

Democracy and XR Technologies

XR stands for extended reality, which is an umbrella term that covers virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR). XR technology can create immersive and interactive experiences that enhance the way we perceive and interact with the world. XR technology is often connected with hardware such as smart glasses and can develop democracy in several ways, such as:

- XR technology can improve democratic participation and civic engagement by providing new ways of accessing information, expressing opinions, and mobilizing collective action. For example, XR technology can be used to create immersive and interactive experiences that educate voters about political issues, candidates, and policies.
- XR technology can enhance democratic deliberation and dialogue by enabling more diverse and inclusive perspectives and voices to be heard and considered. For example, XR technology can be used to create virtual spaces and platforms that facilitate communication and collaboration among people across different locations and cultures.
- XR technology can foster democratic innovation and experimentation by creating new possibilities and opportunities for solving complex and wicked problems. For example, XR technology can be used to create simulations and scenarios that allow people to explore and test different solutions and outcomes. XR technology can also be used to create co-creation and co-design processes that involve people in the design and implementation of public services and policies.

However, XR technology can also pose some challenges and risks for democracy, such as:

- XR technology can create social and digital inequalities, polarization, and fragmentation by creating digital divides, by exacerbating power imbalances, and by undermining social cohesion and trust.
- XR technology can affect the identity, values, and culture of people by influencing their perceptions, emotions, and behaviors, and by eroding their sense of self, reality, and belonging.
- XR technology can require ethical and legal frameworks that balance innovation and accountability, and that empower citizens to use XR responsibly and critically.

Therefore, XR technology can develop democracy by creating new opportunities and challenges for democratic processes and practices. XR technology can be a powerful tool for enhancing democracy, but it can also be a potential threat to democracy. The development and use of XR technology for democracy requires careful consideration and collaboration among different stakeholders, such as governments, businesses, civil society, and citizens.

An introduction and workshop could explore what kind of application that need the different hardware, VR for fully immersive digital environment, MR for digital elements interact with physical world and AR for physical world overlaid with digital layer. User experience and specific needs will find new ways of learning, training, certification and exploring areas quicker and more realistic.

More information: Lars G Fröjd, Virtual Management

<https://www.virtualmanagement.se/mixed-reality-glasses-and-a-new-metaverse-echosystem/>

