

▼ Introduction to the E-Policy, Law, and Governance Minitrack

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The E-Policy, Law, and Governance Minitrack focuses our attention on how the development, utilization, and expansion of information and communication technologies (ICT) are intertwined and interdependent with the creation and implementation of public policies and laws. It is also concerned with how these technologies impact and influence governance systems. While ICT can offer a potential means for increased efficiencies and effectiveness, these same technologies may need to be tempered by analysis concerning their equity and access issues. E-policies and their analysis at the national level are included in this minitrack. E-governance relates to the legal and policy implications of inter-organizational and public-private sector systems for the delivery of government services and the increased presence of NGOs and includes issues of trust, transparency, and legitimacy.

This minitrack has papers with authors from various countries, which offers an international perspective on ICT. The need for comparison and the development of an international discussion of the legal, policy-driven implications of the increased movement towards a systems-based, governance framework is the foundation of this minitrack. The need to identify and develop a consensus on a research agenda analyzing and offering practical applications is also a critical element of this minitrack. These needs are reflected in the papers selected for presentation in this minitrack.

The first set of papers focuses our attention on the development of an ICT research agenda in the area of policy, law, and governance. The

first paper of the minitrack provides an analysis of eGovRTD2020 project and identifies thirteen themes for future e-governance research. Rather than taking a short-term time frame on research needs, this paper seeks to signal the need for a long term research agenda needed to meet the vision of the 2020 project.

The second paper continues the research agenda-building theme by providing an exploratory framework for future research dealing with ICT process investments. By providing a roadmap of sorts, this paper contributes to our ability to understand practical implications of ICT and future research needs.

The second set of papers shifts our focus to national and comparative ICT studies. The third paper of the minitrack deals with a two-country comparison of citizens' perceptions of privacy implications of government held information about them. The paper reports on a study of trust and privacy in Japan and compares these findings to previous and similar research in New Zealand. The paper highlights how modern individual perspectives and more traditional cultural values may impact citizen perceptions.

The fourth and concluding paper in the minitrack is an analysis of a national information strategy concerning the development of a national information infrastructure in Korea. Using the social construction of technology theory as a means to analyze data related to the infrastructure project, the paper traces the transformation of the role the Korean government has had in helping the country move towards an equitable information infrastructure.