

### e-Democracy facilitates public participation in civil society

*"My children keep me busy – and so does my work – but I still found time to go online and give my opinion on the urban renewal project."*

E-consultations facilitate transparent dialogue. They enable people to be fully involved in developing policy and in contributing to government processes.

*"Signing a petition for improved health care in rural areas has given me a real sense of empowerment."*

People initiate e-petitions. These tools give the public an opportunity to express its views and the politicians an opportunity to take them into account.

*"I used to think that my local authority was spending too much on community care; but since I've tried to balance the books with their budget game I understand better the range of challenges we face."*

Participatory budgeting tools and simulation games help the public gain more insight into the workings of government.

*"We are delighted that our region now includes remote e-voting as an integral part of its participation strategy."*

Underlying the current lively debate on e-voting is the idea that it is a way to strengthen democracy.



### e-Democracy provides politicians and government with new ways to improve dialogue

*"I use Twitter to communicate in real time. It allows me to maintain an ongoing dialogue with my constituents and it means I can get my message across undistorted."*

Social networking sites are increasingly used by politicians and their constituents to share and exchange information and ideas.

*"Good governance requires political will and transparency; using e-democracy tools in our council meetings enables us to achieve both."*

Webcasting legislative, executive and judiciary meetings helps to reinforce trust in public institutions and improve accessibility and openness at all levels.

*"The online vote navigator helped me decide how I wanted to vote."*

Voting advice applications can help electors arrive at informed opinions. They provide a user-friendly overview of political parties, of politicians and of their programmes.

*"My political party's website is key to our election campaign because it's a point of contact for people."*

More and more party members and voters are looking online for political and electoral information. E-electioneering offers politicians a way to communicate directly with their supporters and to foster their engagement.



### e-Democracy offers new ways to co-operate

*"Over time I've learned to use my blog to challenge the 'truth' and to tease out the real stories behind the news."*

Many bloggers are becoming independent citizen journalists as they share news, information and viewpoints on the Internet. Whilst there can be no substitute for high-quality professional journalism, due to blogs some serious issues have entered the mainstream media, thereby encouraging wider debate.

*"Thanks to the Internet, for the first time ever the entire world is beginning to unite around a single idea – the fight against climate change."*

Online exchange and co-operation give everyone the power to convene. This redefines political priorities and transforms the ways our local and global communities can be governed.

*"The Internet has made a big difference in my life; I now feel less excluded."*

Facilitating online communication for disadvantaged people is a source of empowerment and improves the chance for social equity.

*"Our online campaign to ban cluster bombs is happening from the grassroots up and 24/7!"*

E-campaigning not only alerts the public to the extent of a problem, but also facilitates its involvement and reduces costs.



### e-Democracy mobilises young people

*"We are creating a new democracy in which we all have a role to play."*

The net generation places great trust in peer-to-peer opinion. Young people develop social networks as well as their own news, entertainment and services through interactive Web 2.0 sites.

*"At first I was surprised to meet political candidates in Second Life. Now I expect nothing less!"*

Virtual communities offer an ideal forum for politicians to establish a dialogue with new audiences in order to show people that their policies are anything but virtual.

*"I've learned from playing Wild Web Woods that I must never give out my name and address on the Internet."*

Teaching children Internet skills ensures that they will acquire the social and critical abilities that are necessary to navigate both the real and the virtual worlds.

*"Creating a parliament-based Internet television channel run by young people has helped to improve communication between 'them' and 'us'."*

Research indicates that democracy is best taught by practising it and that young people are very comfortable using new information and communication technologies.

