

Editorial Preface

Collaborative e-Planning and the Geography of e-Government

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With this fourth issue the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR) completes its volume seven and closes a year important for its future development, marked as it has been by the inclusion in two prestigious journal indices. In 2017 an application was submitted for membership of COPE - Committee on Publication Ethics, with first actions taking place in 2018, a learning process we expect to pursue actively in 2019. Scopus, the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed research indexed the IJEPR in 2017, and in early 2018 the IJEPR has been accepted for inclusion into Web of Science Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), being now included in 16 indices.

This issue explores recent developments in decision support systems in urban design, applied in tree modelling, offers evidence on innovative forms of citizen engagement in slum upgrading and in local regeneration programs, and provides a comprehensive overview of the geography of e-government in Europe.

In the first article - *'A Spatio-temporal Decision Support System for Designing with Street Trees'* - Marcus White from the University of Melbourne and Nano Langenheim from Monash University, Australia, present and discuss new technologies and new methods to 3D modelling of street trees. The authors offer an overview of urban design tree modelling and technology and propose an urban tree decision support system based on recent advances in other fields. The article shows that with these new technologies it is now viable to integrate detailed 3D trees into urban design models allowing therefore a quicker scenario testing of tree placement, species selection, size, alongside the visual and solar impact of these planning options, than was the case until recently.

In the following article - *'Creating collaborative environments for the development of slum upgrading and illegal settlement regularization plans in Brazil: the Maria Tereza neighborhood case in Belo Horizonte'* -, Rogério Palhares Araújo and Ana Clara Moura, both from Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil, and Thaisa Daniele Apóstolo Nogueira, from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, Brazil, explores two planning tools that have been used by municipalities in Brazil to intervene in slums and illegal settlements, which have been criticized, among other aspects, for their lack of citizen participation. The article presents and discusses the outcome of a workshop held in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, whose aim was to develop a methodology for this neighborhood plan, using Geodesign framework and geovisualization strategies, in order to create a collaborative environment, increasing therefore the participation of the various stakeholders in the area. The evidence presented in the article do suggest that this is a promising support tool for a more effective and inclusive neighborhood rehabilitation and land regularization policies, namely in cities with these levels of informal urbanization.

In the third article, 'Public participation in local regeneration programmes in Poland – case study of Olkusz', Magdalena Miśkowiec and Katarzyna Maria Gorczyca, both from Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland, explore and discuss the different forms of public participation in urban regeneration, including the use of ICT tools for consultation purposes, in the framework of the recent Urban Regeneration Act adopted in Poland, namely those employed during the implementation of the Communal Regeneration Programmes in Poland, exemplified in the article by the municipality of Olkusz.

In 'Geographies of e-Government in Europe' Barney Warf, from the University of Kansas, United States, shows how the use of the Internet by governments varies in sophistication across countries. The article explores the spatiality of e-government in Europe and some of the successful e-government programs, focusing in particular the digital divide issue in Europe, the e-government readiness and e-participation scores, correlating them with socio-economic conditions.

This issue includes also a report of the International Conference 'Local Governance in the New Urban Agenda' organized by the International Geographical Union Commission Geography of Governance, and held in the University of Salento, Italy.

The book reviewed in this issue, *Data and the City*, edited by Rob Kitchin, Tracey P. Lauriault and Gavin McArdle, explores and discusses some of the key changes and challenges in the emerging era of data-driven urbanism.

I would like to express my gratitude to all colleagues engaged in this process: the authors of the articles submitted for publication in the IJEPR, members of the editorial board and the external ad-hoc reviewers. The contribution of reviewers, ad-hoc reviewers and members of the editorial board, from 26 countries in all continents (Europe, North, Central and South America, Asia, Africa and Oceania), is acknowledged in the list of IJEPR reviewers engaged in the review process for volume 7 included below in this preface. I also wish to express once again my appreciation to the IGI editorial staff for their cooperation in the publication process and for the indexing efforts made in the last years. Being included in prestigious Index as Scopus and Web of Science is an important recognition of the work developed so far by all those engaged with the journal in different roles and will facilitate the dissemination of the high-quality research articles published in the International Journal of E-Planning Research.

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