



Editorial 17(2)

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Welcome to Volume 17, Issue 2 of JeDEM, eJournal of eDemocracy and Open Government. Over the past few years, JeDEM has chronicled the evolving landscape of e-governance and e-democracy, from early explorations of integrated digital services and emerging e-participation efforts to deeper investigations into open government and cross-boundary digital cooperation. In Volume 15(1), contributors highlighted the importance of seamless service delivery and user-centric design as governments began embracing one-stop digital portals. With Volume 16(1), the discussion had expanded to transparency and citizen participation, mirroring global calls for open data and accountable governance. More recently, Volume 17(1) showcased a holistic view of digital governance, featuring research on global open government policies, e-government services, and the effectiveness of new digital participation platforms. As can be seen in this issues, as digital governance matures, there is growing recognition that technical innovation must go hand in hand with inclusivity, trust, and robust governance frameworks.

Paneva and Benčina introduce the One-Stop Shop Parsimonious Evaluation Model, a user-centred model for evaluating one-stop shops (OSS) in public service delivery. The study bridges a key research gap by moving beyond operational metrics and focusing on user attitudes, drawing on the Unified Model of Electronic Government Adoption framework in combination with OECD best practices. Their framework, tested in North Macedonia with 200 respondents, reveals the importance of socio-demographic characteristics, trust in government, and prior experience with commercial e-services in shaping user acceptance of OSS. The research offers a scalable tool for early-stage evaluation and continuous improvement of OSS initiatives, emphasizing the need for user feedback mechanisms throughout the service lifecycle.

Cruz Romero critically examines the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and its impact on inclusion and accountability. Using a comparative case study of six countries and longitudinal OGP data, the article uncovers discrepancies between formal policy commitments and actual implementation. The study questions the effectiveness of self-reporting and highlights structural barriers to genuine civic participation. The author's analysis reveals that while open governance frameworks promote important ideals, their institutional effectiveness varies widely. Cruz Romero advocates for stronger independent monitoring and cautions against performative transparency that lacks substance and public engagement.

Dedovic and Cromptvoets explore the often-overlooked governance dimensions of cross-border interoperability solutions, like EUCARIS, OOTS, and Peppol. Their multi-case study reveals that while technical interoperability is advancing, governance models remain fragmented and heavily context-dependent. The most common approach identified is network governance, involving shared authority and trust-based coordination. The study offers a nuanced typology of governance models, hierarchical, market, and network, highlighting the need for tailored structures to support sustainable cross-border digital services. This contribution fills a critical gap in the literature by aligning technical solutions with governance realities in the European digital landscape

Liu and Khalid investigate how digital inclusion, cybersecurity, and institutional trust collectively shape the effectiveness of e-democracy. Using case studies, with particular attention to China, the authors demonstrate that the digital divide and low digital literacy hinder meaningful participation, while cybersecurity measures can both build and erode trust depending on how they are implemented. The study calls for a holistic, inclusive framework for sustainable digital governance – one that emphasizes adaptability, transparency, and citizen trust. The authors argue that technical measures alone are insufficient; social and institutional factors must also be addressed to realize the democratic potential of digital tools.

Together, these articles underscore a central theme: digital transformation in governance cannot succeed without deep engagement with human, institutional, and political dimensions. We hope this issue of JeDEM provides valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners striving to build more inclusive, transparent, and effective digital democracies.