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PREVAILING SOCIAL MOBILISATION MODELS AROUND THE WORLD

How political parties and other
organisations strive to engage,
activate and inspire citizens

3.10.2019

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Contents

Preface	4
Summary	5
Tiivistelmä	6
1. Introduction	7
2. Practices of the political parties	9
2.1 Flux	9
2.1.1 Background and operating environment	9
2.1.2 Members and supporters	10
2.1.3 Operating model	10
2.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	10
2.1.5 Deep-dive: practising liquid democracy through the SecureVote application	10
2.2 Momentum	11
2.2.1 Background and operating environment	12
2.2.2 Members and supporters	12
2.2.3 Operating model	12
2.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	13
2.3 Morena (Movimiento Regeneración Nacional)	13
2.3.1 Background and operating environment	13
2.3.2 Members and supporters	14
2.3.3 Operating model	14
2.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	14
2.4 Komeito	14
2.4.1 Background and operating environment	15
2.4.2 Members and supporters	15
2.4.3 Operating model	15
2.4.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	16
2.5 Two-Tailed Dog	17
2.5.1 Background and operating environment	17
2.5.2 Members and supporters	17
2.5.3 Operating model	18
2.5.4. Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	18

3. Practices of non-governmental organisations	19
3.1 Bancada Ativista	19
3.1.1 Background and operating environment	19
3.1.2 Members and supporters	19
3.1.3 Operating model	19
3.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	20
3.1.5 Deep-dive: The practicalities of collective representation in Sao Paulo	21
3.2 Dziewuchy Dziewuchom (Gals for Gals)	22
3.2.1 Background and operating environment	22
3.2.2 Members and supporters	22
3.2.3 Operating model	22
3.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	23
3.3 Sverok	23
3.3.1 Background and operating environment	23
3.3.2 Members and supporters	23
3.3.3 Operating model	24
3.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	24
4. The Practices of digital platforms	25
4.1 Accropolis	25
4.1.1 Background and operating environment	25
4.1.2 Members and supporters	25
4.1.3 Operating model	25
4.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	26
4.1.5 Deep-dive: using Twitch for political dialogue	26
4.2 Citizens	27
4.2.1 Background and operating environment	28
4.2.2 Members and supporters	28
4.2.3 Operating model	28
4.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	29
4.2.5 Deep-dive: adapting the use of participatory platforms on different organisational levels	29
4.3 Countable	30
4.3.1 Background and operating environment	30
4.3.2 Members and supporters	31
4.3.3 Operating model	31
4.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	31

4.4 Rahvaalgatus	32
4.4.1 Background and operating environment	32
4.4.2 Members and supporters	32
4.4.3 Operating model	32
4.4.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	33
4.5 Voulivatch	33
4.5.1 Background and operating environment	33
4.5.2 Members and supporters	33
4.5.3 Operating model	33
4.5.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring	34
5. Summary of the results	35
5.1 Practices of the political parties	35
5.2 Practices of the non-governmental organisations	35
5.3 Practices of the platforms	36
5.4 Conclusion	37
6. Appendix	39
APPENDIX 1 – Summary of the main findings	39
APPENDIX 2 – Interview template	42

Preface

The foundations of democracy are creaking at the seams all over the world. The fast-changing world is testing the public's trust in representative democracy, decision-makers and political parties. Political parties are either at a turning point or have already changed considerably in Europe and the United States.

International phenomena land in Finland typically with some delay. Therefore, it is high time for Finnish political-party operators to consider how to reinvent themselves if they wish to remain operational and up to date when it comes to political engagement, decision-making and politics.

One of the key problems for democracy is that political parties are viewed as being distant from the daily lives of citizens and have moved from being political movements to becoming an integrated part of governmental machinery. In the study represented in this memorandum, the focal objective is to answer the question "How can political decision-making be brought closer to citizens and how can citizens engage in decision-making easier?"

One of the key focus areas in Sitra's Updating democracy project is bettering the conditions for the engagement of citizens in the development of political parties' operations.

Sitra presents this international overview to provide benchmark information to support the development of political parties. This overview attempts to ponder the type of practices that political parties can use to reinvent themselves. Deloitte conducted the study.

Sitra chose the organisations presented in this report. The study on the engagement and activation practices of political parties and other organisations was conducted with phone interviews and based on information collected from the websites of the organisations. Some other material has been used for certain organisations, such as news articles or poll results.

ANTTI KIVELÄ

Director

Capacity for renewal, Sitra

Summary

The purpose of this report is to introduce international benchmarks to support the development of the functioning of Finnish political parties.

The organisations interviewed for this study fall into three categories: political parties, non-governmental organisations and online platforms. Different innovative concepts and practices, which directly link to the moulding of the political process, are discussed in the interviews that cover all the different categories.

The case studies were used to approach the topic while taking into account the operational environment and history of the political parties, organisations and digital platforms that were part of the study. The aim of the study is to map and understand the popularity and key principles and conditions of these innovative organisations, movements and “tribes”. To reach this aim, the elements that influence these movements’ popularity have been studied. This has included understanding the reasons for the behaviour of social movements and identifying the mechanisms and channels used to succeed.

The main source of information has been phone interviews held between April and June 2019. The interviews discussed the organisations’ history, purpose and organisational structure. The interviews attempt to find out the hidden features behind the organisations’ success, and the practices employed for engagement and communication. Some further in-depth interviews were held between May and June 2019.

In the study of the political parties, the ideas discussed related to opposing the current system and offering options to the establishment. The parties under analysis are attempting to move away from the mould of electoral parties in which supporters only express their opinions on the party’s actions by voting in an election. Numerous different ways to engage with supporters were explored, some based on new technological methods and others that were more traditional in their approach. The most central feature is being able to be in constant communication. Supporters of a party can lead the party’s operations and can impact the strategic course the party is taking.

The organisations have the opportunity to act in the most innovative manners in a political setting because the general task of non-governmental organisations is to influence their surroundings and specifically influence society. NGOs can focus on one core interest and work around that one interest, unlike political parties, and can thus stretch the manners and forms of engagement further than political parties. The operations of political parties have moved much closer to those of NGOs.

A number of the studied digital platforms were originally designed to be used by young people. However, the digitisation of engagement does not automatically guarantee the participation of young people. This requires using digital channels that users are already present on and integrating engagement to be part of their current social media behaviour. Another important finding was that popular social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram, can work as the right platforms for the flow of information and unofficial forms of engaging people, but they work unfavourably for providing platforms for meaningful political debate or crowdsourcing.

The case examples of the study include very innovative solutions as well as solutions that are already integrated into some official decision-making processes. A case example that combines these two attributes, in which an innovative solution already has a settled place, was not found.

Tiivistelmä

Puolue- ja järjestötoiminnan malleja maailmalla -työn tavoitteena oli tuottaa benchmark-tietoa hyödynnettäväksi suomalaisten puolue toimijoiden toiminnan kehittämisessä.

Työhön haastatellut organisaatiot voidaan jaotella kolmeen kategoriaan: puolueet, järjestöt ja alustat. Haastatteluissa kaikista organisaatiokategorioista esiin nousi erilaisia innovatiivisia käytäntöjä tai konsepteja, jotka linkittyvät suoraan poliittisen päätöksentekoprosessin muokkaamiseen.

Aihepiiriä lähestyttiin tapaustutkimusten kautta, huomioiden katsauksen kohteena toimineiden puolueiden, järjestöjen ja digitaalisten alustojen toimintaympäristö ja historia. Katsauksen tavoitteena on kartoittaa ja ymmärtää innovatiivisten järjestöjen, kansanliikkeiden tai ”heimojen” suosion ja toiminnan avaimia ja edellytyksiä. Tämän toteuttamiseksi tavoitteena on tutkia monialaisesti niitä elementtejä, jotka vaikuttavat kansanliikkeiden menestykseen. Tähän kuuluvat olennaisesti kansanliikkeiden käytöksen ymmärtäminen sekä osallistumisen mekanismien ja kanavien tunnistaminen.

Pääasiallisena tietolähteenä toimineet haastattelut toteutettiin puhelimitse puolistrukturoidusti huhti–kesäkuussa 2019. Haastattelussa käytiin läpi muun muassa järjestön historiaa, tarkoitusta ja organisoitumistapaa. Haastattelussa pyrittiin selvittämään myös järjestön menestymisen taustalla olevia erityispiirteitä sekä järjestön osallistamisen ja viestinnän käytäntöjä. Jatkoanalyysi toteutettiin neljästä organisaatiosta. Näiden osalta toteutettiin syventävät haastattelut touko–kesäkuussa 2019.

Selvityksessä tarkastelluissa puolueissa nousivat esiin ajatukset järjestelmän vastaisuudesta ja vaihtoehtojen tarjoamisesta valtapuolueita kohtaan. Analysoidut puolueet pyrkivät pois perinteisen ”vaalipuolueen” muotista, jossa puolueen kannattajat lähinnä ilmaisevat tukensa puolueelle vaaleissa äänestämällä. Puolueen kannattajien jatkuvaan vaikuttamiseen ja osallistumiseen on luotu erinäisiä teknologisia ja perinteisempiä ratkaisuja. Keskeisintä näissä on jatkuvan kommunikation mahdollisuus. Puolueen kannattajat voivat etukäteen ohjata puolueen toimintaa ja puolueen kannattajille on merkityksellistä päästä vaikuttamaan puolueen strategiseen suuntaan.

Selvityksessä tarkastelluissa järjestötoimijoille leimallista oli mahdollisuus toimia kaikkein innovatiivisimmin, sillä järjestöjen perustehtävään kuuluu yleisesti laajakantainen ja erityinen yhteiskunnallinen vaikuttaminen. Järjestöt voivat keskittyä yhteen asiaan ja yhden asian kannattamiseen toisin kuin puolueet, ja voivat venyttää osallistamisen muotoja ja tapoja pidemmälle kuin rekisteröidyt puolueet. Puolueiden toiminnan voikin nähdä lähentyneen järjestötoimintaa.

Selvityksessä tarkastellut digitaaliset alustat on alun perin suunnattu nuorten käyttöön. On kuitenkin huomattu, että osallistamisen digitalisoiminen ei takaa nuorten osallistumista. Selvityksen perusteella voidaan kuitenkin olettaa, että nuorten aktivoimiseksi on tärkeää hyödyntää niitä digitaalisia kanavia, joilla nuoret ovat jo valmiiksi läsnä ja näin integroida osallistaminen osaksi heidän nykyistä mediakäyttäytymistään. Toinen havainto on, että perinteiset sosiaalisen median kanavat kuten Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat ja Instagram, ovat hyviä alustoja tiedottamiseen ja ihmisten epäviralliseen osallistamiseen, mutta epäsuotuisia merkitykselliseen poliittiseen keskusteluun tai tavoitteelliseen joukkouttamiseen.

Selvityksen case-esimerkkien joukossa on sekä hyvin innovatiivisia ratkaisuja että ratkaisuja, jotka on jo saatu kiinnitettyä varsin hyvin osaksi ”virallista” päätöksentekoa. Case-esimerkkiä, jossa nämä kaksi ominaisuutta olisi jo saatu yhdistettyä, eli jossa innovatiivinen ratkaisu olisi jo nyt vakiinnuttanut paikkansa, ei kuitenkaan tämän selvitystyön puitteissa löytynyt.

1. Introduction

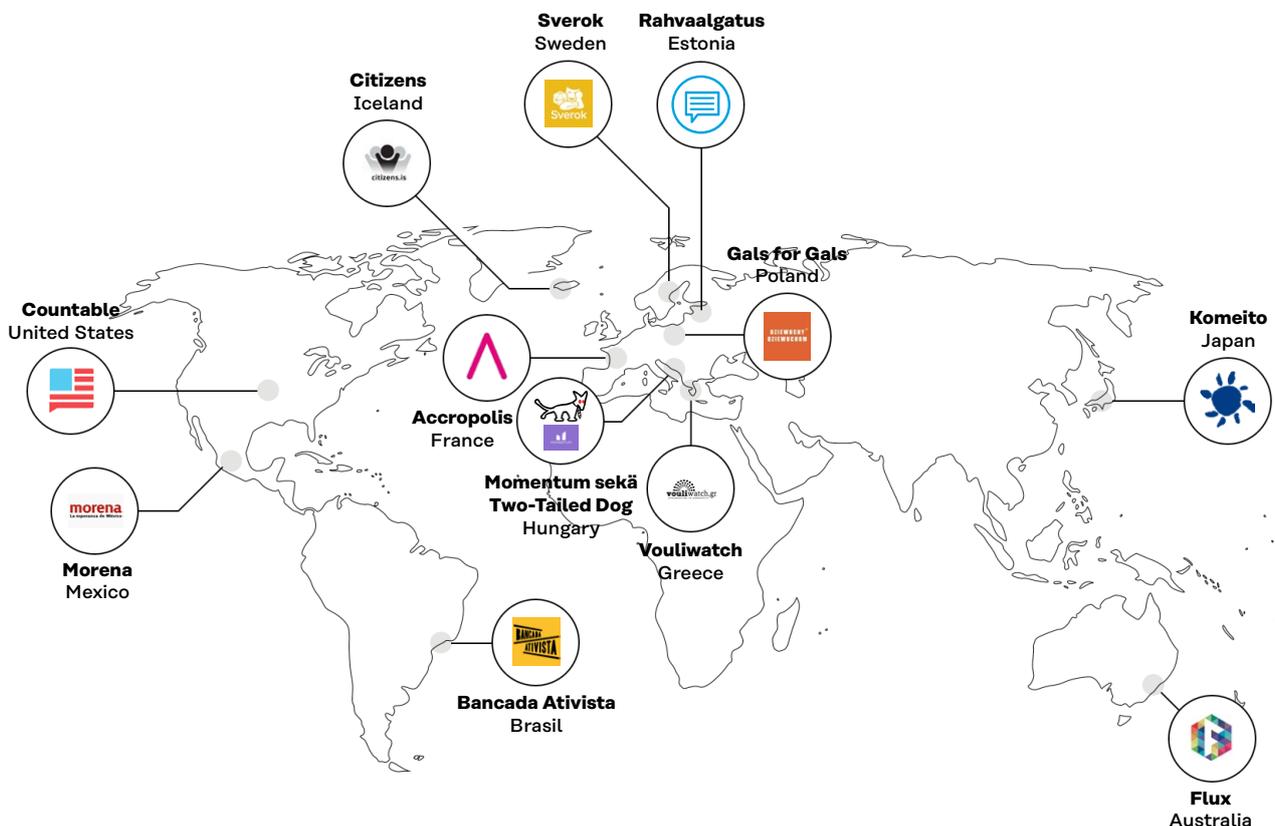
In 2017, the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra conducted a study on the ability of the Finnish decision-making system and administration to cope with future challenges, particularly from the point of view of democracy. For the study, Sitra interviewed more than 100 key influencers from central and local government, Parliament, the government, political parties, interest groups and the business sector. The results were published in February 2018 in the working paper “Updating Democracy”.

Following the study, Sitra launched the Updating Democracy project with the aim of strengthening Finland’s position as a model democratic country with a capacity for renewal.

One of the goals of the project is to improve silo-less co-operation in all decision-making based on representational democracy (state, regions and local authorities). For this goal to be achieved, reforms are required in the operating practices of political decision-making and civil servant administration and in their mutual relationship.

The project focuses on national decision-making and state administration, supporting especially the renewal of operating practices of Parliament and the government in co-operation with appropriate actors.

FIGURE 1. ORGANISATIONS ANALYSED IN THIS MEMORANDUM



The ability of the political parties, the key operators in a democracy, to carry out long-term programme work and maintain a dialogue with voters has declined. The project aims to work together with the parties to reinforce and renew their capacity to work at the national, regional and municipal levels.

The project supports the development of different operators in a representational democracy and the efforts to strengthen people's opportunities to participate and exert influence.

As part of the Updating Democracy project, Sitra identified the need to carry out a study of the operating practices of political parties and other societal organisations and popular movements around the world to identify innovative operating models and good practices.

This study looks at the practices and plans that 13 organisations chosen by Sitra use to engage their members and supporters.

To identify innovative operators, Sitra asked the Unit for Policy Planning and Research of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to send a request for action to all Finnish missions in the OECD countries. The missions were requested to present their views and provide help in obtaining material for a preliminary study. The missions from 17 different countries responded, providing examples of dozens of interesting organisations from across the world. Based on this comprehensive preliminary study and its own background work, Sitra selected the most interesting organisations to be studied by Deloitte.

A wide range of political parties, non-governmental organisations and digital platforms from different countries were selected as target organisations for the study. Organisations identified as innovative operators by Sitra were chosen for a case study. Further analyses were carried out on one political party, one non-governmental organisation and two digital platforms. Interviews conducted with members of the target organisations were the main source of information for the study.

This report describes the objectives, the method of implementation and the results of that international study. The study was completed in June 2019 and was implemented by Deloitte. **Lauri Byckling, Lia Heasman, Pekka Aavikko** and **Ella Tolonen** from Deloitte participated in writing the report.

2. Practices of the political parties

This chapter introduces five political parties that have in one way or another contributed towards improving political activity in their country. The analysis includes details of the background and operational environment, the support base and the operating models of the featured organisations. Based on this, a list of central findings relating to the organisations' methods is included at the end of each case study.

2.1 Flux

Country: Australia

Year of foundation: In 2016 registered as a political party

Ideology: Liquid democracy

Number of members: 8,680 (as of 31 May 2019)

Endorsement: 0.15 % (the share of votes required in the senate's elections in 2016)

Seats: Flux does not occupy seats in the parliament

2.1.1 Background and operating environment

Australia has a bicameral parliamentary system with two houses. The House of Representatives consists of 150 seats whose occupants are elected every three years. The Senate has 76 seats and the occupants are elected from the Australian states and the autonomous internal territories for a six-year period. Only half of the Senate's seats are elected with each parliamentary election round, resulting in a revolving election system.

The members of parliament are elected through a preferential voting system, in which the voter must disclose their preferential order of candidates. When voting for the Senate's members, one is also allowed to vote for a party. The election system has resulted in a situation in which big parties occupy the majority of the seats, especially in the lower house, and the minor parties have mainly succeeded in sending representatives to the Senate. Since 2013, Australia has been governed by a central-right coalition of the liberal and liberal-conservative parties. The coalition lost its majority in October 2018 but has kept power with a minority government.

In a study conducted in 2014, only 56 per cent of Australians believed that their vote mattered. The foundation of Flux, a political party as well as a political civil movement, has been fuelled by the growing discontent with the rule of the two-party system in the House of Representatives.

2.1.2 Members and supporters

Flux's website contains real-time data on its member base. In May 2019 Flux had 8,680 members and the party has experienced 17% monthly growth since 2015. The majority of the members are between 25 and 39 years old, even though a group of middle-aged supporters is also prominent. The members represent the whole spectrum of political ideologies, connected by the desire to change the political culture and reduce polarisation.

2.1.3 Operating model

Flux aims to change the political system of Australia to adopt the principles of liquid democracy, which combines direct democracy with representational politics. In a liquid democracy, the voters can themselves choose to vote on issues and bills or delegate their votes automatically to another person, such as a professional politician. Flux believes that this system would improve the citizen's prospects for participating in the decision-making process, decrease the influence of political interest groups, enable the improved use of expert knowledge and avoid the potential polarising effects of direct democracy.

Flux does not have any specific ideological goals when it comes to politics, but the civil movement and the party are completely devoted to renewing the system. Flux strives to do so from the inside out and has tried to gain a seat in parliament in order to perform liquid democracy through it. The idea is that the politicians who get elected through Flux pledge to act and vote in accordance with the members of Flux. The members could express their opinions through a mobile application, currently under construction by a company established by Flux. Through the app, the members could be able to either actively themselves vote on all the issues coming to vote in parliament or delegate their votes to whomever other Flux members may want. It is, however, possible that the system would enforce the formation of different agenda groups within the party.

Membership of the party is free and the idea is that the app would also be freely available for all Australians to use. Flux does not plan to extend the application beyond a simple voting tool, for example, to a larger political social media platform, due to the ideological non-alignment of the party. Flux hopes to properly integrate the principle of liquid democracy into the current political system and afterwards extend the new political system to a larger societal level (see 4.1.5.)

2.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Flux is a movement against two-party politics. The aim is to create a sophisticated voting system that strikes a balance between direct and representational democracy.
2. The party's website provides real-time data on its members and on the donations received. This type of communication enforces openness and transparency, which are fundamental building blocks for building trust in political institutions.
3. Currently, a central goal for Flux is to increase awareness and improve understanding of the functioning of the country's current voting system. The party believes that the voters do not fully grasp how the preferential voting system shapes the political system and helps the big parties to remain in power.

2.1.5 Deep-dive: practising liquid democracy through the SecureVote application

The people behind Flux have established a company that is currently developing an application to support the functioning of liquid democracy – SecureVote. The app is currently under construction and its source code is publicly available at GitHub.

Through SecureVote, the members of Flux can express their opinions and communicate to their representative how to vote on a certain issue. The central function of the application is to account for all the votes available for a given issue, which is determined by the number of Flux members, and create a sophisticated voting tool based on the availability of votes and members' willingness to vote on a given issue. The members can themselves choose to vote or abstain from voting or delegate their votes to other people. For example, one could automatically delegate all the environmental issues to an environmental scientist. Thus, the members can choose to follow and participate in the decision-making to their own liking and interests. It is likely that a group of professional politicians would also be formed within the system. However, a central distinguishing factor from the current representative politics is the notion that in liquid democracy these politicians would have a say only as long as the voters willingly delegate their votes to them. This type of system might increase the speed at which professional politicians or issue-based experts circulate, but, on the other hand, may keep the well-liked people in power for longer (without constant electoral campaigns), which might force politicians to be more focused on building their expertise rather than seeking media coverage.

The voting system described functions similar to a market system. Each member or voter would automatically gain one vote for each issue, which represents a token. The vote token can be directly used by the member to vote on that specific issue, exchanged with another person on the promise that that person votes on your behalf on that given issue or stored for later to buy votes for other issues from those who have abstained from direct or indirect voting. A distinctive feature of the voting mechanisms is this potential of accumulating one's voting capital, unheard in traditional direct democracy. However, the system has a built-in inflation mechanism that means the value of unused tokens will decrease over time, discouraging storing of tokens for a long period. This mechanism creates an opportunity cost between the different issues and therefore steers the people to vote for issues that they are most invested in or are experts on. On the other hand, the mechanism also recognises one does not have to have an interest in or expertise on every issue, which Flux expects to improve the overall quality of decision-making compared to direct democracy. In addition to voting, SecureVote can also be used to support other political activity, such as the formation of new bills. When linked to the token system these functions could help boost collaboration and further improve people's political participation.

As Secure Vote is still under development and the liquid democracy method created by Flux has still not been properly deployed, many aspects remain uncertain and are prone to change as the system is further developed. For instance, the length of each voting period and how the value of the tokens fluctuates exactly are still to be determined. Flux expects to launch the Secure Vote application when the party gains its first seat in a political institution. The organisation's hypothesis is that about two thirds of members will refrain from voting on a regular basis, preferring to delegate their votes to others. However, members can at any point they want wrest back direct control over their votes or redirect them, which would be likely to increase the reliability of the system.

2.2 Momentum

Country: Hungary

Year of foundation: 2017

Ideology: Liberal, political centre

Number of members: 2,600

Endorsement: 2018 national election 3.06%, 2019 EU parliament elections 9.93%

Seats: 0/199 in the national parliament, 2/21 in the EU parliament, 0/419 in local government

2.2.1 Background and operating environment

Momentum is a Hungarian organisation that became known for its 2017 campaign NOlympia. Momentum opposed the government's plan to apply to host the costly Olympic Games in 2024 without considering the opinion of the people and started NOlympia to mobilise Hungarians against these plans. In a mere month, Momentum collected 266,000 signatures for their petition that required a referendum on the topic. The campaign gained a lot of attention on social media and was fuelled by nearly a thousand volunteers that supported the campaign around Hungary. Consequently, the government withdrew its plans to apply for hosting the Olympic Games.

After the successful campaign, Momentum registered as a party and started preparing for the 2018 national elections. The party aspires to be a new political force that genuinely represents the people, with the ambition to be a serious alternative to Fidesz and to bring a new political era to Hungary.

2.2.2 Members and supporters

Before officially registering as a party, Momentum was a loose network of about a hundred young politically enlightened individuals. Today, the party's members are composed mainly of the same demographic of the young and highly educated. About 70% of the members are men. The main motivation to join Momentum is to belong to a community through which one can support alternative politics and influence political decision-making, directly or indirectly. Roughly, 800 to 900 of the 2,500 members are actively participating in Momentum's operations.

New members normally find out about Momentum through traditional media, social media or through personal connections. The party also actively campaigns on the streets to gain support for their issues and simultaneously strives to recruit new members. One can become a member through the Momentum website. The only requirements are to pay the membership fee (three euros per month) and to participate in a 20-minute phone interview. The purpose of the interview is to get an idea of the person's political views and beliefs to ensure that they are compatible with the ideology of Momentum, as well as to go over the practicalities of the membership. New members can either join an already existing chapter or establish a new one.

2.2.3 Operating model

Outside election periods, Momentum's number one priority is the creation of new chapters. The party has two strategies for this: diffusing large chapters into smaller entities and recruiting new members from chapter-less areas. Recruitment in new areas usually consists of short promotion campaigns by local members. The campaigns include campaigning on the streets and on social media, as well as hosting a relaxed social event such as Grab a Beer with Momentum.

To establish a new chapter, a minimum of three people must be involved. Then a chair and two vice-chairs must be chosen from among the participants. In practice, however, Momentum does not have any chapters with fewer than 10 people involved. The chapters are supported and trained by the party's head office on topics such as community building.

Momentum centres its operations around the people and with the purpose of building a political community. The party organises communal activities at both the local and national level. Several of these activities take place annually, such as the March for Europe demonstration and the Picnic with the Voters spring event. Fun and easy-going events like pub nights and camping events bring an important balance to the issue-oriented and official gatherings. There is

a lower threshold for both the new and old members for participating in these events, which can act as a gateway to further engagement. Momentum's head office also focuses on supporting networking and collaboration between the local chapters.

The members of Momentum are, in addition to being appointed to their respected chapters, also partially assembled according to different political agenda, such as the LGBT rights. The members can thus concentrate on steering the issues that they feel most passionate about. Through both the chapters and the issue groups, the members of Momentum can influence the party's operations and political direction and escalate ideas and motions to the head office. Momentum does yet not have an established mechanism for crowdsourcing ideas from its member base but aspires to foster co-development both in its official and unofficial gatherings. Most of the organisation's internal communication takes place on Facebook, although some chapters also use the Slack or BaseCamp applications. Momentum's operations are still limited by Hungary's political-financial model, as only parties with representatives in the parliament are entitled to receive state funding.

2.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

4. Momentum wants to present itself as a political channel for young Hungarians through which they can network with like-minded others, have an impact and participate in decision-making. The party is defined by anti-system thinking.
5. The members of the party have good opportunities for directly influencing decision-making and the political direction of the party. Momentum actively seeks to further grow its membership and support network and to establish new chapters that support active political participation. Members are also expected to participate in communal activities rather than just official political work.
6. Momentum aspires to remain close to voters and be part of their daily lives, with the intent of creating a safe political community that can support and further the creation of a new and transparent political culture in Hungary.

2.3 Morena (Movimiento Regeneración Nacional)

Country: Mexico

Year of foundation: 2011, registered as a party in 2014

Ideology: Left-wing populism

Estimated number of members: 320,000

Endorsement: 37.5% (senate elections 2018)

Seats: 285/500 in the lower house, 65/129 in the Senate, 4/32 of governors, 378/1123 in local authorities, 335 of 2011 mayors

2.3.1 Background and operating environment

Mexico has a long history of power being in the hands of one party – the Partido Nacional Revolucionario (PRI). The party was often accused of manipulating election results and thus during its rule both political and economic unrest shook Mexico, often around election time. In 2000, an opposition presidential candidate rose to power, which many consider being the beginning of Mexico's democratic era.

López Obrador started a political movement called Movimiento Regeneración Nacional, the predecessor of Morena, in 2011. At first, the movement operated across different political parties and supported López Obrador in his 2012 presidential candidacy. The movement transformed into a social democratic political party in 2014. The Morena party has been directly associated with its founder, who in 2017 became the party's first presidential candidate

and in 2018 won the presidential elections with over 50% support. The 2018 elections were one of the most violent in the history of Mexico, with over 100 political murders within the 10-month campaign period. Today, Morena has a majority both in the lower and upper houses of the parliament.

The central themes of the party include anti-corruption and bridging the income gaps, especially in the public sector. Morena has portrayed itself as a new political alternative to the ones in power and repeatedly underlined the problem of corruption as the single biggest issue to solve. The party has been characterised as populist because of its rhetoric and communication methods.

2.3.2 Members and supporters

Morena's supporters are "ordinary Mexicans", who come from all around the country and different income groups.

2.3.3 Operating model

Morena engages and informs its supporters mostly through traditional communication channels, for example through a party paper that it distributes door to door with the help of volunteers. On social media, Morena's former chair and Mexico's current president López Obrador has addressed his followers on a variety of topics and, for example, during the elections uploaded a video greeting on Facebook every few days.

The party's central thesis is that Mexico ultimately only has one core problem, which is corruption. Obrador has stuck with this simple and easily understandable narrative and consistently repeated it for years on his long tours around the country.

Morena wants to give power back to the people of Mexico and increase transparency in decision-making. As an example, the party organised, together with the Arturo Rosenblueth organisation, an unofficial referendum on the disputed construction plans for Mexico City's airport. The plans were condemned for corruption and their environmental impact, but Morena's referendum was also criticised for being organised inside the presidential party and not through the official channels. A million people voted in the referendum, which resulted in what was claimed to be the biggest infrastructure development plan in the whole of Latin America being aborted.

2.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

Morena's organisational structures were designed to be light, which supports more transparency and flexibility and allows for improved communication. One of López Obrador's aspirations is to be close to the voters, leading him to establish direct contact with all 300 electoral districts and their political influencers. This contact has ensured that Obrador can efficiently mobilise people across Mexico.

2.4 Komeito

Country: Japan

Year of foundation: 1964

Ideology: Conservative/political centre

Religion: Soka Gakkai

Estimated number of members: 440,000

Endorsement: 12.51% in the 2017 parliamentary election

Seats: 29/465 in the lower house, 25/242 in the Senate, 206/2614 in prefectures, 2735/30 101 in local authorities

2.4.1 Background and operating environment

Komeito is a Japanese political party that focuses on the thematic areas of peace and well-being and strives for transparency, fairness and true democracy in politics and its own operations. The party has its roots in a Buddhist Soka Gakkai group and is today part of Japan's coalition government.

Voting activity is moderately low and is often only around 50%. Similarly, affiliation with political parties remains low. The country has never had a national referendum even though it is permitted. Komeito strives to bring politics closer to the voters and in particular activate the younger generations to take part in decision-making.

2.4.2 Members and supporters

Komeito has about a quarter of a million members of which a little over half are women. Young people, defined by Komeito as anyone under the age of 40, account for about 23%. The only prerequisite for membership is an age limit of 20-years in Japan. One does not have to be a Japanese citizen to join, for instance. New members often find Komeito through the activities organised by local chapters, although digital recruiting channels are also used.

The party was originally formed around the religious group Soka Gakkai, but it has since spread and diffused outside the members of this group. Buddhist principles still strongly guide Komeito's operations and political direction; however, the party highlights its dedication to religious freedom and does not, for example, ask its members about their religious affiliation.

2.4.3 Operating model

Komeito's politics are anthropocentric, which also reflects their ambition to engage more people in political decision-making. The party works in close collaboration with many non-governmental organisations to ensure that the social issues relevant to the Japanese are addressed in the party programme. As an example, Komeito's collaboration with an NGO that focused on the treatment and prevention of leukaemia eventually led Japan to accept new treatment methods and thus improve the conditions of those affected with the disease.

The party communicates with and engages its members through traditional printed media and assemblies, as well as different digital tools. Komeito's party paper, which is circulated to around 800,000 households, is published daily. In recent years, however, the party has focused on improving its presence on several social media channels and YouTube.

Komeito has its own application, Komei Appuri, which is especially designed to share information with party members. The application combines all the digital and social media channels Komeito uses and works parallel to its website. It is also possible to follow individual Komeito politicians through the app. This, however, requires that the politicians themselves share information on some digital channel whose content is then linked to the application. Komeito does not publish data on users but has revealed that since the renewal of the app in early 2019, the number of users has grown by 20%.

On YouTube, Komeito live-streams podcasts on a weekly basis. These podcasts are often about the party's public briefings, where the leadership discusses relevant political issues, the party's recent achievements and plans. Komeito uses podcasts because information can then reach its target group in real time. Each podcast has approximately 20,000 followers who are mainly Komeito members active in party's operations. Komeito's podcasts could thus be perceived as an internal information channel, which simultaneously contributes towards more transparency and allows those outside the party to follow its operations. The social media group responsible for streaming the podcasts does not directly respond to the comments sent

by viewers, but they document the general reactions and ideas posed and later deliver these to the party leaders.

For internal communication, Komeito's primary channel is Line, which is a WhatsApp-like application. The party strives to actively engage with its members and can through the application send messages and information rapidly to the people in their communication channel.

In 2016 Komeito organised a noteworthy direct-democracy experiment called the Voice Action campaign. In this campaign, the party offered its members the chance to decide on a new policy issue it would adapt as part of its governmental agenda. Voice Action was particularly aimed at addressing the low turnouts in the polls and the low levels of participation of Japanese voters in politics. The campaign was composed of two steps: background research and a public vote. During the background research, Komeito mapped the most important political issues and themes among its youth members. Then, based on these findings, Komeito, together with some of its youth members, created five policy proposals on which the members of Komeito could vote. Although the policy proposals were based on the ideas of the youth members, the vote was open to all party members and nearly everyone registered their vote. The voting took place on paper, not digitally, in an uncontrolled environment. Active members of Komeito and the youth section distributed the voting papers within their close circle. Such a high participation rate can partially be explained by the personal connections involved and the associated social pressure – for example, parents will not decline to vote if their children bring home voting papers and ask them to participate.

Above all else, the Voice Action campaign functioned as a feedback channel through which the leadership of Komeito gained direct information on the ideas of the party members and the issues they find most relevant. Although the campaign had an official winning policy, the other policies were later integrated into Komeito's agenda. The Voice Action campaign gave younger voters a positive political participation experience. Komeito is currently designing another direct-democracy campaign comparable to Voice Action that it plans to execute in the future.

2.4.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. The communication between Komeito's leadership and local chapters partially takes place through a public channel. Although the local leaders mostly follow the podcasts, the transparent and direct communication has a positive unifying influence between the members and leaders of the party.
2. The goal of the Voice Action campaign was to not only map and better understand the opinions and ideas of its members on major political themes but also to demonstrate that these opinions matter and are listened to by Komeito. A democratic voting process in which participation is made easy for members is a great way to prove to the members that they have a say.
3. The collaboration with non-governmental organisations ensures that topics that are important and issue-specific can be considered in the party's operations and agenda. Komeito considers this collaboration to be a fundamental building block of participatory politics.

2.5 Two-Tailed Dog

Country: Hungary

Year of foundation: as a political party in 2014, but the organisation has been active since 2006

Estimated number of members: 2,000

Endorsement: 1.73% in the parliamentary election of 2018

Seats: 0/199 in the national parliament, 0/21 in the European parliament, 0/419 in local authorities

2.5.1 Background and operating environment

Two-Tailed Dog is Hungarian opposition party whose political action originally began from exhibiting satirical societal art in public spaces. Two-Tailed Dog's first public art campaign addressed the dirtiness of Hungarian trains. The organisation distributed flyers, which sarcastically alleged that the trains were left uncleaned on purpose. The campaign received a lot of publicity and even though the train company in question opposed it, the trains were cleaned soon after. This first campaign illustrated how satire and comedy can be deployed to have a social influence and can result in change.

Since then, Two-Tailed Dog has mainly concentrated on criticising Hungarian politics and the political system. For example, during the elections of 2006, the organisation promised people eternal life, two sunsets per day, free beer and world peace. During the European refugee crisis, Two-Tailed Dog ran a banner campaign as a direct response to the banners of the government that demanded that refugees should not take the jobs of Hungarians. The banners of Two-Tailed Dog apologised for the behaviour of the prime minister, welcomed the refugees to Hungary and noted that there are many Hungarians who have left Hungary to work in the United Kingdom.

Two-Tailed Dog was pressured to transform into a political party by the government, who demanded a separation of political and organisational activity and threatened to abolish politically affiliated organisations. The first time Two-Tailed Dog tried to register as a political party their application was turned down. However, in 2014, the Supreme Court ruled against this and Two-Tailed Dog gained political-party status as well as permission to participate in municipal elections. The transformation to an EU political party has benefited Two Tailed Dog, because EU law specifically protects the operations of political parties.

To be entitled to financial support from the Hungarian state, an organisation must fulfil the following preconditions: gain a certain amount of signatures, be registered as an official party, nominate a certain number of candidates for the elections and receive a minimum of 1% endorsement. In the 2018 parliamentary elections the party gained 1.7% endorsement and became eligible for funding. Traditionally, parties use this funding for political advertising and operations, but Two-Tailed Dog has focused on redistributing this funding to smaller organisations and citizens, which has become the party's new focus.

2.5.2 Members and supporters

Most of the people supporting the party's operations are volunteers. Only the chair and vice-chair receive a small remuneration for their work. Two-Tailed Dog calls its members "passivists", coming from the words "passion" and "passivist".

People participating in Two-Tailed Dog's operations make up a diverse group but are often individuals with strong personalities and who might be in need of emotional support. Nearly 80% of the members are divorced. The members of Two-Tailed Dog desire social impact but prefer to do so through alternative channels.

2.5.3 Operating model

The party has a top-down horizontal structure. Members strive to make decisions on a consensual basis and to give everyone an opportunity to propose their ideas and give their reactions. Two-Tailed Dog does not have strict communication rules and it tries to build an impression of a small society inside a bigger one. However, the operations themselves are assigned to different divisions. For example, the environmental division is responsible for urban gardening, the construction division for building bus stations and social club for organising social events.

One of Two-Tailed Dog's biggest projects is the Robin Hood campaign, named after the famous fictional character, which is about redistributing or donating the state funding received by the party to smaller organisations and citizens' initiatives. The purpose of the campaign is to change the system, give funding directly to those with ideas on what should change and how they can change. The funding helps people to solve problems that they have themselves identified in their community. For example, in 2018, one individual wanted to improve the road conditions in their area. With the money received through Robin Hood, the recipient purchased a road maintenance machine and created a website through which people could report potholes that needed fixing. Funding has also been used to mend a kindergarten's playground and to establish a nightclub in a quiet residential area. The funding has also been used collaboratively; for instance, Two-Tailed Dog donated a caravan to a homeless man who applied for funding together with a landowner who granted a parking permit for the mobile home.

Receiving funding through Robin Hood has some preconditions. For example, the project must be directly affiliated with societal development. The project does not have to link to Two-Tailed Dog's core operations, but the party details information on the projects that receive funding on their website, which has led to some eligible projects to withdraw their request as they did not want to be associated with the party. Because of Robin Hood, people who want to act and change things become aware of the party through the communal co-development activities.

2.5.4. Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Two-Tailed Dog was originally based on political satire and its anti-governmental campaigns around Hungary attracted a lot of media attention. The organisation has since transformed into an official political party with a serious political agenda, including the redistribution of financial capital. In Hungary however, people still perceive Two-Tailed Dog as a joke party and fail to take it seriously.
2. Two-Tailed Dog's core ambition is to mobilise individuals and organisations to actively solve the problems in their community. The party believes that the people themselves have the best means of finding solutions if they can get help with financing. This financial mechanism of the Robin Hood campaign constitutes a form of direct criticism of the government as it uses the money received from the state for a purpose it is not intended for, and instead for something Two-Tailed Dog believes it should be used. The purpose is to completely change the political model that has mainly helped the parties in the government and opposition but failed to account for the real needs of the people.
3. Two-Tailed Dog does not seek to continuously grow its own support and or gain more seats in the parliament but wants to change people's voting behaviour. The idea is that when citizens themselves are given tools to solve their local problems rather than merely find people to blame for them, they are more prone to vote for constructive political representatives rather than dictators. The operating model of the party is designed to strengthen people's own political will and capacity to act accordingly, and thus combat the rise of populist movements. Two-Tailed Dog, however, sees this as a long-term goal that requires a lot of work and changes in society.

3. Practices of non-governmental organisations

This chapter introduces three non-governmental organisations experimenting with different participatory methods. The analysis includes details of the background and operational environment, the support base and the operating model of the featured organisations. Based on this, a list of central findings relating to the organisations' methods is included at the end of each case study.

3.1 Bancada Ativista

Country: Brazil, Sao Paulo

Category: Political movement

Year of foundation: 2016

3.1.1 Background and operating environment

Bancada Ativista, the Activist Coalition, is a political movement founded by a group of Brazilian activists in Sao Paulo. It employs the idea of collective candidacy with which it strives to bring three main themes into politics: democracy, human rights and equal rights.

According to Bancada Ativista, the traditional political parties in Brazil do not genuinely represent the people and political power is still in the hands of a homogenous upper class. The ambition of the movement is to improve the accessibility to decision-making and bring politics closer to the people. Bancada Ativista wants to do so by assisting and promoting activists to gain political power. Currently, the movement has one seat on the Sao Paulo state council, which is occupied by a collective representative composed of nine different activists.

3.1.2 Members and supporters

Supporters of Bancada Ativista are dissatisfied with contemporary politics and politicians, who they think have failed to truly consider the needs and will of ordinary people. The supporters and members of the movement mainly belong to social minority groups, or groups that are otherwise discriminated against in politics.

3.1.3 Operating model

The initial goal of the movement was to encourage activists to run for the national parliament and to take seats from traditional politicians. Activists – in other words, people who are affli-

ated with a specific socio-political agenda – are, according to Bancada Ativista, more responsive and transparent in their operations than traditional politicians in Brazil. This creates and enables new ways of engaging with the electorate.

During the national election in 2016, Bancada Ativista acted as a support network and campaign assistant for eight activists from a number of non-governmental organisations who were running for the parliament through diverse political parties. Bancada Ativista offered its support to activists who had declared their candidacy but also actively sought new potential candidates among non-governmental bodies. The movement played an important role in encouraging and helping the unconventional candidates in gaining political seats. Of the eight candidates backed by Bancada Ativista, one was selected to the parliament. In 2017 the organisation changed its operating model and transformed from a supporter of young individual politicians to a movement that purposefully builds collective political candidates.

In this new operating model, Bancada Ativista seeks activists that could be open to run for office as a part of a collective. The collective's values are based on the core notions of democracy, human rights and social justice. In 2018 the movement nominated its first collective candidate for the Sao Paulo state council, listed with the PSOL party (socialist and liberty party) as their members. The collective candidate received 150,000 votes (0.72% of the total) and thus gained a seat on the council. Nine people, of whom seven are women and two men, share the decision-making power and responsibilities of what is traditionally a single member of the council. The people participating in the collective are all political activists in fields such as women's rights and LGBT rights. Their political backgrounds are from the PSOL or REDE (the sustainability network), or they are politically non-affiliated, and listed as candidates of PSOL was running from the list of PSOL was, therefore, a common compromise.

The movement's ambition is to increase political participation, give power back to the people and avoid the personification of politics. To promote political participation, Bancada Ativista uses some digital platforms but also creates physical communication channels through which citizens can take part. For example, the movement organised an open discussion event on children's and women's rights in Sao Paulo, which was reportedly the first time women, and especially mothers, had been brought together to discuss family policy on such a platform.

Bancada Ativista collaborates closely with other non-governmental organisations to scout for potential political influencers among activists and to address the pressing issues in its political work. The collective representation consisting of people from different fields of activism also enables the movement to efficiently communicate with a large part of civil society.

3.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Bancada Ativista is a political movement that searches for and identifies people within non-governmental organisations and encourages them to apply for office as part of a collective candidacy. The movement's operations are not bound to specific political views, but its central aim is to identify politicians who are sincere about improving well-being and who act in the interests of the people.
2. A collective representation can be more efficient in mobilising a group of people as opposed to an individual politician. People sharing a political seat are all involved in the work and feel responsible for it, thus channelling the individual endeavours into collective political action. Also, the combined strength of the support network behind each of the participants in the collective can be extensive.
3. Bancada Ativista wants to avoid the personification of political themes and direct people's focus to the actual ideas and issues at hand. Collective representation potentially decreases the effect that politicians' individual characteristics and actions can have on decision-making.

3.1.5 Deep-dive: The practicalities of collective representation in Sao Paulo

Collective representation is not a new idea in South America. Reportedly, there are two other seats occupied by collectives in Brazil; one on the city council of Alto Paraíso de Goiás and one in Belo Horizonte. Collective candidacy, and especially the collective representation it may lead to, are dependent on the methods and structures applied inside the collective as well as the attitudes of the political parties.

Collective representation is not an officially recognised form of running a candidacy or holding office in Brazil, and nor in Finland, as the posts are appointed to certain individuals. Therefore, a collective might have to choose among them an individual under the name of which the collective officially operates. This person has the most responsibility out of all the participants as she or he is the only one whose role in the office is lawfully recognised. In Bancada Ativista, the participants beyond the titled are registered as counsellors.

This recognition only of an individual naturally also influences salaries: the person named as the official representative receives the same amount of salary as any other person in that position. However, it is crucial that all the participants receive a similar reward for the work they do. Bancada Ativista pays the same salary to all the participants of the collective. The person named as the official candidate donates part of her salary to the others, but ultimately receives a slightly higher payment than the rest to reflect the added responsibility.

The participants in Bancada Ativista's collective do not have any official agreements on the collective's relation to the organisation itself or the activities of the individual participants. The lack of agreements enables the operations to remain rather flexible, but it might influence the collective and participants vulnerability in some regard. The lack of agreements has also created some challenges for the collective resulting from the operating model of the council and some ministries.

Making decisions as a collective is not as straightforward as it would be as an individual, but its slowness and complexity bring more multidimensionality into the process. A key question is how responsibilities and power inside the collective are shared. In Bancada Ativista's model, there is no hierarchy inside the collective and responsibilities are equally distributed based on the participants' expertise and core areas of activism. The participants have the freedom to work towards the ambitions of their areas of activism in ways they see most suitable. The collective, however, has a political co-ordinator who assists the activists in organising their actions and creating a common agenda. Close co-ordination of the activities of the collective is crucial, as without it the work might appear inefficient and lack focus.

A collective representative must make decisions and vote as a single unit. Clearly defining how the decision-making takes place inside the collective is therefore important. This should, for example, include instructions on what to do in situations where there are deeply divided opinions. In Bancada Ativista, the internal decision-making process does not include voting but rather all the decisions are based on discussions and mutual understanding, with the aim of maximising the collective intelligence. This method is partially enabled by the nature of issues and the goals of the collective: Bancada Ativista focuses on broad societal problems rather than specific political actions. Despite this, the decision-making process is time-consuming. Bancada Ativista has received external assistance for facilitating and co-ordinating discussions, but the collective does not have more established methods.

How political parties relate to the idea of collective representation is fundamental, as without the acceptance of the parties the collective has no channel for its political participa-

tion. In Brazil, the PSOL and REDE parties have expressed favourable attitudes towards the idea. Bancada Ativista made a special agreement with the PSOL in Sao Paulo as a result of which the collective was able to run its candidacy through the PSOL's party list. The agreement states that Bancada Ativista is an independent actor and their responsibilities towards the party are limited in contrast to other members of the party. In practice, this means that the collective is not obliged to attend the party's internal conventions, for example. In terms of communications, Bancada Ativista is not part of PSOL but an independent actor. According to the collective's representatives, this narrative has not been troubling for the voters to grasp. It must be assumed, however, that collective representation is likely to cause some bewilderment among the voters and thus the role of communications is an especially important precondition for success.

Collective representation could be perceived as an add-on to representative politics. Its success is dependent on internal structures and methods, but also requires external acceptance by the existing political participants.

3.2 Dziewuchy Dziewuchom (Gals for Gals)

Country: Poland

Category: Political movement

Year of foundation: 2016

Estimated number of members: 200,000 followers on diverse social media channels

3.2.1 Background and operating environment

Dziewuchy Dziewuchom, or Gals for Gals in English, is a Polish communication channel focused on women's rights. The organisation has three social media channels that have attracted 200,000 followers. Gals for Gals is politically independent and is run by its two founding members.

In spring 2016, an anti-abortion network released its plans for proposing new legislation to outlaw abortion. This started a wider social movement where different networks on social media organised to oppose the bill. The Gals for Gals Facebook group was founded soon after and it gained over 100,000 followers in just a few days. The group advertised public demonstrations organised by the left-wing Ramzen party around Poland on 3 April 2016, with the event in Warsaw attracting over 7,000 participants. The social movement that Gals and Gals is part of influenced the Polish parliament to reject the abortion bill initiated by the Ordo Iuris institute.

The Gals for Gals Facebook group inspired others to start similar groups. The founders of Gals for Gals have since registered the name as a trademark, meaning the other groups have had to change their names.

3.2.2 Members and supporters

A study revealed that 48% of Poles under 25 participated in one way or another in opposing the abortion bill. Of 25 to 34 year olds, 70% stated they supported the social movement for abortion rights.

3.2.3 Operating model

Gals for Gals strives to raise awareness of women's rights both nationally and internationally. On its social media channels, Gals for Gals shares its members' information relating to the topic and facilitates constructive discussion. Facebook and Instagram are the main social

media channels the organisation uses. At the very beginning, the Gals for Gals Facebook group focused only on sharing information about anti-abortion laws, but the topics have since extended to cover women's rights issues more universally. The Instagram page is used more for personal communication with and between the members. The group does not organise activities outside social media but advertises other organisations' events that relate to women's rights.

Gals for Gals does not consider itself as a social movement, but rather a watchdog, a communication channel and an information channel. The administrators of the group closely follow different media channels and identify the relevant topics and articles to be shared with the group. One of the goals of the group is to share information regarding the treatment of women on a daily basis, for example by highlighting news about sexual violence and the frequency of critique surrounding women's looks.

The Facebook group is closely moderated. On occasions when a message has to be deleted the moderators always attempt to inform users about the reason behind it. Joining the group is also moderated, and the administrators try to closely scan requests to join in order to avoid trolls.

3.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. On Facebook, Gals for Gals uses many memes with statistical data and quotes in its communications. The administrators have noticed that they are an efficient way to convey a message, stimulate conversation and increase sharing of the post.
2. Through Instagram, Gals for Gals keeps in closer contact with its members. The members might, for example, share their own experiences relating to domestic violence with the administrators, who can then encourage the person to seek personal help

3.3 Sverok

Country: Sweden

Category: Role-play and gaming organisation

Year of foundation: 1988

Estimated number of members: 55,000

3.3.1 Background and operating environment

Sverok is Sweden's largest youth organisation. The organisation focuses on gaming culture and its operations cover a wide variety of different games, for example card games, cosplay, board games and e-games. Sverok operates through a 2,800-strong, semi-autonomous member organisation and is politically non-partisan.

Before 1988, there were five organisations that focused on games in Sweden. Sverok was established to bring together all these separate organisations. Its goals have from the very beginning been to promote gaming culture and democratic practices.

3.3.2 Members and supporters

Nearly 90% of Sverok's members are under the age of 26 and 97% of them are male. The members have a financial incentive to join and establish their own member organisation, as Sverok supports its member organisations in purchasing gaming devices.

Most of the members belong to the white middle class. Until recently, Sverok has not had to actively acquire new members, but the size of the organisation has grown organically. Sverok has a network of women e-gamers called Princess Leia.

3.3.3 Operating model

Sverok has three management levels: national, district and local. On a national level, Sverok manages state funding and distributes it to the lower levels. The national level also supports operations and management practices of the districts and local chapters. The district level is used to communicate between the national and the local level; the districts, for example, manage bi-monthly online meetings with the local chapters. There are two big annual events at the district level as well as a yearly national assembly involving the whole of Sverok.

The core of Sverok's operations takes place on a local level. The members of each local chapter can themselves decide what they want to do and how they want to run the chapter. The chapter might decide to meet weekly or monthly, for example, and concentrate on organising only board-game events. Volunteers run all of Sverok's operations.

Members can either join an existing local chapter (gaming group) or create a new one. The only requirement for starting a new gaming group is that the events organised by the group must be open to all Sverok members. Members thus have a lot of freedom in deciding what they want to do, as the events at local level can be virtually anything that is somehow related to the gaming culture. This makes participating in Sverok meaningful and fun.

Sverok is a gaming organisation with a democratically operating national organisational structure. Preparing issues, documenting meetings and representative decision-making are some of the tools of democracy, which Sverok's members become familiar with and are educated in when participating.

Sverok has no membership fee. The organisation is funded through a national support trust for youth organisations and the local chapters receive financial support for their operations from the district level and the national level. This financial model encourages new members to join in and to start their own gaming groups. The national level supports the gaming groups in organising events but also assists them in things such as book-keeping and funding applications. Thus, Sverok often introduces young people to organisational operations.

3.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. The operations are centred on the local chapters and the organisation is run from the bottom up. The local chapters also receive more media coverage than the higher organisational levels and often give statements on behalf of the whole organisation.
2. Sverok involves its members by giving them autonomy to run their operations in the way they see fit and by designing all their operations based on the aspirations of the members. This engages members, who feel responsibility for and pride at organising events of their own and for their friends' enjoyment. People joining an existing chapter can, on the other hand, find congenial friends and feel part of a community.

4. The Practices of digital platforms

This chapter introduces five organisations that use digital platforms for policy crowdsourcing and participatory decision-making. The analysis includes details of the background and operational environment, the support base and the operating model of the featured platforms and the organisations behind them. Based on this, a list of central findings relating to the organisations' methods is included at the end of each case study.

4.1 Accropolis

Country: France

Year of foundation: 2017

Number of followers: 25,403 (Twitch)/24 920 (YouTube)

4.1.1 Background and operating environment

Accropolis is a French media channel that uses the Twitch video platform to live-stream political events, such as president's briefings and parliamentary sessions, as well as its own political talk shows. Twitch is designed for streaming e-sports, but Accropolis employs it to raise awareness of political events and stimulate conversation with the aim of increasing young people's interest in politics and to create a new and modern format for political discussion.

4.1.2 Members and supporters

People following Accropolis's programmes on Twitch are mostly young men. There are usually between 100 and 1,000 followers per stream. The channel has a large established follower base, but the majority of the people joining the live-streaming programmes often stumble on them by accident when surfing on Twitch.

Volunteers run Accropolis almost entirely. Most of them were not interested in or involved with politics before Twitch, and they have initially found the channel by accident. Twitch's programme base has expanded through the help of volunteers, and the first talk show created by the volunteers alone, *Et toi, t'en penses quoi* (And you, what do you think?), began in spring 2019.

4.1.3 Operating model

Accropolis has created a new format for following politics, which is strongly based on the community. Live-streaming programmes on the Twitch platform changes a passive acceptance of information to active real-time discussions and discussion tracking. The hosts of Twitch's

programmes do not advocate their own political views, but rather strive to facilitate constructive discussions and teach the viewers critical thinking.

The core of Accropolis's operations is the streaming of political TV programmes together with accompanying live comments by the hosts of Accropolis. This makes the traditional TV programme more dynamic and accessible. The viewers can comment on the programme through the live chat and discuss the events with other Twitch users following the stream as well as the hosts of Accropolis. TV programmes are streamed on Accropolis weekly. The programmes are informal: they often start with light chat from the hosts, followed by following and commenting on the TV programme. After the programme ends, the hosts continue discussing the topic with the Twitch audience for another hour.

As Accropolis's popularity has grown the channel has further developed its range of programmes. The channel has transformed from the mere streaming of TV programmes and taken a larger role in becoming an independent content producer. Accropolis collaborates with French politicians and institutions to create some of this content. A weekly programme called *Le Petit Senat*, for example, invites senators onto Twitch to answer questions sent in by the Twitch audience. The institutions co-ordinate or supply the senators for this programme and Accropolis does not itself have to worry about finding its guests. With this format, Accropolis tries to offer a communication channel and encourage dialogue between young people and politicians. *Le Petit Senat* programme lasts for one hour, which is considered a long time for a broadcast with a politician. The content and the practices of the programme also differ from a traditional political talk show, as the setting is more informal and the questions more direct. The volunteer-made talk show *Et toi, t'en penses quoi*, on the other hand, is about discussing current political events, such as the "gilets jaunes" movement, in more detail.

4.1.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Accropolis has created a political discussion environment on a digital platform that was not initially designed for such a practice. The people following and participating in the discussions facilitated by Accropolis have mostly not been interested in politics prior to finding the channel. This phenomenon has been achieved by employing a politically unconventional platform that applies randomness for suggesting content, thus also reaching those who are politically inactive. This notion increases the relative impact of the channel.
2. Collaboration with the institutions and politicians is key for creating meaningful and interesting content and new political engagement channels. Accropolis offers the politicians a way to reach one of the most challenging voter groups, young men.

4.1.5 Deep-dive: using Twitch for political dialogue

The Twitch.tv live-stream platform was not designed for political purposes. Twitch Interactive owns the platform and it is a subsidiary of Amazon. Amazon bought Twitch Interactive for 970 million US dollars in 2014. Computer and console gamers primarily use the platform to stream gaming content. However, any registered party can stream content of their choosing on Twitch in a similar manner to any other streaming service. Some gaming consoles support live-streaming games on Twitch directly without an add-on. Twitch also hosts large e-sport events and competitions on the platform. Users also create, for example, interview and vlog-type programmes that are usually about gaming. Twitch supports a live comment feed in its streams through which viewers can actively take part in the programmes.

There are approximately 100 million monthly users on Twitch. Most of them are men aged 18 to 34. Having a global, homogenous user base makes Twitch an interesting platform for

political participation, as political events often lack the participation of this demographic. To engage such a difficult-to-reach demographic, parties and other political actors must expand their operations to areas where the targeted demographic is at, in this instance the e-gaming community.

At first, Twitch was not willing to allow its platform to be used for political purposes and Accropolis was once in deleted from the service. But that attitude has changed, and different political actors have now found their way onto Twitch. The platform has also proactively become involved with politics; for example, Twitch streamed the US party assemblies on the platform. These streams were especially carefully monitored.

Also, the Washington Post has its own channel on Twitch with 28,000 followers. The followers of live-streams are however manifold. Their streams are often of important political events such as the Robert Muller press conference and the Michael Cohen hearing. The newspaper also organises political talk shows. All these programmes also encourage viewers to participate in discussions in the comment space. Some individual politicians have their own channels on Twitch, for example Sweden's Rickard Nordin. He broadcasts a weekly live stream of his gaming session, during which he answers questions posed by the viewers. In general, it has also become more common for regular Twitch vloggers to address political topics during their streams.

The statistics on these political channels demonstrate that there is a growing interest in politics. However, the demographic needs easy access to information as well as a mode of participation. Simply podcasting political events on TV or writing about them in a newspaper is not an efficient way to reach younger voters who will not instinctively receive this information as they use different platforms. According to a US study, 18 to 34-year-old males only watch a third of the television that 50 to 58 year olds do. The younger generation still watches entertainment programmes, but increasingly through alternative platforms.

Twitch has noted in a press release that, for many, it is not only the primary source of entertainment but also of information and, therefore, it is the responsibility of the platform to provide the users with access to this information in the familiar Twitch environment. As the users can choose the content they want to stream, allowing political content on Twitch is not undermining its main function, which remains the streaming of e-sports and gaming-related content.

Politicians need to conform to modern ways of consuming entertainment and information in order to reach different demographics. The importance of meeting voters in person in towns and cities is diminishing as people can be reached on different digital platforms with less hassle. People are also often scattered around these digital platforms according to a certain demographic type, which makes targeting a certain group more easy and efficient. Therefore, to facilitate political participation and new types of engagement, those in politics should look for existing digital platforms that have already established themselves rather than seek to create their own ones.

4.2 Citizens

Country: Iceland (but the digital platforms developed by Citizens are used internationally in about 20 countries)

Year of foundation: 2008

Estimated number of users: Nearly 2 million in the past 10 years

4.2.1 Background and operating environment

Citizens is an Icelandic non-profit digital democracy organisation. The organisation has developed several open-source digital platforms and tools to improve political participation and support direct democracy.

Citizens was founded in 2008 after the Icelandic financial crisis. The economic crisis resulted in a crisis of trust, as people's support for the government sank from about 70% to under 10% within a matter of two weeks. From the very beginning, one of the main goals of Citizens has been to reform democratic decision-making through digitisation. A parody party, the Best Party, won the Icelandic national elections in 2010. At their request, Citizens developed the Your Priorities platform to enable direct democracy in Reykjavik.

Today, Citizens has several digital platforms that are used internationally for national and regional decision-making, as well as for public administration and non-governmental organisations. Citizens is an independent organisation.

4.2.2 Members and supporters

Over half of the people using Citizens' platforms find it through different social media channels. About 55% are male and 45% female, which is partially a result of Facebook's algorithms.

Citizens has carefully analysed the different user types on the platform and created two user profiles: the change maker and the observer, which are introduced in more detail later in the chapter.

4.2.3 Operating model

Citizens offers organisations or other groups a digital platform on which to create their own communities. The users can create yet more groups inside these communities. All the communities have their own URL address, which makes navigating to the platform simple. Citizens has two platform models: Your Priorities and Open Active Voting.

Your Priorities is designed for political crowdsourcing, which means that organisations can gather and develop ideas on the digital forum. Users can present their ideas in text format or in multimedia content, such as videos. Other users are not able to comment on these suggestions directly, but they can express their position either by voting for or against, or by creating a counter-argument. These counter-arguments can again be voted on. Because of this progressive discussion format, it is impossible to argue on the platform and users can clearly detect popular ideas. The administrators of the communities can request ideas on specific topics and create parallel sub-discussions for them inside the community. The platform has been used, for example, by Estonia's national government in 2013 to collect ideas on how to improve the country's political system. Iceland is using the platform currently to reform its constitution.

Open Active Voting is a gamified participatory budgeting platform. On the platform, users can themselves choose what projects they would like an organisation to spend a given budget on. The city of Reykjavik distributes 6% of its annual building acquisition budget through the Better Neighbourhoods programme, which is supported by Open Active Voting platform. In practice, the issues or projects among which the users can distribute the budget are crowd-sourced, often through Your Priorities, and experts subsequently estimate their validity and value. The platform educates people on how budgeting works and policymakers can distinguish quickly the preferences of the citizens. The gamified platform is intuitive and easy to use.

Sharing information and communicating new ideas on these platforms has a connection with social media, because users can use social media to share their ideas and their own initiatives. Through different social media channels, users can share ideas that they find

meaningful as well as gather support for their own ideas. Citizens has developed an artificial intelligence-based Active Citizens add-in to improve the user experience of the platforms. The add-in helps to avoid filter bubbles and supports users in receiving information on local politics in a similar manner to Facebook.

4.2.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Citizens has created a progressive communication system that supports constructive discussion. The ability to present and support different perspectives and ideas, and also to oppose a topic, is central to the system. The most fundamental part is, however, the inability of users to directly comment on others' opinions. The system creates a supporting and opposing column underneath each initiative and gathers the comments under them, as a result of which the debate remains factual and sensible.
2. The adoption of these platforms has been, in most cases, initiated by policymakers themselves. Without the support of politicians and integration into the official political system, these direct-democracy platforms would be unable to function. Constructing and co-developing platforms with political institutions and politicians is thus crucial.
3. Participating in decision-making through digital platforms should take place repeatedly and continuously in order to take hold among the people. To ensure continuity, it is vital to inform users about the topics and projects outside the participatory timeframe and to convey the impacts of their actions. In participatory budgeting, for example, people need to be closely informed about the progress and the overall timeline of the next participation opportunities in order to commit them to using the platform in the future.
4. Citizens is an independent platform, but it closely resembles existing social media channels. The platforms also use functions and user interfaces that are already familiar to users from social media platforms, such as the "like" function on Facebook. This enables effortless use of the platform.

User profiles: The changemaker and the observer

The changemaker is an active user and a generator of ideas. She or he is likely to own his or her own house and is therefore especially interested in developing the neighbourhood in addition to the city at large. People who profile as changemakers are often middle-aged or older. The observers like to stay on the sidelines and follow discussions on the platform. They vote on ideas and topics that are important to them but tend not to pose their own ideas. People who profile as the observers are often young and independent, and they lack strong ties to a neighbourhood. They are more interested in big political questions like the environment or urban planning.

4.2.5 Deep-dive: adapting the use of participatory platforms on different organisational levels

Participatory platforms are institutional practices and digital tools that support policy crowd-sourcing and co-development. A platform can function through a web page or mobile application for example. The platforms can be a mixture of both online and offline tools; a digital tool can be accompanied by physical discussion events where the important points and conclusions are documented back to the digital tool. In Iceland, the Citizens Foundation has, together with the University of Iceland, created a gamified platform, "Create your own constitution", which aims to improve people's awareness of the content of the constitution. In addition to directly

enabling political participation, these platforms might also have an educational role to fulfil, as political participation and engagement often depend upon acquiring an understanding.

Such platforms are used at the city and municipality level, for example in Iceland, where both smaller communities and the capital Reykjavik have adapted new participatory tools for their decision-making processes. Any change in the political process that decreases the arbitrariness of individual decision-makers requires reorienting one's perspective as to what the role of a modern politician is. But this change of perspective can also encourage more people to run for office, as the burden of responsibility of an individual becomes less. In Iceland, as citizens have become more involved with local decision-making and budgeting, the threshold to become engaged with more abstract national level policy work reduces. National level participatory platforms are also employed, for example, in Estonia (see chapter 6.4) for drafting citizens' initiatives and in Scotland as part of the Scottish parliament's online debating system.

In this research, three circumstances were identified that allow for integrating participatory platforms into the policy process. As in Estonia and Greece, political scandals can create pressure for a reform of the political system, which can lead to adopting experimental practices and can pave the way for new participatory platforms. Second, particularly at the local level, political candidates have themselves begun promoting the use of new forms of political participation. And, third, people can on their own initiative start to acquire new engagement methods and participatory tools, following the lead of more progressive political environments.

Participatory platforms can engage large sections of the population, especially at the local political level, as decisions with a high local impact are highly engaging and rewarding for citizens. However, platforms that are designed for collecting ideas require supporting mechanisms for discussions, co-development and prioritisation, which improve the quality of ideas generated and help to tailor them more precisely to the specific local context.

The platforms often try to mimic the user experience and functions of commercial digital platforms, thus bringing political participation closer to a form of entertainment. Participatory tools can, for example, use machine learning to generate tailored content for users or make use of game-like elements. These functions can make the use of platform more engaging and accessible, as well as contribute towards an enhanced learning experience, which can again improve the overall quality of the crowdsourced ideas. Without participatory platforms, political discussion will divert to other digital and social media platforms that are not designed for and do not support constructive dialogue. Moreover, discussions on such channels will rarely converge with the official decision-making processes.

4.3 Countable

Country: United States

Year of foundation: 2013

Estimated number of users: 190 million registered users

4.3.1 Background and operating environment

Countable is a website and mobile app for following and participating in politics in the United States. On Countable, people can follow the preparation of bills and influence the legislative process. The texts of laws in the United States are often difficult to comprehend for the average voter, which makes the following of the process challenging for some. This is the core issue that Countable strives to solve.

Soon after the inauguration of President Trump in 2017, a large demonstration called Women's March took place in Washington DC. The demonstration was one of the largest in the United States' history. According to estimates, three to five million people participated in the demonstration around the country. The Women's March opposed the politics of the Trump administration and defended the rights of women and minorities. The demonstration marked a turning point for Countable, which was frequently referred to in the discussion surrounding the event.

4.3.2 Members and supporters

Countable has 190 million registered users. On an average day, there are 250 to 300 thousand users who perform over one billion actions on the site daily. The majority of users are based in the United States, but the company has recently acquired an accompanying website domain, Causes.com, which has a more international user base. Causes.com has eight million Facebook followers.

About 60% of the users are male and they are often affiliated with demands for a progressive reform of the American political system.

4.3.3 Operating model

Countable reviews bills that are in their preparatory phase and creates summaries of them. The summaries also include a short analysis of the main arguments for and against a given bill. Political journalists, who also support the organisation's social media activities, produce the content, which strives to be as non-affiliated as possible.

The users of Countable can then express their opinion on those bills by voting for or against them. This function makes Countable a convenient tool for policymakers to gauge public opinion. As the bills proceed, users can follow how individual politicians vote on them and thus keep them accountable.

Countable supports and encourages discussing and commenting on the bills to keep the platform interactive. The platform is, however, carefully monitored to eliminate inappropriate behaviour. Individual users are also able to flag messages they believe to be against the rules. When a user is considered to act inappropriately, the administrators can set their profile to a ghost state in which they can view the platform as normal but nobody can see the comments they are posting. When the user gets no reactions to their behaviour, they soon stop.

Users can also message policymakers through the platform. This contact function has been embedded within the official communication channels of the politicians, allowing them to receive a message sent through Countable whether they have themselves registered on the platform or not.

The organisation behind Countable also resells the platform service to other organisations, for example to companies who wish to promote their societal programmes. This licensing process occurs under the Countable Action brand. In May 2019, Countable bought Brigade Media and acquired the website Causes.com with it. At Causes.com, users can support social campaigns that they find meaningful and, for example, make donations.

4.3.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Users often find Countable (and Causes) as a result of their wide exposure to media and word to mouth. The functions of the platform have been designed to support social movements and campaigns, which can use the platform to follow the actions of the government and to contact politicians.
2. Countable makes following the legislation process and events easy and offers a structured channel through which people can express their opinions on bills under preparation. The platform can also be used to directly address individual politicians.

4.4 Rahvaalgatus

Country: Estonia

Year of foundation: 2016

Estimated number of users: 10,000 per month

4.4.1 Background and operating environment

Rahvaalgatus.ee is an Estonian website that accommodates and allows users to follow citizens' initiatives. The service was born in the aftermath of a financial scandal involving the Reformist party in the 2012 elections. The event led to demonstrations and the formation of a social movement that demanded changes to the political system. Because of the political crisis, Estonians had an opportunity to present new ideas for renewing the system, one of them being citizens' initiatives.

New legislation enabling citizens' initiatives as part of the political system was enacted in 2014 and Rahvaalgatus.ee began operating in 2016. Before the legislative changes and the new platform, there were no channels through which Estonians could have their issues addressed in parliament.

Rahvaalgatus is publicly funded and it operates under the Estonian Co-operation Assembly. One half of the board is chosen by the president and the other half by stakeholder groups. It is also noteworthy that Estonia has undergone a series of rapid digitisation processes and using online services is commonplace for most people.

4.4.2 Members and supporters

There are no statistics on the user base of the Rahvaalgatus platform because of data protection regulations. It is known that users do not constitute a uniform group who regularly employ the platform, but the average user signs one to two petitions through it. A wide variety of petitions have been featured on Rahvaalgatus and it can, therefore, be assumed that its users form a diverse group. The platform has only been in operation for three years, meaning there is little knowledge of how the existing political situation affects the number of users.

4.4.3 Operating model

The platform supports the drafting of initiatives and collecting signatures for them. It is possible to collaborate with multiple people through the platform to together plan and draft new initiatives. Users can then decide the initiatives they find meaningful and want to support by adding their signatures. Both the drafters of the initiatives and those giving their signature must be at least 16 years old and be EU citizens. They also must have permanent residency status in Estonia.

Initiatives with a minimum of a thousand signatures are escalated to the chair of the parliament. The chair will then decide which parliamentary committee will process the initiative further. People who have drafted the initiative and signed it can follow how it proceeds in parliament through Rahvaalgatus. The parliament must give its response to initiatives that require evaluation within six months.

The citizens' initiatives that end up in parliament do not always lead to changes in legislation. Often, the initiatives illustrate a specific problem or issue, and it is possible to solve them in other ways than changing the law. Above else, Rahvaalgatus is a low-threshold mechanism through which citizens can get their voices heard with ease, even if they do not always lead to fundamental changes. Currently, the platform engages citizens mainly through a small batch of initiatives that gain most of the attention.

In the beginning, Rahvaalgatus used an Estonian open-source platform, CitizenOS, but had to switch to a different platform due to data protection regulations. The names of the supporters of given initiatives are never disclosed and the platform is thus semi-anonymous.

4.4.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Data protection regulations play a key role when it comes to developing Rahvaalgatus. It has been estimated that people's distrust of the privacy policy is hindering their willingness to use the platform.
2. Rahvaalgatus strives to become a permanent part of the operations of parliamentary committees and to fully establish itself as a tool of political participation. This requires close collaboration between the institutional stakeholders and voters, as well as their commitment to the platform.

4.5 Vouliwatch

Country: Greece

Year of foundation: 2014

Number of users: In 2018, 378,661 visitors and 2,971 registered users

4.5.1 Background and operating environment

Vouliwatch is a digital policy-monitoring platform. On the platform, citizens and non-governmental organisations can follow the activities of individual politicians and political groups and the decision-making process in the Greek parliament.

Vouliwatch is first and foremost about building trust between politicians and voters. The organisation's roots are in the Greek financial crisis, during which increasing financial insecurity and distrust towards politics led to growing support for different extremist groups. According to the founder of Vouliwatch, this polarisation shook the whole foundation of democracy.

The organisation began to rebuild trust by pushing through new legislation that improved the general accessibility and transparency of politicians' financial information. Today, 72% of Greek politicians in the parliament actively use Vouliwatch. The organisation collaborates closely with different non-governmental organisations, both nationally and internationally. Vouliwatch is an independent non-profit organisation.

4.5.2 Members and supporters

Vouliwatch is a website-based platform that is open to anyone and to view information on the site users do not have to be registered. Users are on average 35 to 44 years old and about 60% male. Vouliwatch estimates that users are mostly liberals and interested especially in social justice.

4.5.3 Operating model

Vouliwatch offers a range of tools and functions that enhance the availability of political information and improve the overall transparency of decision-making. In addition to offering information on current political events, the platform has three main functions: Ask Your MP – for posing public questions to politicians; Votewatch – for following the actions of individual politicians; and the Policy Monitor – for comparing the policies advocated by different political parties.

Vouliwatch is about citizen-oriented political communication, and the platform wants to offer Greeks a channel that makes keeping up with politics easy. For example, Vouliwatch writes summaries of new bills so that the content is comprehensible to anyone. This type of political communication contributes towards a political system that is accessible and remains close to the people. In order to improve the understandability of political information, Vouliwatch uses a lot of infographics to visualise complex content.

Through the Ask Your MP portal, the users of Vouliwatch can directly send questions or ideas to the politicians of their choosing. All the questions posed and the answers (or lack of answers) are documented in a public database, which keeps the politicians accountable for their previous statements and builds trust. Both individual users, as well as non-governmental organisations, can pose questions through the portal. Vouliwatch constructed the question portal originally by using the collective influence of multiple non-governmental organisations: Vouliwatch brought together a group of NGOs whose representatives put questions to MPs through the portal. This collaboration was crucial in establishing the portal, since politicians faced pressure to respond to the public's questions. Between 2017 and 2018, 288 questions were posed through Ask Your MP, of which 128 were answered.

The Votewatch portal presents information on all the voting that takes place in parliament. The portal also groups all the voting into themes, so the user can, for example, filter out and view data regarding environmental legislation. Users can use the portal to study the voting behaviour of individual politicians and parties. Especially when working in synergy with Ask Your MP, the Votewatch portal promotes accountability and ensures the integrity of politicians' words and deeds.

With the Policy Monitor function, Vouliwatch's users can interactively compare the policies of different political parties. The user can choose which parties to compare and on which political themes. There are 12 different political themes in total within the system. The Policy Monitor offers a tool for systematic and issue-based comparison, free from potential hidden influences. The function has an important role to play in improving political awareness and navigating the political field.

4.5.4 Distinctive methods for engaging, activating and inspiring

1. Vouliwatch has created a direct and structured communication channel between citizens and MPs that is free from trolls. The organisation believes that the environment of traditional social media is too uncontrolled, and its behavioural culture does not support sensible and rational political discourse.
2. The opportunity to closely follow the actions of individual politicians and their voting behaviour enables positive feedback on the attitudes of individuals and the activities of MPs. From the point of view of the users, the platform helps keep politicians accountable for their promises and actions. From the point of view of MPs, Vouliwatch encourages them to be more active, transparent and interactive with civil society.
3. Vouliwatch advocates citizen-oriented political communication, which, in addition to verbal communication, relies on infographics. According to Vouliwatch, simple infographics can present and help to understand even complex information. It can, therefore, make difficult political issues more accessible.

5. Summary of the results

5.1 Practices of the political parties

The study of the political parties addresses ideas related to opposing current systems and offering alternatives to the establishment. Parties often call themselves “the opposition of the opposition” and describe themselves as the opposing force to traditional party politics. Behind these ideas, there exists a need to enable the participation of supporters and active participants in the party’s operations, decision-making and management. A number of interviewees repeatedly raised views on the inability of large parties to engage their supporters in decision-making processes and the structuring of major policies.

The parties under analysis have been attempting to move away from the mould of traditional electoral parties in which supporters only express their opinions on the party’s actions by voting in an election. Supporters can use a range of different technological or more traditional ways to affect and engage with a party. The most central feature is the ability to maintain constant communication. Supporters of a party can in advance lead the party’s operations and can affect the strategic course party takes. For example, Komeito’s Voice Action solution allows the direct measuring of supporters’ opinions without an election. At the end of the spectrum, the technological solutions by Flux enable supporters to voice their opinions while taking into account the fact that not all supporters wish to participate in every decision being made. In this case, parties do not need to stick to one clear political agenda but can change with its supporters.

The parties have distinct features when it comes to agility and adaptability, and all operations take place on a voluntary basis. Even though some parties, such as Morena, work more in traditional ways, the party has a more agile model. The most important part of this is having supporters who actively engage and form a bottom-up model for action. For example, the core idea of the Two-Tailed Dog party is specifically to support citizens in actively finding solutions themselves for problems around them. On the other hand, Momentum attempts to be part of their supporters’ day-to-day lives. Society changes at such a rapid pace that parties must be able to make structural changes.

5.2 Practices of the non-governmental organisations

Non-governmental organisations are able to act in the most innovative ways in a political setting because the general aim of NGOs is to promote far-reaching influence, and specifically societal influence. NGOs can focus on one core interest and work around that one interest, unlike political parties, and as a result can stretch the forms of engagement further than political parties. For example, Bancada Ativista has no desire to become a registered political party, because they do not wish to commit to one political agenda or model.

The core role for NGOs is their societal and political role, which is central today. The operations of political parties have moved much closer to those of NGOs. Similar mechanisms for engagement can be seen in both political parties and NGOs, such as the bottom-up operating model and the engagement of active supporters in decision-making at all levels of operation. The agile model adopted by political parties, which is founded expressly on voluntarism, is traditionally a typical operating model for NGOs.

5.3 Practices of the platforms

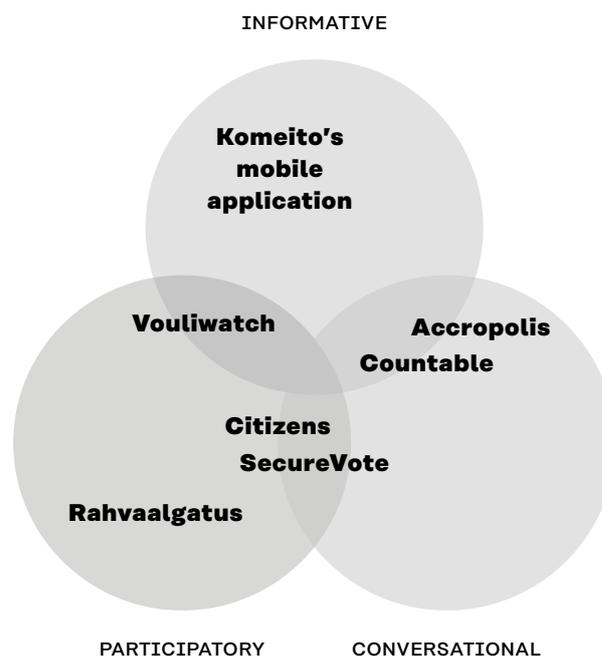
A number of digital platforms, such as Vouliwatch and Citizens, were originally designed to be used by young people. For example, the average age of users between 30 and 44. On the other hand, Komeito has been able to activate young voters by organising a traditional ballot-box election, but the background work and mapping were done through social media. It is apparent that the use of digital channels is important when activating young people. This requires using digital channels that users are already present on and integrating engagement to be part of their current social media behaviour. Citizens, for example, have used this type of model.

The traditional social media channels, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram, can work as the right platforms for information flow and unofficial forms of engaging people, but they work unfavourably for providing platforms for meaningful political debate or crowdsourcing. The most important difference between the traditional social media channels and platforms such as Twitch and other newer platforms is the homogeneity of its users. Platforms typically have a very homogenous user group.

Mobilisation and engagement are clear in the intended use of digital platforms. Digital platforms can be more specifically split into platforms that can inform about, discuss and engage in decision-making. The political decision-making process and the actions of political organs can be unclear or difficult to follow for some. Even if people wished to follow the political process, it may be difficult to receive or get information. For example, Vouliwach and Countable attempt to increase transparency and understandability, and thus make it easier to follow political decision-making by creating content, which clarifies the process.

Another important role of platforms is enabling active and participatory monitoring of politics and facilitating conversation around it. For example, Accropolis wishes to bring politics closer to people and thus allow conversation around political topics.

FIGURE 2. MOST OF THE ANALYSED PLATFORMS HAVE BEEN BUILT FOR MULTIPURPOSE USE



Third, platforms provide the opportunity to crowdsource development ideas and allow a low threshold for participation. For example, Citizens wants to provide a platform for direct democracy in which voters are activated to improve society themselves.

5.4 Conclusion

The groups interviewed for the study are divided into three distinct categories: political parties, non-governmental organisations and digital platforms. Innovative practices and concepts were examined in all the different categories. These practices link directly to shaping the political process. The innovation and current use of these practices are described in the picture below (Picture 3).

The citizens' initiative used by Rahvaalgatus is not a new concept in Finland, but the Estonian citizens' initiative process has one major difference compared to that in Finland, as the number of required signatures is considerably smaller. In Finland, a citizens' initiative requires 50,000 signatures while in Estonia just a thousand is sufficient. In Finland, approximately a thousand citizens' initiatives were proposed with only 25 of them breaking the required 50,000-signature threshold. Of these initiatives, two were accepted (the same-sex marriage act and the maternity act). Citizens' initiatives are largely seen in decision-making as an innovative practice but in Finland the use of the same concept in its current structure has had more of a symbolic meaning to change than actually disrupting political decision-making.

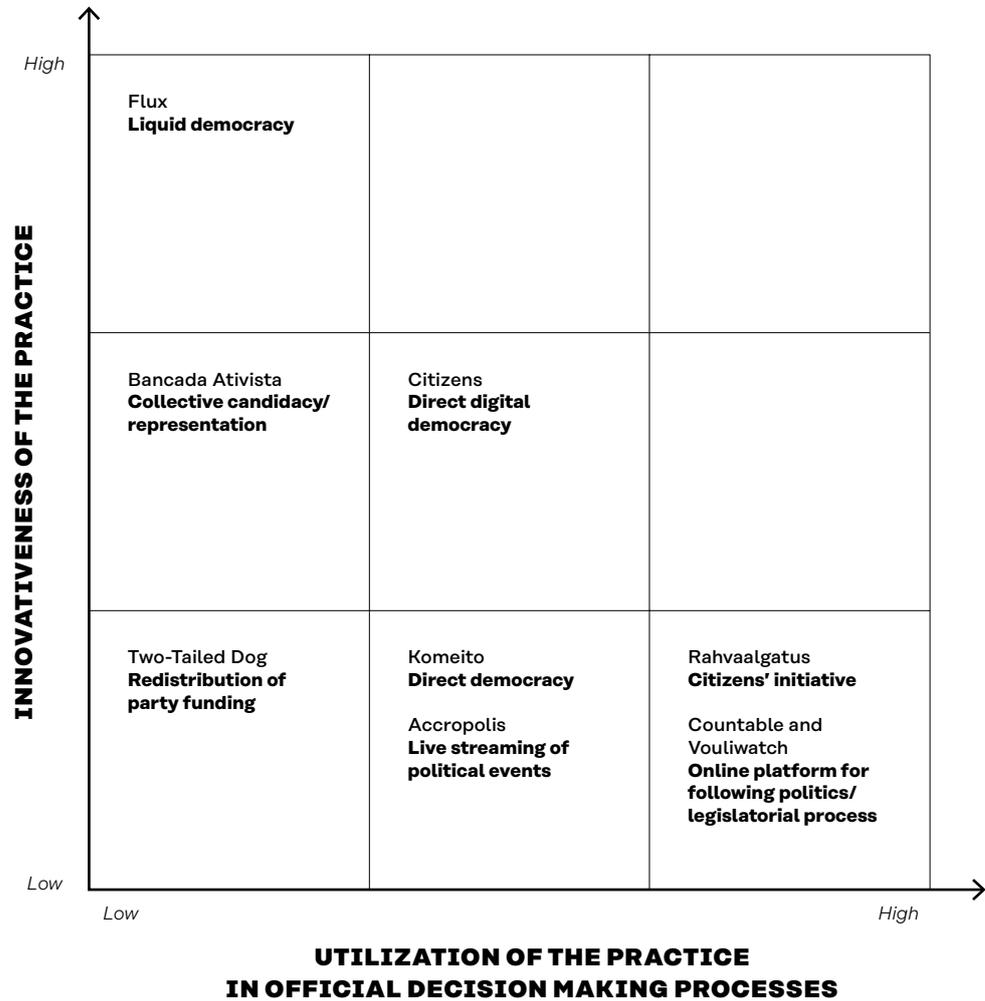
The practices of direct democracy used by the Komeito's Voice Action campaign are not new ideas, but in the context of Japan they are in their form and topic significant. A traditional example of direct democracy is a referendum, which in Finland is only advisory. Referendums, which embody direct democracy, are typically questions answered by "yes" or "no", which measure the opinions of certain groups related to the set question. In the model used by Komeito the vote was used to find out which topics their supporters wished them to support in government. Direct democracy was given a down-to-up engagement channel.

The digital platform created by Citizens is perhaps the most modern form of direct democracy. The digitisation of practice supports using direct democracy to poll on opinions and to crowdsource ideas. Digital democracy has taken its place as part of official decision-making in Iceland and decision-makers at local and national levels have adapted to the practice. However, in its current form, the practice of direct digital is restricted and it does not cover all official decision-making. For example, participatory budgeting only covers budgeting in certain areas.

The collective representation driven by Bancada Ativista is almost unheard of and is an uncommon practice even in the organisation's home country of Brazil. On the other hand, collective representation does not modify the actual process of democratic decision-making, but merely creates a new structure upon which collective participation is built.

The idea of flowing democracy by the Flux party and its combining with the operational principles of the stock market is the most innovative of all the researched ideas and practices. However, the idea is not tried and tested and the operations of the Flux party and its development of the Secure Vote App are still in the early stages. The chances of this practice becoming a part of official decision-making does have the most likely disruptive impact on the entire democratic system.

PICTURE 3. THE PRACTICES AND IDEAS THAT AFFECT THE POLITICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS OF SOME OF THE ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS MEMORANDUM



6. Appendix

APPENDIX 1 – Summary of the main findings

Flux (Australia)	Flux is a movement against two-party politics. The aim is to create a sophisticated voting system that strikes a balance between direct and representational democracy.
	The party's website provides real-time data on its members and donations received. This type of communication enforces openness and transparency, which are fundamental building blocks for building trust in political institutions.
	Currently, a central goal for Flux is to increase awareness and improve understanding of the functioning of the country's current voting system. The party believes that voters do not fully grasp how the preferential voting system shapes the political system and helps the big parties to remain in power.
Momentum (Hungary)	Momentum wants to present itself as a political channel of the younger Hungarian generation through which they can network with like-minded others, to have an impact and participate in decision-making. The party is defined by anti-system thinking.
	Members of the party are able to directly influence decision-making and the political direction of the party. Momentum actively seeks to further grow its membership and support network and to establish new chapters that support active political participation. Members are also expected to actively participate in communal activities rather than just official political work.
	Momentum aspires to remain close to voters and to be part of their daily lives, with the intent of creating a safe political community that can support and further the creation of a new and transparent political culture in Hungary.
Morena (Mexico)	Morena's organisational structures were designed to be light, which supports more transparency and flexibility and allows for improved communication. One of López Obrador's aspirations is to be close to voters, to which end he established direct contact with all 300 electoral districts and their political influencers. This contact has allowed Obrador to efficiently mobilise people all across Mexico.
Komeito (Japan)	The communication between Komeito's leadership and local chapters partially takes place on a public channel. Although the podcasts are mostly followed by the local leaders, the transparent and direct communication has a positive unifying influence between the members and leaders of the party.
	The goal of the Voice Action campaign was not only to map and better understand the opinions and ideas of its members surrounding major themes in politics but also to demonstrate that these opinions matter and are listened to in Komeito. A democratic voting process in which participation is made easy for members is a great way to prove to the members that they have a say.
	Collaboration with non-governmental organisations ensures that topics that are important and issue-specific can be considered in the party's operations and agenda. Komeito sees this collaboration as a fundamental building block of participatory politics.
Two-Tailed Dog (Hungary)	Two-Tailed Dog was originally based on political satire and its anti-governmental campaigns around Hungary attracted a lot of media attention. The organisation has since transformed into an official political party with a serious political agenda, including the redistribution of financial capital. In Hungary, however, many people still perceive Two-Tailed Dog as a joke party and fail to take it seriously.
	Two-Tailed Dog's core ambition is to mobilise citizens and organisations to actively solve the problems in their community. The party believes that the people themselves have the best means of finding solutions if they can obtain help with financing. The financial mechanism of the Robin Hood campaign in effect constitutes direct criticism of the government as it uses money received from the state for a purpose it is not intended, but which Two-Tailed Dog believes it should be used. The purpose is to completely change the political model that has mainly helped the parties in government and opposition but failed to account for the real needs of the people.
	Two-Tailed Dog does not seek to continuously grow its own support and or gain more seats in the parliament but wants to change people's voting behaviour. The idea is that when citizens themselves are given tools to solve their local problems rather than merely finding people to blame, they are more prone to vote for constructive politicians than dictators. The operation model of the party is designed to strengthen people's political will and capacity to act accordingly, and thus combat the rise of populist movements. Two-Tailed Dog, however, sees this as a long-term goal that requires a lot of work and changes in society.

Bancada Ativista (Brasil)	<p>Bancada Ativista is a political movement that searches for and identifies those in non-governmental organisations and encourages them to apply for office as part of a collective candidacy. Movement's operations are not bound to specific political views, but its central aim is to see politicians who are sincere about improving well-being and acting according to the interests of the people.</p>
	<p>A collective representation can be more efficient in mobilising a group of people than an individual politician. People sharing a political seat are all involved in the work and feel responsible for it, thus channelling the individual endeavours into collective political action. Taking account of the support network of each of the participants, the size of the network behind a collective representative can be extensive.</p>
	<p>Bancada Ativista wants to avoid the personification of political themes and direct people's focus to the actual ideas and issues at hand. Collective representation potentially decreases the effect that politicians' individual characteristics and action can have on decision-making.</p>
Gals for Gals (Poland)	<p>The group uses statistics and "memes", which provoke reactions and raise discussion. Followers can share their personal stories related to domestic violence on the group's Instagram page and the administrators assist people to find help and assistance.</p>
Sverok (Sweden)	<p>Operations are centred on local chapters and the organisation is run from the bottom up. The local chapters also receive more media coverage than the higher organisational levels and often give statements on behalf of the whole organisation.</p>
	<p>Sverok involves its members by giving them autonomy to run their operations in the way they see fit and to design all their operations based on the aspirations of the members. This engages members, who feel responsibility and pride for organising events on their own and for their friends' enjoyment. People joining an existing chapter can, on the other hand, find congenial friends and feel part of a community.</p>
Accropolis (France)	<p>Accropolis has created a political discussion environment on a digital platform that was not initially designed for such a practice. The people following and participating in the discussions facilitated by Accropolis have mostly not been interested in politics prior to finding the channel. This phenomenon has been achieved by employing a politically unconventional platform that applies randomness for suggesting content, thus also reaching those who are politically inactive. This notion increases the relative impact of the channel.</p>
	<p>Collaboration with institutions and politicians is key for creating meaningful and interesting content and new political engagement channels. Accropolis offers politicians a way to reach one of the most challenging voter groups, young men.</p>
Citizens (Iceland)	<p>Citizens has created a progressive communication system that supports constructive discussion. The ability to present and support different perspectives and ideas, and also to oppose a topic, is central to the system. The most fundamental part is, however, the inability of users to directly comment on others' opinions. The system creates a supporting and opposing column underneath each initiative and gathers the comments under them, thanks to which the debate remains factual and sensible.</p>
	<p>The adoption of these platforms has been, in most cases, initiated by the policymakers themselves. Without the support of the politicians and integration into the official political system, these direct-democracy platforms would have no prerequisites to function. Constructing and co-developing platforms with the political institutions and politicians is thus crucial.</p>
	<p>Participating in decision-making through digital platforms should take place repeatedly and continuously in order to take hold among the people. To ensure continuity, it is vital to inform users about the topics and projects outside the participatory timeframe and to convey the impacts of their actions. In participatory budgeting, for example, people need to remain closely informed about the progress and the overall timeline for forthcoming participation opportunities in order to commit them to use the platform in the future.</p>
	<p>Citizens is an independent platform, but closely resembles existing social media channels. The platforms also use functions and user interfaces already familiar to users of social media platforms, such as the "like" function on Facebook. This enables effortless use of the platform.</p>
Countable (United States)	<p>Users often find Countable (and Causes.com) as a result of being exposed to a lot of media and through word to mouth. The functions of the platform have been designed to support social movements and campaigns, who can use the platform to follow the actions of the government and to contact politicians.</p>
	<p>Countable makes following the legislative process and events easy and offers a structured channel through which people can express their opinions on bills under preparation. The platform can also be used to directly address individual politicians.</p>
Rahvaalgatus (Estonia)	<p>Data protection regulations are key when it comes to developing Rahvaalgatus. It has been estimated that people's distrust of the privacy policy is hindering their willingness to use the platform.</p>
	<p>Rahvaalgatus strives to become a permanent part of the operations of parliamentary committees and to fully establish itself as a tool of political participation. This requires close collaboration between institutional stakeholders and the people, as well as commitment to the platform.</p>

**Vouliwatch
(Greece)**

Vouliwatch has created a direct and structured communication channel between voters and MPs that is free from trolls. The organisation believes that the traditional social media environment is too uncontrolled and its behavioural culture does not support sensible and rational political discourse.

The opportunity to closely follow the actions of individual politicians and their voting behaviour offers positive feedback on the attitudes of individuals and the activities of MPs. From the citizens' point of view, the platform helps to keep politicians accountable for their promises and actions. From the point of view of MPs, Vouliwatch encourages them to be more active, transparent and interactive with civil society.

Vouliwatch advocates citizen-oriented political communication, which in addition to verbal communication relies on infographics. According to Vouliwatch, simple infographics can present and help in understanding even complex information. It can, therefore, make difficult political issues more accessible.

APPENDIX 2 – Interview template

1. Introduction

- What is your role or relationship with the movement?
 - How long have you been involved?

2. Background of the movement

- What is the background and history of the movement?
 - Who were the main people involved in establishing the movement?
 - What drove them to start the movement?
 - Was there a “break-out” moment that increased the movement’s public profile?
 - Have the activities or goals of the movement changed dramatically since its establishment?
 - What are the biggest achievements so far?
 - (Especially for one-issue political parties) Can you describe how you became a formal political party? Did it organically evolve from a grass-roots movement? What did the process look like? Why was becoming a proper party seen as necessary?
- What is the reason for the movement existing? What is its purpose?
 - What does the movement try to accomplish?
 - What problems in society is the movement trying to address?
 - What in society, if anything, is the movement trying to change or preserve?
 - Does your organisation have a role model? What or who has inspired your work?
- What makes your movement special? Why do you think your movement has succeeded in increasing the political activity of your country’s citizens?
- How is the movement’s organisational structure?
 - Is there one distinct leader?
 - Are there chapters, local branches, etc.?

3. Movement’s supporters or members

- Can you describe the average supporter/member of the movement?
 - Male/female
 - Education level
 - Occupation
 - Experience with activism
 - Values
 - Identity
- What is the motivation of the supporter/member to join the movement?
 - Why should someone join? What is the benefit to them?
 - What distinguishes you from similar movements? What makes you exceptional?
- How do new supporters/members typically find the movement?
- How open and vocal are supporters/members typically about their participation in the movement? Why?
 - Do the supporters/members of the movement experience any criticism and, if yes, from whom?
 - » Discrimination in the job market, online bullying etc.
- How large a commitment is membership of your movement?
 - How does committing to the movement affect the supporters’/members’ personal lives?
 - Do supporters/members belong to other movements simultaneously?

4. Movement's activities

- What is the goal of the movement and by what means does the organisation strive to reach that goal?
- What are the central activities that your movement engages in?
- How do supporters/members contribute to or engage with the movement?
 - Financial donations
 - Meetings/calls/other forms of communication
 - » If so, how frequently?
 - Volunteering (canvassing)
 - Public demonstrations
 - Social media and other information technologies
- How, if at all, does the movement reach out to recruit new supporters/members?
 - How, if at all, do members use their personal networks to spread the word about the movement?
 - Does the movement engage with potential recruits digitally? If so, how?
 - How does the organisation market the organisation's operations and purpose? Can you describe the organisation's desired image in communications materials?
- How do you make sure that supporters/members feel a sense of community or fulfilment?
 - How does the organisation maintain member relations?
 - How does the organisation involve people in your operations and conduct dialogue?
 - How does the organisation involve people in decision-making?
 - How do the organisation's structures and processes work on a grass-roots level, when observed by the citizens? Can you talk more about the role of grass-roots activism in your organisation's structure and operations?
- Can you tell me about your movement's online presence?
 - What online platforms does the organisation use and why?
 - What social media channels does the organisation use and why?
 - For what purpose does the movement use its online presence? For example, recruitment, external communication and/or internal communication.
 - What digital innovations, platforms, tools or apps do you use in your organisation?
- Can you give a concrete example of an engagement method or tool your organisation has used that, in your view, has been innovative or novel?
- What kind of engagement with the media has the movement had?
 - How well known is the movement?
 - Has the media reaction been positive or negative?
- Does the movement co-operate with other movements or organisations?
 - If so, what kind? Internationally?
- Can you describe the development of your movement's operating model?

5. Future outlook for the movement

- What is the end goal or vision of the movement? What are the biggest obstacles for the movement to overcome in order to achieve its vision?
- What do you think that other social movements can learn from you?
 - Can you name movements in any other countries or regions that should learn from your action or example?
 - What parts of your movement might others be able to replicate?
- Can you name other progressive movements that you think should be included in the study?

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