

Abstract

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The Impact of Introducing E-Governance on Marginalized Social Groups: Social and Spatial Dimensions

Smart city projects are getting increasingly widespread around the world due to globalization and the intensifying mobility of urban policies. A major initiative of smart city concepts is to introduce e-governance solutions in order to make administration more comfortable and to improve its accessibility. These efforts are claimed to have positive effects for many people with internet access, including disadvantaged groups as well. Smart city projects, however, might have negative consequences for many people who have limited access to information and communication technologies (ICT) or lack the knowledge to use them properly. In addition, many of these people belong to social groups that already had a disadvantageous position in society before the digitalization (for instance elderly and lower income people). Moreover, such disparities exist not only between social groups, but they have a geographical imprint as well.

My aim is to examine which social groups are affected by e-governance projects in a positive way, and which ones in a negative way. What kind of social disparities might result from e-governance initiatives, and do they have a specific spatial pattern? What sort of spatial inequality prevails between individuals belonging to

the same social group? Do e-governance projects create new social and spatial disparities, or just sustain those that have existed for a long time? And finally, how can these negative effects be reduced?