

Editorial Preface

Modelling Urban Environments, Transdisciplinary Inquiry, Participation Tools, and Information Security in Urban E-Planning

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This issue of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR) comprises four research articles that address the following themes, all important for urban e-planning: the modelling of urban environments; the use of transdisciplinary approaches in planning; the choice of the appropriate tools for citizen participation; and information security awareness by those engaged in urban e-planning.

In the first of these four articles - 'Modelling Urban Environments to Promote Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity – Case of Stockholm,' Anna Kaczorowska (Chalmers University of Technology) and Meta Berghauer Pont (Chalmers University of Technology) address the challenges associated with the loss of biodiversity due to urbanization and examine ways of addressing this issue. The article offers an overview of the tools and approaches to measure ecosystem services, at different scales, based on the case of Stockholm, in Sweden, highlighting the need to integrate these tools and approaches on a platform based on a Geographic Information System.

Elizabeth Henshilwood, Mark Swilling, and Marjorie L. Naidoo, all from the University of Stellenbosch, in the next article - 'A Transdisciplinary Inquiry into Sustainable Automobility Transitions: The case of an Urban Enclave in Cape Town' present the result of an innovative study based on a collaborative transdisciplinary inquiry, whose aim is to understand how, why and where the global dependency on private cars could shift, since such changes is perceived as crucial for sustainability, for natural resource use, and for climate change. The empirical research was conducted in a geographically isolated and automobile-dependent enclave in Cape Town.

In the following article - 'Guiding Informed Choices on Participation Tools in Spatial Planning: An e-Decision Support System,' Giorgos Somarakis and Anastasia Stratigea, both from the National Technical University of Athens, explore and discuss participatory planning, seen as a key issue in urban e-planning. The article adds new insights on how to select the appropriate participatory tools in urban planning, as a way to avoid the common failures during participatory processes or the also common unsuccessful planning outcomes due to poorly designed participatory processes. For that, the article provides a sketch of the architecture/functioning of an e-Decision Support System (e-DSS), conceived as a tool to support planners towards the design of more effective participatory processes.

The fourth and last research article 'Raising Information Security Awareness in the Field of Urban and Regional Planning,' by Margit Christa Scholl (Technische Hochschule Wildau) deals

with the increasingly important issue of information security, an issue that is also critical in the field of urban e-planning. For the author, it is important to improve information security awareness and knowledge about the dangers that accompany digitalization and the corresponding protective measures, namely in the case of the professionals working in the field of urban planning. The author also argues that Serious Games can be used to achieve a deeper understanding of how to promote information security awareness.

This third issue of volume 8 includes also the report on the annual conference of the IGU Commission on Geography of Governance, with whose organization the International Journal of e-Planning Research was associated, and a book review of the UN 10th Report on e-government development, a report that all those working in the field of Urban e-Planning should take into consideration, as it, besides examining current trends, also explores the challenges ahead associated with new and emerging technologies.

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IJEPR