

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND PUBLIC DEBATE. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract:

Recent years have shown the key role that new technologies are taking in the context of political life in general and in Western societies in particular. Their function as recording and communication devices makes it possible to channel an increasing amount of information and transform public debate. Thanks to this, new actors emerge, while political and cultural sensitivities evolve. In the context of this change, it is important to try to understand the role of new technologies: they may in fact represent both opportunities to favour the integration of actors hitherto excluded from the political process, but also risks of encouraging an increase in inequalities, discrimination and social violence.

This panel seeks papers that are interested in the role of new technologies in shaping public debate, with a focus on political and institutional issues. Questions such as the following are examples of issues that could be addressed: what technopolitical processes are developing? What social or institutional transformations could be achieved? How to channel technological potential in favour of and not against the democratic development of society? Which technologies can improve, deepen or make the public debate more inclusive? Is it appropriate for certain socio-political technologies to be developed by private or international actors?

All contributions are welcome, especially those encouraging an interdisciplinary approach and those suggesting new avenues of analysis.

Key words:

Public debate; Democracy; Technoscientific political consequences