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Beyond Bureaucracy

Towards Sustainable Governance
Informatisation

 Springer

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Preface

The title of this edited volume is deliberately chosen in aim to draw attention to research beyond well-trodden paths—set in the broader context of research on technology for governance, *Beyond Bureaucracy* addresses the question how radical technological innovation may transform the power of citizens and the conceptual sovereign body to actively control (rather than passively observe and follow) government agencies and governmental agents. The contrast to mainstream research is deliberately chosen—where traditional research ambitions under terms such as e-government, e-governance, and e-democracy focus on providing and/or studying technology that supports the work and mission of traditional state agencies and state agents (and as such aim to innovate incrementally, if at all), *Beyond Bureaucracy* aims to provide an incubator for ideas, visions, and thoughts that aim to step *beyond* the boundaries of existing frameworks.

Part I (Beyond Bureaucracy) of this volume is focussed on further exploring the “*beyond*”. *Zach Bastick* first provides a discussion on the transformational potentials of technology on society that have gone out of focus over the decades of e-democracy research and practice. This is followed by *Alois Paulin*’s discussion on the potentials of technical sciences to cause radical innovation in the context of *Beyond Bureaucracy*. Next, *Frank Bannister* reminds of the values the bureaucratic state bears for the stability and integrity of public values, while *Uroš Pinterič* explores how the role of the state is to be understood from the new perspectives of the information society.

Part II (Disruptive Innovation for Governance) deals with emerging disruptive concepts for governance, where twentieth-century technology can act as an enabling factor. First, an overview over participatory budgeting, where citizens get a say in how public finances are distributed, is provided by *Ligia Helena Hahn Lüchmann*. Also, *Alicja Mikołajewicz-Woźniak* addresses innovation in the fiscal domain by exploring virtual currencies as a disruptive approach to credit transfer in the digital age. *Morten Kallestrup* contributes by a chapter on recent changes in the European ICT standardisation framework, which adds value by raising awareness for standards as a type of regulations that are generated and adhered-to by a stakeholder community itself.

Part III (Crowd Sourcing Governance) shifts to the various forms and applications of crowd-sourcing, which can be applied in the governmental context. Thus, *Alina Ostling* provides an overview of citizen engagement projects, which give citizens (as the users of government services) power to report on corruption, or provide general feedback on the service received. *Rodrigo Sandoval-Almazan* et al. describe a case where undocumented public transport routes were reconstructed by citizens. *Evika Karamagioli* et al. provide an overview over technology-supported crowd-sourcing projects for constitutional design, and *Filipe Montargil and Vitor Santos* report on European initiatives in which environmental indicators are monitored through citizen observatories.

Part IV (Mass Online Deliberation) is about online deliberation, which ranges from structured forms such as e-petitioning (*Catherine Dumas* et al. provide an overview of this tool for collective political action) and mass online deliberation (*Cyril Velikanov and Alexander Prosser* shall discuss on this) to unstructured and dispersed online discussions in social media and the like, which yet can, as *Yuri Misnikov* et al. argue, be used as a relevant source for forming public policy.

Part V (e-Government Trends), finally, provides an overview over the recent trends in technology-supported governance which aim at optimising existing institutional structures and improve the sentiment of citizens towards their governments. To this end, *Grzegorz Makowski* first provides an overview over bureaucratic corruption, arguing that technology-enabled transparency and open government can reduce corruption and increase citizen trust in governmental institutions. A tool for assessing and optimising costs of governmental institutions is presented by *Yannis Charalabidis* et al., which can help governmental decision makers to assess the value of digitalizing services of existing institutions. An interesting example of optimising satisfaction in citizen-to-government interaction is presented by *Sarah Hartmann* et al., who portray the US-American 311 initiative, a multichannel single point of contact to governmental agencies.

Part V, and thus the volume itself, concludes with *Sokratis Katsikas and Stefanos Gritzalis*' critical portrayal of the state of play in terms of digitalization in Greece, which once again emphasises that progress lies not in the mere introduction of digital technologies to modernise traditional institutions, but instead, that transformations must follow a radical/disruptive approach.

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Contents

Part I Beyond Bureaucracy

| | |
|---|----|
| Digital Limits of Government: The Failure of E-Democracy | 3 |
| Zach Bastick | |
| Beyond Bureaucracy | 15 |
| Alois Paulin | |
| In Defence of Bureaucracy: Governance and Public Values in a Digital Age | 27 |
| Frank Bannister | |
| A Trans-Disciplinary Approach Towards Understanding the State in the Information Society Era | 49 |
| Uroš Pinterič | |

Part II Disruptive Innovation for Governance

| | |
|---|----|
| Participatory Budgeting and Democratic Innovation: Some Analytical Variables | 63 |
| Lígia Helena Hahn Lüchmann | |
| Virtual Currencies as the Starting Point for Changes in Financial Ecosystem | 79 |
| Alicja Mikołajewicz-Woźniak | |
| The New Governance of ICT Standards in Europe | 97 |
| Morten Kallestrup | |

Part III Crowd Sourcing Governance

| | |
|--|-----|
| Social Innovation in Practice: Opportunities for Citizens and Governments | 117 |
| Alina Ostling | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Going Beyond Bureaucracy Through Gamification: Innovation Labs and Citizen Engagement in the Case of “Mapaton” in Mexico City | 133 |
| Rodrigo Sandoval-Almazan, J. Ramon Gil-Garcia and David Valle-Cruz | |
| Participatory Constitutional Design: A Grassroots Experiment for (Re)Designing the Constitution in Greece | 151 |
| Evika Karamagioli, Mary Karatza, Stephania Xydia and Dimitris Gouscos | |
| Citizen Observatories: Concept, Opportunities and Communication with Citizens in the First EU Experiences | 167 |
| Filipe Montargil and Vitor Santos | |
| Part IV Mass Online Deliberation | |
| What Do the People Think?: E-Petitioning and Policy Decision Making | 187 |
| Catherine Dumas, Teresa M. Harrison, Loni Hagen and Xiaoyi Zhao | |
| Mass Online Deliberation in Participatory Policy-Making—Part I | 209 |
| Cyril Velikanov and Alexander Prosser | |
| Mass Online Deliberation in Participatory Policy-Making—Part II | 235 |
| Cyril Velikanov and Alexander Prosser | |
| Converting the Outcomes of Citizens’ Discourses in the Cyberspace into Policy Inputs for More Democratic and Effective Government | 259 |
| Yuri Misnikov, Olga Filatova and Andrei Chugunov | |
| Part V e-Government Trends | |
| From Weber to the Web... Can ICT Reduce Bureaucratic Corruption? | 291 |
| Grzegorz Makowski | |
| Public Services Reengineering Through Cost Analysis and Simulation: The eGOVSIM II Platform | 313 |
| Yannis Charalabidis, Petros Stamoulis and Aggeliki Androutsopoulou | |
| Citizen Relationship Management in Local Governments: The Potential of 311 for Public Service Delivery | 337 |
| Sarah Hartmann, Agnes Mainka and Wolfgang G. Stock | |

Digitalization in Greece: State of Play, Barriers, Challenges, Solutions 355
 Sokratis K. Katsikas and Stefanos Gritzalis

Erratum to: Participatory Constitutional Design: A Grassroots Experiment for (Re)Designing the Constitution in Greece E1
 Evika Karamagioli, Mary Karatza, Stephania Xydia and Dimitris Gouscos