Guest Editorial Preface

Special Issue on Urban Governance and Participation

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This special issue focuses on the smart transformation of urban governance and planning, issues critical and controversial at this time. In 2020, we have been the witness of an epochal demand for digital transformation. Smart-working, video conferencing and electronic commerce are redefining the everyday life of citizens as a "new normal" and consequentially, the socio-economy of cities and regions.

In a future post-pandemic city, urban governance will need to respond to the power of digitally enhanced participatory processes to overcome the grand challenges of the risk society. However, a central question remains over the true potentials of the interplay of socio-economic and technological innovation to transform the governance of our cities in practices?

Seven articles in this special issue offer a rich and varied mix of perspectives on smart city governance and urban planning. The special issue is thus structured in three main themes that offer important contributions to this debate: open governance and co-design, pan-European collaborative research experience, and the sustainability of smart city governance initiatives.

OPEN GOVERNANCE AND CO-DESIGN

The first three articles address in various ways issues the theme open governance and co-design. First, "eParticipation in Neighbourhood Development: A Survey of Digital Applications and Tools" presents different digital tools for eParticipation in urban neighbourhood development evaluated in light of the urban neighbourhood lifecycle, including stages such as design, planning, construction, operation, revitalisation. The authors draw on experiences from three urban planning projects in Germany and propose a governance system based on the planning stages and participation intensity. Ultimately, an outlook on potential future developments in digital urban planning with a particular emphasis on public participation is provided. "With a Little Help From AI: Pros and Cons of AI in Urban Planning and Participation" explores the phenomenon of Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications in urban planning and governance and assesses the impact and role of AI in the interplay of artificial and natural human intelligence. It advocates that certain AI technologies can provide feasible support for the co-creation and understanding of ever-more interdependent urban systems. These combine with bottom-up citizen participation processes and digital co-design and decision-making tools that enable substantial new qualities in future urban planning and governance. The final article of this series, "Co-Shaping Smart Cities: Participation Inequalities in Civic Crowdsourcing," advances the nature of innovative participation models to co-shape the city, focusing specifically on civic crowdsourcing initiatives instigated and managed by local governments as new forms of civic engagement. The

prime concern of the paper is the extent to which civic crowdsourcing might promote participation inequalities and confirm or reinforce existing power imbalances, as only a small proportion of internet users make full use of web2.0 environments.

PAN-EUROPEAN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

EU funded smart city governance research forms a major driver for the development of innovative smart solutions for urban planning. This pan-European collaborative research experience forms the common underpinning for the next two papers in the special issue. SEiSMiC and RUGGEDISED projects are presented in the first article, "Transformation Rooms: Building Transformative Capacity for European Cities," which aims to examine the role of various actors and their specific roles within new urban governance processes, the type of citizenship linked to this approach as well as the transformation of assumptions of governance and participation. The article aims to shed light on the potential of the transformation room as an experimental, but structured approach to negotiating policy objectives to establish a policy that can potentially lead to "win-win"-solutions" and initiate change processes. RESCCUE project is presented in the second article, "The Realities of Governance of City Resilience." The article explores the experiences of cities involved in the RESCCUE project – Bristol, Barcelona, and Lisbon – in addressing climate change risks within pre-existing governance frameworks. How this enabled or introduced challenges to the process and what governance learning resulted. The influence of City Hall is highlighted to convene, engage and involve, guide and steer, provide or liberate resources, demonstrate, and decide, as important means by which a city can accelerate and strengthen the ways to mitigate risks and rebounds from adverse situations better.

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SMART CITY GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES.

The final two articles of the special issue are both concerned with the sustainability of smart city governance initiatives. The first explores the landscape of future business models to sustain smarter cities. The second takes the long view perspective over fifty years of practising urban governance initiatives towards sustainability. Both these articles offer new lessons for the future. "Business Models for Smart City Solutions: An Overview of Main Archetypes" aims to identify the main archetypes of smart city business models in three sectors (energy, mobility, ICT), through an in-depth analysis of lighthouse cities involved in the Horizon 2020 EU-project "MAtchUP": Valencia, Dresden and Antalya. The article investigates the factors and barriers that facilitate or hinder the implementation of smart city business models, including political-administrative, economic-financial, social-behavioural and technological factors. "Fifty Years a Growing: Introduction to the Author's Band-Aid Style Living Lab Melee" focuses on a Test Bed which began in South-East Galway, Ireland and became an ongoing project spanning the period 1976 – 2020. The purpose of the article is to explore the migration from rural into the new view, urban-encompassing-rural, and the social contract, or otherwise, formed the glue for long-term engagement under frequently adverse conditions. In this regard, the role of the smart city, and even its conceptual authenticity, is explored through learned studies rounded off by the hard on-the-ground experience.

Finally, we hope you enjoy the diverse perspectives of our special issue articles as a snapshot of ongoing smart city governance research and innovation. Our purpose is to provide a small platform of promotion and communication that can assist in linking the somewhat fragmented landscape of the smart urban governance world. This is an urgent issue for planning a future post-pandemic city. Participation is needed more than ever, but also transforming by digitally enhanced processes. Further understanding of the interplay of socio-economic and technological innovation to transform the governance of our cities in practice draws on the collective memory of past experiences and to form lessons for future urban research alliances across and beyond the EU. These articles inevitably

represent only the "tip of the iceberg" of these experiences to design new strategies for smarter urban governance and planning research and innovation activities. Accordingly, full conclusions on the true potentials of social and technological innovation to transform governance and to enhance new urban planning methods and practice remains a work in progress!

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