

## Conference of Digital Cities – Santiago, Chile – November 3 y 4, 2015

<http://ciudadesdigitales2015.org/> , <http://asiet.lat/eventos/%E2%80%8Bciudades-digitales/> y <http://ciudadesdigitales2015.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/programa-ciudades.pdf>

Pannel: “*Experiences of citizen engagement in the administration of local governments.* Conference on Digital Cities promoted by ASIET.

**Moderator:** Kim Hendi, Canada and Argentina

**Panelists:** **Yolanda Rueda**, Cibervoluntarios (Spain); **Jorge Alzamora**, Chief of the Modernization Unit of the Government of Chile; **Juan Luis Nuñez**, General Manager of the Fundación País Digital of Chile.

Notes of Dr, Kim Hendi in moderating Panel:

The Conferences of Digital Cities have the aim at disseminating, discussing, and creating opportunities for the technological development of the cities, *at the service of citizens*. From this perspective, it is understood that technology is *a means and not an end*. What *really matters are people* and their ability to create innovation and generate knowledge. The digital aspect is in figuring out how to apply technology to improve education, access to culture, health benefits, public transport, and citizenship participation in democracy.

The Digital City is a *fundamental pillar* in the development of the information society. If a Digital City is to make sense, *the citizens must be able to have digital access*, i.e. fast and simple access to various telecommunications networks.

The strategies to ensure this digital access and promote citizen engagement in the *digital cities*, has seen a fundamental change in the last decade. The focus of the political agendas determined by decisions “from top to bottom” and mainly driven by technology, has evolved into a more open and more inclusive approach, one of multi-stakeholder (multi-stakeholder) engagement, with attention to issues of training and skills development.

In the early stages, the development of the digital city evolved around the “efficiency of the administration or management”. Technical experts (techies), as well as most of the investments, were directed to setting up computers and software and the back-office of public administrations, to increase efficiency.

Efforts were directed to the development of initiatives that improved online access (via web sites) to government services. These were followed by the development towards e-Government, and applications to support digital governments. These initiatives had various levels of transparency and inclusion of the population, but in general they allowed for limited opportunities for real citizen participation and engagement. And even fewer opportunities for consultation and feedback. In this sense, the efforts were to a large extent, still “top-down” policies, led by technical staff, receiving its directives through this “linear” process.

Currently, it is understood that the issues around a “Digital City” exceeds the technological aspects, and those of more and better infrastructure. It is largely understood that it is necessary to:

- implement public policies that support the development of a conducive environment to attract and support businesses;
- promote the development of skills and capabilities around ICTs, so that citizens are active members of the society,
- develop a process of real consultation and engagement participation of actors and networks;
- promote the “inclusive participation” of multiple actors in the definition of the priorities of the digital city.

In the exploration of various examples of cases, it would be expected that the analysis focuses on:

1. The evolution of citizen participation, especially around the design, implementation and sustainability of the digital cities.
2. Best practices with regard to policies and initiatives that have been implemented by administrations and organizations, as well as the major challenges that they have faced.