

COMMENTS

A STUDY OF THE AVAILABILITY AND DEMAND OF DIGITAL SERVICES FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY CITIZENS

EGINE KARAGULYAN,

Tyumen State University (Tyumen, Russia)

MARIA BATYREVA,

Tyumen State University (Tyumen, Russia)

<https://doi.org/10.21684/2412-2343-2023-10-4-162-185>

In recent decades, scientists have been discussing ways of involving the population in social and political processes. Terms such as “civic participation,” “civic control,” “participation in the government of the power-poor,” etc. are widely used in scholarly discourse on this subject. The research related to social and political activities is conducted within various thematic areas based on “political participation theory” and “participatory democracy theory,” as well as on “theories of economic and digital inequalities.” According to the vast majority of scientists, increasing digitalization is known to expand the forms of participation and transform the public administration at all levels concerning joint governance and a citizen-centric approach, taking into consideration the opinion and active participation of citizens in the production and execution of policy decisions. This article presents the results of a study that investigated whether modern digital services allow citizens to participate in and influence the social and political processes taking place at various levels of government. In addition, the study demonstrates how modern digital technologies promote the maximum participation of the most socially vulnerable categories of the population, as well as how such factors as the level of digital competence, the level of income of the population, and the level of digitalization of territories limit this participation. In order to assess the modern digital forms and the use of these forms in a citizen's interaction with the authorities, a survey of 1,200 residents of villages and towns located in the south Tyumen Region was conducted. The ways in which the residents living in the towns and villages of the Tyumen Region were able to express their civic positions were determined and the proportion of citizens using digital technologies was noted. The study also assessed the availability and demand for digital technologies by citizens to express their social and political activities, as well as the primary

factors that limit their social and political participation. Moreover, this research showed that age, education, and digital competence and awareness were the main factors influencing a citizen's propensity to use modern digital technologies for social and political activity. The hypothesis that the demand for digital services by citizens living in remote districts should be higher than that of urban residents was not confirmed. On the contrary, for a wide range of services, the assessments of demand and accessibility are higher among the residents of cities than among the residents of rural municipal districts, with the highest assessments coming from the residents of the regional capital. This fact is associated with a higher level of digital competence among citizens, a higher level of digitalization of the regional capital, as well as a higher level of income, which allows them to more actively master and use all these services. Additionally, this article is addressed to researchers interested in various aspects of social and political participation, as well as to politicians who make decisions regarding the development and implementation of new forms of digital interaction between citizens and the authorities that enable citizens to demonstrate their civic position.

Keywords: smart technologies; smart services; interaction between the state and citizens; civil initiatives; active citizenship; social activity of citizens; civic position; involvement of citizens in socio-political processes.

Recommended citation: EGINE Karagulyan & MARIA Batyreva, *A Study of the Availability and Demand of Digital Services for the Manifestation of Social and Political Activity by Citizens*, 10(4) BRICS Law Journal 162–185 (2023).

Table of Contents

Introduction

1. The Concept and Main Features of Social and Political Participation

2. Results

Conclusion

Introduction

For several decades, there has been a debate in the scientific community about the ways in which people can be involved in social and political processes at different levels. The scientists actively discuss the issues of “civic participation,” civil control, and “the maximum possible participation of the power-poor, the most socially vulnerable segments of the population.”¹ At the same time, modern democracy, under the influence of scientific and technological progress and digitalization, is characterized by a constant expansion of available forms of citizen participation in social and political processes. In turn, the expansion of the different forms of participation requires updating the

¹ Sherry R. Arnstein, *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, 35(4) J. Am. Plan. Ass'n 216 (1969).

existing theories of citizen participation. Digital technologies enable citizens to express their wants, desires, and needs to modify the current management system. On the other hand, new forms of participation related to “smart” technologies are so diverse that researchers do not always have the opportunity to recognize them at a glance. The social and political processes taking place in society require the conceptualization of these new forms of social and political participation.

Today, research on various aspects of social and political participation of the population is conducted within the framework of various thematic areas, such as, “theories of political participation” and “theories of social and political activity of citizens,” “digitalization of the economy and public administration,” “problems of poverty and the fight against social and economic and digital inequality of the population,” etc. According to a report by the World Bank,² the world is experiencing the greatest revolution in the field of information and communication technology (ICT), and historical data show that the poorest households are in fact more likely to have access to mobile phones and the Internet than to toilets or clean water. The use of ICTs have the potential make the process of information transfer faster, easier, and cheaper, making them an important tool for economic, social, and political activity.³ “Smart” technologies combined with the theory of participatory democracy have been continued within the framework of the “smart city” concept. According to a large majority of researchers, increasing digitalization transforms the system of public administration at all levels in the direction of joint management, forming a citizen-centric approach involving citizens in the production and execution of political decisions in smart cities.

Nevertheless, the most important questions that need to be answered today are the following:

1. Will modern technologies provide citizens with the opportunity for “real” participation in social, economic, and political processes, or will the use of technology remains an “empty ritual” that does not give any real opportunity to influence the social and political processes taking place at the level of cities and villages?

2. Will smart technologies contribute to the maximum possible participation of the most socially vulnerable categories of the population or, on the contrary, will these technologies lead to an increase in the digital inequality of the population?

We suppose that the use of smart technologies as a tool for involving citizens in social and political processes has a number of significant limitations that prevent the expected effects from materializing. These limitations are associated with a low level of digitalization in certain regions, territories, and settlements, as well as an insufficient level of digital competence among certain groups of the population along with the predetermined results of using those technologies. All of these factors together lead to insufficient involvement of the population in the management and resolution of social and political issues in both cities and villages. This difference

² World Bank, *World Development Report 2016: Digital Divides* (2016) (Jul. 15, 2023), available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2016>.

³ Yong Hwan Noh & Kyeongwon Yoo, *Internet, Inequality and Growth*, 30(6) J. Pol’y Modeling 1005 (2008).

becomes even more apparent when comparing the availability of smart technologies and the opportunities for their use by residents of cities, towns, and villages.

This article aims to conduct a comparative analysis concerning the demand and accessibility of modern digital services for the population of villages and cities located in the south Tyumen Region as a tool for participation in social and political activity.

The theoretical basis of this study is closely related to the theories of political participation,^{4,5,6,7,8} the analysis of which allows us to identify the criteria for assessing the social and political participation and activity of citizens.

The methodology of this study is also based on research into the factors and roles of e-participation and e-government in the development of democracy^{9,10,11,12,13} (conducted by Russian authors L.A. Vidyasova and Ya.D. Tensina), as well as the study related to the differences in political participation and the level of trust of citizens towards the authorities of cities and villages.^{14,15,16,17,18,19,20}

⁴ Joakim Ekman & Erik Amnå, *Political Participation and Civic Engagement: Towards a New Typology*, 22(3) Hum. Aff. 283 (2012).

⁵ Stuart Fox, *Is It Time to Update the Definition of Political Participation?*, 67(2) Parliamentary Aff. 495 (2014).

⁶ Geraint Parry et al., *Political Participation and Democracy in Britain* (1992).

⁷ Sidney Verba & Norman H. Nie, *Participation in America Political Democracy and Social Equality* (1972).

⁸ Charles Pattie et al., *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy* (2004).

⁹ Filipe Campante et al., *Politics 2.0: The Multifaceted Effect of Broadband Internet on Political Participation*, 16(4) J. Eur. Econ. Ass'n 1094 (2018).

¹⁰ Lucia Vesnic-Alujevic, *Political Participation and Web 2.0 in Europe: A Case Study of Facebook*, 38(3) Pub. Rel. Rev. 466 (2012).

¹¹ Jennifer Oser et al., *Is Online Participation Distinct from Offline Participation? A Latent Class Analysis of Participation Types and Their Stratification*, 66(1) Pol. Res. Q. 91 (2013); Verba & Nie 1972.

¹² Doina Stratu-Strelet et al., *Critical Factors in the Institutionalization of E-Participation in e-Government in Europe: Technology or Leadership?*, 164 Technological Forecasting & Soc. Change (Article 120489) (2021).

¹³ Evgenii Vidiyasov et al., *Institutional Factors for Building Trust in Information Technologies: Case-Study of Saint Petersburg*, in Daniel A. Alexandrov et al. (eds.), *Digital Transformation and Global Society*, DTGS 2021, Communications in Computer and Information Science 152 (2022).

¹⁴ Alex Afouxenidis, *Social Media and Political Participation: An Investigation of Small-Scale Activism in Greece*, 4(1) Advances in Applied Soc. 1 (2014).

¹⁵ Saman Arshad & Sobia Khurram, *Survey Dataset on Citizens' Perspective Regarding Government's Use of Social Media for Provision of Quality Information and Citizens Online Political Participation in Pakistan*, 32 Data in Brief (Article 106311) (2020).

¹⁶ Maria Chayinska et al., *A Longitudinal Study of the Bidirectional Causal Relationships Between Online Political Participation and Offline Collective Action*, 121 Computers in Hum. Behavior (Article 106810) (2021).

¹⁷ Frieder Mitsch et al., *Faith No More? The Divergence of Political Trust Between Urban and Rural Europe*, 89 Pol. Geography (Article 102426) (2021).

¹⁸ Oser et al. 2013.

¹⁹ Stratu-Strelet et al. 2021.

²⁰ Vesnic-Alujevic 2012.

Thus, this article will present the results of a study concerning the demand and availability of digital services as a tool for the participation in social and political activity of the residents living in the south Tyumen Region.

1. The Concept and Main Features of Social and Political Participation

Legal scientists around the world are particularly interested in the theory of political participation, which has been a popular object of study for many decades. One of the significant theories in this field is "Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality" by S. Verba and N.H. Nie,²¹ in which the authors interpret the concept of "political participation." According to S. Verba and N.H. Nie, political participation includes "acts that aim at influencing the government, either by affecting the choice of government personnel or by affecting the choices made by government personnel."²² The authors believe that citizens can participate in politics not only by voting, joining a political party, or participating in an election campaign but also through contacts with government officials and joint or public activities. Furthermore, S. Verba and N.H. Nie take a narrow view of participation and make it clear that they are not interested in or supportive of ceremonials or forms of participation that include marching in parades, developing different projects, or taking part in youth groups sponsored by the government.²³ A similar approach to the definition of political participation has been followed by many other authors.^{24,25}

More recent definitions of political participation have thus tended to be wider in scope. Parry et al.²⁶ or Patti et al.²⁷ for example, in contrast to Verba and Nie,²⁸ emphasize that participation in political life does not necessarily have to be directed to governments; it can also be aimed at various institutions and organizations. Thus, political participation can influence both the policymaking process as well as the services provided by the state, including social services.^{29,30} The author,

²¹ Verba & Nie 1972, at 2.

²² *Id.*

²³ Verba & Nie 1972.

²⁴ Lester W. Milbrath & Madan L. Goel, *Political Participation: How and Why People Get Involved in Politics* (1977).

²⁵ Max Kaase & Alan Marsh, *Political Action: A Theoretical Perspective*, in Samuel H. Barnes et al., *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies* 27 (1979).

²⁶ Parry et al. 1992.

²⁷ Pattie et al. 2004.

²⁸ Verba & Nie 1972.

²⁹ Fox 2014.

³⁰ Yannis Theocharis & Jan W. van Deth, *The Continuous Expansion of Citizen Participation: A New Taxonomy*, 10(1) European Pol. Sci. Rev. 139 (2016).

Van Deth,³¹ points out that the forms of political participation have changed and expanded significantly over the past few decades. Participation in political life gradually became relevant in areas that were previously considered to be private, social, or economic.³² The boundaries between political and civic participation began to be blurred.³³ At present, it is quite difficult to draw a clear line between the political and non-political participation of citizens since citizens often express their political views through non-political behavior. Besides, political participation has now become possible, both in institutionalized and non-institutionalized forms.

As a result of the development of digital technologies, various authors have proposed numerous definitions concerning political participation. In general, these definitions describe political participation as

any aspects of social activity that are either intended to directly influence on state bodies and the political process, or indirectly influence on civil society, or try to change systematic patterns of behavior in social life.³⁴

However, Van Deth also considers political participation to have a broader context, which the author defines as any activity of citizens that influences politics,³⁵ including the following:

- traditional forms of participation (such as, voting, party membership, and election campaigning);
- non-traditional forms of participation aimed at influencing political actors (such as, protests and political activism, including the Internet, etc.);
- activities aimed at solving specific community problems (for e.g. civic activism and volunteering);
- forms of participation that are based on individual motives (for e.g. political expression of one's views).

The majority of scientists agree that political participation is a key element of democratic systems because it establishes a link between the public and the political elite in the above-mentioned author's study, investigates the interactions between citizens and political elites, clarifies the concept of political participation to be observable, obvious, and voluntary, as well as directed towards governments, institutions, organizations, or other non-governmental political organizations.³⁶

³¹ Jan W. van Deth, *A Conceptual Map of Political Participation*, 49(3) *Acta Politica* 349 (2014).

³² *Id.* at 350.

³³ *Id.* at 351.

³⁴ Pippa Norris, *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism* 16 (2002).

³⁵ Van Deth 2014.

³⁶ Maria T. Grasso, *Generations, Political Participation and Social Change in Western Europe* 272 (2021) (Jul. 15, 2023), available at https://books.google.com/books/about/Generations_Political_Participation_and.html?id=Z80etAEACAAJ.

Nowadays, individualized models of participation in social and political processes are the result of the development of ICT technologies, which include online forms of participation that require special attention and research. At the same time, there are plenty of problems regarding the political identification of these online forms of social and political participation of citizens. In this regard, the methodology and results of the study by Theocharis and Van Det are of great interest as they present a new approach to the study of the identification as well as the classification of new forms of digital political participation.³⁷

Nevertheless, the scientific community continues to debate the role and significance of online forms of political participation. Some researchers claim that online forms create only the illusion of participation.³⁸ For example, P. Cardullo and R. Kitchin,³⁹ in their research on smart cities argue that although citizens' participation through smart technologies is potentially diverse, it is frequently framed in a post-political way, providing feedback, negotiations, participation, and creation but in an instrumental, not regulatory, or political framework.^{40,41} The government has absolute power and its activities are protected by law, while citizens are simply invited to "participate," or, to put it another way, citizens are encouraged and even invited to help the authorities find solutions to practical issues related to certain aspects of the development of the city, but not to challenge or replace the fundamental political foundations that form the problem or development plan.^{42/43/44/45} In contrast, the majority of citizens in a smart city are "empowered" by technology and are seen as consumers or testers of these technologies, as well as a source of data that can be turned into a product for decision-makers. Citizens are regarded as people who can and should be guided, controlled, and pushed into taking certain actions, i.e. citizens should act within the framework of expected and acceptable behavior yet not violate social and political norms or resist them.

³⁷ Theocharis & Van Deth 2016.

³⁸ Evgeny Morozov, *From Slacktivism to Activism*, Foreign Policy, 5 September 2009 (Jul. 15, 2023), available at <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/09/05/from-slacktivism-to-activism/>.

³⁹ Paolo Cardullo & Rob Kitchin, *Being a 'Citizen' in the Smart City: Up and Down the Scaffold of Smart Citizen Participation in Dublin, Ireland*, 84(1) GeoJournal 1 (2019).

⁴⁰ Paolo Cardullo, *Citizens in the 'Smart City': Participation, Co-production, Governance* 174 (2020).

⁴¹ Cardullo & Kitchin 2019.

⁴² Andrea Cornwall, *Unpacking 'Participation' Models, Meanings and Practices*, 43(3) Community Dev. J. 269 (2008).

⁴³ Judy B. Rosener, *Citizen Participation: Can We Measure its Effectiveness?*, 38(5) Pub. Admin. Rev. 457 (1978).

⁴⁴ Judy B. Rosener, *User-Oriented Evaluation: A New Way to View Citizen Participation*, 17(4) J. Applied Behav. Sci. 583 (1981).

⁴⁵ Eran Vigoda, *From Responsiveness to Collaboration: Governance, Citizens, and the Next Generation of Public Administration*, 62(5) Pub. Admin. Rev. 527 (2002).

Another group of researchers proves that online participation is a significant and effective form of expressing one's civic position as well as influencing government actions.^{46/47/48/49} In general, a great number of works exploring the role of various modern information and communication technologies are presented in the scientific literature today.⁵⁰ These works are used by the city government to formulate and implement policies. Various platform solutions, official pages of authorities in social networks, websites of the administration of districts, regions, districts, and municipalities, which are used for complaints and appeals, voting, putting forward initiatives, polls, voting, etc., are considered to be the main tools of participation. Most of the presented technologies can be used by the population to participate in urban social and political processes. According to Pereira's research, modern technologies and social networks have the potential to be factors that can both increase the involvement of citizens and stimulate the development of new management models for the government.⁵¹

Additionally, the authors, Hu⁵² and Boyd⁵³ argue that participation in social and political processes through the use of modern technologies promotes public engagement, boosts the abilities and activity of citizens, and raises the level of democracy, the quality, and the acceptability of decisions taken by the government. ICT-based tools can mediate, expand, and transform participation in democratic and consultative public processes.⁵⁴

Thus, from the viewpoint of several authors, participation through digital technologies can be considered a full-fledged form of political participation since it fully meets all of the criteria of political participation.⁵⁵ Participation may be deemed political if it corresponds to the five main characteristics that are included in the broad interpretation of political participation. These characteristics include the following:

⁴⁶ José R. Gil-García et al., *What Makes a City Smart? Identifying Core Components and Proposing an Integrative and Comprehensive Conceptualization*, 20(1) *Info. Polity* 61 (2015).

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ Anthony Simonofski et al., *Citizen Participation in Smart Cities: Evaluation Framework Proposal*, Paper presented at 19th IEEE Conference on Business Informatics, Thessaloniki, Greece (2017), at 227–36 (Jul. 15, 2023), available at <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/8010726>.

⁴⁹ Gabriela V. Pereira et al., *Smart Governance in the Context of Smart Cities: A Literature Review*, 23(2) *Info. Polity* 143 (2018).

⁵⁰ José R. Gil-García et al., *Conceptualizing Smartness in Government: An Integrative and Multidimensional View*, 33(3) *Gov't Info. Q.* 524 (2016).

⁵¹ Pereira et al. 2018.

⁵² Guangwei Hu et al., *A Hierarchical Model of e-Government Service Capability: An Empirical Analysis*, 29(4) *Gov't Info. Q.* 564 (2012).

⁵³ Ovid P. Boyd, *Differences in eDemocracy Parties' eParticipation Systems*, 13(3,4) *Info. Polity* 167 (2008).

⁵⁴ Øystein Sæbø et al., *The Shape of eParticipation: Characterizing an Emerging Research Area*, 25(3) *Gov't Info. Q.* 400 (2008).

⁵⁵ Theocharis & Van Deth 2016.

1. It is carried out voluntarily and not by coercion, by order of the ruling class, or by law.
2. It is carried out by non-professional politicians.
3. It is concerned with the actions or activities of the government, politics, and states.
4. It is aimed at solving specific problems in the community.
5. Its participants indicate the political nature of their actions as a motive.⁵⁶

Our research analyzed the recognized forms of political participation based on these five characteristics, assuming the use of modern digital technologies to express a citizen's civic position and solve various social and political problems.

Furthermore, we assessed the demand and awareness of digital technologies and services for involving citizens in social and political processes in the context of two aspects characterizing the social and political activity of residents of the Tyumen Region: their demand and accessibility (assessed in terms of using various activities to interact with government representatives through electronic portals, electronic appeals, electronic voting, receiving electronic services, etc.).

Using a questionnaire, the conducted research aimed to identify differences in the perception of "smart" socio-political services held by the population of villages, towns, and cities located in the southern portion of the Tyumen Region.

This questionnaire-based survey was administered to the residents of Tyumen Region online during June–August 2021, using the SurveyMonkey service. The object of the study was residents aged 18 and over living in towns and municipalities located in the south Tyumen Region. A total of 1,200 residents were interviewed. The sample (based on randomization) is representative of the population across the southern portion of the region in terms of gender, age, and place of residence (Tyumen City, other urban settlements in the south of the region, and rural municipal districts). Additionally, the sampling error does not exceed 3% for any one attribute.

The analysis of respondents' answers showed that 87% of respondents were politicians, 5% of them were active members of different political parties, and 8% of respondents were members of various parties, but this participation was not an active part of their daily lives. 86% of respondents also indicated that they were not members of any public organization, 7% of them noted that they were active members of public organizations, and 7% of respondents indicated that they were members of a public organization but did not actively participate in the activities of that organization.

In addition, 73% of respondents were considered to be digitally competent on average. At the same time, 39% of respondents indicated that they had an average level of digital competence, 29% of them had a basic level, 26% of them had an advanced level, and 6% of respondents stated that they had an even higher level of digital competence.

During the course of this study, the forms of interaction between citizens and authorities in a variety of settings were also investigated.

⁵⁶ Theocharis & Van Deth 2016, at 81.

2. Results

The results of the study related to the population's perception of smart technologies to express their civic positions and solve social problems, as well as the assessments of the accessibility of these smart technologies by the population, have been received and established.

The study revealed how residents throughout the southern parts of the Tyumen Region expressed their civic positions. At the same time, it was found that 40% of residents used digital technologies to express social and political activity. The share of residents who did not express their civic position was approximately 38%. It was determined that the use of digital services for political and social participation varied greatly depending on respondents' age, their digital competence, and place of residence (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents to the question
“Which services do you most often use to express your civic position?,”
by place of residence and age, in %**

Place of residence	Age	Type of Service			
		Digital services	Personal meeting	I don't use either service	Use other ways
Tyumen City	18–29	51	10	38	1
	30–44	49	13	37	1
	45–59	38	16	46	0
	60 >	24	32	43	1
	The average of the sample	42	17	40	1
Other cities	18–29	45	18	37	0
	30–44	46	19	35	0
	45–59	40	23	36	1
	60 >	24	41	35	0
	The average of the sample	38	26	35	1
Rural areas	18–29 years old	52	23	25	0
	30–44 years old	49	18	35	1
	45–59 years old	39	28	33	1
	60 years and older	25	28	47	0
	The average of the sample	40	24	35	1
Total		40	21	38	1

Source: Author's elaboration

The data shown in the table above indicate that the proportion of residents in Tyumen City who do not want to express their civic position in any way is slightly higher than in other settlements of the region (40% as opposed to 35%, on average, respectively). It should also be noted that the residents of small towns and rural settlements are more likely to express their civic position through a personal reception or meeting with authorities (26% and 24%, respectively). This can partly be explained by the fact that in small settlements, more people know their elected officials personally as a result of the frequent interaction that takes place between the two parties when trying to solve problems in cases where there are no possibilities to use digital services.

The most significant feature was the differences in the expression of their civic position by the respondents of different ages. In all types of settlements, the proportion of respondents who use electronic resources to express their civic position decreases from younger age groups to older ones. In contrast, the proportion of respondents who prefer to use personal meetings to express their civic position increases from younger age groups to older ones. As for other ways of expressing a civic position, the respondents indicated personal calls and participation in rallies.

The analysis demonstrated a connection between citizens' information competence and the use of digital services for the manifestation of their social and political activities. The respondents who were evaluated as being more "information competent" indicated that they used electronic services more often to interact with the authorities (46%). Only 13% of the respondents who lacked information competency used digital services for political participation. Yet, 33% of respondents who could be considered "information competent" did not express their civic position in any way. In addition, 20% of information incompetent citizens used digital services, 24% of them preferred personal reception, and 61% of information incompetent citizens did not express their civic position at all.

The data obtained are confirmed by other studies.⁵⁷ It is considered that the level of information competence has significant effects on the extent of the use of digital services and platforms for the manifestation of social and political activity by citizens. In general, the existing form of electronic interaction between citizens and the authorities assumes an applicant-friendly procedure for citizens' appeals as well as its simplicity. According to Federal Law No. 59-FZ of 5 February 2006 "On the Procedure for Considering Appeals from Citizens of the Russian Federation," authorities and officials, depending on the essence of the appeal, are required to give either a positively or negatively motivated (justified) response or a motivated (justified) consultation. Furthermore, if the issue is not within the competence of this body, officials are obliged to forward the appeal to the appropriate body. As a result, citizens who have a high level of information competence have the capability to verify the information provided by the authorities and take certain actions to hold

⁵⁷ Ekaterina Rodionova et al., *Using Information Technology to Design Comfortable Furniture Based on Research of Seniors' Needs*, 9(11) *Int'l J. Open Info. Tech.* 75 (2021).

officials accountable in cases where they provide false information. If the applicant is not satisfied with the officials' responses, a person with a high level of information competence can also use additional available forms for continuing interaction with the authorities. These forms of action can range from submitting a second appeal to discussing the content and form of the appeal or even the individual personality characteristics of the responding officials in the public information space. Thus, the accessibility of the appeal process and a high level of information competence allow a citizen to influence the decisions of the authorities or at least settle the problem. Moreover, citizens with a high level of information competence frequently express satisfaction and a desire to contact the authorities in the future.

According to the findings of this study, it has been determined that residents of the south Tyumen Region are more likely to address their local governments (45%) and regional authorities (18%) to express their civic position or solve existing problems (Fig. 1). The results demonstrate that the percentage of citizens from the Tyumen Region who applied to local authorities is approximately 2.5 times greater than the percentage of citizens who applied to regional ones. Similarly, the percentage of citizens who applied to federal authorities is 2.5 times greater than the percentage of citizens who applied to regional ones. This can be explained by the specifics of the issues that are resolved at various levels of government (For example, at the local level, issues of vital activity of the territory are defined by Articles 14–16 of Federal Law No. 131-FZ of 10 June 2003 "On General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation," the majority of issues of social security of citizens are solved at the regional level; at the federal level, global political issues are defined by Articles 71 and 72 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation; and issues of both political and non-political nature are solved at the regional level).

A similar order of addresses is typical for European countries, as evidenced by part 3 of Article 4 of the European Charter of Local Self-Government which states that the exercise of state powers, as a rule, should primarily be entrusted to the authorities closest to citizens.

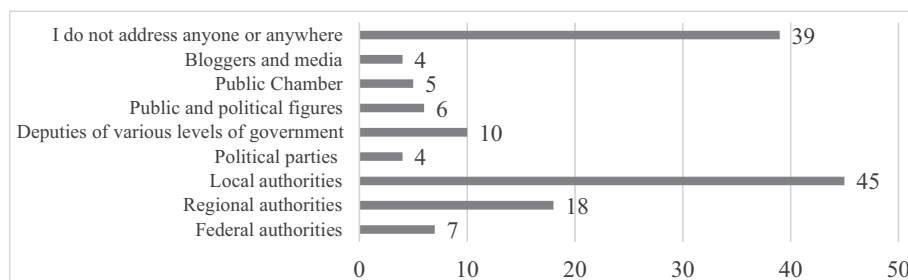


Fig. 1: The results of respondents' answers to the questionnaire concerning their interactions with officials and governments to solve existing problems or manifest their civic position, in %

In addition, the data in Figure 1 shows that nearly 40% of respondents answered this question using the first option of “addressing no one or nowhere.” Only one in ten respondents indicate that they have appealed to deputies of different levels, while the proportion of respondents who have appealed to other instances is less than 10%.

Furthermore, the study into the perception of the digital services used by the citizens to manifest social and political activity revealed that the residents of the south Tyumen Region are familiar with these services and technologies, such as “Gosuslugi,”⁵⁸ a popular federal state information system (only 3% of respondents have never heard of it). The residents of the region in this study are also relatively familiar with the state authorities and official websites of municipalities (only 16% and 14% of respondents, respectively, have not heard about these websites). However, the citizens of Tyumen Region are less informed about petition sites and blogs of government representatives (40% and 32% of respondents, respectively have not heard about these services).

It should also be noted that there are differences in the responses regarding awareness of services among the residents of different types of settlements. In general, the inhabitants of the regional capital are more aware of the availability of numerous services than those of small towns and villages (Table 2).

**Table 2: Distribution of respondents’ answers to the question
“How well are you familiar with the presented technologies or services
for involving citizens in socio-political processes?,”
by place of residence, in %**

Services	Tyumen City				Other cities				Rural areas			
	I have not heard anything about this service,	I have heard about this service, but I have not used it	I used the service, but I did not like it (it is not convenient for me)	I used the service, and I am satisfied (convenient / useful)	I have not heard anything about this service	I have heard about this service, but I have not used it	I used the service, but I did not like it (it is not convenient for me)	I used the service, and I am satisfied (convenient / useful)	I have not heard anything about this service	I have heard about this service, but I did not use it	I used the service, but I did not like it (it is not convenient for me)	I used the service, and I am satisfied (convenient / useful)
Portal “Gosuslugi” (filing complaints, applications, proposals)	2	11	14	73	3	13	19	65	5	16	12	67

⁵⁸ Gosuslugi – Public Services Portal is a part of the infrastructure that provides data exchange and technological interaction between information systems used for rendering state and municipal services in electronic form.

Websites, portals of state (federal, regional) authorities / Website of the President of the Russian Federation	12	56	13	19	21	61	5	13	19	55	9	17
Official websites of municipalities	10	39	18	33	19	50	8	23	19	45	9	27
Blogs of government representatives	28	51	12	9	37	51	4	7	35	47	8	10
Official pages of authorities in social networks	21	56	12	11	29	55	5	11	30	48	6	16
Local communities on social networks	17	40	13	30	33	38	8	21	22	41	9	28
Pages of parties, deputies, public figures in social networks	24	59	9	8	30	59	5	6	34	50	8	8
Petition Sites change.org / Russian Public Initiative	28	44	11	17	47	36	6	11	37	45	7	11
Mobile applications for submitting citizens' appeals ("I decide"/"Active citizen"/"Tyumen is my city," etc.)	32	49	7	12	55	33	4	8	43	39	7	11

Source: compiled by the author based on data from a survey of residents of the south Tyumen Region

The data presented in Table 2 above show that the proportion of Tyumen residents who have never heard of these services listed is lower than among residents of other cities and rural settlements. This difference is especially significant with regard to the official websites of municipalities, petition sites, and mobile applications for submitting citizens' appeals; most of these resources are designed with city residents in mind. In part, the relative difference in the use of official urban websites by the residents of villages and small towns in the Tyumen Region can be explained in part by the fact that the official websites of rural settlements and small towns in this region are poorly designed and have insufficient content as well as inconvenient navigation, unlike the websites of the regional capital. In most cases, the rural sites provide only the latest news, the structure of government bodies, official documents, and contact details for citizens. Moreover, in order to submit appeals, citizens are forced to use both the "Gosuslugi" website and the websites of any other state bodies. Thus, the differences in the use of websites for petitions by residents of cities and villages are more related to the lower digital competence of rural areas.

Nevertheless, the differences in responses to the use of the federal portal “Gosuslugi” are not so significant. 87% of Tyumen respondents have experience using it, 84% of residents of other cities in the region, and 79% of residents of rural municipal districts, and all of these respondents evaluate this service positively and consider it to be convenient and useful.

The official websites of municipalities are also quite popular. 51% of Tyumen respondents, 31% of residents in other cities, and 36% of residents in villages have experience using them. 43% of respondents in Tyumen City, 29% of respondents in other cities, and 37% of respondents in villages have experience engaging with local communities on social networks. At the same time, in all of the cases, the share of those respondents who positively assessed the experience of using both services turned out to be higher by 2–3 times than the share of those who negatively assessed this experience. Residents favorably noted the usefulness of these services in terms of involving citizens in socio-political processes.

The assessment of demand for using existing services for the manifestation of social and political activity was made by respondents according to a five-point scale. The extreme points were interpreted as the following: a rating of 1 represents a service that is absolutely useless and not in demand by the population, whereas a rating of 5 represents a very useful and in-demand service. The obtained average values of the demand for services depending on the settlements of residents are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Average values by residents of the south of the Tyumen Region of the demand for services to involve citizens in social and political processes, in points

Services	Tyumen	Other cities	Rural areas	The average values
Portal “Gosuslugi” (for complaints, applications, proposals)	4.21	4,18	4,11	4,18
Websites, portals of state (federal, regional) authorities / Website of the President of the Russian Federation	3.35	3.24	3.20	3.29
Official websites of municipalities	3.52	3.39	3.21	3.41
Blogs of government representatives	2,71	2,79	2.68	2.71
Website of the Public Chamber	2,81	3,02	2.83	2.75
Official pages of authorities on social networks	2,78	2,93	2.81	2.81
Local communities on social networks	3.24	3.24	3.22	3.23
Pages of parties, deputies, public figures on social networks	2.63	2.84	2.66	2.68

Petition Sites change.org / Russian Public Initiative	3.20	3.16	2.98	3.13
Mobile applications for submitting citizens' appeals ("I decide"/"Active citizen"/"Tyumen is my city," etc.)	3.11	3.00	3.02	3.07

Table 3 shows that the most popular service used for filing complaints, applications, and proposals is the portal "Gosuslugi." The average value of its demand was greater than 4 points for all groups of respondents. Such services as official websites of municipalities, websites of state authorities (including the website of the President of the Russian Federation), local communities in social networks, as well as websites for submitting petitions and mobile applications for submitting citizens' appeals, had average indices of demand (between 3–4 points). As for the official pages of authorities on social networks, the website of the Public Chamber, and the blogs of government representatives, all three of these had the lowest value of demand (less than 3 points).

In addition, the assessment of the availability of services was also made by respondents using a five-point scale, in which the extreme points were interpreted as follows: 1 indicates that the service is not available at all and 5 indicates that the service is as accessible as possible. The obtained average estimates of the availability of services in the context of municipalities are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Average values of the availability of services for the involvement of citizens in social and political processes, in points

Services	Tyumen City	Other cities	Rural areas	The average values
Portal "Gosuslugi" (complaints, applications, proposals)	4.23	4.12	4.04	4.16
Websites and portals of state (federal, regional) authorities / Website of the President of the Russian Federation	3.52	3.34	3.28	3.42
Official websites of municipalities	3.60	3.39	3.30	3.47
Blogs of government representatives	3.22	3.13	3.00	3.20
Website of the Public Chamber	3.29	3.15	3.01	3.18
Official pages of authorities on social networks	3.32	3.19	3.09	3.23
Local communities on social networks	3.50	3.36	3.34	3.42
Official pages of parties, deputies, public figures on social networks	3.26	3.18	3.03	3.18
Petition Sites change.org / Russian Public Initiative	3.45	3.29	3.16	3.34

Mobile applications for submitting citizens appeals ("I decide"/"Active citizen"/"Tyumen is my city," etc.)	3.41	3.21	3.16	3.30
---	------	------	------	------

Table 4 shows that the residents of the south Tyumen Region positively estimate the high availability of services for the manifestation of social and political activity. The averages for all services in this sample are 3.18 points or higher. The value of the accessibility of the portal "Gosuslugi" was rated at an average of 4.16 points. In terms of accessibility, it can be noted that the average accessibility indices for all services are the lowest among rural residents, but they are slightly higher among the residents of small towns in the Tyumen Region, and the highest ratings are found among the residents of Tyumen, which is obviously due to the higher level of digital competence of the urban population and the quality of communication services. The quality of Internet access in remote areas of the Tyumen Region is lower, and this fact is also confirmed by the data obtained during the survey.

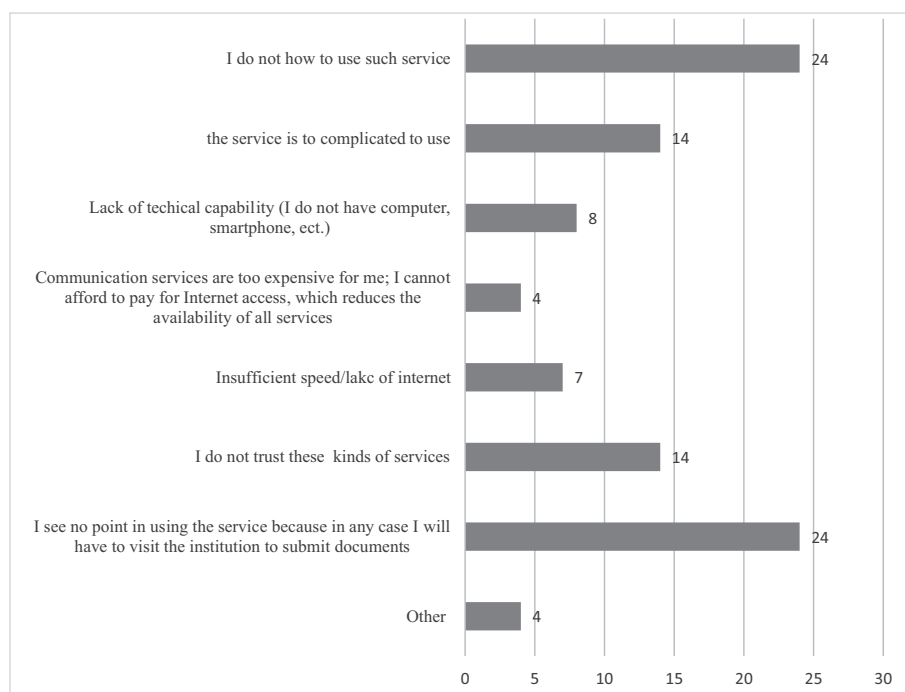


Fig. 2: Distribution of respondents' answers to the question "Please explain what exactly makes the service unavailable to you personally?," in %

Source: compiled by the author based on a survey of residents of the Tyumen Region

Figure 2 above demonstrates the reasons that make digital services for involving the population in social and political processes potentially inaccessible. This question was answered only by those respondents who rated the availability of at least one of the services with 1 or 2 points. Figure 2 shows that the respondents mark the following reasons for not using digital services: inability, unreadiness, and unwillingness to use digital services (24%); necessity to visit a state institution even after using digital services to complete the appeal procedure filling application (24%); distrust of services and the complexity of their use (14% each). Some residents indicated that the speed of the internet connection and the lack of internet were the main problems with using digital services for political participation.

Conclusion

This study determined how urban and rural residents express their civic position as well as the proportion of citizens who prefer modern technologies to manifest their civic position. It also assessed the availability and demand for “smart” technologies by residents of villages and towns to express their civic position and demonstrate their participation in social and political activities.

Furthermore, citizens’ perceptions of their information competence were investigated. 39% of respondents indicated that they have an average level of information competence, 29% of respondents indicated having a basic level, 26% had advanced level, and only 6% of respondents claimed to have a higher level of competence.

The analysis of respondents showed that 87% were nonpartisan, 5% were active members of parties, and 8% were members of various parties but were not actively involved in the parties’ activities. 86% of respondents also indicated that they were not members of any public organization, 7% of respondents indicated that they were active members of public organizations, and another 7% indicated that they were members of a public organization but were not actively involved in its work. The results of the study further revealed that 40% of respondents indicated that they use electronic services to demonstrate their active citizenship, 21% of respondents prefer a personal reception or meeting with representatives of the authorities, 38% of respondents do not use anything, and 1% of them prefer other forms of interaction. However, it is important to note that depending on the types of settlement and the age of the respondents, the data vary quite significantly, indicating that a higher level of information competence and awareness remains one of the key factors influencing the propensity to use modern digital means of manifesting social and political activity. As a result, the information competency of citizens turned out to be largely dependent on such factors as the level of income and education of residents, which in general also corresponds to the data obtained by other studies.

Respondents from the regional capital demonstrated a higher level of demand and accessibility across all digital services and platforms. In general, people who

live in the regional capital are typically characterized by a higher level of digital competence, as well as a higher level of use of digital services to manifest their socio-political activity. In our opinion, this is partly because the scale of large cities, in an effort to save time and resources, forces people to use digital services to a greater extent, including those online platforms that allow people not only to receive services and buy products but also to express their social and political activity. Tyumen city residents have begun to realize that when contacting the authorities through websites or mobile applications, the speed at which most problems are solved and the responses of the authorities to them both increase.

As for residents of small towns and villages, they still use the Internet and electronic services, but to a lesser extent in everyday life. The reason for this is a low level of digital literacy, which has developed as a result of the cumulative effect of all factors limiting their use in aggregate (for e.g. a high proportion of elderly residents in small towns and villages, lower income, and a lower level of education among the population). According to the International Telecommunication Union and the ROCIT (a non-profit organization in Russia that offers IT services), the population of small towns and villages simply cannot be required to regularly use digital services and the Internet since the list of digital services offered and available platforms in all areas is significantly smaller for them.

A survey conducted among rural residents and small towns showed that when asked about the factors limiting the availability of digital services, the respondents indicated technical problems related to the lack of Internet and poor connectivity quality in several municipalities. Moreover, the cost of communication services and Internet connections was not considered a limiting factor for almost all residents of the Tyumen Region. The limited market of small towns and villages and the low level of digitalization were also not considered contributing factors to the active introduction of various kinds of digital services, both for everyday life and for the manifestation of socio-political activity. Today, in settlements of this type, those services that were created by the state remain available to residents, without the use of which it would be impossible to obtain public services.

Residents of small towns and villages further point out that the most popular service for them is the portal "Public Services," which, by expanding the range of services provided, allows not only for users to receive public services but also to file complaints and send appeals to the relevant authorities. The study also demonstrated that residents of small towns and villages, in general, are characterized by a low level of assessment of the demand and availability of supplementary services, as well as of urban and village online platforms and portals for filing and signing petitions. The proportion of residents who have never heard of the official websites of municipalities is lower among Tyumen City residents than among residents of other cities and rural settlements. After analyzing these online sources, it was revealed that the websites of rural settlements and small towns in the Tyumen Region, unlike

the websites of the regional capital, have a less engaging design, poorer content, and inconvenient navigation from the perspective of users. In the majority of cases, these online platforms and portals offer limited resources, such as a news feed, the organizational structure of various government bodies, official documents, and some brief information for citizens.

The preference of residents of villages and small towns for personal meetings over electronic services is partly due to the fact that small towns and villages are characterized by the proximity of local authorities and people in the community. Firstly, small distances in rural settlements and cities allow people to easily travel to and apply to the municipality directly. Federal Law No. 131-FZ of 6 October 2003, the "General Principles of the Organization of Local Self-Government in the Russian Federation" establishes that the boundaries of a rural settlement, which includes two or more settlements, are usually established considering pedestrian accessibility to its administrative center and back during the working day. This norm determines the maximum size of a rural settlement.

Secondly, the Federal Law defines the various forms of direct participation of citizens in resolving issues facing the local population. Some of these forms of participation are mandatory, while others are optional, but all are actively developed by the authorities of the region. For example, public hearings on the local budget are required to be held twice a year (when discussing the draft budget and the report on its execution). Additionally, they relate to all of the issues that need to be resolved by the authorities and on which money will be spent or has already been spent. Thus, active citizens can ask any question of the authorities and expect a response. However, even though federal legislation in Russia provides for public and private hearings, in practice, especially in areas related to improving the urban environment, ready-made projects are submitted and residents are invited to vote for them, including in electronic form. As a result of such actions, conflicts and disagreements often arise between the population and the authorities. In order to prevent potential conflicts, active engagement of the population is encouraged at the initial stages of designing facilities through the process of public hearings, when discussions regarding relevant issues take place. In villages where local self-government bodies are not located, a village headman is elected within the framework of legislation to organize the interactions between local self-government bodies and residents of a rural locality, a practice that commonly occurs across all localities. In general, a reasonable combination of face-to-face meetings and electronic forms of participation can be much more effective than using any one of the forms.

Thirdly, in small settlements, people are united by kinship relationships and various kinds of networks (such as educational and professional). With such dense and layered networks, reputation becomes important to people. This imposes additional moral obligations on municipal employees who are trying to address and solve the problem.

Fourth, there is a high level of population dependency on their elected officials in small municipalities. This is determined by the nature of the election campaign, which is largely based on personal meetings between candidates and the population. Citizens have personal familiarity with the officials they elect and can directly contact them during their term of office. In cities, the election campaign does not focus on face-to-face meetings; instead, much attention is paid to campaigning in the media and campaigning through a network of intermediaries, which at times may consist of several levels.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the majority of services do not involve a dialogue between the authorities and citizens. Despite the fact that most of these services are based on the principle of a two-way communication channel, in practice, citizens receive responses to their appeals that are often of a formal nature and do not always provide a solution to the problems indicated in the appeals, requiring citizens to send out additional letters, appeals, calls, and receptions with government representatives.

According to the findings of the study that was carried out, the active use of “smart” technologies affects the level of satisfaction with the services offered and the policy pursued, as well as the desire to show their civic position and participate in solving public problems at different levels of government. The level of satisfaction or even dissatisfaction with existing services provides an opportunity to change and improve the existing system of electronic interaction between the population and the authorities through requests and appeals from citizens regarding the shortcomings of its functioning. This is particularly important because the portal “Public Services” demonstrates the highest level of demand and accessibility among existing electronic resources across the population of all types of settlements.

Considering the different orientations of the socio-political activity of citizens, further research is required to determine the goals and motives for the use of existing services and platforms in the country by various categories of citizens, as well as changes in the level of activity and intensity of their use in the conditions of the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic. The authors believe that an important step in the continuation of this line of research could be a comparison of the data obtained on the demand and availability of smart technologies for the manifestation of socio-political activity with the data on the global level and the data on individual groups of countries, as well as the data on other regions and municipalities of Russia.

Acknowledgements

The reported study was funded by RFBR and EISR in accordance with research project no. 21-011-31407, “Smart Technologies as a Means of Participating in Social and Political Processes: Expectations and Reality.”

References

- Afouxenidis A. *Social Media and Political Participation: An Investigation of Small-Scale Activism in Greece*, 4(1) *Advances in Applied Sociology* 1 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.4236/aasoci.2014.41001>
- Arnstein S.R. *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, 35(4) *Journal of the American Planning Association* 216 (1969). <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944366908977225>
- Boyd O.P. *Differences in eDemocracy Parties' eParticipation Systems*, 13(3,4) *Information Polity* 167 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.3233/ip-2008-0161>
- Campante F. et al. *Politics 2.0: The Multifaceted Effect of Broadband Internet on Political Participation*, 16(4) *Journal of the European Economic Association* 1094 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1093/jeea/jvx044>
- Cardullo P. & Kitchin R. *Being a 'Citizen' in the Smart City: Up and Down the Scaffold of Smart Citizen Participation in Dublin, Ireland*, 84(1) *GeoJournal* 1 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-018-9845-8>
- Cardullo P. *Citizens in the 'Smart City': Participation, Co-production, Governance* (2020). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429438806>
- Chayinska M. et al. *A Longitudinal Study of the Bidirectional Causal Relationships Between Online Political Participation and Offline Collective Action*, 121 *Computers in Human Behavior* (Article 106810) (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.106810>
- Cornwall A. *Unpacking 'Participation' Models, Meanings and Practices*, 43(3) *Community Development Journal* 269 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsn010>
- Ekman J. & Amnå E. *Political Participation and Civic Engagement: Towards a New Typology*, 22(3) *Human Affairs* 283 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.2478/s13374-012-0024-1>
- Fox S. *Is It Time to Update the Definition of Political Participation?*, 67(2) *Parliamentary Affairs* 495 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gss094>
- Gil-García J.R. et al. *Conceptualizing Smartness in Government: An Integrative and Multidimensional View*, 33(3) *Government Information Quarterly* 524 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2016.03.002>
- Gil-García J.R. et al. *What Makes a City Smart? Identifying Core Components and Proposing an Integrative and Comprehensive Conceptualization*, 20(1) *Information Polity* 61 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-150354>
- Grasso M.T. *Generations, Political Participation and Social Change in Western Europe* (2021). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315684031>
- Hu G. et al. *A Hierarchical Model of e-Government Service Capability: An Empirical Analysis*, 29(4) *Government Information Quarterly* 564 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2012.04.007>
- Kaase M. & Marsh A. *Political Action: A Theoretical Perspective*, in Barnes S. et al., *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies* 27 (1979).
- Milbrath L.W. & Goel M.L. *Political Participation: How and Why People Get Involved in Politics* (1977).

Mitsch F. et al. *Faith No More? The Divergence of Political Trust Between Urban and Rural Europe*, 89 Political Geography (Article 102426) (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102426>

Noh Y.H. & Kyeongwon Y. *Internet, Inequality and Growth*, 30(6) Journal of Policy Modeling 1005 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpolmod.2007.06.016>

Norris P. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism* (2002). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511610073>

Oser J. et al. *Is Online Participation Distinct from Offline Participation? A Latent Class Analysis of Participation Types and Their Stratification*, 66(1) Political Research Quarterly 91 (2013).

Parry G. et al. *Political Participation and Democracy in Britain* (1992). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511558726>

Pattie C. et al. *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation and Democracy* (2004). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511490811>

Pereira G.V. et al. *Smart Governance in the Context of Smart Cities: A Literature Review*, 23(2) Information Polity 143 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.3233/ip-170067>

Rodionova E. et al. *Using Information Technology to Design Comfortable Furniture Based on Research of Seniors' Needs*, 9(11) International Journal of Open Information Technologies 75 (2021).

Rosener J.B. *Citizen Participation: Can We Measure its Effectiveness?*, 38(5) Public Administration Review 457 (1978). <https://doi.org/10.2307/975505>

Rosener J.B. *User-Oriented Evaluation: A New Way to View Citizen Participation*, 17(4) Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 583 (1981). <https://doi.org/10.1177/002188638101700412>

Sæbø Ø. et al. *The Shape of eParticipation: Characterizing an Emerging Research Area*, 25(3) Government Information Quarterly 400 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2007.04.007>

Saman A. & Khurram S. *Survey Dataset on Citizens' Perspective Regarding Government's Use of Social Media for Provision of Quality Information and Citizens Online Political Participation in Pakistan*, 32 Data in Brief (Article 106311) (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2020.106311>

Simonofski A. et al. *Citizen Participation in Smart Cities: Evaluation Framework Proposal*, Paper presented at the 19th IEEE Conference on Business Informatics, Thessaloniki, Greece (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1109/CBI.2017.21>

Stratu-Strelet D. et al. *Critical Factors in the Institutionalization of E-Participation in e-Government in Europe: Technology or Leadership?*, 164 Technological Forecasting and Social Change (Article 120489) (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120489>

Theocharis Y. & Van Deth J.W. *The Continuous Expansion of Citizen Participation: A New Taxonomy*, 10(1) European Political Science Review 139 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773916000230>

Van Deth J.W. *A Conceptual Map of Political Participation*, 49(3) *Acta Politica* 349 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1057/ap.2014>

Verba S. & Nie N.H. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality* (1972).

Verba S. et al. *Race, Ethnicity and Political Resources: Participation in the United States*, 23 *British Journal of Political Science* 453 (1993). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400006694>

Vesnic-Alujevic L. *Political Participation and Web 2.0 in Europe: A Case Study of Facebook*, 38(3) *Public Relations Review* 466 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.01.010>

Vidiasov E. et al. *Institutional Factors for Building Trust in Information Technologies: Case-Study of Saint Petersburg*, in Alexandrov D.A. et al. (eds.), *Digital Transformation and Global Society*, DTGS 2021, *Communications in Computer and Information Science* 152 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93715-7_11

Vigoda E. *From Responsiveness to Collaboration: Governance, Citizens, and the Next Generation of Public Administration*, 62(5) *Public Administration Review* 527 (2002). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-6210.00235>

Information about the authors

Egine Karagulyan (Tyumen, Russia) – Associate Professor, Tyumen State University (6 Volodarskogo St., Tyumen, 625003, Russia; e-mail: e.a.karagulyan@utmn.ru).

Maria Batyreva (Tyumen, Russia) – Associate Professor, Tyumen State University (6 Volodarskogo St., Tyumen, 625003, Russia; e-mail: m.v.batireva@utmn.ru).