



Citizen Involvement



POLITIX

Posted by: Politix EU



Representative democracy is based on interactions between citizens and decision makers. In this digital age, an absence of interaction between these players appears out-dated and unnecessary. That is why Politix EU wants to close the feedback loop between politicians and citizens. The aim is to give citizens a voice that might ultimately break the vicious cycle of important decisions being decided and discussed only between politicians and a few key interest groups while excluding the general public.



A challenge Politix EU tries to tackle is to inform citizens *why* a law-proposal is important and *how* it may affect our future lives. In order to do this, we need

to go beyond institutional language and processes. If we actually want to make sense of EU policies, we need to get better at telling the story and communicating the context. Basically, we need a little bit of extra background to actually see the bigger picture.

Yet, to achieve this goal of showing the bigger picture and ultimately closing the feedback loop and MEPs should take their voters' opinions on board – not only every four to five years when they go to the polls, but on a regular, issue-related basis. However, there was not much progress in this area in the past three years, although parliamentarians seem to be well aware of the existing deficits.

e-Democracy in the EU: potential and challenges

Vote Breakdown



257 votes required to pass.

A parliamentary resolution on e-democracy and the improvement of participation, transparency and accountability in decision-making was adopted in March 2017 by an overwhelming majority of 459 votes to 53, with 47 abstentions. In this text MEPs acknowledge that “citizens’ relationship with politics has become increasingly strained” and that there is “a growing risk of public disaffection with politics” while the “engagement and involvement of citizens is essential for the functioning of democracy” and that “there is a clear need to enhance the democratic linkage between citizens and political institutions”.

So when stating, “our society has changed extremely quickly and citizens feel the need to express their views more frequently and directly” and that “policymaking institutions are therefore well advised to invest in democratic

innovation” it seems that MEPs have indeed realized what the actual problems and challenges are. And they even suggest some precise ways forward like simplifying institutional language, explaining decision-making processes (in order to promote understanding and participation) or creating an “online platform so that members of the public can systematically be consulted before the European legislator takes decisions, thus being involved more directly in public life”.

Finally, the resolution calls on elected representatives “to use these tools as well as to communicate and positively engage with constituents, with a view to informing them on EU and parliamentary activities and thus opening up the policy-making processes”. So there is a problem definition and Politix EU is a first step to implement the treatment recommendation.

Towards 2019

Looking towards the 2019 elections which will hopefully bring more of these committed MEPs we hope that the general and individual discourse between citizens and politicians will intensify.

Looking towards the 2019 elections which will hopefully bring more of these committed MEPs we expect that the general and individual discourse between citizens and politicians will intensify. As a precondition for this discourse, politicians need to start acting responsibly again. This means they need to answer question that come from the public and explain their decisions. Only then citizens will have a realistic chance to act and react.

Standout MEPS



Julia Reda

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Julia Reda has a website that is available in 16 different languages, from English to Catalan. When she was working on her draft report on the current EU copyright framework, she provided a 30 second summary, a timetable as well as

She provided a 60-second summary, a timetable as well as specific reactions from inside and outside the Parliament. But most importantly, she explained her report to her readers paragraph by paragraph, entering in a dialogue with them.



Jan Philipp Albrecht

Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance

Jan Philipp Albrecht regularly enters in a very direct conversation with his voters and other interested people. He offers live chats on Facebook and Twitter where he answers questions submitted by citizens via social media, email or phone calls.
