



Editorial

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We have already published two issues this year, but we are proud to present this slim and “particularly special” issue of JeDEM. It’s special for two reasons. The first reason is that it is the first time that we publish a third issue during the course of a year. The second reason is that it represents “ongoing submissions” only. Our website says that “the eJournal of eDemocracy and Open Government provides researchers and practitioners the opportunity to advance the practice and understanding of eDemocracy, eGovernment, eParticipation”¹. Authors can therefore submit to one of the calls, but we also accept ongoing submissions, that is, not in response to a specific call (although all submissions have to undergo the tough double-blind peer-review!). This 3rd issue presents papers that range from the analysis of the perception of political candidates’ personality or character traits in social media over a comparison of ‘open government’ definitions to a case study of the EU project *MyUniversity* that involved 13 European universities.

Political candidates invest many resources in social networking sites, assuming that these are able to influence voters’ attitudes and behavior in political campaigns. This is an assumption about social media that has not been empirically tested. Using a web-based experiment that staged a mock campaign and fictive political candidates, Montathar Faraon, Georg Stenberg and Mauri Kaipainen examine the differences between online news and social networking sites in terms of the influence on participants’ explicit and implicit attitudes. Their results show that both types of media impact voting behavior and explicit attitude change, but not implicit attitude change. The data reveals that attitudes are formed in close agreement with the perceived trustworthiness of the information source, so that people not only tend to have a skeptical attitudes to online network sites but also that their attitudes are not influenced by information obtained from such network sites.

The term open government is often defined in a number of different ways. Mary Francoli and Amanda Clarke’s paper begins by addressing the multiple definitions of open government from the 1950s until present day. Secondly, by analyzing the content of Open Government Partnership Action Plans, they investigate how current definitions vary across jurisdictions. Their analysis suggests that “open government” is understood in more than one way, but contemporary open government still focuses on access to information and accountability in the same way as it did in the 1950s conception. But caution is needed: firstly, open government is a global phenomenon, but lessons learned and theories cannot be applied to all countries indiscriminately, and secondly, whilst open data has become an increasingly important issue, it is a topic that needs to be considered separately from the topic of open government.

There are a number of general guidelines and recommendations for e-participation that have been gained from the European e-participation research and experiences. The paper by Samuel Bohman, Henrik Hansson and Pooyeh Mobini presents a critical study of e-participation in the context of online participation in higher education decision-making. The case study focuses on *MyUniversity*, a web-based system designed to provide European universities, students and other members of the academic community the opportunity to be involved and engaged in the Bologna

¹ <http://www.jedem.org/about/editorialPolicies#focusAndScope>

Process. The results, gained by using mixed-methods research design, provide insight on the design and implementation, as well as the outcomes, the lessons learned of the *MyUniversity* EU project. They not only confirm other research on the state and development of e-participation in Europe, but also provide recommendations for future research and applications.

As you can see from this selection of papers, we publish theoretical, practical and empirical research, but we would also encourage you to submit reflections on current issues, reviews of books, interviews, etc. that are related to the journal's topics and sections. Besides publishing rigorous work, one of our aims is to foster discourse, so we welcome feedback, and did you know that you can comment on the articles?

About the Editors

Noella Edelmann

Noella Edelmann is a researcher at the Center for E-Governance at the Danube University, her main research interests are the psychological aspects of behaviour and communication on the internet, e-participation and Open Access. Besides conducting research, Noella is Co-chair of the Conference for E-democracy and Open Government (CeDEM) and Managing Editor of the international Open Access eJournal for E-Democracy and Open Government (JeDEM). She completed her Psychology and English Literature Degree at the University of Strathclyde and Master's Degrees at the University of London and the Danube University Krems.

Judith Schossböck

Judith Schossböck is a research fellow at the Centre for E-Governance at Danube University Krems. She holds a degree in German studies and literature as well as communication studies and has been involved in researching internet competence of young people in Austria as well as an e-participation project for European youth. Together with Noella Edelmann, she is Managing Editor of JeDEM.org and is currently working in a project examining online identification in e-participation. Her research interests are open government, digital identities, digital literacy and online participation.