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## The role of digital technologies in building an inclusive and transparent society: an analysis of the legal mechanisms of democratic governance

### РОЛЬ ЦИФРОВИХ ТЕХНОЛОГІЙ У ПОБУДОВІ ІНКЛЮЗИВНОГО ТА ПРОЗОРОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА: АНАЛІЗ ПРАВОВИХ МЕХАНІЗМІВ ДЕМОКРАТИЧНОГО ВРЯДУВАННЯ

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#### Abstract

The preservation of democracy in the digital age is an increasingly pressing issue, requiring the development of new legal mechanisms to ensure inclusivity and transparency in governance. The rapid advancement of information technologies and data dissemination has accentuated the differences between state regimes, highlighting the need for improved democratic control mechanisms. This study analyzes the impact of digital tools on democratic governance and the formation of an inclusive and transparent society. Key concepts such as democratic, electronic, and digital governance are explored, defining them as forms of public administration organization. The study emphasizes the role of digital technologies

#### Анотація

Збереження демократії в епоху цифрових технологій стає дедалі актуальнішим питанням, яке потребує розробки нових правових механізмів для забезпечення інклюзивності та прозорості управління. Швидкий розвиток інформаційних технологій і розповсюдження даних загострили відмінності між державними режимами, підкреслюючи потребу у вдосконаленні механізмів демократичного контролю. Це дослідження аналізує вплив цифрових інструментів на демократичне врядування та формування інклюзивного та прозорого суспільства. Досліджуються такі ключові поняття, як демократичне, електронне та

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in enhancing accessibility and transparency in governance, and their influence on the inclusion of diverse social groups in decision-making processes. Current trends and innovations in digital governance are examined, along with their potential to improve the quality of democracy and public participation. The methodology employed includes historical, legal hermeneutics, systemic, analytical, modeling, comparative, and statistical methods. The conclusions stress the critical importance of understanding and effectively utilizing digital technologies to ensure openness, transparency, and participation in public processes, which are fundamental for creating a modern, democratic, and inclusive society.

**Keywords:** digital technologies, democracy, people's sovereignty, people's rule, state regime.

цифрове врядування, які визначаються як форми організації державного управління. У дослідженні підкреслюється роль цифрових технологій у підвищенні доступності та прозорості управління, а також їхній вплив на залучення різноманітних соціальних груп до процесів прийняття рішень. Розглядаються сучасні тенденції та інновації в цифровому управлінні, а також їхній потенціал для покращення якості демократії та участі громадянськості. Використовувана методологія включає історичний метод, метод правової герменевтики, системний, аналітичний, моделювання, порівняльний та статистичний методи. У висновках підкреслюється критична важливість розуміння та ефективного використання цифрових технологій для забезпечення відкритості, прозорості та участі в громадських процесах, які є фундаментальними для створення сучасного, демократичного та інклюзивного суспільства.

**Ключові слова:** цифрові технології, демократія, народний суверенітет, народовладдя, державний режим.

## Introduction

The future of democracy in the age of digital technologies is a subject of ongoing debate. Despite a decline in trust in traditional representative institutions and political players, public participation in the digital sphere remains robust. Digital tools have created new avenues for civic engagement, including virtual discussions, consultations, and various online platforms. This digital revolution in state management is driven by political leaders' desire to improve service quality while ensuring economic efficiency. However, this transformation also faces significant challenges. Effective change requires attention to the needs of end-users, support through initiatives such as training programs for civil servants and increasing workforce diversity.

The growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) and automated government management systems raises concerns about accountability, transparency, and discrimination risks. Without adequate security measures, technology can negatively impact citizens' rights and freedoms, including personal information protection and preventing discrimination. Addressing these challenges is essential to maximizing the positive impact of digital transformation on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Effective accountability requires governments to clearly define AI's role in decision-making processes and ensure accountability for such decisions.

The rapid digitalization of the public sector, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has contributed to the sustainability of public action, ensuring the continuity of democratic institutions and public services. However, it also exposes democracy to new risks from state actors and public structures. The blurring lines between the physical world, digital technologies, and biological processes due to digital innovation are transforming how we live, work, and communicate. This is particularly evident in public administration, where it is increasingly challenging to distinguish between government activity and e-governance.

The relevance and scientific novelty of this study lie in recognizing digital technologies as essential tools for ensuring democracy and the rule of law. The information society offers new opportunities for citizen participation in management and decision-making processes. However, it also brings challenges related to data security, privacy protection, and ensuring access to information for all societal layers. In the context of ongoing technological changes and the dynamic digital space, studying legal mechanisms to protect citizens' rights, regulate digital processes, and foster balanced digital economy development is crucial.

### Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this scientific study is to analyze the impact of digital technologies on the mechanisms of democratic governance and explore their potential for creating an inclusive and transparent society.

To achieve the general objective of analyzing the impact of digital technologies on democratic governance and exploring their potential for creating an inclusive and transparent society, the study can be broken down into specific objectives and research questions as follows:

### Specific Objectives:

1. Examine the Legal and Regulatory Frameworks.
2. Analyze the current legal and regulatory frameworks governing the use of digital technologies in democratic governance.
3. Identify how these frameworks impact citizen participation in decision-making processes.
4. Assess the Challenges and Barriers.
5. Identify the main challenges and barriers to implementing digital technologies in governance.
6. Examine the implications of these challenges for democratic processes and institutions.
7. Evaluate the Role of Digital Tools in Enhancing Governance.
8. Investigate how digital tools can enhance accessibility, transparency, and inclusivity in governance.
9. Analyze the effectiveness of various digital platforms and tools in fostering civic engagement and participation.
10. Analyze the Impact of Artificial Intelligence and Automated Systems.
11. Explore the role of AI and automated systems in government decision-making processes.
12. Assess the implications of AI for accountability, transparency, and democratic governance.
13. Propose Solutions for Inclusive and Transparent Digital Governance.
14. Develop strategies and recommendations for overcoming barriers to digital governance.
15. Propose ways to enhance inclusivity and transparency through digital technologies.

### Research Questions:

#### I. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

1. What are the current legal and regulatory frameworks that govern the use of digital technologies in democratic governance?
2. How do these frameworks affect citizen participation in democratic decision-making processes?
3. Are there gaps in the existing legal frameworks that need to be addressed to facilitate more effective digital governance?

#### II. Challenges and Barriers

1. What are the main challenges and barriers to the implementation of digital technologies in governance?
2. How do these challenges vary across different political and cultural contexts?
3. What are the potential risks associated with the widespread adoption of digital technologies in governance, particularly regarding privacy, security, and discrimination?

### Role of Digital Tools in Enhancing Governance

1. How do digital tools enhance or hinder accessibility, transparency, and inclusivity in governance?
2. What types of digital platforms and tools are most effective in promoting civic engagement and participation?
3. How do different demographic groups perceive and use digital tools in the context of democratic governance?

### Impact of AI and Automated Systems

1. How are AI and automated systems currently being utilized in government decision-making processes?

2. What are the implications of AI and automation for accountability and transparency in governance?
3. How can governments ensure that the use of AI in decision-making processes aligns with democratic principles and values?

#### Solutions for Inclusive and Transparent Digital Governance

1. What strategies can be developed to overcome the barriers to effective digital governance?
2. How can digital technologies be designed and implemented to promote inclusivity and transparency?
3. What role do training programs for civil servants and efforts to increase workforce diversity play in achieving these goals?

By breaking down the general objective into these specific objectives and research questions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital technologies on democratic governance and offer actionable insights for creating a more inclusive and transparent society.

#### Tasks of the Study:

**Examine the Legal Framework:** Study the modern legal framework regulating the use of digital tools in governance and their impact on citizen participation in decision-making.

**Identify Challenges:** Identify obstacles and challenges that may arise during the implementation of digital innovations in governance.

**Propose Solutions:** Propose concrete ways to overcome these obstacles to achieve a more inclusive and transparent society.

**Assess Digital Tools:** Evaluate the role of digital technologies in enhancing accessibility, transparency, and inclusivity in governance.

**Analyze AI Impact:** Investigate the implications of AI and automated systems on accountability and transparency in government decision-making processes.

This study seeks to fill several critical gaps identified in the existing literature on digital technologies and democratic governance:

**Quality of Digital Engagement:** While there is ample research on the increased quantity of civic engagement through digital tools, there is a lack of focus on the quality and effectiveness of this engagement. This study aims to explore how digital technologies can enhance meaningful democratic participation, rather than just increasing the number of participants.

**Trust and Digital Governance:** Existing research has highlighted concerns about trust in digital governance, but there is a limited understanding of how trust is built or lost in digital environments, particularly in diverse political and cultural contexts. This study will investigate the factors that influence trust in digital governance and how these can be managed to strengthen democratic processes.

**Impact of AI on Accountability:** While the potential risks of AI in governance have been identified, there is a need for more in-depth research on how AI affects democratic accountability and transparency. This study will analyze the legal and regulatory frameworks needed to ensure that AI and automated systems do not undermine democratic values.

**Digital Divide and Inclusivity:** There is a significant gap in understanding how digital tools can be made more inclusive, particularly for marginalized groups who are often excluded from digital governance processes. This research will focus on strategies to enhance inclusivity and ensure that digital transformations in governance benefit all citizens, regardless of their background or access to technology.

**Blurring of Digital and Physical Governance:** The fusion of digital and physical governance environments presents new challenges for democracy that have not been fully explored in the literature. This study will

examine how this blurring of lines affects the nature of democratic accountability, transparency, and citizen engagement.

By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between digital technologies and democratic governance, providing insights into how digital tools can be harnessed to enhance democracy while mitigating potential risks.

This article is structured to guide the reader through a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital technologies on democratic governance. The introduction provides an overview of the study's relevance and the importance of digital technologies in modern governance. The literature review follows, highlighting key studies in the field and identifying existing knowledge gaps that this study aims to address. The methodology section outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analytical approaches used to achieve the study's objectives. The results and discussion section presents the results of the research, detailing the impact of digital technologies on democratic processes, including their potential to enhance or hinder governance and offers an in-depth interpretation of the findings, examining their implications for policy and practice. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key insights from the study, provides recommendations for future research, and suggests practical steps for policymakers to foster more inclusive and transparent digital governance.

### **Theoretical Framework or Literature Review**

Democratic governance, a key institution of law, is tightly interwoven with the global processes of globalization and technological progress. It is essential to consider it as a modern legal mechanism crucial for constitutional modernization. O.V. Bondarenko (2019), in his book "Constitutional Modernization: Ontological Understanding, Axiological Significance, Comparative Value," asserts that constitutional modernization reflects functional characteristics aimed at ensuring constitutional reform. The goal is to create an optimal constitution model that meets the needs of the national legal system, the state, and society, ensuring their proper functioning and adaptation to future changes.

In his work "Electronic Governance in Executive Bodies: Administrative and Legal Foundations," V.V. Marchenko (2016) explores various aspects of digital management. Though his focus is on the executive branch, he provides general insights on the potential consequences and prospects of governance digitization. These include enhancing the country's strategic potential and competitive advantages, modernizing state administration at various levels, improving administrative services through electronic channels, reducing administrative costs, and fostering effective interaction between the state, citizens, and businesses.

Similarly, O.O. Zolotar (2018), in "Human Information Security: Theory and Practice," discusses human rights and freedoms in the information society, information security threats, and the development of legal support in this area.

Moreover, T.Yu. Tkachuk (2019) underscores the importance of protecting human information rights within the European integration process.

M.S. Mikhrovska (2020), exploring electronic and digital governance, notes that digital governance aims to integrate digital technologies to modernize the public sector rather than merely support governmental processes. This approach requires adapting public sector capacity, workflows, business processes, operations, and methods to current trends and relationships among stakeholders already active in the digital environment. Thus, the main difference between digital and electronic governance lies in using technology to achieve results in public administration, necessitating consistent and strategic planning of digital technology policies across all management areas and levels.

The debate about e-democracy has intensified, particularly online. Proponents of the digital revolution argue that digital platforms and forums can enhance government trust, citizen engagement, and the quality of democratic decision-making. The past decade has seen a proliferation of digital tools in democratic governance worldwide. For example, citizens in France and Brazil participated in large-scale online discussions about national issues (Landemore, 2020).

In Iceland and Spain, political parties like Iceland's Pirate Party and Spain's Podemos have used digital tools for policy crowdsourcing, setting legislative priorities, and allocating municipal budgets. Political scientists have studied how these tools improve democratic processes and expand citizen rights and opportunities (Gastil, 2021).

Yatsyna, Y., & Kudinov (2023) made a research devoted to conceptual analysis of the problem of innovative analytical and statistical technologies implementations as a corruption prevention tool.

Pyroha, I., Tokarchuk, L., Perezhniak, B., Nikitenko, L., & Berch, V. (2022) tried to conduct a legal analysis of the concept of "electronic democracy", including problematic issues of implementation of this mechanism, in order to understand whether this mechanism is an urgent need, or is a tribute to fashion and trends in the world practice.

The reviewed literature highlights several important themes and insights that are directly relevant to the study objectives, particularly in understanding the evolving nature of constitutionalism, governance, and human rights in the context of Ukraine's post-war recovery and its integration into the European framework. Constitutional Modernization and Democratic Governance:

O.V. Bondarenko (2019) emphasizes the role of constitutional modernization as a key mechanism in adapting and reforming national legal systems to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. Bondarenko argues that an optimal constitution should ensure the state's proper functioning while adapting to future changes, which aligns closely with the study's objective of analyzing the necessity and possible directions for constitutional changes in Ukraine post-war. This underscores the need for constitutional frameworks that are both resilient and adaptable, capable of supporting democratic governance amid new challenges. Digital and Electronic Governance:

V.V. Marchenko (2016) and M.S. Mikhrovska (2020) provide insights into the transformative potential of digital governance in modernizing public administration. Marchenko discusses the benefits of digitization, such as reduced costs and improved administrative services, which are crucial for the post-war reconstruction phase in Ukraine. Mikhrovska further differentiates digital governance from electronic governance by emphasizing the need for comprehensive integration of digital technologies across public sector operations. This supports the study's focus on innovative directions for the development of Ukrainian constitutionalism, particularly how digital tools can enhance governance efficiency and transparency in the post-war context.

Human Rights and Information Security:

O.O. Zolotar (2018) and T.Yu. Tkachuk (2019) highlight the importance of safeguarding human rights in the information age, particularly regarding information security and the protection of human information rights. Their work underscores the necessity of legal frameworks that protect citizens in an increasingly digital society, a consideration that is critical for Ukraine as it navigates post-war recovery and European integration. These insights directly connect to the study's objective of examining the impact of the war on Ukraine's constitutional guidelines and identifying new challenges, such as digital privacy and data protection.

E-Democracy and Public Participation:

Landemore (2020) and Gastil (2021) explore the impact of digital tools on democratic processes, demonstrating that platforms like online forums and policy crowdsourcing can enhance citizen engagement and improve democratic decision-making. These findings are particularly relevant to the study's exploration of constitutional changes needed for democratic institution restoration and strengthening in Ukraine. The use of digital tools in countries like France, Brazil, Iceland, and Spain serves as a valuable reference for how Ukraine might leverage similar technologies to bolster democratic participation and trust in governance during its recovery period.

Corruption Prevention and Innovative Technologies:

Yatsyna and Kudinov (2023) focus on the use of innovative analytical and statistical technologies as tools for corruption prevention, which aligns with the study's goal of enhancing the effectiveness and

transparency of Ukrainian state institutions. This is particularly pertinent in the post-war context, where rebuilding trust in government and ensuring accountability are essential for sustainable development.

#### Conceptual Analysis of Electronic Democracy:

Pyroha et al. (2022) delve into the concept of electronic democracy, analyzing its implementation challenges and relevance in modern governance. Their work helps frame the study's investigation into the substantive guidelines of Ukrainian constitutionalism, particularly in understanding the practical applications and potential limitations of electronic democratic mechanisms in a post-war, transitioning society.

#### Connection to Study Objectives

The literature reviewed provides a robust foundation for understanding the evolving landscape of Ukrainian constitutionalism in the post-war period. By synthesizing these findings, the study can effectively address its objectives:

**Analyzing Fundamental Values:** The insights from Bondarenko, Zolotar, and Tkachuk on constitutional modernization and human rights provide a basis for identifying and analyzing the core values enshrined in Ukraine's Constitution that remain relevant in the post-war period.

**Assessing the Impact of War:** The discussions on digital governance and information security highlight new challenges posed by the war, such as the need for robust digital infrastructure and legal protections in a rapidly evolving information environment.

**Proposing Constitutional Changes:** The examples of digital and electronic governance, e-democracy, and corruption prevention technologies offer concrete ideas for potential constitutional reforms aimed at enhancing democratic institutions, governance efficiency, and citizen engagement in Ukraine's post-war recovery.

By integrating these key findings, the study aims to provide actionable recommendations for legal and institutional development, aligning with Ukraine's broader goals of democratic renewal, transparency, and effective governance in the aftermath of conflict.

#### Methodology

This study was conducted using several methods of scientific knowledge. Using the historical method, the birth and development of the concept of e-government in Ukraine and the world was clarified and analyzed. The method of legal hermeneutics, in turn, helped to reveal the development of the legal framework regulating "electronic governance" and the principles that are the basis for building such governance, etc.

The systemic method in this study also allows us to consider digital technologies and legal mechanisms of democratic governance as parts of a complex, interconnected system. Thanks to this method, all levels of interaction between various elements of the control system and digital tools are covered. The systemic method helps to reveal the interrelationships between the components, which contributes to a deeper understanding of their impact on the overall effectiveness of the legal system. Using this method allows you to develop holistic approaches to the implementation of digital innovations that take into account all aspects of management and interaction, providing a more comprehensive analysis and forecasting of consequences.

The analytical method within the framework of this study helped to better understand and evaluate the impact of digital technologies on democratic governance, inclusiveness and transparency of society. The synthesis made it possible to combine all the important characteristics and elements of democratic governance to highlight the prospects for development and improvement of the relevant structure.

The modeling method within the framework of this study is used to create digital governance models that simulate real processes in the judicial system and public administration. Modeling allows you to predict the consequences of the introduction of new digital tools and technologies, to determine the optimal strategies

for their implementation, taking into account potential risks and opportunities. This method helps to better understand complex processes and develop effective strategies for their implementation.

It is also worth highlighting the comparative method, which allows analyzing and comparing different systems and approaches used in different countries or regions. In this study, this method is used to compare the effectiveness of various digital technologies and legal mechanisms in the field of democratic governance. Thanks to the comparison of successful examples of the implementation of digital technologies in different areas and countries, it is possible to determine the best practices and models that can be adapted for use in Ukraine. This contributes to the study of successes and failures of other countries, with the aim of improving national approaches.

Also quite important was the statistical method used to collect and analyze statistical data on the implementation and effectiveness of digital technologies in the judicial system and public administration. The statistical method allows measuring the impact of digital tools on indicators of accessibility, transparency and inclusiveness of public services. Analyzing quantitative data helps to draw informed conclusions and recommendations, which contributes to more effective planning and implementation of digital innovations in the legal system.

## Results and Discussion

The concept of "democratic governance" has been explored by various scholars, each offering unique interpretations that emphasize different facets of governance processes. For example, P.I. Nadolishniy (2007) describes democratic governance as the exercise of power by authorities at different levels, both state and local, in collaboration with citizens and their organizations during the formation and implementation of public policy. This definition suggests a direct interplay between governance and public participation, yet it lacks critical engagement with the complexities and challenges of implementing such an idealized form of governance. Nadolishniy's assertion that "governance" and "democratic governance" are interchangeable terms might overlook the nuances that differentiate democratic processes from more autocratic forms of governance.

Similarly, M.V. Martynenko (2010) offers a somewhat limited view of democratic governance, framing it primarily as a process involving representative government bodies across social structures. This definition does not sufficiently account for the multifaceted nature of democracy, particularly the role of direct citizen engagement beyond formal representation. It implicitly assumes that the establishment of representative institutions alone is adequate for ensuring democratic governance, which may oversimplify the broader concept and overlook the need for deeper participatory mechanisms and accountability measures.

Yu.E. Humen (2018) takes the concept further by incorporating elements from domestic research and adapting the term "governance" to fit the Ukrainian context, reflecting a hybrid model that integrates state authority, civil society, and the private sector. This approach underscores the importance of cross-sector collaboration and effective mechanisms for decision-making. However, it might underestimate the potential power imbalances and conflicts of interest among these sectors, particularly in a post-authoritarian context like Ukraine's. The adaptation of Western democratic governance models to different political and cultural contexts, such as Ukraine's, is fraught with challenges that are not fully addressed in Humen's framework. The discussion around e-governance, as outlined by authors like O.Z. Romanchuk et al. (2021) and international researchers, adds another layer to our understanding of governance by highlighting the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in public administration. While the use of ICTs is often lauded for enhancing transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement, this discourse tends to gloss over significant issues such as digital divide, cybersecurity risks, and the potential for surveillance and privacy breaches. The emphasis on technological solutions can also obscure deeper structural problems within governance systems, such as corruption, lack of accountability, and insufficient civic education, which are not necessarily resolved through technological means alone.

Furthermore, the development of e-government in Ukraine, as discussed by researchers like M.S. Mikhrovska (2020), highlights both the progress and setbacks in implementing digital governance frameworks. While initiatives like the "Digital Agenda of Ukraine 2020" demonstrate a commitment to integrating digital technologies into public administration, the slow pace of progress and lack of comprehensive implementation raise concerns about the readiness of state institutions and society to fully embrace these changes. The focus on digital transformation as a panacea for governance issues risks

oversimplifying the complex socio-political and economic landscape in which these technologies are being deployed.

Finally, the broader implications of these findings point to a need for a more critical and reflective approach to studying governance. The optimistic narratives around democratic governance and e-governance often fail to critically assess the limitations and potential unintended consequences of these models. For instance, while democratic governance aims to increase citizen participation and transparency, it also requires robust institutions and a politically engaged citizenry, conditions that may not be present in all contexts. Similarly, the push for e-governance might overlook significant barriers such as digital literacy, access to technology, and the infrastructural capacities of different countries.

In conclusion, while the literature on democratic governance and e-governance offers valuable insights into contemporary governance practices, there is a need for more critical and context-sensitive analyses that account for the diverse political, social, and technological landscapes in which these concepts are applied. By acknowledging the limitations and challenges of implementing these governance models, researchers and policymakers can better tailor their approaches to fit the unique needs and conditions of different societies, ultimately contributing to more effective and equitable governance outcomes.

Thus, over the past decade, democratically elected governments have become more active in regulating the activities of commercial entities on and off the Internet. Broadly speaking, governments take two approaches: regulation (hard law) and creating voluntary standards (soft law). With regard to the first approach, many jurisdictions adopt regulations in accordance with the model of democratic governance. The most common form involves placing some form of responsibility on internet companies for the content that appears on their platforms or websites. Several national governments have enacted relevant legislation, including Germany, the United Kingdom and India. The most far-reaching and comprehensive of these is the European Union's Digital Services Act, which imposes obligations on commercial actors to increase transparency, stop illegal content and regulate advertising to create responsible platforms free from manipulative design (European Commission, 2022b).

Another hard-law approach is based on the balance of power model of democratic government. An example of this is antitrust or competition regulation, which aims to use government power to reduce the concentration of private power. Again, the European Union has gone the furthest, using the size and power of the European market to check anti-competitive and monopolistic practices by technology companies. The Digital Markets Act, passed in 2022 together with the Digital Services Act, is clearly intended to reduce the gatekeepers of large online platform companies (European Commission, 2022a).

Using soft law approaches, governments create guidelines, codes of conduct, and other standards of behavior that technology companies voluntarily agree to adhere to. For example, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) (United Nations, 2011) and UN Special Rapporteur David Kaye's recommendations on content regulation offer companies a framework to inform their decisions (United Nations, 2018). Similarly, in 2018 the EU introduced a Code of Practice on Disinformation (European Commission, 2022c). In 2022, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy released the AI Bill of Rights, which sets out guidelines for the development and use of artificial intelligence systems (The White House, 2022). These guidelines at least show companies how to act more democratically and with respect for human rights.

## Conclusions

As we have observed, the characteristics of an inclusive and transparent society align closely with the principles of democratic governance. This relationship underscores that both are fundamentally aimed at creating a fair, open, and democratic environment for all members of society. The synergy between these two concepts is evident as they both emphasize the participation of all citizens, equal access to resources, and transparency in governmental processes.

### 1. Democratic Governance and Inclusive Society: Interconnected Principles

Firstly, democratic governance is defined by the active participation of all citizens in political processes and decision-making. This participation is facilitated through electoral processes, public debates, and mechanisms allowing citizens to address authorities on issues of concern. Inclusive societal institutions

reinforce these democratic principles by ensuring that opportunities for participation are accessible to all individuals, including those from marginalized groups such as people with disabilities, migrants, minorities, and other underrepresented populations.

Secondly, an inclusive society establishes conditions for equal opportunities and access to resources for all citizens. This means providing equitable access to education, healthcare, housing, and other basic services, regardless of social status, economic situation, or other characteristics. Democratic institutions are instrumental in ensuring that decisions made by authorities reflect the interests of society as a whole, rather than privileging certain groups or individuals.

Thirdly, a transparent society provides citizens with access to information about the workings of state bodies and decision-making processes. This transparency allows citizens to stay informed about government activities, monitor its actions, and detect instances of corruption. Democratic governance supports this transparency by ensuring that government mechanisms are open to public scrutiny and accountability.

Thus, the interaction between democratic governance and the institutions of an inclusive and transparent society is pivotal in creating conditions for equal participation in decision-making, safeguarding rights, and protecting the interests of all citizens. This interaction is essential for building a just, open, and democratic society that operates for the benefit of all its members.

## 2. Digital Technologies: Challenges and Opportunities in Democratic Governance

Digital technologies significantly enhance the interaction between the institutions of an inclusive and transparent society and democratic governance, making it more accessible, efficient, and effective. However, the integration of these technologies presents both opportunities and challenges:

**Opportunities:** Digital tools provide unprecedented access to information and political processes. The Internet and social media platforms enable citizens to receive news, engage in discussions, and express opinions, fostering greater openness and participation in political actions, which are vital for robust democratic institutions. Furthermore, digital tools promote equal access to services and opportunities; for example, electronic voting systems can make electoral processes more accessible to individuals with disabilities. Additionally, digital management systems increase government transparency by facilitating the monitoring of governmental activities, auditing expenditures, and controlling decisions, thus reducing corruption and enhancing public trust.

**Challenges:** Despite these advantages, digital technologies also pose significant challenges. The digital divide remains a critical issue, as not all citizens have equal access to technology, which can exacerbate existing inequalities and hinder inclusive participation. There are also concerns about privacy, data security, and the potential misuse of digital platforms for spreading misinformation or manipulating public opinion. These challenges necessitate a careful examination of how digital tools are implemented and governed to ensure they contribute positively to democratic processes rather than undermining them.

## 3. The Role of Education and Training in Enhancing Citizen Digital Skills

Education and training are crucial in developing the digital skills necessary for effective citizen participation in democratic governance. As digital technologies become increasingly embedded in political and social processes, ensuring that all citizens have the skills to navigate these tools is vital for fostering an inclusive democratic environment. Digital literacy programs should focus on:

**Technical Skills:** Teaching citizens how to use digital tools and platforms effectively for accessing information, engaging in civic discussions, and participating in digital voting processes.

**Critical Thinking:** Encouraging critical engagement with digital content, equipping citizens to identify misinformation, and understanding the ethical implications of digital interactions.

**Civic Engagement:** Promoting awareness of digital rights and responsibilities, fostering an understanding of how digital tools can be used for advocacy, community building, and holding government accountable.

#### 4. Future Research Directions

Future research should focus on several key areas to deepen our understanding of the relationship between digital technologies and democratic governance:

**Impact of Digital Technologies on Democratic Participation:** Investigate how different digital platforms influence citizen engagement, political mobilization, and the quality of democratic participation across diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts.

**Digital Literacy and Inclusivity:** Explore effective strategies for enhancing digital literacy among various populations, particularly those who are marginalized or have limited access to technology, to ensure inclusive participation in democratic processes.

**Ethical and Regulatory Frameworks:** Examine the ethical implications of digital governance tools and develop robust regulatory frameworks that protect citizens' rights while promoting transparency and accountability in digital governance.

**Innovations in E-Governance:** Analyze the potential of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, in enhancing transparency, efficiency, and citizen trust in democratic institutions.

By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how digital technologies can be harnessed to support democratic governance while mitigating potential risks and challenges. This research will be instrumental in guiding policymakers, educators, and technologists in creating more inclusive, transparent, and effective democratic systems in the digital age.

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