Editorial

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Biographical notes: Flavio Corradini is Full Professor of Computer Science at the University of Camerino. He received a Master Degree in Computer Science from the University of Pisa and a PhD in Computer Engineering from the University of Rome La Sapienza. His research interests are centred around design methods, formal and semi-formal specification and verification of complex systems, e-government and information society. He is the Coordinator of UEG – Unicam e-government research group and COSY – Complex systems research group. He collaborates with several companies and Public Administrations for the development of innovation technology, technology transfer and scientific research.

Alberto Polzonetti is a Professor of Computer Network and Service Oriented Computing at the University of Camerino. He is a member of the UEG – Unicam e-government research group and he is active in several e-government projects related to services infrastructure and broadband development and diffusion. His research activity is focused on the study and on the introduction of technological advanced, innovative and interoperable solutions able to encourage the Information and Communication Technology inside the Information Society.

In the context of innovation of public administrations, which is taking place in many countries, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are playing a significant role. This special issue focuses on ICT-based methodologies, technologies and tools enabling e-government. Methodologies play an increasingly important role in the management and definition of e-government initiatives. Technologies improve their efficiency and effectiveness while tools allow new specific services and functionalities. All of this, of course, influence political, legal, cultural and organisational issues.

The published four original research papers were submitted by researchers, teachers and practitioners active in the area of e-government on various disciplines pertinent to the objectives of the special issue. It was launched right after MeTTeG'08, the 2nd International Conference on Methodologies, Technologies and Tools enabling e-Government (25–26 September 2008 – Ionian University, Corfu, Greece).

The first paper 'E-governance for development: lessons learned and strategic principles for designing an operational roadmap', by Gianluca Misuraca and Gianluigi Viscusi, discusses the relationships between ICTs and Governance. It concentrates on the analysis of the strategic and methodological issues related

to e-government interventions in developing and emerging countries, with a focus on the Mediterranean region. In defining the organisational and institutional dimensions underpinning ICT-enabled governance models, the paper positions e-government activities within the broader framework of e-governance, as a learning type of dynamics. Furthermore, the paper presents an overview of the BLIND methodology and selected results from field cases, highlighting both their policy implications for governance and public administration reform and practical recommendations for e-government implementation.

The formation of legislation in Parliaments is a 'wicked' problem, characterised by high complexity and several stakeholders with different and heterogeneous problem views, values, concerns and interests. According to previous research, the best approach for addressing such problems is through consultation and exchange of argumentation among stakeholders. The e-participation research has investigated and suggested some ICTs for this purpose, such as e-forum, e-petition and e-community tools. The second paper of this special issue 'An investigation of the use of structured e-forum for enhancing e-participation in parliaments', by Alexandros Xenakis and Euripidis Loukis, investigates the use of an advanced and more structured ICT tool, the 'structured e-forum', for supporting and enhancing e-participation and e-consultation in the legislation formation process in Parliaments. The authors design and implement an e-consultation pilot on a law under formation (regulating the 'Contracts of Voluntary Co-habitation') in the Greek Parliament, using a structured e-forum tool based on the Issue-Based Information Systems framework. This pilot has been evaluated using multiple methods (analysis of discussion tree, quantitative and qualitative evaluation). The conclusions drawn reveal the advantages offered by the structured e-forum, along with its limitations.

In public administration, business process redesign is an essential activity for reducing costs, has strict connections with laws and is carried out by actors with different backgrounds. The paper 'A tool supported methodology for BPR in Public Administrations', by Aaron Ciaghi, Andrea Mattioli and Adolfo Villafiorita, proposes an approach where changes in the law are mapped in process diagrams to highlight and review the impact on processes. This allows for a stricter collaboration among the different people usually involved in business process redesign. The methodology takes advantage of the UML notation and is supported by a tool, VLPM (Visual Law Process Modeller), which helps to keep traceability between processes and laws. Finally, the authors discuss an example in which the methodology was applied to model the transition from electoral processes to e-electoral process.

The impressive penetration rate of electronic and mobile networks provides the unique opportunity for all countries to use electronic and mobile services and accelerate their entrance in the digital society, strengthening the fundamental structure of governmental organisations and enhancing the collaboration of the public sector. Moreover, extensively used distributed e-government solutions did not succeed to gain governmental organisations' and end-users' acceptance because their integration remained in a generic level, not being able to fulfil core requirements such as interoperability, scalability/extensibility, security and trust, and high administration. The paper 'Advanced e-government enterprise strategies and solutions', by Athanasios Karantjias, Teta Stamati and Drakoulis Martakos, presents an innovative Local Government Access framework, deployed for the central union of municipalities and communities of Greece, providing insights to critical success design factors for

reengineering mission critical legacy systems so that they can operate in and take full advantage of a user-centric electronic and mobile government environment. The local government access framework integrates almost 250 e-government services in many different domains of the public administration such as health, social care, education, public transportation, cultural, and others, integrating peak XML technologies, worldwide standards and specifications.

Though the papers provide just single views in ICT-based methodologies, technologies and tools enabling e-government, they address a number of general matters that are central to leading e-governance research. They focus on practical and theoretical issues as well as consider case studies and best practices in different countries.

We wish to thank the invited speakers at MeTTeG'08 – Serge Novaretti and Josè Manuel Alonso – all the authors of the invited papers as well as the referees for their careful and professional job. We also wish to thank the IJEG Editor-in-Chief – Prof. Panagiotis Georgiadis – and the IJEG Executive Editor – Prof. Dimitris Gouscos – for having accepted our proposal of editing this special issue of the *International Journal of Electronic Governance*. Last but not least, we express our gratitude to the Ionian University, Corfu (Greece) and the University of Camerino (Italy) for their support.