CoDesigning Participatory Tools for a New Age: A Proposal for Combining Collective and Artificial Intelligences

In the context of a Citizen Lab, this paper describes how a vanguard of activists, designers, scholars and participation practitioners were involved in a participatory prototyping process. As a result, they designed CoGovern an online participation tool whose focus is to incorporate citizen preferences in local policy making. CoGovern is aimed at supporting informed and transparent participatory processes whilst avoiding that sponsoring authorities cherry-pick policy proposals and omit to provide explanations. With this purpose, this paper proposes a decision-making process which incorporates Artificial Intelligence techniques to a collective decision process and whose result is mainly based on standard optimization techniques rather than just vote-counting.