

Editorial

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Welcome to EGOV-CeDEM-ePart 2021!

Our world-renowned international conference is now in its fourth year of existence, and not even the ongoing SARS-Cov2 pandemic has been able to put a damper on either the quantity or quality of submissions received. Hosted by the University of Granada, Andalusia, Spain, the current edition of the EGOV-CeDEM-Part conference series was held from 07-09 September 2021 under the stewardship of the local host Professor Manuel Pedro Rodríguez Bolívar, with the help of Laura Alcaide Muñoz. We are grateful to Shefali Virkar, who did a fantastic job in assembling the ongoing proceedings. Given the uncertainty surrounding travel to the conference venue, the organisers opted to provide an innovative hybrid format of on-site and online attendances.

In keeping with this conference series being an established premier academic and practitioner forum in the research domains of digital, open and smart government and electronic participation, these proceedings consist of high-quality, cutting edge research-in-progress made available in the form of Ongoing Research Papers, Reflections and Viewpoints, Workshop Proposals, and Poster Summaries. These offerings both revisit well-established research issues and critically explore

emerging ideas, theories, and innovations drawn from across the various conference tracks: e-Government and e-Governance; e-Democracy and e-Participation; Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics and Automated Decision Making; Digital and Social Media; the Digital Society; Legal Informatics; Open Data - Social and Technical Aspects; Smart Cities - Governments, Communities, Regions; other Emerging Topics and Innovations; and Practitioner Perspectives.

One must never underestimate the importance of ongoing research to the scholarly canon. The first set of ongoing research papers in these proceedings critically explore various facets of e-Democracy and/or e-Participation. Panagiotis Keramidis and Yannis Charalabidis identify decisive factors that contribute to the success or failure of an e-Democracy application or initiative. Olga Filatova and colleagues, through an analysis of online discussions on Facebook demonstrate the potential of Internet-mediated, social media-based deliberation as a significant form of public dialogue. Through a literature review of e-Participation tools, Marius Rohde Johannessen and Eiri Elvestad lay the examination of the potential political and deliberative consequences of different technologies. Internet voting also features within these pages, with Marlon Freire and colleagues providing a critical exploration of the Estonian internet voting model in order to identify the legal, technical, and technological pre-conditions for introducing this form of democratic participation in Portugal. Elsewhere, José Lavado and colleagues examine the opportunities afforded to governments by social networking technologies to engage with their citizens through the empirical evaluation of a Twitter dataset.

Yet other ongoing research papers take a closer look at emerging issues in digital transformation. Lieselot Danneels investigates how digital government units navigate the paradoxical tension between 'digital' and 'information technology' discourses through an interpretive multiple case study. In continuing to look at the public sector, Alessia Neuronni, Michael Marti, and Anja Wüst take a critical look at the innovation capabilities of public agencies in their quest to transform digitally. Using a case study based in Switzerland, the authors focus on three interconnected pillars – collaboration, learning culture, and leadership – and discuss which of these are sufficiently developed to directly impact the digital transformation of the public sector. In their ongoing research paper, Sara Hofmann and colleagues approach the digitalisation of public services from a slightly different angle. Hofmann et. al. consider how the benefits of digitalising public services can be realised, and question whether all public services are indeed suitable for digitalisation. Elsewhere, Efthimios Tambouris and Konstantinos Tarabanis explore emerging trends in integrated public service co-creation through the delineation of the inGov project – its aims, methods, and pilots. Still looking at the development of e-Services, Proscovia Svard and Sheila Zimic explore the management of information practices that are critical to the processes of placement of children and young people in residential care homes in two Swedish municipalities.

Ongoing research papers are an excellent medium for revisiting well-covered topics from fresh perspectives. Open Data is one such subject domain. J. Ignacio Criado and colleagues critically analyse the structural factors needed to understand the adoption of Open Government Data portals at the local layer in a single country. Using statistical analysis, the authors of this ongoing paper explore the differences between a sample of city councils, and posit that OGD portals represent the intention of public agencies to adopt sophisticated devices to improve the transparency and access

to public information by digital means. Remaining with Open Data portals, Sebastian Urbanek and Sonja Schimmler take a closer look at the metadata that describes their constituent datasets. They conclude herein that this metadata is typically available in one or two languages only, and that translations, when present, are usually added manually. In arguing for the development of more inclusive open data infrastructures, the authors propose an approach for automatic translations of metadata based on Semantic Web technologies using the DCAT-AP standard.

Another set of ongoing papers consider the deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the public sector, and developments in the digitalisation of the public sector. Going back to basics, Marissa Hoekstra, Anne Fleur van Veenstra and Cass Chideock argue for a better understanding of how and for what purpose public agencies are using AI, and advance a typology for applications of public sector AI based on a systematic literature review. Taking a more practical approach, Alexandra Daikou and colleagues investigate the beliefs and perceptions of Greek healthcare professionals working in public hospitals towards the new automation technologies being deployed in health services. Shifting the focus slightly away from technology and onto e-government processes, Sebastian Halsbenning, Michael Koddebusch, Marco Niemann and Jorg Becker investigate, through the use of a case study, the factors necessary to foster e-Competence in the public sector. Luca Tangi and colleagues critically explore the relationship between ICT expenditures and e-maturity in local governments. In taking a broader look at the use of technology in the public sector, Wagnar Araujo, Delfina Soares, and João Carvalho critically appraise national e-government strategies, and propose an e-government strategy formulation framework taking into account international rankings.

Ongoing research within the smart cities domain also features within the pages of these proceedings. Giampero Lupo and Davide Carnevali investigate, through an analysis of smart city and smart technology literature, the institutional, social and technological conditions under which e-justice technologies are developed for lawyers by lawyers. In considering the advent of the Digital Society, Boriana Rukanova and colleagues take a critical look at how digital infrastructure innovations can enable and support circular economy governance. The relationship between digital technologies and welfare are also explored during the conference. Marcus Heidlund and Leif Sundberg examine how digitalisation is legitimised in government welfare policies, and argue that such initiatives need to be carefully scrutinised given their potential to bring about significant structural change within society. Focusing on the Scandinavian countries, Annika Hasselblad takes a critical look at so-called welfare technologies, and proposes a framework that may be applied to better understand the impact that their design, development and deployment and use have on the actors associated with them.

Investigating emerging issues and innovations in the digital society is of great importance. Tove Engvall takes a critical look at the digital technologies used in climate reporting, and argues that this can consequently be considered as a case of digital global governance. Engvall attempts to develop a theoretical and empirical understanding of climate change reporting, selecting Sweden's reporting to the UN as the central case study. In considering good governance from another perspective, Douglas Silva and Sergio Carvalho explore the use of data science methods and techniques in processes of tax collection, and argue that, given the amount of data needing to be analysed, these methods are appropriate for proper tax administration and effective fraud detection.

Reflections and Viewpoints are excellent way of eliciting expert opinion on a particular topic or subject domain. Four such thought pieces are included within these proceedings. Nicholas Robinson argues for the adoption of self-service, reconfigurable smarter networked infrastructures in the move towards a more equal, diverse and human-centred society. Ana Melro takes a closer look at local governance models, and the impact that European integration has had on the digital transformation of two Portuguese municipalities. Pasi Hellsten and Kristiina Lume reflect on the importance of measurable public management indicators, and the implications of selecting which factors are to be measured for digitalisation initiatives. Michele Benedetti and colleagues take a more practical stance by proposing an approach to support the monitoring of open data policies through a qualitative evaluation of their impact.

Pre-conference workshops bring together a diverse audience to discuss emerging concepts, revisit traditional research problems, or to try out newly developed tools and technologies. In the first of three workshops held during this year's edition of EGOV-CeDEM-ePart, Efthimios Tambouris and colleagues take a critical look at existing conceptual models for Integrated Public Service (IPS) design and delivery in Europe, and will discuss with participants to possibilities available to further enhance them to support personalised and inclusive IPS co-creation and provision. Co-creation is also on the agenda of the second workshop led by Gerhard Embacher-Kohle aim to investigate the various aspects of innovation and human-centred design associated with the collaborative design and provision of digital public services. The third and final workshop organised by Wagner Araujo, Delfina Soares, João Carvalho and Joana Carvalho has a slightly different stance by focussing on the evaluation of a prescriptive framework developed by the organisers that supports the formulation of national e-government strategies.

Research posters are widely used in the academic community to showcase cutting-edge ongoing work, to summarise a research programme or findings concisely in an attractive manner to publicise it and to generate discussion. Seven poster proposals covering a wide range of topics across the different conference tracks are found within the pages of the proceedings this year. Guilia Maragno and colleagues present an overview of the state-of-the-art of Artificial Intelligence solutions and applications in use within the public sector, with the stated dual purpose of exploring trends and identifying promising paths for future research. The digital transformation of the public sector is also the topic du jour for Peter Kuhn, Matthias Buchinger and Dian Balta, who take a close look at the application of the Government as a Platform (GaaP) approach in a German federal agency. Francesco Mureddu and Nathan Carvalho showcase the ACROSS project, and discuss the delivery of interoperable cross-border public digital services that are at once compliant with European regulations that facilitate their interconnection with the private sector and those that protect the data sovereignty of citizens. Two posters presented within this year's conference take a close look at Cloud Computing. In their offering, Mikhail Bundin and Aleksei Martynov investigate the challenges and opportunities associated with the use of Cloud Computing by public control and supervisory bodies in Russia. Similarly, Francesco Mureddu and Roberto Di Bernardo discuss the factors enabling public administrations to take advantage of shared data and analytical power tools and methodologies - including cloud services - for evidence-driven policymaking within the context of the DECIDO project. Elsewhere, Matheus Lustosa de Souza Louzeiro and colleagues critically examine the impact of the Brazilian General Data Protection Law (LGPD) on private

organisations. The final poster within these proceedings, authored by Iikka Pietilä and colleagues, considers a novel multidisciplinary model draft that can be used to describe e-participation activities to ultimately support the sustainable development of societies.

As life slowly begins to return to normal, we look forward to seeing many of you in person at the conference this year! Since hybrid events are set to be the norm in the near foreseeable future, we hope to still encounter more colleagues online. The editors would like to thank the contributing authors for their hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm; with our gratitude extended to the expert peer-reviewers, the programme committee, the track chairs, the proof-readers, and the sponsors for the time and effort spent towards making the EGOV-CeDEM-ePart 2021 conference a resounding success.

Enjoy reading!