



Open Governance

Digital opportunities and democratic challenges

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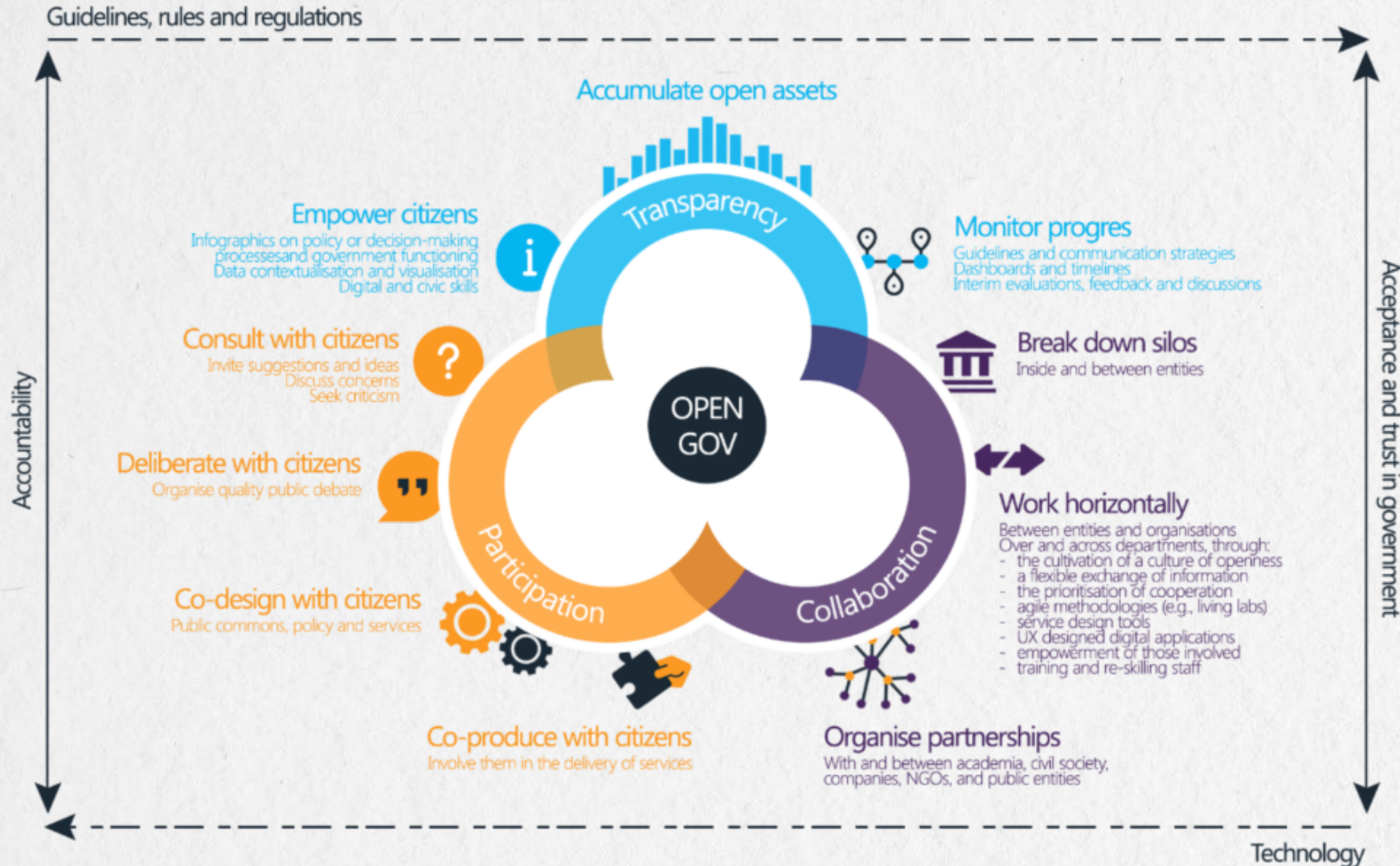
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What is Open Governance?

☑ Core **ambition** = To open up policymaking and service delivery to non-state actors

“

The art of **open decision-making** and **steering society** based on the ideals of **inclusiveness, transparency** and **accountability**, encouraging participation and collaboration in the agenda-setting, design, implementation and monitoring of public policy and services to **generate public value**.



Conceptual Framework: Open Governance Ecosystem

OG core themes, an INNOVADE adopted framework based on the work by Le Coz and Lage (2013) and Wirtz and Birkmeyer (2015)

Why would we care? → Contemporary Challenges

☑ **Scarce resources**

- Governments are under constant pressure to do (more) with less

☑ **Complex challenges**

- Climate change, geopolitical conflict
- Wicked problems demand collaborative solutions

☑ **Declining trust in institutions, rising civic expectations**

- Demand for an active inclusion

Research Questions

- ☑ What **characteristics does open governance (OG) exhibit in a European context**, from both an academic and practical perspective?
 - At what levels and in what domains is OG most used?
 - Who participates, how, and through which type of tools?
 - What challenges do organisers often incur and how can they be addressed?
 - What outputs and outcomes can we anticipate from OG in a European setting?

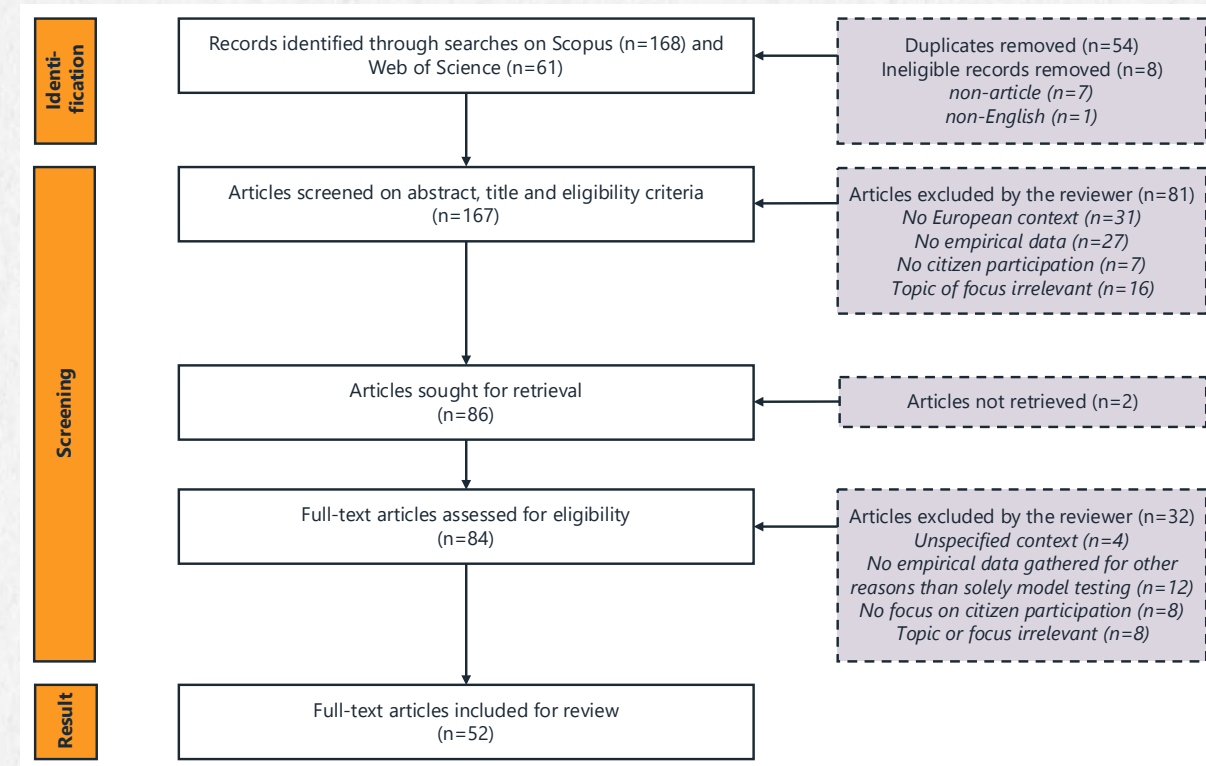
Two-fold Methodology

Scoping review on empirical OG research evidence (n=52)

- Identifying academic articles that provided empirical data on European OG applications or initiatives according to **PRISMA** standards, to promote transparency and reproducibility

Use Case Analysis of European Citizen Participation Initiatives (n=14)

- To supplement the scoping review and validate identified challenges and coping strategies based on include OG elements
- Sample = convenience-sampled from Participedia



PRISMA diagram

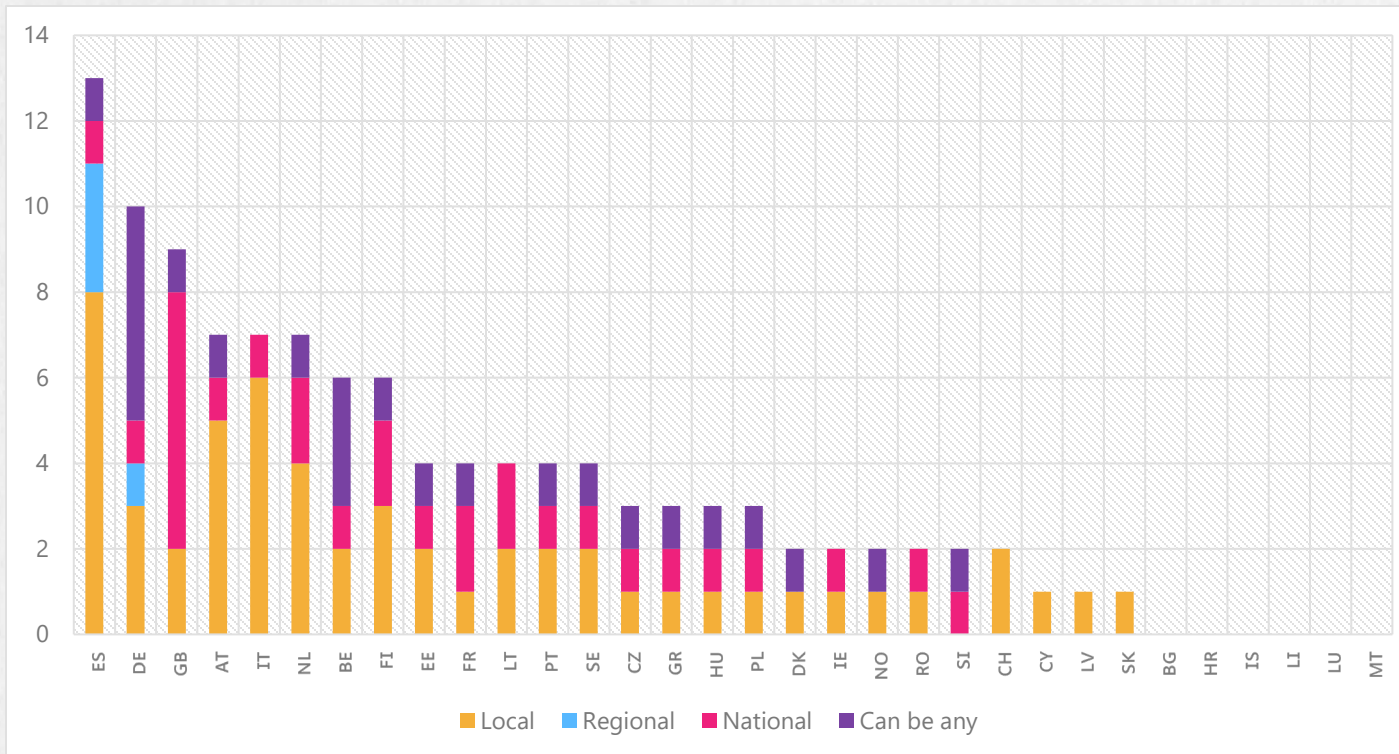
Uniform Coding System

☑ A **two-iteration coding process** was followed:

- **First iteration**, a priori coding was used to classify pieces of journal article text under one of the **six broadly defined denominators**:
 - Application grounds
 - Rationale or objectives
 - Actors involved
 - Building blocks
 - Challenges and coping strategies
 - Benefits, outputs and outcomes
- In a **second iteration**, codes were revisited to identify subthemes and discern relations.

Application Grounds

- ☑ **Policy level:** Initiatives are organised at **policy levels closest to citizens (58%)**
- ☑ **Policy domain:** Urbanism, urban planning or redevelopment prominent policy area
- ☑ Absence of applications focused on **disaster relief** and **crisis management**



Systematic review

Objectives and benefits, outputs or outcomes of OG

Category	# Sources ^a	
	Objectives	Outputs & outcomes
Product, service and/or policy	21	21
<i>Access and use</i>	5	9
<i>Effectiveness and quality</i>	2	6
<i>Efficiency</i>	4	4
<i>Innovation</i>	16	8
<i>Personalisation</i>	4	2
<i>Satisfaction</i>	2	2
<i>Sustainability</i>	0	1
Process and/or relationships	10	10
<i>Better requirement consideration</i>	4	7
<i>Inclusiveness</i>	4	2
<i>Learning</i>	2	0
<i>Legitimacy</i>	1	2
<i>Resource integration</i>	7	4
Regime or democratic ideals	19	18
<i>Accountability</i>	4	2
<i>Empowerment and participation</i>	16	12
<i>Reputation</i>	0	1
<i>Social cohesion</i>	0	2
<i>Solution ownership</i>	0	5
<i>Transparency</i>	9	1
<i>Trust and connection</i>	4	8

Systematic review

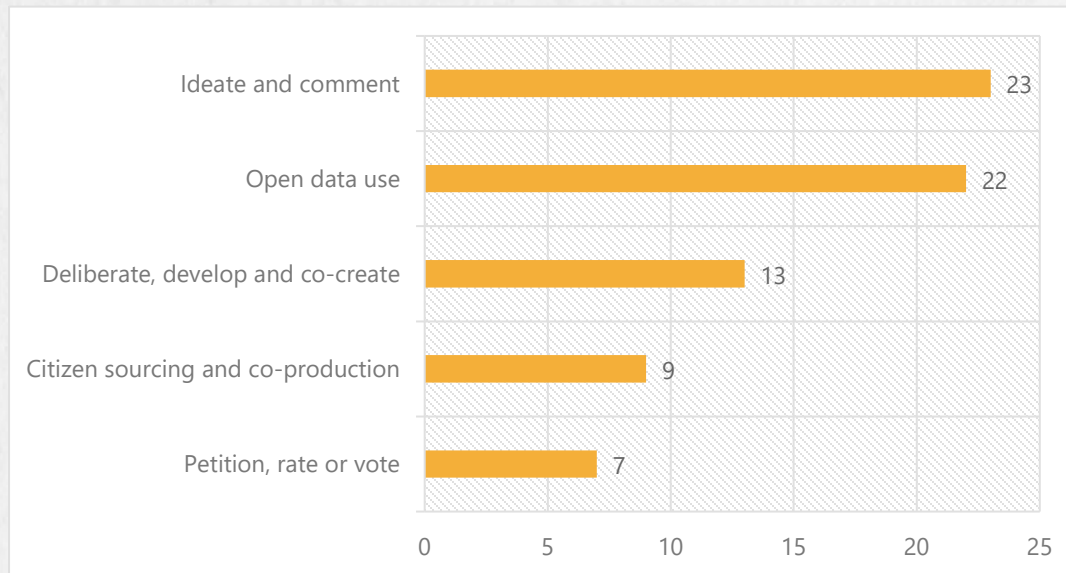
Category	# Sources ^a	
	Objectives	Outputs & outcomes
Product, service and/or policy		
<i>Access and use</i>	2	2
<i>Effectiveness and quality</i>	0	3
<i>Efficiency</i>	1	3
<i>Innovation</i>	0	5
<i>Personalisation</i>	3	0
<i>Satisfaction</i>	1	3
<i>Sustainability</i>	0	1
Process and/or relationships		
<i>Better requirement consideration</i>	0	0
<i>Inclusiveness</i>	0	0
<i>Learning</i>	2	2
<i>Legitimacy</i>	1	1
<i>Resource integration</i>	1	0
Regime or democratic ideals		
<i>Accountability</i>	0	0
<i>Empowerment and participation</i>	4	3
<i>Reputation</i>	0	0
<i>Social cohesion</i>	1	2
<i>Solution ownership</i>	0	0
<i>Transparency</i>	0	0
<i>Trust and connection</i>	1	5

Reviewed use cases

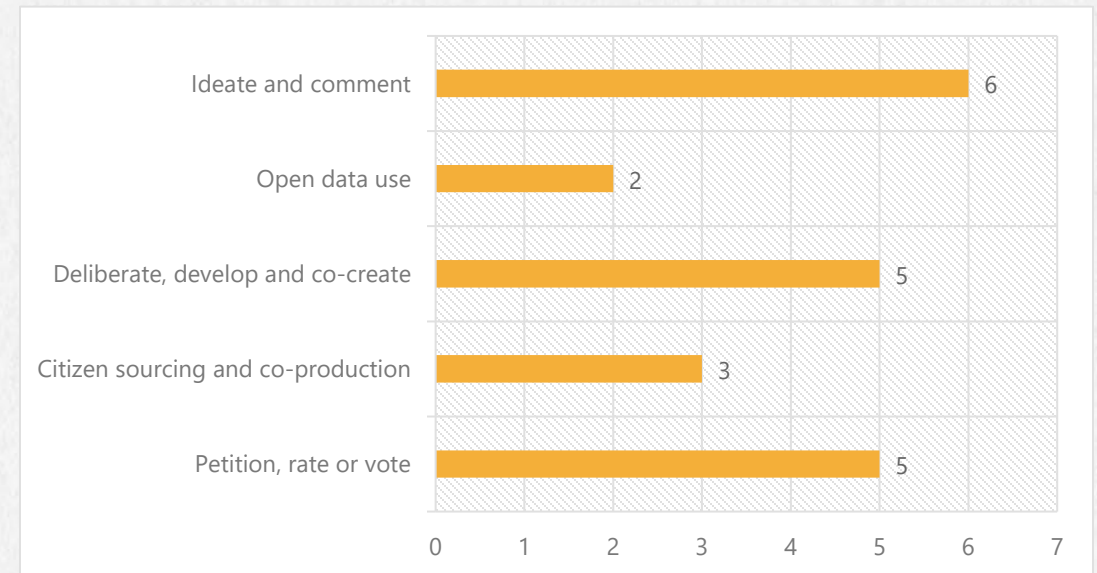
Actors, Inclusion and Exclusion Rules

- ☑ A **wide range of stakeholders** are involved in OG
 - citizens, civil society, public sector actors, academia, industry and technology developers
- ☑ **Challenges persist in achieving broad inclusion**, particularly among vulnerable groups
 - Immigrants or non-native speaker, the elderly and those digitally less literate
- ☑ **Data intermediaries** (e.g., researchers or tools) are considered crucial for bridging the gap between public organisations and citizens who may lack data literacy
- ☑ Despite the wide range of actors involved in OG, initiatives were **(almost) always government-initiated** and **orchestrated**

Building blocks - Activation methods

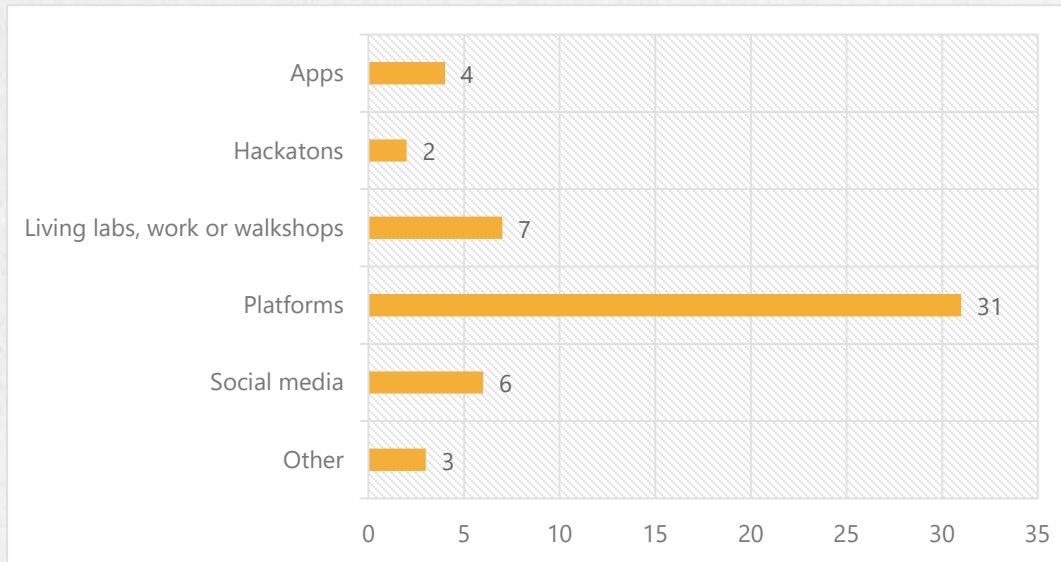


Systematic review

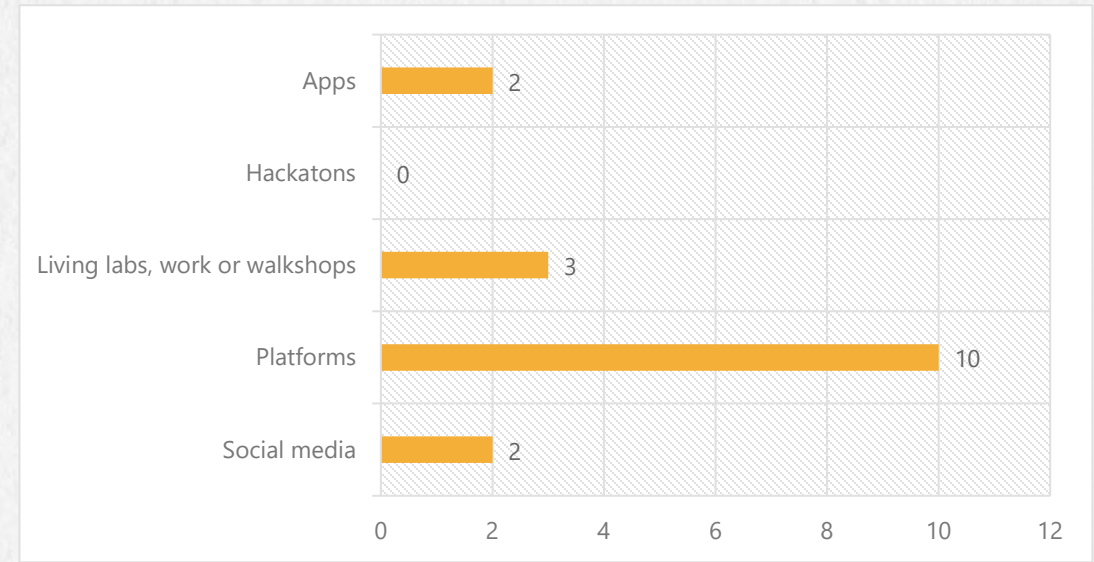


Reviewed use cases

Building blocks - Tools



Systematic review



Reviewed use cases

Challenges

☑ Government side

- Most frequently, issues are **structural** particularly concerning
 - Poor coordination, communication, internal organisation and leadership
 - Data provision (e.g., limited data quality or exchange between departments)
 - The technological tools that enable participation (e.g., platform usability)
 - Scarce financial means
 - Insufficient human capacity
- **Cultural barriers**

☑ Citizen side

- **Structural barriers**
 - Lack of resources and confidence
 - Lack of awareness
- **Cultural barriers**
 - Lack of internal motivation
 - Mistrust in government
 - Lack of external efficacy
 - Disinterest in politics

Coping Strategies

Internal actors, procedures & relations

- Establish a strong and compelling vision, translated into action plans
- Develop appropriate instruments to monitor (a) open data (quality) and (b) the participation of non-state actors
- Thoroughly discuss matters internally

Non-state stakeholders

- Adopt clear, transparent, targeted and ongoing communication
- Offer comprehensive assistance, information, feedback and support
- Ensure that participation is accessible and inclusive

Digital technology used

- Follow user experience (UX) and universal design (UD) principles
- Gamification elements (e.g. quizzes, badges, voting, competition, or storytelling)
- Data visualisation and dashboards

Practical Recommendations for Public Officials

1

... hold realistic expectations.

2

... **formulate clear objectives** that focus on the co-creation of public value.

3

... translate the objectives into **detailed yet inspiring action plans**.

4

... **acknowledge, communicate, and showcase** interesting, innovative, or successful OG applications or artefacts

5

... **empower citizens**.

6

... **empower colleagues** to coordinate and support OG initiatives.

7

... **design adequate systems to monitor** OG progress.

Future Research Areas

☺ Under-explored European regions

- → Smaller EU member states, Balkan countries, Non-EU yet Schengen, weak democratic settings

☺ Bottom-up /citizen-led initiatives

- → Particularly in areas like **disaster relief and crisis management**. What are the democratic, organisational, technological, and social dynamics at play or interplay?

☺ Longitudinal or cohort research designs

- → Focus on outputs and outcomes of OG and how these can be sustained

☺ Sustainability research agenda of digital democracy

- → Sustainability of (a) the use of resources, (b) the artefacts designed and (c) outputs and outcomes



Thank you!
Let's keep in touch.

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