Engaging Public Online: An exploratory study on the citizen participation via online in Korea

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Research Questions

• **How** exactly ICT (e-gov) improve citizen participation? Is there ‘meaningful’ public participation online in Korea?

**Meaningful**: Is there empirical evidence of effect on policy changes beyond political participation or service provision?
Small N case study

• Very early stage of research! 😊 [content analysis, case-survey & interviews]

• Seoul City’s Oasis (oasis.seoul.go.kr)- [about 4 years of operation] & Similar ones in other cities’
OASIS ( ~2008. 12)

• Creative Seoul Promotion Headquarters, creative city administration by a new mayor in 2006

• 2.9 million Visits
• 20,000 ideas submitted
• 70 of them adopted as policy
• 52 of them implemented
• UN’s Public Service Award 2009
Categories of ideas/proposals

-More
• Culture
• Welfare

-Less
• Environment
• Economy
• Citizen Lifestyle
Preliminary findings

• “meaningful/actual” participation in the decision making process

• 4 stages of participation in “decision making process”
4 stages of OASIS

• Ideas submitted
• Discussed online (individual citizens, OASIS groups) – [topics moved here by civil servants]
• Internal discussion and screening
• Final meetings (mayor, people in charge, citizen groups, individual citizens)
Success factors of OASIS

- Leadership from the top (mayor)
- Incentives:
  - Incentives for citizens: award, monetary reward
  - Incentives for civil servants: points for appraisal
- Catalyst group (Volunteering Citizen Groups=citizens of OASIS, 500 members)
Tracking the adopted policies

• Citizen participated policies: different in terms of duration, challenges in implementation? – ‘success rate?’

• Policy evaluation? (interviewees: more effective ones = revising existing policies and programs)