



## INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN ELECTRONIC DEMOCRACY ACTIVITIES

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The issue of solving a number of problems facing the executive and legislative authorities is an important component of Internet communication. With the introduction of Internet technologies into management practice, the corruption component of the activities of officials will decrease, and interested parties will be able to take the initiative, which will help minimize corruption in state structures and decriminalize society. It is necessary to study the positive experience of developing countries in implementing "electronic activities". These are, first of all, Singapore, Estonia and Japan, where the practice of using electronic means of communication to improve the activities of state bodies is developing quite actively.

**Experiences of e-democracy around the world** - There are several types of successful models of e-(digital) democracy, but these models may differ depending on the specific features of specific democratic processes being implemented in countries.

Here are some examples of countries:

**Estonia:** The Estonian government has been a leader in e-democracy through online voting since 2005.

**Switzerland:** Switzerland has a long tradition of direct democracy and has used digital tools to enhance this process. For example, citizens use digital platforms to hold referendums and collect signatures for initiatives.

**UK:** Online voting systems have been used in local elections.

**USA, West Virginia:** West Virginia tested mobile voting among military personnel deployed overseas during the 2018 primary election.

**Canada:** Has implemented several e-democracy initiatives, including online voting trials and digital town halls. The government has also launched a number of online platforms for citizen engagement and consultation, including MyDemocracy.ca.

**Australia:** Has implemented several e-democracy initiatives, such as online voting trials and digital town halls. The government is also launching several online platforms for citizen participation and consultation, including the YourSay platform.





**India:** Electronic voting machines (ESMs) have been used in national and state elections since 1999, and are still widely used. In India, e-voting has been used 100 percent in general elections, but has been criticized for being unverifiable, and India is testing E2E voting technology for online voting with the New Town Kolkata Development Authority. In 2022, over 500 people in New Town, Kolkata, will vote for the best Puja decorations using mobile phones, demonstrating that e-voting is secure, fully automated, and popular with voters.

**Brazil:** All federal and state elections have used EVMs since 1996, and are still widely used.

**Belgium:** All regional and federal elections have used EVMs since 1991, and are still widely used.

**Philippines:** EVMs have been used since 2010, and are now used in national and local elections.

**South Africa:** EVMs have been used since 2014, and are still used in all national and regional elections.

**France:** Some electronic voting systems are used for voting in local elections.[1,111]

However, it is worth noting that the use of electronic voting systems is controversial, and some experts have raised concerns about the security and reliability of such systems.

More and more experiments are being developed in this area, and new concepts of direct democracy via the Internet are emerging. Models for the implementation of the concept of electronic democracy are being tested and selected. Currently, electronic democracy in the world is reflected in the following activities:

1. Electronic voting (e-vote);
2. Improving the reception, consideration of appeals, implementation of appeal measures, and reporting on the measures taken in electronic form by creating official websites of political parties and officials of state bodies;
3. Projects for determining public opinion on the main laws and political events of the country on the Internet;
4. The right of legislative initiative, the right to referendum;
5. Creation of electronic bodies of the legislative and judicial authorities for online registration of opinions (in the USA, the municipal electronic project “City Hall”, the project “European Citizens’ Initiative”);[2,11]
6. Creation of electronic parties (in Australia, Sweden, New Zealand, aimed at online representation, voting among party members, formation of party





policy, development of a position on voting on certain issues within the framework of legislation).

7. Use of an electronic platform for voters to receive information about elections in the country;

8. Creation of an “Electronic” information and communication base for the formation of political and public leaders;

9. Reporting on the most important political events via the Internet;

10. Electronic government (Canada, South Korea, etc.), etc.

The highest form of electronic democracy is direct electronic democracy (EDD), which represents the direct participation of citizens.

The most difficult problem in foreign theory and practice seems to be the problem of legal justification for the implementation of electronic democracy.[3,11] A general study of this issue has shown that it is necessary to build complex legal models based on regulatory documents regulating the relations between citizens using information and communication technologies.

The process of developing electronic democracy is uneven in the world. This process is taking place faster in democratic countries, and slower or completely absent in authoritarian states. The greatest changes can be seen in Western Europe, where the development of electronic democracy has taken a systematic form. Within the framework of the “Electronic Democracy” project, the electronic voting project on a number of important issues was a useful experiment. The initiative belonged to Greece, which at that time held the presidency of the European Union. In 2003, the European Union was to be directly accessible to all citizens of all European countries, regardless of their membership, using the Internet.[4,24] Five topics were proposed for voting: the current European Union, its role in the world, the future of the Union, the Iraq crisis and the extraordinary summit of the European Union. There were various ways to participate in the project, namely:

E-democracy is one of several strategies for supporting democratic institutions and processes, and for disseminating democratic values. It complements traditional democratic processes. Each process has its own advantages and none is universally applicable. It is an opportunity to increase citizen engagement in order to facilitate the provision of information and debate, and to strengthen political debate. E-democracy affects all sectors of democracy, all democratic institutions, all levels of government and a wide range of parties.

Another example of the successful use of the Internet for socio-political purposes is **Iceland**. According to recent estimates, 97.8% of the country's





population uses the Internet. One of the most significant examples of this experience was the collective discussion of the draft new Constitution on the country's social networks. After the Icelandic financial crisis of 2008-2009, it was decided to develop a draft new constitution with broad participation in the process.

**Switzerland** also has experience in electronic voting, and there is also an electronic consultation system "citizens - government representatives" at the level of large cities and cantons.

**In Italy**, a special state organization was created to implement ED tools and support state projects in this area - the National Center for Public Administration and Informatics.

**In Spain**, there is a Government program to support local e-democracy projects. The system for monitoring the standard of living in Madrid based on electronic surveys of citizens has been launched; systematic electronic surveys are conducted on the issues of forming state budgets.

**In the UK**, experiments have been carried out on electronic voting, official debates of election candidates are held in the format of an Internet blog, the "UK National Project for Local Electronic Democracy" is being created and financed.

**In Germany**, work is underway to create a concept of electronic lawmaking, remote electronic participation of deputies in lawmaking activities, taking into account citizens' appeals. Analysis of German constitutional legislation has led a number of scholars to the conclusion that the status of a member of the German parliament allows each of them to create a system for considering citizens' initiatives electronically and making quick decisions on them.

**Hungary** has a system of state Internet forums at various levels, from city to local. The United States and New Zealand stand out in the development of e-democracy mechanisms. In the **United States**[5,30], a system for considering electronic appeals has been created at the state governor and city municipality levels, and parties have developed electronic information systems to increase electoral activity.

**In New Zealand**, in 2007, a wiki version of the new draft law was made available to the public in the "Revision of the Police Act of 1958".[8,10] As a result of the experiment, 234 proposals were received and taken into account. According to experts, citizen participation in the process of preparing the law will become one of the main aspects.





In some countries and regions of the world, a very effective system of public control over the activities of state authorities and administrations via the Internet (e-government) has already been created. However, the models of this system have their own regional specificities.

The **European model** is characterized by the presence of national supreme institutions - the decisions of the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Court of Justice are binding on all EU countries. Therefore, this model is primarily aimed at leveling the playing field and coordinating e-government activities for EU member states. This makes the G2G model (government to government) a reality.

The **Asian model** is based on a specific management style, namely the Asian type of corporate culture and a multi-layered system of public administration organized according to the principle of a hierarchical pyramid. This model is a practical implementation of the G2E (government to government employees) model.

The **North American** e-Government model has become widespread in the USA and Canada. The American model not only provides access to the websites of state organizations, but also largely determines its uniqueness, becoming a place for a free exchange of ideas, initiatives, a platform for discussing the results of specific work. It develops within the framework of the theoretical concepts of G2C and G2B and is aimed at developing e-democracy by building a popular e-government. The vision of the American concept of e-Government is aimed at meeting the needs of citizens and is based on market mechanisms.

The **Canadian model** can be called a classic, since the main goal of digital electronics in Canada is to provide citizens with access to government information via the Internet, as well as to train all individuals and legal entities to use new systems. E-Government focuses on providing services to citizens. The Federal Accountability Act of 2006 required Canadian government agencies to provide assistance to individuals requesting information. Federal ministries and departments are required to publish information on public opinion research contracts and summaries of completed projects on their websites to facilitate public access. Since 2001, Canada has been implementing a government program called "Government On-line" (GOL). It contains a significant requirement for government agencies to provide information and services across departmental boundaries.

The level of Internet accessibility is the availability of web services necessary for the operation of electronic digital services (the availability of





online information through government portals and electronic payment systems on the Internet, filing tax returns, voting, etc.), as well as the level of convenience of their interface. The leaders in this category are the United States, Canada, and South Korea, which have the most government web services and their interface is well thought out in terms of convenience.

According to general criteria, the United States, Canada, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Germany, and Taiwan are recognized as countries with the maximum level of electronic development.

A number of authoritarian states suppress the development and use of information technologies on their territory, considering them a threat to the existing regime. Thus, in China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Belarus, Vietnam, and other countries, Internet freedom is significantly limited. For example, Iranian authorities have repeatedly blocked access to Gmail e-mail. According to official explanations, e-mail services do not comply with the laws of the Islamic Republic. Currently, Iranian state agencies are actively developing their own analogue of the Internet, which they can control.

In general, the following serious shortcomings have been identified in the construction of an electronic democracy system, which are widely discussed by experts and the public around the world:[6,52]

the requirement to use high Internet technologies in the country is mandatory (which hinders the construction of electronic digital services in less developed countries);

information security issues that are processed during the implementation of ED processes (the risk of violating the basic principles of fair vote counting, etc.);

the difficulty of assessing the effectiveness of establishing an e-democracy system at the state level;

the need to establish the boundaries of legal regulation of the Internet as a method of indirect state control.

The above countries share their experiences in the following areas:

-Including the voice of citizens in determining political activity, including taking specific measures for electronic participation for vulnerable segments of the population;

-Empowering their citizens by investing in digital literacy and skills.

-Promoting inclusive practices by setting standards for state, non-state and business sector partners, and maximizing access to digital services.





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