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Electronic Participation

11th IFIP WG 8.5 International Conference, ePart 2019
San Benedetto Del Tronto, Italy, September 2–4, 2019
Proceedings

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ISSN 0302-9743 ISSN 1611-3349 (electronic)
Lecture Notes in Computer Science
ISBN 978-3-030-27396-5 ISBN 978-3-030-27397-2 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-27397-2>

LNCS Sublibrary: SL3 – Information Systems and Applications, incl. Internet/Web, and HCI

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Editorial

Welcome to EGOV-CeDEM-ePart 2019! The conference presents the merger of the IFIP WG 8.5 Electronic Government (EGOV), the IFIP WG 8.5 Electronic Participation (ePart), and the E-Democracy and Open Government Conference (CeDEM). The conference is dedicated to the broader area of electronic government, open government, smart governance, e-democracy, policy informatics, electronic participation and other social innovation, and digital society applications. Scholars from around the world have been attending this premier academic forum for a long time, which has given EGOV a worldwide reputation as one of the top two dedicated conferences in the broader domain of digital government.

EGOV-CeDEM-ePart 2019 was held during September 2–4, 2019, in San Benedetto Del Tronto, and was hosted by the University of Camerino, Italy. The University of Camerino has a seven-decade long history, starting in 1336 when it was founded as Studium Generale. Today, the university is ranked first among the small-scale Italian Universities. The University of Camerino is responsible for research and training in multiple areas and the local organization belongs to the Computer Science Division. This is a vibrant and young research group that is part of the School of Science and Technology with a research background in modeling, analysis, verification, and deployment of distributed systems.

The call for papers attracted completed research papers, work-in-progress papers reporting on ongoing research (including doctoral papers), project and case descriptions, as well as workshop and panel proposals. The submissions were assessed through a double-blind review process with at least two reviewers per submission. This conference of eight partially intersecting tracks presents advances in the socio-technological domain of the public sphere demonstrating cutting-edge concepts, methods, and styles of investigation by multiple disciplines. The papers were distributed over the following tracks:

- General E-Government and Open Government track
- General E-Democracy and eParticipation track
- Smart Cities (Government, Communities and Regions) track
- AI, Data Analytics, and Automated Decision Making track
- Social Media track
- Social Innovation track
- Open Data: Social and Technical Aspects track
- Digital Society track
- Practitioners' track

The current volume contains 13 completed research papers presented at the General e-Democracy and e-Participation track, the Social Media track, the Digital Society track, and the Social Innovation track. Another 27 completed research papers presented at the conference can be found in the LNCS EGOV proceedings (vol. 11685).

The volume begins with eParticipation Developments and a decade overview of the ePart conference by Marius Rohde Johannessen and Lasse Berntzen. Such important milestones allow community reflections on how eParticipation has evolved as a research area within an interdisciplinary conference. In a case study of participatory budgeting in Helsinki, Titiana-Petra Ertiö, Pekka Tuominen, and Mikko Rask discuss how an effective combination of offline and online engagement can make such exercises more effective and inclusive. Tiago Silva, António Tavares, and Mariana Lameiras provide an overview and adoption models of social media channels for local government engagement in Portugal. Labeled as ‘trendy cities’, they observe how the local government’s use of social media varies based on demographic characteristics, administrative capacity, and geographical location. Michael Sachs and Judith Schossböck design and apply a user identification framework for eParticipation platforms. They conclude that purposefully built digital engagement platforms can be of higher quality and relevance than public spaces when sufficient legitimizing mechanisms mitigate user concerns.

The section on Digital Transformations begins with a promising exploration of chatbots in public services by Colin van Noordt and Gianluca Misuraca. Even such novel applications seem to follow a known pattern: while immediate benefits to providing information can be realized, more complicated uses like transactions will require organizational change. Shefali Virkar, Noella Edelmann, and a group of colleagues present an extensive study of informal knowledge sharing networks within the public sector. They identify internal workflows and culture as important reasons to explain why some organizations have made more progress than others. From a design perspective, Helena Korge, Regina Erlenheim, and Dirk Draheim present a qualitative study of proactive business event services in the Estonian company registration portal. They demonstrate how better user experience can be achieved with consideration to small changes like notifications and data reuse.

Continuing with two contributions in the area of Crisis and Emergency Management, Sofie Pilemalm examines how response capabilities during the early stages of emergencies can be enhanced by engaging early respondents using digital tools. Reflections are offered on the co-production of emergency response and its impact on different groups. On a related note, Monika Magnusson, Geir Ove Venemyr, Peter Bellström, and Bjørn Tallak Bakken report on the Swedish-Norwegian CriseIT project that developed a platform for crisis management training. A design science approach is adopted to draw the components of the system and discuss how they individually and altogether can facilitate and improve training.

Moving on to the ever-important User Perspectives, Bettina Distel and Ida Lindgren provide a critical reflection of citizens as ‘users’ in e-government research. By unboxing the concept of the ‘user-citizen’ as an active entity, they provide a value perspective that can inform future research and design. Mapping citizen roles to their motivations emerges as an important factor in the case studies of open agriculture data hackathons reported by Arie Purwanto, Anneke Zuiderwijk, and Marijn Janssen. Participants in such events were found to be motivated both by instinct and extrinsic reasons which are important to consider when designing such events. In a study of digital divides in Brazil, Marcelo Henrique de Araujo and Nicolau Reinhard find that mobile phones have become a substitute device for computer use in more marginalized

groups, hence reinforcing digital exclusion patterns. This is important for considering mobile accessible policies that will stimulate multiuse device skills in the digital economy. Marie Anne Macadar, Gabriela Viale Pereira, and Fernando Bichara Pinto integrate eParticipation studies with the capability approach by Sen and Nussbaum. This analysis illustrates the increasing digital engagement inequalities in a development context.

Closing the volume, the editors would like to thank the many people that make large events like this conference happen. Our gratitude goes to over 100 members of the Program Committee and dozens of additional reviewers for their great efforts in reviewing the submitted papers. We particularly express our gratitude to the local organizing team from the University of Camerino for the organization and management of the conference.

July 2019

Panos Panagiotopoulos
Noella Edelmann
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Barbara Re

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Open Data: Social and Technical Aspects Track

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Anneke Zuiderwijk	Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands
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Digital Society

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