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Welcome to JeDEM's EGOV Conference Special Issue, Volume 16, Issue 2. Based on the 2023 EGOV-CeDEM-ePart conference, held in Budapest, Hungary, participants were invited to submit their conference papers or keynotes to JeDEM. The papers published in this issue contribute to addressing the digital transformation of public services and provide insights into how technology can reshape public services and participation.

Höglund Rydén and Hofmann explore the human aspect of digital service delivery, observing that when public services transition to online, many citizens struggle to utilise self-services independently and rely on frontline workers to navigate self-service platforms. Frontline workers act as intermediaries, bridging the gap between citizens' needs and digital requirements, and the nature of their roles can be flexible or narrow. The findings show that organisational, personal, and external circumstances influence the role taken by frontline workers. How this role is fulfilled can, in turn, either enable or restrain the co-production of self-services.

Looking at the intersection between research and practice, Karlsson and Adenskog posit that current e-participation theory and empirical scope are increasingly disconnected from how information technology influences actual political engagement. The authors analyse the dissolving boundaries between online and offline spheres of political participation and the growing dissociation between Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and democracy to illustrate the detachment of research from practice. They call for a new perspective that emphasises the relationship between e-participation and the political system in which it is enacted, presenting a potential path forward for the field inspired by research on deliberative democracy and democratic innovations.

Meanwhile, Rizk et al. track the evolution in digital government strategies, revealing a shift from internal management and organisation towards digitalisation, digital innovation, and infrastructural governance. The study presents findings from a large corpus of local government policies in Sweden produced over three decades. Through topic modelling of government documents, the authors investigate the transformative aspect of the digitalisation narrative at the local government level.

Lastly, Galdino de Magalhães Santos reflects on dynamic capabilities as a framework for understanding public sector digital transformation. Research on dynamic capabilities in the public sector

reveals how organisations implement digital transformation, manage multi-stakeholder collaborations, and improve service delivery. The author identifies five emerging areas of dynamic capabilities in the public sector: conceptual discussion, management and performance, measurement frameworks, innovation and public value creation, and digital transformation and calls for future research on understanding multiple actors involved in digital transition.

These studies underline that while digital technologies offer transformative potential for public services, successful implementation requires understanding human factors, evolving strategies, and organisational capability.