

# **Electronic democracy and public participation in Portugal: an exploratory analysis**

Filipe Montargil

*ICPPIT99 - International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technologies*



# Electronic Democracy

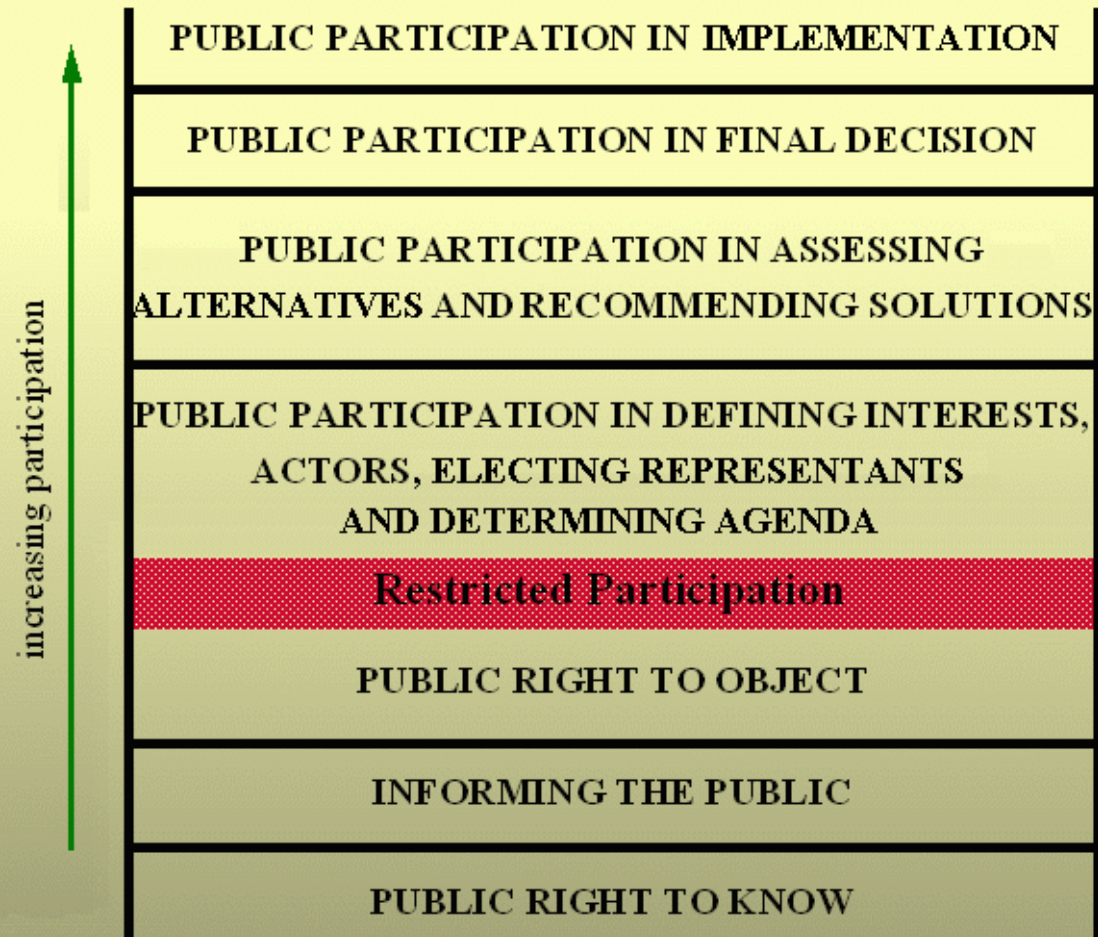
- Use of electronic means (computer networks, telephone, radio and television...) by the citizens in their participation in public life, in a given democratic political system.



## Public participation

- Refers to the engagement in the decision making process.
- As Weidemann and Femmers suggest, public participation can be conceived as a ladder, organized in hierarchical levels of participation.

# PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



Source: Carver, 1998, p. 7. Available: <http://www.ccg.leeds.ac.uk/vdmisp/>



# Analysis

- *Green Paper on the Information Society in Portugal, 1997: 72 measures;*
- *Programme Cidades Digitais (Digital Cities), 1997: 10 measures;*
- Programme Aveiro Cidade Digital: 48 objectives;
- Electronic voting experiences.





# *Green Paper on the Information Society in Portugal*

Level	Designation	n.	%
-	<b>No public participation level assigned</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41,9%</b>
1	Public right to know	21	48,8%
2	Informing the public	21	48,8%
3	Public right to object	0	0,0%
4	Public participation in defining interests, actors, electing representants, and determining agenda	1	2,3%
5	Public participation in assessing alternatives and recommending solutions	0	0,0%
6	Public participation in final decision	0	0,0%
7	Public participation in the decision implementation	0	0,0%
<b>Total of characterized units</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>58,1%</b>
<b>Total of units</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>100%</b>

# *Programme Cidades Digitais*

Level	Designation	n.	%
-	<b>No public participation level assigned</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11,8%</b>
1	Public right to know	7	46,7%
2	Informing the public	8	53,3%
3	Public right to object	0	0,0%
4	Public participation in defining interests, actors, electing representants, and determining agenda	0	0,0%
5	Public participation in assessing alternatives and recommending solutions	0	0,0%
6	Public participation in final decision	0	0,0%
7	Public participation in the decision implementation	0	0,0%
<b>Total of characterized units</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>88,2%</b>
<b>Total of units</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>100%</b>



# *Programme Aveiro Cidade Digital*

Level	Designation	n.	%
-	<b>No public participation level assigned</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>25,0%</b>
1	Public right to know	18	42,9%
2	Informing the public	20	47,6%
3	Public right to object	0	0,0%
4	Public participation in defining interests, actors, electing representants, and determining agenda	3	7,1%
5	Public participation in assessing alternatives and recommending solutions	1	2,4%
6	Public participation in final decision	0	0,0%
7	Public participation in the decision implementation	0	0,0%
<b>Total of characterized units</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>75,0%</b>
<b>Total of units</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>