Civil Engagement Platforms for Better Public Policy:

The European Union and China Case Study.

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I, the undersigned *Svetlana Zens* hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis.

To the best of my knowledge this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non – degree program, in English or in any other language.

This is a true copy of the thesis, including final revisions.

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Abstract

Contemporary society is exposed to cyberspace in almost all the aspects of our daily lives. It is impossible to imagine life without the internet and digital platforms. Most predominantly, the internet is depicted as the tool for communication, education, and entertainment. However, it is also becoming an important link between governments and the public.

Digital platforms are greatly affecting the way that society conducts research, exchanges information, makes comments and generates interest in ideas. The more that society raises a topic on internet planforms, the more interest it attracts. This particular approach is promoting more people to raise and discuss issues online.

The diversity of information on the internet sometimes misinforms users, and it may create the wrong picture of a situation. When it comes to public policy issues, there are usually many complains in the cyber platforms. However, these complaints do not spur any actions. For this reason, it is suggested to use the internet capacity in the form of the civic engagement platforms to engage citizens in public policy activities.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Introduction

The capacity of cyberspace is unlimited and can be used for noble or bad intentions. Its technological architecture allows people to communicate without encountering time and borders constraints. Internet users' daily activities are thoughtfully registered in the cyberspace, which forms a cyber image about us. However, it is important to remember that these activities can be used to improve our lives and to create a dialog between civic society and the government. Technological aptitude towards human everyday life enables local authorities to use digital platforms, which are increasingly becoming an important part in public policy life. However, many state applications or platforms are mostly used to store data and information source. (Breeden 2012) Cities are increasingly using digital platforms to engage their citizens, and it is possible to see the public policy issues by monitoring online discussion forums. (De Lange, M. and M. de Waal, 2013) Along these lines, it is important to facilitate civil-public engagement by introducing policies on secure digital platforms.

The recent developments in the European Union and Chinese internet policies show states' intention to using digital platforms to facilitate discussions regarding public decisions. The states use set of the regulations and institutions to fulfill the strategic plans.

The information from the European Union Commission's factsheet[1] states that 64% of the European citizens think that digital technologies have a positive impact on the society. With new technological approaches, public services will meet citizens' needs and expectations.

The Chinese approach to civil engagement platforms and developing public policy decisions are business oriented. The contrast of the two different approaches by using similar tools has a great potential to create a new hybrid of civic-government engagement platform, particularly for the

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[1] EU Commission Fact list, accessed May 27, 2017: europa.eu/rapid/attachment/IP-17.../Cybersecurity.en.pdf

public policy issues. A digital platform can involve all private citizens, civic societies and special interest groups. Based on the European standards of quality and the Chinese public engagement practice, it is possible to increase the digital participation and to make more deliberate policy decisions.

Internet penetration is expanding and including online activism. As a result, there are additional filters that also provoke political control of the internet. (Journal of Democracy, 2009) Previous studies have also found a relationship between online and offline forms of civic engagement, such that those individuals who have higher levels of online civic engagement also have higher levels of offline civic engagement. (Smith, 2009) The policy paper "Online spaces for urban citizen engagement: A comparison of civic apps" suggests the importance of the civic engagement applications in the chain of communication between society and public institutions. (Sarah Giest,2016) "Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule" discusses the various views of internet influence on the regime and society. Proponents see the internet as a tool which has the potential to overcome authoritarian regimes but how this can be done. (Shanthi Kalathil,Taylor C. Boas, 2003)

The aim of this research is to prove that civic engagement on digital platforms is important in developing public policies and improves governmental decision-making. The basic principle of the platforms is to attract the maximum number of the participants, engage them in discussions, bind it with the existing legal regulations, and make the public policy agenda forming transparent and safe.

Studying the differences between the European Union and Chinese cyber policies will help to analyze examples of the civic engagement platforms and their impact on the public policy. With this imperial research, it is expected to prove that civic society engagement in the public policy process through digital civic engagement platforms is efficient, secure and important for the public

policy sphere. It is expected to find the differences in the policy approach for the further policy recommendations to improve the mechanisms of the public policy cycle with in the digital platforms.

The imperial analysis is going to be collected by a semi-structured interview method. The interview was conducted among the academia and public experts. The platform analysis list is based on the Horizon 2020[2] budgeting projects in the European Union and digital forums introduced by Chinese business companies. It is important to make a comparative analysis of the current and previous policies to come up with the recommendations on the policy improving measures for the future of the cyberspace and the engagement platforms.

This research survey was conducted through face-to-face and telephone calls formant interviews. The interviews were conducted among the officials, academia experts and the platforms producers between April - May 2018. The semi-structured interviews clarified the issues regarding the practical and theoretical approach applying digital platforms.

Due to time restrictions and the limited academic research on the particular topic and countries, only six interviews were possible to conduct. However, all the spheres of this subject were covered. The experts had prominent experience in the cyber security policy, project management of the digital planforms, media policy academics, cyber security researchers. The interviewees were;

- Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar, the Head of Cyber Policy Coordination, European External Action Service,
- Yuxi Nie, Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Area Studies Leiden University with the focus on Chinese Political Communication and Media,

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[2] Horizon 2020, accessed 25 May, 2018 https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/

- Dr. Jelizaveta Krenjova-Cepilova, expert of e-Democracy domain at the e-Governance Academy,

- Ferran Davesa, a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for European Studies (IES) at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), focus Hybrid Democracy in the EU,

- Trisha Meyer is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute for European Studies (IES) and an assistant professor at Vesalius College with focus on the media and their transition to the online environment,

- Jamal Shahin, Assistant Professor at the University of Amsterdam, focus on global internet governance, and the impact of the internet on policy making.

When all the interviews were transcribed, they formed the parameters of the research framework. Further, the interviews included an explanation of the civic engagement platforms and the policy background. Thus, the interviews helped to observe the policy merge and data analysis.

This thesis paper is expected to prove that the civil engagement platforms bring positive impact on the public policy without threatening democracy nor privacy. Additionally, this paper will show that investing in these platforms is the most efficient and effective way to improve the public participation in public policy decisions.

This paper will answer the following questions: What are the particularities of the EU and Chinese public engagement and cyber policies? How do these policies influence the implementation of the civic engagement platforms? Which civic engagement platforms are sufficient to use for the public engagement for the better policies? It needed to compare the link between the policies and practices and to highlight the trends.

The civic engagement process is the tool which shows how the democracy developed in the country. According to Paterman, "participation develop and foresters the very qualities for (democracy); the more individuals participate the better able they become to do so ." (Palerman, 1970)

The civic engagement platforms can be considered as the opportunity to join governmental decisions with public engagement. According to Stocker, "opportunities for the political participation matter because they help reduce inequality in the redistribution of power and courage responsiveness to the individual and collective needs" (Stocker 1996, 188) If we enable the population to feel involved and equal, they will feel invested in public policies.

Civic society is considered to be perceived as the mechanism through which governmental decisions meet citizens' needs. If we are talking about the democratic approach, it has to include every member of society; the individual would work in cooperation with institutions. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's opinion is that feeling of participation is a necessary condition force for forming individualism and further psychological features.

The theoretical thesis framework is allowing us to have the theoretical background to the topic of the thesis. The information on the current cyber policies of the European Union and China and the case studies of the successfully implemented civic engagement platforms identifies the current and future directions towards public policy agenda forming and implantation.

The reason I chose this particular topic was driven by the lack of the research made in the sphere of cyber and public policy. It is relatively a new subject but it is changing very rapidly. I think that the usage of the modern instruments such as internet and civic engagement platforms will help increase participation of the society and will encourage people to follow the developments in the public policy by having 24/7 access. I chose European Union and the People`s Republic of China because

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they have different approaches to the public policy. However, China has technological advantage and has intention to become the next "super power" by not following the democratic approach. The European Union has an equal approach to all of its member states, while dealing with Chinese interests penetrating the EU.

Chapter 1: The Notions of Public Engagement in the Public Policy of the European Union and the People's Republic of China

The following chapter is going to describe the internal mechanisms of the public policy engagement in the European Union and People's Republic of China. It will explain the cultural and procedural differences of the two states' public policy agenda and the actors in the decision making process. Further, a case study will show the different formats of the civic engagement platforms and their focus.

1.1 The Internal Mechanisms of the Civic Engagement Platforms in The Public Policy.
From the ancient times, when countries started to form their governments and establish rules that followed a democracy approach, there was born the definition of the public. The public is a group of people joined by a common interest. In the frames of this thesis, it is suggested that the digital approach to the civic engagement is necessary for the public to fully participation in governments' decision-making in order to legitimize public policies.

We can dispute about whether public participation is a political outcome of the society. However, it is important that public participation is the term which requires engaging the stakeholders to participate in making public policy. Public participation in governmental decisions has a long history, with traces of it noticed in ancient Greece and in England. Until 1960, the governmental approach was more towards the external participation. This method became institutionalized by the Lyndon Johnson`s Great Society program.. (Cogan and Sharpe, 1986) According to the Cogan and Sharpe, public participation provides the civil society the ability to influence on the public policy decisions and thereby become a significant component of the democratic decision-making process. Citizens' participation is a process which provides private individuals an opportunity to influence

public decisions and has long been a component of the democratic decision-making process. (Cogan and Sharpe, 1986).

Further, public participation engagement in policy decisions allows to form coherent public policy agenda. The policy's stakeholders can be from the different interest groups, such as individuals, governments, institutions, businesses and civil society organizations. Despite the political or public responses to an issue, the participation is defined as the sum of the actions produced by the individuals or political system and make the participation operate. (Hagen, 1997). It is important that the one who is affected by the policy is the one who is obliged to participate and thereby empower the democratic government.

It is suggested that public participation can create a collective knowledge that inspires individuals to become involved with developing public policies.[3] Participation has been variously described as a means and an end, as essential within agencies as it is in the field and as an educational and empowering process necessary to correct power imbalances between rich and poor. It has been broadly conceived to embrace the idea that all "stakeholders" should take part in decision-making and it has been more narrowly described as the extraction of local knowledge to design programs off site. (Jennings, 2000) The above notion may create the other perception as "*the bigger the better*" or " *the more, the merrier*".

The notion of the public participation is always contested and raises the question as to whether input is expected from every stakeholder. It is suggested that for the public participation it has to be strong institutional commitment and sometimes reorganization. (Ibes, 2008) However, public participation has to be done in the rubric of current regulations and in the framework of local interests.

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[3] Principals of the Public Participation, accessed, May,25, 2018:http://www.co-intelligence.org/CIPol_publicparticipation.html

Public participation is an essential part of the public policy cycle. However, it requires significant efforts to engage society in the public policy agenda as active actors and decision shapers. Further, every state with its regulations and restrictions has it is own model. In some countries, public institutions are tasked with the various public policy engagement focuses. Also, it depends on the internal models of the countries. As the thesis paper covers, the EU and China it will be contrasted to analyze two starkly different ways of conducting public engagement.

The Chinese Public Policy

The Chinese public policy approach involves two policy–making and implementation structures: one is the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the other is the Chinese government. (Berman 2010). The public policy decisions are the most taken by the CCP, so the CCP as the main policy making actor. The CCP can influence on the decision making process of the State Council, National People's Congress.

The Chinese government is unitarian, by which policy decisions follows a top-down approach. Local governments do not possess any independence nor autonomy. The local government's political role is the translation of national-level decisions to local realities. The policy initiation is implemented by local governments, since the lower levels of government understand how to implement new programs on the ground. *Figure 1.1* schematically shows the structure of the policy making and implementation in China's government.
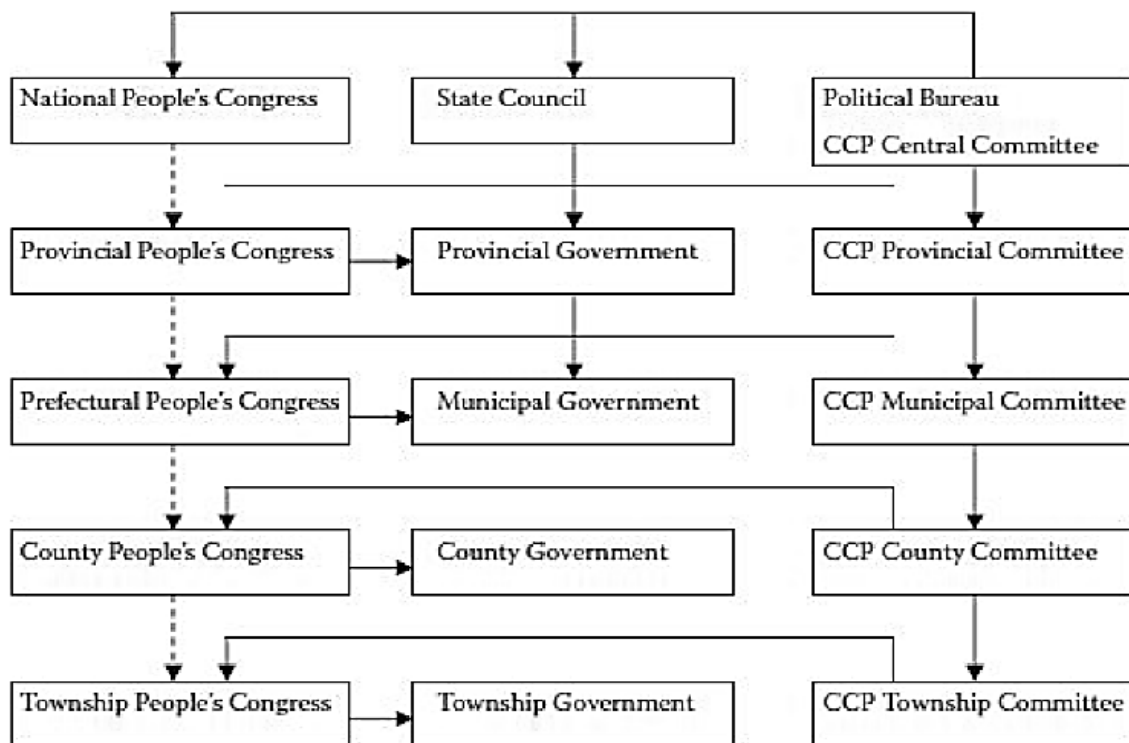
Figure 1.1 The structure of the policy making and implementation in China's government.

However, despite the China's hierarchy decision-making structure, local governments can conduct bottom up policy making. The State Council (i.e. China's chief administrative authority) has a role of the information point about the policies approved and the local authorities that launch those policies. The Chinese government is usually using the circulation method for the public policy, in order to revise omissions during the policy implementation.

In order to mandate public policies, the lower levels of the Chinese governments are obliged to fulfil certain criteria. For example, there needs to be a consensus between the political and administrative branches. First, officials develop the policy agenda. Second, the administration departments must agree on the technical implementation of the proposal. Ideally, the consensus has to be between the CCP, government and the People's Council.

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The other feature of the Chinese public policy process is that it should comply with the regulations and standards of the CCP guideline, which were implemented after 1978.

The way that the policy is developed is through higher-level advice on a particular issue. In China, the issue needs to attract the attention of the higher level authorities in one of two options. The first option is through personal connections, in which the proposer and the decision makers have a personal affiliation. The second option is usually the nominative statement, since the process of adoption was done and the information has to become public. However, it is obvious that the political leaders are always involved in the public policy processes. (Ibes. 2010)

The policy making process in China is usually divided into three directions of the policies: 1) legislative, 2) administrative, and 3) political.

The People's Congress is in charge of the legislative policies, the administration units are in charge of the administration policies when the political are under the CCP. These three distributions are the obvious example of the "rubber stamp" institution under the guidance of the only decision making actor.

Despite the limited freedom in the decision making process, the Chinese government still possess a public participation component. According to the Wang Shaoguang, a professor in Hong Kong University, it is suggested that the Chinese public policy agenda for the public participation contains following six modes:

1.Closed door mode, when it is deliberately decided not to engage the public and not to let the policy win.

2. Mobilization means mode, when the all possible means are used to get the policy to the agenda and receive a much as possible votes for it.

3. Inside assess mode, when policy is proposed by the think tanks groups closely connected to the core team.

4. The rich out mode, when the think tank groups make the agenda public and try to utilize the public attention to push through the policy.

5. The popular pressure mode, when a policy proposal was proposed by a "noble patriot".

6. The more mode, when advocates use the public opinion to accumulate the pressure on the policy which is required to be changed. (Shaoguang 2008)

Despite the availability of the modes and other rules, local governments are quite reluctant to use them. These rules are not institutionalized and thus the implementation of the public participation is low. Additionally, state authorities prefer to involve the experts rather than involve the public in making policies. (Ibes, 2008)

The Chinese approach to the public participation is quite reluctant, and it is obvious that nothing is happening without CCP influence. Even the other major state actors are limited in their power. For every aspect, it is required consensus which has no time limits and the policy decision making can take years.

With the internet outbreak in China, there have been new forms of the public participation. Civic society has more avenues through which to express opinions by using digital platforms. Furthermore, the highest Chinese leadership is getting the information on the political current situation in the country through the digital platforms.

The European Public Policy

The idea of public participation in the European Union and the law development process are essential parts in the life of the EU society. The role of the highest ranks public institutions do not

finish with the bureaucracy it involves public engagement component. It has to comply with the models of the supporting participation and to engage the citizens to strengthen it.

When we talk about the European approach, we mean Brussels; when we discuss Brussels, we mean Europe. It is a known fact that the legislations and regulations introduced by the EU Commission are compiled by all of the EU member states. However, public participation is one of the hardest issues with which the 28 member states have to deal. The Lisbon Treaty states in the article 11, "*The institutions shall, by appropriate means, give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action*".

Before the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU Commission developed a White Paper on the principles to enhance the public participation in the policy making process: openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. These principles not only "underpin democracy and the rule of law in the member states, but they apply to all levels of government – global, European, national, regional and local[4]." The strengthening the participatory ability of the public is suggested to be the core of the policy forming agenda.

How does the participation look like in the EU vision? The European attitude towards public participation is that the public policy process is the interaction between the government and the public by the constant information about the changes and implementation. According to the European Commission's principles, the stages of public policy development (i.e., preparation, drafting, adoption, implementation, and evaluation) should be subject to public participation. "The quality of EU policy depends on ensuring wide participation throughout the policy chain – from conception to implementation." It is suggested that there are various forms of participation,

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[4]White Paper on European Governance, COM(2001) 428

including access to information, consultation and active engagement through dialogue and partnership. The following is a summary of how these levels are described in different documents.[5]

1.2 Case Study: CIVOCRACY, VOLIS, WeChat

The technological approach in the modern times can be very helpful for the public policy cycle. It can help to facilitate exchanges of information, build common knowledge, and as follows save time for the decision making between the society and the state institutions. It is obvious that information which is online can be used or the political reasons, like promoting accountability and increasing the trust among political entities. Further, the information shared online has a faster distribution and the less costs. However, the technological approach and the data distribution is not enough to achieve engagement success in the public policy sphere. There several factors which are necessary. These factors will be discussed in the next chapter.

In the era of the civic engagement on digital platforms, it is important to present the information to the public in the way that the public could understand the peculiarities and could fully take an action for the policy implementation. Civic engagement applications use technological advantages to play the essential role for the humanity and bring the balance between state and the population.

The reason that the society has to use the civic engagement applications is so that citizens could deliberate in decision-making processes. For this reason, the engagement platforms are used to "tie action to discussion." (Fung and Wright 2001, 7) This is helping to reduce the time for people to mobilize to provide opinions and recommendations. The digital platforms is also helping to stop various malicious policies that the public consider harmful. The most important aspect that it plays is being the catalyst role for decision-making processes. Moreover, digital platforms help to make decision-making processes transparent and increase governmental accountability to the public. For

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[5] Council of Europe (CoE) CoE, Code on Participation 2009; OECD, Citizens as Partners, 2001

example, "opening the backdoors" of the budgeting process and involving citizens in learning and deciding about its trade-offs will decrease society's political apathy and increase its engagement (Geissel 2009; Ganuza and Francés 2012; Allegretti and Herzberg 2004; Herzberg 2011).

Through civic engagement applications, it is entirely possible to strength the citizen applications as follows to make citizens voices' stronger. Civic engagement platforms (CEP) allows sharing and interpreting data in a short period of time. It is very essential when we want to increase the social cohesion and support for the particular policies and democracy.

The effect of the CEP depends on the number of the individuals engaged -- more users to be engaged, the better for the policy. By this account, it is necessary to mobilize the higher level of the engagement.

According to the report on the Civic Engagement "How can digital technologies underpin citizen-powered democracy?"[6] It is important to foreseen the implications with the evidence. For example, the government service is provided to the public in the form of the tax applications, passports applications, official references. The Government Digital Service (GDS) play an important part of these services. It is suggested that the wider the service implementing, the more public policy receives benefits out of the service spread. The benefits can be in the form of the time saving, remote work, removing the borders between the institutions and public.

The digital approach to the public policy process allows citizens to interact with the citizens and improves the government services. Currently, digital planforms are playing an important part in the data collection and information distribution. (Lange, Waal 2013) It is important to mention that platforms can be very useful for the public policy needs especially at the agenda forming and

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[6] Dubow, Talitha, Axelle Devaux, Christian Van Stolk, and Catriona Manville, Civic engagement: How can digital technologies underpin citizen-powered democracy?. RAND Corporation and Corsham Institute, 2017. https://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF373.html.

decision making stages. Despite the country political regime, technology can come of the help to the society. The European Union and Chinese government fully understand the value of the modern technologies and cyber capacity to develop public policies.

Along the lines of the thesis paper, it is suggested to make an analysis of the CIVOCRACY, VOLIS, WeChat platforms. This analysis will show how different states use various forms of digital platforms.

The Civocracy platform was founded by the Benjamin Aaron Snow, when he was studying for his Master of Public Policy (MPP) at the Hertie School of Governance and rapidly concurred the attention of the public.

"The idea for Civocracy became a fully formulated one: an online platform where the government could engage with the communities to get validation of policy and co-create projects in an open and constructive way. We were selected for Startupbootcamp in Amsterdam, and during the programme, secured our first clients – Losser and Potsdam. In the three years following this, we've migrated to Berlin, have 15 clients in four countries, and have grown our team to nine: our latest addition was Bassel Tabet, former VP at Credit Suisse, as our CSO." [7]

Civocracy[8] is the platform that helps to facilitate the collaborative decision between the decision-makers and community members. The reason of the platform is to attract attention of the society to the political decisions, public policy and proposed alternatives. The feature of the Civocracy is the diverse list of the participants. The application's uses include governments, business sector, organization, and civil society. It brings them together and built the bridges between the different

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[7] Civocracy: Shape the Future of Your City, interview with Benjamin Aron Snow: https://www.leapfunder.com/blog/civocracy-shape-the-future-of-your-city

8 ttps://www.civocracy.org/

sectors. According to the press information[9], Civocracy provides a neutral platform for the stakeholders and the government dialog. It helps municipalities to benefit from the citizens feedback, moreover it makes public policy processes more transparent. Civocracy conducts the policy shaping activities online and offline with the same participants. Officials can start the discussion in the application platform and ask for the citizens' reaction on the certain topic as well as find the supporters.

The platform Civocracy was launched in the four cities in the EU, which helps the cross-city collaboration because it is linking related discussions in different locations. The platform is available in English, Dutch, German and French. According to the Civocracy press information, it is already working with local authorities in Potsdam (DE), Losser (NL), and a French Metropolis. In addition, thirteen cities are planning to open Civocracy and forecast to have social media reach of 290,000 people.

Civocracy has a list of the projects which helped the local authorities in establishing better conditions in the public places, control the quality of water, and reduce the bureaucracy. One of the examples is Ville de Lyon. The local authorities decided to consult their citizens on educational structural change. The authorities' decision was to focus on the education organizations and collect the qualitative feedback. "Ville de Lyon read 99.5% of all the comments submitted on the Civocracy platform. One thousand fourteen children from 20 schools were interviewed."[10] At the end the Ville de Lyon authorities implemented six changes. There were changes in the daily learning structure, increase time for the breaks, free daily child care at schools, increased extracurricular activities, and improved teacher-student interactions.

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[9] https://www.civocracy.org/press

[10] Civocracy, Project: improving educational structures: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/c88825_f607c4aa6930477d91a0aae0e532513b.pdf

However, there is another platform which covers the other part of the public policy is the VOLIS.VOLIS[11] (System for Local Democracy Procedures) claims to change the public policy in the participatory budget aspect as well as speed up the process of the decision-making processes and reduce expenses. VOLIS creates an online environment where stakeholders, and councils members can conduct sessions along the agenda. At the same time, the platform allows to monitor and extract the voting results and automatically writes the protocols of the meeting and makes it available online.

The features of the platform is the paperless document process, possibility to participate at the meetings, e-voting, webcasting, archiving, participatory democracy and budgeting[12]. (www.volis.ee)

The data which is collected along the policy shaping process allows users to generate the trend views for the target groups and differentiate them. The setting of the platform the specific participatory budget function which gave a beginning of the Tartu project on the participatory budget. The participatory budget module with in the VOILS allows to submit the proposals with consideration of the data security and even preventing the double voting.

When we start to talk about the civic engagement in China, the first name that comes in mind is WeChat (known in China as "Wēixìn," which means "micro-message" in Chinese). WeChat is not just a digital platform for the communication. It contains a set of rules, applications, regulations, and even a mobile operating system. WeChat was introduced in 2011 by the Chinese holding Tencent. The number of the active users reached 980 million.[13] The uses of internet and SNS have fostered civic engagement within China (Bondes & Schucher, 2014). This is how WeChat became a part of the civic engagement process. WeChat gives access to the various services starting from

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[11] VOLIS is the Estonian acronym for "information system for local councils" – "volikogu infosüsteem".

[12] https://www.volis.ee/gvolis/?lang=en&kid=

[13] Nocole Jao, WeChat now has over 1 billion active monthly users worldwide, 2018: https://technode.com/2018/03/05/wechat-1-billion-users/

sending messages and finishing with the complicated city service. The platform is a good example for when business oriented digital product can be a one click helper for the public policy change. The multitasking nature of the platform enables all the users -- including the state institutions -- to survey the current situation on users' traffic. For example, WeChat platforms has the "heat map" where the user can check the situation of foot traffic in real time. However, the government adapted this application feature to identify the possible protests.[14] This particular platform is also acting as a battlefield for the public shaping opinion where the traditional wu mao (five cent army) paid by the government is taking leading position. According to the Citizen Lab fellow Lotus Rian, to assist the opinion shaping there was introduced a list key words which block the message flow further[15]. "The government is starting to put together a real name registration and setting up a social credit system to tie one's online activity to one's physical identity. This makes it much more difficult to participate in that [meme] culture." (McLauchlin, 2017) For example, the Chinese society is very concern about the air pollution and ecology policy. This created the WeChat as the digital mobilization agent to engage population into the public policy. Citizens documented the air condition and post it in the WeChat with the photos comparing landmark buildings before the smog to landmark buildings after the smog. This civic activity triggered many comments and discussion (Boykoff, 2016). We may say that civic engagement applications foster a citizenry that is increasingly knowledgeable about public policy issues and collective problems and promote civic participation and public deliberation within China. (Zhou, 2010, p. 1005) In a nutshell, it is suggested that the civic engagement cases are useful to identify the trends and directions of the future step in the policies. Since these platforms are digital and activated online and involve the private data, it is important to study the cyber policies of the proposed states because it will show the

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14 John Horwitz, WeChat's new heat map feature lets users—and Chinese authorities—see where crowds are forming, 2017: https://qz.com/518908/wechats-new-heat-map-feature-lets-users-and-chinese-authorities-see-where-crowds-are-forming
15 Lotus Ruan, Jeffrey Knockel, Jason Q. Ng, and Masashi Crete-Nishihata, One App, Two Systems How WeChat uses one censorship policy in China and another internationally, 2016: https://citizenlab.ca/2016/11/wechat-china-censorship-one-app-two-systems/

bounders and gaps which might be the reasons of failure of the digital public policy agenda forming approach

Chapter 2: Cyber Strategy of the European Union and the People's Republic of China

The current chapter is devoted to the cyber developments the EU and PRC policies. The idea of the information provided in the chapter is to see the differences and similarities of the two states' cyber policy approach. The comparison of the two approaches will show the possible ways to enhance the civic engagement platforms usage in the public policy sphere. According to the National Cyber Security Index (NCSI),[16] the Belgium (which is the country of the EU's capital-Brussels) takes the 14th place and China takes 52nd among other countries. The NCSI rating in Belgium is 68.83 and 38.96 in China. When the digital development is 77.62 in Belgium and 58.00 in China. However, it is known that Chinese evolution in the cyber sphere is moving rapidly. This brings us to the question how different are the requirements of the EU and CPR in the cyberspace.

2.2 Cyber Strategy of the European Union and its Peculiarities

Since the paper will investigate the value of the civic engagement platforms and its value for the public policy, it necessary to study the cyber background because knowing the background helps to understand the limits and consequences of the digital platforms. Moreover, it shows the government approach towards the cyberspace and future development of the civic engagement in the cyberspace as follows personal data protection.

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[16]The National Cyber Security Index is a global index, which measures the preparedness of countries to prevent cyber threats and manage cyber incidents. The NCSI is also a database with publicly available evidence materials and a tool for national cyber security capacity building.: https://ncsi.ega.ee/compare/

The European Union has an equally democratic approach to all of the sectors of the public spheres and policies. Even the cyber security policy with the national interest protection tackle the democratic approach. Last year, the EU introduced an updated version of its Cyber Security Strategy which was made based on the gaps of the EU cyber strategy in 2013. *"The new Cyber Security Strategy of 2017 is more focused on the cooperation capacity increase. Which suggests the equal distribution of the related measures and instruments to be distributed on the territory of the EU member states. "(TIIRMAA-KLAAR Heli, Head of the Cyber Policy Coordination, EEAS[17])*

June 2017 was marked for the European Union as the cyber security agenda. The newly revised strategy tackled the civilian and military infrastructure. The McAfee & Centre for Strategic and International Studies report was stating that there is a significant financial loss which governments are facing with. The estimated cost on the global scale is about 400 USD billion. However, even a non-significant amount provides enough reason to pay attention to the cyber issue and security. This particular point mean that the cyberspace is vulnerable. Eighty-six percent of the EU citizens believe that there is a risk of becoming a victim of cyber-crimes[18]. The Eurobarometer survey states that 64% of the EU population think that digital technologies have a positive on the social life and the 67% on the quality of life[19]. The threat coming from the cyber part is can affect any landscape in general. It can affect the stakeholders in any policy, decision makers, end-users, and other groups.[20]

The future of EU Defense highlights the necessity of the capacity increase on the cyber defense. Here is the chance to introduce NATO agenda to protect EU citizens for from the being attacked in the cyberspace, particularly if we are talking about the civic engagement platforms.

The recently introduced GDPR regulations in the EU are vivid examples of the EU authorities to concern on the private data security. *"The EU would be able to run high-end operations to better*

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[17] EU WHOISWHO:http://europa.eu/whoiswho/pdf/EUWhoiswho_269879_EN.pdf

[18] Eurobarometer on Cybersecurity (EBS 464)

[19] Attitudes towards the impact of digitization and automation on daily life, Eurobarometer, 2017

[20] ENISA Threat Landscape Report 2017 15 Top Cyber-Threats and Trends, 2018

*protect Europe, potentially including operations against terrorist groups, naval operations in hostile environments or cyber-defense actions."(*Reflection Paper On The Future Of European Defense, 2017) The EU position with in the current strategy is the following. The EU member states are responsible for their national cybersecurity; however, the EU is willing to provide incentives to elaborate on the strengthening of the cyber security capacity at the national and cross border level.

The strategy focus is on the security and high risk applications, using cybersecurity in widely-deployed digital products, networks, systems and services. The set of the focal points enables the EU cybersecurity capacity to ensure the citizens in the safety and protection of the cyberspace which by default protects the private data.

Cybersecurity is widely-deployed in digital products, networks, systems and services. The following area obliges the private and public sectors to fulfill with the directive of the EU on the European Electronic Communications Code which requires every organization to respect the security measures prescribed for the relevant cyber risks.   That enables users to be defended from the cyber-attacks. These products are only to be used if they were built under the "security by design" method. The producers in order to be able to distribute their devices are obliged to fulfill with the necessary updates of the software in case of the identification of the threats. Without proper updates, the devices are not allowed to be sold and used in any market.

Since it is an important issue with the resilience through the rapid emergency responses, the EU had introduced the Cyber Security Emergency Response Fund which can help when cybersecurity incidents can have effect on the economy functioning. That will allow the EU member states to approach for help in case of the cyber emergency.

The EU's commitment to the cyber defense and the security competence network opened a wide perspective for the cybersecurity research. For example, the Public-Private Partnership on

Cybersecurity which was created in 2016 and was allocated EUR 1.8 billion of investment by 2020. Under the Horizon 2020, the EU is going to invest 50 million euro for the stimulation of the technology development of the cyber competence.

According to IBM's 2014 Cybersecurity Intelligence Index, 95% of the security-related incidents are happening because of the human factor. The human element is one of the most common faults when we are talking about the threats and with the civic engagement platforms it is directly exposed. The recent survey showed that people mostly share their birth date (76%) then it comes to the phone numbers (73%) and the third biggest percent for the sharing the information is (49%).[21] Regarding available data, it is obvious that civic engagement platforms do not bring any threat to the policy and the public. However, it is public who need to be more careful on the data sharing.

The cyberspace can be limited by the censorship and technical infrastructure. For this reason, the EU major pillar of the cyber strategy is the strengthening of the International Cooperation on Cyber Security. *"The EU priorities will establishment of a strategic framework for conflict prevention and stability in cyberspace in its bilateral, regional, multi-stakeholder and multilateral engagements."* (JOIN(2017) 450). If the EU enforcing the cooperation in the cyber security it will influence the measures, other countries may take as the good example, such a phenomenon know the "Brussels sindrome".

The Digital4Development is promoting the security capacity in the development which is the trigger point for the EU Agenda 2030. This means that the focus will be on the joint effort on the increasing the capacity of the cyber topic itself: implementation the cyber policy to make eu population be sure that they can leave an use the safe cyberspace and use the open data as follow.

It is obvious that the cyber space of the EU has to provide the safe and day-to-day service and protect the all the human spheres including the ICT.

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[21] Survey Findings: Are Consumers Making It Easier for Identity Thieves?: https://www.experian.com/blogs/ask-experian/survey-findings-are-consumers-making-it-easier-for-identity-thieves/?pc=prt_exp_0&cc=prt_0817_itpsurvey

2.3 Cyber Strategy of People's Republic of China and its Implications

The peculiarity of the Chinese public policy process has similar features as the EU but the CCP has the final say. The new trends are always introduced by the CCP, the same as with the cyber policy. The 19th Party Congress President Xi introduced the new direction in the cyber policy that to led the CPR to become the New Digital Silk Road. Cyber superpower 网络强国 (wǎngluò qiángguó) direction was highlighted during the General Secretary Xi Jinping's. The strategic concept attached to these words in addition to the other initiatives are creating the proposed draft of the Chinese vector towards cyber space.

The CPR is very active in promoting the creating the online forums where citizens can fully participate and provide their opinion on the policy making initiatives. It might appear very surprising for those who do not follow Chinese developments in this particular sphere. It is very surprising that Chinese citizens are allowed to post and cover wide range of the topics for example on local corruption, environment, financial policies. (MacKinnon 2012) However, Chinese approach to the cyberspace and its security can be described by the uncertainty of Chinese capacity in this particular sphere. "The Chinese government is not sure if it can trust anyone; this is why it has this type of behavior."[22] For this reason, China wants to make sure that the cyber front is protected.

Over the last five years, the People's Republic of China showed a very active enthusiasm in the cyber policy sphere. In November 2016, China introduced the Cybersecurity Law which came in force later in June 2017. The law's main intention was to focus on the national security then it was about the cross border data flow, which influenced the ICT industry.

[22] Yuxi Nie, Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Area Studies, Leiden University

The Cybersecurity Law was constructed in the way to tackle critically important for China spheres (i.e. business, politics and public). Basically, every entity which has email and produce data becomes the "critical sector" including international companies.

The law obliges companies to cooperate with the government which described as the technical support. Article 21 imposed mandatory testing and certification, plus it required the establishment of technological measures to prevent any malware attack and monitor, record the network, and undertake data classification, back-ups of important data, and encryption.

Article 37 obliged all the related entities to store all the gathered or produced data to store on the land of China. The law implies the data of economic, technological or scientific nature not to be transferred any out the mainland of China because it may be a threat to national security or public interest.

However, it was not only cyber regulation introduced by the CPR. The established of laws on censorships and Telecom Service Licensing Requirement, State Radio Administrative Measure, and set technological standards to be used in the cyberspace.

For example, there introduced the Great Fire Wall and the Gold Shield initiatives. The initiatives which provide the full control of the cyberspace internally and externally.

It is obvious that the international democratic community was not approving the non-democratic attitude in the cyberspace. However, it triggered the CPR to propose to the UN body the International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace[23] (ISCC) for the peace and security in the world. The basic idea of the document was to focus attention on the cyber sovereignty of the states, and to use the UN body and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) for changing law. The document contains the information about international cyber governance,

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[23] International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace, 2015 http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2017-03/01/c_136094371.htm

multi-government platforms and the democratic approach. Although, it mentioned that no interference to be done into the internal business of the country.

Significant attention was put to the militarization and deterrence[24]. "The tendency of militarization and deterrence buildup in cyberspace is not conducive to international security and strategic mutual trust." (ISCC) However, it is suggested that this particular point was addressed to the United States because of the US Defense Department strategy`15.

Chinese territory is vast and differs from the East to the West, even though it is one country. For this reason, the Chinese approach to the regulations and policies is multileveled. For example, the Chinese Ministry of the Public Security introduced the multi-level protection scheme which implied the restrictions on the ICT, party state ownership enterprises, and external ownership of the websites. The entities were graded from one to five points for the purpose of categorization to identify how critical it is for the Chinese national security. For example the items or entities which received category (point) three or more are the subject to have Chinese IP.   All the IT products above three pints are the subject to the mandatory certification according the China Compulsory Certification for Information Security Products (CCCi) guidelines for government procurement.

As a result of the 2014 JCCT discussions, companies are no longer required to use Chinese encryption for MLPS. Few foreign companies are licensed to sell products at level three. The State Council is in the process of updating and expanding MLPS to cover new high growth sectors including big data, cloud computing, and mobile internet.[25]

The 19th Chinese Communist Party Congress was marked by the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) as relies of the document that outline the cyber policy of China in the advantage of the president Xi and the Party priorities. It was stated in the document that the military-civilian

24 International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace, 2015: http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2017-03/01/c_136094371.htm
25U.S. Commercial Service, Jane (Xia) Shen, China - Technology and ICT: https://www.export.gov/article?id=China-Technology-and-ICT

integration for cybersecurity and informatization is an important component. More over the directive proposes outlines the focus on the further implementation of the cyber security projects, innovation and military integration.

The State Council and the Ministry of the Science as the one of the highest policy making level institution has introduced the Program for Science and Technology Development 2006-2020[26] emphasizes the importance of integrating civilian and military scientific and technical efforts.

According to the document, the Cyberspace Administration of China's (CAC) together with the Cybersecurity Review Expert Panel and the third party decided to establish regulation on the security reviews on ICT products prior to their sale to operators of critical information infrastructure. Industries which are related to the finance, telecommunications, energy, and transportation were requested to introduce its own standards to the ICT. However, all ICT products are the subject tot full fill the general CAC standard.

Comprehensive analysis on cyber policy of China done by the Doctor Austin, introduced the research insights of the China understanding. It is very important to understand China because it is takes a strategic position in the world arena now. Based on the International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace and the investments it does into the cyber sphere. China has ambitions to become the cyber power, plus it is one of the biggest ICT exporter in the world. China (Austin, 2014) Although the internet sovereignty which is biggest concern for the international society .

CPR perspective is more to protect its cyberspace. It is suggested that China does not feel well protected for this reason it establishes such restrictive regulations. Internet was introduced to the wide Chinese population just at the beginning of 2000 and ICT, economic cyber , applications of the cyber power are strengthening the Chinese government.

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[26] The Ministry of Science and Technology People's Republic of ChinaNewsletter,
no.456:http://www.most.gov.cn/eng/newsletters/2006/200611/t20061110_37960.htm

Chapter 3: ICT Sector and Public Policy

"Information and communications technology" (ICT) is a term used by academics since 1980. The United Nations International Telecommunication Union introduced ICT as equipment and services in telecommunication for the capturing and displaying information digitally. We know that the technological boom around the globe enabled ICT to be represented in all spheres of the human life including public policy.

The Telecoms' over-the-top (OTT) services, FinTech, gaming, mobile platforms, and social mobile internet cloud (SMIC), wearables, big data, smart cities, e-health, and internet of things (IOT) are the core of ICT. Around these spheres, the public is engaged.

The current chapter is going to describe the current developments and plans of the EU and the CPR in the ICT sector. This comparison will show the attitudes of the EU and the CPR has on the ICT sector and the compass the authorities are following.

3.1 Analysis of the ICT Sector in the European Union and People's Republic of China, Current Stage and Trends.

The EU Commission became very concern about cyber, ICT and innovations[27]. Several member states were concern about the fall of the investment and productivity after the crisis. The ICT industry also attracted attention since it the tool which makes the public and politics to communicate. One of the EU Commission recommendations to the EU Parliament was to allocate the capital for the development of the ICT and education, same as the cyber strategy to increase the capacity. Also to solve the structural issues which are affecting the ICT.

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[27] EU Commission, Annual Growth Survey, COM(2016) 725

The EU is interested in the innovation and the development of the ICT for the interest of the EU citizens one of the directions in the Horizon 2020[28] program is the ICT for Societal Challenges. *"ICT in Horizon 2020 will support the development of ICT in Science, ICT in industrial leadership and ICT in societal challenges."*[29] The ICT Societal Challenge consists of the seven points which by the 2020 the EU has to reach.

The EU is investing in public ICT interests by giving out grants. China main land is succeeding in the Information and communication technology (ICT) and is the most profitable market sectors in China People Republic. It is even suggested that the Chinese ICT market is the largest ICT market for import and export in the world. China accounts for over 30% global consumers, while national consumption accounts of 25%. It is suggested that with the "One Belt, One Road" initiative will boost the prevalence of China's ICT and will spread the ICT to EU.

The main body regulating the ICT industry in China is the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. In local regions, its support body is the Economic and Information Technology Commission. These two institutions introduced new policy for ICT o the nationwide spectrum. It is well known that ICT sector is strongly promoted by the CCP. To motivate business sector to invest in the ICT sector, the CPR provinces are ready to offer beneficial conditions, such as through tax exemption policies or the help in clustering businesses. This sector is mostly state owned; however, the foreign investment is allowed but through the Joint Ventures option and need to be approved by China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MITT).

However, we need to remember that China's main ICT support comes from the Chinese public. The Chinese public is very much involved into ICT products as applications and platforms. The new

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[28] Horizon 2020 is the biggest EU Research and Innovation programme ever with nearly €80 billion of funding available over 7 years (2014 to 2020) – in addition to the private investment that this money will attract. It promises more breakthroughs, discoveries and world-firsts by taking great ideas from the lab to the market.

[29] A guide toICT-related activities in WP2016-17

applications mentioned do not fit into the traditional four categories, they contain elements that span across the traditional sectors, giving rise to the development of new sub-sectors to categorize them. For example the newly introduced sensors, can be considered as hardware, which refers to IT and they can fall under the categorization

Even China's platforms can be categorized under IT services. The big data can be categorized since it involves and IT service. However, it is a good news for the public policy, which means the ICT can still use and this data is possible to be used by the platforms for the enhancing the public policy.

Since China was making a significant effort to develop strong internet architecture and the sector, the capacity of the cybersecurity and policies was increased. For example, China's internet speed capacity was increased and rapidly changed from 4G to 5G. This boosted China's "smart-city" policy, where everything is connected to digital platforms and applications. For example, WeChat applications are now being connected to objects in the physical world such as meters, sensors, cameras, and control systems in pilot projects around the world.

3.2 Utilization of ICT for the Public Policy Development

When we talk about ICT and engagement platforms in the public policy, that means the collectivism. The ICT is becoming the tool which this collective approach need to be active. It implies the collective decision making tool. The simple scheme producer and consumer can make a significant changes in the public policy.

The ICT and cyberspace are considered as public goods or services, through which the society as population of particular country entitled use for the good of their country. The particular way how is the ICT products provided for the public policy need can be defined as the e-government (Promberger/ Bernhart/Früh 2010). ICT supplies the service by collecting data, delivering that data,

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and creating the public opinion analysis and defining the budget proportions. It is clear that states are interested in the ICT development. This development is good for the government and for the population. Since the ICT is produced by the business entities but consumed by the public, this combination if to establish proper regulations can be very beneficial. The obstacle can be faced if the standard are different. For example, EU has ISO/IEC 10646:2014 standard which the exporting side has to comply with. It also requires the consequent adaptation to the public policy needs.

The Yun`s  and Opheim`s vision on the role of ICT in the public sector is the following:

1. Billboard stage.

2. Partial service-delivery stage.

3. Portal stage with fully executable and integrated service delivery.

4. Interactive democracy stage.

The ICT's impact is very valuable since this technology reduces governments' costs and better meet public policy needs. The speed of the public policy agenda is also higher. It also helps to evaluate the rate of the innovations. Moreover, ICT has an effect on the democracy development because, despite the political regime the population rises, the technology involves citizens to engage freely in issues. As was mentioned before it strength the collective decision-making. This improves public policies and increases the engagement with the direct through democratic means. The ICT allows to have an access to the platforms and monitor the development.

As for the political regime shift and to move to the democratic society, ICT can be very useful. A very known example with the "Arab Spring,"[30] when ICT facilities were used to break down the regime within short time and minimum expenses.

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[30] The Economist, Special Report on Arab Spring , 2013

ICT played a significant role in Arabs countries, because it is an ideal tool to comment various groups depends on the interest. The engagement by the means of ICT triggers the regime change and formed the ideas of the Pivotal to the revolutions that quietly overthrew regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and pushed for change in cyberspace into real-life action on the ground. (Natana J. DeLong-Bas)

Last but not least to highlight, when ICT becomes widespread and affordable, it enables the massive surveillance and censorship. There are some academic experts who believe that ICT can support the democracy. (Toffler and Rheingold 1994) (Dyson 1998) It phenomenon is depends on the political reasons of the state due to the certain alert has to be done. The vulnerability of the ICT system can have be a subject of the national interest.

The effect after broader use of ICT, it is very valuable because it possible to use more sophisticated regulations for the decision-making process but with the lower cost. However, it is important to have backup policies to protect the civic engagement platforms by the cyber space regulations and the technical support, since a large amount of information and data are produced by public. It is proposed to have separation of the ICT and civic engagement platforms producers from the public administration.

Conclusion

In the explanation of the civic engagement platforms in the different political atmosphere, it was proposed to get familiar with the public engagement mechanism and peculiarities of the public engagement cycle in the EU and CPR. It was explained why the EU approach to the public policy agenda forming and decision-making is different than in CPR. There were proposed the vision of the expert on the issue of the both sides. We focused on regulations and the case studies for the proposed topic to get the understanding of the links between them.

Further, various civic engagement platforms examples were introduced to the reader to bring the understanding of the mechanisms and different origins of the platforms. CIVOCRACY is a platform for the policies related to the social issues, VOLIS is the participatory budget platform for the where on the local level population can discuss and the decide on the budget distribution for the various policy issues, and WeChat is the representative for the Chinese way of dealing with policies with the given restrictive environment. This is an important dimension and specific to the peculiarities of the political and cultural atmosphere. By the comparison of the three platforms, we discovered the geographical distribution of the distribution of the platforms. The engagement in the platforms and information spread among the platforms participants.

For example, WeChat has a great potential to become the policy making engine in China. The interaction is based on the "friends group" and "people who are near" increases the engagement since it gives the feeling of the common interest. The Co-matter report on the public engagement stated that *"38.6% believe that measuring the active participation of members is a key indicator of a thriving community."*[31] Despite the restrictions, censorship and the technological implications, WeChat still remains the leading tool for the public opinion dissemination and acts as the push

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[31] The-State-of-Communities-2018-Report: http://co-matter.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-State-of-Communities-2018-Report-by-co-matter.pdf

button for the policy agenda. WeChat was introduced to the public, after leadership transition, when the media space was shrinking. However, the evidence of the Chinese state interference was not discovered. (Stockman, 2013) This means that the censorship and cyber regulations are possible to avoid in case of the raising the issue of the public policy matter.

The European platforms in their function are similar and do not have the restrictions and censorship. Here is the human factor: the EU citizens need to learn how to shift to the digital public policy agenda forming and decision making. They need to be sure that the data they produced is secure. For this reason the EU Commission introduced the GDPR on the top of the cyber strategy. Overall, the engagement platforms are creating excitement of it is nature among the users by this it allows to distribute the approach of the digital engagement and increase of productivity.

The discussion on the cyber policies is the sign of the restriction the both parties may have and the way the EU and China is dealing with that issue. Moreover, it is showing the strengthening of the cyber policies in the several directions. For example, the EU is focusing on the security, education and capacity increases for the better and safer utilization of the cyberspace. The Chinese side is more on the establishing the institutions for the control of the cyberspace and increase cyber security front. It was mentioned in that China was strengthening its fronts by introducing cybersecurity laws which makes an impression of the China is the cyber guardian with the given notion of censorship and surveillance from the side of China. Since there was a comparison of the EU and CPR cyber policy approaches, we may conclude that regulations were introduced to protect the data of the citizens the intentions are different in its values. The Chinese Standing Committee the National People's Congress which are the highest legislative bodies in CPR put in to the cyber law the legislation which applies to the network operators, critical information infrastructure but the main feature of the regulation is the cross-border data transfer and digital identification. This law is more

as complementary regulation on the National Security law, 2015 where users are asked to provide their real ID.

For the GDPR as an EU policy, human rights and freedom of speech are the core values this regulation differs from the Chinese CSL. The regulation highlights the responsibility of the entities involved in the data storage and information dissemination.

It addresses the data protection as the CSL; however, the GDPR is focused on the personal aspect when the CSL is more on the national cyber security. As follows the CSL is protecting the national cyber infrastructure and the GDPR the human rights. However, this does not influence on the number of the ICT users and engagement in to the public policy. The common feature is still remains the security of the data. One is when state punishes entities to share personal data, the other when state punishes entities not to share the personal data with them. By default, it is acting as the government increase of the authority.

The other niche when we talk about ICT its trends and possible role in the public policy. Both the EU and CPR are interested in the ICT development. The EU side is more interested in reducing the dependence of the ICT imported to the EU. However, the Chinese side is interested in exporting the ICT products to increase the dependence. The reason of the EU to establish more regulations on the imported ICT, particularly China because it puts under risk the security promises made for the population of the EU. However, China is trying to negotiate the standardization imposed to the CPR ICT products. Further, the Chinese approach towards classification of the ICT products which do not give any chance for the products coming from the outside of the CPR. Moreover, it blocks ICT to share the information with the outside of the China.

The proposed notion of the ICT as a public good makes the EU as a state more valuable in terms of the keep promise to secure the personal data and encourage citizens to go online. Alternatively, the

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CPR approach is more restrictive in terms of the content but not limited in term of the items to be used. However, the stages which are proposed for the ICT usage in the public policy sphere are the same for both political situations.

To conclude, the strengthening public participation in the cyberspace by means of the platforms and the continuous digital interaction between government and society will have a positive impact on the future of the public policy. The regulations on the cyberspace and the ICT are very important because they are representing the guarantee from the government and by default increase the trust of the population into the policy making process.

The different political approaches do not bring a significant difference in the way the platforms are used. However, it shows the contract of the approach of the government and the process of the policy forming. The civic engagement platforms as the future of the public policy have all the necessary tools to make the public policies coherent, deliberate and democratic.

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Annex: The outline of the interviews

<u>Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar the head of the Head of Cyber Policy Coordination, External Action Service.</u>

The International Cyber Policy is the subject of the discussion of the EU and the UN institutions. The reason of the inefficient use of the policy lies in the multiple levels of communication between the EU and the UN. "We agree to meet and to disagree" (HTK) The problem of the cyber policy regulations is that the implementation of the rules and principals is voluntary. There is a lack of implementation of the International Law.

The International Cyber Security Strategy proposed to the UN by China has the support from the authoritarian countries. According to the EU values the internet has to be open and secured with the respect to the Human Rights. The China and Russia are debating on the democratic approach towards cybersecurity. China has it is own standards and more concerned about the content.

The cyber-attacks sponsored by some countries are disclaiming Human Rights and regulations.

The private IT companies in EU are subject to fines in case of violation the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations)

The new Cyber Security Strategy of 2017 is more focused on the cooperation capacity increase. Which suggests the equal distribution of the related measures and instruments to be distributed on the territory of the EU member states. "

<u>Yuxi Nie, Ph.D. Candidate Institute of Area Studies Leiden University</u>

The Chinese approach to the media and politics is very special. Weibo is banning most of the content. The social resonance on the Fungong case increase the social participation in the digital platforms. Since the external communication platforms are closed, population has it national

platforms to engage in. The state policies are to control the Xiomi and Apple. People who were born in 80th they use the Apple. The generation of 90th is using Xiomi. The peculiarity of the Chinese engagement in WeChat can be shown by "red envelopes" (tradition in China to give   red envelopes with money) This emerged to the WeChat and became a motivation to participate for some initiatives. Chine feels unsecure, this why it has restrictive cyber policy.

<u>Dr. Jelizaveta Krenjova-Cepilova, expert of e-Democracy domain at the e-Governance Academy</u>

Estonian case on the digital platform and e-governance. THe usage of the application on the local level. Allows to manage the 1% t of the investment budget of Estonia. Explained the system VOLIS. ICT tools helped to disseminate the costs. Helped to diminish the administration work. The participatory budgeting is attracting population, facilitate the dialog between local authorities and the society. Enables to strengthen the security.

Recommended to consult the following:

Rahvaalgatus.ee – yet another e-platform for civic engagement? No, a process of democratic renewal   instead!:   https://www.opengovpartnership.org/stories/rahvaalgatusee-yet-another-e-platform-civic-engagement-no-process-of-democratic-renewal

Participatory Budgeting: Theoretical Model sand Applicability in Estonia and Beyond: https://digi.lib.ttu.ee/i/?8975

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Situation Review: Safety and Security of Cyberspace and e-Democracy in the Eastern Partnership Countries:https://www.ega.ee/publication/situation-review-safety-and-security-of-cyberspace-and-e-democracy-in-the-eastern-partnership-countries/

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Recommended to look through the following GREMLIN project on Global and Regional Multistakeholder Institutions, which is a joint project with the Centre for EU studies at the University of Ghent, supported by the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies in Bruges (2017-2021). the PARENT project, which is supported by Innoviris and the JPI Urban Europe funding scheme (2016-2019).

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