The Second Step

Allowing for diverse and separated decision-making universes under Civil democracy

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Abstract: So far, Civil democracy has been established as unitary decision-making universe for global decisions and universal global participation. The current paper describes the next step to a platform for diverse universes with own electorates and voting rights. It also clarifies some leftover aspects of the original project. It describes user stories, differentiates centrally organized and decentralized applications, describes a payment structure, with a differentiation of centrally and decentrally paid universes, and the invitations process for decentralized applications.

A first step of coding (Scholtz 2022) has established Civil democracy as unitary decision-making universe directed towards global decisions where every human in the world is entitled to participate.

The current paper describes the next step: To transform the Civil democracy site into a platform that allows to host diverse 'applications' or 'decision-making universes' with their own electorates and voting rights.

At the same time, the paper serves as clarification for some aspects of the original project that had been deliberately left out of the first implementation step, as including the support for right-to-left languages.

1 New user stories

To make the concept of Civil democracy applicable in specific contexts, decision making universes need to be set up and managed. This is done in the following steps:

1.1 Setting up nonglobal decision universes with specific voting rights

So far, the platform has been set up to allow for global decision making, with all voters participate in all decisions. It is, however, necessary to set up 'decision universes' with specific voting rights: With that, administrators can set up nonglobal decision universes with specific voting rights.

1.2 Advanced user identity management

For these nonglobal decision universes, several ways to check these specific voting rights may be possible. Examples include centralized admin check and decentralized checks by other users, or mixtures of both.

For political movements for which growth orientation outweighs existing formal structure, the following process is implemented:

Existing network member hand out access codes to other opposition members. Entering code allows to make first entries.

New registered users are assigned to existing users who call them to check their voting right and attachment to the movements' values. If they agree, the new user is given full access.

1.3 Specifying open actors

So far, trust in open actors is general, and it is assumed that open actors are cautious to participate only in decisions that are within their profile and will not alienate supporting voters who see specific questions outside of it.

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To do so, decisions are assigned tags in a fuzzy way. E.g., a decision may relate to the environment fully (assigment value=1), partly (assigment value for example=0.3) or not at all (0). For every open actor, users may either negatively reduce their trust in this specific OA and a specific tag, again in a fuzzy way, and by implication leave it unchanged if these tags are not attached. Or they may bind their trust to the existence of tags attached, and by implication reduce it if no such positively valued tags are attached. The weight of a specific open actor is reduced accordingly in the calculation of the indirect ranking. (There is no effect on OA's appearance in relation to arguments.)

As creating and attaching tags both to decisions and OAs is a cumbersome process that will not be done by very many users, it shall be possible to automatically adopt and the tags of trusted OAs and IVs with similar OA trust structure, and situatively adapt them.

1.4   Handbook

A handbook is created to leads users step by step through all the processes of Civil democracy.

1.5   Social media output lists

The universe administrator gets a page with currently most supported items. (5.4)

2   Application types

Applications can be organized centrally or in a decentralized way.

Centrally organized applications are meant for collectives with a current governance structure that embraces Civil democracy and aims to use it for better participation and involvement of its citizens and civil society. Examples are communities, cities, counties, nation states or groups of nation states using Civil democracy.

Decentralized applications are meant for groups suffering from a current governance structure that does not embrace Civil democracy and in most cases will reject important principles of democracy generally. Examples are diaspora communities or local oppositions of autocratically governed societies.

3   Payment structure for nonglobal decision universes

All decision universes are paid for collectively. (The only exception are global sustainability decisions; this application is funded independently.)

One way is to have the application paid and administered centrally, e.g., by a city or community administration.

The other way is to have the application paid by its users and administered in a decentralized way.

In this case, with regards to payment users have three options:

- they can just pay for their own voting right,
- they can contribute to pay for the participation of others,
- and they can apply for slots paid by others; these slots are assigned on a first-come-first-served base.

To encourage solidarity among application members, supporting the participation of others is priced much cheaper than individual participation. Example numbers are 5$/mo for oneself and 2$/mo for others, but

4   Invitations

Decentralized applications are meant for networks of diaspora communities that do not have, and partly, for security reasons, do not aim to not aim to have centralized member administrations.

4.1   Process

In these cases, getting part of the decision universe involves the following steps:

1. An eligible individual is approached by a network member, invited to the universe, and handed over an individual access code.
2. The individual accesses the Civil democracy platform, signs the general Civil democracy responsibility manifesto, and enters the access code.

3. They are called back by other network members who assess their credibility.
4. In case of positive evaluation, they are given access to the universe and its decisions, and receive the right to vote and to serve as open actors within the platform.

4.2 Roles

These steps demand the definition of two roles:

- network members allowed to invite others
- network members assessing the credibility of potential new members

5 Additional aspects

5.1 Right-to-left languages

So far, the website is set up only for usage with left-to-right languages. It needs to be adapted for right-to-left languages.

5.2 Translation API

So far, all text entries for decisions, options, arguments, and actor descriptions exist only in one language version. It is necessary to have a automatic translation and the option to edit these automatic translation to make it more appropriate. An adequate rights structure needs to be defined and implemented.

5.3 Images supporting arguments

For arguments arguing for or against specific rankings of options, so far the upload of images was not possible. Now this shall be possible, and the respective screens need to be adapted accordingly.

5.4 Social media output lists

The universe administrator gets a page with currently most supported items:

- most supported options overall
- options receiving most support in the last 24 hours
- most supported arguments overall
- arguments receiving most support in the last 24 hours
- open actors receiving most new support in the last 24 hours

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References

Scholtz, Hanno. 2022. "Pressing to Stop Climate Change with a Civil Democracy First Surveys Platform: Introduction and Technical Requirements of a Civil Democracy Platform to Unite Global Civil Society."