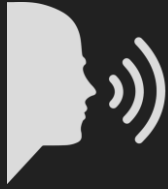




European challenge

Citizens' Initiative Platform
ManaBalss.lv:
a successful digital direct democracy

Imants Breidaks
CEO of ManaBalss.lv
21th of February, 2018



THE PROJECT



Effective way for the Citizens to initiate new laws within the representative democracy



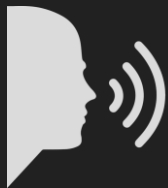
Instant, daily engagement not just for active few, but targeted and designed for the **ordinary** citizen



Bringing government and citizens together for cooperation & policy making



Our measure of success: political power of the ordinary Citizen



THE PROJECT

HIGHEST KNOWN
SUCCESS RATE :

50%

Of all the initiatives that have received the needed amount of votes have become laws or other legislative acts



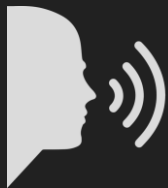
NATION ENGAGED:

70%

Of Latvia's population have visited ManaBalss.lv

FINANCIALLY SELF-SUSTAINABLE:

Financial model that is based on micro-donations from the platform users. 15% of users have donated



HOW IT WORKS TODAY

1

An idea is formed and submitted as an initiative by a citizen

2

ManaBalss.lv team reviews the initiative and publishes on the platform for gathering the votes of the citizens

3

If discussion on the initiative is successful and 10'000 citizen signatures have been gathered, the proposal is introduced in Parliament for debating and voting

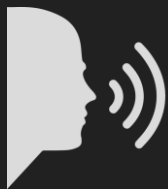
4

Parliament debates, votes, and examines the best possible solutions for the initiative's implementation

5

If the initiative receives the necessary votes from Parliament, it is implemented as a law





Observations and comparisons on other citizen initiative platforms

ManaBalss.lv **Vs** Other CI

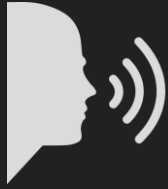
Governmental vs nongovernmental (includes funding and policy)
Simple **legal ideas**, not full legislative texts (room for dialogue)
Only **secure authorization** tools
High **quality control standards** & anti-extremist rules
Some CI platforms are “overtaken by parliamentary opposition”

ManaBalss.lv
EU suggested
strategy **Vs** ECI

Driven by **national-level media**
Driven by **narrative-based marketing**
Far **higher engagement and success rates**
Addressing the highest legislative authority
No time-limit to gathering signatures.



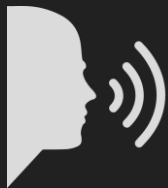
Such systems should **strive to do the heavy lifting behind the scenes** so that the obstacles for participation to authors and citizens are ever decreasing.



How to get ECI from proof-of-concept to functional tool of direct democracy?

1. Has to have **user-centric design**. 3 minutes per visit. A micro-managed democracy is no democracy.
2. Using online banking as the basic authorization tool can be universally doable and cover the majority of authorization needs.
3. Has to have a functioning **quality control system** based on values first
4. Democracy tools as PR tools for some institution doesn't work
5. Rebuilding image (PR) of the ECI. A restart could do that.
6. Enlargement of **potential influence: an involvement of Council of EU**
7. Has to work from **national level-up**.
8. Has to be safeguarded **against authoritarian, populism, Kremlin influence**
9. **Has to be based on mutual trust and respect**





How it can work on EU level

Scale. Building **network of national** Citizens initiative platforms.

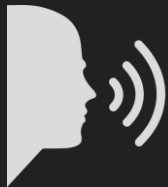
Power play. Addressee: Council of EU.

Achieve similar and/or higher results that Latvia has. With **successful platforms in 10 EU countries in place only then it makes sense to add EU content.**

2,5 million signatures should be the preferred goal.

New features we strive for to implement for a stronger EU level citizen initiatives:

- public voting on all laws Parliaments are voting on
- crowdfunded lobbying campaigns for the new initiatives
- fully mature skill-set and strategies for working within communities being already under anti-democratic and pro-Kremlin narratives

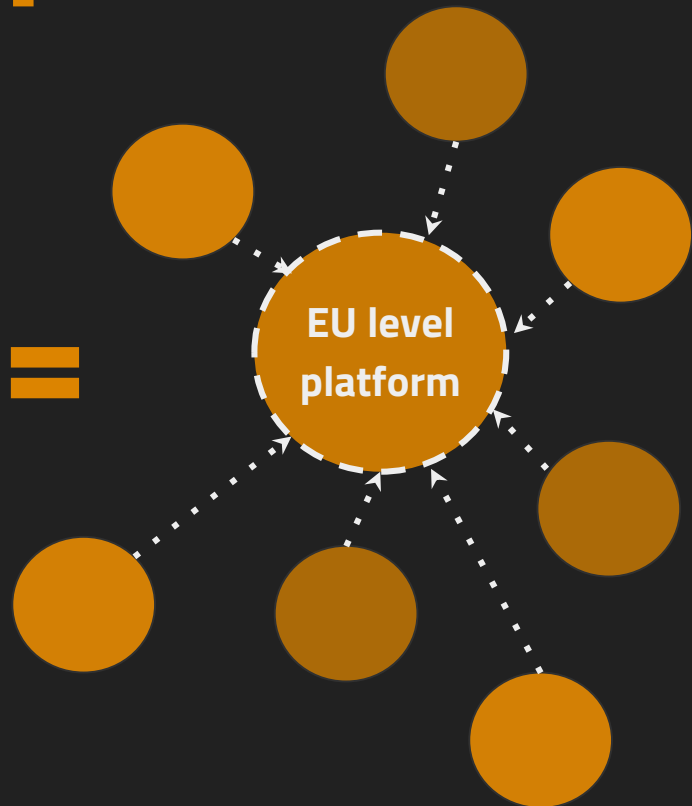


Bottom-Up approach

At least **10 EU countries** have national platforms



Adding EU dimension to the platforms



"People will be ready to think about EU initiatives only after they feel they can influence their own domestic issues," EU Crowd conference in Ljubljana, 2016



European challenge

**We would love to tell
you more**

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