

The Impact of ICT on Citizens' Well-being and the Right to the City/ Community (Introduction)

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The use of information and communications technologies (ICT) has changed our lives in many ways. The goal of implementing new technological solutions is very often an increase in people's comfort and well-being; however, the actual realisation poses a challenge to privacy, authenticity and human agency. In this minitrack, we are particularly interested in ICT's impact on individuals' well-being in the context of the right to the city and community. The concept of the "right to the city" introduced by Lefebvre (1968) is a postulated right to reclaim the city (and community) by citizens that is in line with principles of social justice and equality. However, in the face of digital transformation, the right to the city should be re-examined. Thus, this minitrack aimed to examine different facets of ICT implementation and its relation to citizens' empowerment and well-being as well as to individual's threats and concerns.

The three papers included in this minitrack represent different methodologies, theories and conceptualisations of ICT and the right to the city/community. They deal with both positive and negative aspects of new technological solutions, and together, they offer a platform for creative discussion of very timely issues.

In the first paper, "Sustainable Rural Development through Union Digital Center: The Citizen Empowerment Perspective", Rakibul Hoque, Golam Sorwar and Uzir Hossain discuss the possibility of empowering disadvantaged residents through union digital centres (UDCs) aimed at providing easy access to digital services in rural regions. By doing so, UDCs are also meant to facilitate positive social changes in terms of, for example, social inclusion, gender equality or education. The authors' main aim was to examine whether individual and collective empowerment, obtained via these social changes, translates into sustainable development. The findings of the study show evidence for the effectiveness of the UDC programme, as rural people frequently use UDC services, which, in turn, induces empowerment factors and contributes to sustainability. The authors rightly point out that similar technology intervention should be

adopted to increase people's rights to their place of living and include them in place's development.

In the second paper, "You Perceive What You Believe: The Impact of Psychological Beliefs on Perceived Technostress", Julia Theresia Zielonka and Franz Rothlauf explore the role of individual differences in perceived technostress (i.e. the feeling of stress that users experience due to the use of ICT). Noting that previous research on predictors of technostress has been limited primarily to personality traits, the authors propose a new approach focused on psychological beliefs. The results of the quantitative research show that internal locus of control (the belief that an individual can affect the outcome through his or her own actions) and self-efficacy (the belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action) were related to lower perceived technostress. The authors emphasise that one of the most important practical implications of the research is that its results can be used to develop new methods of helping individuals who experience technostress. It turns out that this feeling can be potentially controlled by helping people develop the beliefs they need to lower their stress perception. Because modern cities are increasingly saturated with new technologies, we agree that the proposed method may be important for protecting residents from additional environmental stressors and for increasing their well-being.

The third paper, by Agnieszka Rychwalska, Magdalena Roszczyńska-Kurasińska and Anna Domaradzka-Widła, entitled "Right to Privacy in the Context of the Privacy Paradox and Data Collection Patterns: Exploratory Study of Polish Facebook Users", deals with a very timely and important issue of online data protection. The authors investigate a community of Facebook users and their concerns about privacy while using the platform. The results of the empirical study conducted among Polish users revealed a privacy paradox; on the one hand, individuals declared that they value their online privacy, but on the other hand, these declarations do not translate into factual data protection actions. The authors conclude that participants of the study may not have enough knowledge about the

amount of data sharing occurring and do not know how to control the use of their data by other commercial actors; thus, raising awareness of this issue is crucial.

These three papers all contribute to the minitrack's goal by demonstrating how intelligent technologies impact our daily lives in real and virtual communities. Through investigating both advantages and disadvantages of ICT implementation, they aid in our

understanding of different patterns of the interplay between new technological phenomena, individual well-being and quality of life.

References

- [1] H. Lefebvre, "Le Droit à la Ville", Anthropos, Paris, 1968