

WHAT IS ELECTRONIC DEMOCRACY IN THE WORLD AND IN UKRAINE

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Анотація

У статті розкрито дефініцію терміну «електронна демократія», його походження та застосування у повсякденному ужитку. Проаналізовано переваги електронної демократії у сучасному світі та в Україні. Простежено процес полегшення волевиявлення особи та висловлення власного ставлення щодо сучасних проблем, які безпосередньо хвилюють людину.

Ключові слова: електронна демократія, демократичний сектор, електронний сервіс, електронна реєстрація, електронна петиція.

Abstract

The article deals with the definition of the term “electronic democracy”, its genesis and applying in everyday use. It is analyzed advantages of electronic democracy in the modern world and Ukraine. The research allows people to facilitate the process and express their own attitude to contemporary issues that directly concern people.

Keywords: electronic democracy, democratic sectors, e-service, e-registration, e-petitions.

We live in a remarkable period when we not only analyze news and our current political situation, but can send messages to official structures and express our views. So, the term «» has appeared not so long ago and it incorporates 21st-century information and communications technology to promote democracy. In fact, e-democracy is the use of information and communications technologies and strategies by «democratic sectors» within the political processes of local communities, states or regions, nations and on the global stage.

The «democratic sectors» include four interacting groups such as political groups, government, private sector and media. Each sector often views its new online developments in isolation. They are relatively unaware of the online activities of the other sectors.

Governments provide extensive access to information and interact electronically with citizens, political groups run online advocacy campaigns and political parties campaign online. Media distribute different information or political projects and private sector responds to the actions of government, media or political groups.

Electronic democracy offers many advantages for citizens and it develops quickly nowadays. The main advantage is that every citizen who wants to improve the world around them and be heard on important public issues can participate in public life with freedom and the right to act on their sense of public responsibility.

Secondly, e-democracy encourages effective «on your own time» participation as legitimate complement to in-person, often time discriminatory forms of political participation.

Thirdly, it creates a virtual public space where people can interact, discuss issues and share ideas. Finally, it suggests a different role for government and more participatory forms of direct citizen involvement in efforts to address public challenges. So, the chance that community opinions will be taken into account in government or industry’s planning and decision-making processes increases.

However, there are some bad sides of electronic democracy. First of all, it excludes participation by those people who are not online. Secondly, results of different polls can be manipulated even mostly, than when not-online, events are held.

Thirdly, people can become disillusioned if the project is ‘over-hyped’. And at last, but not least, e-mail lists with many active subscribers generate so much information that they drive people away.

In Ukraine, the topic of electronic democracy is relatively new and recent public opinion research shows that public awareness and usage of ICT for strengthening democratic life is increasing rapidly.

Nowadays the main problem is that the high percent of Ukrainian citizens have never heard of such terms as e-democracy and e-government. Electronic petitions, appeals, receptions and other e-services were introduced by government recently and so more and more people become active citizens and use new technologies successfully.

The most popular e-service in Ukraine is e-petitions' service. It is used by social activists as well as by ordinary civils. Everybody can propose some project or idea and make other citizens interested to support it. E-petitions' service is a convenient method to cooperate and to have online-dialogues between civil society, business and the government. So, the community should be active and the government should provide clear procedures for responding to electronic petitions, appeals and requests.

Other electronic tools that work and develop in Ukraine are e-registrations, limited discussion forums on social networking sites, simple e-appeals and feedback, horizontal online information sharing via email, social networks and some local initiatives such as digitalization of bus stops. Such e-services as digital signatures, Bank-ID, e-advocacy and e-documents exchange are just emerging and distributing.

Special attention was given to the development of The Green Book about e-government and The White Book about e-democracy in our state. Writing documents of this type is widespread European practice. Unlike normative acts, Green and White Books are documents where the existing problems, goals and objectives for their decision on the state of public policy and the expected results of their implementation are described in detail.

Authorities should establish a comprehensive national e-governance and e-democracy strategy and strengthen legal and relevant online infrastructure for the development of a thriving e-commerce system in Ukraine. Introduction of secure and reliable electronic identification system, legally enable civic associations to submit e-petitions and establishment a high-quality civic education campaign for e-democracy are the main priorities for development e-democracy in Ukraine.

After all, you can see that there is a growing alliance across the political spectrum pushing incremental change in democratic sectors around the world. Together we can be an engine of democratic intent as we seek to improve our communities, and the world around us.

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