Preface

This book is about government, how it is responding, and how it should respond to the present challenges. But, first and foremost, this book is about citizens, their roles, their rights, their freedoms, and their involvement in modern systems of electronic governance.

In this book, an attempt is made to go beyond the obvious. We outline the nature of the present transformation, providing not only conceptual clarification but also empirical findings on recent developments. The focus is on citizens' access to information and their participation, as well as changes in public administration and politics within the broader framework of information society development. The book is based on the international and interdisciplinary cooperation of 21 authors, representing seven different countries and various disciplines and disciplinary traditions. Together, the authors attempt to widen our understanding of the social transformation we are facing at the beginning of the 21st century.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

This book is based on international and interdisciplinary cooperation of established scholars working in the areas of political science, public administration, sociology, communication studies, and information society research. The work was initiated during the CIPA'99 conference, *Citizens and Public Administration in the Information Age: Constructing Citizen-Oriented Society for the Future*, held in Tampere, Finland, in August of 1999. The purpose of the conference was to discuss, in multinational and multidisciplinary contexts, the role of citizens and public administration in the emerging information society, concentrating on issues such as "what is the role of citizens and public administration in the information age" and "how can we use modern information and communication technologies, organizational principles, and knowledge to create a citizen-oriented open society for the future." The conference was organized by the editors of this book, under the auspices of the International Social Science Council

(ISSC; Unesco House, Paris), the University of Tampere, Information Society in Finland: Present State and Future Prospects (ISFI) Research Project, and the Information Society Research Centre (INSOC) of the University of Tampere.

The conference was a huge success, attracting participants from 20 countries. During the conference, it was felt that there were not enough books tackling the problem from a truly international and interdisciplinary perspective. Most of the existing publications were considered to be too narrow with regard to their scope, disciplines, or geographic coverage. Based on this conclusion, it was agreed that more books based on interdisciplinary perspectives were needed. Thus, a project was initiated to fill this gap.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The book is intended to serve a wide audience, especially those working in public administration, universities and educational institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. The main target group is teachers and researchers involved in IS development and related studies. The book can also be used as a textbook within a broad range of courses addressing issues such as citizens and democracy in a modern society; new forms of governance and politics; teledemocracy; electronic governance and politics; and information society within academic fields like political science, public administration, sociology, communication studies, mass communication, and information society research.

A thematically broad but, at the same time, focused and analytical contribution with ample empirical evidence is provided. The focus of this book is on citizens and governance in a modern society. The strengths of this book as compared to other existing contributions are threefold.

First, this book has a strong interdisciplinary background. The issues of citizenship and governance are discussed from an interdisciplinary rather than disciplinary perspective. The viewpoints of political science and public administration are especially important in this respect. Second, detailed attention is paid to the issues of citizenship, participation and access to information. Public administration and politics are approached by asking how citizens may influence the processes of planning and decision making on local, regional, national, and global levels; how we can guarantee the inclusion of our poorest regions and poorest social groups; and how we can guarantee citizens access to information. Third, the strength of the book is that an analytical stance is taken toward the enchantment often associated with the development of an information society. Thus, no earth-shattering changes in public administration and the practices of governance are envisioned, but potentials and problems of e-transformation are discussed in an analytical way by relating them to the ideas of more traditional approaches to administration and politics. In this we attempt to sail in the middle between Scylla and Charybdis — between the most conservative and the most radical; between those who see all changes as threats to the functioning of the present society and thus something to be impossible to implement and impractical to even discuss, and between those who see only the positive opportunities but not the dangers (or problems or threats) and who push for immediate adoption of new ICTs, and for radical, revolutionary changes in our social and political practices instead of more cautious and more controlled evolution.

In sum, the originality of the book lies in the topic chosen for the study and the approach taken to discuss the issues: the transformation processes taking place in public administration and politics are expressly approached from the angle of citizens.

CONTENTS OF THE BOOK

The book contains 14 chapters discussing the ongoing electronic transformation in government, politics, and society, and its causes and its consequences for public administration and citizens. The chapters have been grouped into five interrelated sections focusing on the following themes:
- Introduction and conceptual framework
- Involving citizens
- Restructuring public administration
- Building urban and regional communities
- Citizen access to information in the information age

Section 1. Introduction

The introductory section of the book (Chapters 1 and 2) provides a starting point for the subject matter and themes to be discussed throughout this book.

In Chapter 1, *eTransformation in Government, Politics and Society: Conceptual Framework and Introduction,* Matti Mälkiä of the Police College of Finland, and Reijo Savolainen of the University of Tampere (Finland), outline the changing landscape of electronic transformation of society and its consequences to government and politics. This is done first by identifying and discussing four major factors affecting the transformations in governance: the changing role of knowledge, the changing forms of social organization and co-operation, globalization, and the utilization of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Based on this analytical framework some key dilemmas, problems and failures of transformation and how they might be solved are identified and discussed. In the end of the chapter, a detailed introduction to the specific themes and chapters of this book is given. The aim of the chapter is to develop a better common conceptual framework with which to understand the key changes we are living with, to understand how these changes are linked together, to understand what kind of problems and dilemmas are caused by and linked to these changes, and to understand how the different individual topics and issues discussed in more detail in individual chapters of this book are related to each other.

Chapter 2, *Introduction to Democratic e-Governance,* Ari-Veikko Anttiroiko of the University of Tampere (Finland), provides a more detailed introduction to the concept and practices of electronic governance (in short: e-governance), one of the key topics of this book. Special attention is devoted to the potentials of democratic e-governance. It emphasizes the interactions between citizens, political representatives and administrative machinery providing a special view of citizens' opportunities to influence and participate in policy-making and related processes. This perspective opens up a view to the practices in which institutions, organizations and citizens steer and guide society and communities. It provides a citizen-centered view of governance. In regard to technology, democratic e-governance is based on the idea that the new ICTs can be used to facilitate interaction, communication and decision-making pro-

cesses, and thus have a great potential to strengthen the democratic aspects of governance.

Section 2. Involving Citizens

The second section of the book deals with how to involve citizens in public affairs. The central questions include how the practices of e-governance might provide new opportunities to motivate citizens to participate in politics, especially in local level, to prepare decision-making, to influence decision-makers, and to take part in televoting and other practices of "direct e democracy".

In Chapter 3, *Teledemocratic Innovations That Public Officials Continue to Ignore — At Our Great Peril,* Ted Becker of Auburn University (USA) tackles the major problems plaguing representative democracies around the world. The problems manifest themselves, for example, in the dramatic decrease of voting turnouts particularly in the United States. Becker discusses new methods to bridge the gap between government and citizens and to fight political apathy. One of the methods of empowering citizens is scientific deliberative polling which has been experimented with success since the 1970s. The author also reviews the experiences received from electronic town meetings, for example, AmericaSpeaks which was organized in New York in July 2002 to discuss how to rebuild the World Trade Center. In this chapter, Becker speaks with a voice that will and should be heard. He is undoubtedly one of the world's most authoritative experts in the field of teledemocracy and citizen's empowerment.

In Chapter 4, John Clayton Thomas of Georgia State University (USA) continues the theme by speculating the potentials and problems of public involvement in public administration. In his chapter, *Public Involvement in Public Administration in the Information Age: Speculating on the Effects of Technology,* special attention is paid to the effects of the ICTs on public involvement in public administration, including both benefits and costs or risks. The administrative side of government, once viewed as a solitary enterprise, the domain of scientific and technical experts, is now widely perceived to require regular and continuing input from the public in order for government to operate effectively and responsively. As examples of the practices of public involvement, Thomas discusses the role of "key contacts" among the public, that is, the ways in which citizen-initiated contacts may be used to obtain information. Also the potential of citizen surveys, public meetings and advisory committees are reviewed.

This section ends with Chapter 5, *ICTs and the Communicative Conditions for Democracy: A Local Experiment with Web-mediated Civic Publicness.* In this chapter Seija Ridell of the University of Turku (Finland) assesses the contribution of the new ICTs to enhance democracy at the local level. Drawing on a local experiment conducted in 1998-2000 in Tampere, Finland, Ridell assesses whether or not the ICTs can be employed to introduce other than top-down ways of public debate and participation, contributing, in this way, to new forms of Web-based publicness. In the above project, specific efforts were made to enable and encourage online encounters between those local stakeholders that rarely meet in the discursive public spaces of mainstream media.

Section 3. Restructuring Public Administration

The main focus of the third section of this book is public administration: How should structures and functioning of public administration, public officials, public or-

ganizations and administrative bureaucracy be changed to better meet the challenges of citizen-centric society. There are three individual chapters in this section.

In Chapter 6, *Public Administration for a Democratic Society: Instilling Public Trust through Greater Collaboration with Citizens,* Christa Daryl Slaton and Jeremy L. Arthur, both of Auburn University (USA), continue a discussion about the question of how can we enhance citizen feedback and increase citizen influence in local politics. The authors call for new models of citizen participation, positioning citizens as "owners" of government, not as "clients" or as "partners" in making and implementing policies through choices. Televote, a form of scientific polling that elicits informed and considered opinions from randomly selected respondents, is presented as an example of the new approach. The other method, a version of face-to-face meetings, was employed in Uniontown, Alabama, to engage citizens on an ongoing basis to establish citizen agendas, develop policies, and implement programs. These examples are good cases of various ongoing attempts to restructure public administration and politics to face the challenges of citizen participation and active citizenship.

In Chapter 7 titled, *Bureaucratic Discretion and Deliberative Democracy,* Christian Hunold of Drexel University (USA) and B. Guy Peters of the University of Pittsburgh (USA) analyze the relationship between these two concepts. Authors demonstrate that administrative discretion is both a strength and a weakness of contemporary political systems because governments can not govern without the capacity to fill in legislation with detailed administrative regulations. The weakness of using discretion in rulemaking is the lack of legitimacy of these rules. In order to make rulemaking more legitimate, effective means of oversight and participation for the public as a whole are required. The deliberative turn in thinking about participation may provide opportunities for greater direct oversight, and perhaps also greater legitimacy for the rules adopted.

In the last chapter of this section, Chapter 8 titled, *The Moderator in Government-Initiated Internet Discussion: Facilitator or Source of Bias?,* Arthur R. Edwards of Erasmus University Rotterdam (The Netherlands) investigates the varying roles of the moderator in government-initiated Internet discussions. Although the importance of moderation of online policy discussions is widely recognized, attention has rarely been paid to the social interface in which moderators perform their tasks. Edwards scrutinizes the management of six government-initiated online discussions in The Netherlands. It appears that the moderators significantly contribute to the interactivity and openness of the discussions. In addition, they also form part of a new interface between citizens and public administration with its own power relations and possible biases.

Section 4. Building Urban and Regional Communities

The fourth section of this book concentrates on the opportunities and challenges to build e-governance at local and regional levels. These issues are important because the development of democratic e-governance is dependent on how well the specific needs of various regions such as metropolitan areas and municipalities can be taken into account and to which extent the local e-governance can be viewed as a cooperative venture between various groups of actors.

In Chapter 9, *Metropolitan Governance and Telecommunications Policy: Changing Perceptions of Place and Local Governance in the Information Society,* Roger Richman of Old Dominion University (USA) characterizes metropolitan governance

and telecommunications policy in the U.S. In his chapter, Richman proposes creation of metropolitan non-governmental organizations for urban regions to undertake telecommunications policy roles. The proposed Metropolitan Telecommunications Organization (MTO) would represent urbanized areas' interests in the designing of metropolitan telecommunications system. MTO would also be operative in providing network security, insuring open access and universal service, and in undertaking other important system governance roles that currently are not being addressed by local governments.

In Chapter 10, Kevin Sproats of the University of Western Sydney (Australia), Trevor Cairney of the University of New South Wales (Australia) and David Hegarty of CADRE Design (Australia) survey the potentials and problems of building a regional community in GreaterWestern Sydney. In their chapter, *Building Regional Communities in an Information Age: The Case of Greater Western Sydney*, TeamWest, an innovative mechanism for regional governance is presented. This chapter draws on the experience of the authors in TeamWest, and provides an illustration of the ways in which a regional web site may function as a vehicle for the exchange of knowledge and information of relevance to citizens and leaders within the region.

In the last chapter of this section, *Responding to the Information Needs of Citizens in an Open Society: The Role of Smart Communities*, (Chapter 11), Roger Caves of San Diego State University (USA) introduces "Smart Community" as a concept which may help areas of various sizes accomplish a variety of local and regional development processes. The chapter covers issues such as the role of citizen participation, the roles of the ICTs, the components of a "Smart Community", the California Smart Communities Program, and the lessons learned to date from the program. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the "digital divide" between people with access to various ICTs and those without this access.

Section 5. Citizen Access to Information

The last section of the book discusses the questions of citizen access to information and the ways in which individual citizens and civic associations — as well as other groups currently with or without power — may use the Internet to empower themselves and their supporters. Access to information is power; and access to Internet is power times two.

In Chapter 12, *What's New? Perspectives on Freedom of Information and New Information Technologies,* Sonja Bugdahn explores the perspectives on freedom of information. The author selects more than 200-year- old right of access to governmental information as a reference point, investigating it from five perspectives: politics, policy, polity, market, and citizenship. Each perspective highlights different aspects of the impacts that a right of access to information can possibly have. The Citizenship Perspective turns out to be particularly interesting since the traditional, but changeable concept of citizenship and the right of access to information interact with each other. Similarly to access to information, the relationship between the use of the ICTs and the citizenship concept are analyzed.

In Chapter 13, *Bridging the Digital Divide: Developments in Scotland*, Anna Malina and Ann Macintosh of Napier University (UK) address the topical questions of "digital divide", exploring the possibilities for extending e-democracy to support wider democratic participation using ICTs in local communities. Drawing on empirical case study conducted in Scotland, they describe current approaches for tackling the digital

divide, for example, the "Digital Scotland" initiatives. The authors conclude by suggesting how action research could extend electronic democratization into the two digital communities being created in Scotland.

Chapter 14, the last chapter of this section and the book, *Globalization, Citizenship and New Information Technologies: From the MAI to Seattle,* Peter J. Smith of Athabasca University (Canada) and Elizabeth Smythe of Concordia University of Alberta (Canada) provide a detailed picture of the ways in which ICTs have been used by non-governmental organizations to contest economic globalization. The article uses as case studies the failed attempt to negotiate the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI; 1995-1998) and the failed effort to launch a new round of trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization ministerial meetings in Seattle 1999. The authors impressively demonstrate how Internet technology contributed to the capacity of civic groups to communicate, to quickly mobilize and to widely disseminate critical information, outside the control of national elites. By demonstrating how powerful a tool the Internet can be when used by the citizen activists, this chapter provides an ample ending for the book.

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