

**PENNE, ITALY
4-7 FEBRUARY 2020
1ST INTERNATIONAL EVENT**

**"IS IT ALREADY A DIGITAL DEMOCRACY?" - ON TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS
AND HOW THEY SHAPE DEMOCRACY**



**SUMMARY OF THE INTERVENTION**

**SPEAKER:** **Mr ALDO DI FABRIZIO – Project manager of the Municipality of Penne and of the UES/SUE (Unique European Service/Servizio Unico Europeo)**

In Europe, incentives for the development and diffusion of technological innovation have led to its use in participatory processes of direct democracy (ASSUNTO).

A. The current debate pushes analysts towards three types of political-institutional analysis:

1 opportunities and risks that characterize the challenge;

2 algorithms and digital platforms;

3 political-philosophical analysis (feeling part of the decision-making processes and problems related to cognitive bias).

B. The violation of the mandate bond (art.67 of the Constitution) in the use of digital voting platforms.

C. The advance of populism in two main aspects:

1 communication (using social networks to reflect on complex topics is risky);

2 induction (there is behind someone who manipulates or someone we do not know who operates in a non-transparent way), lack of control, lack of security.

Does digital help democracy? (RESULT). In the various countries there is a different level of development in the management of the platforms. Proposals are being studied (such as verifying sources in order to avoid fake news and Euroscepticism) and this project intends to develop new ones. Upcoming international meetings like this will help us do this.

In recent times, technology has intervened in the life of each of us in a disruptive ("disruptive") way. This new wind has also influenced the participatory processes of European citizens in democratic life. Political movements have sprung up across Europe that have their way of being and acting in liquidity (they take the shape of the containers they find from time to time). The Pirates Movement was born in Germany. In Italy first the 5 Star Movement and then Volt Italy (in Europe it is called Volt Europe) which recently participated in the regional elections in Emilia Romagna in support of the candidate president Stefano Bonaccini.

The first opportunities arose from the new forms of voting (as Antonello Soro, the Privacy Guarantor reminds us in his book): electronic and online (through platforms and algorithms). Electronic voting is carried out within a place where digital equipment is available (electronic booth); it requires more checks than the traditional ballot box vote (the vote is a sensitive data that can be altered). Online voting, however, can be done from home by accessing digital platforms if you have an account; here the risks are even higher because we do not know who is behind that platform, how the vote is counted, how the voting question is decided. It is therefore not the tool that guarantees the democracy (power of the people) of the voting and decision-making processes. Democracy does not imply everyone's duty to make judgments on everything but to give citizens the opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss and discuss and then delegate the right person and participate in a decision-making process that guarantees governance. As for the discussion, for example, the TED allowed to advance a different rhetoric through a particular format (it is a form of marketing, teaching); the paradigm is reversed and the teachers are put in a less orthodox way (students can get into the chair), less responsive to the traditional canon. It has to do with politics: participation in active life, in the social space (the polis, the agora). The speech is concentrated in 10 minutes.

The Constitution states in article 48 that the vote is personal, free, equal and secret. The technology also poses technical problems related to reliability, data security, anonymity; today there is no protection in all this. For example, the Change platform (2 million users) allowed to vote on an online petition that saved bees from 3 lethal pesticides and simplified the rules relating to the organization of live concerts. The petition allows to exercise popular sovereignty: the people stimulate the politician and sometimes suggest that he is not doing his job at best.

The journalist Barbara Carfagna says that millennials expect to come one day to have a world where they will vote only online or electronically. But will we be hacked (via cyber) in the vote or in the election results? Tel Aviv University (Israel) is wondering about the dilemma: will there be democracy with digital technology? The citizen can be influenced and manipulated invisibly.

Philosophers and constitutionalists wonder whether direct democracy does not risk transforming into heterodirect electronic democracy: directed by those who actually exercise control over the technical means aimed at expressing the political will of the demos. In various European countries there are forms of digital voting ranging from electronic voting to the deliberations of the virtual agora. The problem of people's self-government is complex and cannot be solved by a technique in itself but requires mediation, compromises and institutional arrangements. The techniques must be used with a critical sense and historical awareness. Certainly the democracy of the new digital media allows greater participation of marginal subjects. He must not always seek plebiscitary consent but also a critical reflection on the contents. This leads us to reconsider the concept of Digital Humanism (teleworking, big data, open data).

Prof.ssa Stefania Milan (Univ. Of Amsterdam): Facebook's algorithms present the contents that may interest us in our wall; this leads to the idea that everyone thinks like us (dating). He created an FB tracking expose software for a critical approach to data (it makes us understand what happens to us when we are on FB and if they have manipulated us). The network is a disintermediated space and the censorship goes more on the medium (access to the network) than on the content (Umberto Eco: internet gives space to imbeciles). In China the check takes place: by not sending news about the servers; cover negative noises; create positive noises. The digital divide and computer literacy cause a difference in the ability to inquire and vote.

Russeau platform: Until parliamentarians it did not exist. Gianroberto Casaleggio: "direct democracy in a word is that the person no longer delegates the politician, controls the work of a civil servant and is required to respect the mandate in terms of the project, of proposals and not in general political terms. The network will lead over time to a real representation of people in the political world. "

Davide Casaleggio: ”Russeau is a place where our whole community has managed to speak, build, vote for candidates. Propose laws with LEX MEMBERS, protect yourself from external attacks that took place with the shield of the network, propose new ideas for participation in the political life of your city with initiatives. Russeau was born for a participation linked to digital citizenship. "Enrica Sabatini:" Digital citizenship can transform participation and action into a shared process. Smart platforms and grids extend the potential of our actions in a connective and collaborative way through access to data and participation in the network. "

Even in the government contract with the League, voting was made on Russeau. LEX MEMBERS PARLIAMENT and REGION: the citizen votes on the proposed laws, responds to the proposed laws. E-LEARNING is the training by movement parliamentarians who insert online lessons.

Jean Jacques Russeau: "The right to vote is sufficient to impose my duty to educate myself on the matter." An informed citizen is always a free citizen. The SHARING function allows you to share through an open source archive containing laws, interpellations, agendas, queries. The network is not just a series of nodes in which the nodes are citizens but part of a larger whole. The CALL TO ACTION function is the participation (low) of the individual towards the community (high); the community supports him with the strength of the group. The ACTIVISM function is participation from top to bottom: the individual can join collective and collective projects (e.g. march for citizenship income). Casaleggio suggests using the Blockchain also in government decision-making processes.

Thaler: Human nature therefore complicates the picture of the relationship between paternalism and libertarian spirit because it is subject to heavy inertia. Staying anchored to the default choice is one of these inertias. Thaler and Sunstein propose a limited conciliation which they call "libertarian paternalism". The libertarian paternalist is paternalist in that he claims the right to modify the architecture of choice if it is shown that this can improve the quality of decisions. Nudge is a gentle push.

Kahneman: cognitive bias pushes to decide on the basis of their beliefs. induces individuals to prefer information that confirms their hypotheses and to avoid contrary possibilities.

The news should be checked (to limit fake news). There is a difference between Russeau and Cambridge Analytic according to prof. Carlo Alberto Carnevale Maffè: Russeau represents a vertically integrated industrial populism; there is a manipulation because the choice is made by someone before formulating the question (e.g. do you want with government with the PD? But it does not say that there is also LEU and Italia Viva). There is a programming of the subversion of participatory processes. The questions are neither neutral nor complex. There is a mandate restriction. Cambridge Analytic, on the other hand, is political marketing but then the vote is free.

Denis Roio talks about algorithmic sovereignty: algorithms create incentives and lead us to do something. The sharing economy is an immense economy (billions of euros): AIR BNB, Uber ... Algorithms enter our intimacy, make us share information (sometimes we don't know with whom). There are the Brain Hubs. Behind it are people who rate Google or moderate discussions on FB. There is another industrial scenario (the internet of things; internet of thing), e.g. the refrigerator connected to the supermarket or the Amazon algorithm that tells the courier how many minutes it must take to make that geolocated delivery. In the end, however, it is the intelligence of people that avoids technocracy for the benefit of democracy.