05 **Welcome and Introduction**, Gabriela Rogowska (Trust-IT Services)
- © 15:05-15:20 **What is digital democracy?** Christian Fuchs (Paderborn University)
- © 15:20-15:35 **How can open governance work in practice?** Laurien Coenen (KU Leuven)
- © 15:35-15:50 **What global trends shape the future of digital democracy?**
Fatih Yilmaz (Beyond the Horizon)
- © 15:50-16:15 **Q&A and discussion**



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1 Interdisciplinary Knowledge Base on Digital Democracy


The report discusses the start of digital democracy. Given the talk about the crisis of democracy is, what digital media and societal developments influence digital democracy?

Components

- Chapter 2: Digital Democracy
- Chapter 3: Online Participation
- Chapter 4: Open Governance
- Chapter 5: Digital Activism
- Chapter 6: e-Voting
- Chapter 7: Global Trends that Influence Digital Democracy
- Chapter 8: Foreign Interference in Democracy

SOCIETY

The aspects of digital democracy



2 What is Digital Democracy

Author: Christian Fuchs (Paderborn University, Germany)


Digital Democracy

Digital democracy is the digital media via a variety of digital media.

- Digital democracy is **NOT** a type of democracy
- Digital democracy often does **NOT** mean digital democracy
- Digital democracy **BUT** combines several forms of democracy
- Digital democracy is **NOT** about social applications
- Digital democracy **BUT** about technically mediated applications which certain democratic models and

Recommendations

- R2.1: The design and practice of digital democracy should be of (digital) democracy.
- R2.2: Specific digital democracy support top-down and bottom-up views.
- R2.3: Digital democracy apps and democracy while rigorously address digital democracy.
- R2.4: Digital democracy practice constitutional digital democracy while rigorously address digital democracy.
- R2.5: Online debate forums should other local online services.



3 Online Participation

Authors: Kevin Friesch, Christian Fuchs, Joel Museba (Paderborn University, Germany)

Introduction

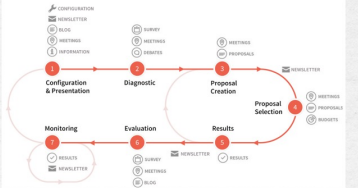
This chapter examines how digital technologies are reshaping citizen participation in democratic life. It defines online participation (e-participation) as the use of digital tools to support and extend participatory democracy, enabling people to engage in political and social decision-making beyond traditional settings. Rather than replacing established forms of participation, these digital practices aim to complement local civic structures, foster collaboration, and make engagement more accessible.

Methodology

How online participation functions in practice is examined using global cases to explore its forms and enabling conditions.

- Understanding: What is e-participation?
- Cases: from Porto Alegre's participatory budgeting to Barcelona's Decidim platform
- A typology of e-participation: 4 forms > e-activism, e-engagement, e-communities, e-ownership
- Dangers: how e-participation is turned into an ideology
- Focus: how platform design, institutional support, and resources shape meaningful participation

Stages of Online Participation Process




source: Xavier E. Barandaran, Decidim Project, Ajuntament de Barcelona

Conclusion

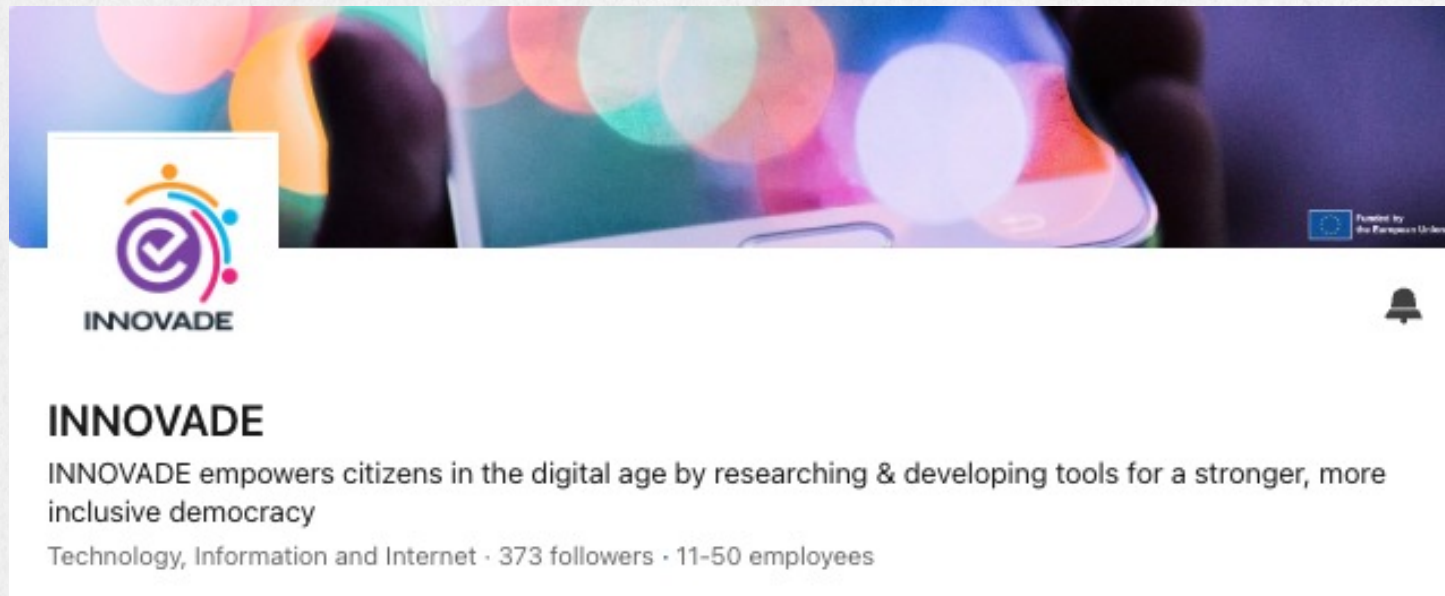
- Online participation can strengthen democracy.
- The success of e-participation, however, depends on enabling resources, sustained political will, clear rules, strong facilitation, learning by doing e-participation, and institutional reforms.
- There is no technological fix to political problems.
- E-participation is NOT a technology, BUT a socio-political design process of society. Without proper socio-political design, participation risks becoming tokenistic and meaningless.
- Digital participation is a long-term governance process that requires continuous adaptation and integration into broader democratic and societal practices.

Recommendations

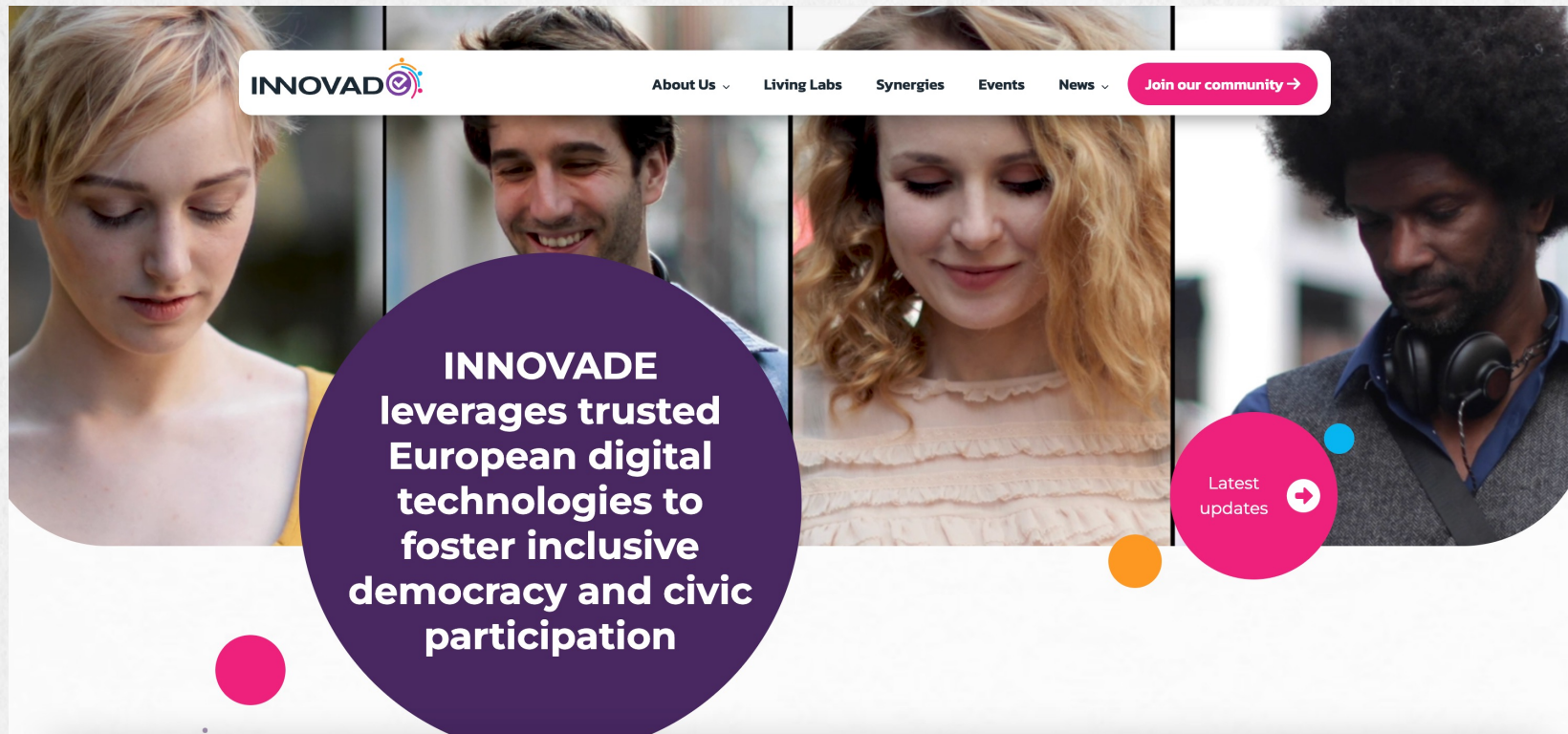
- R3.1: **Avoid the park bench problem:** the issues and content of participatory digital democracy should be non-trivial and meaningful.
- R3.2: Think about how **scarce resources** such as time can be freed up for citizens for empowering them.
- R3.3: **Combine** online tools with offline interaction.
- R3.4: **Avoid making e-participation too time-demanding** in order to avoid the dominance of a small number of citizens and the exclusion of others.
- R3.5: **Safeguard rights** by combining constitutional digital democracy with deliberative and participatory digital democracy.
- R3.6: **Include participatory budgeting** features in digital democracy tools.



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Thank you!
Let's keep in touch.
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