Citizen initiatives' Platform MyVoice

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CEO of ManaBalss.lv

Success Story

Global Strategy

Next Projects / Open2Vote

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

Success Story

"ManaBalss.lv now puts Latvia at the forefront of European efforts to shift some forms of political participation to the Internet."

The New York Times
April 9, 2013

Bringing people's ideas to Parliament and putting them on the official agenda. Citizens causing new laws the easy way.

Because of ManaBalss

2016: A nation-wide discussion about property tax with multiple reform plans because of that suddenly being discussed

2016: Caused a permanent stop to anti-human rights legislature (ban on donation of ovas)
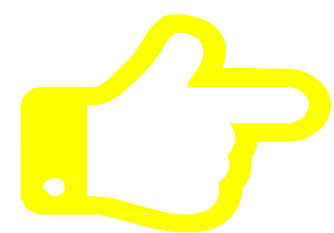
2016: Road tax and budget reforms under discussion after massively popular initiative

New law provisions on stricter consequences for breaking MP's ethical code

A new participation mechanism set in law – collective submission
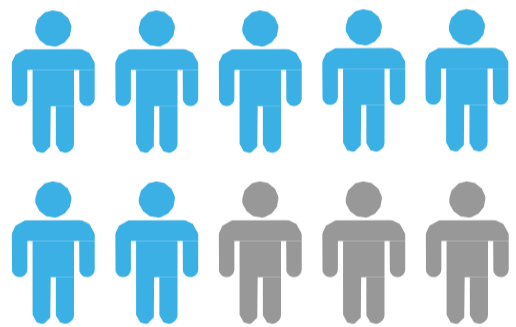
New law provisions on limiting the use of synthetic drugs

Statistics

Overall **42 initiatives have been submitted to the Parliament or municipality**. Of them 14 initiatives under consideration currently

15 initiatives have received a positive response / vote in Parliament or municipality and **have become laws, law amendments or legislative acts**.

Over 70% of Latvia's population have visited ManaBalss.lv. 24'000 individual donors in 2016 makes it **financially self-sustainable**. In comparison – in 2016 to all Latvian political parties 550 individuals made donations.

791 000 signatures collected in 6 years. If done on paper they would cost up to 1,3 – 2 million euros. Meanwhile with ManaBalss.lv its been just 5000 euros in donations per 1 changed law

Success rate close to 50% - as far as we know thats the highest in the world

A growing actor in political cohesion of the Latvian nation. Engaged Russian community – 180'000 new Russian users since July, 2015

Global Strategy

👍 **Transfering both social tech, know-how and software**. Open to partnerships globally. First partners in progress: Ukraine MiyGolos.

👍 **Two types of partnerships: branches and independent partners.**

Other Projects

Next functions will likely make it a globally unique platform.

- **Practial democracy course at universities**
- **Open2Vote -** voting by citizens on all the most important law projects that parliaments (and municipalities) are voting upon.
- **Digital co-decision & voting platform for NGO's, companies, regions and other organisations**
- **Crowdfunded public lobby campaigns** - Giving civic activists funds to carry out the lengthy lobby process.

Open2Vote

O2V MAIN FUNCTIONS

- **Social profile:** the platform will be able to recognise where the voter is from and even what is his/her economical & social statuss. This will allow to build legitimate social profile for each of the voting session.

- Voting results show user's perfect **political match** (in %) with political party and individual members of parliament.

- **10 – 12 voting on law projects every month during the days before the parliament votes**

- **Easy to understand texts for everyone**

- **Only authorised users, ensurance for «real people» only, 1 person = 1 vote**

- **Media integration**

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- Democracy is more than just for and about civil society. Nation-wide communication plans are crucial. **Effective communication tools and methods. Legitimacy often comes from numbers.** Involvement of those who are tired and bored of democracy.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- **Digital democracy means only valid authorization tools.** Positive experience exists in Latvia, Estonia. Negative experience: UK. Widespread popularization of such tools helps to create plenty of spin-off tools. Weak authorization means very low level legitimacy for the content of the ideas.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- CSOs have to **bridge the gap between politics and citizens, between technology and actual political results.** The **role of CSOs in e-democracy is to be the infrastructure of democracy**. Thus, the CSOs have to heavy-lift the dirty work behind the scenes (technological, processual, etc.), to make it easier for the rest of the citizens to achieve a higher political impact.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- The focus of CSOs in regards to technology should include attention spent in regards to **trustable information, corruption and influence of money.** The influence of money upon politics is very high. And through that power of media.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- Digital democracy might be on the path to eventually lead to a more **nuanced and inclusive democracy**. One that does not discriminate those who didn't vote for the winning parties. We see emergance of micro-parties.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- It is good when democracy and digital democracy tools are outside the control of the government. The state should never have "monopoly" on democracy.

What role for civil society in a future of e-democracy?

- There is no digital or e-democracy, only democracy during digital age. That means the **core processes of democracy should be more often reviewed through the prism of what technology allows** rather than just using technology as a communication tool without substantially improving the democracy itself. Technological improvement is not just about communication speed, it is also about building consensus, getting unexpected valuable ideas, re-creating legitimacy, easing the bureaucratic burden, etc.

We would love to tell you more!

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