


Editorial Preface

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A DECADE OF URBAN E-PLANNING

This special issue of the *International Journal of E-Planning Research* (IJEPR), ‘A Decade of Urban E-Planning’, commemorates the IJEPR 10th anniversary and is dedicated to its readers and authors and to all those that have made the journal possible day after day in the different stages of a journal production. The IJEPR is now well established as a leading global forum for urban e-planning research, and a reference for research on e-planning practices that affect the life of citizens and places across the world. Looking back, it has been a rewarding journey, with the inspiring companionship of authors, members of the editorial board, ad-hoc reviewers, and members of the IGI Global editorial staff. All these colleagues can be proud of the individual contribution each of them provided for this to happen.

The journal is the result of a process that somehow began two and half decades ago when issues related to the widespread increase in the use of information and communication technologies by planners were changing the circumstances in which spatial planning was carried out in cities in the developed world. From the point of view of the history of urban planning it became clear during the 1990’s, in particular in the second half of that decade, when the World Wide Web became ubiquitous, that a new Age had started in the field of spatial planning. For those interested and working on issues of planning history and planning theory at that time, the new conditions brought by digitalization to the spatial planning field, together with the guiding principles of collaborative planning, smart urbanism, and sustainable urban development, constituted the new frontier in planning research and in the teaching of spatial planning as well.

A quick Google search in mid-2020 of the term ‘e-Planning’ devolved around 1,5 billion results while for ‘urban e-planning’ the figure was 1 billion in the mode ‘all results’. A search in mode ‘verbatim’ devolved 61 million for ‘e-planning’ and 249 thousand results for ‘urban e-planning’. This is a crude estimate of the use of the term, as the search engine devolves a mixture of results, part of which is meaningless for our purposes, in particular in the first search referred before. Even so, if we take these figures with caution they may be used to get an idea of the rate of growth in the use of the terms ‘e-planning’ and ‘urban e-planning’. The last decade (2010-2020) represents over 98% of the use of these terms, which corroborates the sense we already had from other sources, namely in the literature published, about the expansion of the field of urban e-planning. But it also indicates how new the field was in those years. A search in Google Scholar (‘urban e-planning’, verbatim in the title) devolves the first reference only in 2010. There is apparently no publication with these terms in the title before that year. This number increases to 28 in the following decade (2010-2020). A similar search for the term ‘e-planning’ devolves 216 results up to 2020. In both searches some of the cases are not relevant as they do not relate to spatial planning issues broadly defined. The foundation of the IJEPR is thus apparently contemporary of the coming out of this field and the journal emerges as a pioneer in the publication of research outcomes in the early days of the new planning paradigm.

What followed those early days in the IJEPR is the result of a collective scientific effort that I had the privilege to steer during this last decade. One of the outcomes of this collective endeavour is the inclusion of the IJEPR into prestigious journal indices, most notably Web of Science® – Emerging Sources Citation Index®, Scopus®, and others. Additionally, the IJEPR has also been included in the

list of Class A scientific journals by the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes for 2018-2020, in the Journal List of the Australian Research Council for the Excellence in Research, and in the list of journals of the International Geographical Union. The Scopus 2019 CiteScore places the IJEPR in a very positive position in the field of 'Urban Studies' and in 'Geography, Planning and Development'. It is ranked in the Scopus CiteScore 2019 with a score of 1.9, ahead of numerous other much older and well-established journals in these fields. The IJEPR, with just 8 years in 2019, is ranked in Percentile 69th in 'Urban Studies' and Percentile 62th in 'Geography, Planning and Development' in that year. The perspectives for 2020 are even better according to the Scopus CiteScore most recent update at the time of writing. In the 2019 Scimago Journal & Country Rank the IJEPR is in Quartile 2 in the category 'Urban Studies' and Quartile 3 in the categories 'Geography, Planning and Development' and in 'Computer Science Applications'¹, and has an H Index of 4. All these figures suggest the IJEPR is on the right track in the moment it reaches its volume 10. All good reasons to commemorate.

This special issue, prepared to commemorate the first decade of the International Journal of E-Planning Research, comprises a collection of invited articles, which together provide a broad view of the increasingly diverse field of Urban e-Planning, highlighting at the same time some of the themes that make up the journal's scope. We hope some of the ideas put forward in these essays will offer future direction for the IJEPR, as it continues to evolve and grow in the next decade within the rapidly changing field of Urban e-Planning. This preface, besides introducing the special issue, highlighting some of its key aspects, examines the first decade of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR), pointing out aspects that require change and improvement in the coming years as well as those that seem to recommend continuity.

The 'International Journal of E-Planning Research' is published by IGI Global, an academic publisher based in the USA, and is closely associated with the 'Urban e-Planning Research Network', and with the International Conferences on 'Urban e-Planning', held annually in the University of Lisbon, Portugal. Few years after its foundation the IJEPR started to operate under a Hybrid Open Access publishing model, which means that when an author submits a manuscript to the IJEPR, he/she may choose to have the manuscript published either standard or under open access. In the standard access there is no submission or publication fee but in open access there is an Article Processing Charge. The IJEPR has always practiced a Fair Use Policy, meaning that under certain conditions the author may post its paper published in the IJEPR, in a secure university site for academic purpose, in a University Repository, or republish it in an authored or in an edited book.

As referred in the description available in the IJEPR website, the journal publishes original theoretical and innovative empirical research on the many aspects of the emerging interdisciplinary area of urban e-planning, and is primarily focused on urban e-planning theory, history, methods, ethics, best practices, urban e-planning pedagogy, future developments, and on the software technology associated with urban e-planning. The IJEPR publishes new research that add up to the scientific understanding on all sorts of issues of interest to the urban e-planning community. It publishes cutting-edge research, research that seeks to lead to innovations in the practice of urban planning, in particular by inspiring positive societal changes in local communities characterized by social and economic disadvantage. This is and has always been its watermark since it started to be planned, a process concluded in mid 2011 with the submission of the first issue, physically published in early 2012.

Only original papers, unpublished, and not under the review of any other publication can be considered for possible publication in the IJEPR. Manuscripts are accepted on the principle that they represent original research, except for review articles, and that they have not been copyrighted, published, or submitted for publication elsewhere. Authors of each article published in the IJEPR are the sole responsible for the content, including accuracy of the facts, arguments, and citations. Opinions are personal statements of the respective author and do not represent the views of the editor-in-chief or the publisher of the journal.

The IJEPR is deeply committed to sound ethical practices and maintains a high level of transparency throughout the entire editorial process, from initial assessment after submission up to publication or rejection. The journal seeks to maintain the integrity of the scientific process in all stages of its editorial process. Issues of authorship, confidentiality, data fabrication, plagiarism, duplicate publication, among other aspects are strictly considered in every step along the IJEPR editorial decision making process. Authors are expected to disclose potential conflicts of interest that might affect the article to be published, as well as any issues related with research involving human participants. IGI Global, the publisher of IJEPR, became an accepted full member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and since then the journal takes into account the COPE guidelines, adding them to its own independent editorial policy and decision making process, which already seeks to ensure the highest level of quality, integrity, and accuracy in its rigorous double-blind peer review process.

As the peer review process is at the core of decent scholarly publishing, the IJEPR carries out a rigorous double blind peer review of all articles submitted, which is fully conducted through the IGI Global eEditorial Discovery manuscript submission system. If a manuscript is invited, as is the case in this commemorative special issue, this fact is clearly stated in the editorial preface of that issue. In other words, the use by the IJEPR of the IGI Global eEditorial Discovery manuscript submission system makes the entire editorial process more transparent and easier to be audit. The IJEPR has all review documentation for every published or rejected article archived and available in this online platform. If the journal is ever called into question for its peer review practices, the editorial team at IGI Global have access to all articles submitted for consideration to the journal and the respective supporting peer review documentation. The existence in the online archive of the IJEPR of these proofs of the peer review is particularly important in a time marked by questionable publishing practices conducted by predatory journals and by vanity publishers. According to the information available in this archive, the rate of rejection of the manuscripts submitted was 30% until volume 10.

The editorial board performs an important and valuable role, assuring that the IJEPR is published with integrity and accuracy. The journal ensures diversity across the review board and ensures that there is not an uneven ratio of reviewers from the same country or based in the same universities. The editorial board has since the beginning three sections, currently with a total of 51 members plus the editor-in-chief, from 25 countries and all continents: the International Advisory Board, with 5 members; the Associated Editors with 7 members; and the Editorial Review Board with 39 members. Its composition experienced changes over the years, due in some cases to the need to cover new areas of knowledge or to the retirement of some of its members. The list of past editorial boards can be consulted in the printed edition of the journal and in the Blog IJEPR (<https://ijepr.blogspot.com/>).

Overall the editorial board is currently still gender unbalanced, with 68,6% men and 31,4% women, a pattern we have been improving each time the board has been renewed. It is less unbalanced in the editorial review board and more so in the International Advisory Board and in the group of associated editors. It is an aim of the IJEPR to reach gender parity in the editorial board composition through gradual revisions of the board membership. It is also an aim to improve the regional distribution of its members, now mainly concentrated in Europe, North America and Australia. Asia and Africa are represented in the board with only two members each, from India and China, and from Algeria and South Africa, respectively. This pattern will be gradually changed in the following years, each time adjustments are made in the editorial board.

On average the journal benefited from the contribution of 53 reviewers per year, of which 68% men and 32% women. This gender unbalanced list of reviewers the IJEPR exhibits in its first decade is a characteristic that will also be corrected in the coming years. The list of reviewers in this first decade spans over 40 countries, from all continents, with European countries prevailing in most years and being responsible on average for 48% of the reviewers in this first decade, which is followed by North and South America with 36%, and Oceania with 10%. Reviewers based in Universities in Asia (4%) and in particular in Africa (2%) have not been regularly present in the review process in this first decade. This in part reflects the origin of the articles, the location of the case studies and

the need to have reviewers familiar with the cases researched in a particular paper. This pattern will be corrected by calling in more reviewers based in Universities in Asia and in Africa in the coming years, a shift that needs to be associated with the increase in the submission of papers focused on case studies in those two continents.

Reviewing is not yet sufficiently acknowledged as a valuable research activity by research institutions or funding agencies as others have already noted. In the IJEPR we value this fundamental activity for the progress of science. The journal gives a formal feedback and recognizes the contribution to the review process, acknowledging the contribution in the journal pages, in both printed and online versions, a practice followed with no exceptions during this first decade of existence. The list of reviewers has been published every year in the last issue of each volume as part of the Preface. Since moving to the current journal online platform, an automated acknowledgment is also issued immediately after the submission of the review report. More recently, the IJEPR became member of Publons, one more step in the process of crediting the reviewers work and contribution to the advancement of science.

Authors published so far in the IJEPR come from quite diverse backgrounds, both culturally and by region of the world. The journal is thus not biased towards any specific type of author and exhibits a consistent diversity across these first ten volumes. An empirical analysis of IJEPR author demographics shows that in this first decade the list of nearly 400 authors that have published in the IJEPR spreads over more than 30 countries, in America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania. The number of authors per volume is relatively constant. The female-male ratio in the IJEPR authors is 58,5% men and 41,5% women. There is thus no deep gender gap in the publication output in the IJEPR, which in part is also an indication of women's advancement in this particular field of science, although our aim is to narrow that gap even more in the coming years. Urban e-planning research emerges thus, at the end of this first decade, as a somewhat gender-equal field considering the publication output of the IJEPR.

We aim the IJEPR will continue to attract and to publish research that seeks to lead to innovations in the practice of urban planning, in particular research focused on planning cases that seek to introduce positive societal changes in local communities characterized by social and economic disadvantage. We trust the IJEPR will continue to be able to play this important social role in addition to its contribution for the advancement of science in the particular field of spatial planning, following at the same time, and as before, strict research and publishing ethical principles.

The journal will continue to explore research issues grouped in its current four main clusters of themes and issues. The first two are more concerned with theory, history and ethical issues in urban e-planning and with the future of this research field. In particular, the IJEPR aims to address data protection and citizens' privacy issues; human rights; ethics; the history of e-planning adoption and its impacts; modern and post-modern theories; and trust in Urban E-Planning. It seeks also to continuously explore future directions for Urban E-Planning as well as innovations and best practices.

The other two clusters of themes and issues deal with functional dimensions of Urban E-Planning and with issues of organization, technology, and methods. This includes, for instance, the following sectors, activities or planning issues: Culture, Leisure, and Tourism; Digital Divide; Disability; Disaster Management; Education; Environment; Ethnicity; Gender; Health; Housing; Low Carbon Urban Development; Social Issues; Universal Design; Urban E-Marketing; Urban Economic Development; Urban Governance; Urban Infrastructures; Developing Countries; Smart Cities and Smart Urban E-Planning; Urban and Metropolitan Government Reform Through E-Planning.

Issues of Organization, Technology, Methods include, for example, Augmented Reality; Citizen E-Participation; Citizen Science; Complexity and Wicked Problems; Crowdsourcing; Digital Augmented Reality; Visualization; Benchmarking; Data Collection; Data Management, Data Analysis, Data Storage; Evaluation; Monitoring; Online Communication and Dissemination; Games and Idea Generation; Games as Visualization and Participatory Tools; GeoDesign and the Planning of Natural and Virtual Environments; Internet of Things; Landscape Virtual Modeling; Living Labs; Mobile

the articles published somehow cover the entire list of themes and issues, referred in the preceding paragraphs, which were initially announced when the journal was launched.

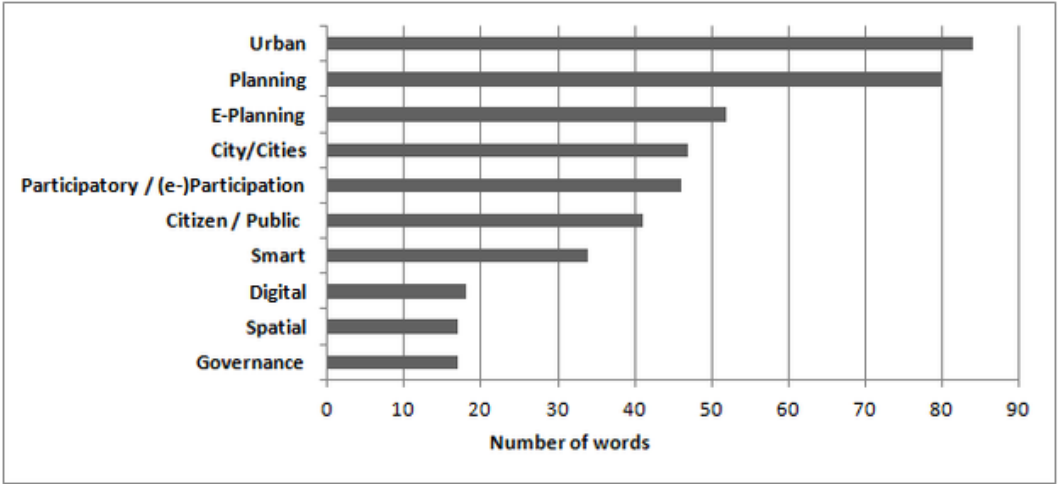
The findings in figure 2 highlight the urban focus of the IJEPR, with the words ‘urban’ and ‘city’ prevailing in the list of the ten more frequent words in the title of the articles, along with the words ‘planning’ and ‘e-planning’, which underlines the nature of the IJEPR as a journal on ‘Urban e-Planning’. A second point highlighted in this graphic is the weight that studies on citizen (e-) participation had in this first decade, as shown by the number of times the words ‘participatory’, ‘e-participation’, ‘citizen’ and ‘public’ have been included in the title of the articles published. Issues related with smart cities, digital tools, and issues of (urban) governance are also among the most present in the articles published by the IJEPR in this first decade.

In sum, there are facets of the journal that require change and improvement while others seem to call for continuity. The demographic characteristics of authors and members of the editorial board reveal aspects that require action. A gender and geographically more balanced list of authors, of members of the editorial board, and of reviewers is one of the goals the IJEPR seeks to meet during the next decade. At the same time, other defining characteristics of the IJEPR claim for continuity and perseverance. The publication of innovative and ground-breaking theoretically informed empirical research, in particular research that seeks to lead to innovations in the practice of urban planning, and to positive societal changes, shall continue to be the driver of the journal. Its commitment with sound ethical practices, transparency and with the integrity of the scientific process, in all stages of its editorial process, must also continue as one of its driving forces. This requires, among other aspects, a rigorous double blind peer review of all articles submitted through the online platform, which must continue to be transparent and easy to audit. The editorial board must keep its diversity and continue to adhere to fundamental publishing ethical principles, assuring that the IJEPR continues to be published with integrity and accuracy.

As a corollary of these principles and practices it is reasonable to expect that the IJEPR will continue integrated in the current prestigious journal indices, in which it is already indexed, but also included in the list of notable Class A scientific journals by research agencies across the world, as already happened with the case of Italy and Australia.

This special issue comprises 7 invited essays written by colleagues with a long time association with the IJEPR and to some extent pioneers in the building of the new field of Urban e-Planning.

Figure 2. Ten more frequent words in the titles of all articles published in the IJEPR, 2012-2020 Source: Author own elaboration



In the first of these essays - *'Urban digital infrastructure, smart cityism and communication: research challenges for Urban e-Planning 10 years on'* - Scott Mcquire

offers an historical overview, largely seen from his own personal experience, starting from the point in which computing came into the field of urban planning at the end of the 1960s up to the arriving of the concept of the smart city in the early 2000s. From there, Scott Mcquire explores what happened in the last decade or so, in which the notion of smart city has been subject to increasing critique but also to new applications, questioning at the end of the article how the smart city agenda might be reformulated in order to meet the most positive claims that have been associated with this idea. In other words, Scott Mcquire questions what needs to be done to guarantee that the digitally instrumented city doesn't exclude key elements of the social ambience and political action that have been essential in the culture of modern cities, a challenge that all those engaged in the field of urban e-planning ought to take into account.

In the next article - *'Digital Citizenship and Digital Communities: How Technology Matters for Individuals and Communities'* - Karen Mossberger and Caroline J. Tolbert discuss the need to examine uses and outcomes of broadband across cities and neighbourhoods, as this opens opportunities but sets constraints on urban e-planning, advocating for thinking about technology use as digital human capital in communities. The article offers ample evidence, taken from two current projects that explore community outcomes for digital human capital, on how 'place' matters for broadband and mobile use in low-income urban communities, an issue of critical importance for a fair and socially just urban e-planning. Finally, Karen Mossberger and Caroline J. Tolbert end with suggestions about opportunities for future research, and a need to examine urban disparities and their consequences to promote evidence-based urban policy for the future.

The third of these essays, written by Ari-Veikko Anttiroiko, is titled *'Digital urban planning platforms: the interplay of digital and local embeddedness in urban planning'*. The article discusses platformization, seen as the increased utilization of platform logic in society, and its impact on urban planning, where it is mainly visible in the form of digital co-production platforms. These platforms in the field of urban planning provide a wide range of benefits, such as digitally assisted collaborative mapping, sharing, analytics, and facilitated integration of citizen input into the planning decision making process. The changes associated with the widespread use of these co-production platforms in urban planning are certainly among the factors responsible for the move towards a new urban planning paradigm model more suited to meet the needs of a complex late modern society as Ari-Veikko Anttiroiko argues.

Soon Ae Chun, Dongwook Kim, Jun-Suh Cho, Michael Chuang, Seungyeon Shin, and Daesung Jun in *'Framework for Smart City Design Models and Risks'* explore one particular challenge faced by urban e-planning as a result of the current data revolution, which has been made possible by advanced computational means and Artificial Intelligence. As these changes may create new and unique opportunities but also lead to unforeseen consequences, it is therefore necessary, as Soon Ae Chun and co-authors argue, to be prudent in the design of the smart cities, exploring the different design options available and assessing the risks associated with each of them. For that the authors offer in the article a framework of design models for developing smart cities, a framework that considers different component designs involved in a smart city project, which is exemplified through two case studies: the smart infrastructure in Taipei City, Taiwan and the Neighborhood Business Services for Seoul City, in South Korea.

Łukasz Damurski in *'How to include omnichannel services in land-use policy? E-planning holds the key'* offers a reflective overview of the online conversion of services in the perspective of urban planning, suggesting that the traditional approach in urban planning has been recently challenged by the widespread use of information and communication technologies which among other aspects added new virtual dimensions to the urban economy. According to Łukasz Damurski these new conditions call for a new urban planning paradigm, one able to create the conditions for the development of omnichannel services. The article presents and discusses the advantages of urban

e-planning in managing omnichannel services, concluding that urban e-planning will be critical in the future development of the services sector, since according to his argument only a multi-channel approach can bring appropriate answers to contemporary developments in the services sector.

The following article - '*E-government, Corruption Reduction and Culture: A Study based on Panel Data of 57 Countries*' -, by Haoyu Zhao, Michael J. Ahn, and Aroon P. Manoharan, all from the University of Massachusetts Boston, USA, deals with the relationship between e-government development and corruption, taking into account different cultural contexts, under which an e-government system can influence the level of corruption, according to the authors' hypothesis. For that the study uses a panel dataset gathered from 57 countries, over the period 2003 to 2014, and based on that examines the impact of cultural factors on the relationship between e-government development and corruption. The article shows that the impact of e-government development on corruption levels varies according to different cultural factors, being more effective in the reduction of corruption in countries with certain characteristics than in others, which also sheds light on the relation between Urban e-Planning development and corruption.

Mike McCall, in the last article, 'Participatory Mapping and PGIS. Secerning Facts and Values, Representation and Representativity' discusses ethical issues and good practice improvements in the application of participatory mapping and PGIS to the mapping of local spatial knowledge, in a moment when its use in this field is expanding. The discussion is centred around the notions of 'facts' and 'values' in the knowledge being mapped in those cases, arguing the author that the characteristics of Participatory Mapping that emerge from this discussion should be acknowledged as a strength, and not as a deficiency.

This special issue includes also a review of a book on planning history that those working in the field of Urban e-Planning, well aware of how the past always impact on the future, ought to read.

To conclude, I'd like to express my gratitude to all colleagues that made possible the journal in this first decade: authors, readers, current and past members of the editorial board, ad-hoc reviewers, for their time and for their intellectual contribution in the reviewing process of the IJEPR, as well as to all colleagues engaged in the management of the journal, at the IGI Global headquarters, for their professionalism in handling the entire publication process.

A final word of appreciation is due to the colleagues, long time members of the IJEPR community, that accepted my invitation to write an essay for this Special Issue, in commemoration of the first 10 years of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR).

ENDNOTE

- ¹ According to the Scimago ranking system Q1 comprises the quarter of the journals with the highest values, Q2 the second highest values, Q3 the third highest values and Q4 the lowest values.

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