Preface

As governments across the world increasingly adopt information and communication technology to improve their efficiency and effectiveness, they are gradually providing opportunities for citizen participation and engagement online. The use of Internet technologies raises the possibility for large-scale e-democracy and enhances the degree and quality of public participation in government. Initially, e-participation was largely passive, with mostly one-way communication and information dissemination. Nowadays, online participation is highlighted by two-way communication and the active participation of citizens, along with the increasing accessibility of computers and the ever-increasing prevalence of social media. In light of these various possibilities for citizens to actively participate in governance and decision-making, this book details the efforts of governments and public agencies in providing proper channels for engaging their citizens.

This book presents a wide range of research on approaches undertaken by governments across the world in facilitating active citizen participation online. The chapters also highlight the unique determinants and challenges surrounding its implementation in different global regions. Focusing on the issues and challenges involving adoption and implementation of online civic engagement initiatives globally, the book should serve as a valuable guide to governments in their efforts to enable active citizen participation.

In Chapter 1, *Reconfiguring Performance Information Linking with Accountability: Reporting and Internal Management,* Étienne Charbonneau and Younhee Kim suggest innovative approaches to present complicated performance information to citizens. The chapter reviews various cases to understand the link between performance measurement and performance information in order to promote communication between citizens and government. According to the authors, performance reporting should be constructed in modernized, innovative, and user-focused ways to stimulate the use of performance information by external stakeholders, which can promote government accountability. In Chapter 2, *E-Gov and Transparency in NJ Counties: Providing Information to Citizens,* Deborah Mohammed-Spigner, Daniel Bromberg, Marc Fudge, and Neil Coleman examine the levels of transparency on New Jersey county government websites, and addresses specific issues related to access to information and service delivery. The research demonstrates that counties are utilizing information and communication technologies to increase transparency in a range of modes. However, the use of such technologies continues to remain in its infancy at the county-government level. In Chapter 3, *Transparency Issues in E-Governance and Civic Engagement*, Sherri Greenberg and Angela Newell discuss the definition of transparency related to e-governance and the implementation of transparency initiatives. Transparency is important in the transition from e-government to e-governance, and President Obama has made transparency a prominent issue in the federal government with his directive to use online resources to promote transparency. This chapter outlines the necessary political, policy, and technology and transparency issues in e-governance,

along with recommendations for best practices in policy development and implementation. In Chapter 4, *Measuring and Improving Information-based Government Websites: A Suggested Framework*, Laura Wesley introduces a framework for measuring efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen satisfaction with public sector websites. The framework uses research methods that measure the extent to which online information advances organizational objectives, reaches its target audience, and meets users' expectations for service and quality. In Chapter 5, *Online Political Participation in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election: Examining the Democratic Divide*, Taewoo Nam and Djoko Sigit Sayogo examine how the democratic divide (the gap in political activities via the Internet) is linked to socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, based on the data from the Pew Research Center's survey conducted during the campaign season of the 2008 U.S. presidential election. The study compares five different types of online political activity - communication, mobilization, information consumption, information production, and involvement in social networking websites.

In Chapter 6, *Power and Identity among Citizens in Networked Societies: Towards a Critical Study of Cultural E-Governance*, Jakob Svensson discusses the issues of political participation, citizenship practices and power. Based on social theory and transdisciplinarity, the chapter examines how people enter into citizenship through political participation online and the factors governing these processes. In Chapter 7, *A Systems Theory Approach to Electronic Voting Complexity*, Dimitrios Zissis, Dimitrios Lekkas, and Argyris Arnellos contribute to the existing body of knowledge on electronic voting, based on Soft System Methodology (SSM). Electronic voting is often identified as a soft, ill-structured human activity system, and soft systems thinking is applied to resolve complex issues and provide a clearer perspective of related interdependencies. In Chapter 8, *Educational and Democratic Potential of Digital Games in E-Government*, Erkki Patokorpi, Sami Leppimäki and Franck Tétard discuss the potential of digital games for education, communication and the promotion of civic skills in e-government. According to the authors, learning by games promotes the understanding of complex social issues and their mutual relationships, and consequently, learning by playing serious games is best understood as reasoned practical action in a virtual world. Presenting a social and cultural rationale for the use of games by citizens in terms of social capital, the chapter discusses worldwide examples of existing game applications for e-government. In Chapter 9, *Managing Interactional Performance in E-Government*, Françoise Simon discusses the issue of interactional performance in public e-service delivery, based on a conceptual framework of media choice and the theory of perceived justice. The chapter examines the interplay of service complexity, media richness, and social cues on individual media preferences. Additionally, it discusses key factors that lead citizen-users to the perception of a sense of equity through electronic communication.

In Chapter 10, *Social Networks, Civic Participation and Young People: A Literature Review and Summary of the Educational Challenges*, Sonia Lara and Concepción Naval examine the contribution of social networks to citizen participation. The key questions discussed in the chapter are - How does the use of social networks affect civic behaviour and attitudes among citizens? Does such use foster real civic participation or, in contrast, does it lead to isolation from the real world as a result of engagement in online activities? Also, are there generic, quantitative and/or qualitative differences between offline and online social and civic participation? In Chapter 11, *Innovative Processes and Managerial Effectiveness of E-Procurement in Healthcare*, Ubaldo Comite discusses the functioning of new models of e-procurement and explores its potential in achieving efficiency, based on the reorganization of the acquiring procedures of goods and services. In Chapter 12, *European Public E-Procurement: The Italian Experience*, Pietro Previtali discusses the role of e-procurement and presents various European central procurement models

from the public sector. Based on an e-transaction survey in the Italian Central Procurement Department, the chapter discusses the category of goods and services compliant with e-procurement tools, along with the implications of the legislative framework for e-procurement transactions.

In Chapter 13, *Civic Engagement and E-Governance in Gauteng: Grounds for Universal Household Broadband Internet Service,* Lucienne Abrahams, Mark Burke, Lauri Elliott, and Warren Hero present insights into the state of e-development in Gauteng, South Africa. The achievement of universal suffrage in 1994 created the foundations for greater civic engagement. However, as social interaction and societal governance become increasingly electronically mediated, a large proportion of the population is excluded from these new forms of on-Net interaction. This chapter argues that policies that push universal household broadband service can contribute to reducing social exclusion through creating the foundation for households to operate as units of production and overcome economic deprivation, thus laying a stronger basis for civic engagement. In Chapter 14, *Implications of E-Government in Botswana in the Realm of E-Particpation: Case of Francistown*, Mbako Vako, Bwalya Kelvin Joseph, Tanya Du Plessis, and Chris Rensleigh present the intervention strategies towards robust e-government development in Botswana where e-government is still at the very initial stages. Many of the e-government strategies being planned in Botswana have often inadequately considered the e-participation component and this is negatively impacting the overall anticipated value prepositions for e-government implementation. Based on an exploratory and empirical study of Francistown and surrounding rural areas, the chapter presents a critical analysis of the state of e-government preparedness and the current status of e-government adoption in Botswana.

In Chapter 15, *Impact of Internet Use on Civic Engagement in Chinese Rural Areas: A Preliminary Research*, Jian-Chuan Zhang and Ying Qin explore the relationship between Internet usage and civic engagement in rural China. Based on the surveys implemented by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), the authors find that Internet does enhance the level of civic engagement among rural users and has the potential to enable active engagement in public affairs in the future. In Chapter 16, *Rural E-Governance through the 'Panchayat Raj' Institutions in India: Prospects and Challenges*, Malathi Subramanian examines the role of local self-government Institutions (Panchayats) in rural e-governance in India. The Panchayats are particularly helpful in simplifying civic governance, by making government more democratic, inclusive, and more accessible to the citizens at the local village level. In Chapter 17, *E-Engaging India: E-Democracy Strategies for Empowerment and Civic Participation*, Kavita Karan examines the e-governance and e-democracy strategies, and new media technologies used by political parties, industrial corporations, and other organizations in India. The chapter particularly examines the recent elections that witnessed a surge in the use of new Internet technologies, social networking and mobile technologies, along with the traditional forms of electioneering.

In Chapter 18, *E-Government Policy Implementation in Brunei: Lessons Learnt from Singapore,* Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Patrick Kim Cheng Low, Mohammad Nabil Almunawar, Fadzliwati Mohiddin, and Sik-Liong Ang examine e-government strategies in Brunei in the light of policy success in Singapore. Based on their empirical research in these two South-East Asian nations, this chapter highlights the factors that have enabled e-government policies to be successfully implemented in Singapore and proposes potential success ingredients for the implementation of similar strategies in Brunei. In Chapter 19, *Elucidating Online Structure for Democratic Legitimacy: Case of Local Government Online Structure in Java-Indonesia*, Djoko Sigit Sayogo and Taewoo Nam explore the online communicative structures among local governments in Java, Indonesia. Based on an analysis of local government websites, the study reveals that the levels of democratized Internet mediated human interactions through

local government online structures are restricted. The questions specifically addressed in this study are: to what extent would e-government implementation change the communication structure between local government and the citizens of Indonesia? Are citizens able to generate opinions and attitudes that will affirm or challenge the affairs of state? Is the local government able to promote democratic legitimacy in Indonesia through the design, control, and filter of their online structure?

In Chapter 20, *Citizen Participation Through Municipal Websites: A Global Scorecard,* Alicia Schatteman, Deborah Mohammed-Spigner and George Poluse introduce a model to explain why some countries provide better online citizen participation opportunities than others. Based on the global study of municipal websites, the chapter specifically addresses two primary questions: 1. What are the opportunities for online participation in the most populous cities globally? 2. What factors are associated with opportunities for online citizen participation through municipal websites? In Chapter 21, *Stepwise E-Participation: Good Practice from the Regional Level in Europe*, Francesco Molinari, Mateja Kunstelj and Ljupčo Todorovski discuss the results of the IDEAL-EU project, in which three European Regions - iTuscany, Catalonia, and Poitou-Charentes - have involved citizens (and particularly young people) in discussing and deliberating on the priorities of the new climate change agenda of the European Parliament. These deliberations are supported by two distinct ICT instruments - a social networking platform and a pan-European virtual town meeting.

In Chapter 22, *Open Governance, Civic Engagement and New Digital Media*, Eleni-Revekka Staiou and Dimitris Gouscos highlight and discuss the concepts of e-governance, open governance, and civic engagement enabled by technologies such as Web 2.0, social media, and user-generated content. The focus of discussion is placed on common founding premises and adoption factors that are reproduced at multiple levels, from that of the underlying technology up to end services and interaction patterns. A number of governance initiatives and services are used as working examples, with a view to providing readers with an improved understanding of technological principles and functional capabilities that can attract citizen participation and encourage civic engagement. In Chapter 23, *Social Media Corporate Policies for Government Organizations: Lessons Learnt from the United Arab Emirates*, Al Shair, Salem and Ibrahim Elbadawi, present the key lessons learnt from the process of formulating a government-wide social media policy in the United Arab Emirates. The chapter discusses the main barriers to the successful adoption of social media along with providing recommendations for future research.

In Chapter 24, *TT Connect – The Gateway to Enhanced Service Delivery*, Charlene M. L. Roach examines the Trinidad and Tobago (TT) Pilot Portal site, also known as ttconnect, which provides a gateway to access the services of the twenty-two TT government ministries. The chapter explains that in using the portal design, TT's government is attempting to shift to a new paradigm in its service delivery, improving public outreach and citizens' responsiveness. The chapter also reviews TT government's macro policies, called *Vision 2020* and *Fastforward,* the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy, which are being used as policy instruments to enable TT to reach developed nation status by the year 2020. In Chapter 25, *A Glimmer of Hope in Mass Media in Liberal Democracy: istanbulrumazinligi.com*, Vildan Mahmutoğlu examines a website launched by the Greek minority in İstanbul - istanbulrumazinligi.com. The chapter examines how a minority group can find a place in national public sphere? Particulary, how does the new media provide solutions for the problems of national integrated public sphere through opening new spaces? The findings are analyzed by the terms of engagement to democracy, public sphere, minority culture and e-democracy, and e-deliberation. In Chapter 26, *Debate on E-Debate: Between Acceptance and Refusal*, Ewa Krzątała-Jaworska examines the factors that influence the acceptance or refusal of e-participation tools by local government stakeholders. Based on a

case study of a French Municipality of 50,000 inhabitants, the findings show that the attitude towards e-participation by local councilors depends largely on the degree of control they have over the vision of local democracy. The hypothesis of this study is that the decision of local officials to involve citizens in the policy process via the Internet depends not only on the rational balance between gains and costs, but also on the beliefs of the local councilors. In Chapter 27, *Conceptualization of Trust in the e-Government Context: A Qualitative Analysis*, Hisham Alsaghier and Rahim Hussain provide an in-depth understanding of the citizens' perception of e-government adoption based on a qualitative approach using focus groups. The study identifies the critical factors that affect citizens' trust in e-government and provide a comprehensive guide to governments on how to improve citizens' trust and enhance their engagement in the e-government initiatives.

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