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## Editorial

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**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 digital communication, electronic governance, social media and digital games.

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We are glad to welcome you to this opening double issue of Vol. 9 of the *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, which encompasses a special section on *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.

This special section, which has drawn research papers from contributors of PEGOV workshops (part of the UMAP conference series), provides a picture of selected developments in personalisation solutions for e-government and public participation services, an emerging issue in the e-governance landscape.

In the regular section of our current issue, at the same time, we are happy to present a number of research papers with international coverage on the potential of ICTs as public policy and public value enablers in different settings. In this respect:

- *A systems tool for structuring public policy problems and design of policy options*, by Ibrahim and Larsson, presents a tool for systems modelling and simulation of public policy problems that supports the design of policy options and integrated impact assessment. At the same time, the authors propose Labelled Causal Mapping as a policy-oriented problem structuring method which provides a graphical representation of the involved actors, key variables, control flows and causal dependencies in a policy decision situation and supports quantitative scenario-based simulation.
- *Quality of service improvement based on procedure analysis and reengineering: a case study in Cameroonian public service*, by Roger and Ghislain, introduces an approach to optimise the quality of service in public administration based on the analysis and re-engineering of existing administrative procedures. This effort is

based on the correlations between the different entities involved in the processing of an administrative procedure, focusing on the documents required and the tasks involved, and has been applied to the improvement of the human resource retirement process in the Cameroon public service.

- *Open data project for e-government: case study of Stockholm open data project*, by Temiz and Brown, explores open data practices using the city as the level of analysis, expanding Kassen's local level framework to study the Stockholm open data platform. The authors evaluate the Stockholm Open Data Project along a number of legal, political, economic, functional and citizen value perspectives, observe that current open data initiatives are more similar to closed platforms that provide open APIs than to real open source projects, and discuss to what extent their results can be generalised as an open data framework to empower local citizens in different settings.

In the months to come, 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

- *Citizen rights in the world of the new computing paradigms*, guest-edited by Sokratis Katsikas, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway & University of Piraeus, Greece and Vasileios Zorkadis, Hellenic Data Protection Authority, Greece.
- *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.
- *Privacy-preserving, secure, intelligent eGovernment services*, guest-edited by Sokratis Katsikas, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway & University of Piraeus, Greece and Vasileios Zorkadis, Hellenic Data Protection Authority, Greece.
- *Pervasive participation – new horizons for technology-mediated citizen involvement*, guest-edited by Sarah-Kristin Thiel and Peter Fröhlich, Austrian Institute of Technology, Austria, Malgorzata Goraczek, Donau-Universität Krems, Austria, Matthias Baldauf, FHS St.Gallen – University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland, Titiana Petra Ertiö and Sampo Ruoppila, University of Turku, Finland.

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

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 electronic governance-related recent

developments and forthcoming conferences in our News in Brief and Conference Calendar columns, respectively.

On top of that, 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 review of one more title: *Social Media, Politics and the State – Protests, Revolutions, Riots, Crime and Policing in the Age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube* by Daniel Trottier and Christian Fuchs, published by Routledge (2014), providing a balanced account, firmly grounded on social theory and going well beyond clichés, of the ways in which today's prevalent online social networks are used by citizens, activists and states with different intentions and at different levels of effectiveness as mechanisms for exercising power.

Leaving the floor to our authors and special section guest editors, we gladly invite you to read on and peruse the research papers, news in brief, conference calendar and book reviews that follow.