

## Discussion: On-line forums as democratic tool?

Posted on Jan 23, Posted by [Administrator](#) Category [ACTA online discussions](#)



source: socialmediawatch.net On-line forums are defined **as e-democracy technique** for promoting new spaces of deliberation by enabling citizens to exchange and share respective political opinions among themselves. Main goal of this on-line tool is to enhance the process of citizen's opinion formation through their deliberative engagement. On-line forums can also support e-consultations during decision-making by providing the general public, experts and interest groups with developments in a policy field and invite them to respond ( [Trechsel et al 2003](#) ).

Today, on-line forums acting as democratic space are facing many **challenges** such as:

1. [not much conversation among participants](#) (dialogue issue)
2. [absence of rational-critical discourse in cyberspace](#) (deliberation issue)
3. [abundance of alternative internet communication tools](#) (information overload issue)
4. [difficulties with assessing democratic impact](#) (slacktivism issue)

On the other hand on-line forum are still regarded as a powerful e-democracy tool to **support participation**

in public life, strengthen communities and democracy by enabling:

5. [inclusive engagement and active citizenship](#)
6. [open and transparent government](#)

7. [promoting and advancing political democratization](#)
8. [technical simplicity and accessibility](#)

This discussion is aiming to build upon existing practice by **identifying both positive and negative experiences** of using internet forums for democratic participation by young people as well to **propose decision-makers** (politicians & government) how they should include internet forum into democratic decision-making.

Thus, the **discussion starting questions** are:

1. *Which aspects of internet forum are motivating you to use them as democratic tool and which aspects are discouraging you?*
2. *How would you like to see internet forums as a democratic tool in the future?*
3. *If you were a decision-maker, in which way would you use internet forum as democratic tool?*

**Time frame:** Discussion will end on 17th of February 2013. The summary results of discussion will be submitted to decision makers as well presented at the ACTA conference in Maribor (Slovenia) in March 2013.

**Privacy statement:** No e-mail registration is need to participate (unless you would like to receive updates about new contributions). Contributions can be posted by either a real name or anonymously. No personal data will be included into discussion report provided by facilitator.

**Discussion rules:** please follow generally accepted rules for on-line discussions provided by <http://forums.e-democracy.org>

. For more information please contact facilitator smetenju. Če ga želite videti, omogočite Javascript.

Ta e-poštni naslov je zaščiten proti .

Looking forward to an active and fruitful discussion.

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