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DEMOCRACY AND ICTs:  
OLD TRAPS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES  
FOR THE INCLUSION CHALLENGE

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# “CREATIVE PARTICIPATION”:

A tautological expression?



There may exist a "not creative"  
participation?

unfortunately, yes...

because not all forms of participation  
are **democratic forms of participation**

see how many adjectives are  
used in the democracy context!

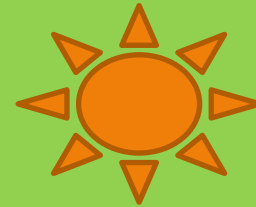


# E-DEMOCRACY:

limitations and failures vs. learned



Lessons



an ambiguous concept

# E-DEMOCRACY DOES NOT EXIST

1. There is a public action that chooses the most appropriate means to achieve their objectives by providing guidance on the use towards the realization of the model of democracy desired.
2. In a model of substantive democracy, once tools have been chosen, the public subject is not allowed to ignore the terms and the effects of their use.

3. The policy choices regarding the effects that you want to achieve through the use of technological means become one of the main gauges of the quality and level of democracy of political behavior.

BUT  
IN ITALY  
IT DIDN'T HAPPEN.....

# WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WHICH HAS HINDERED THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION OF ICT POLICIES?

progressive separation between  
e-government policies and e-governance policies

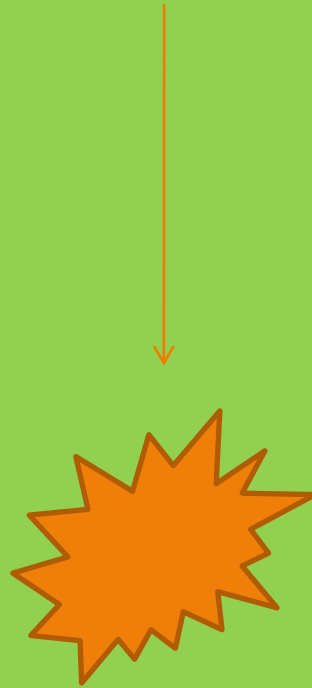


infrastructure



rights

# E-GOVERNMENT / E-GOVERNANCE / E-PARTICIPATION



Quantitative result, but not qualitative!



# BUT ALSO E-GOVERNMENT POLICIES HAVE FAILED ....

e.g. C.A.D.: technology policies in which the rights have remained in the background of generic standards and backward.

Linee guida 2009 per i siti web delle PA: “dalla rete dei contenuti alla rete delle relazioni”:

*but there are no content yet .....*

lack of rules and “safeguards”

or

a vision of (qualitatively) high policy  
about the role of ICT than the rights



- 1) participation as a mere sum of points of view;
- 2) participation as a tool of manipulation of the political consensus.

# LESSONS LEARNED

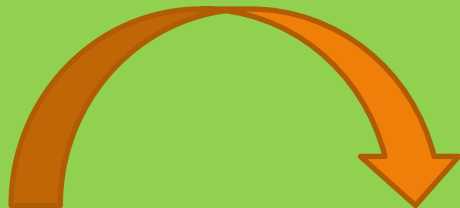
1. ICTs must be traced from the plane of the objectives to the plane of the tools to achieve the purpose of a political nature
2. ICT must facilitate the creation of civic awareness and exploitation of knowledge in use of the people

# SYNTHESIZING:

1. SOCIAL INCLUSION ↔ DIGITAL INCLUSION

BUT

2. DIGITAL INCLUSION DOES NOT MEAN MERE FREE  
ACCESS TO GENERAL INFORMATION



3. TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY DOES NOT MEAN TO USE  
SINGLE TOOLS

BUT

CREATION OF POSSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND THE  
MEANING AND SCOPE OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES



CHANGE  
THE POLITICAL PERCEPTION OF TECHNOLOGIES

BUT WHAT VISION?

# SOCIAL ICT O CIVIC ICT ?

The answer is in  
**THE TERRITORIES**



Need to identify and use the knowledge  
background of their inhabitants



# ‘CIVIC ORIENTATION’ OF the ICTs

BUT

civic orientation



social network

"Social" is a relational concept in which you give importance only to the relationship

"Civic" is a relational concept in which the relationship is functional to a territorial community

# ICT policies:

set of rules and tools to help increase the civic virtues and social capital and use it well for the construction of public policies



*EMPOWERMENT TOOLS*  
**BUT...**



# *EMPOWERMENT*

NO IN THE 'TECNOLOGICAL MEANING'  
(old conception of technological literacy)

BUT

IN THE 'CIVIC MEANING'  
(learning and capacity  
building - also - through the use of ICT)

# ICTs

BETWEEN THE PRE-CONDITIONS OF  
PARTICIPATION IN THE VARIOUS STAGES  
OF DECISION-MAKING



Affirmative action (social rights)  
procedures  
competencies  
methodologies  
guarantees

## SOME KEY POINTS IN DESIGNING LOCAL ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF PARTICIPATION THROUGH ICT:

1. analysis of the context;
2. how to define and identify a local policy on which to intervene;
3. parties to be involved;
4. enhance the heritage of previous experiences.

....

5. define the participatory "path";
6. integrate online and off-line participation (It requires cross-sectoral approach);
7. prepare the organizations involved;
8. promotion of the initiative;
9. prepare models and methods of self-assessment during the course of the investment.

F. Marzano, 2006:

“ARE WE READY FOR THE 'E-PARTICIPATION?”