

Editorial Preface

Emotional Mapping, Citizen Responsive Urban Planning and Indicators for Assessing Smart Cities

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The articles published in the first issue of the 2017 volume of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR) explore three important themes in the field of urban e-planning: emotional mapping, citizen responsive urban planning and indicators for assessing smart cities.

In the first article - “Emotional Mapping in Local Neighbourhood Planning: Case Study of Příbram, Czech Republic”, Jiri Panek and Vít Pászto, both from Palacky University Olomouc, Czech Republic examine and discuss the adoption of emotional mapping in urban planning. For the authors this is a form of moving away from elitist urban planning practices that has characterized much of the planning history in the country and elsewhere. As the authors argue, city planning and decision-making processes in local government can sometimes be a non-participatory process, being citizens frequently neglected or put aside of these processes, being in most cases only involved during elections periods. Against this background, the article describes the implementation of a web-based crowdsourcing tool for the collection and visualisation of emotion-based and subjective information on maps. It was applied in a case study of neighbourhood development consultation in the city of Příbram in the Czech Republic. For that, the authors used visual, textual and statistical analyses and combined qualitative and quantitative approaches in the process of e-participation in urban e-planning, an approach and methodology that can be replicated in other places and case studies.

In the following article, “How Technologies Can Enhance Open Policy-Making and Citizen-Responsive Urban Planning: Miramap - A Governing Tool for Mirafiori-Sud District in Turin”, Francesca De Filippi, Cristina Coscia, and Roberta Guido, the first two from the Department of Architecture and Design, Politecnico di Torino, Italy and the third from the Department of Architecture, Design and Urban Planning, Università degli studi di Sassari, Italy, explore an innovative approach developed with the aim of opening up the policymaking process, promoting in that way a more citizen-responsive urban planning. It is based on the project MiraMap, a research conducted by the Polytechnic University of Turin, based on a digital collaborative platform, which engages citizens and the relevant public administration departments, in a process focused on critical issues in the MirafioriSud administrative area of Turin, Italy. The experience is also innovative in the sense that it aimed to evaluate the use of open source technologies to advance e-participation in urban planning. It was set up with the aim of achieving integration within the existing administrative management structures and processes, engaging at the same time new actors in the decision-making process, through a groundbreaking collective governance approach. In sum, for the authors, the aim of the research presented in the article is to define and to experiment a methodological and technological

framework capable of addressing the complexity and dynamics of urban planning, taking into account the perspectives of the citizens affected by the planning process.

In the third research article included in this issue, Anastasia Stratigea, Akrivi Leka, and Maria Panagiotopoulou from the National Technical University of Athens, Greece, explore new ways to measure the development of smart cities in the article titled “In Search of Indicators for Assessing Smart and Sustainable Cities and Communities Performance”. The aim is to elaborate a sustainability assessment of smart sustainable city environments and, for that, the authors provide a critical review of the approaches available for this kind of assessment. In doing this, the authors identify sets of indicators adopted in each of these different approaches, compare them and identify convergences and divergences among the different approaches. The article also shows the results of the attempt made by the authors to integrate different sets of indicators in a more coherent indicator system with the aim to effectively match the development of smart and sustainable cities to the set of indicators developed to assess it.

This first issue of volume six includes a book review on the UN report on “E-Government In Support of Sustainable Development”, an important survey published by the United Nations on the state-of-the-art of e-government worldwide, with data and insights that, as in the previous reports published since 2001, will be useful for all those working in the urban e-planning field.

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