

AUTOGOV

Abstract

There isn't much time left for the shape of global governance to start changing, but if that transformation is to be effective, it needs to take into account a few lessons from what has failed so far.

Notably, in our view, that power ends up representing itself, and so democracy better be direct. That excellent decision-making alone, without economic power, is futile, and so the new governance model needs to include an economy section with its own value generating currency, and a basic income to guarantee the freedom of the voters and neutralize the current economic powers. It also needs to take advantage of the Internet, the great transformational force of our times; and it needs to be bold, for nowadays it has become easier to improve something 10x starting from scratch, than 10% through small increments from within.

Autogov is an open-source, no-one on top, no-one behind, software. It has two main sections working in synergy: A decision-making direct democracy Political one (the rudder), to find out "Where we want to go?" and "What is the best solution for each issue?"; and an economy section (the engine), with its own virtual currency, basic income, creative free market, and public budget.

The Political section rests upon a minimalistic yet sufficient philosophy that through the abstract, rather empty, concepts of 'Meta' and 'Better,' manages to provide a transparent, coherent legitimacy to the whole system. It does so by, from an external, neutral, vessel, force the contents within it to debate and compete until the Better idea at each region-time is found and implemented.

The main structural component to achieve this is the Vontest (Votable Contest).

A Vontest consists of six main components or steps:

1. A Question, pointing out a problem, need or opportunity.
2. An unlimited number of Answers addressing the question.
3. A structured Evaluation of each answer and a Debate between them all.
4. A cumulative, anytime-anywhere, voting capability.
5. A Votography (Votes Photography) to tally the votes on a previously specified date.
6. A Resolution to implement it.

Anyone can create a new Vontest about any subject, and anyone can answer, debate and vote on them, though typically, users will concentrate on those topics affecting them directly or interesting for them. In Autogov everyone is equal from beginning to end. Neither people nor money hold power. Only good ideas, through their persuasive power, and their votes, do.

The Economic section, whose goal is to make us free to dedicate our life on what we are really passionate about, and to achieve the goals we all decided in the Political section, is composed of four structural items:

1. The Voins (∞, Virtual Coins) an internal money that can be printed as needed (within the limits set by maintaining the credibility and stability of its value) to enable all transactions and power the system.
2. A Basic Income in Voins, allowing for real creative freedom for all, by providing a cushion to fall on and be daring from.

It could be divided in two: An Unconditional one, and a Participation one, which could be voided through sanctions or if a minimum activity is not fulfilled.

3. The Creative Market is a free exchange bazaar of services, products, and events where everybody is asked: “What (several things) would you like to offer?”. It makes it very easy to sell, be found, be booked, be reviewed and be paid.

4. The Public Budget, its amount in Voins could begin equal to the sum of all Basic Incomes but can grow from taxes and other public earnings. Every period it is spent according to all most voted answers that fit within its import, in the Special Vontest: “In what should we spend our common budget this next period?”

The answers here can be:

- Tasks that need to be performed
- Positions to be filled for a short term such as coordinator of a certain topic (thus creating a fluid-bureaucracy)
- Award money for The Game, which is an incentive given to the best scores every month from the sum of points received by successful activity in the system
- Thanks2x4y: an award to X person for performing Y service in the past that has proved valuable today.

Autogov is ultimately a software with a simple, elegant and easy to use interface, and should always remain free and open-source, otherwise, its credibility would be compromised. An instance of the software based on the WordPress CMS development platform is 80% complete, and could be used to run pilot implementations soon, until a more robust and secure version, reprogrammed in parallel, is ready.

The implementation of Autogov does not pretend to be a Revolution, fighting to snap and overcome the current power. Nor does it pretend to be Evolution, slowly struggling to improve existing institutions from within. Instead, just as other Internet services like Linux, Wikipedia or BitCoin did, it wants to add itself to the world, and grow by Voluntary Gradual Substitution: As Autogov matures it should become so much more efficient than its previous non-digital alternative, that the choice to switch to it will be soft and obvious.

In practice, the strategy of implementation could include pilot tests in small communities and universities, award contests to improve and divulge it, and a program to incorporate it as a proposal in current or new (Autogovian) political parties. We think quite soon the public would be ready to favor it in political debates and elections, over longly despised as inefficient and corrupt traditional parties.

Beyond solving current governance models limitations and defects, we propose Autogov as a socio-politic-economic, ultra-flexible, high-resolution Operating System, to enable humans, with the help of automation and AI, to explore the future at (collective) will, through the creative freedom of its individuals. What awesome future could come out of that? Let us not be afraid to aim for awesome; this time around failing to do so could be catastrophic.

Description of the Model

Introduction: Prolegomena to Any Future Governance Model

Let us begin by first pointing out briefly a few key considerations we believe any new model should take into account given the nature of our times and what we know has failed so far.

Power wants to represent itself

Representative democracy was a significant progress from previous monarchies and dictatorships, but it has definitely shown its deficiencies and limitations lately. Party politics, powerful lobbies, inefficiency, corruption, impunity, revolving doors, unfulfilled electoral promises, increased inequality, and so on, have made citizens distrust and be frustrated with their respective governments. The relative ubiquity of this across the world has led us to conclude that there might be something inherently wrong with representative governance; that power, by its own dynamics, wants and tends to represent itself only in the long run; the needs of the other may be discussed but somehow end up ultimately neglected.

In current societies power is held by the economic and political elites. Any improvement for the rest of the people is a concession to keep things more or less the same, real equality, real change, is not a structural outcome of the system even if it clearly needs it. Thus in new governance models, power should be held directly by everyone.

Politics not enough, you need Economy too

This is also why we think it would not suffice with a model with political (decision-making) capabilities only. These decisions could be excellent and taken after a thorough debate but if the real power in a society is not bound by it, if the decision makers do not hold the power, then it becomes just a wishful recommendation, which can be relatively easily vetoed or ignored. We believe power can be generated by introducing an Economy, with its own currency, into the model; without it, current economic powers will still reign supreme.

Its the Internet, stupid

Just as the stories of MP3, Linux, Wikipedia, and Bitcoin, among so many others, have proved, we believe the Internet has allowed for unprecedented decentralization, automation, and directness in all informational and economic transactions. We believe it to be evident that it is this new tool that will allow a new shape of governance to be so obviously better than the previous system to peacefully persuade its users to switch to the new one. No need to fight for it.

Automation and Abundance

Despite understandable disbelief that a radical change in the human condition is approaching, practically everyone who takes the time to study the exponential nature of technological growth and the advances in artificial intelligence ends up concluding that very soon we will face the threat of massive unemployment and personal poverty due to unprecedented productivity from automation and robots. This dystopian threat has a utopian-seeming alternative of actual abundance in terms of production and availability of goods (many of which will become virtual and free), and of, for the first time ever, real freedom for all. (Real freedom = you decide what you do with your time).

10x easier than 10%

As the Global Challenge Foundation appears to have recognized by the creation of this contest, now is a good time to take a step back and rethink everything from scratch, to be radical, to be utopian, because for once, being radical is much more realistic than being gradual:

"Here is the surprising truth: It's often easier to make something 10 times better than it is to make it 10 percent better. Because when you're working to make things 10 percent better, you inevitably focus on the existing tools and assumptions, and on building on top of an existing solution that many people have already spent a lot of time thinking about. Such incremental progress is driven by extra effort, extra money, and extra resources. It's tempting to feel improving things this way means we're being good soldiers, with the grit and perseverance to continue where others may have failed – but most of the time we find ourselves stuck in the same old slog. But when you aim for a 10x gain, you lean instead on bravery and creativity."

Astro Teller (Google X head, WIRED Magazine)

In 2012 in Spain, a new political force, Podemos (We Can) asking for radical democracy and basic income burst in with unprecedented impact into the political landscape of Spain (a 2015 poll said it had risen from 0 to 30%, the leading force at the time, in just a year). What ended up happening since then? The system absorbed it into its inertia and customs, party politics, short-term goals, limits and structures and nothing much has really come up from it. It's just very hard to change our current systems from within.

We ain't got much time

Slowly but surely is not good enough this time.

If we don't start now to fight climate change, it might soon be too late.

If we don't have an accepted alternative to employment-based monetary distribution, automation could soon bring massive unemployment.

If we don't have a globally unified powerful open debate, we won't be ready to control the unprecedented power and risks that AI, genetic design, nanotech, VR/AR, etc. will bring.

Perhaps even more urgent, everyday people are hungry while tons of food is thrown away. Every day employees, spouses, children, are exploited thanks to economic need. And every day most people in the world have to sell their work and time for something they don't care about or enjoy.

What a waste!

The Autogov System

Any governance model, indeed any device designed to navigate its way through uncertain waters, must have a direction mechanism (a rudder) and an energy generation device (motor).

Likewise, Autogov has a Political section to determine “Where shall we go now?” on every issue; and an Economic section to answer “How can we get there?”.

In broad terms:

For the Political section, we propose to break with, hitherto useful but not anymore, vertical static hierarchies of command in favor of a dynamic, high-resolution, continuous, direct democracy meta-system.

For the Economic section, we propose to break with, hitherto unavoidable but not anymore, scarcity and labor economy in favor of a basic income, creative market, multi-layered, automation compatible, abundance economy.

Autogov is an Internet-based software, an instance of which is already almost finished based on the WordPress CMS development platform.

The name Autogov refers both to Autonomous Government: we govern ourselves, and to Automatic Government: it all happens algorithmically, except for our human choices.

The Political Section

This section is in turn composed of three parts: A (1) Philosophical foundation, which sustains and legitimizes the (2) Decision-Making engine, which in turn provides for (3) Law and Justice.

(1) Philosophical Foundation

We believe a minimalistic yet effective and coherent foundational philosophy is essential for the understanding, credibility, and legitimacy of any Governance Model.

We are all diversely equal

In Autogov, we all have access to everything, everything is transparent, and there's no one above or behind anything. Autogov is practically flat. Neither people nor money hold power or privilege; we govern ourselves through the free competition of our ideas and votes. Within this structural equality in terms of power however, a creative diversity based on freedom is furthered.

Individuals (1), Groups (\in), All (\forall) and Nothing (\emptyset)

The Ethical relationship between these four ontological entities regulates the use of the Autogov system:

- The individual user, the one, is the primary focus of the system, it can raise questions, answer, debate, follow subjects, vote, be in charge of tasks and positions, etc.
- The Group, the some, can be any association of individuals united for any purpose or goal, from a small club to a company, to a whole nation.
- The All is always present both concretely as the public provider of basic incomes and the public budget in the Economy and as a section where all global logs and stats are kept in Politics. And philosophically, as something who's good needs to be considered for any answer in Politics.

We believe that, in the long term, the best for the All is equal to the best for the One (and the Groups): Altruism is long termed egoism.

- The Nothing is present as an ethical guarantee that there is nothing beyond discussion, nothing outside the system, no one behind it, nothing unquestionable. Nothingness is the guarantee of free consciousness. It is the Meta perspective. Without Transparent, the color Red could never be aware of its being just one more color among others.

MetaPragmatism

The only axiomatic presupposition for the system is the concept of *Better*, which is almost empty of content in itself: Better could be in any direction or way.

Who knows what is better on any issue? In Auogov no one does, only the Votes can tell.

It could be said this concept is the Artificial continuation to Natural Selection.

As for *Meta*, only through an external point of view that neutrally analyses and compares the varied contents within it, can there be real consciousness in the development of anything. This meta, fractal, geometry is omnipresent in the structure of Autogov.

We introduce the concept of "Atem", to denote the relationship opposite of Meta, i.e., "My cells are Atem to me" (the word "Mesa" could also be used, but we like Atem).

(2) The Decision Making

A Betterment Engine

Just as a Search Engine is an algorithm designed to retrieve all information related to any issue, Autogov's Political section could be thought of as a Betterment Engine. An algorithm designed to find, through open proposals, structured debate, and voting, the best possible way to improve any matter for everyone's benefit. Whatever issue is passed through that engine, should come out of it more conscious and better. This Betterment algorithm, where everybody participates as equals, is comprised of:

Vontests

The Vontest (Votable Contest) is the central structural unit in Autogov. Vontests are used for everything, wherever there is a question, problem or something to decide you vontest it, and once the best solution is chosen, you vontest the best way to do it, and then the best person to do it, and so on. Anything can be vontested.

Every Vontest consists of:

1. Question

A question raising a problem, need or opportunity. Any user can post it.

In fact, if a user has a proposal, he is forced to see what problem it would solve and write that as a question, and then the proposal as an answer to it, thus allowing for alternative proposals to compete with it.

2. Answers

An unlimited number of answers to solve it. Again, anyone can answer.

In Autogov you always have access to everything, though typically, you end up concentrating on the things that interest or afflict you.

When posting an answer in a vontest you are asked to explain it by responding What, Where, When, How, and How Much questions, as well as to provide any images, videos, audios, etc. that further describe and explain it.

3. Evaluation and Debate

A structured debate with software tools to evaluate and compare the answers.

This section is critical in Autogov, and introduces a growing collection of instruments to help structure a thorough discussion of each answer, such as Comments, Pros and Cons, Simulations, Variations. It allows for Mixes: combinations of two or more answers or aspects into one new proposal. It also permits breaking a question, when convenient, into smaller ones. And finally, it allows for competitive criteria comparisons among all the answers.

4. Cumulative Voting

A 10/4 cumulative voting ability. You have 10 votes per question and can assign a maximum of 4 to any answer, thus promoting interest in more answers than your first one (to avoid wasting the rest of your votes), and preventing Condorcet loser victories, where the worst option (among more than two) for the majority ends up winning.

For maximum convenience, you can vote and modify your vote anytime anywhere until the Votography (Votes Photography) date.

In some cases votes could be weighted according to distance or degree of direct affliction by the issue, i.e., those who live on the street have more weight than those that live in the neighborhood and much more than those who live in the city.

5. Votography

When the question is posted, a Votography date is determined in which all the votes are tallied, and a winning answer is declared.

There are several timescales for Vontests, from urgent "let's decide it today," to normal "we have a month for this," to thorough "let's take a year to discuss it."

6. Resolution

Following the votography, a corresponding resolution is taken. Usually, the resolution implies the creation of further Vontests to determine how and who will implement the solution.

For most questions, after the resolution, the question remains open, the debate continues, and a new relatively distant votography date is set. Or if at any time, the system detects a change of leader in the answers, such date could be hastened.

The six elements above are the main components of a Vontest. But besides them there are several variables or modifiers:

• Taxonomies

Every question has certain taxonomy fields like, location, type, topics, groups, ministry, etc. that make it easy to find, explore, and notify interested users about its existence. These taxonomies can be hierarchic or just horizontal like tags. New taxonomies can also be proposed and approved.

• Total number of Votes, Views and other Stats.

The total number of votes could be used to grade the importance of a Vontest and thus give it more notoriety, give game rewards, etc.

• **Rewards and Awards**

All Vontests could include a reward for the winning answer. This can be provided privately by the Question creator individual or group; or publicly, if approved in the budget.

• **Groups**

Although by default everything should be open and accessible to all in Autogov, certain issues and their Vontests can be restricted to the participation and voting of a Group, provided the decision only affects that group, obviously.

Thus, for instance, the neighbors of a building could use Autogov to decide what to do in the common garden areas or if the elevator should finally be replaced. And those group issues would appear as one more thing to check in its member's Autogov feed.

• **Conflicts**

Anyone can claim a certain answer, or the question of the Vontest itself, is in conflict with a previous Resolution or Law, and then a parallel faster vontest be set up to decide if that is indeed the case.

To understand better how a Vontest works you may refer to the Examples at the end of this document, as well as the diagram and screenshots included in the two images attached.

Lists

Aside from Vontests, the Autogov software allows for Lists, which are curated collections of:

- Vontests (Questions)
- Answers
- Resolutions
- Economy Goods

Anyone can curate a list for any purpose. For instance, a list of all Vontests that you think are underexposed, the list of your favorite answers, a list of weird offerings in the Creative Market, etc. There are also some important lists kept by the system such as:

• **The List of Main Values**

This optional list is simply the answer to the continuous Vontest: "What values are most important for us?"

We could expect Happiness, Love, Freedom, Peace, Progress, Self-realization, etc. to figure up there. It is just a reference to be used in debates as an evaluation parameter. What do we mean exactly by each concept? Well, obviously for Autogov, that also depends on the outcome of the Vontests: "What is freedom?", "What is Peace?", etc.

• **The List of Laws**

Certain vontests' resolutions require the writing of a new Law, and it is added to the list. From then on, any future Vontest should take it into account in its discussion, and if it is broken, a sanction can be imposed. What punishment should be imposed? How severe? Well, a new vontest can decide that, or a Judge position, either paid publicly or hired in the Creative Market, could do it.

To get started, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could be added as laws.

Though Autogov is all about fluidity and change, a minimum system robustness needs to be maintained, and thus, certain fundamental laws could need to reach a special majority to be changed.

(3) Justice and Conflict Resolution

Even if, through its Positions and Tasks (to be further explained later), Autogov is ready to offer the service of static juries as those present today, it is also ready to impart justice and resolve conflicts in its own way through Vontests. For instance, there could be a Vontest question: “Is this man guilty of this crime? This is the evidence...” or “Should custody of this child be given to the mother exclusively?” and just as in any other Vontest anyone can propose Verdicts that can be evaluated, compared, and finally voted. The affected parties could agree to restrict voting to several appointed people with high reputation scores, or to a Creative Market's private Judging provider user or group that has great reviews.

The Economic Section

Having a nice Political, decision-taking, betterment engine section is great and could be used as a stand-alone system in many cases.

However, It is our belief that without real power it might end up generating nothing more than a high recommendation, the likes of which are routinely ignored.

Therefore in Autogov, we propose to slowly but surely begin creating our own value, our own power. And this can only be done by introducing an Economy section that has synergy with, complements, enhances and impulses (provide actual energy for) the Political one.

Voins (∞)

The first and key component in this section is having our own internal currency, the Voin (from Virtual Coin).

As has been said, the value of money stems from a shared fiction. As long as everybody who uses a currency believes in its value, that value is real.

That is not to say this credibility is without risks, indeed keeping the stability and preventing devaluation of the Voin should be a top priority, perhaps addressed through maintaining a partially static Position in charge of safeguarding it.

[Unfortunately, there aren't many studies or from-scratch monetary experiments that can teach us much about the possible pressures the Voin will face, and so, should budget permit it, we suggest this be one of the first areas to spend it on. However, if such stability has been achieved through trial and error by current inefficient democracies, we believe the flexibility, transparency, and high resolution of Autogov, combined with the desire and sole priority of ALL its users to maintain it, should assure such currency stability will eventually be achieved]

Basic Income

Discussion on the advantages and risks of a Universal Basic Income are beyond the scope of this paper, but we would still like to briefly point out some of its benefits.

- Real Freedom - We are not really free if we have to spend our time in often unfulfilling jobs.
- No exploitation - Having a subsistence assurance firmly cuts the possibility of exploiting someone else through economic need, and this is even relevant for spouses and children within a family.
- Less Crime - No doubt a substantial part of crime comes originally from survival desperation.
- Less need to accumulate capital for the future
- More money, time and attention to spend on the system
- More creative and quality work - I can work on what I really care and am good at.
- Effective defense against the potentially catastrophic outcomes of automation-induced unemployment.
- It is like having a soft cushion on which to fall if anything goes wrong for you or anyone. The system, and its users, can be more playful, creative and daring thanks to it.

As much as these substantial benefits have been discussed, implementation of a Basic Income has proven to be difficult in current economies. We believe the fact that in Autogov this will be done with a virtual, non-pre-existent currency can make this introduction softer and easier to experiment with.

We propose to divide the Basic Income in two:

- Unconditional Basic Income. You get it always no matter what
- Participation Basic Income. You have to perform a minimum of activity in the system to get it, as defined by the 'participation' topic votes; and may be affected through sanctions.

It should be noted, that for certain implementations of Autogov, such as in small communities looking to become free through it, this basic income could be supplemented with an External Currency ("EC", Dollars, Euros, etc.) basic income earned through donations and public earnings, at least until enough subsistence products can be acquired with Voins alone.

The Creative Market

Ideally, What would you enjoy offering to the whole? Such is the central question posed to all users in the Creative Market. And the user is encouraged to find not just one main thing to offer, as in current jobs, but a few small ones, reflecting our multi-dimensional nature.

What you offer can be a:

- Service
- Product (new or used)
- Events (courses, presentations, etc.)
- Partnerships

And they can be booked and acquired by sale or auction; in Voins alone or, in some cases or communities, in combination with EC as well.

Offering a service, and it being found in Autogov, would be much simpler than currently in the wild. You only need to answer a what, where, when, and how much questionnaire, upload any images or video to describe it better, and that's it. It is ready to be quickly found, to automatically receive bookings, reservations and online payments without you needing to hire your own hosting, create a website, struggle to promote it, or have a merchant account.

Every item and every seller in the Creative Market can be rated and reviewed, unless specifically prevented. Thus allowing for confidence and reliability for the acquirer, and motivation to excel to the provider.

So why 'Creative'? We believe the abundance economy and personal freedom, being brought about with automation, could multiply the number of options offered in the market; and we believe

this is a desired feature for the evolution and well-being of any mature natural or artificial system as a whole, as well as for the individuals that form it.

The Public Budget

Publicly decided

Just as in any nation today, Autogov will have a common or public budget, the use of which will be determined by the Special Vontest: "In what should we spend our public budget this next period?" This budget vontest is unique not just because of its centrality and importance, but also because instead of there being only one winner, there can be several winners in each votography: all those most voted answers that fit above the money limit of the budget, are approved for execution. As always anyone can propose an answer.

A fluid-bureaucracy: Positions and Tasks

Just as in today's bureaucracies, Autogov could have certain people paid publicly in charge of coordinating and supervising all activity within a topic. The difference is that in Autogov:

- Positions are short termed, renewable every (say) six months by default (this is to prevent clogs in the system)
- Positions are required to vontest all decisions, even if no one else ends up participating in it
- The actual execution of decisions should be vontested as Tasks in which everybody can compete to perform.

Thus, compared with today's bureaucracies, everything in Autogov is more open, transparent, honest, and fluid.

The Game

In order to promote activity and existentially motivate users, something that could become more important in a softer world with basic income guaranteed, we believe an Autogov Game could be useful.

In it, every Autogov activity like posting a Vontest, answering one, etc. could earn points depending on how many votes it gets. Every month or so, the users with more points are recognized and awarded important Voins prices.

We think the Game, with significant awards from donations in EC, could be a useful strategy to motivate participation at early stages of an Autogov implementation.

Thanks2x4y

To promote a culture where you just worry about doing good and trust that eventually your actions, if they deserve it, will be rewarded; we propose this option where you can suggest a Thanks payment to 'x' person for something 'y' she did in the past. If the Thanks passes within the budget limit, the award is given to x.

Taxes, Limits and Donations

As any other governance system, Autogov has the capacity to tax certain activities, both to discourage something, and to earn money for the public budget.

Limits to the accumulation of Voins could also be placed to assure a degree of equality of all users, and to avoid devaluation of the Voin.

It should be noted that, compared to current societies, users should be less bothered by taxes since concern about corruption or wrong spending will lessen, and with a guaranteed basic

income, the anguish about the future (and our descendants future) that motivates accumulation nowadays should also diminish.

We expect users to feel happy about paying their taxes and even to donate Voins and External Currency (EC) to the public budget, perhaps in exchange for recognition.

Corrective taxes, things the system tolerates but wants to gradually diminish (perhaps experiments with animals, advertising, livestock, luxury items) could also easily be enabled in Autogov, should they win their vontests and not conflict with any other previous right or law.

Multi-layered Income

Thus, to sum up, in Autogov users have a Multi-layered variable income coming from several sources. An average person earnings in a mature Autogov society could look something like this:

Source:	Monthly Income:
Unconditional Basic Income	650
Participation Basic Income	350
Creative Market earnings	1,200
Public Positions and Tasks	350
Thanks2x4y	100
The Game Awards	250

Total:	2,900 0

The Software itself

Autogov is ultimately an open-source software, and we have already advanced a lot in an implementation of it based on the Wordpress development platform, with Toolkit plugins for the political section and WooCommerce and MyCRED for the economic and currency part. It is about 80% complete.

We think this version could be used to get a pilot started soon, and from there, through GitHub and Autogov itself, manage the development of a more robust and secure version.

The software must be open-source and it should never belong to anyone, or generate any external profits. Otherwise, its credibility might be compromised.

The Interface for Autogov should be neutral and minimalistic, reflecting its transparent meta nature. It could use the 'cards' metaphor for the Vontests and the Answers.

It could also have a swipe-like interface for mobile and smartTV usage, where watching your feed (which depends on your interests) and participating, is actually entertaining (See Fractal Interface prototype attached).

The Implementation of Autogov

In the past, a political Revolution of this caliber was achieved only through war: by overthrowing and destroying the previous power and installing a new one in its place.

Later, once the horrors of war were realized, instead of revolution we talked about Evolution. It was perhaps slower but still much better than war.

Through the advent of the Internet, however, a third option has appeared: Create an entirely new system in parallel, make it an order of magnitude more efficient than the previous one, and just wait for its users to come willingly. We call it Voluntary Gradual Substitution.

This option is soft, fast, dynamic and secure, since as long as something in the new system is not mature yet, then that part remains ruled by the old one.

This is, in general, the way we would want to introduce Autogov. Instead of asking people to be ready to die for the revolution, we ask them to have fun, create and be free through the system.

In practice this could mean several parallel strategies of implementation:

- Pilot tests of Autogov in small communities
- Promote Academic discussion and perhaps a political sciences and economy faculties student contest for the best version/variation of Autogov.
- A literary contest of sci-fi stories taking place in a world managed under Autogov
- Creation of traditional political parties that support Autogov and/or adoption of Autogov by current political parties.
- Autogov Implementation Contest, every year we all discuss, debate and vote for the best Autogov real case implementation. Big price.
- An open to all Autogov app, as the first Global Politics social-network. It would need good promotion to gain a critical mass of users, but that is nothing that a few bright minds could not come up with in the contest: "How should we promote Global Autogov effectively?"

Static and Opaque parts within Autogov's Transparent Foam

As we have seen, Autogov is all about dynamic flow and transparency, but is that always desirable? Are we already ready for that? We might not be, and perhaps some things might always work better, more efficiently, with some static elements.

Thus Autogov is ready to accommodate partial/temporary static walls and ceilings, should the contests decide it. The main static elements come in the form of Positions: From Ministers of a main topic (Education, Agriculture, Law, etc) in charge of supervising, responding to emergencies, and leading activity on it; to public functionaries or committees in charge of managing Resolutions, Taxonomy issues, User Support, Software and Server issues, etc.

(Perhaps it could even be a good idea to give every single user a topic-coordinating task, from which the Participation Basic Income partly depends. This task could change randomly every three or six months)

In Autogov however, in contrast to today's functionaries, the purpose of them should be to try to contest everything as much as possible, and should a certain quorum ask for it, she is forced to do so.

As for Opacity, Autogov should be ready to hide anything for privacy. But, should there be any conflict about it, transparency should be the ultimate norm. As we know, everything is logged in the system, so Autogov is not a good place to discuss private things. By default, no one knows anything you don't want to share, but the system knows everything; and once something is published it remains public.

A Vontest Example

Let us end this section by illustrating all the above structures with an example: How could we deal with a global challenge such as climate change with the help of Autogov?

Now Autogov is designed to serve as a legally binding system for a community to self-govern itself. However, before that arrives (hopefully in some 10-15 years), it could also be effective as a very credible forum and journalistic reference to help influence and pressure national governments (hopefully in 3-5 years).

Thus we will split the example for both scenarios.

In a binding Autogov:

Vontest Question: What shall we do about climate change?

Answer 1: Put a lower and strict industrial cap on CO₂ emissions

Evaluation: Comments, Pros and Cons, Simulation

Answer 2: Heavily tax use of fossil fuels

Answer 2b (Variation): Tax Fossil Fuels + Incentivize renewable energies

Answer 3: Yearly Very Important Award vontest for best synthetic meat

Answer 4: Sum of 1+2b+3

More answers (unlimited)...

Comparative Grading Table of all Answers (just for reference during debate, what ultimately counts is the votes)

Votography: Answer 1 = 12% of votes, Answer 2 = 5.3%, Answer 2b = 9.8%, Answer 3 = 14.2%,

Answer 4 = 44% votes, ...

Resolution: Answer 4 wins and therefore:

- Vontest to best formulate new Law to cap fossil fuels is created
- Vontest on how best to incentivize renewable energies is created
- Vontest Award on Best Synthetic meat is created and added to the 'Featured Vontests List.'

Eventually (in a month perhaps) these vontests reach resolution themselves, and that's it, done.

The climate change problem should be on its way to be fixed in the manner that all the people and groups involved in the decision, anyone who wanted, thought best.

However the original vontest remains open, a new Votography date is set for next year, and evaluation of the last solution becomes part of the new debate.

In a non-binding Autogov:

Here the process and structure would be the same, but the answers would rather be:

Answer1: Publish a list of high CO₂ emitting corporations

Answer2: Order a study and simulation on how a tax and incentives on renewable energies on fossil fuels would affect climate change

Answer3: The synthetic meat award could actually remain the same but with private funds.

Etc...hopefully you get the idea.

Argumentation demonstrating how the model meets the assessment criteria

A. Core Values

Is Autogov “guided by the good of all humankind?”

As a Betterment engine, Autogov is not just guided by that principle, but it is actually a tool to know what actually might be the good of all humankind. Without an appropriate and credible such tool, “looking for the good of all humankind” could still be used to justify terrible policies.

How do we know what is the good of all humankind in a complex rapidly changing world? Whom do we ask? The ‘experts’? But there are experts behind many different, contradictory beliefs on that, or every, question; and anyway, how does one become an expert on such a question?

Autogov’s answer to this is, “we do not know what it is, nobody does.” But through the thorough continuous debates and voting processes of the Vontests, we have an effective tool to approach it as closely as possible through time.

Does Autogov respect the equal value of all human beings?

We believe it clearly does to an unprecedented degree in the history of governance systems. In Autogov all users start, and remain, equal. There are never any privileges for anyone. In Autogov it is the ideas that are protagonists and compete with each other, the people are rewarded only indirectly through their acts.

Furthermore, the guaranteed basic income assures everybody is effectively free and have the freedom and time to participate unconditionally. Without time, such potential access to power could de facto be meaningless.

B. Decision-Making Capacity

Within Autogov, decision-making can be quite fast when necessary, it is just a matter of setting up an urgent votography date for the Vontest in question, and that’s it; since everything is open, the result is final. Of course, people could object or disagree about the urgent nature of the decision, but that can be resolved through another fast vontest about whether the Votography should be urgent or not.

There might be many situations where even an urgent vontest is too slow (like whether the army should go to help on a fire incident), those decisions should be taken by the person or committee holding the relevant Position at that moment, i.e., the Army chief position. But every position holder should remember that, as much as possible, all decisions should be taken by vontest, and if, a *posteriori*, it is observed that he/she abused the position, he/she could be sanctioned.

Some could object that democracy, or vontests in our case, are too much effort and resources spent for many decisions that are just not very important. But bear in mind that those resources would only be spent to the exact extent that the issue is important. i.e., if a decision is not important at all, like, “should we buy more toner for the printer?” then, most probably, only the person in the position in charge of that would participate in the Vontest. There might be a lot of insignificant decisions in Autogov with only one answer and few people voting in the Vontest.

Which raises the question of quorum and notifications: If just a few people participate in a Vontest, but it affects many, is it still valid? Well if all incumbents were notified about the vontest then we

suppose it would be valid. We write “we suppose” because those norms and rules would be fine-tuned by everyone through Autogov itself.

C. Effectiveness

We believe the main challenge for a new governance body to be effective is to have power. Its own, internal, power. Otherwise, by just ‘being right’ and trying to persuade the status quo, it ends up being just too slow and ineffective. We have seen this; power always wants and tends to represent itself.

This is why we think it is crucial that Autogov is a direct democracy, and that it includes an Economy section, able to slowly but surely generate its own money and power.

Another challenge for effectiveness could stem from lack of consensus on the legitimacy of the decision process; this is where Autogov’s complete transparency and openness for all could leave little room to the vontest ‘losers’ to complain and try to impede the decision.

D. Resources and Financing

Just as other internet-based revolutions: Linux, Google, Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, Bitcoin, and so on, Autogov is designed to require relatively minimal resources and financing to begin with. Depending on the type of implementation chosen, a team of 10 persons for one or two years (or hiring a great programming agency), could be sufficient to get it started. At least enough for it to then continue and pay for its needs on its own, thanks to its decision-making, tasks, economy, currency and value creation capabilities.

E. Trust and Insight

This is also something where Autogov excels. Everything in Autogov is logged by the system, and everything is transparent. There might be many transactions that are kept private for everyday use, but should there be a conflict with them, they can always be accessed. There will never again be any doubts of why a decision was taken. There will never again be any doubts that all relevant parties were listened to, and had an equal, or fair weight on the decision.

As users get used to this unprecedented confidence on its meta decision-making; and as the evaluation and debate phase of every Vontest (of every decision on the best way to progress on any issue) is made ever more efficient through tools like simulations, and AI recommendations, we should expect a softer, much more stable and trustworthy relationship between governance (in our case processes, not persons) and users.

F. Flexibility

Every single sentence in Autogov is subject to revision through a Vontest. Every logo, every color used, every term is continually evolving as needed, by design. Thanks to its minimalist meta-pragmatic ethics described above, there are very few things sacred in Autogov. Of course, this does not exclude that, in order to provide structure and stability, certain norms require a special

majority to be modified, but even this can always be put to question and finally changed if deemed necessary.

Comparing the flexibility and resolution of Autogov to a current representative democracy where citizens can choose every four years between mostly 2 or 3 similar options, is like comparing a stick of wood to a molding clay, or a slide-show to a 3D Movie. Indeed the term Liquid Democracy has been used in the past to describe flexible direct democracy systems, but we believe the right analogy for Autogov's material is a transparent foam that can take any shape and color at any given time; but unlike liquids, retain that shape until further need due to an external (environmental) or internal (organic) change.

G. Protection against the Abuse of Power

There are two possible types of abuse of power: (1) From the majority to a minority or individual, and (2) From a powerful minority to the majority.

(1) The tyranny of the majority is a known subject in political science (typically as discussed by A. de Tocqueville and J. S. Mill) and the solution has been the introduction of rights and guarantees for the individuals or minorities. In other words, a protective sphere where, as long as I do not bother anyone else, I can do as I wish, even if others do not understand or like that behavior. In Autogov this protective sphere is one of the few axioms (laws that need a special majority to be modified) it contains.

For instance, what if someone proposes to choose what color should the clothes of everyone be, and the green color wins. I could argue that that resolution, or the votest itself, is not valid because it conflicts with my right to do as I wish as long as I do not bother anyone, and the majority should know that if we remove that rule their own future freedom is threatened.

This is also how this abuse of power is prevented in current societies. I accept the right of someone else to differ because I know that gives me the right to differ should I want to in the future. However sometimes these things are not so black and white, sometimes my behavior does slightly affect others but not as much as it affects me, making judgment difficult and often leading to conflict. Here, Autogov, through its weighted voting according to affliction from the issue could make the decision fairer.

For instance: The bell in the L'Armentera town in Catalunya chimes loudly every hour and people who live nearby have trouble sleeping because of it. Obviously, they want it dimmed or silenced, but the majority of town claim it is a tradition, and it is "the voice of the town", they think you should just get used to it. How can you decide? Should my vote be equal if I live far from the church than if I live close to it? With Autogov you could create a formula (a public or private jury could decide on the exact one) that gives more weight to your vote depending on the distance of your house to the bell.

(2) As for abuse stemmed from a powerful minority to the majority, or to another minority or individual. Well, that is what happens now all the time, and that is precisely why direct democracy is the only option for a new governance model. If you give real power, economic or political, to a minority, chances are it will end up abusing it. In Autogov everyone is and stays equal, only good ideas have power.

Epilogue

Response to some deeper skepticism we are aware exists.

"But People are stupid," and so Direct Democracy will not work.

One of the hardest intellectual temptations to let go is to think "sure, we all have opinions, but in the end, mine is the right one." We need to remind ourselves that the others think so too. We need to go meta and realize that the whole, if properly wired internally, knows more about its will and its path, than any one part of it alone. If that part is indeed right, it should eventually be able to persuade, through Autogov structured debates, the rest of people.

"But only experts, with special studies and credentials know what is right."

Well, the thing is there are usually experts supporting all positions, which ones are right?

Furthermore, in the case of people's existence, what studies exactly enable you to decide what is best for all? Some could argue that the more you study and specialize with your mind, the further detached you become from some other more natural or spiritual wisdom.

"But we have seen how a charismatic leader can manipulate the masses."

First of all, we are all always been manipulated, that's just culture, but we tend to see only the other party's manipulation and not ours. Second, such manipulation is much harder to do when the issues are small and concrete, like in Autogov, than when you only get to decide between two or three packages of ideas every four years. Thirdly, if the 'wrong' decision wins, since its debate and voting remains open in Autogov, it can be corrected quite quickly and smoothly.

Fourthly, reputation scores can act dynamically to bring attention to de-facto expert individuals or groups in each field; but without giving them any authority.

Last, but not least, if we create a governance based on the idea that people are stupid, that system is bound to create and perpetuate stupid people. "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us" Winston Churchill

"But People are lazy, and so Basic Income will not work."

So what, you expect me to be fine with people staying at home watching TV while I do all the work?" This is a deeply rooted attitude and criticism to Basic Income. The thing is, we do not know at any given time if an act is a contribution to society or not. What is a contribution to society? Can we really tell? A man working in an arms factory is contributing to society? An artist making strange paintings few people like is contributing? An executive in a transnational corporation?

First, we do not have a consensual goal for society against which we could measure our advances. Second, even if we had such a consensual goal, it is not easy at all to assess whether an act leads us to it or not, particularly in a complex society like ours. Third, an act, in this context, cannot be judged disregarding the Time dimension: John Doe is doing nothing all day, but his mind is working, maybe it is restructuring itself, perhaps it is planting the seeds for a significant contribution to society in a few years. We really don't know what consequences a moment has over time.

Notably, from an ecological point of view, there is actually an excess of production in our society, so someone who is not producing could be contributing more to society than someone producing. Furthermore, when left free, people eventually (after some rest and purification from forced activity) start to want to do something with their lives. There is a compelling joy in feeling useful and with meaning. Add to that the social pressure of having a good answer to the question "So what do you do in life?," and I think this concern should not worry us much. On any case, the system can always fluctuate the value of the basic income or incentivize activity with other variables if it deems it convenient.

“But people are not prepared to be free; freedom is scary.”

Indeed it is scary, specially at first, but as J.P. Sartre argued, we are condemned to be free; otherwise, we are just fooling ourselves. Let us dare to be adults and rise to that challenge.

Final words

Beyond solving the problems, defects and limitations, present in today's governance models, Autogov is a sociopolitical and economic Operating System ready to invent new opportunities and benefits; it is a very flexible, yet very credible foam. We have no idea now what, with the harmoniously combined creative activity of all humans living in anguish-less freedom and with the help of technology and Artificial Intelligence might come out. Chances are something awesome. It is time to aim for awesome, failing to do so could be catastrophic.



Where do we go?



How do we get there?

Nobody



Politics

Economy

Meta ↔ Better

Creative ↔ Freedom



"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us." Winston Churchill

Lists

Axioms, Values, Laws

Resolution

Votography

Cumulative Voting

Debate

Evaluation

Answers

Question / Problem / Need

Vontest

Public Budget

Positions
Tasks
Game/Thanks Awards

Creative Market

Services
Products
Events

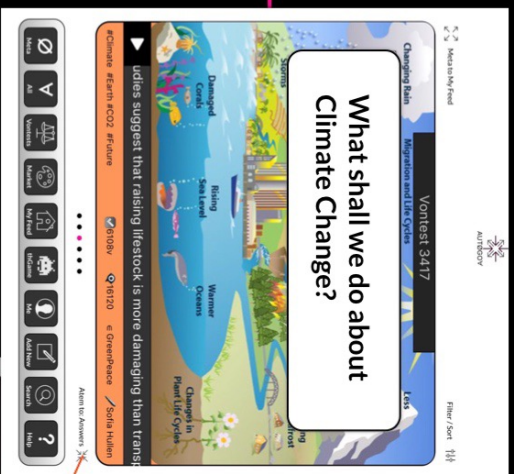
Basic Income

Participational
Inconditional

Own Currency

Voins

Autogov Fractal Interface



How do we solve the Catalan conflict with Spain?

Should we silence the church's bell at night to let people sleep?

Should we begin legislating on AI and Robots? If so, how?

Swipe for more Vontests

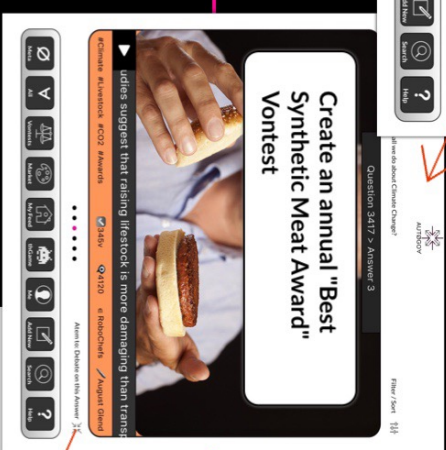


Enforce a lower cap on industrial CO2 emissions

Heavily tax fossil fuels

Tax fossil fuels + Incentivize use of renewable energies

Swipe for more Answers



Description and details

Comments

Votes

Swipe for more Debate

