

e-Democracy

Advances in Group Decision and Negotiation

Volume 5

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The book series, *Advances in Group Decision and Negotiation* — as an extension of the journal, *Group Decision and Negotiation* — is motivated by unifying approaches to group decision and negotiation processes. These processes are purposeful, adaptive and complex – cybernetic and self-organizing – and involve relation and coordination in multiplayer, multicriteria, ill-structured, evolving dynamic problems in which players (agents) both cooperate and conflict. These processes are purposeful complex adaptive systems.

Group decision and negotiation involves the whole process or flow of activities relevant to group decision and negotiation – such as, communication and information sharing, problem definition (representation) and evolution, alternative generation, socialemotional interaction, coordination, leadership, and the resulting action choice.

Areas of application include intraorganizational coordination (as in local/global strategy, operations management and integrated design, production, finance, marketing and distribution – e.g., as for new products), computer supported collaborative work, labor-management negotiation, interorganizational negotiation (business, government and nonprofits), electronic negotiation and commerce, mobile technology, culture and negotiation, intercultural and international relations and negotiation, globalization, terrorism, environmental negotiation, etc.

David Ríos Insua · Simon French
Editors

e-Democracy

A Group Decision and Negotiation
Perspective

 Springer

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Foreword

In group decision and negotiation (GDN), we seek solutions – jointly decided actions – to group problems. With *e*-democracy, the GDN solution process involves application of GDN concepts, democratic principles, and technology that can extend democracy to a higher level of participation with increased potential for problem solutions that produce connectedness among participants.

How the GDN approach and *e*-democracy can mutually reinforce each other is at the heart of this noteworthy book. Thus we have a jointly emerging hybrid – GDN/*e*-democracy – that is well represented in the editors’ overviews in [Chapter 1](#) and 19, and by the contributions of the various authors. These concern political, methodological, technical bases, and case studies of *e*-democracy. The book is a welcome addition to the ongoing book series, *Advances in Group Decision and Negotiation*.

The world has many difficult problems. GDN/*e*-democracy can help find solutions that the world badly needs. This book arrives at an opportune time – now.

That is all that is needed for this foreword; the rest is in the book.

New York, NY

Melvin F. Shakun

Acknowledgment

To a large extent, we view this volume as a culmination of the 4-year European Science Foundation (ESF) programme *Towards Electronic Democracy: Internet Based Complex Decision Support*. We are thus grateful to the ESF for its generous support over those years. We are also grateful to the hundreds of participants at various TED events and our fellow members at the Steering Committee. Over the last 2 years, we have also benefited from our participation in the COST-ESF program in *Algorithmic Decision Theory*.

We are grateful to the authors of the various chapters. Taken together, they provide a wide-ranging and very original, refreshing panorama of *e*-democracy, showing that it is something more than *e*-debating and *e*-voting. The conscientious advice of the referees made our work much simpler. Mel Shakun kindly asked us a few years ago to prepare this monograph and, even more, has prepared a wonderful prologue for our volume. In between, the personnel at Springer have been exceedingly patient with our continuing delays.

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Simon French acknowledges with much gratitude his funding by various EU and UK bodies. Early on he benefitted from EU Framework programmes targeted on emergency response to nuclear accidents in which public participation is a vital part of the recovery phases. In the UK, he has been funded by the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency to work on stakeholder interactions. Most recently, he was a member of a project funded by Research Councils UK on Rural Economy and Land Use to explore the involvement of rural stakeholders and the public in handling food risks. He has benefitted from many discussions and collaborations with Gary Barker, Clare Bayley, Peter Bennett, Jo Brown, Emma Carter, Angela

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Last, but far from least, our families – Susana, Sabela, and Ota; and Judy, Kate, and Sarah – have been extremely supporting, especially as other pressures, often institutional, political, and not a little trying, also took our time.

It is our fervent wish that rationality, participation, and deliberative democracy in the spirit embodied in the pages that follow would permeate society and our institutions. Supported by technology, such a spirit of inclusiveness might release us from the current closed door machinations that are still to be found framing much of our lives.

Madrid
Manchester
February 2010

David Ríos Insua
Simon French

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