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Electronic Participation

9th IFIP WG 8.5 International Conference, ePart 2017
St. Petersburg, Russia, September 4–7, 2017
Proceedings

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Preface

The International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP) Working Group 8.5 (Information Systems in Public Administration) is very pleased that the dual IFIP EGOV-EPART 2017 Conference was hosted this year in St. Petersburg – the second largest city and the cultural capital of Russia – at the State University of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics (ITMO University). Университет ИТМО (ITMO University in Russian) is one of Russia’s National Research Universities and one of the Russian universities selected to participate in the “Russian Academic Excellence Project 5-100” by the government of the Russian Federation so as to improve its international competitiveness among the world’s leading research and educational centers. It specializes in information technology, optical design, and engineering and has 11,200 students, of whom 1,500 are foreign students from 71 countries. This made it an ideal place for the 2017 IFIP EGOV-EPART Conference.

The IFIP EGOV-EPART Conference presents an opportunity for researchers and experts from all over the world to meet and exchange current ideas and research on a range of issues addressed in the tracks on e-government, e-participation, open government, open and big data, policy modeling and informatics, and smart governance, government, cities, and regions. The papers submitted contain current research findings, implementations, ongoing research, methodological and theoretical issues, as well as critical reflections. Authors also cover emerging and special topics, provide models, and help visualize the data and results obtained. A PhD Colloquium offers students the opportunity to present their work; they benefit not only from the feedback and guidance given by senior scholars, but also from other researchers’ experiences, cross-disciplinary inspiration, and the networking opportunities.

This volume of the IFIP EGOV-EPART proceedings contains the full papers from the “eParticipation” track and the “Policy Modeling and Policy Informatics” track. Following a double-blind peer-review process, the papers from these two tracks were finally accepted for this volume.

eParticipation is the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance political participation and citizen engagement, but is by definition a multi-disciplinary field of study, and the papers from the “eParticipation” track present recent developments drawn from several technical, political, and social areas. The authors who submitted to this track describe new and innovative developments in this expanding discipline, and focus on research topics such as citizen engagement in public affairs and public participation facilitated by information and communication technologies. The “Policy Modeling and Policy Informatics” track focuses on supporting public policy making using innovative ICT and involving relevant stakeholders. The papers accepted to the “Policy Modeling and Policy Informatics” track look at public policy-making with innovative ICT that involves the relevant stakeholders, policy analysis, programming, conceptual modeling, and visualization of simulation models. While both these tracks highlight the importance of theoretical foundations, critical

reflections, and implementations, they address in particular the importance of interdisciplinary research and the use of existing concepts and approaches combined in innovative ways to achieve powerful, transparent, participative, data-driven, and collaborative solutions. Thus the research made available in these tracks is not just multidisciplinary, it is also complex, as it considers different political, economic, social, human, and technical aspects.

Several authors focus on methodological issues. Amizan Omar, Vishanth Weerakkody, and Uthayasankar Sivarajah consider the performance metrics necessary for evaluating participatory budgeting based on multiple channels. Such participatory platforms are important as they foster citizen engagement and aim to have sociopolitical impact, but determining the success of such an initiative and platform requires the development of criteria to evaluate it accordingly. Other authors, such as Magnus Adenskog and his colleagues, consider both the potential and the risks of using the living lab approach to evaluate mobile participation by focusing on a Täsä, a new mobile application that enables interaction between citizens and city authorities in Turku, Finland. Kevin Klamert and Sander Münster look at gamified tools and methods for fostering public participation in urban planning. They suggest that playful formats as well as gamification and serious gaming may improve public participation, and provide insights for the design of participatory platforms.

In terms of practical implementations of eParticipation, Uwe Serdült and Thomas Milic consider e-voting in Switzerland for citizens living at home or abroad. Using structural equation modeling, they analyze a survey on e-voting recently conducted in Switzerland to consider the important issues of digital divide and trust associated with e-voting. Using the concept of crystallization, a metaphor borrowed from chemical engineering where the aim is to produce highly purified and ordered crystal lattices from raw materials, Guoray Cai, Feng Sun, and Jessica Kropczynski look at how local (political) knowledge can be “crystallized” to support informed public participation. Using a case study (a community issue about inflationary tax indexing), they show how community-level, panel-based deliberation can be “crystallized” into knowledge to be extracted and used for decision-making in the public domain. Just as important is the presentation of ongoing work, such as that by Lyudmila Vidiasova, Dmitrii Trutnev, and Evgenii Vidiasov, who analyze the factors that impact the development of e-participation in Russia, or by Aggeliki Androutopoulou, Yannis Charalabidis, and Euripidis Loukis, who consider how ICTs and social media help the transfer and exchange of knowledge as well as interaction for the development of effective public policies in a democracy.

Focusing on data-driven policy making and modeling, Anne Fleur van Veenstra and Bas Kotterink consider the policy lab methodology to support data-driven policy-making, that is, the collaboration between citizens and public administrations so as to co-create policy. They first identify innovations in data-driven policy-making, then map them to the stages of the policy cycle, and find that most innovations focus on the use of new data sources and that methodologies to capture the benefits are still “under development.” Cesar Renteria and Ramon Gil-Garcia study the concept of policy analysis and find that it is associated with many different terms and meanings. This has led to conceptual ambiguity, and they use the Min-Max strategy of concept formation to provide conceptual clarity to help future research in this area. Bernhard

Waltl and his colleagues consider to what extent the outcome of appeal decisions based on the German tax law can be predicted. Predicting the outcome or the probability of winning a legal case has always been highly attractive in legal sciences and practice, and they present their research based on a machine-learning classifier to predict the outcome of cases.

Critical approaches and reflections are always important. Wouter Bronsgeest, Rex Arendsen, and Jan van Dijk study a selection of evaluation reports of e-government projects, and point out that such projects are not only often poorly evaluated but also poorly governed, thus do not achieve the aim of participatory e-government. They highlight the importance of the evaluation of projects, but also the need for co-creation in such projects and the involvement of stakeholders. Co-creation is certainly an important aspect of e-participation and policy-making, but Mila Gasco-Hernandez, Rodrigo Sandoval-Almazán, and Ramon Gil-Garcia also consider the role of the intermediaries involved in innovation and innovative processes. In particular large e-participation initiatives need to be considered carefully, and Alessio Braccini, Tommaso Federici, and Øystein Sæbø investigate the Movimento 5 Stelle, which has gained huge momentum and has become an important dimension of the Italian political sphere.

We hope you enjoy reading these papers! The editors would like to take the opportunity to thank not only the authors who contributed their work, but also those who helped to make this year's conference successful: the participants, the organizing team, and, of course, the hosts Dimitrii Trutnev and Andrei Chugunov from ITMO University.

July 2017

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