Towards a Crowdsourcing Pilot at the EU Level:
Taking Decisions with Citizens and Not for Them

Presentation by Elisa Lironi

What is Digital Democracy?

⭐ Digital Democracy (or eDemocracy) refers to the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to support democratic decision-making in order to enhance democratic institutions and democratic processes.

⭐ It relates to the online activities of governments (administration, representative
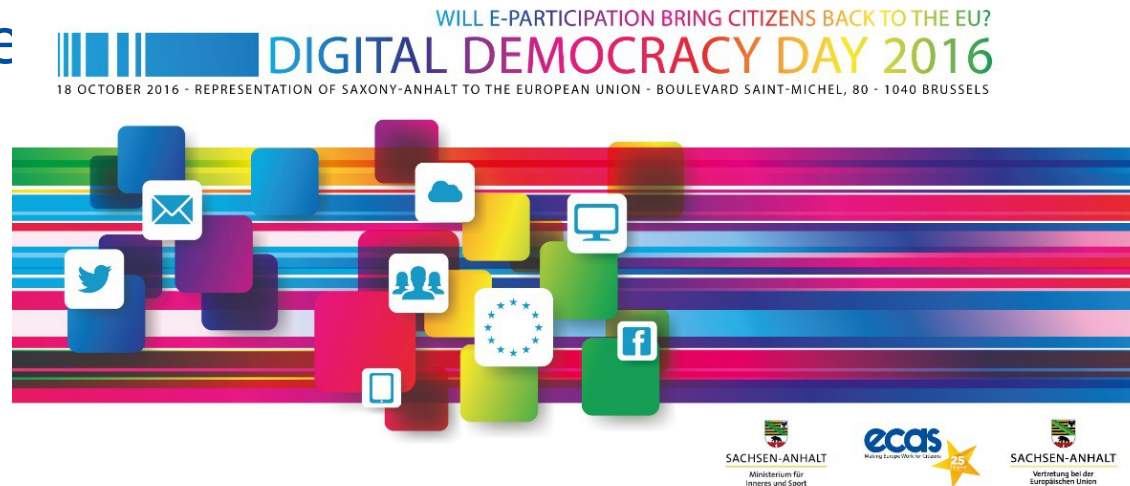
★ Three aspects of E-Democracy

E-Government

E-Transparency

G → **C**

E-Participation

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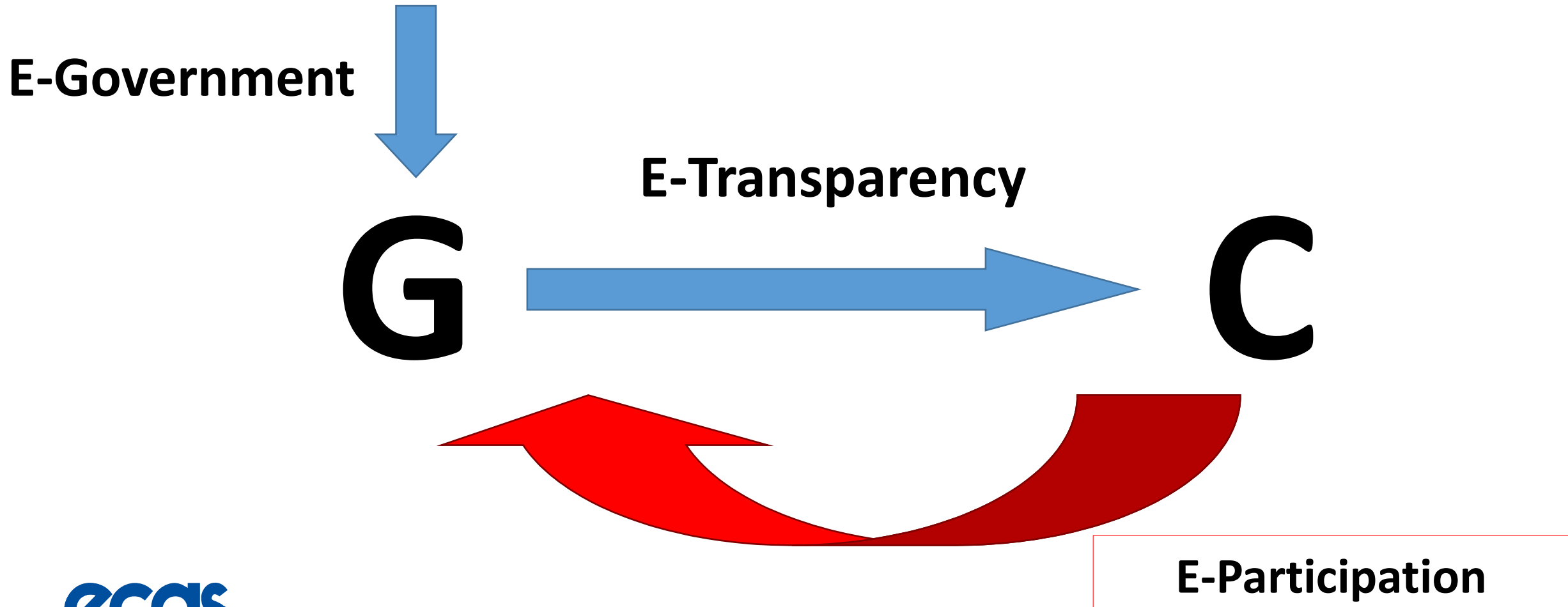
Digital Democracy is <u>NOT</u> meant to replace traditional forms of representative democracy, but rather to complement them by adding <u>elements</u> of citizen empowerment and more direct participation.
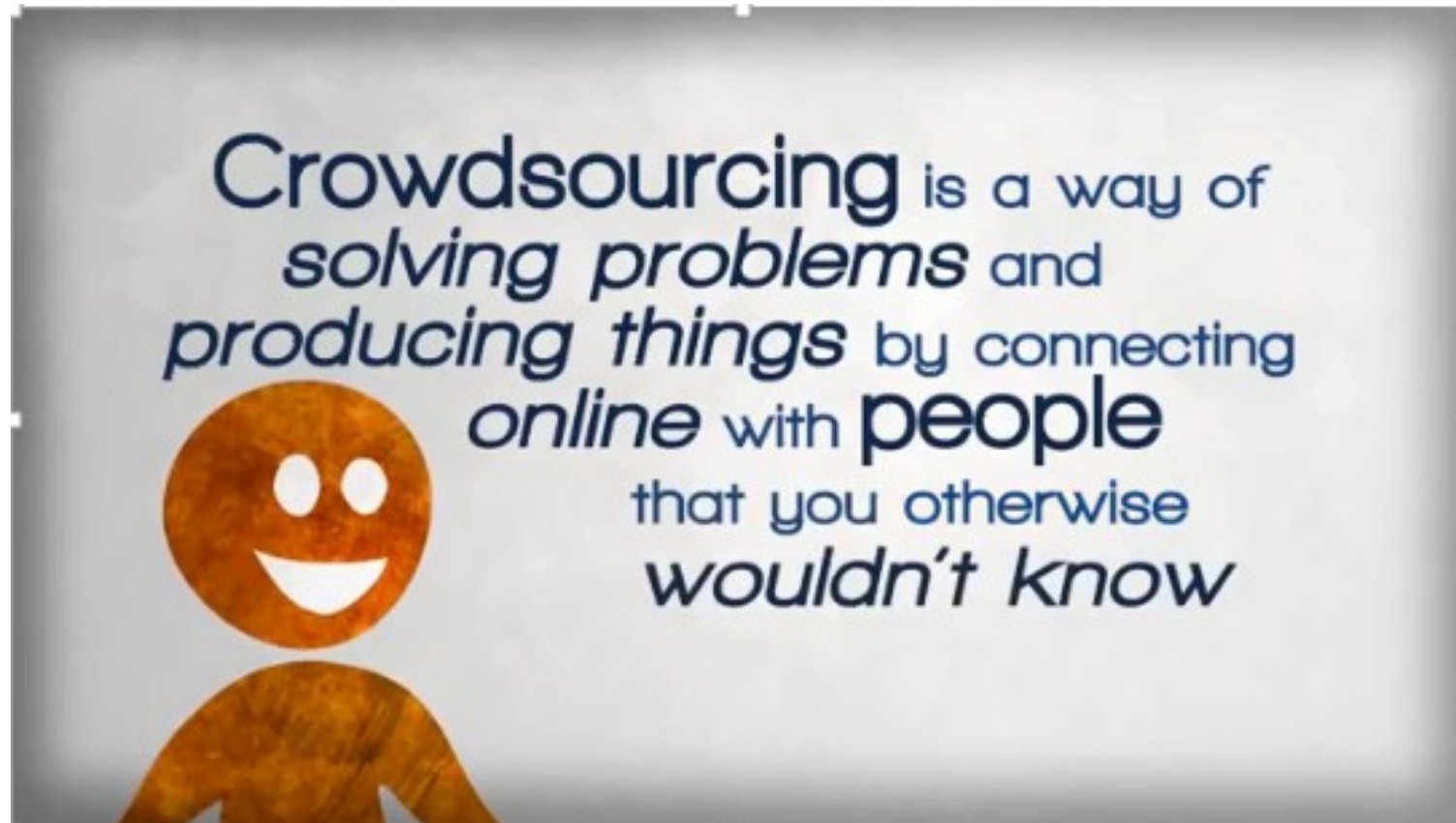
EU E-Participation Tools

★ European Citizens' Initiative

★ Online EU Public Consultations

★ Petitions to the European Parliament

Additional Ways:

★ Projects Co-Funded by the EU ex Puzzled by Policy, DEEP-linking Youth

★ Futurium, DG CONNECT

★ MEPs and E-Participation

Limited in quantity and efficiency!

What is Crowdsourcing?

Crowdsourcing is a way of solving problems and producing things by connecting online with people that you otherwise wouldn't know

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-38uPkyH9vI

Example: Constitutional reform in Iceland

⭐ Step 1: 1000 citizens in a National Forum to explain the values they would want to see in the Icelandic Constitution

⭐ Step 2: 25 citizens in the Constitutional Council to produce a draft constitution to be passed in the Parliament; Openness by social media.

⭐ Step 3: Non-binding referendum, 49% turnout

Ultimately stalled in the Parliament!

27 Cases of Crowdsourcing – *Work in Progress*

Objectives	Considered Successful	Unsuccessful	No Data
Enhanced citizens participation in policy-making	23	0	4
Ensured full representativeness	11	5	11
Engaged youth	11	2	14
Ensured a learning process	16	0	11
Ensured innovative ideas for policy-making based on the 'wisdom of the crowd'	23	1	3
Increased political legitimacy/trust	20	0	7
	18	1	8

The Case for a Crowdsourcing Pilot at EU level

Problem

62% of Europeans believe their voice does not count in the EU.

41% of EU citizens want to influence decision-making directly.

Needs

Effective mechanisms for engaging citizens (including youth, non-formalised and/or non-mainstream civic groups) in the process of co-producing decisions for Europe.

Strategy

Apply the crowdsourcing method as a complementary tool to expand the number of contributors to EU policy-making, remove potential barriers to participaiton and "engage the unengaged" throughout Europe.

Assumptions

- Political 'Window of Opportunity'

- Experience and lessons learnt

- National partners

- EU level alliances

- Potential for engaging youth and the 'unengaged'

Best Practice Research

- A deliberative tool: all contributions publicly available in real-time

- 'Wisdom of the crowd' – hidden expertise revealed

- Strong learning curve

- Increased legitimacy

Influential Factors

- Committed decision-makers

- Informed selection of the subject

- Civil Society support infrastructure (to ensure citizens' awareness and diversity)

1. EU Policy Fields
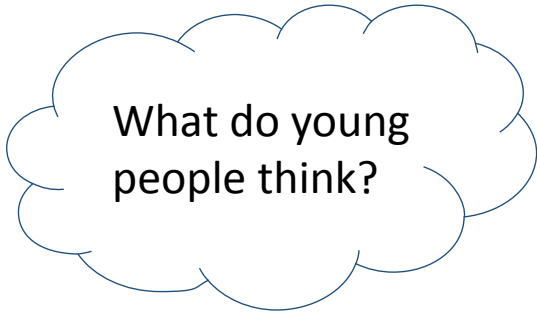
What do young people think?
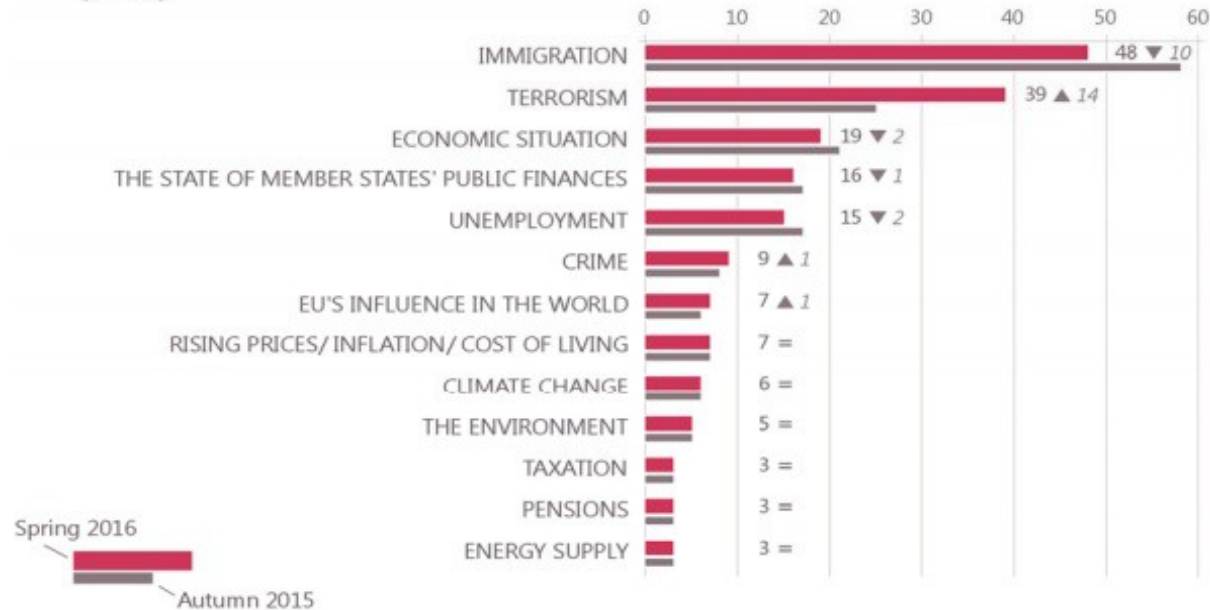

For a future crowdsourcing experience in the EU in which policy sectors do you think it would be feasible?

🔒 Poll locked. Responses not accepted.

Eurobarometer, 2016

QA5 What do you think are the two most important issues facing the EU at the moment? (% - EU)

Issue	Value	
IMMIGRATION	48	▼ 10
TERRORISM	39	▲ 14
ECONOMIC SITUATION	19	▼ 2
THE STATE OF MEMBER STATES' PUBLIC FINANCES	16	▼ 1
UNEMPLOYMENT	15	▼ 2
CRIME	9	▲ 1
EU'S INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD	7	▲ 1
RISING PRICES/ INFLATION/ COST OF LIVING	7	=
CLIMATE CHANGE	6	=
THE ENVIRONMENT	5	=
TAXATION	3	=
PENSIONS	3	=
ENERGY SUPPLY	3	=

Spring 2016
Autumn 2015

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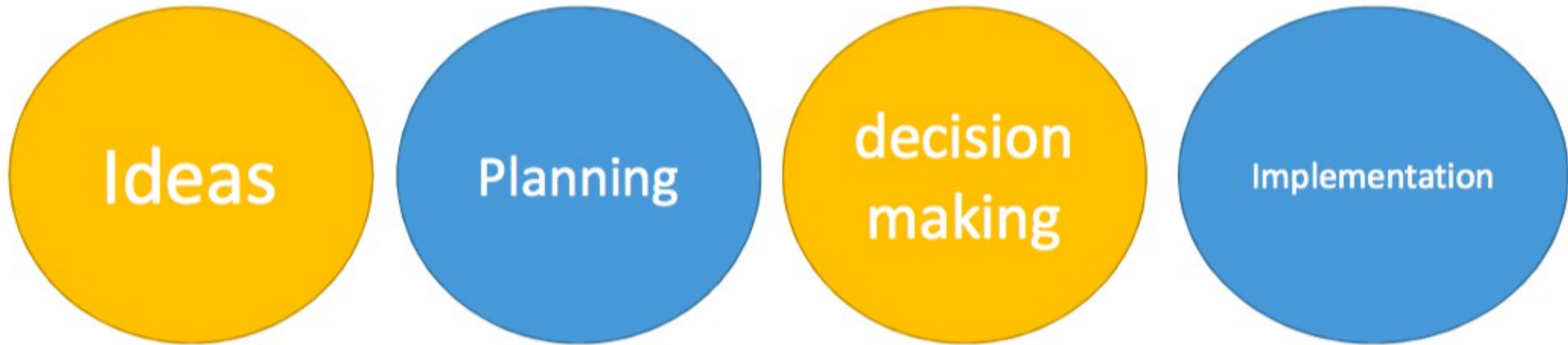
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2. Points of Entry (Timeframe)

3. Technological Platform

4. Civil Society Organisations

Join Us!

Crowdsourcing

What I learned	To be discussed
EU citizens want more influence on decision-making	Would citizens participate more if they had other ways to influence decision-making?
Limits of EU e-participation tools (ECI, consultations…?)	Would crowdsourcing be a good method to involve citizens in EU decision-making?
The 'wisdom of the crowd' can lead to innovative ideas	In which EU policy field could this wisdom be applied? (emotions+reason)

Thank you!

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