

Inclusive Digitalisation

Challenge Question

How might we make public services and active citizen participation inclusive for underserved groups?

Regions in Focus

Jakarta (Indonesia) and Poltava (Ukraine)

Initial Situation

For public administration, there are so-called underserved groups that are difficult to reach and involve for a variety of reasons - especially through digital public services and participation opportunities. From the perspective of inclusion, it would be very necessary to activate these underserved groups and allow them to participate. Underserved groups are, for example, homeless people, low-income citizens, refugees, people who do not speak the official language, elderly people, women or people with disabilities. Many public services are not designed from the perspective of underserved groups and are not made easily accessible. These people sometimes have the feeling that their participation is not wanted, they have limited access to digital media or not enough skills for digital tools.

Challenge Description

The two regions in focus in this challenge are Jakarta (Indonesia) and Poltava (Ukraine). An idea has to be developed for one of the two. The underserved groups of the two regions differ. For Jakarta it is interesting to focus on low-income citizens, elderly people, women or people with disabilities. For Poltava it is people with disabilities, elderly people and displaced people throughout the country.

The possibility to use public services easily and autonomously and to feel invited to do so influences the opportunities that open up for citizens and impacts whether they can live the life they want to live. The Challenge is open to a wide range of approaches and not limited to specific areas of public services for citizens. An interesting example are certainly public services when it comes to active participation, e.g. in the citizen-centred development of public services and programmes, citizen involvement or elections. It is precisely this active participation that would be so important to ensure that their needs, opinions and preferences are better represented. This would advance the inclusion of underserved groups in the long run.

How can we open up the easy use of public services and active participation ideally in one-stop for underserved groups, make them feel invited and lead them towards it? How offline, how online, how hybrid should it be? Understanding the exact needs, existing barriers and activation possibilities and involving the underserved groups in the development of these solutions is therefore absolutely necessary. Inclusion is the goal and digitalisation can be a means to better inclusion. What opportunities does digitalisation offer for more inclusion of underserved groups?