

Keynote Abstract

From Smart Cities to Smart Communities: The Case of Children's Independent Mobility

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The idea of smart cities has mainly developed along a technology-centric vision, based on (broadband) communication networks, smart objects and internet of things, (open) public, private, and personal data made available by institutions and citizens, software based services, and so on. The vision of a smart community moves the emphasis towards the people living in the territory and towards the different communities of citizens sharing common goals, interests, and problems.

A key element of a smart community is the proactive participation of citizens to the public life and the related decision-making processes, the interaction with policy makers and city managers. However, the smart community vision does not neglect the importance and the need of technology. Techniques supporting different communities in their specific needs, enabling the creation of social networks, and speeding up the adaptation and personalization of services can be key elements supporting the growth of a smart community.

In my talk, I will present some ideas for a technology for smart communities through the project called “children's independent mobility”, which we have just started in collaboration with the municipality of Trento. In the case of “children walking buses” to/from school, the project involves different kinds of actors, institutions, and communities: families (e.g., parents), schools (e.g., teachers), neighborhood (e.g., shop owners), civic servants (e.g., urban police), and volunteers (e.g., elderly people helping children in crossing roads). Proper technology can support the whole community in the ideation, management and daily operation of children mobility initiatives and services. Personalized tools for knowledge sharing, community management and gamification techniques can play a key role to raise awareness, promote behavioural changes and increase the impact of policies and actions supporting children's independent mobility.