

## Editorial Preface

# Assessment, Efficiency, Equity, and Other Criteria in Spatial E-Planning

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The first issue of the 2021 volume of the International Journal of E-Planning Research (IJEPR) compiles a series of articles that somehow explore different issues associated with planning methodology and different types of criteria employed in spatial planning for different purposes.

In the first article, 'Integrating Online and Onsite Participation in Urban Planning: Assessment of a Digital Participation System', Rosa Thoneick, from the CityScienceLab, HafenCity University, Germany, offers an assessment of the development and implementation of the Digital Participation System in Hamburg, Germany, a system that uses open and public planning data within a web-based interface and a physical decision-support tool. The findings of this evaluation seem to support the use of hybrid strategies, online and onsite, through the integration of digital participatory tools with traditional planning practices, as the best way of getting citizens engaged, with relevant contributions, in the planning decision-making processes.

In the following article, 'Efficiency and Equity in the Spatial Planning of Primary Schools', Jan Wolf, Fillipe Feitosa, and João Lourenço Marques, all from GOVCOPP - Research Unit for Governance, Competitiveness and Public Policy, University of Aveiro, Portugal, deal with an important issue with which most national and local governments are confronted - the need to restructure public services at the local scale in face of demographic changes, namely those associated with shrinking populations -, as is the case in some regions of Portugal, being the study focused in one municipality of one of these regions. At stake is the selection of the criteria that should guide the restructuring of public services at the local level, in this study primary schools, in particular how to balance efficiency and equity in accessibility. For that, the study presented in the article analysed the spatial distribution of primary schools in the municipality of Vagos, in the central region of Portugal. Based on a linear programming approach, the configurations obtained were used as benchmarks for the actual spatial distribution of schools, with the aim to identify how it could be made more efficient or equitable, concluding that the changes in the spatial distribution of primary schools in this municipality were done with significant equity concerns.

The third research article, 'Multicriteria Methodology for Open Space Analysis: Understanding Environmental Performance and Diversity', Nagore Urrutia del Campo, Olatz Grijalba Aseguinolaza, and Rufino Hernandez Minguillón, all from the University of the Basque Country UPV-EHU, Spain, explore the use of an urban analysis method for the evaluation of the diversity of open space, defined as the options that a public space offers to the user. The methodology employed in this study is based on a multi criteria analysis of a public square in Madrid, Spain, and enabled the identification of specific locations favoured by citizens and the variety of the space associated with the scale of preferences identified.

The last research article included in this issue, 'Socio Demographic Factors Influencing the Extent of Residential Green Spaces in Galle City, Sri Lanka', written by Buddhini Chathurika Jayasinghe, GPTS Hemakumara, and Piyadasa Hewage, all from the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka, examines one key challenge confronted by urban planning, that of the declining proportion of public green

areas in cities as they expand. This study addresses this issue by identifying socio-demographic factors that influence the size of residential green spaces in an urban residential area in one city in Sri Lanka. The study shows and quantifies the multiplicity of factors responsible for the extent of these green areas within the city.

This first issue of volume ten comprises a review of a book on planning for climate change, a book that will certainly be useful for all those teaching or doing research on climate change in the context of spatial planning, a book that, among other arguments, claims that climate change ought to be considered also as a standard variable in all stages of the urban planning process.

The next two issues of Volume 10 have a special character. One of these special issues commemorates the 10th anniversary of the IJEPR and the other compiles a series of invited essays on the impact and interrelationships between the Covid-19 Pandemic and Urban e-Planning written and submitted for publication with the pandemic still active.

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