Limits and Opportunities of Collaboration in a Digital Context

Valentin VANGHELESCU
University of Bucharest

Abstract: *Although the collaborative instruments of the digital platforms can hypothetically ensure both individual capacity for action and new forms of social structuring, this paper illustrates different uses of networks by social actors, which diminish the potential for collaboration predefined by design. I aim to show how the cultural capital (Bourdieu) of the users develops in the context of networks (Wellman), on a platform which adopts a collective intelligence design (Peach et al.). The paper also follows the European context of public policies aimed at maximizing the potential of the Internet in promoting democracy, social inclusion and cultural diversity.*

Keywords: *cultural capital, networks, collective intelligence, public policy, digital platforms, ITC*

Two Logics of Information and Knowledge Production

Theories that deal with the connection between information, knowledge and society have not yet reached a stage of stability and clear definition. Frank Webster (7) has identified two currents in terms of approaching the production of information and knowledge by researchers. The first one considers that the production of information and knowledge and the acquisition of new technological means of communication (ICT) by the users generated a disruptive moment, which gave birth to a new society (Webster 7). The second current looks at society from the viewpoint of continuity; it does not deny the importance of information and knowledge in the modern world, but considers that they are subordinate to long established principles and practices (Webster 7).

The present study uses as its main theoretical pillar the approach that observes the disruptive part of the adoption of the information and communication technology (ICT) by society.

Castells delimits the structural change of the world economy due to technological revolution between 1970 and 1990. The new economy, in his view, is centred on "informationalism", which is established as a new mode of development, "whose critical attribute is networking" (162).

Benkler also analyses the transformations of the most developed economies in the world, but from the perspective of the phenomena that reduce the limitations of the production of information and knowledge based on the logic of the market, from the industrial society. He identifies "two parallel trends" (2-3). The first turn is aimed at an economy focused on information (financial services, accounting, programs, science), on the production of cultural goods (film, music, video games, personal development programs) and on the manipulation of symbols (advertising campaigns, social responsibility campaigns, etc.). The second turn is the result of the

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

emergence of networked information environments generated by network processes, which interconnect millions of computers – processors with high computational performance – in a "ubiquitous network." This allows the role of non-market production to grow in the information and cultural production sector, characterized by "a pattern of decentralization." Bankler predicts that the new patterns of production – non-market and decentralization – will develop at the centre of economies, not at their "peripheries," and will trigger a "social and exchange production" which will play a much more important role, alongside intellectual property and production based on market logic. Currently, the elements reported by the author are becoming more and more evident and are developing rapidly. One of the production models in the interconnected information economy is "peer production" and refers to the production of goods and services that support communities and individuals, in which the work process is coordinated towards a non-exclusive shared result and in which the collaboration tools that the Internet offers are used. Cultural products such as the Gutenberg project,[1] scientific products such as Wikipedia,[2] but also programs distributed through the "open source"[3] system are examples of this form of production. To sum up, the concept of "networked information environment" places the dimension of collaboration at the centre of the production mechanisms.

Benkler identifies a series of "practical promises" of "networked information environment" (1): i) the dimension of individual freedom of expression; ii) installing networks for better democratic participation; iii) fostering a more critical and more self-reflective culture; iv) human development in any corner of the world, through the global economy increasingly dependent on information. He considers that social actors "use their recently extended practical freedom to act and cooperate with other actors in ways that enhance the practical experience applied in democracy, justice and development, critical culture and community" (8-9).

In the applied case of media production, Jenkins uses the notion of *convergence* to describe production duality. Thus, convergence is the result of two processes (18): i) one from top to bottom, in which media corporations learn to accelerate the flow of media content in delivery channels in order to increase profit, expand markets and strengthen consumer loyalty (corporate convergence); ii) and a bottom-up one, in which consumers learn to use different media technologies to better control flows and interact with other consumers (grassroots convergence). The author draws attention to the fact that these two types of convergence interact positively by creating closer links between media producers and consumers, but also

[1] The Gutenberg project is a voluntary effort to digitize cultural archives and works, create and distribute electronic books in the online environment.
[2] Wikipedia is a free online encyclopaedia, with free access, developed collaboratively by volunteers, according to <https://en.wikipedia.org/>.
[3] The copyright of the source code of the program states that anyone can study, change and distribute it in any purpose.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

negatively, through the difficulties of redefining culture, which create tensions in the media ecosystem (Jenkins 18). At the same time, Jenkins believes that consumption must also be redefined, given that the consumer has moved from the passive to the active state, and his/her degree of loyalty to the media has decreased, in favour of migration. Another problem the author points out is that producers are duplicitous in accepting change and use a mix of old and new practices and tools.

Another author who observes the dual phenomenon of production is Christian Fuchs. He states, reservedly, that the Internet economy is characterized by "an antagonism between cooperation and competition, between the informational gift economy and the informational commodity economy" (160). The author refers to the classical sociology developed by Malinowski and Mauss, who theorized the economy of gift and the culture of gift. In this type of economy and culture, valuables are not traded or sold, but offered without explicit agreement for direct or future rewards. Placing this theory in the online context, we observe the presence of many platforms that offer as a gift a digital space that can be instrumentalized by users for various purposes in the social world: interpersonal communication, many-to-many communication, corporate communication, organizational communication, sharing services, collaborative work, learning, civic participation, etc. Going back to Fuchs, he considers that commons-type production is the foundation of exploitation in "information capitalism" (161). The author predicts that, in the future, these exploitation processes can lead either to the birth of a totally controlled society of political-economic monopolies, through forms of totalitarianism or fascism, or to the birth of a cooperative society, in which the commons-type production processes can generate "the development of self-determination, cooperative ownership and participatory democracy" (161).

Analysing the cultural dimension of the networked information economy, Benkler considers the emergence of a "more critical and self-reflective culture," which creates a more attractive cultural production system, targets two aspects of it: "it makes culture more transparent and it makes culture more malleable" (15). In his opinion, transparency and malleability lead to the emergence of a new "folk culture," eliminated by the industrial period of cultural production, in which each social actor "actively participates in making cultural movements and in finding the meaning of the world around us" (Benkler 15). Benkler states that culture becomes more democratic, self-reflective and participatory, thanks to "practitioners" who, on the one hand, interpret their own culture much better and become self-reflective and critical participants in the conversations within it, and on the other hand, they become cultural creators through the possibility of participating in the cultural creations of others (15).

The transition from institutionalized to social and exchange production is an emerging phenomenon. The industrial practices of information and knowledge production have not been replaced by those that characterize social production. They operate in parallel, sometimes symbiotically and at other times in conflict. Therefore,

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

we cannot discuss a set of exclusive, one-way, practices or phenomena that we have observed in the selective review of the literature above.

Forms of Capital and "the Strength of Weak Ties"

Bourdieu argues, in "Forms of Capital" (1986), that the social mobility of individuals in a stratified society cannot be explained only by economic capital, but also by cultural and social capital. According to him, "it is impossible to take into account the structure and functioning of the social world, unless capital is reintroduced in all its forms and not only in a single form recognized by economic theory" (242). According to Bourdieu, economic capital is manifested through the management of economic resources, such as money, assets, properties; the social one through the real or potential resources correlated with having a sustainable network of institutionalized relations, based on mutual knowledge and recognition; and the cultural one through the set of intellectual abilities and knowledge that make up a person's education.

We can ask whether Bourdieu's theory is valid in the digital context, where a different type of structuring manifests itself. The answer derives from Granovetter's notion of "the strength of weak ties" as a form that can enhance cultural capital by instrumentalizing social capital. One of the authors who emphasizes the role of "weak ties" in this context is Wellman. He argues that social actors are more likely to seek information in the "weak ties" when strong ones are not able to provide it, because social actors with strong ties are more likely to have the same cultural capital (same information, same knowledge). Therefore, the search for new information and knowledge should take place in diverse, interconnected social circles, according to Wellman in "Little Boxes, Glocalization, and Networked Individualism." Wellman argues that the Internet has contributed to the transition from a society based on social arrangements formed around social groups and hierarchical bureaucracy, to a network-based one, due to a triple revolution produced by the Internet, mobile communication and social networks. In fact, "The proliferation of computer-supported social networks favours changes in 'network capital': the way people contact, interact and obtain resources from one another" (Wellman 11).

Online Platforms and Collective Intelligence Design

In one of the most recent papers in which the connection between society and the digital is analysed, José van Dijck et al. wonder, in the context in which companies are increasingly organized through online systems, who is or should be responsible for setting public values. The authors advance the term *platform society*, a concept which, in fact, they consider contested, defining it as:

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

> an emergent society in which social, economic and interpersonal traffic is largely channelled through a global online platform ecosystem, which is powered by data and organized by algorithms.[4]

José van Dijck et al. (2) consider that this concept not only defines the transition from an economic focus to a social one, but also the tension that emerges between private gain and public benefit.

The way in which the Internet has generated a disruptive phenomenon in social logic, through the proliferation of new business models, through platforms that satisfy certain users' needs, is synthetically presented by Phillips et al. They consider that ICT "produced networks of alliances that blur industry boundaries" (176) and exemplify through the following companies: Uber (it is the largest taxi company in the world yet does not own cars), Airbnb (it is the largest provider of accommodation locations yet does not own any real estate), Skype and WeChat (they are the largest telephone companies but do not own any telecommunications infrastructure), Alibaba (it is the most valuable retailer in the world but has no inventory), Facebook (it is the most popular media owner and does not create content), SocietyOne (it is among the fastest growing banks yet has no real money), Netflix (it is the largest movie house in the world but does not own theatres), Apple and Google (they are the largest software providers but do not write applications).

In the parameters of social and exchange production, public values should be the result of integrating the feedback of all stakeholders as actors in understanding the social world and in defining its meaning. This participatory process has been named by Pierre Lévy *collective intelligence*.

Lévy defines collective intelligence as:

> a form of universally distributed intelligence, constantly improved, coordinated in real time and which results in efficient mobilization of skills. I will add the following characteristic indispensable to this definition: the basis and objective of collective intelligence is the mutual recognition and enrichment of individuals, rather than the worship of fetishized or hypostasized communities. (qtd. in Shermon 54)

This definition obliges us to distinguish between the typology of social networks present in the society, between the way users choose to use them, and between the stakes of entrepreneurs who establish various platforms and the goals of public institutions that fund the creation of platforms for citizens. Social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter are based, rather, on the function of information

[4] Excerpt from the introduction made available on the Oxford Scholarship Online. Available at <https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/oso/9780190889760.001.0001/oso-9780190889760-chapter-2>. Accessed October 20, 2019.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

dissemination, through an effect of multiplying the symbolic capital of the person or public or private entity that owns the account, and of the network itself, rather than the one of participation in which the social meaning and social innovation are co-created. The owners of these types of platforms, which are also actors in the knowledge economy, instrumentalize and accumulate forms of capital (social and cultural capital that turns into economic capital), as long as the number of nodes in the network (the number of users) increases.

In the recently published manual *Collective Intelligence Design Playbook (beta)*,[5] the authors consider that collective intelligence "is created when people work together, often with technology, to mobilize a wider range of information, ideas and understandings about phenomena, in order to address a social challenge" (Peach et al. 15). In their view, there are three types of technologies that amplify collective intelligence: the Internet, smart technologies (for example, satellites, smart phones, etc.) and machine intelligence (for example, artificial intelligence) (Peach et al. 15). They believe that collective intelligence can help us have a deep understanding of problems and to identify solutions, to make informed and inclusive decisions, and to learn and share working models (Peach et al. 18). At the same time, they point out that projects of collective intelligence generate an increase in the power and the capacity of the citizens to act (Peach et al. 30). Starting from the purpose of the various platforms analysed, Peach et al. consider that collective intelligence provides three forms of connection: *data-to-data connections* (it involves gathering multiple data sets to generate new and useful perspectives, in other words triangulation and interpretation of connections), *people-to-people connections* (it implies facilitating the production of distributed information, solving problems, co-creating and forecasting) *people-to-data connections* (involving the implication of crowds in order to generate, classify, clean, sort or label unstructured data, photos, PDFs, etc.) (31). The authors also identify a number of actors and practices that oppose the vision of collective intelligence, such as: closed organizations that do not use ideas or experiences generated beyond their own walls; dictators or autocrats who make their own decisions; groups that lack the common language or structures, within which a "cacophony" of voices and points of view is formed, due to the lack of active listening (a common situation in social media); groups that have formed on the basis of beliefs, ideologies and dogmas and show a reluctant behaviour to new ideas and information; markets shaped by various incentives that promote the inability to see things in all their complexity, avoiding risks; the use of collective intelligence tools to supervise participants or to influence behaviour and consequences; extracting data

[5] Manual published online by Nesta's Center for Collective Intelligence Design, supported by UNDP's Accelerator Lab network, in 2019, to support those who want to develop a project that uses collective intelligence. It can be accessed at <https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/collective-intelligence-design-playbook/>.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

from communities without offering mutual benefits or failing to manage the collected meanings (Peach et al. 32).

Methodology

The present work is an exploratory one. Starting from specialized literature, I will attempt to explain "How is cultural capital used on a platform that adopts a collective intelligence design by the actors involved in the process?"

The approach is part of my doctoral research, a project which started in 2014. The Edgeryders platform was chosen as a case study in 2015, and the selection criterion was the innovative character in the digital landscape of that time: the tools (simple post, wiki, task, event, document) that they provided for the creation of cultural capital at the level of the online hosted groups, which fulfilled communication, coordination and collaboration functions.

The study focuses on two lines of research. The first line consists of the analysis of a corpus of programmatic documents (The Edgeryders Guide to the Future Manual, 2013; of the 2012-2015 "Internet Governance" Strategy of the Council of Europe, 2012; of the project of candidature of the city of Bucharest for the title of "European Cultural Capital 2021," 2016), based on the results from online searches of the keyword "Edgeryders," in order to highlight the context in which the platform and the group were born ("Spot the Future Romania").

The second line of research is the qualitative and quantitative content analysis applied to a corpus of posts and comments from the group, in order to study the micro-social phenomena of collective intelligence in detail, which are manifested through the cultural capital created by the actors present on platform. The criteria for the selection of this corpus were the spatial proximity and the shared cultural code, starting from the premise that we would better understand a phenomenon that is taking place in Romania.

The "Spot the Future Romania" group was active on the Edgeryders platform between 2015 and 2016 and was formed based on an action proposed in the candidature project of the city of Bucharest for the title of "European Cultural Capital 2021." The action was called "Bucharest Futurespotters Lab,"[6] was coordinated by Edgeryders and aimed to involve unMonastery (EU), Common Futures (UK), Lighthouse (UK), Chaos Communication Congress (DE), Foodhacking Base (global), and OuiShare (FR / ES / UK / DE / CA / BR) as partners. Thus, it was intended to create an online framework in which young people could meet, collaborate and become known outside the community they belong to through the projects they manage. In 2016, the city of Bucharest lost the competition for the designation of the European Cultural Capital 2021 in Romania. The flow of interactions decreased significantly by the end of that year. The group is currently

[6] The action is presented in the candidacy project of the city of Bucharest for the title of "European Cultural Capital 2021" in detail.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

not active, but posts and comments are public. On this corpus of the interactions produced by the group I have applied quantitative instruments on the analysis units (posts, comments, authors), but also qualitative instruments through the thematic grouping of the titles of the posts, using open codes, which were set with the evolution of the research approach.

For both the analysis of the tools offered by the platform and the content analysis I have used data collected between 2015 and 2016.

Case study: The "Spot the Future Romania" group hosted by the Edgeryders platform

a. Context

The Edgeryders platform[7] was established as a pilot project co-financed by the European Commission, through the General Directorate for Social Affairs, Employment and Inclusion (DG EMPL), and the Council of Europe, in 2012. The last actor, the Council of Europe, is the one that implemented the project, through the Social Cohesion, Research and Early-warning Division.

The aim of the project was to understand and help the younger generations, from different cultural contexts, who are in the transition towards an independent active life:

> This online platform, (...), had a specific aim: to understand, via an innovative approach which deliberately sought not to impose any institutional forms of dialogue, the difficulties faced by young Europeans and the solutions they come up with, based on their experiences of the transition towards an independent life, in a rapidly changing environment in which insecurity is increasing all the time. (*Edgeryders Guide to the Future*, 5)

From the perspective of European public policies, the Edgeryders Project was developed within the framework set by the Council of Europe's "Internet Governance" Strategy 2012-2015, action line V, point 13.b):

> V. Maximising the Internet's potential to promote democracy and cultural diversity
> 13.b) Promoting citizens participation and engagement in public life, such as on-line consultations on draft laws on participation policies, strategies and good practices, connecting and engaging with large undefined groups of people to address a message or engage in a specific task, i.e. crowd sourcing; in this context, media pluralism and press freedom on the Internet should be

[7] It can be accessed at <https://edgeryders.eu/>.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

> strengthened as indispensable prerequisites of democratic societies. ("Internet Governance" Strategy 2012-2015, 3)

The funders of the platform aimed to "empower" young citizens with digital tools in order to strengthen their role in the policies directly targeting them, by building their capacity and ability to co-create their future in the European space. At the same time, they aimed to foster a culture of collaboration framework, which can, theoretically, reduce the gaps between citizens and institutions.

b. Marks of collective intelligence design

As we can see (Table 2), the platform integrates communication, coordination and collaboration tools. Users can create five types of content in the discussion group: a simple post, a task, a wiki, an event, or a document. The simple posting ensures the communication function through the main operation of information transmission. The "wiki" and "document" type posts are a channel for accumulating, generating and distributing cultural capital (creating, editing and transmitting content), ensuring the collaboration function. Event type posts allow the organization, sharing and promotion of activities, fulfilling all three functions: communication, coordination and collaboration. The task type posts provide the coordination function within the network: users can collaborate and distribute the work to the discussion threads that are marked in the respective topic. The status of a task can be easily tracked by labels such as: "open," "open in progress," "open: waiting for entry," "delayed," "removed," "finished," labels which are themselves marks of collective intelligence.

Types of content	Operation	Function
Simple post	Transmission of information	Communication
Wiki	Creation and editing of content through collaboration (participation in discussions and tasks)	Collaboration
Task	Work management and assignment of tasks to certain qualified users of the network; members can also provide solutions by commenting; tasks can be easily tracked by their status: open, open in progress, open: waiting for entry, delayed, removed, completed	Collaboration
Event	Organization, sharing and promotion of offline activities	Coordination, communication, and collaboration
Document	Co-creation and sending of PDF, MS Office, LibreOffice documents, etc.	Collaboration

Table 1 – Tools, operations and functions of the group section of the Edgeryders platform

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

In terms of user roles, these are not determined by the platform settings. Users do not have a distinctive title to indicate that they are divided into typologies.

The tools identified on the platform can influence the creation of cultural capital through the communication, coordination and collaboration functions, and are marks of collective intelligence design, revealing a *people-to-people connection.*

b. Discursive marks of the collaboration culture and of the dynamics of the actors

The network of the group "Spot the Future Romania" is made up of 70 actors (discussion threads). The observations during the data collection led to the establishment of two categories of users in the "Spot the Future Romania" network: agents (moderators) and community agents (civics). Three of them are agent users (Noemi, Alberto and Nadia). All users were active at the time of the observation: they posted or commented at least once in the group. In the 76 discussion centres (posts) the actors created a total of 472 comments and shared about 700 links on the network (N = 699). The users used all the operations allowed by the design of the platform, except for document creation.

Within the network, as it can be seen in Table 2, 47 simple posts, 11 event type posts, 12 wiki-type posts and 6 task type posts were identified. Related to the posting category and the number of comments, the first place belongs to simple posts (238 comments), followed by event type (134 comments), wiki type (71 comments) and task type posts (29 comments).

The "Spot the Future Romania" group 2015-2016	76 discussion threads (posts)				
	Simple posts 47	Events 11	Wikis 12	Tasks 6	Documents 0
Comments (N= 472)	238	134	71	29	0
Links shared in the network (N= 699)	438	112	121	28	0

Table 2 – General information about the "Spot the Future Romania" network

The post that produced the biggest reaction at the network level is titled "Call for participation: #Futurespotters Bucharest Int'l Workshop, 9-10 July"; it is an event type and was published by the moderator Noemi. The post produced 58 comments. At the same time, it is also the one that most actors joined, 23, and in which the greatest number of links were distributed.

Regarding the category of simple posts, the post "Free as in freedom - setting up our infrastructure" had the biggest impact; it was posted by the moderator Nadia, with 37 comments. Among the "wiki" type posts, "Planning the meeting on civic engagement platforms" posted by the moderator Noemi was the most commented,

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

with 23 interactions. "Make a poster for the workshop" generated the largest flow of comments in the category of "task" posts and was also created by the moderator Noemi.

By calculating the average number of comments according to the typology of posts (Table 3), I have found that network actors had the highest involvement in discussion threads created through "event" type posts.

Average comments no. compared to the total number of posts (Total number of comments / total number of posts)	Average comments no. compared to simple posts (No. of comments on simple posts / total number of simple posts)	Average comments no. compared to "event" posts (No. of comments on event posts / total number of event posts)	Average comments on "wiki" posts (No. of comments on wiki posts / total number of wiki posts)	Average comments no. compared to "task" posts (No. of comments on task posts / total number of task posts)
6,21	5,06	12,18	5,9	4,83

Table 3 – Ratio of average comments to posts' typology

The topics of the posts reveal the shared cultural context of the collaboration within the network. From the analysis of the titles I have identified seven thematic categories, which manifest themselves as discursive markers of this type of culture:

- *sharing knowledge through personal projects* ("How to help 600 kids in foster homes through a network of 360 volunteers built in one year"; "An expat in Bucharest: why collaboration is essential for social entrepreneurship to thrive"; "From cultural policy stuff to cultural manager"; "Dealing with an upcyling business");
- *sharing knowledge through sources outside the network* ("#Futurespotters as output from the trenches: will Mr. Vintila Mihailescu come to workshop?").
- *community involvement through participation in events* ("On urban communities at Visini Hub (The Night of Houses)");
- *involvement in the products created in the network* ("Project activities and calendar"; "Discoveries in the community so far"; "Our community after 2 months: an open report"; "Outbox newsletter with ideas, initiatives and events in which we can get involved");
- *involvement in the development of joint projects* ("The Community connector spot gathers a cool combination of activities under the same umbrella ... so interested"; "How network collaboration takes time before it delivers small results. We're running OSCEDays in Sibiu, Romania!");
- *involvement in the construction of a unitary identity* ("Mapping the grassroots that not many believe we have"; "A game of resource tag in Bucharest. You're

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

it!"; "Free as in freedom - setting up our infrastructure"; "Futurespotters video is up: the making of collaboration in Bucharest"; "Make a poster for the workshop");

- *participation in common recreational activities* ("Futurespotters dinner: rounding up this year's work"; "Bicycle trip to Mogosoaia"; "Cooking & projects talk @ NGO hub"; "Active socialization");
- *promotion of job offers* ("Hiring a community connector and engager in Bucharest. Part-time/ two months/ 1400 EUR").

From a quantitative point of view, the network is made up of over 95% civic users. Regarding their degree of involvement, the ratio is reversed. The three moderators generated 42% of the posts and 36% of the comments in the group. From the perspective of posts and comments, the "Noemi" user is the most active member of the network (Figure 2 and Figure 3). She also managed the co-creation flow in the network: she was the only user who created tasks and produced the most wikis. Thus, both the distribution of the posts and the comments, depending on the author and the type of post, reveal a directivity of the individual action capacity of the civic users in creating cultural capital which is determined by agent users. On the one hand, agent type users ("Noemi", "Alberto", "Nadia") assume the strategy and direction of the network flow by setting some themes and projects aimed at developing the "Bucharest Futurespotters Lab" action within the candidacy project of the city of Bucharest for the position of "European Cultural Capital 2021," which does not exclude collaboration, community formation and development of civic projects. On the other hand, civic users share their experiences from their own social projects and try to develop a community of mutual help.

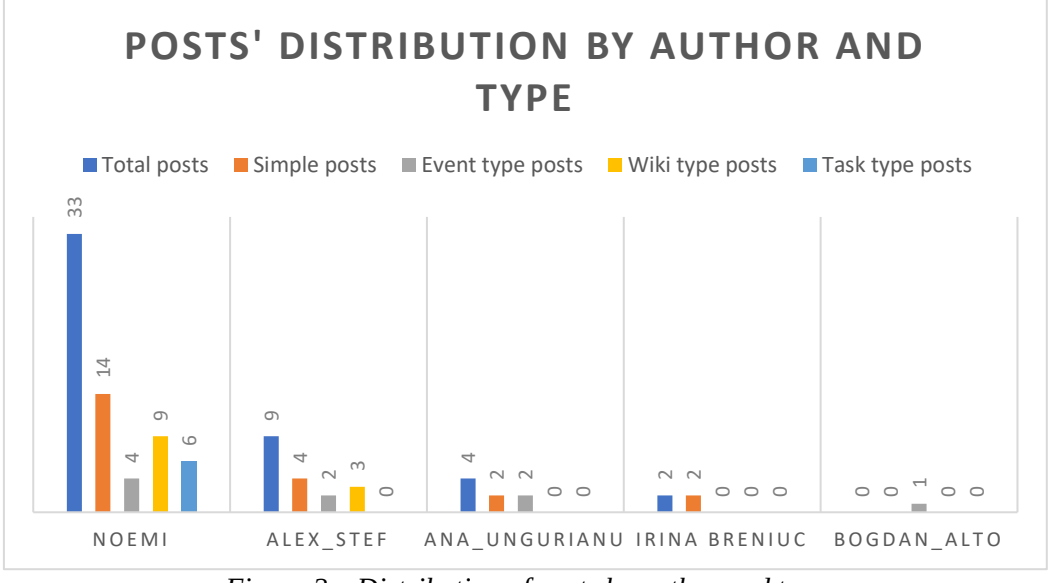


Figure 2 – Distribution of posts by author and type

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

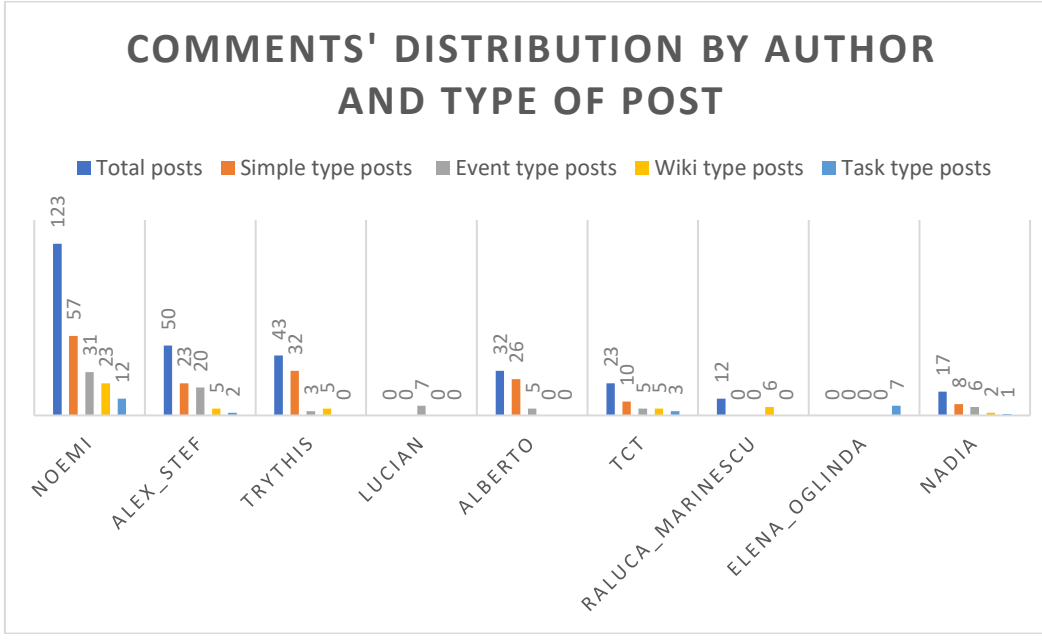


Figure 3 – Distribution of comments by author and type of post

Discussion and conclusions

The present study provides important data on the way in which the cultural capital is used, and the different stakes of the actors involved: funders, civic users, and agent users. However, the findings provided cannot be generalized, given the analysis of a single case and the exploratory nature of the approach.

In the case of the Edgeryders platform, the instruments provided (simple posts, wikis, tasks, events, documents) integrate two dimensions, a cognitive one, which theoretically generates a co-created cultural capital, and a social one, which, hypothetically, forms the social capital that multiplies the nodes of the network.

The study indicates the presence of three stakes within the network, which behave as actors in the formation of cultural capital. The first is that of the funders, in this case the European Commission and the Council of Europe, and is generated by the need for European public policies to reduce the gaps between institutions and young citizens by creating a digital knowledge space. The second is that of the civic users, who focus on their own projects. The third stake is that of the agent users who direct the individual capacity of action of the civic users towards a certain cause through a bottom-up flow. In this case it was an action within the project of candidature of the city of Bucharest for the title of "European Cultural Capital 2021." From the quantitative content analysis of the posts and comments related to the author, we can observe that the interactions of the agent users produce an asymmetric network. The culture of collaboration should distribute and organize relationships symmetrically, and an indicator in this regard would be the formation of horizontal

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

relationships. Although the thematic analysis of the titles of the posts indicates discursive markers pertaining to collaboration culture, the directivity of certain interactions places part of the users in the position of "traffic conductors." Thus, the idea of horizontal collaboration and collective intelligence is partially invalidated.

Works Cited

Benkler, Yochai. *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*. Yale University Press, 2006.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Forms of Capital." *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Ed. J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986. 241-258.

Castells, Manuel. *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture 1: The Rise of the Network Society*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

Granovetter, Mark S. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78.6 (1973): 1360-1380.

Phillips, Fred, Ching-Ying Yu, Tahir Hameed, Mahmoud Abdullah El Akhdary. "The Knowledge Society's Origins and Current Trajectory." *International Journal of Innovation Studies* 1.3 (2017): 175-191.

Fuchs, Christian. *Internet and Society: Social Theory in the Internet Age*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Available at <http://fuchs.uti.at/wp-content/uploads/Internet+Society.pdf>. Accessed on October 25, 2019.

"Internet governance" Strategy 2012-2015 of the Council of Europe. 2012. Available at <https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cad04>. Accessed 25 October 2019.

Jenkings, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and NewMedia Collide*. New York University Press, 2006.

Lévy, Pierre. "Collective Intelligence." *Reading Digital Culture*. Ed. David Trend. Wiley-Blackwell, 2001. 253-258.

Edgeryders Guide to the Future. 2013. Available at <https://issuu.com/nenadmaljkovic/docs/edgeryders_2013>. Accessed on October 25, 2019.

Peach, Kathy, Aleks Berditchevskaia, Theo Bass. *Collective Intelligence Design Playbook (beta)*, 2019. Available at <https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/collective-intelligence-design-playbook/>. Accessed on October 25, 2019.

The project of candidature of the city of Bucharest for the title of "European Cultural Capital 2021." 2016. Available at <https://www.capitalaculturala2021.ro/Files/bidbook/Bucuresti/bidbook-

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)

buc/Bucharest2021_BidBook_2016_EN.pdf>. Accessed on October 25, 2019.

Shermon, Ganesh. *The Intellectual Company: Beyond Wisdom*. Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publications, 2017.

van Dijck, José, de Waal, Martijn, Poell, Thomas. *Platform Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Wellman, Barry. "Little Boxes, Glocalization, and Networked Individualism." *Digital Cities II: Computational and Sociological Approaches. Digital Cities 2001. Lecture Notes*. Ed. M. Tanabe, P. van den Besselaar, T. Ishida. Computer Science 2362. Springer-Verlag Berlin: Heidelberg, 2002.

Webster, Frank. *Theories of the Information Society*. 3rd ed. Routledge: New York, 2006.

BDD-A31708 © 2019 Ovidius University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:27 UTC)