Preface

Today, people live in a rapidly-changing world. ICTs are one of the fundamental factors in the background of this rapid change. ICTs have affected political area as well as economic, social, and administrative areas. This impact is increasing day by day. Concepts such as e-voting, e-democracy, e-participation, online campaigning, and e-parliament are the most powerful proof of the use of ICTs in political activities, processes, and institutions. E-parliament is closely related to such concepts as e-democracy and e-participation; however, it also refers to a different and more specific application.

In this day and age, the expectations of citizens from public institutions have begun to change. Governments have today put into effect various reform initiatives to make public institutions more efficient, transparent, participatory, and democratic, and meet citizens’ expectations. As a part of the political system, parliaments are not immune from these expectations and reform initiatives. In this age in which co-operative management has come to the forefront within the framework of governance model, parliaments have felt the need to restructure themselves. In this context, parliaments have begun using opportunities offered by ICTs to meet requirements of an efficient and democratic parliament. Today, ICTs have a profound impact on core functions of parliaments (legislation, representation, oversight). Parliaments, thanks to the means and opportunities created by ICTs, have had a chance to simplify and integrate their administrative processes and involve citizens in legislative processes and improve their countries’ democracy.

In this context, this book focuses on the concept of e-parliament, which is an ever-rising concept and initiative. E-parliament is not a concept that is frequently studied and debated in the relevant literature. E-parliament literature is still in its infancy. This edited book attempts to close a serious gap in the literature on e-parliament. The aim of book is to present a conceptual framework regarding e-parliament and analyze the impacts of ICTs on the structure of parliament, its functions, relations with other actors and the legislative process. Therefore, in addition to the conceptual framework, this study illustrates the practices of some countries those of which are based on conceptual framework and makes it possible for them to take some lessons. This book reflects new understandings, developments, and practices in the parliaments within the framework of use of ICTs.

This book is a product of a very intensive effort of many people and they rightly deserve special thanks. First, I would like to thank the contributors of this book for their patience. Since their chapters were carefully evaluated by reviewers, they made tireless efforts to revise their relevant chapters. I am also grateful to peer-reviewers of this book for their help in the reviewing process. I am thankful to editorial
advisory board of the book. Their constructive comments and suggestions have helped to enhance the quality of the book. I am indebted to staff of IGI Global; of course special thanks go to Michael Killian. I also thank my colleagues at the Department of Public Administration of the Uludag University for their moral support. I want to express my particular thanks to my family for their continuous patience, support, and encouragement during the project of this book. I hope this book will enrich discussions on e-parliament and be useful for MPs, parliamentary administrations, experts, academics, and students.

Mehmet Zahid Sobaci
Uludag University, Turkey