



**EGPA/IIAS**

European Group  
for Public Administration

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***European Group for Public  
Administration***

***18 March 2021***

***Citizen Participation in times of Crisis***

***Permanent Study Group VIII  
Citizen Participation***

***Call-for-Papers***

## EGPA Permanent Study Group VIII on Citizen Participation

### *Citizen Participation in times of Crisis*

In the context of the COVID-19-pandemic, citizens have collaborated with governments, non-profit organisations and business in order to contain the effects of the pandemic on their lives. If we have learnt one lesson, it is that governments and other public service organisations are not able to deal with such encompassing challenges on their own. After all, this is not only a health crisis but there are effects on many other aspects of our lives such as our jobs, education and social life.

Citizens have co-produced with professionals and the government in various ways to produce goods and services by necessity, as professional capacity to deal with the crisis has reached its limits in many ways. For example, public safety was co-produced by people adhering to social distancing rules. Furthermore, many people provided informal care as professional health care capacity was confronted with unprecedented demand. Volunteers also help to produce medical devices which were in short supply in the early stages of the pandemic such as mouth masks and ventilators. Last but not least, parents worked with teachers and their own children to provide homeschooling.

It is still too early to take stock fully of which interventions have worked and which have not, as the pandemic is not over yet. However, this global and all-encompassing crisis provides an excellent opportunity to learn how to strengthen resilience, in order to be better prepared for future crises. In particular, the greater involvement of citizens in public service delivery and in public policy making in crisis management opens up new questions for researchers on the role of citizen participation and user and community co-production. Hence this call for papers on “citizen participation in times of crisis” for our online Study Group Meeting on 18 March 2021.

The EGPA Study Group ‘Citizen Participation’ would therefore like to invite you to submit an abstract of max. **400 words** no later than **15 December 2020**. Notification of acceptance will be given by **January 15, 2021**. As this Study Group Meeting will be online, we will only be able to accept a limited number of papers.

We welcome empirical and theoretical studies that discuss the role of citizen participation in crisis.

- What lessons can we learn about the conditions that enhance and shape citizen participation in times of crisis? From a theoretical and empirical perspective, is it valuable to distinguish different stages and forms of participation over time. Do we need to reconsider the common assumption that crisis requires top-down management? Are there conditions under which citizen co-production is likely to last beyond the crisis period? Are there inequalities, e.g. differences in the capacities and efficacy of citizens, that determine whether they are able to participate or not in dealing with the crisis?
- How can citizen co-production build user and community resilience to manage crises more effectively – and what are the mechanisms by which this can be achieved?

- What is the role of online platforms and digital technologies to support citizens to deal more effectively with crises? To what degree have civic tech initiatives enabled social innovation, e.g. through crowdsourcing of new ideas in Hackathons? And what are the pitfalls of citizens providing information to each other which is not verified, in approaches may be captured by specific interest groups who, for example, promote conspiracy theories.
- What is the space for citizen participation under conditions of a 'coercive state' which restricts personal contacts or issues regulations without much public consultation?

How can groups which feel excluded (e.g. those people who believe that their rights have been severely and illegitimately curtailed under lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19) be given an appropriate voice to engage with government – and when should protests against government restrictions be regarded as inappropriate or even banned?

## Practicalities

*Important dates:*

- ✓ Deadline for submission of Abstracts: December 15, 2020
- ✓ Deadline for notification of acceptance to the authors: January 15, 2021
- ✓ EGPA PSG VIII online workshop: March 18, 2021

EGPA 2021 Conference Management System: <https://www.conftool.org/egpa-conference2021>

*Registration*

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EGPA Individual Membership and access to EGPA Virtual Events' series: 100 €

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