
Editorial

Dimitris Gouscos

Department of Communication and Media Studies,
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens,
1, Sofokleous str. (2nd floor),
GR-10559 Athens, Greece
Email: gouscos@media.uoa.gr

Biographical notes: Dimitris Gouscos is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication and Media Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and a Research Fellow of the Laboratory of New Technologies in Communication, Education and the Mass Media. His research interests include online communication, electronic governance, social media and serious games.

In this second issue of Vol. 8 of *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, we are glad to accommodate a set of research papers along different topics from the journal's subject scope, as well as from different geographies across the IJEG international coverage.

The first research paper, 'A medium-scale trial of Handivote' by Valcheva et al., reports on an electronic voting system utilising mobile phones and short text messages, tested in a field trial in the UK by a local community group to assess support vs. opposition to a planned building development. The authors elaborate on the procedures to issue voting credentials, the information given to voters and the ICT infrastructure required, as well as the user interfaces for setting up polls and presenting results to the public. At the same time, voter scrutiny mechanisms for ensuring vote integrity, as well as money and labour cost aspects of this voting scheme, are also discussed.

Staying in the broader domain of using mobile technologies for governance and citizen engagement, 'Current state of m-government research: identifying future research opportunities' by Albeshier and Stone embarks on a comparative research to study m-government alongside e-government concepts, and their eventual similarities and differences. Based on a systematic review of m-government literature, the authors argue that there exists a gap in understanding the relationships between m-government and civic engagement, let alone the eventual positive influence of the former to the latter, and provide recommendations for further research in this area.

In the next two research papers that complete the contents of our current issue, the authors are focusing on the quality and appeal of public sector websites within the context of broader e-governance and open government efforts.

'A quality assessment index for evaluation of district e-governance websites', by Banerjee and Katare, presents a methodological approach to comparative evaluation of user perceived quality factors of regional government websites. Based on identification and scaling of factor categories relevant to users' perceived quality, the authors propose a

Web Quality Assessment Index (WQAI), and test it on a sample of websites of Madhya Pradesh state districts in India alongside cluster analysis for the same sample. The authors find that the two methods of study provide converging results whereas, at the same time, websites of high population or high industrial status districts may underperform in terms of user satisfaction, although ranking well in other criteria. In this context, the overall findings are helpful as elements of a combined approach to identify strong and weak points of public sector websites.

In the last research paper, ‘The influence of open government on e-government website: the case of Jordan’, Al-Jamal and Abu-Shanab set out from the current advancements of the open data and open government arena to investigate the perceptions of citizens regarding major concepts of open government in Jordan, a country that has officially endorsed an open government effort since 2011. The authors develop a literature-based research model, which has been subjected to an empirical test based on citizens’ responses to a survey in order to identify how open government perceptions may influence citizen attitudes towards e-government websites. As the authors’ results indicate, perceptions about collaboration and transparency seem to have positive influence on citizens’ intention to use e-government websites. On the other hand, perceptions about participation may have a negative influence, an interesting result which is certainly worth for further investigation.

IJEG will continue with alternating regular and special issues on topics from the journal’s subject coverage. In this respect, our forthcoming special issues feature:

- *Electronic Governance and Open Society: Challenges in Eurasia*, guest-edited by Yuri Misnikov, ITMO University, Russia, Christine Leitner, Centre for Economics and Public Administration, UK and Dmitrii Trutnev, ITMO University, Russia
- *Electronic Participation*, guest-edited by Efthimios Tambouris, University of Macedonia, Greece, Konstantinos Tarabanis, University of Macedonia, Greece, Øystein Sæbø, University of Agder, Norway and Panos Panagiotopoulos, Queen Mary University of London, UK
- *Personalization in e-Government and Smart Cities*, guest-edited by Nikolaos Loutas, PwC, Belgium, Fedelucio Narducci, University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy, Adegboyega Ojo, Insight@NUI, Ireland, Matteo Palmonari, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy, Cécile Paris, CSIRO Digital Productivity Flagship, Australia and Giovanni Semeraro, University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy
- *Empowering Citizenship in the Hybrid City*, guest-edited by Dimitris Charitos, University of Athens, Greece, Martijn de Waal, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands and Penny Travlou, University of Edinburgh, UK
- *Citizen rights in the world of the new computing paradigms*, guest-edited by Sokratis Katsikas, University of Piraeus, Greece and Alexander Sideridis, Agricultural University of Athens, Greece.

We invite all our readers and contributors to check the IJEG call for papers at <http://www.inderscience.com/info/ingeneral/cfplist.php?jcode=ijeg> for currently open calls for submissions to the above special issues.

Alongside these developments, in our ongoing quest to expand the subject coverage of the *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, and especially so across boundary-spanning interdisciplinary topics, we are constantly looking out for regular

contributions and special issues on emerging topics, such as open data and big data, collaborative and co-produced governance and participation, smart local governance, DIY citizenship, and many others.

At the same time, in the effort to provide our readership with a rich coverage of news and upcoming conferences of interest to the broader electronic governance constituency, we are providing a number of links to selected recent developments and forthcoming electronic governance-related conferences in our News in Brief and Conference Calendar columns, respectively.

Last but not least, in the current issue of IJEG, we are happy to continue with our Book Reviews column, featuring review presentations of books that span a broad spectrum of interdisciplinary topics of interest for electronic governance researchers and practitioners. In this respect, we are glad to present the reviews of two books: *Making Democracy Fun – How Game Design Can Empower Citizens and Transform Politics*, by Josh Lerner (author), published by MIT Press (2014), providing a forward-thinking approach to the use of games, serious but still funny ones, at the service of democratic (and often unfunny) processes; and *DIY Citizenship – Critical Making and Social Media*, by Matt Ratto (editor), Megan Boler (editor) and Ronald Deibert (foreword), also published by MIT Press (2014), offering an inclusive account of efforts by citizen groups to enact their own notions of citizenship, and so much so along do-it-yourself, critical and un-institutional (even, counter-institutional) ways.

We gladly invite you to read on and peruse the research papers, news in brief, conference calendar and book reviews that follow, and stay close to us for more developments and updates.