

# Innovative democratic approaches and tools

E-Democracy in Italy



Co-funded by  
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# What is the E-democracy ?

Digital democracy, also called "**e-democracy**" or "**electronic democracy**," refers to the use of information and communication technologies to facilitate democratic participation and self-governance. Digital technologies are used not only for popular consultations, but also for legislative initiative, exercise of citizens' rights, monitoring of parliamentary activities, and other forms of citizen involvement in public decisions.



# E-democracy in European union

The EU has been actively **promoting the digital transformation** of its member states, including efforts to enhance e-democracy.

EU member states have made progress in providing **e-government services** :

- online portals for accessing information
- submitting forms and
- interacting with government agencies.

The EU has encouraged:

- **e-participation** initiatives to engage citizens in policy-making processes.
- **cross-border collaboration in the field of e-democracy.**



# Principles of e-democracy

Which is the effect of e-democracy on society?

Inclusiveness

Transparency

Accountability

Civic Education

Accessibility

Participation

Security and  
Privacy

Digital Divide  
Mitigation



# E-Democracy in Italy

We can distinguish among:



**direct e-democracy:**  
which involves citizens in political decisions without the intermediation of elected representatives



**representative e-democracy:**  
which uses digital technologies to select representatives and evaluate their performance.

# E-Democracy in Italy

The Italian government has a centralized approach to its electronic initiatives.



CNIPA (National Center for Public Administration and Informatics)

Responsible for promoting and supporting ICT



e-government



e-democracy



# E-Democracy in Italy

- **2004** : Ministry of State for Innovation and Technology

projects aimed at :



- fostering digital citizenship
- civic participation in territorial administration.



- institutional websites to provide access to public information and
- forums for facilitating public debate

- **2004: Guidelines for E-Democracy**
- **2006:** CNIPA co-funded the first 57 **e-democracy projects** at the local level in Italy
- **Private initiatives:** programmatic websites with the aim of fostering direct and participatory democracy.



# Regional e-participation projects

ioPartecipo+



online platform designed to promote citizen participation and engagement in the decision-making processes of local government.



Partecipa  
Toscana



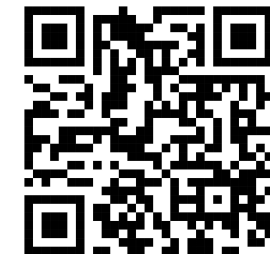
web page that allows public participation and consultation within the regional political system



Comune  
Agrenta



self-financed project, local online political space to engage more the citizens



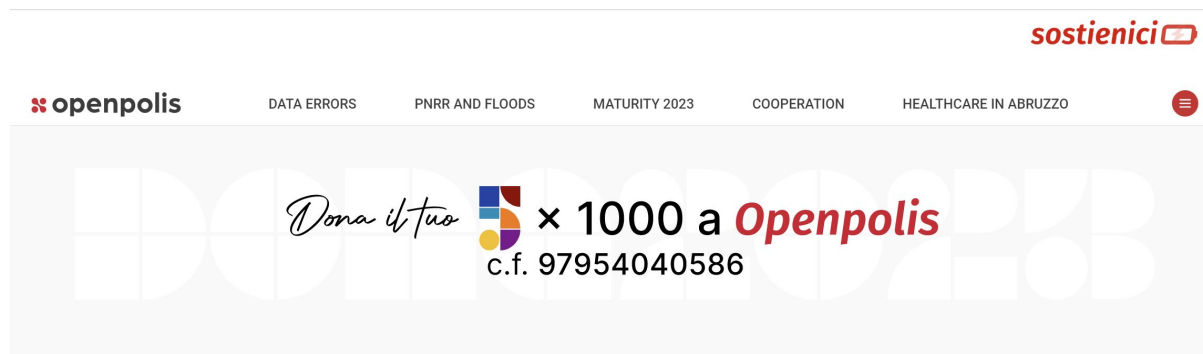


# Openpolis.i

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- independent and **non-profit** organization
- promote **transparency, participation, and accountability in politics**
- **database** of political information and **tools** for civic engagement.



# What are the main problems of E-Democracy in Italy?

- Despite the development of digital technologies, the results of direct electronic democracy have been disappointing. Experiments have remained limited and have not had a significant impact on current liberal democracies.
- Technical problems are one of the main reasons for the failure of direct electronic democracy. The systems developed so far have failed to provide both the political influence of citizens and the security and accessibility necessary for effective participation.
- Another reason is normative and institutional. Current democracies are based on representation, and the introduction of electronic democracy without representation would require complex reform that addresses constitutional and normative issues.

# Summary

## E-democracy:

- refers to the use of electronic communication and technology to facilitate democratic processes.
- is clearly an increasingly common practice.
- It still presents some problems due to technical and normative issues.

In Italy, various online platforms and tools were introduced to encourage citizen participation, including those for participatory budgeting, citizen consultations, and collaborative governance, but it is still in a growing stage.





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# Thank you!