

Smart cities and public values creation: The case of St. Petersburg

Abstract:

Co-production and the co-creation of public values in the context of smart and sustainable cities has become a significant focus in public management research during last years. Many scholars emphasize that public values are the result of not only public employees' activity but all urban stakeholders' (city and municipal administrations, business, NGOs, universities, and citizens) participation in smart city's policy and strategy development as well as decision-making processes. This paper concentrates on citizens' engagement in smart city initiatives as one of the most important aspects of cities' smartness which strongly influences cities' capacity of public values delivery.

Nowadays St. Petersburg is on its way to smart city development. Nevertheless, introduction of smart technologies into different spheres of urban life doesn't necessarily mean that the city is smart. The crucial role in "smartness" is played by citizens' engagement in different urban processes. Smart city projects, introduced in St. Petersburg, are aimed on improvement of citizens' engagement and, therefore, they should have positive impact on public value co-creation.

One of the most important practices of public value co-creation — participatory governance — is provided by legislation. The local act of St. Petersburg Administration #452 "About St. Petersburg State Program "Creation of conditions for public accordance provision in St. Petersburg" for 2015-2020" (April, 4th, 2014).

The empirical basis for the current paper is the attitude of citizens towards following smart city initiatives, which are aimed to enhance participatory governance in St. Petersburg:

- "Your Budget" project, which has been started in 2016. The main goals of the project are improvement of city budget transparency and provision of public accordance. It gives citizens' possibility to participate in city budget distribution.
- "Our St.Petersburg" portal, which can be used by citizens to complain on their problems in field of housing and communal services, also providing possibility to share ideas about prospects of city development.
- "Home district" project, the start for which was given in April, 2019. The goal of this project is to provide citizens' to choose the most desirable directions of their community development.

In spite of existence of these and some other projects, there are some obstacles for the development of participatory governance in St. Petersburg. Among them are the lack of competencies of consultants in participatory governance and low level of information on participatory governance, available to citizens.

Therefore the aim of our research was to define, whether the smart city technologies, are able to solve mentioned above problems and to improve the level of citizens' engagement in participatory

budgeting. The second assumption for the analysis is that improvements in participatory governance can be referred as public value co-creation practices. Thus we assume that smart city technologies have positive impact on public value co-creation practices.