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Information: Today's exponential advancement of information and communication technologies is reconfiguring participatory urban development practices. Citizen participation, defined as an interdisciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach, emphasises the role of people and their knowledge in creating cities' futures. The use of digital technology implies new forms of decentralized governance, collaborative production of knowledge, and social activism leading to new paradigms such as radical openness, connected intelligence, and crowdsourced deliberation. Social media, digital mapping, e-participation platforms, and location-based games are examples of such technologies.

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Digital technologies are considered as a crucial building block for enhancing the potentially deliberative quality of participatory processes and for tackling historical shortcomings in such processes. As such, they carry the promise to enable a “more communicative action-oriented process of planning and city creation” (Houghton et al., 2015). However, digitalization also poses challenges and problems. In a society of access, where being connected is crucial, already existing inequalities and segregation can be perpetuated or even attenuated. Moreover, old problems related to citizen participation still occur in digital initiatives. Digital tools are not unbiased, but programmed and developed by human beings and their norms, values, and beliefs.

In this thematic issue we are especially interested in the trajectories and (dis)continuities of citizen participation through different tools and means. The issue will focus on how they have opened up novel approaches to mobilizing resources, addressing target groups, creating visibility and publicness, or enhancing participation through hybrid and multi-sensory approaches, and how they potentially affect, transform, contest, or reproduce hegemonic power relations.

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